Sauri: CEWs trained in Education for All
By Zoe Stopak-Behr

With the recent addition of four Community Education Workers (CEWs) to the existing team, a two-day training was held on June 24th and 25th at the Maseno Training Center involving all 20 CEWs. The training allowed the new Sauri CEWs to interact with the more established group that has been working in various sub-locations of East Gem for the past year. During the training’s opening session the CEWs exchanged ideas regarding the purpose of their role and the main challenges they face in accomplishing full school enrollment and completion for the children in their communities. Mr. Collins Okeyo, member of the Kenyan National Council for Children’s Services and a former teacher, conducted much of the training. He provided an overview of Kenyan law and policy regarding children, especially as it concerns issues of education and child labor. Additional sessions included modules on the Millennium Development Goals, the CEW working model, child health and wellness, and best practices in the provision of guidance and counseling.

SADA: Training KG teachers
By Heather George

After spending four weeks conducting observations of KG teachers, I was given one week to plan a two-day workshop for all of the KG and some Primary 1 teachers in the cluster. Of the 34 teachers that attended the workshop, only two stated that they had ever attended a teacher-training workshop before. Many of the KG teachers are volunteer teachers and not formally part of Ghana Education Service. The workshop consisted of effective teaching methodologies, classroom management, lesson planning, remediation, family involvement, checks for understanding, differentiation and identifying/working with students with special needs.

Groups present ideas for using existing resources found in the community
Other Highlights:
Learning Assessments, Interactive Whiteboards

Learning Assessments in Koraro

In June 2013, Tadele Atakelti, Education Coordinator in Ethiopia, launched learning assessments in the Koraro MVP for the first time. These learning assessments were developed by the site team following the methodology of UWEZO, whose tests have been implemented across East Africa in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Tadele incorporated the grade 2 competencies from the Bureau of Education, developing tests in the local language (Tigrinya), English (as a subject) and mathematics. In the pilot, Tadele personally assessed 90 children in 9 different schools, with each school taking approximately three hours to survey. The tests were conducted on paper, with results later collated in excel. The possibility of switching to phone based surveys is being explored in the coming months. The preliminary results show that reading capacity in the local language is strong (78% have achieved basic reading skills), but there is a gap in English skills (24%). Math skills are also strong, with 84% of those tested having achieved basic numeracy levels. The results of these learning assessments will be shared at the annual school directors and district education office meetings, in which Tadele will discuss the status of student performance and focus on remedial actions to address the gaps.

Interactive Whiteboards in Potou

In the Potou, Senegal, MVP, a partnership with the digital learning company CyberSmart has introduced the world’s first interactive whiteboard powered by a small, solar-charged battery, and created especially for classrooms with poor infrastructure. Most important, this technology enables an entire school – including those off the electric grid – to benefit from a global store of knowledge, such as virtual science experiments, interactive encyclopedias, and a variety of software programs and Internet resources. Both Potou Elementary School and Leona Secondary School have been provided with the specially adapted interactive whiteboards, along with software and ongoing teacher training. Although the CyberSmart program uses innovative equipment, the real focus is to enable 21st century learning, “where the teacher becomes more of a facilitator of learning and the students are more active participants, learning to think with today’s tools and content,” said Radhika Iyengar, Millennium Villages Project Education Director.

Below: A class using the interactive whiteboard