



2011 USAID Education Strategy Technical Notes

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Glossary

Actual: Actual number of students demonstrating improved reading skills. (Agency goal is 100 million students.)

Number reached (direct): Direct beneficiaries are those students reached with direct USG assistance (funded in part or in whole by USG).

Number reached (indirect): For the purposes of this document, indirect beneficiaries are those students affected through a follow-on, such as countries taking a USG-funded pilot intervention to scale, with no additional USG funding; or donor and country harmonization around a common technical approach, in which USG has been instrumental.

Projection: Expected number of students with improved reading skills.

Target: Sum of number reached (direct) + number reached (indirect).

Threshold: Point at or beyond which students can be counted towards the Agency goal.

Goal I

Evidence and Rationale for Primary Grade Reading

In the past decade, significant achievements have been made in increasing primary school enrollment worldwide, but children in low-income countries are completing primary school at 67 percent¹ of the rate of high-income countries, with studies showing very little actual learning occurring in the classroom. In Mali, Pakistan, and Peru, reading assessments have indicated that at least 70 percent of primary school children are unable to read at their grade level.^{2,3}

Children who do not attain reading skills at the primary level are on a lifetime trajectory of limited educational progress and therefore limited economic and developmental opportunity. The leading international assessment, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), indicates that low-income countries that participated are performing at the bottom 5th percentile in the world. Research suggests that these astoundingly low learning levels are impeding economic growth, as a 10 percent increase in the share of students reaching basic literacy has been demonstrated to translate into a 0.3 percentage point higher annual growth rate for the country.⁴

Goal I – improved *reading skills* for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015 - builds upon USAID’s long experience in primary education and more recent leadership in supporting interventions to improve school quality, as measured through learning outcomes. It recognizes that learning takes place at all levels, but adopts a particular focus on primary grade reading improvement as the foundation for future learning. Though it is clear that children’s future economic potential is dependent not just on reading instruction, effective reading is a critical and necessary pre-condition for skill development in all other areas and, as such, will be a primary target by which we hold ourselves accountable for results in basic education. For more information on USAID’s current and past programming see the Ed Data II and EQUIP websites at: <https://www.eddataglobal.org/index.cfm> and <http://www.equip123.net/>.

Teaching Children to Read – USAID’s Experience and Recommendations for Program Design

Learning to read is the foundation for future learning at all levels and subjects, and is a key contributor to all measures of education quality. Despite this, many educational systems around the world are failing to equip students with the necessary skills to learn to read, much less read to learn. Though it seems obvious that reading needs to be strongly emphasized and effectively taught and practiced in primary school, in many developing countries, reading curricula are often not standards-based nor do teacher preparation or professional development programs teach teachers how to teach children to read; rather, many systems assume that reading will be acquired through the teaching of language using traditional teaching approaches. Based on assessment data from more than 20 countries to date, we now know that this is not the case.

¹ Calculations of the ratio of low-income to high-income country average primary completion rates from World Bank EdStats Query database. Country classification based on World Bank country and lending groups (World Bank, 2010).

² J. Das, P. Pandey, and T. Zajonc, *Learning Levels and Gaps in Pakistan*. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 4067. The World Bank, (2006).

³ USAID, EQUIP 2, *Opportunity to Learn: A High Impact for Improving Educational Outcomes in Developing Countries*, (2008).

⁴ Erik Hanushek, and L. Woessmann, National Bureau of Economic Research, *Do Better Schools Lead To More Growth?: Cognitive Skills, Economic Outcomes, and Causation*, NBER Working Paper 14633, (2009).

Though there is no single “recipe” for improving reading outcomes in all contexts, there is a growing consensus and body of evidence among international education researchers and practitioners about key elements. A report from the Early Grade Learning Community of Practice, summarized below, is broadly consistent with findings from the International Reading Association, another USAID implementing partner. However, it is important to remember that reading programs are always influenced by the larger educational and policy environment, as well as other country-specific factors.

The following are some guidelines for effective reading programs⁵ that are likely to be scalable. The ability to scale and sustain programs should be carefully determined at the initial project design stage. Guidance is available from EGAT/ED if assistance or additional resources are needed for any of these technical areas:

- 1. Teaching Technique and Instructional Approach:** Initial teacher preparation and professional development for effective reading instruction should focus on the systematic, language-specific teaching of letters and sounds, and appropriate instructional routines to teach the five major component skills of reading instruction in alphabetic languages: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. All should be taught every instructional day. Ongoing professional development should be regularly provided to teachers by existing education system staff, who should coach and mentor teachers in classrooms to ensure effective instructional approaches are implemented in a high fidelity fashion.
- 2. Texts and Materials:** Effective reading textbooks and, in many contexts, daily lesson plans, should be distributed to teachers in conjunction with teacher preparation and/or professional development as described above. Leveled and decodable readers⁶, including non-fiction texts, and/or story cards (low-cost sheets with text and pictures), with multiple titles per reader, should be available in every classroom to engage students at their skill level, which may be different from what the curriculum anticipates for their age/grade. Students should be encouraged to take materials home for additional practice.
- 3. Language of Instruction:** As reading is a process of learning to match sounds to symbols (letters), it is much easier for students to learn to read in a language they speak and understand. A strong foundation in a first language, especially during the early years of school, is crucial to educational success.⁷ In countries where appropriate language policies exist, USAID projects should be designed in accordance with these policies. Where appropriate policies do not exist, USAID should engage in policy dialogue with host country governments and partners in an attempt to improve policy, as on other technical issues.⁸ Transitional bilingual programs are used in many countries; students should not transition to reading instruction in a second language

⁵ Amber Gove and P. Cvelich. *Early Reading: Igniting Education for All. A report by the Early Grade Learning Community of Practice*, (North Carolina: Research Triangle Institute, 2009).

⁶ A leveled reader is one that is appropriate for a given grade level; it provides appropriate support and challenge for the development of reading skills in a given context. Readers that are decodable are designed to be easy for a child to decipher, i.e. through phonics.

⁷ Jenny Perlman Robinson, *A Global Compact on Learning: Taking Action on Education in Developing Countries* (Washington DC: Brookings, 2011). http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2011/0609_global_compact/0609_global_compact.pdf

⁸ Studies, evaluations, visits, and pilot projects, among other approaches, should be considered as possible sources of input for policy decisions.

until they are solid readers in a language they understand and have oral language competency in the new language. Successful transition programs are well-structured and include the direct instruction of unfamiliar letters and sounds, as well as extensive vocabulary and comprehension instruction.

- 4. Assessment and Testing:** Classroom-based, teacher-led assessment is the cornerstone of effective instruction. Teachers should have clear expectations for student learning and the tools to track achievement. Classroom coaches and supervisors should assess students during their regular coaching and mentoring visits. In addition, national assessment systems that measure reading skills with sufficient levels of differentiation to track changes at lower levels of skills as well as progress within the curriculum and periodic Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) or Assessment Survey Evaluation Research (ASER)-type tests should be used to measure system progress⁹. Conduct randomized control trials (RCT's) for replications and scale-ups.
- 5. Time Use:** Reading should be taught as a subject for at least one hour per instructional day. Additional time should be set aside for reading practice, in and out of school. Involve parents and students in improving student and teacher attendance.
- 6. Tracking:** Teach students at their level. Use differentiated instruction or remedial programs to ensure students master foundational skills before moving on. Use curricular expectations to guide teacher-led assessment and differentiate instruction for students at different levels. Consider support for regrouping classes by skill level, at least in the early stages of reading instruction.
- 7. Community and Parental Support:** Develop supplemental materials collaboratively, help communities to assess student learning, support the training and use of teacher aides inside classrooms and tutors after school hours, and help parents to understand curricular expectations and how to support their young students in school, even if they cannot read themselves. Learning to read well requires hours of reading practice, much of which will have to take place outside of school hours, and varied materials, not all of which are likely to be supplied by schools in resource-poor contexts.

Box I: Using Technology to Support Reading Interventions

As appropriate, USAID support can integrate technology into early grade reading programs and activities. For example, in Liberia and the Philippines, video is being tested to upgrade teachers' professional skills. Other examples of technology use for literacy include: national radio and video broadcasts; SMS for teacher support and supervision, computers and hand-held devices for conducting early grade reading assessments; e-readers; and using mobile phone applications.

⁹ See: <https://www.eddataglobal.org/reading/index.cfm> and www.asercentre.org

Counting Numbers of Students Demonstrating Reading Gains at the Primary Level

The technical notes for Goal I of the education strategy provide a recommended approach for counting students toward the quantitative goal of 100 million students with improved reading skills by 2015. This guidance serves as a starting point for Missions. Throughout the strategy implementation process, the Office of Education and Regional Bureaus stand ready to provide additional assistance.

Laying the Groundwork: An Introduction

To inform and report on program and project results in-country Missions should: obtain reading performance data at the same grade levels over time, calculate changes in performance levels (midline is strongly suggested for monitoring change in the early stages of implementation, and for informing mid-course corrections; while endline is needed for the count), and extrapolate observed performance gains to the universe of students from which the sample¹⁰ was drawn. Given the Strategy's time frame, it will be important to ensure the measurement of reading skills at grade two¹¹ in FY2012 (baseline) or FY 2013 (latest possible baseline), FY 2014 (suggested midline), and final endline in FY 2015. As Missions implement programs and generate results, country-level results will be aggregated in Washington to gauge progress towards the Agency's goals for education.

"Improved reading skills" is defined as increases in fluency and comprehension in reading grade level text (at grade 2 and at the end of the primary cycle); these are defined as the **standard outcome indicators** and described in the Implementation Guidance. Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, quickly, and with good expression and is calculated based on words correct per minute read; while comprehension is understanding the meaning of what has been read. The recommended indicator to measure *reading with comprehension* is based on the point at which words correct per minute (wcpm) produces 80 percent reading comprehension. Using an assessment like EGRA or an ASER-type instrument, Missions will be able to determine how fluently a child should be expected to read *and* comprehend. Missions, however, decide which thresholds to use to determine what proportions of students demonstrate reading skill gains (see Step 5 for greater detail). These multiple thresholds will be determined based on the distribution of wcpm scores at baseline, in conjunction with data on reading comprehension. Thresholds to be chosen in each country for the "count" toward the 100 million should reflect what is expected to be a meaningful in each country. Note that these thresholds should be determined using baseline data drawn from a probability-based sampling frame representative of the population of interest, i.e., the population to which you wish your sample to generalize, and should be set long before endline data are available. These estimates of students with reading skill gains should be realistic, empirically sound, and possible to track. Missions should be aware that thresholds are expected to vary by language, so in projects where reading is being taught in multiple languages, each language should be treated separately.

¹⁰ Sampling strategies will be discussed later in the counting section of the guidance.

¹¹ Grade two should be used to enable reporting against the **standard outcome indicator**, although the actual grade may be different depending on the country context and previously conducted assessments. However, when planning a new assessment grade 2 is the recommended grade to assess for reporting purposes.

In selecting the thresholds, Missions can examine USAID's experience in evaluations conducted in Liberia, Egypt, South Africa, and Kenya; DFID's in Zambia; Hewlett's in Mali, Uganda, Kenya, and India; and Pratham¹²/ASER work in India, among others. For example, if the country has used EGRA or a similar instrument to assess reading skills in the past, then the results of those assessments can inform the determination of thresholds. Washington has developed a worksheet ([Country Level Projection Calculations Worksheet](#), pp. 16 - 20) to assist Missions in assembling and processing the needed information for calculating projections, i.e., the number of students the Mission is programming to reach and the improvement in reading scores that is expected as a consequence of the intervention.

The following steps provide clear guidance on how Missions can calculate reading improvement results from their projects and programs.

STEP 1 – Developing a Development Hypothesis and Results Framework

As a first step to articulate how a new project's activities will achieve improved reading outcomes, it will be important for Missions to assert a clear *development hypothesis* using recent assessment results and research findings coupled with existing government strategic plans. Missions are encouraged to refer to the USAID Project Design Guidance, which can be found at: <http://inside.usaid.gov/PPL/offices/spp/upload/FINALPDGuidance120911.pdf>

A *Results Framework* should be developed based on the development hypothesis, and is expected to translate new activities, sub-intermediate results and intermediate results into both qualitative and quantitative expected outcomes of the Mission's education program. Unless a country has formalized processes for tracking primary reading skills at grade two, many (if not most) programs will require the introduction of primary grade reading assessments, using a nationally representative sample. This ensures that results can be extrapolated for larger student populations. Programs working at less than national scale should construct a sample that corresponds to the region(s) where the program is being implemented. A more detailed discussion of sampling is located under Step 3. Missions should consult with host country governments and other partners working in early grade reading to ensure collaboration and avoid duplication of effort.

Missions should consult with a sampling statistician to ensure the sampling frames are of sufficient size to detect small changes and that the frames are representative of the population of interest as well as appropriate sub-groups, bearing in mind both cost and utility.¹³

STEP 2 – Estimating Total Number of Students Reached by USAID Reading Interventions (direct and indirect)

Missions should estimate the total number of students reached by the reading interventions, making sure not to double count students. It is important to disaggregate **direct** and **indirect** beneficiaries. Direct beneficiaries are students reached with USAID support and funding (funded in part or in whole by USG). Indirect beneficiaries are those students affected through a follow-on, such as countries taking a USG-funded pilot intervention to scale, with no additional USG funding; or donor and country harmonization around a common technical approach, in which USG has been instrumental.

¹² See: <http://www.pratham.org/>

¹³ A sampling statistician should be included in a project's monitoring and evaluation plan, and in some cases may need to be procured separately. Additional information on sampling and sampling specialists is available on the EdData website and through ASER.

The following tables are **examples** of how to determine the total number of students reached (the denominator in the calculation; the numerator will be the total number of students with improved reading), assuming that the intervention lasts three years and covers all of primary school. In this example, we assume that several regions of the country are covered by a USAID-funded reading intervention in all primary grades, starting in 2013, and lasting for three years. Another assumption is that in the second year of the intervention, the remaining regions of the country implement these same reading interventions, in all grades, but with non-USAID support.

Tables I-3: Number of Students Reached Estimating the Denominator for the Count¹⁴

Table I: Estimating direct beneficiaries (students) reached

Grade	Number of students reached (direct beneficiaries), counted only once, by year of intervention			Direct students reached
	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	
1	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	
2	750,000			
3	700,000			
4	650,000			
5	600,000			
6	500,000			
Total	4,200,000			6,200,000

Table 2: Estimating indirect beneficiaries (students) reached

Grade	Number of students reached (indirect beneficiaries), counted only once, by year of intervention			Indirect students reached
	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	
1		2,000,000	2,000,000	
2		1,500,000		
3		1,000,000		
4		850,000		
5		750,000		
6		650,000		
Total		6,750,000		8,750,000

Table 3: Estimating the total beneficiaries (students) reached

Grade	Number of students reached (TOTAL beneficiaries), counted only once, by year of intervention			Total students reached
	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	
1	1,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	
2	750,000	1,500,000		
3	700,000	1,000,000		
4	650,000	850,000		
5	600,000	750,000		
6	500,000	650,000		
Total	4,200,000	7,750,000		14,950,000

Per the example above, in 2013, for the areas with the direct USAID intervention, in the first year, we count all students in grades 1-6, as they all received the programming. In 2014, in terms of the direct count, we add in only the grade 1 students for that year, and do the same in 2015. For areas with the indirect, non-USAID funded interventions, we follow the same

¹⁴ This example assumes that the partner's intervention (or host-country scale-up) runs exactly parallel to that of USAID.

approach: counting all students in grades 1-6 in 2014, the first year of the intervention in those areas, and counting only new students in grade 1 in 2015. Tables 1 and 2 are disaggregated for direct and indirect beneficiaries, while table 3 displays the total number of students reached, which in this case is 14,950,000.

Limitations

We recognize that there are data limitations and challenges. For instance, it is likely that there will be errors in the count of students from administrative data sources. Also, by not taking dropout and repetition into account, we introduce additional error. We could argue in two ways about including dropouts in the denominator: 1) if students are in school long enough to have a chance to improve their reading skills, even if they drop out, they should be counted, or 2) If not, they should not be counted. However, we have no way of knowing which category dropouts fall into. Therefore, this calculation method does not take dropouts into account, but rather takes the total number of students affected by the intervention.

Repetition may be more complicated. For example, if large percentages of grade 1 students repeat grade 1 once or twice, we risk double-counting these students in subsequent years. At the same time, we know that administrative data on repetition rates typically are inaccurate, so using these data to adjust the numbers of students reached would not necessarily improve the accuracy of our estimates. In countries with well-substantiated high dropout and repetition rates, Missions may need to adjust estimates. AID/W is available to assist Missions on a case-by-case basis to discuss ways to minimize error.

STEP 3 – Estimating Total Number of Students Projected to Have Reading Gains

Each Mission with Goal 1 programming should calculate **projections**, or the intended number of students with improved reading skills in their country to help them assess and maximize program performance and results. Projections are expected to focus on improvement in reading grade-level text. The worksheet located in the EGAT/ED tools section of the guidance is designed to assist Missions in formulating **projections**. Regional Bureau and EGAT/ED staff will also be available for technical support. Projections, or the number of expected students with improved reading skills, should be set in collaboration with host country governments and all other country-level partners working on early grade reading, including civil society organizations and other donors. Country-level results will be generated at the country level, in collaboration with implementing partners to assist Missions in monitoring progress. Country-level data will then be aggregated by AID/W to track implementation of the Agency's strategic goals. **Projections** and **Actuals**¹⁵ must be reported separately for direct and indirect beneficiaries, similar to the tables above.

STEP 4 – Measuring Reading Skill Gains

It is recommended that Missions use a cross-sectional data (assessing different samples of students at two or more points in time at the same grade level) for counting the numbers of students with reading skill gains.

Cross-sectional designs, holding other design and measurement issues constant, provide valid and reliable data. A cross-sectional study measures a specified outcome (i.e. reading skills) at a specified point, e.g., end of Grade 2, at different points in time. Missions should consider how errors caused by dropouts, repetitions, or missing data will be addressed. This is discussed in

¹⁵ Actuals is defined as the **actual** number of students demonstrated improved reading skills. (The Agency goal is 100 million students).

more detail below. For instance, if there are substantial differences in repetition rates from baseline to endline, these differences could introduce error into the estimates of the total number of students reached and the total number showing reading skill gains, which will need to be considered for the count. AID/W is available to assist Missions on a case-by-case basis to discuss ways to minimize error.

Sampling

Issues of sampling must be considered. Rather than testing the entire population of students, best practice suggests that Missions use a probability-based sampling framework to ensure that the sample tested is reliably representative of the population of interest. Following are a few possible scenarios that Missions may consider.

If a reading intervention is being implemented on a national-scale (perhaps funded by USAID, as well as other donors or the host country), then the sample needs to be nationally representative.¹⁶ If, however, the program is only intended to be implemented in a few regions, then the sample need only be representative of those regions. Sampling plans should cover the baseline, midline (strongly suggested for an early sense of efficacy and to inform course corrections), and the endline. Keep in mind that sample size can also be affected by the number of sub-groups whose results one wants to compare, e.g., region, urban/rural, and/or sex. For example, if previous data indicate that there are no significant differences in reading level outcomes by region, or that detecting these small differences would be very expensive, then the sample required would not need to be increased to produce estimates by region.

The sampling framework developed will be a practical balance consistent with available monitoring and evaluation budgets. Missions should consult with a sampling expert to ensure samples are representative and of sufficient size to detect the expected magnitude of changes.

Assessment Types

Either written or oral assessments will be used to assess reading skills at the end of grade 2¹⁷ using an assessment such as ASER-type instruments (www.asercentre.org; www.uwezo.net; www.omaes.org), EGRA (www.eddataglobal.org/), or another test that is reliable and appropriately measures reading ability (has appropriate psychometric¹⁸ properties).

As most countries with USAID programs have low levels of reading skills, it is likely that oral assessment will be the most appropriate approach for students in the early grades. Written assessments are less expensive than oral assessments, but can only be used effectively in countries with higher levels of achievement, because they typically are not sufficiently sensitive to detect changes at low levels of reading skills.

Most countries have some form of written assessment at the final primary grade, which could be appropriate for these purposes. However, in countries with very low levels of student learning, there may still be a need for oral assessment at the end of primary. For example, in

¹⁶ A two-stage cluster sampling of schools can substantially reduce costs of national sample. Sample sizes must be large enough to measure small changes in percent of reading gains.

¹⁷ As mentioned earlier, grade 2 should be used to enable reporting against the standard indicator, although the actual grade may be different depending on the country context. However, when planning a new assessment grade 2 is the recommended grade to assess for reporting purposes.

¹⁸ Psychometrics is the theory and techniques related to the measurement of knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and educational measurement. It is mainly concerned with the creation and validation of testing and assessment instruments.

one country that recently conducted an EGRA, nearly half of the students still could not read a single word of connected text at the end of grade 6. Oral assessment is more appropriate in this context.

National exams can be used as assessments, but there are often issues with content, governance, and purpose (exams are often used for screening students for admission to secondary school). True assessments of primary grade reading are currently done only in a few countries. Reliability and validity would have to be carefully considered before deciding to use data from national exams. Missions should continue to check the EdData II and ASER websites for updated information about test instruments.

Decisions should be made in collaboration with governments and other donors. It is important to note that all countries receiving grants from the Global Partnership for Education should commit to one early grade and one end-of-primary assessment.

Collecting Baseline, Midline, and Endline Data

If a suitable assessment has been done recently enough, and is representative of the area and population where the intervention will occur, then these data may be used to establish a baseline. What constitutes ‘recently enough’ depends on the context; if an assessment has been done within one or two years of the project start-up, and there is reason to believe that reading skills have not changed substantially in that time, then that assessment can be used as a baseline. Ideally, however, baseline data are collected *before* the start of the intervention. If, however, there have been recent developments in country that are likely to alter results, a new baseline should be established. Older assessments are not likely to provide suitable baselines.

Missions should collect assessment data periodically and conduct a midline assessment to confirm that interventions are being adequately implemented and determine whether mid-course corrections are required. However, for the purposes of reporting on contributions to the **actual**, only baseline and endline data will be required.

The key to both midline and endline data collection is ensuring comparability with the baseline data collection. Both midline and endline assessments must be done at the same grade level(s) and at the same points in time as baseline assessments. Data should be collected at or near the end of the intervention, or prior to the end of FY 2015, whichever happens first, using an equated version¹⁹ of the instrument used at baseline. One approach to ensuring comparability is to develop an item test bank up front, or several versions of the complete assessment tool, and to equate items across the baseline, midline, and endline assessments, using statistical techniques, not just expert review. It is important that assessments not be identical, and care must be taken to ensure confidentiality of assessments over time. It should be made clear to host country governments and partners that data should not be used for high stakes performance or other evaluations of individuals or particular units of the system, and that cross-country comparisons will not be made beyond the comparison of very basic data. At the same time, data should be used for general, system-focused approaches to accountability.²⁰

¹⁹ An equated instrument is defined as a survey instrument or assessment that has equivalent questions, rather than identical ones, to the baseline (or midline) instrument(s).

²⁰ When testing is done in multiple languages, tests **cannot** be translated. Equated versions must be developed.

STEP 5 – Calculating the Actual

The next step is to estimate the number of students showing reading skill gains, referred to as the **actual**. Reading skills are defined as reading grade level text with fluency and comprehension. In the case that Missions are assessing reading skills in different language groups, and baselines are being collected in each language group, “thresholds” should be set by language group.

Example: Using the “Multiple Threshold” Approach for Calculating the Actual

This approach compares the proportion of students meeting a series of threshold levels of achievement at a given grade level, at baseline and endline.

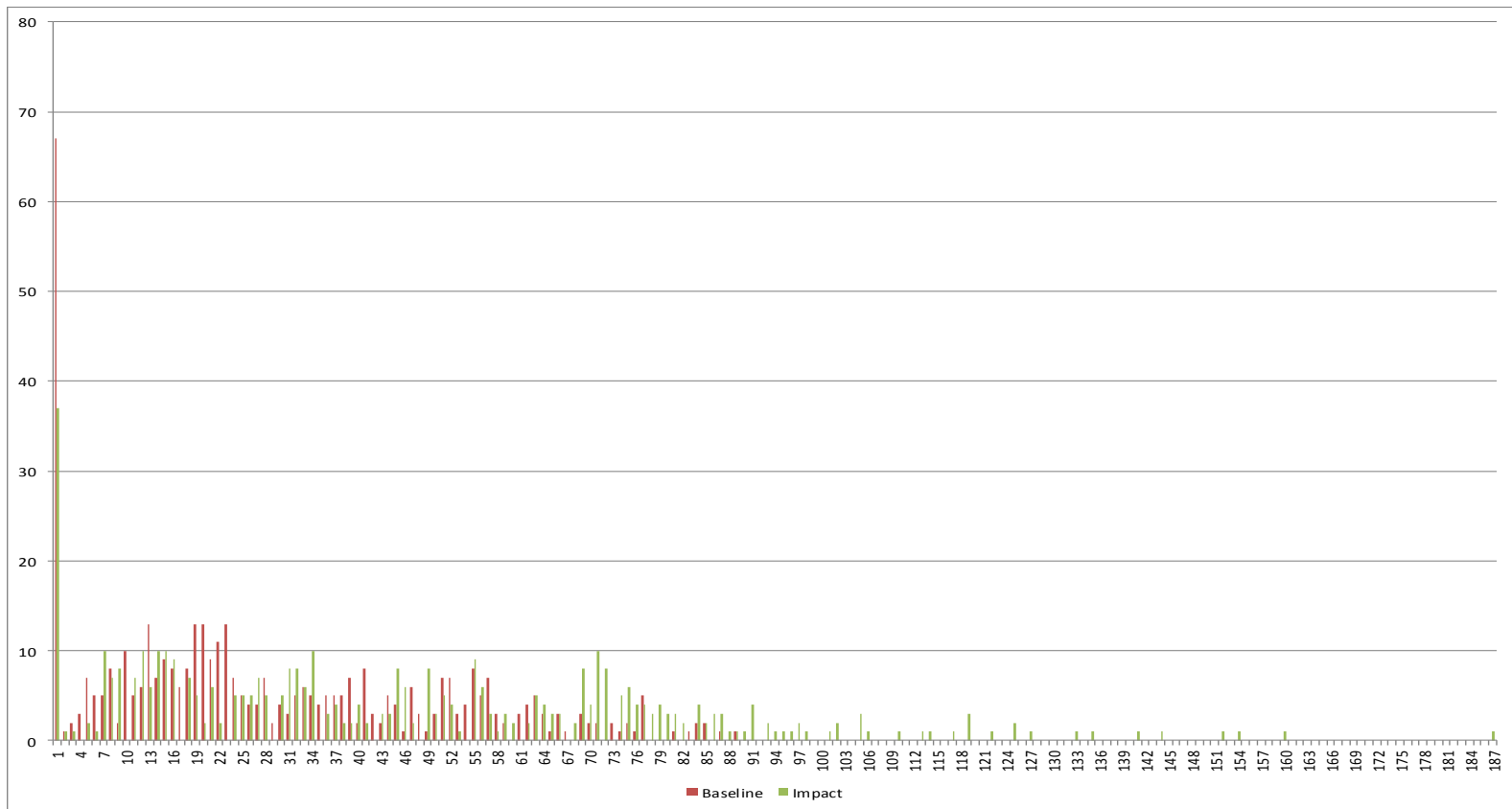
In calculating the number of students demonstrating reading skill gains in a given country, the results will be generalized (as stated earlier) from the sample of grade 2 (or other grade – but discussed here is grade 2) students assessed, to not only all grade 2 students reached by the intervention, but to *all students* at the primary level exposed to the intervention (calculations should be made for both direct and indirect beneficiaries).²¹ If the total proportion of grade 2 students, across threshold groups, demonstrating reading skill gains increases by 40 percentage points, then that same rate of gain will be applied to students in all other primary grades with comparable USAID interventions in order to calculate the total number of students showing reading gains.

Missions will be expected to report both **direct** and **indirect** beneficiaries reached through USAID supported/funded reading interventions.

The multiple threshold approach compares the distribution of reading scores (words correct per minute, or wcpm) across several levels of reading fluency at baseline and endline. Each country will determine what the thresholds are for the various levels, using baseline data. Thresholds should be set based on the distribution of scores at baseline. It is recommended that the lowest threshold be set at 0 (non-readers) or near 0, particularly in cases where reading achievement is very low at baseline, and that the highest threshold be set at fluent reading (reading grade level text with at least 80% comprehension). Missions may choose to add another threshold, apart from these two, depending on the baseline distribution. It is strongly recommended that missions set only 2 or 3 thresholds, with the intent of maximizing the accuracy of the count, while containing the required sample size – which increases along with the number of thresholds. It is expected that these thresholds will be set at the country level, for each language.

The chart below, and subsequent table and discussion, makes use of data from a country in Africa, adapted for this purpose. The chart shows the distribution of wcpm scores, with baseline scores in red and endline scores in green, from a cross-sectional sample of students. Scores were obtained for approximately 450 students at baseline and a similar number at endline. At baseline, there was a high incidence of zero scores, while there were considerably fewer zero scores at endline. Overall, from baseline to endline, the distribution moves to the right. The multiple threshold approach offers a way to compare changes in the distributions to produce a count.

²¹ If results from assessments at grade 2 and at the end of primary show that very different proportional gains were achieved by grade tested, a country may use a revised approach to this calculation.



The table below compares the proportion of learners at various defined reading levels in English—in this case, 0 wcpm for non-readers; 1 – 40 wcpm; 41 – 70 wcpm; and 71 + wcpm for fluent readers.²² In this example, the highest threshold is tied to reading comprehension. As it happens, learners needed to read about 71 wcpm to score at or above 80 percent reading comprehension. **Note that this fluent reader group corresponds to the standard/F indicator for reading at grade level.** The third row in the table estimates the net percentage point change for movement we know to be desirable. For instance, we aim to reduce the proportion of non-readers, so a decrease from baseline to endline here is counted as a gain. The same principle applies with the two highest-performing categories. With the second lowest group, however, in this country, it is less clear how to interpret the changes; so this column is not added to the others. In some cases, it might be desirable for the proportion in this group to rise, while in others it might be desirable for the proportion to drop. This must be determined country by country, as a function of baseline data and reading trajectories.

Year	Percentage of non-readers (0 wcpm)	Percentage reading (1 - 40 wcpm)	Percentage reading (41 – 70 wcpm)	Percentage reading (71 + wcpm)	Percentage with reading gains
Baseline	22	63	12	3	
Endline	16	47	20	17	

²² The lowest (non-reader) and highest (reading at grade level) are rates set for English in the country in question. Note that on the whole, higher fluency is needed to achieve comprehension in a second or third language than for a first language.

Net percentage point change	6	NA	8	14	28
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In this example, the cross-sectional data (two different samples of grade 2 students) demonstrates a total of 28 net percentage points gain—determined by adding up the percentage increases in the categories that are readily interpretable. So, if the intervention population in the country is 600,000, we then would count 28 percent of the population, or 168,000 improved readers.

Note that for each language in each country the threshold points will be determined using the baseline data on wcpm as well as other factors. The example used here is purely illustrative, and not meant to suggest recommended thresholds across languages and countries. Those thresholds will be determined at the country level, in context.

The 18-month intervention that produced these results was intensive and implemented effectively. It is important to take note of the scale of gains—in 28 percent of learners—achieved, even with the high quality programming. Missions should design and implement programming based on rigorous evidence, ensure high-fidelity implementation, and be realistic in setting targets.

In the above “multiple threshold” example, where a national-level intervention with USG support was assumed, 1680,000 students can be **directly** counted toward Goal 1. In other cases, USAID will support interventions that do not involve all learners in the given primary grades. In those cases, if there are other interventions that are not funded by USG but are **indirectly** attributable to USG influence, **direct** and **indirect** contributions will be counted separately toward the 100 million. For instance, perhaps USAID advocates for primary-level reading interventions, and implements programming in selected regions of the country. The numbers of students showing reading gains in these areas would be counted as direct contributions. If the country then expands those interventions to the rest of the country, then the number of students showing reading gains in these government-supported areas would be reported separately as indirect contributions.

Other Analytical Considerations

While we have discussed in detail the methodology that will be used for the count, the datasets that Missions will have can be usefully analyzed in many different ways. A comparison of the baseline and endline datasets, in addition to providing a count, can also be used for further, informative analytical purposes. For instance, Missions will want to know how the mean (average) and median (score at the mid-point of the distribution) change between baseline and endline. This information tells us a great deal about overall rates of change in reading skills. In addition, the standard deviation (SD) describes how the scores are dispersed, or arranged, around the mean. In sum, a great deal of additional information can be gleaned from a comparison of the baseline and endline datasets.

Tools

Country Level Projection Calculations Worksheet

This worksheet is designed to assist country programs to work through the process of determining projections for contributing to USAID’s goal to improve reading skills for 100 million primary school children by 2015. Each section should be carefully reviewed and information provided for all relevant factors. This will likely require consultation with country partners.

I. Primary School Population

I.1. Number of Primary Schools

Public Private Total

I.2. Number of Primary School Pupils

Grade*	Public	Private	Total
Grade 1			
Grade 2			
Grade 3			
Grade 4			
Grade 5			
Grade 6			
Source (including academic year)			

*Add kindergarten if it is a part of the formal primary education system and additional grades if a country’s primary cycle extends beyond grade 6.

Comment on any country specific enrollment trends.

2. Evidence on Reading

2.1. Describe the current assessment environment. What assessments have taken place or are planned? Is there any systematic evaluation of reading?

2.2. What results exist, if any, for the following measures?

Measure	Indicator	Result(s)	Nationally Representative?	Regionally Representative?	Source (including year)
Non-readers					
Letter Recognition					
Word Recognition					
Fluency					
Comprehension					
Grade Level Literacy					
Other					

2.3. What goals/policies/targets, if any, have the government established for reading outcomes?

3. Programming

3.1. What funds are anticipated for achieving reading outcomes?

FY 2012

FY 2013

FY 2014

FY 2015

3.2. Targeted Population

3.2.1. What is the geographic reach of the anticipated programming (national, selected regions, selected districts, etc...)?

3.2.2. What is the estimated number of schools to be targeted?

3.2.3. What is the estimated number of pupils to be targeted?

3.2.4. Is there any expectation that other partners (including the government) will replicate or take to scale within the timeframe of the strategy?

3.3. Program Focus

3.3.1. What are the elements of the reading intervention (check all that apply)?

Teaching Technique and Pedagogy

Improved curriculum and standards for primary reading

Evidence-based instructional approach

Teacher professional development and coaching

Texts and Materials

Additional and improved teaching and learning materials

Grade-level appropriate materials developed

Language of Instruction

Use of a language that students speak and understand

Use of mother-tongue instruction

Assessment and Testing

Classroom and large scale assessment

Planned RCT for replication/scale-up

Time Use

Increased instructional time

Tracking

Use of remedial program or differential instruction

Community and Parental Support

Parent/community support for reading

Use of community-based teacher aides/tutors

Other

Describe Other

3.3.2. What grades are being targeted (check all that apply)?*

Grade 1

Grade 4

Grade 2

Grade 5

Grade 3

Grade 6

*Add kindergarten if it is a part of the formal primary education system

3.4. Implementation Mechanism(s)

3.4.1. How will the programs be implemented (check all that apply)?

Contracts/Cooperative Agreements with International Partners

Contracts/Cooperative Agreements with Local Partners

Host Country Contracting

4. Assessment

- 4.1. What indicators have been established?
- 4.2. What are the baseline values (for each)?
- 4.3. What are the target values (for each)?
- 4.4. Will there be a control group?
- 4.5. What is the schedule for assessment activities?

5. Considerations for Indirect Attribution

- 5.1. What are other partners doing to support reading improvements?

Table 5: Illustrative Country Numbers of Primary Grade Students for Goal 1

Country	Grade 1 stds	Total primary stds	Total potential stds	EGRA done ***
Pakistan	4,923,765	18,175,802	28,023,332	X
Jordan	141,781	4,864,350	5,147,912	
Egypt	1,702,015	9,988,181	13,392,211	X
Sudan	931,880	4,351,957	6,215,717	
Indonesia	5,523,325	24,498,266	35,544,916	
Liberia	130,406	539,887	800,699	X
Ghana	741,603	3,625,178	5,108,384	X
Iraq	1,006,833	4,864,350	6,878,016	
Lebanon	74,331	817,160	965,822	
Ethiopia	4,144,686	13,379,059	21,668,431	X
Mali	376,507	1,823,087	2,576,101	X
Nigeria	3,856,534	21,632,070	29,345,138	X
Haiti	...			X
DRC	2,756,274	9,973,365	15,485,913	X
Senegal	351,079	1,618,303	2,320,461	X
Tanzania	1,416,855	8,626,825	11,460,535	X
Kenya	1,268,098	6,868,810	9,405,006	X
Yemen	725,441	3,282,457	4,733,339	X
Mozambique	1,131,559	4,899,652	7,162,770	X
Zambia	504,969	2,909,436	3,919,374	X
Honduras	261,623	1,276,495	1,799,741	X
West Bank and Gaza	98,280	390,051	586,611	
Malawi	880,407	3,197,928	4,958,742	X
Uganda	1,897,114	7,963,979	11,758,207	X
Morocco	748,940	2,878,640	4,376,520	
Guatemala	626,282	2,500,575	3,753,139	X
Somalia	144,482	457,132	746,096	
India***	2,342,400	10,389,593	15,074,392	
Philippines	2,907,459	13,411,286	19,226,204	X
Peru	613,090	3,854,764	5,080,944	X
Bangladesh	4,283,094	16,001,605	24,567,793	X
Rwanda	680,117	2,190,270	3,550,504	X
El Salvador	185,017	993,795	1,363,829	
Dominican Republic	225,689	1,333,468	1,784,846	
South Africa	1,122,114	7,231,660	9,475,888	X
Jamaica	49,435	315,129	413,999	
Cambodia	504,021	2,340,606	3,348,648	X
Macedonia	24,010	115,082	163,102	
Kyrgyzstan	98,710	399,833	597,253	
Nicaragua	252,931	944,341	1,450,203	
Afghanistan	811,282	4,887,528	6,510,092	X
Benin	411,579	1,601,146	2,424,304	
TOTAL	48,280,686		333,165,134	

*2007 data used where 2008 missing.

**Includes all primary year 1, plus new grade 1 classes years 2 and 3, same size as grade 1 class in year 1.

Assumptions: Countries and other donors will fund a good portion of intervention costs.

***Total for column is numbers of students in countries with assessments done or underway.

****The grade 1, total primary, and potential students for India is calculated for 2 states where USAID may engage

Table 6: Goal 1 and Goal 3 Standard Indicators

Goal 1 and 3 Standard Indicators	
	Goal 1: Improved reading skills ¹ for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015; Goal 3: Increased equitable access to education for 15 million learners in crisis and conflict
1 (3.2.1-27)	Proportion of students, who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text. (outcome; direct and indirect breakouts clear from indicator reference sheet)
1 (3.2.1-28)	Proportion of students, who, by the end of the primary cycle, are able to read and demonstrate understanding as defined by a country curriculum, standards, or national experts. (outcome; direct/indirect breakouts clear from indicator reference sheet)
3 (3.2.1-14)	Number of learners enrolled in primary schools and/or equivalent non-school based settings
3 (3.2.1-15)	Number of learners enrolled in secondary schools or equivalent non-school based settings
Output indicators by IR	
1.1 3.3 (3.2.1-31)	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who successfully completed in-service training or received intensive coaching or mentoring with USG support. (disaggregated by direct and indirect)
1.1 3.3 (3.2.1-32)	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who successfully completed pre-service training with USG support. (disaggregated by direct and indirect)
1.1 3.3 (3.2.1-3)	Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support. (disaggregated by direct and indirect)
1.2 3.3 (3.2.1-33)	Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with USG support. If the indicator is used ask: Have these materials been reviewed for gender bias, and if so how?
1.2 3.3 (3.2.1-34)	Number of standardized learning assessments supported by USG
1.2.3.3 (3.2.1-35)	Number of learners receiving reading interventions at the primary level
1.2 (3.2.1-36)	Number and proportion of schools using Information Communication Technology ²³ due to USG support (direct/indirect).
1.2 (3.2.1-37)	Number of impact evaluations conducted (disaggregate by Goal One and Goal Three)
1.3 3.3 (3.2.1-18)	Number of PTAs or similar 'school' governance structures supported
1.3 3.3 (3.2.1-38)	Number of laws, policies, regulations, or guidelines developed or modified to improve primary grade reading programs or increase equitable access
3.1(3.2.1-39)	Number of classrooms built or repaired with USG assistance
3.1 (3.2.1-30)	Primary Net Enrollment Rate (NER)
3.1 (3.2.1-40)	Number of USG supported schools or learning spaces meeting criteria for safe schools program
3.2(3.2.1-44)	Number of teachers in USG supported programs trained on how to support learners' psychosocial well-being (do not double count with other indicators)
(3.2.1-41)	Total number of person hours of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who successfully completed in-service training or received intensive coaching or mentoring with USG support.
(3.2.1-42)	Total number of person hours of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who successfully completed pre-service training with USG support
(3.2.1-43)	Total number of person hours of administrators and officials successfully trained.

²³ (television, radio, internet, computers, DVDs, e-books, mobile phones etc.)

Goal 2

Trends and Challenges

The following provides additional substantive material for use in planning or realigning Goal 2 portfolios.

Growing Enrollments. Higher/tertiary education enrollments worldwide doubled between 1990 and 2005 and continue to grow at a rate of six to seven percent per year. The increase in enrollments can be attributed to three factors – population expansion, increased secondary enrollments and graduation rates, and high private returns to education. While the higher education sector has responded to this surge in student enrollment, capacity is still not able to match demand. In some instances, expansion in access has come at the cost of educational quality. Many university and workforce development programs in developing countries do not teach the skills needed in the workplace, often due to a lack of **quality and relevance** of tertiary and workforce development programs. This mismatch results in a surplus of graduates without critical workplace competencies, accompanied by skill shortages in critical occupations and industries required for economic development.

Rising Costs. As enrollments rise at all levels so do government costs of public education. Most countries do not have the required financial capacity to support demand, forcing higher education providers to search for innovative funding solutions. This search has led to some significant outcomes, notably the expansion of private higher/tertiary education, lower cost modalities of higher education, and increased public-private partnerships. At the same time, inadequate levels of transparency and accountability associated with management and admissions (i.e., corruption), compounded by disparities in income, access to quality secondary education, and geographic factors, limit access to higher education.

Equitable Access. In many countries of the world, the process of gaining admission to a publicly supported institution of higher education is not based on equal opportunities. Corrupt practices surrounding the admissions process may enable a student to purchase university entrance although his or her academic achievement may not warrant it. Even where admissions are based on competitive academic merit, inequities often remain. Most commonly, students whose parents can afford private secondary school and/or private tutors in order to prepare them academically tend to perform well and obtain the lion's share of public admission places. Students of lesser means—the poor, the rural, and the ethnic minorities—are frequently left with the payment of unaffordable tuition fees at a private (or public) institution as their only option for continuing their education, or forgoing the continuing education option altogether. Such inequities, especially when they systematically exclude particular social groups over time, can foster resentment and raise the potential for political instability.²⁴ To the degree that the quality of primary and secondary education provided in rural areas is less than that provided in urban areas, the access of rural populations to quality tertiary education is further constrained. Finally, tertiary education institutions and programs tend to be concentrated in areas of high population, further limiting access for rural populations.

²⁴ INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility, 2008, *Education and Fragility: A Synthesis of the Emerging Research*, Amherst. INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility, 2008, *Education and Fragility: A Synthesis of the Emerging Research*, Amherst, MA: Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts Amherst, p. 11

The Rise of a Globally Competitive, Knowledge-driven Economy. Governments worldwide are pursuing national and corporate capacity for innovation that increases productivity and enhances economic competitiveness. These dynamics have increased the demand for more productive higher education partnerships with the corporate sector that jointly fund research and apply science and technology innovations to market demands. Likewise the demand for expanded leadership, increased management training and a skilled labor force make tertiary education institutions increasingly important as instruments for national development.

The ICT Revolution. The ICT revolution fuels the demand for higher education by expanding delivery options and transforming the way in which higher education is provided. Technology enables higher education to manage rising student demand by offering greater access and cost-effective alternatives to traditional campus-based study while expanding services to under-represented ethnic groups and rural students in foreign markets. Conversely, the accelerated growth of the ICT sector has created new demand for skilled workers, reinforcing the need for better access and higher quality in high education institutions.

Governance and Accountability Trends. Recent data analyses and literature reviews have found evidence of a positive correlation between higher education and good governance.²⁵ As tertiary institutions gained a more prominent place in national development efforts, they claimed a larger proportion of public and private resources. Greater levels of public expenditures, in turn, increased demands and efforts for greater accountability in the use of public funds, as well as the quality and relevance of the education. These concerns and demands have led to the establishment (or improvement) of national quality assurance initiatives, international rankings of universities, inclusion of external stakeholders within institutional governance, and performance-based funding formulas for competitively allocating budget resources to institutions. In response to these demands, higher education communities have pressed for greater autonomy in governing their own affairs so that they would have greater flexibility to respond/adapt to the changing global market demands.

In the current knowledge-driven economies where specific knowledge and skills may rapidly become outdated, the challenge for the education system is to quickly be able to adjust to the changing market demands and development priorities. This means that development and assurance of educational quality and relevance become vital to a country's ability to compete in the global economy. Current approaches include, but are not limited to, policies supporting autonomy and accountability; policies aimed at fostering competition within the domestic tertiary education subsector; policies and institutional arrangements supportive of collaboration with the private sector and other stakeholders; improved faculty development programs; and innovative quality assurance mechanisms.

Promising Approaches for Strengthening Tertiary Education

Systemic Reform. USAID assistance will promote policy reforms that cultivate a diverse system of autonomous and accountable tertiary education institutions responsive to the needs of economic and social development and capable of effective collaboration with public and private

²⁵ Laura Brannelly, Laura Lewis & Susy Ndaruhutse, *Higher Education and the Formation of Developmental Elites* (Development Leadership Program; Research Paper #10, February 2011; www.dlprog.org)

sector stakeholders. Such reforms should foster accountability and quality assurance at public and private institutions.

Encourage Competition and Collaboration. Competition among tertiary institutions encourages innovation and reduces bureaucratic waste. Competitively accessed funding for capacity building works best when it promotes institutional quality or experimentation rather than system-wide reform, when evaluation procedures are based on transparent procedures, and when funding decisions are made by an independent body of experts. In addition, research collaboration encourages institutions to leverage their respective strengths and conduct joint research that promotes the application of science and technology innovations in the private and public sectors of society.

Foster and Promote Institutional Autonomy and Accountability. The best higher education systems are characterized by autonomy and independent governance. USAID interventions in higher education, to the degree feasible, should aim to affirm (and possibly expand) the legal limits of institutional autonomy and ensure that membership on institutional governing boards is broadly representative and not dominated by any one interest group.²⁶ Apart from educational benefits, such a stance would also help to promote democratization objectives. At the same time, USAID interventions should work to ensure institutional accountability, particularly with regard to public universities and public funding.

Consider Challenges Posed by Expanding Enrollments to Education Quality. Increasing demand and social pressure for access to tertiary education will inevitably pose a challenge to the capacity of tertiary education institutions to maintain and improve education quality and relevance. The final determination of interventions, developed through close collaboration with the host country, will need to reflect the political, social, and economic realities.

University and Private Sector Partnerships. Missions are encouraged to develop public-private partnerships, linkages, and networks among and between U.S. and local tertiary institutions, business communities, foundations, non-governmental organizations, and private voluntary organizations. This will facilitate relevance, quality and sustainability of programs and contribute to broader economic and social development of the partner country. In considering such linkages, missions should carefully consider what types of partnerships are best suited for what types of interventions, and how they can promote/support broader systemic changes.

Workforce Development

Workforce Development is by nature cross-sectoral in that expertise and involvement is needed from the Education field and Economic Growth/Private Enterprise, or even specific expertise from the Agriculture field and others. Within USAID this means that Education country teams collaborate with other sectors as each brings critical knowledge and networks to the table. Education's strengths are in human development, learning, and detailed knowledge of the education and training actors in a country—both formal and non-formal. Economic Growth's strengths are in understanding market dynamics and the characteristics and growth prospects of

²⁶ Fielden, John. 2008. Global Trends in University Governance. Education Working Paper Series Number 9. World Bank, Washington D.C.

industry sectors and value chains where a nation's young people will seek jobs once they leave the education system. Education and Economic Growth experts may come to the workforce development field speaking different “languages” and with different sets of priorities and areas of familiarity, as well as funding parameters.

Efforts should focus on strengthening local capacity to form academic programs so they are suffused with a work readiness development; and developing school-to-work programs that provide pathways to help connect students to the world of work. USAID programs may provide technical support for career development programs and centers in communities and educational institutions to provide career and employment information, employability training, and credentials to job seekers. Practical work-learning experiences will be increased through internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, and mentoring—particularly for women and girls. USAID may support efforts to improve quality and access to workforce development programs through policy reform, accreditation, assessment, standards frameworks, certification systems, and capacity building for host country institutions and stakeholders, including the private sector, to effectively implement these measures. The key component in all of these interventions is prior commitment from governments or NGOs to participate in the programming and continue the programs after USAID funding ends. Linkages to international and regional industry and workforce preparation networks are important as the workforce globalizes.

Private training firms may also be effective providers of non-formal training and employment services, and market-based solutions should be explored. ICT modalities such as employment services through mobile phones, internet-based curriculum, and educational gaming are encouraged and are expanding as skills needed in the private sector, and as a means of service delivery.

Evaluating Workforce Development Programs

Evaluation of workforce development programming is challenging because of the complexity of the labor market for which learners are being prepared. The bottom line of any workforce program is that learners obtain (or create) jobs, that they retain these jobs for a substantial period of time (for self-employed, that they eventually formalize the business and add employees), and that this employment is safe and provides a living wage (sometimes called a “decent” job). A monitoring and evaluation system for most workforce development systems should include employment outcomes and these should be sensitive to these factors. Typically, a workforce development system will be evaluated on:

- How many learners who entered a training program completed it (disaggregated by sex);
 - Number of persons completing USG-funded workforce development programs [former F Standard Indicator]
- How many earned a recognized certification (whether recognized by government or private industry entities);
 - Number of US-supported tertiary educational programs that develop or implement industry-recognized skills certification [F Standard Indicator 3.2.2-39 – higher education]
- How many participants obtained jobs related in the training field six months after completing a program;

- How many participants obtained any kind of job;
 - Number of persons receiving new employment or better employment (including better self-employment) as a result of participation in USG-funded workforce development program [F Standard Indicator 4.6.3 – workforce development]
 - Percentage of graduates from USG-supported tertiary education programs reporting themselves as employed [F Standard Indicator 3.2.2-37 – higher education]
- Earnings;
 - Per capita expenditures (as a proxy for income) of USG targeted beneficiaries [4.5 – agriculture]
 - Percent change in value of input purchases by microentrepreneurs (or smallholders) [F Standard Indicator 4.7.3 – microenterprise productivity]
- Job retention rate among participants at one year;
- Job placement rate of tertiary and workforce development institutions targeted by USG;
- Number of people transitioning to further education and training as a result of participation in USG-funded workforce development programs [former F Standard Indicator]

In contrast to most general education programs, an individual follow-up or tracking system—as well as a supported “accompaniment” period after training—is critical to workforce development systems that USAID may support. In fact, success in this area is usually *the* mark of a successful workforce development system.

Box 2: Impact Evaluation Resources

For information on conducting impact evaluations of youth livelihood programs (relevant to Goals 2 & 3), see the GPYE/World Bank guide, “Measuring Success of Youth Livelihood Interventions: A Practical Guide to Monitoring and Evaluation,” at <http://www.gpye.org/measuring-success-youth-livelihood-interventions>. This guide provides in-depth information on how to design and implement impact evaluations of youth livelihoods programs, with sections such as: Project design; Establishing a monitoring system; Deciding whether to do an impact evaluation; Proving program impact; Identifying an appropriate impact evaluation method; A step-by-step guide to impact evaluation.

However, the pure employment-based M & E approach is usually *not* adequate for youth—whether in school or out of school—or for vulnerable populations in post-conflict or other crisis settings, thus additional measures will be necessary. This is because positive outcomes are also measured by increased levels of workforce preparedness, which may not be fully actualized by the learner obtaining a stable job for many years to come. Instead workforce preparation for youth and marginalized populations in extremely challenging environments will unfold over a period of years and will involve a variety of stop and start work and learning experiences. In addition to internationally or regional recognized technical skills certifications there are also a number of emerging global measures of workforce readiness including “soft skills” that employers universally say they want (e.g., critical thinking, strong ethics, communication skills, self-motivated, etc.).

Indicators

Table 7: Goal 2 Indicators

Goal 2 Indicators	
3.2.2-33	Number of USG-supported tertiary education programs that include experiential and/or applied learning opportunities
3.2.2-35	Number of U.S.-host country joint development research projects
3.2.2-36	Number of USG-supported tertiary programs with curricula revised with private and/or public sector employers' input or on the basis of market research
3.2.2-37	Percentage of graduates from USG-supported tertiary education programs reporting themselves as employed
3.2.2-38	Number of USG-supported tertiary education programs that adopt policies and/or procedures to strengthen transparency of admissions and/or to increase access of underserved and disadvantaged groups
3.2.2-39	Number of US-supported tertiary educational programs that develop or implement industry-recognized skills certification
3.2.2-40	Number of academic research initiatives whose findings have been replicated, applied, or taken to market
3.2.2-41	Number of individuals from underserved and/or disadvantaged groups accessing tertiary education programs
3.2.2-42	Number of tertiary institution faculty or teaching staff whose qualifications are strengthened through USG-supported tertiary education programs

Program Rubrics

Table 8: Rubrics Covered Under Goal 2

Formal	Non-formal	Informal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy reform, accreditation, assessment, standards frameworks, certification systems, and capacity building ▪ Financing modalities to enhance disadvantaged youth to access quality training ▪ Collaboration platforms to enable private sector partners on curriculum standards with education and training providers ▪ Financial sustainability of Workforce development programs with local stakeholders ▪ Strengthening public vocational education systems to offer second-chance programming for youth ▪ Reform of academic programs to include work readiness ▪ Career development programs and centers ▪ Linkages to international and regional industry and workforce preparation networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mainstreaming of workforce readiness skills in general and vocational education systems ▪ School-to-work programs ▪ Work-related learning for increased access of disadvantaged learners (unemployed female and male youth, dropouts, rural women and men, and the disabled) ▪ Life skills education as complementary to formal training ▪ Employability training ▪ Functional literacy/numeracy (related to job skills) ▪ Alternative certifications ▪ Entrepreneurship skills ▪ Job placement and career development/employment service centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-plant technical training by companies, organizations, or individuals ▪ Enterprise-based training (uncertified) ▪ Skills training offered through a vocational education institution or polytechnic college ▪ Internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, and mentoring ▪ Peer learning and youth leadership for specific skills needed for the workforce (e.g. ICT) ▪ Job site mentoring

Goal 2 Table 9: Overview Typology of the Workforce Development Field (including rubrics beyond those covered under Goal 2)

Formal	Non-formal	Informal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upper primary-to-work programs ▪ Secondary vocational-technical schools ▪ Technical colleges ▪ Professional colleges ▪ Community colleges ▪ Vocational training schools ▪ Secondary professional schools ▪ Post-secondary non-degree colleges and institutions ▪ Enterprise-based training, entrepreneurship, and apprenticeships (certified) ▪ Business Development Services (BDS) attached to formal training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Out-of-school youth programs ▪ Vocational training centers led by organizations, faith-based, or private (non-accredited) ▪ Job placement and career development/employment service centers ▪ Short vocational training courses for crises and post-crisis recovery ▪ Functional literacy/numeracy ▪ Life skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-plant technical training by companies, organizations, or individuals ▪ Enterprise-based training (uncertified) ▪ Skills training ▪ Cooperatives offering craft training ▪ Apprenticeship training (uncertified) ▪ Peer learning and youth leadership for specific skills needed for the workforce (e.g. ICT) ▪ Job site mentoring

Goal 3

Defining Crisis and Conflict Environments

Of the over 70 million primary school-aged children not in school, nearly 40 million live in countries affected by armed conflict. Tens of millions more are living in situations where they have been displaced or otherwise affected by natural disaster. Finally, untold numbers of children and youth are at risk every day in their communities or neighborhoods from lawlessness, crime and gang activity.

While the annual USAID alert list captures countries affected by traditional forms of armed conflict, fragility and instability, it does not capture countries or areas with high rates of lawlessness, crime and gang violence. Given this, for the purposes of the education strategy, lawlessness, crime and gang violence will be determined by taking into consideration several factors:

- I. **Murder Rates** – Even though its measurement is not fully reliable, homicide is the crime whose incidence is more accurately known. Given this, murder rates are widely accepted as one of the most reliable indicators of high crime contexts. Those countries with murder rates of 30 deaths per every 100 thousand people or higher are considered to be most at risk. The most credible source of information on murder rates is the United Nations Office on Crime and Drugs’ “Intentional Homicide Database.” ([Available here.](#))
- II. **Perceptions of Citizen Security and Rates of Victimization** – Given that most crime statistics are under reported in high crime environments, opinion surveys which track perceptions of citizen security and crime victimization are often used as a proxy measure for citizen safety. The rate of crime victimization refers to the proportion of people who report having suffered from crime in the previous year. USAID, along with other donors, fund several studies which track these measures including Americas Barometer, Afro Barometer and Arab Barometer. These reports are normally published once every two years. [The 2010 Americas Barometer report can be found here.](#)
- III. **Presence and/or High Risk of Gangs, Organized Crime or Drug Trafficking** – While there are no internationally recognized statistics on gang activity or drug trafficking, there are several gang assessments, reports and local reporting information which should inform this designation. The reports provide detailed information on countries that have or are at risk for gang activity and drug trafficking. Some of the most notable include the following:
 - a. [LAC/RSD's 2006 Central America and Gang Assessment](#)
 - b. [Human Development Report for Central America 2009-2010: Opening Spaces to Citizen Security and Human Development](#)
 - c. UN’s Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Organized Crime has produced regional assessments of organized crime. The most recent include regional assessments of West Africa and Central Asia.
 - i. [Transnational Crime in the West Africa Region](#)
 - ii. [An Assessment of Transnational Organized Crime in Central Asia](#)

- d. State Department’s International Narcotics Control Reports ([Volume I](#) & [Volume II](#)) and the UN’s Office on Drugs and Crime [World Drug Report \(2011\)](#)

IV. In order to be considered for Goal 3 programming, as a starting point, a Mission must identify violence related to lawlessness, crime or gang activity as a threat to national stability in the Mission Strategic Resource Plan (MSRP) and/or the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), or in a comparable strategic communication with AID/Washington. In addition, Regional Bureaus in collaboration with EGAT/ED will determine which environments meet the standards of lawlessness, crime and gang activity for programming under Goal 3 by considering the standards listed above. USAID Missions may be asked to provide a justification in those cases which are not clear cut.

Estimating Numbers of Learners with Increased Equitable Access to Education in Crisis and Conflict Environments

Overview

This guidance is designed to help missions programming under Goal 3 to calculate the number of learners with increased access to education in crisis and conflict environments.²⁷

Missions will calculate contributions to the 15 million goal using primarily Foreign Assistance Framework standard indicators:²⁸

- Number of learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings with USG support
- Number of learners enrolled in secondary schools or equivalent non-school based settings with USG support

In addition, Missions may need to use a third-party data for other indicators available from the country and/or from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) for primary and secondary school. More detail on the calculation methodology is below.

All indicators used to count direct and indirect beneficiaries toward Goal 3 should be reported separately. Direct beneficiaries are reached with direct USG assistance (funded in part or in whole by USG). Indirect beneficiaries are affected through a follow-on or indirect effect but where there is plausible attribution—such as countries taking a USG-funded pilot intervention to scale, with no additional USG funding; or donor and country harmonization around a common technical approach, in which USG has been instrumental. The total mission contribution to the Goal 3 count, though, will be the sum of the direct and indirect beneficiary counts.

Each mission programming under Goal 3 will count the number of learners (children and youth²⁹) benefitting from one or more education opportunities supported with direct USG funding, or indirectly through policy reforms, coordinated efforts, or when USAID provides a key component in programs.

²⁷ Note that in crisis and conflict environments where program exclusively measure under goal 1, with no measurement of access, learners cannot be counted toward goal 3. In many countries, missions may have programs with both quality and access goals, and so fall under both goals 1 and 3. In these countries, missions can and should count learners benefitting from goal 3 programming so long as measuring contributions toward the Agency goals are distinct.

²⁸ See Annex 1-F for a full list of the standard, or F, indicators.

²⁹ Youth will be defined according to the USAID Youth Policy (forthcoming).

Learners involved in all of the following access-related activities, with direct or indirect USG support, should be counted:

- Formal primary school
- Formal secondary school
- Alternative education services for children and youth
 - Non-formal primary
 - Non-formal secondary
- Accelerated learning
- Early Childhood Education
- Other

Calculation

Missions are encouraged to use one of two alternative approaches to counting toward Goal 3. *Alternative 1*: In countries with direct goal 3 interventions that are not at the national level, or are limited in scope and coverage, and where increased access is directly attributable USG programming or influence, a simple sum of the totals from two standard indicators will be used.³⁰

Goal 3 – Alternate 1

Number of learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings with USG support
+
Number of learners enrolled in secondary schools or equivalent non-school based settings with USG support
=
Total number of learners with increased access

Or: *Alternative 2*:

Goal 3 – Alternate 2

Number of learners enrolled in <i>non-school based</i> primary-level settings with USG support
+
Number of learners enrolled in <i>non-school based</i> secondary-level settings with USG support
+
Estimated number of learners at the primary and secondary levels newly enrolled in formal school
=
Total number of learners with increased access.

In countries with national-level direct or indirect interventions, in which it is plausible to attribute large-scale change to USG programming or influence, the calculation is a bit more complicated: The first two components can be calculated from the standard indicators, keeping the numbers of learners in non-school based settings at the primary and secondary levels, and excluding those in formal settings³¹. Missions typically have ready access to separate counts.

³⁰ Programs that include support for Early Childhood Education or accelerated programs for youth will need to create an additional indicator for these age groups.

The third component is more complex and will be calculated from the change in the Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) at baseline, before interventions begin, and at the end of the strategy timeframe.³² The GER is the ratio of students in formal schools at a given level, to the number of children/youth of the intended age range for that school level. To do the calculation, we must have access to both the GER numerator and denominator. The table below illustrates how this calculation will be done; note that a separate spreadsheet will be needed for the primary and secondary levels, as GER is level specific:

Year	Number of primary school students (of any age)	Number of children age 6-12 in the population	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Number of students with new access
2012	500,000	750,000	67	
2015	750,000	1,000,000	75	83,333

The number of students with new access to primary schooling is calculated by taking the change in the GER (from 67 to 75, or 8 percentage points) and multiplying it by the denominator, 1,000,000, to get a total of 83,333. AID/W will assist missions in making these calculations, using third-party data.

With both approaches to the calculation, it is difficult to avoid double (or triple) counting learners. If the same learners are reached with a variety of interventions, each learner still should be counted only once. In addition, while missions will report on standard indicators annually, the numbers of learners enrolled in USG-supported primary schools or their equivalents cannot be summed across the years of the strategy to estimate a total, unless different learners are reached in each year of the intervention. Missions, and implementers, will need to take care to count learners only once, and explain their approach to doing so. The methods to avoid double counting are very context specific and guidance and support can be provided by AID/W on a case by case basis.

Crisis and Conflict-related Indices and Assessment Tools

Additional Crisis and Conflict Indices

Global Peace Index: Provides yearly rankings of countries most at peace. Index made of 23 indicators from the [Global Peace Index Peace Indicators – 2010](#).

The Political Instability Task Force: The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The PITF website, [found here](#), is hosted by the Center for Global Policy at George Mason University and is provided as a public service. The Task Force seeks to develop statistical models that can accurately assess countries' prospects for major political change and can identify key risk factors of interest to US policymakers.

³¹ In countries where non-formal education learners are counted in the GER, component three alone should be used for the calculation.

³² In some cases, even as access to schooling expands, the GER may decrease in countries that are improving age-appropriate enrollments and reducing overage participation. In these cases, while GER may go down, the NER may increase. Where this is the case, missions should use NER data instead of GER data. If neither NER nor GER increases, Missions should count 0 toward the access number, rather than a negative number.

Assessment Tools

[Table 10](#) provides a list of important tools and resources that are helpful in designing and carrying out assessments for education in crisis and conflict-affected environments. They include tools related to education, youth, conflict, and natural disasters.

Table 10: Tools and Resources to Help Design and Carry Out Assessments for Education in Crisis and Conflict-affected Environments

Education Specific	Natural Disaster	Conflict
INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery (2010)	X	X
USAID, Education and Fragility Assessment Tool (2006)		X
Save the Children, The Education and Fragility Barometer: An early warning tool to aid conflict prevention (2007)	X	X
Education Cluster, The Joint Education Needs Assessment Toolkit (2010)	X	X
USAID/Equip 3/EDC, Guide to Cross-sectoral Youth Assessments (2009)		
UNICEF, Field Action Guide for Psychosocial Assessment of Children and Families in Emergencies (2005)	X	X
Crisis/Conflict Specific		
Inter-Agency Conflict Assessment Tool, ICAF		X
USAID, Conducting a Conflict Assessment: A framework for strategy and program development (2005)		X
OFDA, Field Operations Guidelines, (Section J: Assessment Checklists & Chapter 3: Information on Populations at Risk) (2005)	X	X
DfID, Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance Notes (2002)		X
Mercy Corps, Youth and Conflict: Best Practices and Lessons Learned (includes a section on youth and conflict assessment)		X
Natural disasters		
USAID and ICIP, ABCD Basic Disaster Awareness Handbook. Istanbul, Istanbul Community Impact Project (2002)		X
Abarquez, I. and Murshed, Z., Community Based Disaster Risk Management – Field Practitioner’s Handbook. Bangkok, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (2004)		X

Coordination Relationships for Goal 3 Programming

Coordination with USG Agencies, IASC Clusters and appropriate policy frameworks and working groups is key in order to avoid duplication, identify gaps, and contribute to a coordinated approach to education reconstruction, rehabilitation, and transition.

US Government: Coordinate with the appropriate USG and USAID offices at post and in Washington depending on the nature of your program. Agency coordination helps to define the specific organizational arrangements required to deliver effective and efficient programs while outlining specific office capacities and strengths. In addition to the typical cross-cutting issue coordination with Economic Growth and Health, this section maps out other key offices within USAID where education and crisis or conflict intersect.

OFDA: Responds to natural disasters and complex emergencies and notes that disruption of education is usually a serious consequence of disasters. OFDA recognizes that education and schools are important to populations affected by disasters and that safeguarding and restarting educational opportunities are valuable normalizing activities that help communities cope with and recover from disasters.

In disasters OFDA's programming is managed through DC- and field-based regional teams or by a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in the field and a Response Management Team (RMT) in Washington. Mission-based education officers should contact regional-based OFDA staff for information on any education-related programming supported by OFDA. Washington-based staff should contact Washington-based OFDA regional teams for information about specific countries.

IASC Clusters: The IASC mandated cluster leadership approach aims to ensure a more effective humanitarian response in countries facing both conflict-related and natural disaster related crises. Clusters are coordinating bodies in humanitarian settings. The Cluster Approach is activated when a situation is deemed a humanitarian emergency by the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) based on a request from the in-country UN Resident Coordinator or Humanitarian Coordinator. Because the cluster approach is relatively new, it has limited capacity at both global as well as country levels; therefore the capacity and strength of the Education Cluster as a coordinating body will vary from country to country.

The Education Cluster is co-led at the global level by UNICEF and Save the Children. At the country level the Education Cluster may be led by one of these two agencies, both, the MoE, or another agency that has played a lead role in education provision to crisis or conflict-affected populations. While participation in the Education Cluster is key, coordination with the following other Clusters is also critical for the design and implementation of an effective education program. The following clusters represent some important linkages to education.

Other important partners include the World Food Program (WFP) as they often provide significant resources related to school feeding programs, and they also carry out detailed mapping and vulnerability assessments which provide extremely useful data related to education.

Donor Coordination Group: Donors that have included education in crisis and conflict-affected environments as a priority in their development aid strategies include DfID, The Government of the Netherlands, CIDA, The European Commission (EC), and Sida. United Nations related agencies that have showed strong commitment, intellectual leadership and technical innovation include UNICEF and UNESCO. Coordination with these actors is paramount to ensuring a sustainable education approach that supports the reconstruction, or rebuilding, of the education system.

Sector Working Group: In most situations a national level Education Sector Working Group may exist chaired by the Ministry of Education. Sector planning defines how various agencies will work together to achieve sector specific objectives. Keep in mind that in countries where the crisis or conflict is limited to a specific area or region, the priority of issues around education and crisis or conflict may not be high within the Sector Working Group. Developing linkages between the Education Cluster (or other education in emergencies related working group) and the Sector Working group is important for several reasons, but most importantly for strengthening sustainability and transitioning elements of the program. At the same time USAID programs implemented under Goal 3 bear a responsibility to raise issues and concerns related to education in crisis and conflict environments.

In 2002, Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the World Bank, together with development partners, launched the Education for All–Fast Track Initiative (FTI), now renamed the Global Partnership for Education. GPE is a global partnership to help low-income countries meet the education MDGs and the EFA goal that all children complete a full cycle of primary education by 2015. The GPE is a platform for collaboration at the global and country levels. Developing countries commit to design and implement sound education plans while donor partners commit to align and harmonize additional support around these plans. Funding is channeled through existing bilateral and multilateral channels and also through the GPE Education Fund, which replaced the Catalytic Fund (CF), which supports countries with insufficient

resources to implement their sector plans. Many crisis and conflict-affected countries fall under the Education Fund mechanism. Programming under Goal 3 should mention how USAID’s strategies will complement GPE funding if it exists in that country.

Agency	Coordinate on the basis
Department of State	Preparation of the mission strategic plans (MSPP)
Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, PRM ³³	Basic education in refugee or IDP settings, resettlement of displaced persons.
Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, S/CRS ³⁴	Inter-agency assessments related to crisis or conflict. Up-to-date data or analysis on countries in conflict, countrywide stabilization efforts.
DoD and other military teams including PRTs ³⁵ or other military teams working on reconstruction	School construction or other related community structures. Some PRTs are actively involved in school construction as well as other community rehabilitation efforts.
Department of Labor, DoL	Funds programs to combat exploitative child labor, including child soldiers, in several conflict-affected countries
Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, INL	Funds programs to combat international narcotics and crime. Programs also complement counterterrorism efforts, both directly and indirectly, by promoting modernization of and supporting operations by foreign criminal justice systems and law enforcement agencies charged with counter-terrorism mission.

³³ Funds humanitarian activities, including education through international organizations and NGOs providing services to refugees, IDPs, and stateless persons.

³⁴ The operational component of the State Department’s formalized reconstruction and stabilization (R&S) activities. S/CRS is charged by Congress and the Secretary of State with building and maintaining an expeditionary, innovative, and interagency civilian capability to plan, manage, and conduct U.S. stabilization operations on behalf of the Secretary of State and Chiefs of Mission overseas

³⁵ PRTs include military officers, DoS, USAID, and reconstruction subject matter experts working to support reconstruction efforts in unstable areas or states. PRTs operate in Afghanistan and Iraq.

USAID Offices to Coordinate with

Office	Coordinate on the basis
Office of Transition Initiatives, OTI	OTI provides short-term assistance to take advantage of windows of opportunity to build democracy and peace. Programs lay the foundations for long-term development by promoting reconciliation; jumpstarting economies and helping stable democracy take hold.
Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, OFDA	As part of its disaster response programming, OFDA frequently supports non-formal education activities as well as assistance to schools to re-start. Examples of education-related OFDA programming include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child-friendly spaces to provide children with opportunities for safe, supervised play and informal learning ▪ Skills training for adolescents, women, and other vulnerable populations ▪ Provision of temporary shelters for damaged schools ▪ Provision of school supplies and teaching materials where supplies have been lost or destroyed in a disaster ▪ Advocacy and material support for schools to enroll internally displaced children to enroll in schools in the place of displacement ▪ Training for teachers in psychosocial support, landmine awareness, and child protection.
Conflict Management and Mitigation, CMM	Provides technical support to USAID Missions and partners do more to address conflict with resources that are already available. CMM works to integrate or ‘mainstream’ best practices of conflict management into more traditional development sectors including education. Education Officers should participate in multi-sector Conflict Assessments; utilize toolkits and conflict-related frameworks.
DCOF	Provides support and protection for the special needs of children at risk, including orphans, unaccompanied minors, children affected by armed conflict, and children with disabilities.

Inter-cluster coordination

Cluster	Lead Agency	Issues to coordinate around
Health	WHO	Learning spaces provide a location in which children can have safe and reliable access to various health services, and be provided with basic knowledge on health and hygiene, and urgent life-saving health information.
Logistics	WFP	Logistics support for provision of educational materials.
Camp coordination and camp management	UNHCR/ IOM	Education in camp environments brings a sense of normality in the lives of children, their parents and their communities. In collaboration with the camp management cluster, school areas, child- friendly spaces, play and recreational areas can be planned jointly within a camp setting at the outset of an emergency, with guidance on standards provided to ensure safe and protective environments (e.g., safe distances, adequate latrine and sanitary conditions).
Protection	UNHCR/OH CR/ UNICEF	Education in safe spaces/learning environments provides psychosocial support and protection by establishing daily routines and a sense of the future; reduces vulnerability to sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation, child labor; engages children in positive alternatives to military recruitment, gangs and drugs; provides a means to identify children with special needs, such as experience of trauma or family separation; facilitates social integration of vulnerable children.
WASH	UNICEF	Safe water and gender-segregated and appropriate sanitation facilities for learning spaces and schools, hygiene promotion.
Nutrition	UNICEF	Meals or nutritious snacks as part of school feeding programs.