MVP Education Sector Newsletter

Inter-Sectoral Initiatives in Action: April 15, 2013

MVP Training of Cooks

**SADA** - Eighteen cooks from West Mamprusi and Builsa South sectors of the cluster benefited from a 2-day training on basic nutrition, food safety and hygiene to enhance skills delivery and performance during the week. For this training, only schools that benefited from the school feeding programme were selected and they included Wesi, Gbedembilisi, Katigiri, Silinga, Nabare, Uwasi, Buterise and Jadema.

Among the issues discussed during the 2-day training, were Role of cooks in school attendance, retention, health and performance; basic nutrition; personal hygiene; kitchen hygiene; food safety and hygiene; cooking behavior; food poisoning; menu and meal planning using locally available foods; and monitoring and evaluation.

Remarks from the cooks indicated that they were appreciative of the training and were ready to show improvements in the quality of their service delivery at their own level as part of their contribution to improving their societies.

Abiba, a cook from Gbedembilisi explaining her understanding of personal hygiene

Menstrual Hygiene Management Pre-Pilot Project

**Mwandama** - A Menstrual Hygiene Management pilot project is under way in Mwandama. This project aims to improve personal hygiene, knowledge on menstrual hygiene and health, and improve girls’ attendance in school during menstruation. The project features a reusable sanitary pad, called a “Be-Pad” which is being distributed to a sample of pupils to test product usability, comfort, and acceptance in the community. This initiative is a cross sectoral collaboration project with coordination from Gender, WASH and Education.

An introductory visit was conducted in March, where the site team and WASH Advisor Luckson Katsi introduced the project to the Headmaster to seek permission and support for its implementation. A group of 40 adolescent girls were selected by the headmaster, and given the “Be-Pads”. Additionally, a focus group was conducted with the 40 pupils, to establish a basic information on menstrual hygiene management in the Mwandama cluster community, but results having to still be analyzed. A meeting with mothers of pupils was also conducted to garner their support on the project. To gain wider publicity and lobby support a meeting with the Principle Secretary for Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare was held to introduce the Be-Girl Reusable Pads Pre-Pilot project. The presentation was well received.

Focus Group Discussion in progress
Teacher Training Workshop to Hold Double Vacation Classes and Multi-Grade Classes

Tiby – The Tiby site is characterized by a lack of teaching staff. To cope with this, MVP team, in collaboration with the Regional Education services, agreed to make use of the double shift and multigrade classes. Thus, taking advantage of recent Easter holidays (from 26th to 29th March), a Training Workshop was held to the benefit of 100 teachers of primary schools (100 teachers divided in two groups of 50 for the workshop). This training will enable them, in the context of their respective schools, to practice double shift (case of schools located in semi-urban localities with many pupils) or to organize students in multigrade classes (in the case of of schools with small numbers of pupils). The Regional Director of Education, during his speech, announced that administrative instructions will be taken to allow teachers to practice these methods in their respective schools, depending on their local context.

A view of teachers during the training

CIES Conference

By Sarah Muffy, Education Intern

New Orleans, Louisiana, USA - The Comparative & International Education Society (CIES) - hosted their 57th annual conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA this March with the theme: “Educational Quality: Global Imperatives and Contested Visions”.

Radhika’s and my paper abstract was accepted in the Global Literacy Special Interest Group panel on “Assessment”. Our presentation was on “Real-time Access and Utilization of Children’s Learning Data: Case study from the Millennium Villages Project.”

We discussed the literacy assessment method using mobile phones that was piloted in the Port-à-Piment MVP in Haiti last summer where I did my field placement. The presentation also included the description of the study design that some of us at the Earth Institute are working on currently in Bonsaaso, one of the MVPs in Ghana.

The current study involves administering short reading tests to children in 10 primary schools, 5 of which will receive remedial interventions following the assessments. The unique, exciting aspect of the project is that the results of the assessments are recorded using Android phones, and uploaded to formhub, created by Modi Labs. From there, automated report cards are generated that can be shared with teachers, headmasters, district education officials, and other community members. After the remedial interventions have been implemented, another round of assessments will be conducted in order to observe differences in the treatment group from the control group.

The Education Team was proud to be among the panelists and happy to discuss our projects and goals with peers from around the world.
Site Assessments in Action:

**CTL IN A FEW WORDS**

By Papa Moustapha, Education Coordinator

*Education and training can be improved through...*

Increasing the efficiency of the Education Department in Louga, in general, and particularly in the rural community of Leona to achieve Education for All, the second Millennium Development is an international commitment as by the Millennium Villages Project.

Papa Moustapha’s contribution is focused on strengthening the professional skills of teachers, improving learning conditions for students, especially girls, by modernizing educational tools through the introduction of ICT. It is in this context that the CTL program whose launch is planned in two of the EMC CR (Leona and Potou) from the academic year 2012/2013, in close coordination with the Inspection and Inspection Academy of Education Departmental Louga, Ericsson, Tigo, Institute of Earth Sciences at Columbia University and Millennium Promise.

**Quality of basic education**

To teach better and reach a greater number of students, the program will start with 50 laptops, 2 video projectors divided between the two institutions. Meanwhile, 90 scholarships are offered to girls who achieved the best results in their final year of primary school and whose families are facing relatively difficult socio-economic conditions. These girls retain all the benefits of these grants until their middle school, which allows them to increase their academic performance.

Innovative methods involving pedagogical tools, through ICT, as well as mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of training and skills are developed in the two colleges target.

**Professionalize elementary teachers**

Based on the real needs of teachers in the daily practice of their profession, training, grants for good equipment and educational tools as well as expertise adapted are offered. Teachers in the classroom who have minimal teacher training are expected to improve their mastery first personal didactic transposition and use of information technologies and communication. They are therefore more comfortable to apply modern teaching methods and effective with younger students. To achieve these objectives, each teacher will follow training sessions in the workplace while library resources in terms of software and computer applications are provided. These capacity building activities for teachers will be implemented in close collaboration with the academic authorities of Education Department in Louga.

**VISIT TO SADA MVP SITE**

SADA - Nelie Jeantillon, the Education Specialist from the Regional Headquarters of the MDG centre in Dakar, visited all the eighteen schools in the Northern and Upper East Regions MVP sites, to assess the real situation on the ground. She identified some factors that affect the quality of teaching and learning in the project site. Some of the factors included lack of adequate teachers, no access to portable drinking water, lack of sanitation facilities, lack of adequate infrastructure and lack of teaching and learning materials just to mention a few. She assisted the Education Coordinator to put in place some plans and strategies to help solve these problems.
**Connect-to-Learn & Girls with Wheels**

By Richard Ogeda, Education Coordinator

**Sauri** - 50 girls from resource disadvantaged families who benefited from Connect-to-Learn scholarships have received bicycles to ease their movement to school. These were the first beneficiaries of the CTL MVP partnership which was initiated in 2012 to increase girls’ transition from primary school to secondary school.

The girls who were placed in two local secondary schools previously had to walk up to four kilometers to school and back had every reason to smile. Having to walk to school such a long distance subjected the girls to a host of challenges including fatigue by the time they reach school, and bicycle or motorcycle taxi riders who take advantage of them by transporting them to school for sexual favors.

The bicycles were presented together with text books by the Sauri MVP Education Coordinator, Richard Ogeda in a ceremony attended by the students, their parents and teachers.

To ensure proper utilization of the bicycles, the MVP staff present gave stringent terms and conditions for usage of the bicycles.

Christine Osiala, one of the beneficiaries of the program had dropped out of school in 2011 and stayed out of school for more than one year due to lack of school fees. When the CTL/MVP opportunity came by, she rejoined form one at Ulumbi secondary school. “I would be a miserable housewife and probably a mother of three children had this chance not come my way, says Christine. “Now I have my fees paid for and I have a bicycle to move to school. I sincerely thank the MVP for this opportunity. Now it is my responsibility to work hard, complete my education and pass well.” Christine wants to be a medical practitioner when she completes her education.

**Millennium Promise Japan & Secondary School Scholarship Beneficiaries**

By Lawrence Ssenkubuge, Education Coordinator

**Ruhiria** - During the recent routine follow up visits to support the secondary school Scholarship Beneficiaries supported by Millennium Promise Japan, the members of the Ruhiria Millennium Villages project education sector got overjoyed to meet the supported girls who recently joined nursing school fully dressed in Nurses attire.

The two girls Nishaba Miria and Nayebare Doreen narrated to us their recent achievements. “We now participate in clinical practice, where we spend about half our time in the week going on rounds in the wards”. “I can now administer an injection, measure pressure of patients, do an intravenous insertion for drip and a lot more” said Doreen. We as the sector could not hide our joy as we looked at these smart young ladies who are going to be our first crop from the scholarships. We are looking forward to having them treat the members of the community that raised them.

Routinely the sector meets all scholarship beneficiaries: 20 under Millennium Promise Japan, 100 supported under Connect to Learn and 8 other types of scholarship during every holiday, to help and inspire them set meaningful goals, encourage them to stay in school and to inspire other girls. The scholarship beneficiaries are thus serving as role models to the rest of the students in the project area.

The other good news is that of Muteebwa David a secondary scholarship beneficiary who recently appeared in one of the national dairies as one of the best students. David passed with flying colors after pursuing an A level course in Physics, Mathematics Chemistry and Economics, David hopes to join university to do Civil Engineering. We thus think 2012 was a very fruitful year. Our appreciation to the Millennium promise Japan, Connect to learn and MP New York for supporting this young talent. Meanwhile the parents of these scholarship beneficiaries have formed a cooperative to save some money which they will later invest so as to generate means to support the scholarship beneficiaries when the Project phases out.
CEWs in Action:

Léona - In the rural community of Leona, the annual distribution of school supplies took place. As every year, MVP purchased and made available a large batch of school supplies and teaching materials to the 53 primary schools and three colleges of the rural community of Leona for the academic year 2012/2013.

Distribution was entirely conducted under the supervision of the Departmental Inspectorate of Education. The distribution process has also involved the President of the Rural Community, associations of parents, school management committees, teaching teams of teachers and school cooperatives, to ensure transparency and consideration of all needs expressed by the populations.

Meanwhile, the implementation of the "PHASE" in schools substantial support in hardware preventive maintenance has been made available to schools to encourage students to better understand issues related to water, sanitation and hygiene which led to a change of behavior initially desired by the program. The device program is used daily by each class throughout the day, with the result: less disease and longer attendance of students in class.

Simultaneous the distribution of inputs for the promotion of hygiene and cleanliness in the school took place in December 2012. These major inputs have always contributed to increase access and retention of students in school, to fight against the risk of wastage of all kinds such as absenteeism and dropouts while improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Mbola - A total of 40 Community Education Workers were hired by the project in January 2013 and started working in their respective villages on February 2013. After receiving the initial training, the CEWs have been instrumental in community sensitization events in pushing the enrollment exercise as well as following up the students’ attendance in schools. They have also represented the project in various meetings arranged to take place in their areas of operation.

Registration of the grade one pupils surpassed the target by 7.6% while that of the pre-primary (nursery students) was below target by 32.5% for the reasons of distance to schools and shortage of pre-school classrooms. CEWs mission effected attendance where despite the absence of the school meals in the first quarter it elevated from 75% in January to 79 in February and attained 87% in March 2013. Additionally, Education data collection exercise started on February 2013 by using android phones. The exercise will be conducted monthly and will involve the education team and the M&E team.

In collaboration with the Community Agricultural workers the education team distributed a total of 222 bags (25 Kg bags) of fertilizer (DAP) in 15 primary schools and 3 secondary schools. The stated agricultural input was supplied aiming at improving agriculture in schools and thereby sustain the school meals as the project is phasing out the year 2015.

The school meals program has resumed in this second quarter and it will hopefully have a positive impact on the students' attendance.

Through its education sector Mbola site continued its support to all the 49 Connect-To-Learn students where during the first quarter items including: water buckets, basins, brooms, grass slashes, mattresses and bed sheets were provided. It also managed to prepare and supervise 3 school to school connection events where both Lolangulu primary and secondary school students interacted with their fellow students from New Canaan Country School that is based in New York. The events as declared by students has positively impacted their language skills as well as improved their academic performance.

On Friday March 7, 2013 Mbola marked the World Read Aloud Day with a jubilant and well-off event with students from Lolangulu Secondary and Iloangulu Primary Schools participate. They marked it with their counterparts from New Canaan in New York. Students read themes of the Day and some book pages. Tanzanian students read their sentences in English and their fellows from New Canaan Country School made it in Swahili. During the process some students from Mbola read a passage from a book titled “Mabala the Farmer” and one student from New Canaan read another book in English.

Ms. Kristen, a teacher from New Canaan said the weather in New York was too cold and asked students to bring and show ice cubes to their fellows in Mbola. It was a great pleasure to have the day cerebrated at the site. Songs were sung from both sides where Mbola crooned one in English and New Canaan performing theirs in Swahili.

A total of 27 students from Mbola participated, this included 20 students from Lolangulu Secondary and 7 from Lolangulu Primary School. The Mbola Team Leader Dr. Gerson Nyadzi argued that in the next event the site will invite the Government officials. He insisted that students have to use the opportunity to build up their capacities/skills. On the other hand the Lolangulu Secondary School Second Master maintained that he was so grateful for the event and advised students to do their best while adhering to instructions.