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PARTICIPANTS:

SESSION 1: GOVERNMENTS TAKING ACTION

Moderator:

LUIS CROUCH
Lead Education Specialist
Coordinator, Global Good Practices Team
Education for All Fast-Track Initiative
Secretariat

Panelists:

ATO FUAD IBRAHIM
State Minister for General Education
Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

ABEL FERNANDES DE ASSIS
National Director for Quality Assurance Department, Ministry of
Education
Government of the Republic of Mozambique

MATOR KPANGBAI
Deputy Minister for Instruction, Ministry of Education
Republic of Liberia

GUILLERMO LOPEZ
Director General, Primary Education, Ministry of Education
Government of the Republic of Nicaragua

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. CROUCH: I'm Luis Crouch from the Education for All Fast-Track Initiative. We are, as many of you know, changing our name soon to the Global Partnership for Education, which I think, more effectively, reflects what we've been doing. I'll talk a little bit more about ourselves later on. In this session, my role is simply to moderate and introduce our distinguished speakers.

I would like to, before I introduce them, talk a little bit about the composition of the panel. It's a somewhat engineered panel, in a sense that we've got countries that, in some respect, are further along the track of doing something large-scale, national scale on literacy, such as Nicaragua, which started a little bit earlier than Liberia, but Liberia, as well, which has serious randomized trials and is going to scale. And we have other countries that are, sort of, beginning down that path to some degree, doing national assessments, drawing baselines, designing programs. And so, we wanted to create an opportunity for exchange compressions both amongst them in formal situations, but also with you, so that the audience gets a sense of the spectrum that we're working with.

So, let me introduce the speakers, and I will introduce them in the order in which they will be speaking. And so we will have Ato Fuad Ibrahim, the Minister of State for Education -- General Education in Ethiopia. We will then move on to Abel de Assis from Mozambique, who is the National Director for Quality Assurance in the Ministry; Mator Kpangbai, who is the Deputy Minister of Instruction for the Ministry of Education in Liberia; and then, Guillermo Lopez, who is the Director General of Primary Education in Nicaragua. Let me just say a word or two about each presenter, just so that you get to know them a bit.

Minister Ibrahim is the -- as I said -- the State Minister. He has served for many years in the Harari Region in the -- in his country. Ethiopia is a decentralized country, and he has experience at the decentralized level. He has, like most of the panelists, experience as an instructor in a teacher training college, in this case. He earned his Bachelor's degree at the Bahir Dar (inaudible), and a Master's degree from a Finnish university.

The next speaker will be Abel Assis, and his background is that he has been head of the -- he is currently head of the Quality Assurance Program at the Ministry, but previously he has worked in the National Learning Assessment Institute of Mozambique with experience in curriculum design

assessment and examination and certification.

Minister Kpangbai is currently the Deputy Minister for Instruction in the country of Liberia. It's the third highest post in the Ministry. He is a dynamic and tireless fellow. He has the distinction, relative to other members of the panel, that he has been an educator in the United States as well, being a teacher, and I believe ending up as a high school principal. He has many distinctions and honors from various bodies in the United States and abroad. He has a Bachelor's of Science degree from Cuttington University in his own country, and a Master's in business administration from, I believe, the United States -- a United States university.

And finally, Guillermo Lopez is currently the Director General of Primary Education and Ministry in Nicaragua. He has a Master's degree in teacher training from The National University of Nicaragua, and a Bachelor's degree in education science, and he, perhaps, was the longest serving teacher. He has a 30-year teaching career, so we're quite honored to have someone who has been, for so long, at the coalface, if you will, of teaching. He also plays a role in various teacher unions and work organizations in Nicaragua.

So, without further ado, I would like to turn the session over to Minister Ibrahim.

MR. IBRAHIM: Good morning. I'm glad to express my gratitude for the organizers to have me here and give an opportunity to explain about my country's education, our children's challenges, and so on. So, since I'm not only in this, our climate is to be very brief about my presentation. My presentation follows so much (inaudible) education with that and a greater assessment (inaudible) you have that. The (inaudible) plan system and the plan for addressing the challenges in operation (inaudible). And you talk a model of education is about a hundred years old. Since 1991, only -- for (inaudible) 16 percent of them are going to school, when this government took power, 19, 18 years ago. So, totally, 20 percent of the children were going to school. Most of the children who were going to school were from (inaudible) nationalities (inaudible) 18 nationalities, so that's put 18 nationalities on the (inaudible) nationally as we are going to discuss.

The (inaudible) advantages (inaudible) because rural happened the difference was so huge. Gender issue was another problem. So, among nationality sources, there was a difference very much, (inaudible) and (inaudible) as I said. So, with this government came to power what it did was, it

established, and largely, it was composed of different, you know, social strata, with (inaudible) and also representation, more so that the (inaudible) and government. Our (inaudible) is a country without. Just for, you know, the transition of (inaudible), which led, you know, as a country for two to three years.

So, this gross (inaudible) identified for major problems for education. The first one was access, as I said. The second one was (inaudible) and quality. The third was (inaudible). The fourth one was inefficiency. So, as I said, many children before they finish primary education, they leave the school. Drop-out was very high. Repetition was very high. As I said also, the education system totally followed in a way (inaudible) had a very good relation with (inaudible). Everything came from (inaudible). When we had a very good relationship with England, everything came from England, and when we had more so relationship with U.S.A., again the same average. And now, of course, what we did was, we have these folks whatever (inaudible). It is dismissed that we do not want to know the (inaudible). But together we (inaudible) partners we identify problems, we plan together, and we implement together, and also we (inaudible), and we read feedbacks and improve for the next test. This is how we are now working, so this is the difference also.

So, then, the other very important issue is when we come to the problem, our teachers were unprepared, I could say because, as I said again, the text books, everything was coming from different countries where you had different relationships with different countries all based on our leadership. So, even the teachers' preparation was not (inaudible). So, they don't know what they are going to face when they go to the schools.

In 2006, we have good AT, nationalities with AP languages, (inaudible) and everything, but to be where forced to learn in only one of the language in the country. So, (inaudible) were a problem with the countries (inaudible), as you know, this government has taken a (inaudible). The first one is, it was 1997, I think, we had a (inaudible) development plan, education sector coming up with the plan, which was followed by the 20 years, you know, that active plan. This time, 20 years later, the plan was also followed, you know, the education training and policy. It was (inaudible).

After identify those four problems, as I said, we developed the education and training policy in the country. It's a 15-page document that's each and every worker is that document has with a very, very huge (inaudible). So, it will explain a lot of things. Every word in that document explained. So,

based on that, education training and policy, which asked in a first objective sense, we will pursue an education which will support the economic development of the country, and the vice versa where the economy also supports the education (inaudible). Now, everybody in the country has the staff observe and sense this in our statement because the (inaudible) has been joined the last five years. So, we have to run to the last -- this what we have been create with U.S.A. because we have (inaudible) it's (laughter).

So, it is those parents that brought 20 million students into the land (inaudible). It just (inaudible) our schools to have 28,000 primary schools and 20 million -- more than 20 million students. So, why need to separate, why need to separate? It's good to bring children to school, but we need to provide them quality education, better education. So, last year we conducted a study -- EGRA study, with EGRA (inaudible). It's six-long weeks in (inaudible) but there is (inaudible). So, everybody was thinking we would do (inaudible), but it was not. So, now we have developed a plan, as I said. What we -- the curriculum -- we will -- curriculum would be now changed, the syllabi (inaudible) and everything -- the curriculum. Is it (inaudible). Then, we are going to develop the textbooks, and then, (inaudible) textbooks who are going to train our teachers. Again, we will check -- we will conduct (inaudible) EGRA and we'll see against those (inaudible). And finally, some of these processes, we'll see. And on October, we will have an English EGRA and also EGMA, math tests. We have national (inaudible) and they will conduct it, and for grade 4, 8, 10 and 12, by every two year, we do national assessments. So this (inaudible). As a principle, we are following that -- a principle we're following that. Education is an instrument to maintain development and development of (inaudible) resources for development, so we'll get an education, quality education, that we have in (inaudible). Thank you so very much. (Applause)

MR. CROUCH: The next presenter is Mr. Assis from Mozambique. Would you prefer to manage your own slides?

MR. ASSIS: Yes.

MR. CROUCH: Yes. This is the forward.

MR. ASSIS: Okay. Good morning, everyone. I want to salute you all for this International Literacy Day that commemorates today, and to thank the organizer of this event, and my official language is Portuguese, but I will try to do my best to present it in English.

My presentation will have three main parts, which is the context, the progress, and the

summary challenges. In Mozambique, (inaudible) believe that education is a key to combating poverty and increase economic development, and the priorities is (inaudible) educational reach comprises now seven years of primary education. Here, we bring the assignment progress, starting -- increased it from 1992 when the end of the war, so can see the expression at the primary education in general in all the system, and to have also increased the effort and (inaudible) especially in general -- gender in primary and secondary education, and although we have high pupil/teacher ratio. We also have as a problem the drop-out is still high, particularly in grade five and seven.

(Inaudible) issue were trying to implement different programs to measure the quality of the education, so that some are actions, at the national level, who have different institutions from the government, (inaudible) and also from the civil society what they can -- some measure to measure the learning of the children. So indicating (inaudible) briefly to hear some examples, and to also put (inaudible) in the original initiative which we called SACMEQ which comprised 14 categories in the Southern Africa regions of 15 minutes of education in grade six in language, maths, and the third one in also age (inaudible).

And here, we bring you one of the (inaudible) taken this year. The purpose is to make a (inaudible) in the north of the Mozambique Capital Garden, and then that is some question of this study, as there was selected in some of the indicators. And then, the measure of findings; we can see that is there. We spent little time on task and that (inaudible) affect us. The school year starts later. Some lessons started also later. Absenteeism for the teachers and students due to different reasons; (inaudible) official visits and public events are some of the factors that contributed to the problems that we have in the schools. Also the time spent in the classroom is ineffective and shows the students are not on task. From the SACMEQ, we participated in 2007 in the assessment and to really have results from the reading, so the scale comprises eight lists -- eight levels from the lower to high level of skills. So, we can see here that, in general, in the progress that our students have some difficulties at higher-level skills in reading.

Also, in maths, we have very similar problems that differs from the progresses, that some can say that Mozambique is still a long way to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

For us, our challenges is access, retention, and conclusion of the seven years of

education with the relevant contents, and to deal with these problems while focusing on the read and write in the first grades, and that's why we're trying to improve some areas. One of the areas is school assessment, basically to call (inaudible). It just (inaudible) to make the teacher aware of what the students learn. The second one, we will use the National Assessment in the reading and maths. The third one, we will continue to use the SACMEQ Assessment, and to deal with the quality issue also, focus on measuring outcomes, which implies to define norms and standards, to train people to use the instruments, to train the head teachers, and to identify the progress in our education system. So, those are the challenges that we have in that part of education in Mozambique. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. CROUCH: Excellent. Thank you very much, and I hope you're all taking notes because we're being exposed to some very, in my view, brilliant insights and suggestions on which you may have questions later. But, thank you so much to the presenters so far, and over to you, Mator.

MR. KPANGBAI: Thank you, Luis. I want to extend to EFA, FIT and AID and all the partners for organizing the International Literacy Day. A quick (inaudible), my friend at the computer two, I will move in numbered slides.

SPEAKER: That's no problem.

MR. KPANGBAI: So, firstly, we have a literacy rate of 58 percent. That matches our life expectancy. English is spoken as our official language. We have 16 major languages. Liberia went through a brutal civil war, so interestingly, at our primary level, we have about 3 or 4 percent of all students completed grade six. We have 52 percent of our teachers currently not certified and considered unqualified, and we use English as our official instructional language.

After the war, we had over a half a million overage of student population. So, the first thing we did as a government, was to look for programs in which would accelerate learning, so we have an accelerated learning program that has three levels. And level one and level two will prepare students for grade one and grade two; level two and four -- I'm sorry -- level two will prepare students for three and four, and level three will prepare students for grade five and six.

We had opportunity to have assessed the program, which is referred to as the Core Skills -- Education Skills for Liberian Youth, which is going to be evolving to advance youth programs. One

thing we have done is that, we have recently made reading as a separate (inaudible) of curriculum for grades one through eight.

Unqualified teachers, we got support for AID, so we work on rehabilitating our Rural Teacher Training Institute, and work with international NGOs to train teachers. We have issue out on a secondary level; government had made our university free for educational students. We have recently passed an improved (inaudible) center for teachers.

This presentation will be guided by five questions, and I will forward to slide number seven. Now, when did we become aware of this issue, as it relate to early literacy skill?

SPEAKER: (Inaudible) want to take over that?

MR. KPANGBAI: Please.

SPEAKER: Because I can see your page but he cannot.

MR. KPANGBAI: Sorry.

SPEAKER: That's all right. Page 8. (Inaudible).

MR. KPANGBAI: Yes. In 2008, we ran the pilot Assessment, with (inaudible) from the World Bank, and in primary we're looking at two grades, grades two and grade three. As you will see, we had 34 percent of the students couldn't read one word, and we have -- the average number of word read were 19.6. So what do we do with a dismal reading performance of our students? Internationally, as required, we have about 45 words being read per minute, but our goal in Liberia is to approach 60. So, with the pilot done, there were five core questions that had to be answered. So, on page 10. The re-intervention what we've done with the Ministry of Liberia (inaudible), and we're looking at baseline oral reading assessment data, our (inaudible), and we're looking at the group, going to schools, and we're using a (inaudible) and we're required (inaudible) to fund the term assessment.

With the intervention we had 60 schools in 7 counties, and in 15 school districts. In Liberia, we have 15 counties, and we have a hundred school districts -- on page 12. So, with the EGRA Plus intervention, the lesson learned, based on a (inaudible) approached, but one of things that children learn the signs of English, and we're talking about the signs, the letters, in initial instruction. As EGRA is evidence-based, we require a 45 minutes a day instruction. In addition, teachers are required to read

every afternoon. There's a homework component that students read to parents and parents sign and return to indicate that they are also part of the process.

Today, we (inaudible) our program to 670 schools in 4 counties with the hope of reaching the other 11 counties.

With our EGRA Plus, our coaching is the center of competent, so we have coaches to different schools to help our teachers. We use social marketing. There's a parent/community report card, and continued assessment is required.

The fifth thing, the experiment that (inaudible) and reading comprehension. I want to try - get folks attention to the effect size. If you look at the control and full intervention, there's no difference. If you look at final mean at one and a half years, you'll see the effect size for letter-naming doubled, 0.52. For oral fluency, we doubled, 0.80. And for reading comprehension, it's 0.82. And these are significant means.

Quickly, letter-naming means that you have 100 regular letters that kids can name in rows. Oral reading has to do with the (inaudible), assist the words and read (inaudible) at a secondary level, and comprehension means that students must answer five questions on the passage read. So, with that size, and the number of students that participated in the experiment, were 2,800 students. So you see the proof. After -- the group over a year was letter-naming (inaudible) two years. Oral fluency was 1.8, and reading comprehension for two years. So, there was significant gap close. Students that couldn't read, now read almost at grade level after only five years. We have changed our name from EGRA Plus into Reading First, and this is based on (inaudible) AID but it's also required for all of our teacher training institute. So, all of our incoming teachers, now, into our schools must go through the EGRA Plus or the Reading First program to ensure that they are able to teach students when they leave the (inaudible) institution (inaudible).

Our interim goal is 45 words, but that is also international benchmark; but for Liberia, our goal is to ensure that all of the students by the end of grade three they can all be able to read and write. We now have support for (inaudible) that will be doing national assessment reform to determine that all students are indeed able to read at completion of grade three.

How do we sustain this? As I indicated earlier, we have made a requirement in terms of

making sure our teacher preparation programs teach reading. We are (inaudible) realignment between our ECB and our primary education, and finally -- if you could go to Page 22 -- just a minute -- the important thing is that we are (inaudible) language in the pre-primary instruction, in the English where we have local partnerships.

Finally, Page 24, the goal is to focus on reading and reading (inaudible) we had (inaudible) Liberia. We are trying to find resources to have professional development at all levels, and critically important pieces that you need leadership in the (inaudible) Bureau of Recertification. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. CROUCH: And last, but not least, because in a way, it's the country that's sort of moved ahead the fastest or the furthest, Nicaragua, Guillermo is going to speak in Spanish, but the presentation will be in English, and I will help him (Speaking Spanish). He's going to speak in Spanish; the presentation will be in English. So, welcome to a globalized world, and if you can't do it, get with the program. (Laughter)

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: Sorry, just a quick note that the -- on the quality side because it's acronyms, those are teacher training programs where teachers are encouraged to analyze the curriculum rather than just, sort of, receive, so they think about the curriculum that they're a part.

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: So master teachers -- a master teacher program that reach out to others.

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: Just to summarize, again, the acronyms, on the EGRA and (inaudible) RFB, basically refer to early assessments appropriate for early grades that they're either experimenting with or have already adopted more -- adopted more in reading experimenting amount.

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: Sorry, that may be a little hard to follow. So, it's, just on the slide. So, he's talking about the middle -- bottom middle slide there, around issues of shared responsibility and accountability, school councils and so on.

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish) (Applause)

MR. CROUCH: One statistic that I don't know if you caught is that Nicaragua has now a 97 percent literacy rate in (Speaking Spanish).

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: So, in Nicaragua, the process obviously is how to do literacy better and faster because, in a way, they're -- in terms of basic percentages -- they're almost there. Unfortunately, due to the time, I've just been told by the process managers that we will have time for only one or two questions. So -- but of course, there could be fifteen answers, right? (Laughter) So -- no, but seriously, let's take the two questions right -- one after the other -- and then we'll give space for the panel to answer the questions, and hopefully, in any case, there will be time over tea at some point, coffee, to chat some more. So, a couple of questions, please, from the audience? I told you to have questions, so, surely, you heard me and came up with some.

SPEAKER: Good morning. Thank you for your presentations. My name is Annie Duguay. I'm from the Center for Applied Linguistics, and I'm wondering about -- maybe some of you touched upon it -- but I'm wondering about first language use in your literacy programs.

MR. CROUCH: Second question? Nobody else? One over there. She had her hand up first, so let's move to her first.

SPEAKER: Hello, I'm Jenny Spratt from Research Triangle Institute. I would suspect that, in many of these countries, there is a dearth of reading materials for children, and I would like to hear a little bit more about what -- I noticed Nicaragua mentioned libraries and maybe you said more, but I wouldn't know -- what your countries may be doing to develop age-appropriate reading materials. And, perhaps, private sector involvement in that work.

MR. CROUCH: Okay. So, you heard the two questions. Home language issues, how are you approaching that, and the issue of high quality and appropriate reading materials? Are we going to --?

SPEAKER: One more, hopefully, if they can weave it in. My name is Meg Gardiner. I'm a researcher at the Woodrow Wilson Center right now. My question is whether or not you've had the opportunity to hear from the teachers about how some of these policies are trickling down and what are

some of the constraints and enabling factors that they face in the schools.

MR. CROUCH: So, if I could ask all panelists to contribute, you know, fairly quickly to any of the three questions -- you don't have to take all three. Just take the ones that you feel are most pertinent, and why don't we do it in linear order, from here to there.

MR. ASSIS: Can I speak in Portuguese? (Laughter)

MR. CROUCH: Yeah. Thank you.

MR. ASSIS: In Mozambique (Speaking Portuguese)

MR. CROUCH: Okay. Just a quick translation is that, yes, they are, indeed, paying attention to the home language issue. They have had several pilots, and the results have been good, and they are, while not yet at the stage of going to national scale, they are beyond the pilot stage, so they're in a, kind of, intermediate -- between pilot and full scale. They agree fully with the importance. In fact, their analyses show that that's one of the reasons for early failure, is the lack of home language instruction. The challenges remain to prepare the teachers and also to adjust the assessment tools for a variety of languages, and to preview use of assessment in non-Portuguese languages. I think I got that right? I think you borrowed that one. Yeah.

MR. IBRAHIM: Okay. Just to reflect. The first language in Ethiopia, as a minimum of instruction, is about 24. Okay. In Ethiopia, as you know, we have a very (inaudible) language voice in our education training and policy. It's very much education and training policies; it's very much (inaudible) primary school is -- has to be used by the (inaudible). But, in most cases, (inaudible) grade one to four (inaudible), and each state is independent. It has got its own (inaudible), so education is just (inaudible) regions, so, so far, we have reached 24 languages, but, as my colleague said, it -- using (inaudible) as a first language is very good. But, if we are not (inaudible) and also psychology can be very (inaudible). Then, it's a problem. This is what EGRA showed up. So, we have to work on that. So, we have (inaudible) and intervention. English, we start from grade one as a subject, but for most readers, from grade seven onwards, they achieve (inaudible) minimal instruction. But, according to the policy, every region has to start English as a minimal instruction from grade nine onwards. This is (inaudible). The other one is (inaudible). Yes, we do. We have a lot of that. (Inaudible) we do. It was in our own (inaudible). It was in our own regions, but now with the GEQIP, General Quality -- General Education

Quality Improvement Program, which is a very comprehensive package to bring about quality education, and it has about six programs, and these programs -- this package is designed in such a way that each program has an impact, as well as (inaudible) combination has an impact. This includes leadership in the school -- from the Ministry level to school leadership, very important; the teachers; the curriculum; the school improvement program where the next center that results in all achievement of all students; and more so, the (inaudible) aspect of it. (Inaudible) education because it took place a very long (inaudible). I said 80 languages, 80 nationalities, and so, we need to bring all of these people on board together, so that we have (inaudible) and (inaudible) education, which has got 12, in all, values, in which everybody exerts a part in making a difference. Another one is ICT (inaudible) College Technology to -- as a subject in the schools, as well as (inaudible 17:00:51). So, using this (inaudible) as a tool to deliver -- render quality education. So, just out of six programs, which are considered part of the package, which is supported by (inaudible) technically (inaudible) because they have (inaudible) 3,000 schools -- some 3,000 schools. So, the same program that in some 3,000 schools, and so on. So, this is outside of the issues, but as far as teacher (inaudible) has been raised, it's a problem. As I said, it is (inaudible). The problem is, especially with -- we are (inaudible). I usually travel to different parts of the country. When I travel, I go to schools and I observe classes. I discuss with the students, with teachers, everyone. Even in math classroom, when I go there, and it's grade seven and it's grade six, first ask children to eat, and then to explain to me what is said. Before I ask of them, you know, to (inaudible) so there are problems. So, now, with EGRA, with this idea, you are thinking that if every child is (inaudible), so I was (inaudible) to the same, you know, (inaudible), so every child is different. At the same time, also, every teacher has to teach reading and writing.

You know, we -- it was in this context (inaudible), so we have, now, tonight, so, this is very important. One of the problems is, the teachers, themselves, sometimes they have no literacy. I'm sorry to say that. We have to prepare them. This is not their problem, but this is our problem -- the training of our teachers -- the system in which we are training. You have one of the teacher development program explains very well the difference of programs, about six (inaudible) programs, updating -- upgrading the (inaudible) of the teacher (inaudible) everything we've considered in our program, and that's a very huge program. So, I said GEQIP -- General Education Quality Program, so this, we hope,

will solve this problem. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. KPANGBAI: Thank you for your questions. For (inaudible) official language for instruction is English. Several years ago, we began piloting Liberian languages in different parts of the country. On August 8, (inaudible) it revised education law that required Liberian languages to be taught in every school. We are currently in the process of coming up with the different policies, but we are looking at grades one through nine, somewhere (inaudible) like to support to ensure that Liberian languages are taught. But, this will be done on a decentralized basis because we are 16 plus different languages, so we are hoping now with different (inaudible) school goals, where it would decide the predominant language in that particular county to be taught.

The issue regarding localized materials, we do have the Liberian Association that does allow collaboration with (inaudible) in developing a (inaudible) and relevant materials. Many, at times, we have material that not relevant, a content for students to relate to. So, we are (inaudible) supplemental materials or even primary materials for the local context, in which the students will be able to use it, draw conclusion, and have some understanding of.

Teacher, our challenges are (inaudible) as a way we have brutal civil war in (inaudible) why the folks fled. We had (inaudible) parting several ways with the rehabilitation for Rural Teacher Training Institute. The (inaudible) that we have had with our EGRA program is that, knowing that the teacher are taught and supported, we have coaches that regularly do visits and part of our (inaudible) is to, not only have coaches come to the school for teachers identify in each school where they also can't get work alone with the program after three years, they can assume of role of helping individual teachers and students.

MR. CROUCH: Professor Lopez will answer in Spanish, and I'll make a quick translation.

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: Okay. Just quickly, then, on the languages issue, there in the Atlantic Coast is where they have the greatest variety of languages, and that -- if I understood it correctly -- a kind of semi-autonomous -- has a semi-autonomous policies. They have five or six original languages. They've been adapting the assessment tools -- early reading assessment tools and also the textbooks, and also improving the teacher training and the teacher training colleges to handle the mother-tongue

issue.

On the textbooks, they have a massive textbook program, free distribution, but aside from textbooks, they've also been working on -- I don't know what to -- sort of, fun reading materials, that are not instructionally-based, such as reproducing a lot of the poetry of Nicaragua's national poet -- actually a important part in the whole Hispanic world -- so that kind of thing.

And, in terms of the teacher integration into the new policies, his, sort of, rhetorical question is, "How do we get the teachers to accept the policies," and his response was, "Well, they co-developed them," so the teachers had been integrated into the development of a lot of these policies, a lot of dialogue, a lot of consultation. Imagine it's time-consuming, but I'm sure it pays off.

So, thank you to the panelists. I think there are some very clear lessons that emerge out of this. We will make sure to come back to them during the following sessions, so that a set of themes clearly emerges throughout the day. Thank you very much. (Applause)