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EQUIP2
Educational Quality Improvement Program
Policy ▪ Systems ▪ Management

School Effectiveness in Maïssade, Haiti

Summary

Under difficult conditions, some community schools supported by Save the Children (SC) in Maïssade, Haiti are producing good results. We tested third graders in 19 schools and found that while national school students on average outperform community school students in reading, some community schools are getting better results than might be expected. In fact, five of the eight best performing schools are community schools. Not only do these community schools perform well, they are doing so at a lower cost than the national schools, demonstrating that community schools can be cost-effective components of the education system in Haiti provided they are appropriately supported and assisted. Furthermore, Save the Children's program in Maïssade holds important lessons about how the necessary school support can cost-effectively be provided.

The town of Maïssade is the center of operations for a program that reaches out to 80 community, national, and private schools, serving between 10,000 and 11,000 children. The schools and the families they serve are scattered over the steep hillsides of this undeveloped district. With no roads, many of the schools can only be reached after several hours of travel by foot or mule. During the rainy season, steep paths and swollen rivers make some journeys impossible.

Under these conditions, schools would normally be left to fend for themselves. Before the Save the Children program, that was indeed the case. Using the techniques found in numerous other programs around the world that support community-based education, Save the Children in Haiti deploys a staff of trained support personnel to work with communities to improve the management and operation of their schools. Most importantly, these support personnel work directly with teachers to better prepare and deliver lessons. When asked about the help he receives, one teacher in a community school remarked, "*I used to teach without preparing lessons. Now I prepare them.*" Another replied, "*Organizing the class in groups permits the students to learn quicker, especially when I have a lot of students.*" Teachers with limited formal education themselves are acquiring basic, practical skills like these that enable them to help students acquire literacy.

Save the Children's program in Haiti provides this kind of support to teachers, but also mobilizes a variety of resources to help improve schooling in Maïssade. For example, Save the Children designed a student-teacher program to make university students available to national schools in Maïssade to fill teaching positions that would otherwise be left vacant by the government. They also help implement an interactive radio-based distance education program, run school health interventions, and support school feeding and HIV/AIDS education.

We found that student performance in reading is better in schools where support services are focused on the instructional practices of individual teachers. Reading performance is also better when the management committee and the director work together to oversee and manage the school. This may contribute to higher attendance, less staff turnover, and stable

or growing enrollment, three characteristics of better performing schools. Schools that performed poorly are in session less frequently, have lower student attendance, are small and losing enrollment, and have higher staff turnover.

This study indicates that even better results could be obtained if school support services were more focused on classroom instruction targeting literacy acquisition and if school management committees were encouraged to change the school timetable and calendar to make it easier for school to be open more frequently and for students to come to school more regularly.

Background

Haiti

Non-governmental schools account for 81 percent of all primary school enrollments in Haiti (MENFP, 2007). "Of the twenty poorest countries in the world, Haiti is the only one with more than fifty percent of children enrolled in the private sector (Salmi, 1998)." The limited role of Haiti's government in the provision of schooling has a long history. For the first 150 years of Haiti's independence, public schools served an elite minority. During the Duvalier era in the latter part of the 20th century, public provision of schooling improved slightly, but then deteriorated as teachers fled the political oppression that was the defining characteristic of both Duvalier governments (Salmi, 1998).

Post-Duvalier, schooling in Haiti expanded, but primarily in the private sector. Between 1980 and 1997, 92 percent of new school entrants were to private schools (Hadjadj, 2000). This growth of non-public education was not planned by any particular person or organization, but arose from a vacuum of educational opportunity as religious institutions, NGOs, communities, and individuals established schools. Their purposes ranged from converting followers, to providing an education to children in need, to launching a school as a business venture. Schooling in rural areas did increase by 20 percent, but is said to have been "accomplished to the detriment of quality (Hadjadj, 2000)."

Non-public schools in Haiti include religious, independent and community schools. Catholic schools are usually some of the best institutions in the main cities and towns. Mission schools, which are affiliated with Baptist, Adventist, and Pentecostal congregations, may receive foreign support. Presbyterian schools are usually poorer, receiving less outside support and varying greatly in quality. Religious schools account for about two thirds of the non-governmental schools in Haiti (Salmi, 1998). The remaining third are independent private schools and local community-organized schools. Private or commercial schools in Haiti are usually operated as businesses with for-profit motives. Community schools are non-profit and are established by local associations, NGOs, or individuals,

Education, like all public services in Haiti, is chronically underfunded. In the past the government has devoted between 1 percent and 2 percent of GDP to education, only recently increasing funding to 10 percent. The lack of public support for education caused all schools in Haiti to place a large share of the burden of costs for education on families that are the poorest in the Western Hemisphere. Salmi (1998) reported that families in Haiti paid for 61 percent of all school costs between 1996 and 1997.

Government or national schools receive the limited funds provided by the state. Religious schools receive support from their affiliated churches and congregations. Community schools rely almost entirely on family and community resources to operate. A 2001 study of the costs and financing of education in Haiti found that less than 10 percent of community schools report having access to sources of funding other than family contributions (Moisset and Merisier, 2001, p.84).

Save the Children in Maïssade

Save the Children began supporting educational training and organizing in Maïssade in 1999. Their goal was to promote access to and improve the quality of primary education. SC reports in a 2006 proposal that in Maïssade, "Between 1999 and 2006, the number of children enrolled in community schools went from 1,048 to 4,185. This considerable increase was largely due to investments in infrastructure and improvement in school environments. Eight primitive one-room schools were transformed into multi-room educational facilities, with classrooms constructed according to state building code and educational standards."

The SC program that is the subject of this study has been supporting 80 schools—30 community schools, 10 government schools, and 40 private schools in Maïssade, Haiti. Maïssade is in Haiti's Central Plateau, about eights hours drive over rutted gravel roads from the capital, Port au Prince. The town of Maïssade, the main city in the eponymous district, is relatively undeveloped. Dirt roads are unimproved, with no drainage system to control the torrents of water that overwhelm them in the rainy season. Two large rivers split the district of Maïssade in three. Rocky mountainsides, the major rivers and a lack of roads, render most of the countryside inaccessible by motorized vehicle. Most people spend long hours walking to get from on place to another, or they just stay in the countryside. The exception is Thursday, market day, when Maïssade town swells with people and bustles with commercial activity. SC's office in the center of town marks them as the only NGO with a strong presence in the district. The district has about 120 schools, mostly located in the countryside and many only partially constructed. People live spread out across the mountains, with no real towns or population centers outside of Maïssade town.

To improve the quality of schooling in Maïssade, Save the Children provides support services to community, public, and private schools across the district. This includes training, ongoing supervision, provision of basic materials and supplies, as well as health and nutrition aid. Save the Children groups schools and their communities into "grappes" or geographic clusters for the purpose of organizing school support logistics and to facilitate school-to-school and community-to-community learning and sharing of experience. A pedagogical and community trainer (ECP for *encadreur communautaire et pédagogique*) is assigned to each cluster of schools, and visits them at least monthly. Community schools receive guidance from SC on how to establish and operate a school management committee.

The training provided by the ECPs targets directors, teachers, school management committees, and parent committees. Teachers and directors receive training during school visits and take part in "pedagogical days" where several teachers or schools treat a particular topic that has been identified as a weakness for that group. School management committees

and directors take part in trainings on school management and administration. Parents are trained on how to oversee and actively contribute to the school. Health support in SC schools is supervised by nurses and assisted by ECPs in follow-up and reporting. This health support includes promotion of school nutrition, administration of medications and micro-nutrients, and hygiene training. Material support, including funding for construction of schools, school benches, and blackboards is provided to all schools. In 2006–2007, Save the Children also provided direct financial support to community school management committees to help cover school expenses.

Methodology

Save the Children's program of school support in Maïssade is similar to many other community school efforts around the globe. The EQUIP2 project refers to these programs and projects as complementary education, wherein community-based initiative is supported through NGO intervention aimed at helping locally organized and operated schools serve children who are beyond the reach of the formal public education system. At the same time, Save the Children's Haiti program is different from other complementary education programs studied by EQUIP2 in one significant way. SC works not only with community schools, but also with government and private schools. It therefore provides even more of a window into cost-efficient strategies for supporting school effectiveness.

From 2004 to 2006 EQUIP2 analyzed nine community-based complementary education programs. The study examined whether large scale complementary education programs effectively provide access, assure completion of a given level of primary education, and contribute to basic learning, such as literacy. In addition, EQUIP2 evaluated the costs and cost-effectiveness of these programs in comparison to the formal public education sector in each country.

The study found that in all the cases, the programs provided access to basic education for students who would otherwise not be able to attend school. EQUIP2 also found that some of the community-based programs obtained completion rates equal to or better than those in the formal public schools. And, when data on learning were available (in five of the cases), the study found that the complementary program schools obtained better outcomes than government schools. (DeStefano et al, 2006).

The unit recurrent costs of the complementary programs were lower than the cost of government schools in six of the cases and higher in three. More importantly, the complementary programs used resources differently than the public sector. In all the programs, a smaller proportion of the costs is attributable to teacher salaries—low cost, sometimes voluntary, locally recruited teachers are used in all the programs—and a higher share of the costs are attributable to school support services. In four of the cases, the community-based schools were found to be at least twice as cost effective at producing a specific learning outcome as the government schools in the same country (DeStefano et al, 2006).

All of the programs studied by EQUIP2 rely on community and non-governmental support. NGOs work in conjunction with local communities to help set up, manage, and support schools. Haiti, where over 90 percent of schools are run by non-governmental entities,

presents a case where the EQUIP2 research on complementary education is particularly pertinent. As was the case in all nine programs analyzed by EQUIP2, the Haitian students in the community schools included in this study are from some of the poorest families living in one of the most remote parts of the country.

Using the framework developed for the other nine case studies, EQUIP2, in collaboration with Save the Children, set out to analyze the effectiveness of community and government schools in Maïssade. Four basic questions guided this research:

- Are government and community schools in Maïssade effective?
- How do the costs of community schools compare to the costs of government schools in Maïssade?
- How cost effective are community and government schools in Maïssade?
- What factors are most associated with school effectiveness?

To answer the first question, we tested a sample of students in reading fluency in Haitian Creole. This improves considerably on the methodology employed in the other EQUIP2 case studies, which relied on existing student outcome data, usually in the form of end of cycle exam results. To answer the second and third questions, we analyzed the budget of the Save the Children program and relied on a previous study of the costs of education in Haiti. Again, we go a step further in this study than in the previous cases and look at cost-effectiveness school-by-school in Maïssade. To answer the last question, we gathered data on a variety of school characteristics, relying on Save the Children's monitoring and evaluation system, and conducting field interviews. A detailed description of the methodologies used to collect and analyze data is provided in the section titled "Implications for Save the Children and Schooling in Haiti," starting on page 27.

School Effectiveness in Maïssade

The SC program in Maïssade currently works with 80 schools. However, data are only available on 54 with which SC has been working most closely over the last three years. These 54 schools include 30 community schools, 14 private, and 10 national schools—the latter are all of the national schools in Maïssade district. Further information was gathered through field research that looked at a random sample of 19 schools drawn from the 54 (details of how the sample was selected are provided in section VIII). The sample includes 15 community schools and 4 national schools. Data reported in the following sections reflects either the universe of 54 schools or the sample of 19, as indicated.

Access

Schools in Maïssade fall into distinct categories. There are large national schools that are durable in construction and are usually located in or near the main town. National schools are often the biggest structures around. Classrooms have thick cement walls and corrugated tin roofs. In contrast, most community schools are located several hours journey by foot or mule beyond the town. Community schools serve families that live spread out across hilly farm land. Students and teachers often walk long distances to school, fording rivers and climbing steep, often muddy paths. Schools in these more remote corners of Maïssade are of poorer quality construction, many of them half completed. Usually there is one large room with a tin roof, a few benches, and sometimes a couple of free standing blackboards.

The 54 schools working closest with SC have served on average close to 11,000 primary school students over the last three years in Maïssade. In 2006–2007, 10,478 students were enrolled in national, private, and community primary schools, with girls accounting for 48 percent of the total. Across the board, access for boys and girls is fairly equitable (see Table 1).

Population estimates for Maïssade for 2006–2007 include roughly 10,150 boys and girls 6 to 12 years old. The 2006-07 gross enrollment rate is therefore 103 percent. However, almost all students in Maïssade are overage, and population figures are at best rough estimates, so we would be cautious about stating that access in Maïssade is universal. Yet it is high given the level of poverty and remoteness of most of the population.

Table 1: Enrollment in Maïssade (in the 54 schools with which SC worked most closely)

	2004–2005		2005–2006		2006–2007	
	Total	% Girls	Total	% Girls	Total	% Girls
Community Schools	4,251	48%	4,185	50%	3,678	47%
Private Schools	3,539	48%	4,067	51%	3,471	51%
National Schools	3,000	46%	3,317	48%	3,329	47%
Total	10,790	47%	11,569	50%	10,478	48%

Community schools in Maïssade account for 35 percent of the students enrolled in school. As is the case throughout Haiti, national schools in Maïssade account for the smallest share of the available access to education (32 percent).

Schools in Maïssade in the Save the Children program vary considerably in size as shown in Table 2 below. National schools are larger; they all have at least 150 students and four schools have over 400 students. More than three quarters of the community schools have less than 150 students. Private schools are neither as small as community schools, nor as large as national schools.

Table 2: School Size (based on 2007 enrollment)

	Community		Private		Public	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Less than 50	3	10%	0	0%	0	0%
50 to 149	20	67%	2	14%	0	0%
150 to 299	6	20%	8	57%	5	50%
300 to 450	1	3%	3	21%	3	30%
more than 450	0	0%	1	7%	2	20%
Total	30		14		10	

Table 3 shows that all the national schools, and all but two private schools, offer a complete primary cycle of six grades. Only seven percent of community schools do. Most community schools in Maïssade only reach fourth grade. This is partly due to USAID funding that was restricted to building one classroom per school. Completed community schools were built using Save the Children's own sponsorship funding.

Table 3: Number of Grades in Each Category of School

	Community		Private		Public	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
3 or fewer grades	3	10%	0	0%	0	0%
4 grades	17	57%	1	7%	0	0%
5 grades	8	27%	1	7%	0	0%
6 grades	2	7%	12	86%	10	100%
Total	30		14		10	

During the last three years enrollment in individual primary schools supported by Save the Children has fluctuated considerably. More than three quarters of community schools have actually seen their enrollment decrease from 2004–2005 to 2006–2007. Some private and national schools have also seen enrollment decrease, but most have had increases during that same period, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Changes in Enrollment 2004-05 to 2006-07

	Decrease	Increase
Community Schools	23	7
Private Schools	5	9
National Schools	3	7
Total	31	23

Figure 1: Percent Change in Enrollment for Different Size Schools

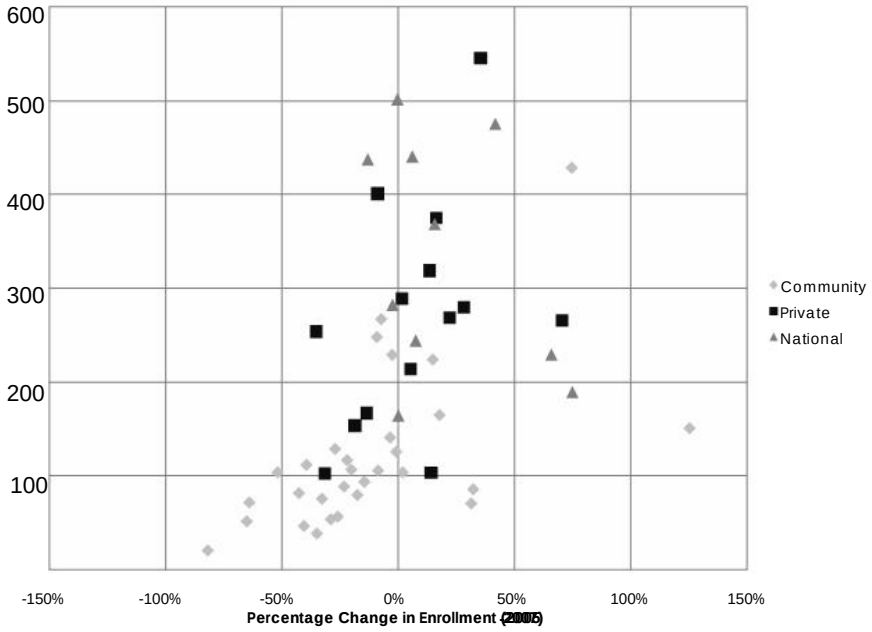


Figure 1 shows the relationship between changes in enrollment and school size for community, national, and private schools in Maïssade. Smaller schools in all three categories tend to be the ones that experienced drops in enrollment. Decreases in enrollment are possibly due to large numbers of people migrating to the Dominican Republic in search of work. SC has also noted that when a school feeding program ends at a school, enrollment tends to drop. Difficulties encountered during recent harvest seasons may also have contributed to variations in enrollment from year to year. Maïssade is not immune to the economic and social instability that continues to plague Haiti. Children move in and out of school depending on the fragile and constantly varying fortunes of their families.

Completion

Data on completion of the primary cycle are not available for the schools in Maïssade. However, grade-to-grade promotion rates are available for the 54 schools on which SC collected data for 2005–2006. The promotion rates are based on the number of students in each grade who take and pass the end of year exam. These exams are prepared by each teacher for each grade and are in no way standardized. The content, structure, and administration of the exams varies from teacher to teacher, so variations in the pass rates do not necessarily reflect differences in student learning as much as they probably reflect differences in how teachers prepare and administer the exams. Nevertheless, the promotion rates do reflect the actual numbers of children who are allowed to move through the primary cycle.

Using those rates we calculate that on average roughly 9 percent of the students in Maïssade who enroll in first grade make it through the primary cycle to sixth grade. Promotion rates are between 50 and 70 percent for each grade, so when compounded across years, a very low percentage of students end up reaching sixth grade. On average, private schools have the highest calculated sixth grade survival rate—12 percent. Community schools come next at 10 percent. National schools had the lowest—7 percent.

These low rates of promotion and survival to sixth grade reflect the social and economic instability of a district like Maïssade. Families move children into and out of school based on their available resources for fees and/or to allow a child to attend school instead of contribute to family work. Data on student performance in reading—presented below in Table 5—do indicate very low levels of achievement in most schools, so poor performance in school is also contributing to low persistence through the primary cycle.

Learning

No data on student outcomes were available. Field data collection therefore included testing of reading fluency for a sample of third grade students from each of the 19 sample schools. Students were evaluated on their ability to recognize letters, read words in isolation, and read a short section of third grade level text. Our approach to assessment draws on the work of Helen Abadzi and the EdData II project and is explained further in the detailed description of the methodology provided in the Details of Methodology section.

Overall, we tested 161 third grade students, or 28 percent of the 566 third graders in the 19 sample schools. This sample included 121 community school students and 40 national school students.

On average, third grade students in the sample schools in Maïssade could recognize 39 letters per minute (LPM), only 11 words in isolation in one minute, but could read 25 words per minute of text. It is not surprising that students can more easily read text than words in isolation. Furthermore, we found that letter recognition, reading of individual words, and reading of text were highly correlated. Overall, the majority of third grade students tested in Maïssade are reading below the threshold of 60 words per minute, the fluency or speed associated with reading comprehension (Abadzi, Crouch, Echegaray, Pasco & Sempe, 2005). Table 5 shows the distribution of reading fluency for the full sample of students. Only 14 percent of the students tested were reading above the comprehension threshold of 60 words per minute, limiting our ability to look at variations in quality across schools. However, based on Abadzi's research, 30 words per minute (wpm) represents a reasonable indicator that students have at least learned to recognize and/or decode some words, and is a threshold usually used for first grade students. We employ this benchmark in Haiti to see which schools are successful at getting students to at least acquire some initial reading skills. Table 5 shows that 41 percent of the students tested were reading at 30 wpm or above.

Table 5: Reading Fluency Thresholds

	Number	Percent
From 0 to 30 wpm	95	59%
From 31 to 60 wpm	44	27%
Over 60 wpm	22	14%
	161	

Overall, national schools outperformed community schools. National school third graders could read 37 wpm of text, compared to 22 wpm of text for community school students. More than half—55 percent—of the national school students tested had a fluency of at least 30 wpm, compared to 33 percent of community school students. Table 6 below summarizes the data on student reading fluency for community and national schools.

Table 6: Overall Performance on Test of Reading Fluency

	LPM	WPM (isolation)	WPM (text)	% > 40 WPM	% > 30 WPM
Full Sample	39.1	11.0	25.4	25%	38%
Community Schools	37.9	10.1	22.3	21%	33%
National Schools	43.7	14.4	36.8	40%	55%

The overall low level of reading fluency for third graders—only 25 percent of tested students could read at least 40 wpm—reflects the poor living and school conditions in Maïssade. All the schools are under-resourced, especially community schools. Community school teachers frequently are unpaid, or paid less than promised, leading to them spending

time trying to supplement their incomes through other means. School books and other materials are limited—other than a 1st and 2nd grade math and creole book, Save the Children only supplies materials for children receiving individual sponsorships. Subsistence farming leaves many families with inadequate income and often insufficient food. Children have to travel far and over harsh terrain to get to school, so attendance is poor. In some cases, inadequate instructional techniques and the lack of materials combine to slow down the rate at which students acquire basic literacy.

More interesting than the averages for community and national schools is the variation in student learning outcomes across schools. Some schools clearly outperform others, with much higher percentages of students meeting a fluency threshold of 30 or 40 wpm. Eight schools had at least half of their students meeting the 30 wpm threshold. Those eight include three national schools and five community schools. Four of the six schools with the highest proportion of students meeting or exceeding 40 wpm are community schools. In fact the highest performing school is Figue Community School, with 90 percent of its third grade students meeting the 30 wpm threshold. However, the five worst performing schools are also community schools, three of which have no students meeting the 30 wpm threshold.

Table 7 below shows the fluency results for each of the 19 schools included in the sample. It is clear that some community schools are performing very poorly, while others are surpassing some of the national schools in the sample. More importantly, since Save the Children support is provided to all the schools in the sample and in the universe of 54 for which we have data, it is worth asking whether variations in performance can be related to differences in either the degree or nature of support schools receive.

For the purpose of trying to understand these results, we look most closely at the schools with the best performance as compared to those with the worst performance. We define the best performers as those schools where at least half the students reached the fluency threshold of 30 wpm. These include five community schools—Figue, Ramier, Larique, Christ Capable, and Tarte—and three national schools—Anténor Firmin, François Capois and Amiral Kilick. The worst performers are those that had less than 10 percent of their third grade students meeting the threshold of 30 wpm and included Grande Savane, Gazard, Bateille, and Ossenande. In the latter three schools, no tested third grade student read at 30 wpm.

The factors most associated with student reading fluency include opportunity to learn (OTL) as measured by the number of days school is open and average student attendance, school size and changes in enrollment over the last three years, school staff stability, the degree to which school support is focused on individual teachers and their classrooms, and the strength of relationship between the school management committee and its director. The following paragraphs indicate how these factors are associated with student outcomes in the sample schools. Additional information about the critical features of the SC program and the characteristics of schools in Maïssade is included in Section VII. Table 8 provides the values for some of the relevant variables for the sample of 19 schools.

Table 7: Results of Reading Test

Community Schools National Schools	Average Words per Minute	% of students reading more than 30 wpm	% of students reading more than 40 wpm
Ossenande	1.5	0%	0%
Bateille	5.0	0%	0%
Gazard	5.8	0%	0%
Grande Savane	10.7	9%	0%
Callebassier	14.5	20%	10%
Cœur Unis	16.2	18%	0%
Citron	16.6	20%	20%
Cinquième	17.3	20%	10%
Boukan Joumou	21.1	40%	20%
Enfants Démunis	21.8	25%	25%
Tarte	27.2	50%	17%
Nat'l Amiral Kilick	29.5	50%	20%
Nat'l Biliguy	30.8	40%	30%
Christ Capable	32.0	60%	40%
Nat'l François Capois	34.4	60%	60%
Larique	39.3	70%	60%
Ramier	51.8	75%	38%
Nat'l Anténor Firmin	52.6	70%	50%
Figue	53.7	90%	80%

For the purpose of trying to understand these results, we look most closely at the schools with the best performance as compared to those with the worst performance. We define the best performers as those schools where at least half the students reached the fluency threshold of 30 wpm. These include five community schools—Figue, Ramier, Larique, Christ Capable, and Tarte—and three national schools—Anténor Firmin, François Capois and Amiral Kilick. The worst performers are those that had less than 10 percent of their third grade students meeting the threshold of 30 wpm and included Grande Savane, Gazard, Bateille, and Ossenande. In the latter three schools, no tested third grade student read at 30 wpm.

The factors most associated with student reading fluency include opportunity to learn (OTL) as measured by the number of days school is open and average student attendance, school size and changes in enrollment over the last three years, school staff stability, the degree to which school support is focused on individual teachers and their classrooms, and the strength of relationship between the school management committee and its director. The following paragraphs indicate how these factors are associated with student outcomes in the sample schools. Additional information about the critical features of the SC program and the characteristics of schools in Maïssade is included in Section VII. Table 8 provides the values for some of the relevant variables for the sample of 19 schools.

Table 8: Values of Certain Key Variables for Sample Schools

Averages	Avg WPM	%>30 WPM	2006-07 Enroll.	% Δ in Enroll.	3rd Gr. Enroll.	N (tested)	OTL Ind	Hrs from Town
Full Sample	25.4	38%	164	-6%	30	163	51%	3.3
Community Schools	19.0	27%	132	-12%	25	125	47%	3.2
National Schools	49.4	76%	283	17%	48	38	66%	3.5
Individual Schools								
Ossenande	1.5	0%	39	-35%	2	2	48%	4.0
Bateille	5.0	0%	47	-41%	6	6	52%	4.0
Gazard	5.8	0%	52	-65%	5	5	50%	0.3
Grande Savane	10.7	9%	72	-64%	15	9	54%	5.0
Callebassier	14.5	20%	106	-9%	22	10	41%	2.5
Coeur Unis	16.2	18%	86	32%	12	9	0%	2.5
Citron	16.6	20%	126	-1%	34	10	48%	5.0
Cinquieme	17.3	20%	248	-9%	59	10	49%	2.0
Boukan Joumou	21.1	40%	89	-23%	18	10	44%	5.7
Enfants Demunis	21.8	25%	94	-15%	18	8	54%	2.0
Tarte	27.2	50%	80	-18%	14	6	46%	4.2
Amiral Kilick	29.5	50%	282	-2%	50	10	51%	1.5
Biliguy	30.8	40%	189	75%	40	10	58%	4.0
Christ Capable	32.0	60%	107	-20%	18	10	56%	3.5
Francois Capois	34.4	60%	368	16%	61	10	57%	2.5
Larique	39.3	70%	224	15%	33	10	57%	0.6
Ramier	51.8	75%	267	-7%	39	8	62%	4.0
Antenor Femin	52.6	70%	475	42%	76	10	75%	2.5
Figue	53.7	90%	165	18%	44	10	68%	6.9

Opportunity to Learn Correlates with Learning: The overall data for schools in Maïssade show that community schools on average are open fewer days and have lower rates of student attendance. For sample schools the combination of the percent of days school is open and the average student attendance rate is the strongest correlate with student test results—together these factors account for 55 percent of the variation in student performance. School being open and students being present are required for a basic OTL to be assured. We therefore multiply the percent of days school is open by the average attendance to calculate the foundational OTL. Ideally, teacher attendance would be factored in as well, but no data on this were available.

The top performing schools on average provide a 26 percent greater opportunity to learn than the lowest performing schools. The top two schools, Figue and Anténor Firmin, had

the highest student attendance rates and were open more than any other schools in the sample. See Table 9 below.

Table 9: Opportunity to Learn in Best Performing Schools

	% days in session	Student Attendance Rate	Computed OTL
Figue	83%	90%	75%
Anténor Firmin	89%	91%	81%
Ramier	75%	88%	66%
Larique	74%	85%	63%
François Capois	81%	79%	64%
Christ Capable	65%	81%	53%
Amiral Kilick	71%	74%	52%

School Size Matters, but Not in the Way You Think: The best performing community schools, except for Tarte, have larger enrollments and a more complete primary cycle. The two community schools with a complete primary cycle are Ramier and Larique, while Figue has five grades. Anténor Firmin, the best performing national school, is also the largest national school in the sample. The four worst performing schools all have less than 75 students. Biliguy, the smallest national school, is the worst performing in that category.

Schools that Are Growing Perform Better: The data also show that the best performing schools had increasing enrollment, while the worst performing schools had falling enrollment. In fact, while 13 of the 15 community schools in the sample lost enrollment between 2005 and 2007, the four worst performing schools on the test of reading fluency had the biggest drops in enrollment. On average their enrollment declined by 51 percent during those three years.

Staff Stability Makes a Difference: The national schools all had perfectly stable staff from 2005 to 2007. The best performing community schools also had stable staffs—Figue and Ramier, had no change in teachers. The stability of national school staff is in large part attributable to Save the Children's intervention to recruit and support student teachers to fill positions that would have remained vacant. Over the course of three years, Save the Children's support provided almost half of the teaching staff for national schools, reducing student-to-teacher ratios and contributing to the stability of those school environments.

More Classroom-Focused School Support Seems to Make a Difference: When it comes to the role that Save the Children's ongoing support plays in school success, the most significant correlation is with school visits that focus on teachers and the classroom. SC employed Encadreurs Communautaires et Pédagogiques (ECPs) that provided a variety of support services to schools in Maïssade. The best performing community schools had a greater share of their ECP visits focused on classroom observations and meetings with teachers. At the five best performing community schools, 40 percent more of the ECP visits included meetings with teachers and classroom observations. Other forms of support—for example ECP work with SMCs and parents or provision of direct budgetary support to community schools—had much less impact on variations in student performance.

Teacher Formal Qualifications Are Not Strongly Correlated with Student Learning: Some ECPs remarked that some teachers struggle to be effective in their classrooms because their own level of literacy, numeracy, and subject area knowledge is so limited. Obviously, a minimum level of reading and writing ability and a fundamental understanding of arithmetic is needed to effectively introduce children to literacy and numeracy. However, beyond that, our data show a very limited relationship between the performance of students in a school and the education levels of the teachers in that school. Schools, and in this case national schools, aren't necessarily more effective because of higher credentialed teachers. This is confirmed by research in other settings that show no difference between the classroom effectiveness of formally qualified and unqualified teachers (Heneveld, Niddle, Rajonhson, and Swati, 2006).

Stronger SMCs Influence their Schools' Performance: The better performing community schools shared certain characteristics with respect to the operation and attention of their SMCs. In the four best performing community schools the directors all reported that the SMC could make decisions without consulting them. Also, in three of the four best performing community schools, when asked about the reason they visit the schools, all SMCs said they visited to encourage teachers. "We visit often to see how it's going, particularly to encourage teachers who are working and not getting paid." Another SMC stated, "When teachers are absent we go visit them to see why and talk to them about it." The encouragement and oversight provided by these SMCs may account for the higher opportunity to learn statistics in these better performing schools.

The combination of the above factors appears to create the conditions of success for community and national schools in Maïssade. SMCs that take an active role in monitoring teacher presence and have good working relationships with school directors may help increase the number of days school is in session as well as positively influence student attendance. These better run schools manage to keep their teachers and maintain or grow their enrollment either by doing a better job recruiting and creating a supportive working and living environment, or by paying them more regularly. These better run schools also benefit from ECPs that are more focused on observing and meeting one-on-one with teachers.

The Save the Children program in Maïssade is helping some schools succeed. Data do not allow us to compare school performance with and without SC support. We do know that many of the SC-supported schools would barely exist without help constructing buildings, organizing management committees, and recruiting, training, and paying teachers. Furthermore, national schools would have been severely understaffed if SC had not recruited university students to serve as teachers over the last three years. Clearly, the support network provided by Save the Children makes a difference. The following section demonstrates how that difference is being made in a way that is cost-effective.

Costs and Cost-Effectiveness of Schools in Maïssade

The previous section examined school effectiveness. Like the other case studies conducted by EQUIP2, we now want to ask, "But how much does it cost?" Our previous work looked at three aspects of cost. How much does a school support program cost? What are the main components of that cost? And, what is the cost-effectiveness of the program? The first two questions are addressed by examining the budget of the Save the Children program

and looking at how resources are used. The last question is answered by looking at the cost per unit of desired outcome—in this case, students demonstrating a basic level of reading fluency.

Costs

Save the Children provides the bulk of resources needed to support the operation of community schools in Maïssade, while also providing some support to national and private schools in the district. Community schools also raise money from the fees paid by students and other, mostly in-kind, contributions from each school community. National schools receive support services, materials, and training from Save the Children, but they rely principally on government resources mostly in the form of teacher salaries, and on some revenue raised from student fees. Private schools generate revenue from fees, and in some cases, from other contributions such as church-related fundraising. We do not have data on private school financing so we can only look at the costs of government and community schools in Maïssade.

By far the biggest source of funding for community schools in Maïssade is Save the Children's program. SC's support constitutes 91 percent of community school resources. For the national schools in Maïssade, SC contributes about 15 percent of the resources available to them. The other 85 percent is primarily from government funding and a small amount from fees.

Table 10 shows the amount of resources in Save the Children's budget for community schools and total resources spent on national schools in Maïssade in 2006–2007. The costs for administering the program, for school support services and for teacher/director training are attributed to community and national schools based on the percentage of the total schools in the program that they represent.

Table 10: Resources for Community Schools in Maïssade

	Community Schools	%	National Schools	%
Administration	$29,852	15%	$9.951	4%
School Support Services	$69,124	35%	$23,041	9%
Teacher/Director Training	$14,890	8%	$4,963	2%
Parent/SMC Training	$4,920	2%	$0	0%
School Operations (including salaries)	$78,797	40%	$218,419	85%
Total Budget	$197,583		$256,375	

Based on Save the Children's budget and the authors' calculations. Figures are in US$.

For community schools, school operations constitute the largest share of expenditure at 40 percent. This includes SC provided budgetary support, direct sponsorship support to students and the provision of materials and supplies for schools, as well as resources raised by schools themselves through fees. Community schools own resources make up only about 23 percent of this expenditure category. Support services provided by ECPs are the next largest expenditure category for community schools at 35 percent of the total. Training for

directors, teachers, SMC members, and parents makes up another 10 percent of the total costs. Administration of the whole program accounts for 15 percent of the costs.

For national schools, 85 percent of their costs are made up of the government provided resources for teacher and other staff salaries. The other expenditures derive from the national schools' share of the SC provided school support and training services and the portion of SC administrative costs attributable to national schools.

Fees

Community schools raise their own resources through two principle charges: enrollment fees and school fees demanded of students' families. Table 11 shows what community schools in Maïssade charge in these two fee categories.

Table 11: Fees in Community Schools

Annual "Enrollment" Fees (gourdes)	
Amount Range	# Schools
<25	3
25 to 50	26
more than 50	1
	30

Annual "School" Fees (gourdes)	
Amount Range	# Schools
<100	0
100 to 150	8
151 to 200	21
More than 200	1
	30

Most schools charge between 25 and 50 gourdes for students to enroll in school, and an additional 150 to 250 gourdes for attending school. A family is therefore paying between 175 and 300 gourdes (roughly between US$5 and US$7) per year for a child to attend a community school. Two national schools in Maïssade report charging fees of around 100 to 125 gourdes per student, with additional charges of about another 100 gourdes for school feeding—a similar total of about US$7. In both community and national schools, families sometimes do not pay the fees.

No community school is able to pay its staff and cover its operations with the resources it raises through these fees. Based on the budgets prepared by each community school for 2006–2007, each school operates at a deficit. The average budget deficit is just over US$1,000 for the year. Since about 80 percent of a school's budget is made up of teacher and director salaries, deficits cause those salaries to go unpaid for part of the year. In 2006–2007, Save the Children provided budgetary support to each community school, averaging US$529 per school. This support reduced each school's budget deficit by about 50 percent.

As seen in Table 10 above, Save the Children and communities spent $197,583 in 2006–2007 to support 30 community schools in Maïssade. With an enrollment of 3,678 that budget amount translates into a unit cost of $54 per student. We estimate the annual recurrent cost for national schools by combining the findings of Moisset's and Merisier's study of the costs and financing of education in Haiti with the portion of Save the Children's program costs that are attributable to national schools. Moisset and Merisier determined that national schools had a unit recurrent cost equivalent to US$66. To that we added 19 percent—the proportion of national schools within the program—of SC's administrative

costs, school support service costs, and teacher and director training costs. We arrive at a unit cost of $77 per student for national schools in Maïssade. Community schools in the Save program in Maïssade are therefore estimated to be operating at 70 percent of the cost of the national schools.

Cost-Effectiveness

To calculate cost effectiveness, we apply the same methodology used by the nine EQUIP2 case studies.

We first estimate the cost per student completing the third grade. We defined completion as the percentage of students in the first grade who reach the end of third. We took the average of first and second grade promotion rates for 2004–2005 and 2005–2006 to calculate the percent of first graders making it to third grade. We use third grade as a completion point because we tested third grade students in 2006–2007.

We estimate the cost per learning outcome using the results of the reading fluency tests administered in the field. We set a threshold of reading at least 30 words per minute of text, and use the percentage of students from each school able to achieve that threshold as an indicator of the desired learning outcome.

Table 12 below summarizes the unit recurrent costs, the cost per third grade completer and the cost per student reading at least 30 words per minute for community and national schools. As mentioned above, community schools in Maïssade operate at about 70 percent of the unit cost of national schools. In addition, community schools have a slightly higher third grade completion rate than national schools, on average. Therefore the cost per completer in community schools is 40 percent less than in national schools, the equivalent of US$437 compared to US$725. National school students faired better on the test of reading fluency. On average, 50 percent of the students tested could read at 30 wpm or faster in national schools compared to only 33 percent who read at 30 wpm or greater in community schools. However, community schools are still 10 percent more cost effective than national schools at producing a student able to read at least 30 words per minute.

Table 12: Cost Effectiveness Calculations for Community and National Schools

	Community	National
Annual Unit Cost	$54	$77
3rd grade completion rate	*37%*	*32%*
Cost Per 3rd Grade Completer	$437	$725
Percentage of 3rd graders at > 30 WPM	*33%*	*50%*
Cost Per 3rd Grade Student at > 30 WPM	$1,317	$1,450

Data for our sample of schools allow us to disaggregate by school the completion rates and student performance on the test of reading fluency. Table 13 below shows cost effectiveness calculations for each of the 15 community schools and four national schools. The same unit recurrent costs of US$54 per student for community schools and US$77 for national schools are used to estimate each individual school's cost-effectiveness.

The three schools that most cost-effectively produce third grade completers who can read at 30 wpm or faster are all community schools. In fact, four of the six schools that have a cost per learning outcome below US$1,000 are community schools. In addition to the lower community school unit cost, the better performance of these schools' students on the test of third grade reading fluency is what is contributing to their lower cost per learning outcome. Conversely, the schools with the worst performance on the test of reading fluency have the highest cost to produce the desired level of learning. The four schools with the highest cost per learning outcome are also all community schools, three of which had no students meeting the target of reading at least 30 words per minute.

Table 13: Cost Effectiveness Calculations for Individual Schools

	National schools		Community Schools	
	3rd Gr. Completion Rate	%>30 wpm	Cost Per Completer	Cost Per Learning Outcome
Ramier	0.49	75%	$331	$441
Figue	0.26	90%	$617	$685
Tarte	0.39	50%	$409	$819
Amiral Kilick	0.56	50%	$414	$827
Anténor Firmin	0.36	70%	$648	$925
Larique	0.24	70%	$664	$949
Christ Capable	0.22	60%	$722	$1,204
François Capois	0.31	60%	$740	$1,234
Cinquième	0.55	20%	$293	$1,466
Citron	0.45	20%	$362	$1,810
Enfants Démunis	0.34	25%	$472	$1,889
Boukan Jomou	0.21	40%	$766	$1,916
Biliguy	0.23	40%	$987	$2,466
Callebassier	0.27	20%	$600	$3,002
Grande Savane	0.31	9%	$519	$5,709
Couers Unis	0.16	18%	$1,040	$5,718
Bateille	0.35	0%	$460	
Gazard	0.17	0%	$926	
Ossenande	0.58	0%	$279	

Considering the cost-effectiveness of schools is a way to determine whether the resources devoted to education are having the intended results. It is one thing to count up the cost of ensuring the enrollment of students. It is quite another to examine whether that enrollment eventually leads to a desired learning outcome, and at what cost. The successful community schools in Maïssade, like those researched in other countries by EQUIP2, demonstrate that a different allocation of resources can in fact lead to more cost-effective achievement of learning outcomes.

Critical Features of the Save the Children Program in Maïssade

This section explores further some of the critical characteristics of schools in Maïssade, and specifically looks at the differences between community, national, and when data are available, private schools. Data presented here are for the universe of 54 schools—30 community, 10 national, and 24 private—for which data were available. These schools vary considerably in terms of size, number of grades, number and qualifications of staffs, operation of governance structures, and nature of the support services received from Save the Children.

Opportunity to Learn: Days Schools Are Open and Student Attendance

The SC-supported schools in Maïssade serve most of the school age children in the district. However, the amount of schooling varies considerably from one school to another. Gillies and Quijada state that at the most basic level, the quality of learning is determined by the available opportunity to learn, which is a function of time and effort. The amount of schooling actually available to students is determined by how often school is in session, whether a teacher is present on those days school is open, and how regularly the students attend school. To answer this first question, we looked at two key variables: 1) the number of days schools were open and 2) student attendance for the full school year of 2005–2006 and for five months in 2006–2007. Data on teacher attendance were not available.

From September 2005 through January 2007, there were 283 possible school days. This combines the 188 school days in the official calendar for 2005–2006, plus 95 days in the first five months of 2006–2007. As shown in Table 14, overall, the 54 schools in Maïssade for which SC has data were in session on 73 percent of the 283 school days, with private schools open slightly more, and community schools slightly less. Rain, extra days added to holidays, teachers not returning from holidays on time, and teachers staying away from school to work in their fields likely account for most lost school days.

Table 14: Opportunity to Learn, September 2005–January 2007

	% Days School Is in Session	Attendance Rate	OTL Index
Community Schools	71%	75%	54%
Private Schools	75%	78%	59%
National Schools	73%	84%	62%
Overall	73%	77%	57%

Table 14 also shows that when schools are open, national schools have better average attendance than both community and private schools. Most students in national schools are drawn from a smaller catchment area and thus may be able to more regularly attend school. Students in some community schools must walk long distances to arrive at school, over terrain that at times is impassable because of rain.

Multiplying the percent of days schools were in session with the average attendance rates on those days provides an indicator of the average opportunity to learn offered in schools in Maïssade. On average, schools in Maïssade provided only 57 percent of the possible opportunity to learn. National schools had the best average opportunity to learn (62%),

followed by private schools (59%), then community schools (54%). Schools in Maïssade can therefore at best be expected to accomplish only 50 to 60 percent of what possibly could be covered in a school year. If teacher attendance is factored in, the opportunity to learn index would be further reduced. For example, if teacher attendance averaged 80 percent—a reasonable number given data that show many countries with attendance rates for teachers worse than that—then the opportunity to learn in Maïssade would be reduced to 46 percent.

The 2005 UNESCO Global Monitoring Report sets a standard of minimum instructional time for a quality education as 850 to 1000 hours per year. The official amount of instructional time in Haiti is 940 hours, well within UNESCO's range. However, in Maïssade, the average opportunity to learn of 57 percent translates to only 536 hours. Expectations for learning outcomes under these circumstances must be realistically adjusted downward. EQUIP2 research into other complementary education programs indicated that part of what made those programs effective was their ability to more consistently assure an opportunity to learn. This was done through community-based schools being open more often with students and teachers attending more regularly than in official schools (DeStefano, et al, 2006). This is clearly not the case in Maïssade.

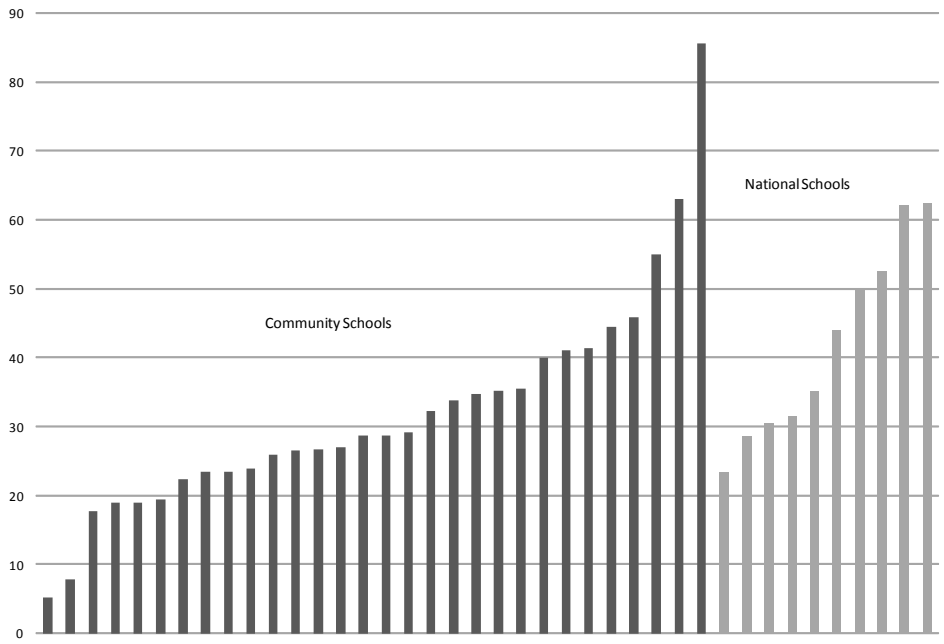
Teachers

Data are available on 228 teachers working in community, national, and private schools in Maïssade. In many schools, teachers are assigned to teach multiple grades. In all the community and in two national schools, the directors also serve as teachers. Save the Children greatly impacted the staffing in national schools in Maïssade from 2004 to 2007. Without Save the children's intervention, about half of the teaching positions would have been unfilled during those three years. To make up for vacancies in the national schools, Save the Children recruited 32 students into a program in which they spent three years (2004–2007) as volunteer teachers in national schools, filling long-standing vacancies, in return for professional teacher training leading to a degree. In 2006–2007, student-teachers accounted for 42 percent of the staff in national schools in Maïssade. In three national schools, student-teachers made up more than 60 percent of the teaching staff. The Ministry of Education is reportedly nominating teachers for 2007–2008 to fill the positions previously held by these students.

Figure 2 below shows the variation in student to staff ratios for all community and national schools in Maïssade (the data do not permit the calculation of student to staff ratios in private schools). While both types of schools have considerable variation in these ratios, community schools vary around a lower average student to staff ratio of 32:1, compared to national schools, which vary around an average ratio of 42:1.

Government schools on average have slightly higher student to staff ratios, but only because of the use of student-teachers supported by Save the Children in 2006–2007. Without student-teachers, the average student to staff ratio in national schools would be over 70:1. Community schools exhibit a broader range of student to staff ratios. The low end of that range is made up of very small community schools.

Figure 2: Student to Staff Ratios in Community and National Schools



Teachers in national schools have more advanced formal qualifications than their counterparts in community schools. Table 15 below shows the percentage of staff with different levels of qualifications in community, national and private schools. In community schools 70 percent of the staff have achieved only lower secondary or primary education—26 percent have only a primary certificate (CEP) and 44 percent have attained a seventh to ninth grade level of education. Twenty-two percent of private school teachers have a lower secondary level of education, but no national school teachers have below an upper secondary level of training. Forty-six percent of teachers in national schools have a first level baccalaureate (about 12th grade). Another 33 percent are graduates of normal school (teacher training college), and an additional 3 percent have some normal school training (CAP), but are not officially certified teachers. In contrast, only 10 percent of community school teachers have a first level baccalaureate, and none have normal school training. In private schools, 39 percent of teachers have a first level baccalaureate, and 11 percent are graduates of normal school.

Table 15: Percentage of Teachers with Different Qualifications

	Staff Qualifications 2006-07						
	CEP	7e/9e	3e/sec	BAC I	BAC II	CAP	Ec Norm
Community Schools	26%	44%	17%	10%	2%	0%	0%
National Schools	0%	0%	12%	46%	5%	3%	33%
Private Schools	0%	22%	24%	39%	4%	0%	11%

Community school teachers are employed by the schools at which they work. They are recruited, hired, and compensated by the school management committees responsible for

each school. Teachers are in principle paid 1,000 gourdes (about US$29 at the average 2006–2007 exchange rate) per month and school directors/teachers are paid 1,500 gourdes (US$43) per month for the 10 months of the school year. However, as discussed in the section on costs and financing, all of the community schools operate at a budget deficit and therefore at times are unable to pay their teachers and directors. In fact, many schools report that, when paid, teachers receive closer to 500 to 740 gourdes per month. Teachers in national schools are employees of the education ministry and are paid 4,000 gourdes (US$115) per month.

Governance

All of the community and national schools included in the study have SMCs. Community school directors and SMCs share responsibility for the day-to-day operation and management of the school. The nature of the interaction between school directors and SMCs was explored through interviews with them at the 19 sample schools. The operation of SMCs and their relationships with schools' directors are fairly similar across community schools, but have a distinctly different character in three of the four government schools. SMCs are not in charge in national schools, but rather tend to interact with the school on an "as needed"—as defined by the director—basis, with one notable exception.

The SMCs of community schools in our sample have five or seven members who are almost always parents of children in the school. The members are often recognized as leaders in the community and come from different "zones" and are therefore able to represent and spread messages to different parts of the territory from which students are drawn. In most community schools there are two to four core members who have served on the SMC for three to nine years. These members are seen as knowledge-bearers about school-based management and mentors to new members.

In community schools, directors and SMCs together handle matters relating to the school's finances. Both entities set and collect school fees, hire and pay teachers, manage school construction and repairs, and organize logistics for feeding programs and for transporting materials and furniture to the school. The decisions that SMCs make independently of the director are limited to management of materials, including purchase and transportation of materials to the school. Two SMCs reported that they can pay teachers without the director's consent, including one of the five better performing community schools.

All community school SMCs report visiting their schools regularly; most often to control teacher and student attendance and tardiness, observe teacher and student interactions, check on the physical conditions of the school, and encourage teachers to keep working even without pay. SMC members also report interacting with students on their visits, mostly encouraging them not to misbehave, to respect teachers, and to arrive on time. Considering the opportunity costs, difficulties of distance, and the volunteer nature of their job this is no small accomplishment, and SMCs clearly elaborated on the effort demanded by this constant interaction.

Most community school SMCs (13 of 15) report meeting monthly. The president of the committee calls the meetings and in 14 of the 15 cases reports preparing a written agenda.

School directors attend the majority of meetings. All SMCs report some form of group decision making.

In contrast to community schools included in other EQUIP2 research, the Maïssade's community school SMCs do not set the school calendar and schedule. Rather, the directors and SMCs enforce the official calendar, discipline tardy students, and exhort the community to send their children to school on the prescribed days. At the same time the SMCs describe the difficulties they encounter in adhering to the official calendar because of the long distances students and teachers must travel to school and inherent conflicts with planting, harvesting, and rainy seasons, and market days. Only one national and one community school report adjusting their school day to start one half hour later to allow time for students to reach school.

When asked what they could do better in the future, almost half of the SMCs reported that they would do a lot more, but were constrained by their financial means.

The school management committee of a community school usually chooses someone seen as a leader in the community and who likely has more formal schooling than most people to be the school director. All of the community school directors also teach. Directors report being limited in the decisions they can make without consulting the SMC, leaving directors to mostly enforce policy and advise teachers. Duties include supervising teacher instruction and behavior, setting exam schedules, handling disciplinary actions, enforcing school uniforms, and dealing with fee and tardiness policies.

In contrast to the community schools, national schools are governed almost exclusively by their school directors who are chosen and employed by the Ministry of Education. The director is in charge of the school and accountable only to the national government for how the school functions. Directors collect school fees, manage the school budget, keep school records and ensure the quality of teaching. Two national school directors in our sample also work as teachers.

Although all four national schools report having a committee of community representatives that are called "school management committees" by school staff, these differ from the SMCs of community schools. None of the "SMCs" in national schools is in charge of the school's financial resources. Moreover, two of the four directors report that they do not consult with their "SMCs" at all in making major decisions. An exception to the director-dominated school management model of the national schools is the Anténor Firmin School in which the director reports that the SMC is involved in all activities and able to make decisions without him, including where money is spent. SMCs are a requirement for national schools that want to participate in the Bureau of Nutrition and Development's school feeding program.

Overall, we found that communities are contributing a great deal to the mental and physical work of running their schools, doing everything from fetching materials and construction to encouraging teachers and watching over student-teacher interaction. Furthermore, SMCs, with the help of the ECPs, are reinforcing a culture of change and improvement in teaching and learning. The SC program has created a space for teachers and directors to share and progress together. With Haiti's dictatorial history, it must be recognized as a tangible accomplishment that SMCs are working in a democratic fashion. The members are

aware of their roles and of the particular contributions they can make. They recount how the committees allow each person to state his/her particular view rather than deferring to an individual decision-maker. Fullan writes in School-Based Management: Reconceptualizing to Improve Learning Outcomes that, "In many developing countries where there is a legacy of hierarchical or top-down models of education management from colonial days, it [school based management] represents a radical change." Although two SMCs were dysfunctional—one because of in-fighting and the other because of not meeting often enough—there was much more evidence of SMC departure from authoritarian models and a sense of inclusiveness and equality.

School Support

Save the Children's program in Maïssade supports community, national, and private schools through the provision of ongoing training and advice related to instruction, school management, governance, school nutrition and health initiatives, and HIV/AIDS prevention. SC also provides oversight for the implementation of a radio-based distance education program. With the exception of health-based initiatives, all of these efforts are primarily implemented and supported through the work of the Encadreurs Communautaires et Pédagogiques (ECP). We collected data on the activity of ECPs and their interaction with directors and teachers for the sample of 15 community and four national schools. In addition to these support services, Save the Children provides direct budgetary support to community schools, data about which are presented in the section on costs and cost effectiveness. There were insufficient data available about micronutrient and medication provision to include these areas in our analysis.

ECPs are assigned to a cluster of up to eight schools, called grappes. All of the ECPs are professional educators with training skills. They live and are based in Maïssade town, so must travel over difficult terrain to reach their schools. ECPs visit schools at least monthly, providing a variety of services including observing teachers, meeting with teachers individually or in groups, meeting with directors to review administrative issues, meeting with SMCs or with parents, and overseeing the additional programs mentioned above. The ECPs sometimes also deliver a specific training for teachers, directors, SMCs, and parents and hold cluster-wide workshops for teachers about once per month.

Data on ECP activity are available for two school years, 2004–2005 and 2005–2006. The monthly activity summary sheets were analyzed for each of four ECPs working exclusively with community schools. Reports for ECPs working with national or private schools were not available. Reports were missing for different months during the two school years for some ECPs, making it difficult to summarize the data. Therefore, we present ECP activity in terms of the percent of months for which a report was available and in which the activity was reported to take place. Activities were categorized as either an administrative visit, a classroom observation visit, a meeting with a teacher or teachers, or a meeting with a school's pedagogical team. All activities are self-reported by the ECPs.

For the full set of 30 community schools, ECPs performed administrative visits in 73 percent of the months for which data are available, by far the most frequently reported activity. In 42 percent of the months, they conducted classroom observations. As shown in Table 16 below,

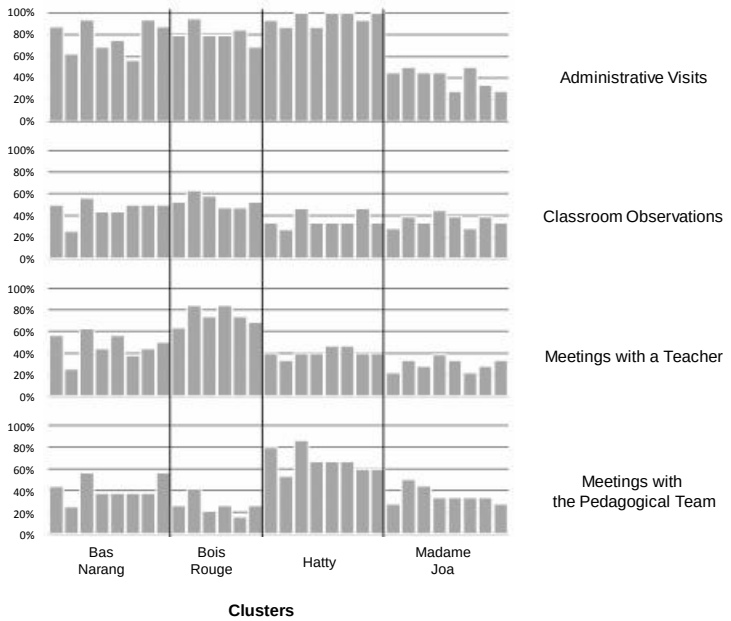
the balance between observations, teacher meetings, and pedagogical team meetings were roughly the same for the sample schools.

Table 16: ECP Activity in Support of Community Schools

	Percentage of Months in Which Service Occurred	
Type of Support Service	All Community Schools	Sample Community Schools
Administrative Visit	73%	82%
Classroom Observation	42%	44%
Teacher Meeting	46%	50%
Pedagogical Team Meeting	44%	49%

However, ECP activity varied considerably across community schools. ECPs performed all four of the types of school visits mentioned above at different rates for different schools—even schools in a single cluster served by the same ECP—as shown in Figure 3 below. One school in the Bois Rouge cluster had a classroom observation in more than 60 percent of the months for which data were available compared to a school in the Madame Joa cluster that had observations only 10 percent of the time. The schools in the Madame Joa cluster appeared to receive less visits from their ECP than schools in the other clusters. The Bois Rouge cluster appears to have the most frequent activity, except for meetings with pedagogical teams. That cluster includes fewer schools, and offers room and board, allowing the ECP to visit more schools rather than return to Maïssade each evening. Variations can be explained by different approaches taken by the different ECPs or by other factors that intervene to force ECPs to focus on other areas such as distance education, school feeding, or nutrition programs.

Figure 3: Variations in ECP Activity for Each Community School



From interviews with 42 teachers, all the school directors, and a group meeting with ECPs, we gleaned additional data on the exact nature of ECP support to the 15 community and 4 national schools in our sample.

Teachers in sample schools report that they work directly with their ECP either individually or in a group about 5 times per year. The average individual meeting last about 45 minutes, long enough for the ECP to observe a lesson and have a short conversation after class with the teacher.

Roughly half the teachers interviewed reported working with ECPs on math, and half reported working on language. Approximately one third reported working on methods such as the use of didactic materials or participative methodology. Less frequently, teachers mentioned working on administrative functions, lesson preparation, and student evaluation. ECPs reported that many teachers have a problem with basic subject matter knowledge and therefore ECPs focused most on remediating teachers in content areas while modeling instructional strategies. The teachers themselves reported requesting ECP help in understanding and using first and second grade math and reading text books, some implying that they found the materials difficult.

Teachers report learning to teach in new ways through ECP guidance. Eighty-eight percent of teachers reported that the ECP showed them something that changed the way they taught—using group work with students, new methods for teaching reading, and participative methodologies. One teacher reported, "Organizing the class in groups permits the students to learn quicker, especially when I have a lot of students." Fifteen percent of the teachers interviewed reported changes in their approach to lesson preparation as a direct result of work with their ECPs. One teacher stated, "I used to teach without preparing lessons. Now I prepare them." ECPs themselves report that one-on-one trainings lead to teachers making observable changes in their lesson plans and execution.

When asked to give an example of a successful visit with a teacher, most ECPs describe how teachers applied teaching techniques or assessment techniques after a training session. In three out of four examples, successes followed after an ECP taught a model lesson in the classroom. Two teachers rewrote a lesson with the ECP and another received a lesson in arithmetic. One example was, "[The teacher] rewrote the lesson and I saw the application of what we talked about; getting children to speak, asking them questions about the material, and helping them discover the information themselves. The teacher really understood." One ECP reports training teachers in a school to more fairly test their students. After the training, teachers wrote clearer exam instructions and separated the test takers to discourage copying.

ECPs enthusiastically report that cluster meetings encourage teachers to network, sharing information and discussing each other's progress. ECPs also state that the constant reinforcement they give to directors has increased directors' involvement in schools and has positively affected the quality of teaching. ECPs help directors identify their own needs, which leads to the directors being more engaged in the trainings.

Directors cover a broad range of topics with ECPs, including review of subject content, methodology, lesson preparation, and other teaching related areas, as well as administrative

functions like taking attendance, school budgets and management, parent training, and radio-based distance education. One national school director described the ECP impact on the use of corporal punishment. "*Yes, we used to use the whip a lot. After our training we did away with it this year and will continue this way.*" However, two of the three national school directors reported not changing anything in their leadership as a result of interacting with an ECP.

ECPs were rarely seen by teachers or directors as unable to respond to their needs, but they did express concern about the short duration of some trainings. One director said, "*Sometimes one day trainings should last two or more days. When they try to give you too much, some gets away.*" Teachers and directors also wished they could receive SC certificates recognizing the training they have received.

Additionally, ECPs work with SMCs on managing finances, school materials, special events, projects, health services, and Save the Children's sponsorship program for orphaned and vulnerable children. SMCs reported that the direct budgetary support provided by Save the Children was the most valuable assistance they received, despite problems with payments being later and less than promised. SMC members felt that training was more important for teachers and directors, and could not give specific examples of training they received this year which they found particularly helpful.

Implications for Save the Children and for Schooling in Haiti

Many of the poor conditions confronted by community schools, their students, and families in Haiti are common to the other complementary education programs studied by EQUIP2. In the other nine cases, the programs took specific steps to overcome the constraints of a lack of resources, remoteness, and poorly educated teachers. Save the Children in Haiti is employing many of the same interventions to help schools enroll and meet the learning needs of children in an underprivileged district.

Like the other cases we have studied, Save the Children does succeed at ensuring frequent, regular school support visits from trained support personnel—ECPs in the Haiti case. Despite the difficult conditions of travel in Maïssade, ECPs are visiting schools more than once per month. However, their efforts are divided among a broad range of responsibilities. ECPs must work with schools on everything from basic teaching and learning issues and teacher development to administration, management, interactive radio, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention, and any other programmatic topic that draws attention. The fact that in the best performing schools ECPs were able to focus more on classroom observations and meetings with individual teachers reinforces what EQUIP2 found in other case studies—learning is best promoted when school visits focus on the specific instructional deficiencies of teachers with low levels of education.

Schools in SC's program in Maïssade are getting levels of service and support far above what other schools in Haiti can expect. Consistently across cases we have studied, NGOs have been able to cost-effectively provide levels of support services to schools that ministries of education cannot. However, the full benefit of that support is not realized in Maïssade because ECPs are asked to shoulder too many programmatic priorities. ECPs themselves lament this issue. In our focus group, all ECPs referred to the multiplicity of objectives and programs for which they are responsible as a constraint on their ability to effectively support instruction in each school.

In remote areas where students would normally have to travel long distances to reach an official school, the complementary education programs studied by EQUIP2 help communities set up a smaller scale school within easy walking distance of their homes. This may not be possible in Maïssade, where households are not concentrated in central villages or towns. In all of the schools included in this Haiti study, children and teachers travel long distances to school, in impact of which is evident in the reduced opportunity to learn—students attending less regularly and teachers not getting to school on some days, thus closing school.

Other community-based school programs we have studied encourage local control over the calendar and schedule for school as another way to increase the basic opportunity to learn. Given that in Maïssade it is not possible to reduce a school's geographic catchment area, adjusting the schedule to make it easier for students and teachers to get to school is even more important. Flexibility in the timing of the academic year, the days on which school meets and the hours of class allow community-based schools to better fit into the rhythm of life in the countryside. It was surprising to find that this is not the case in Maïssade. Community schools adhere to the national school calendar and schedule, despite day-to-day evidence that this creates hardships for students and families. Faced with poor attendance by students and teachers, school directors and SMCs seem most often to respond by further exhorting or pleading with teachers and families to follow the official schedule. This is reported to be a facet of community school culture in Haiti. These schools are trying to emulate national schools as a way to establish their credibility, and therefore as a default position, are unwilling to make adjustments to their school schedule.

Similarly, in their efforts to look as official as possible, community schools enforce tardiness, school uniform, and fee policies to the detriment of student attendance. Students who are late, who do not have a uniform or who have failed to pay their fees are too often sent home, eliminating their opportunity to learn that day. EQUIP2 found no examples like this in any of the other successful complementary education programs studied.

Community, national and private schools in Maïssade all also suffer from too restrictive promotion policies. Far too many children are not advancing through the primary cycle because of the exam-based approach to grade promotion that relies on teacher developed and administered tests. Rather than try to improve the quality of end of grade student testing, it would make more sense to improve teachers' instructional ability and increase time on task in schools and move to a system of automatic promotion.

In addition to the increased flexibility around the timing of school, successful complementary education programs studied by EQUIP2 also alter the primary school curriculum to more directly focus on literacy and numeracy. Haiti does have the advantage of providing instruction in Haitian Creole, the language spoken by children, their families, and teachers. However, in none of the schools we studied in Maïssade did anyone talk about modifying the curriculum to target literacy acquisition. In fact, Save the Children reinforces adherence to the national curriculum. ECPs we interviewed did express concern about this and stated their preference that schools be encouraged to alter curricular content to better meet the needs of their students and abilities of the teachers.

Like other complementary programs, SC's program in Maïssade promotes and supports local governance structures. Each community school has an SMC, but the relationship between SMCs and their school directors is variable. In all the other programs studied by EQUIP2, schools do not have directors. In these cases, leadership is assumed by the SMC with NGO program support. All directors in community schools also serve as teachers, but seem in most cases to shoulder the bulk of the administrative responsibilities that go with running the school. In some cases this may be due to SMC members being far from the school and unable to visit daily, or to not having the ability to perform these tasks. However, a governance model allowing directors to more deliberately focus on their own teaching and on instructional leadership for their colleagues could get more educational "bang out of the buck" of a school director.

Concerning the role of community schools in Haiti, the Ministry of Education's General Secretary stated at the Round Table on Community Schools in April 2007 that the future of schooling in Haiti has to include community schools. The challenge facing Haiti is how to ensure the quality of what community schools offer. This analysis shows that under the right conditions, community schools with limited resources are able to outperform national schools. Community schools can also be more cost-effective than national schools at producing third graders that can meet a minimum standard of reading fluency. The government of Haiti needs to look closely at how the use of resources, particularly for school support, in Maïssade is allowing some community schools to actually spend less, but achieve more.

No discussion about improving the situation of community schools in Haiti can avoid the problem of inadequate resources. Schools need to be able to at least pay their teachers to ensure a stable environment and a consistent opportunity to learn. ECPs said that community school teachers often do not attend school because they aren't paid regularly or paid enough money on which to live. According to teachers and ECPs, the teachers become dissatisfied, tired of difficult circumstances, or unable to care for their family without doing other work. In interviews, the ECPs asserted that if there was more money made available it would be easy to find people to work in rural areas, including those from the locality who have moved elsewhere looking for work. While resources overall for schooling in Maïssade are inadequate, the fact that some SC-supported community schools are more cost-effective than government funded schools may point to alternative ways to use resources. Public-private partnerships modeled on the program in Maïssade that combine Ministry of Education funding with NGO capacity to cost-effectively deliver services in the field may hold part of the answer to improving the quality of community schools in Haiti.

Overall, what this study reveals is that the average student in primary school in Haiti is not being offered the opportunity to secure a foundation of learning. If by the end of third grade, three quarters of the students we tested in Maïssade are still unable to read at least 40 words per minute, then one has to ask how time in school was spent during those three years. While that general finding may be discouraging, some schools in Maïssade faired much better than average. This fact provides a vision for how resources can be better used to support schools that successfully engage students in the foundational learning processes that lead to literacy and future success in school and life.

Details of Methodology

Selection of Schools

The Save the Children program has worked with 80 schools in Maïssade: 30 community, 10 public, and 40 private. Data were available for 54 schools, as SC only recently began supporting 26 of the private schools and data were unavailable for the these schools during the three year period at which we were looking (2004-05, 2005-06, and 2006-07). Descriptive data are presented for the universe of 54 schools. For additional data collection, and in particular for evaluation of learning outcomes, we drew a stratified random sample from the 30 community and 10 national public schools based on school size.

Table 17: Sample Schools

Averages	2006-07 Enrollment	# of Grades	Change in Enrollment (2005–2007)	Student to Staff Ratio	Distance from Maïssade (hrs)
Full Sample	164	5	-6%	34.6	3.3
Community Schools	120	4	-16%	29.1	3.5
National Schools	329	6	33%	46.6	2.6
Individual Schools					
Gazard	52	4	-65%	7.8	0.3
Callebassier	106	4	-9%	26.5	2.5
Cœur Unis	86	4	32%	28.7	2.5
Larique	224	6	15%	28.7	0.6
Ramier	267	6	-7%	44.5	4.0
Boukan Joumou	89	5	-23%	17.8	5.7
Figue	165	5	18%	55.0	6.9
Bateille	47	4	-41%	23.5	4.0
Grande Savane	72	5	-64%	24.0	5.0
Christ Capable	107	4	-20%	26.8	3.5
Ossenande	39	3	-35%	19.5	4.0
Enfants Démunis	94	4	-15%	23.5	2.0
Tarte	80	4	-18%	40.0	4.2
Cinquième	248	5	-9%	41.3	2.0
Citron	126	4	-1%	63.0	5.0
François Capois	368	6	16%	52.6	2.5
Biliguy	189	6	75%	31.5	4.0
Amiral Kilick	282	6	-2%	40.3	1.5
Anténor Firmin	475	6	42%	62.1	2.5

Size served as a proxy for school location—remoteness and distance from Maïssade town—and for the number of grades in operation (i.e., whether the school offers a complete primary

cycle or not). National schools are larger than almost all the community schools, so the two groups of schools were stratified separately into small, medium, and large subsets. From those subsets schools were randomly selected—left out were the smallest community school with only 21 students and the largest government school with over 500 students. Table 17 shows some basic data on the sample schools.

Data Collection

A large share of the quantitative data used in this analysis comes from Save the Children's field office's monitoring and evaluation system. SC's monitoring and evaluation office has data for national, private, and community schools, including enrollment and student attendance, the number of days schools are in session during the school year, the teachers assigned to each school, teacher levels of education, schools' internal promotion rates, and the nature and frequency of school support visits. In addition, Save the Children's internal program budgets provide detailed data on community school costs. Individual school-level budgets prepared by each school's management committee afford further insight into school costs. The most recent available data on costs for national government schools are taken from a 2001 study of the costs and financing of education in Haiti by Moisset and Merisier.

The only data on student outcomes for both national and community schools in Save the Children's database are grade-by-grade promotion rates. These rates are based on tests teachers independently develop and administer at the end of the school year to their own students. The results of those examinations are used to determine which children can be promoted to the next grade. Teachers have little to no training on how to develop and administer such exams; each teacher designs and evaluates exams without specific criteria or grade-level standards. Such measures of student outcomes were deemed too unreliable to use as indicators of school effectiveness. Therefore, testing of student basic reading ability was added as an objective for the additional field data collection.

Given the amount of data obtained from Save the Children's monitoring and evaluation system, field data collection focused on three priorities:

1. Evaluating student capacity in reading;
2. Understanding school governance and management, including the operation of SMCs, and in particular, the relationship between SMCs and school directors; and
3. Gathering teachers', school directors', and pedagogical support personnel's perspectives on the nature, content, and effectiveness of teacher support services.

The field data collection team included three people: the team leader (coauthor on this paper) and two locally recruited university students who had worked as teachers in national schools in Maïssade in 2006–2007. Data collection took place over the course of six weeks in June and July 2007. Save the Children's field office in Maïssade facilitated communication with each school to arrange a meeting day and time. The team then journeyed to each school to conduct the student testing, and teacher, director, and SMC interviews. The team leader conducted ECP interviews.

Testing student capacity in reading: The simple measurement used in this field test was based on the 2005 work of Helen Abadzi and colleagues and adapted directly from an application of

that work by the Research Triangle Institute in Senegal and the Gambia. The test of reading fluency evaluates the number of words a child can read from a cohesive text in 1 minute. According to research in cognitive psychology, text comprehension depends on working, short-term memory as well as decoding and vocabulary. The verbal working memory buffer can only hold approximately seven words for 12 seconds, and functionally literate people are not only able to read at this speed, but their minds engage in chunking—automatically recognizing sets of letters and words processed very quickly. Therefore, slow, halting readers are likely to be functionally illiterate, their working memory not recalling the beginning of the sentence by the time they read the last word.

Abadzi et. al. also report that comprehension correlates at 0.82 with reading speed. "Although this research was merely correlational, these results are consistent with memory research predicting that sufficient reading speed is needed for comprehension (assuming students know the vocabulary). Thus reading speed predicts comprehension, at least in the early grades (p.144-145)."

Based on Abadzi's research and Luis Crouch's experience developing and using assessments of fluency in several countries, we administered three tests in Haitian Creole to students who had been in the third grade in sample schools. The tests included recognition of individual letters, reading of individual words, and reading of a short passage. The letters we used were part of the officially recognized Haitian Creole alphabet. Words were chosen randomly out of a widely used third grade reading book and the paragraph of text was taken from a third grade grammar book that is also widely used in Haiti. A Haitian Save the Children staff member in the Port-au-Prince office who had formerly worked on translating the national curriculum into Creole advised us on the choice of text, which was a passage about soccer.

To test the validity of the instruments we tried them out with a group of second and third grade students in Port-au-Prince. The third grade students we evaluated were able to read the passage fluently, at over 100 words per minute. This showed that the text was not too difficult for third graders who can read. Although a test of reading comprehension was originally designed to go with the text, these data were not used because questions were designed to be asked after a reader read 100 words or finished the paragraph in the minute given. This was too difficult for all but four of the students in Maïssade. Preliminary reading tests in Port-au-Prince gave a false impression that there may be a higher number of third grade students who could reach this target. A field-based pilot may have helped adjust expectations, although reproduction of testing instruments was problematic in the field.

Based on Helen Abadzi's research and experiences evaluating reading fluency in other countries, 30 wpm represents a minimum benchmark for students who are just beginning to learn to read. In Chile and Peru, her research shows that 30 wpm or greater represents a reasonable expectation for students at the end of first grade. For Haitian students in Maïssade, given the overall low levels of performance on the reading assessment we used, the standard of 30 wpm for students at the end of third grade was employed so that we could still capture some of the variation across schools. Setting a target of 30 wpm allows students to demonstrate a level of reading fluency consistent with early acquisition of word recognition and decoding skills, but still below 60 wpm—an acceptable threshold for comprehension, and thus actual literacy.

In the field, the data collection team tested third grade students at all 19 schools in the sample. At each site, all students from the third grade were requested to be present, and from the pool of students who came, ten were chosen at random while assuring that gender representation of the pool stayed the same. If there were less than 10, all students were tested. We tested a total of 161 students, 121 from community schools and 40 from national schools.

School management and governance: EQUIP2 research on complementary education programs found that local decision-making plays an important role in improving a community school's ability to assure a basic opportunity to learn. The literature on school-based management confirms the importance of leaders at the school level who can make decisions on school operation while functioning as part of a larger support system (Caldwell, 2005). EQUIP2 found that school management committees support school quality by determining the school calendar and schedule, assuring regular oversight of teacher and student attendance, and directly managing teacher recruitment, hiring, pay, and dismissal if necessary.

Like other community-based complementary education programs, Save the Children's program in Maïssade focused on helping systematize the mechanisms for local school governance, such as setting up school management committees and providing training for their members and school directors. The training focused on the basics of school management—recruiting and keeping records on students, finances and budgeting, supervising teachers, dealing with discipline and managing student behavior, identifying and implementing projects, etc.

The objective of the field data collection relating to school management and governance was to find out what decisions are made by management committees. We were also interested in understanding how well school directors and SMCs work together, how often they meet, what kinds of decisions they make together or independently, and how effective they think the training and support they receive has been.

The lead researcher and a student researcher interviewed the school director on site at each school in the sample. In addition, the team conducted a group interview with four to seven SMC members. At least two key members of the SMC were always present (e.g. president, secretary, or treasurer).

School Support Services: Another critical component of success for community-based schools in the complementary education programs researched by EQUIP2 is the regular support services received by teachers and SMCs. In most of the cases studied, teachers received support at least monthly, and in some cases weekly. NGO trained and managed school support personnel work directly with teachers on curriculum and instruction, help management committees identify and deal with problems and challenges, and in general supervise the operation of the school (DeStefano et al, 2006).

The ECPs in Save the Children's program in Maïssade, like NGO-provided school supervisory personnel in other programs studied by EQUIP2, are the main vehicles of school and community support. Save the Children's monitoring and evaluation database includes the ECPs' monthly activity reports that detail what schools they visited and what kind of support or administrative services they provided each month. In addition to those data, the field visits were designed to interview all the ECPs and to individually interview a few teachers at each school. We asked teachers to identify specific examples of instructional support they received

from the ECPs, and asked ECPs, among other things, to identify the strategies they employ that are most successful at improving instruction.

Costs and cost effectiveness: Three sources of information were used for data on costs for community and national schools in Maïssade. We did not analyze the costs of private schools. Save the Children's budget for the two most recent years (2005–2006 and 2006–2007) of their program in Maïssade provided details on their costs. The budgeted amounts for the two years were used, not actual expenditures. For national schools, we rely on a study done in 2001 by Moisset and Merisier. They combined national government budget data and a survey sample of schools to determine unit costs for primary and secondary schools in Haiti. Because SC's program in Maïssade serves national, community, and private schools, we also had to attribute the expenses of that program to each category of school. We did this based on the kind of support each category received as well as the proportion of the total number of schools from each category.

Unit costs were obtained for community schools by dividing the 2006–2007 budget attributable to them by the January 2006–2007 enrollment. For national schools, we calculated the amount per student of the SC expenses attributable to national schools and added that number to the Moisset and Merisier unit cost.

Limitations of the Data

All of the data pulled from Save the Children's database are gathered by school staff, SMCs or Save the Children ECPs. All the data are self-reported and therefore may be biased in ways the serve the interests of those doing the reporting. The additional informants interviewed during the field portion of the data collection were also directly involved in and received benefits from the Save the Children program. However, examination of the data revealed no systematic attempts to paint Save the Children in either a positive or negative light.

The two university students who participated in the field data collection were engaged through Save the Children, and had served as teachers in two schools included in the study. Close monitoring of the responses they were documenting by the lead field researcher showed a consistency across schools and no evidence of bias in favor of Save the Children.

Field data collection was carried out during the summer which reduced the pool of available students from which to draw a sample for testing. If done during the school year, a more representative pool of students may have been available. Large numbers of students did turn up at several schools, many coming from more than one hour away.

Oral Reading Fluency Tests have been critiqued on several levels. Not using the first language of readers is often a problem, but in this case, the first language of students, Haitian Creole, is the instructional language and was used for testing. Another critique is that text excerpts may be difficult to follow if they don't have a setting, plot, or characters. The text used in this test was in second person, had a defined setting and characters, and told a complete story from beginning to end. Also, some similar tests do not concern themselves with self-correction or use of synonyms by the reader. We did count self-corrected words correctly, and the use of synonyms came up rarely and concerned only one word in the text.

Lastly, Maïssade is an isolated district and is not representative of all of Haiti. In addition, the national schools in our sample all happened to be outside of Maïssade town. While this may offer a good base of comparison to community schools which are also all outside of town, it leaves out a set of national schools that may have a different character. The results presented here therefore should not be generalized to national schools as a whole.

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