



# U.S. Agency for International Development

International Basic Education aligns with USAID's Mission



On behalf of the American people, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) promotes and demonstrates democratic values abroad, and advances a free, peaceful, and prosperous world. USAID leads the U.S. Government's international development and humanitarian efforts through partnerships and investments that save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, and help people emerge from humanitarian crises and progress beyond assistance.

For partner countries to advance on a path to self-reliance, they need educated and skilled populations capable of leading and managing their own development.

USAID invests in education in developing countries because we know that its positive effects are far-reaching and that it serves as a driver for all other development. Increasing education levels around the world is good for American businesses and investors. These investments are in the direct interests of the American people and support Strategic Objective 2.2 of the Department of State and USAID Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) to “promote healthy, educated, and productive populations in partner countries to drive inclusive and sustainable development, open new markets and support U.S. prosperity and security objectives.”

From 2011-2017, USAID education programs directly benefited more than 83.4 million children and youth in more than 50 countries. During that time, these programs allowed 69.8 million children to receive early-grade reading instruction, 22.6 million children and youth living in crisis- and conflict-affected environments to receive access to education, including 4.1 million who were previously out of school; and 736,000 individuals to gain skills that helped them secure employment. USAID will build on its extensive experience in international education to implement the U.S. Government Strategy for International Basic Education.

## USAID's Contribution to the U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education

### Leadership

#### **Coordination of the U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education**

The Senior Coordinator for International Basic Education Assistance (Senior Coordinator), appointed by the President and housed within USAID, will lead the U.S. Government's interagency coordination efforts. The Senior Coordinator is responsible for facilitating program and policy coordination of international basic education programs and activities among relevant departments, agencies and officials; partner governments; multilateral institutions; the private sector; and non-governmental, faith-based, and civil society organizations.

In Washington, USAID will lead the coordination of both the Agency Advisory Group and the Interagency International Basic Education Working Group, as outlined in the Strategy. In partner countries where USAID supports education programs, the Agency will play a central role in coordinating the U.S. Government's basic education assistance.

#### **Presence in Partner Countries**

USAID is the largest bilateral donor to basic education in the world, with a strong field presence in more than 40 countries. USAID will maintain this comparative advantage, which enables policy dialogue and network-building on the ground with relevant government ministries and local stakeholders. USAID will continue building strong bilateral development relationships, which, in turn, support strong political and economic relationships between the U.S. Government and partner-country governments and help advance U.S. foreign policy objectives.

#### **Global Engagement**

Globally, USAID is uniquely positioned to leverage resources while providing technical guidance, leadership, and convening authority. The Agency will continue to engage with multilateral institutions, international organizations, and global funds—such as the Global Partnership for Education, Education Cannot Wait, and other donors and development partners—to expand the Agency's reach, ensure the representation and promotion of U.S. interests, and maximize the efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

### Programmatic

#### **USAID Education Policy**

An Agency-wide Education Policy will support the overall objectives of the U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education and foster self-reliance in partner countries. To achieve these objectives, the policy will clearly state that the *top priority for USAID programming in the education sector is sustained improvements in learning outcomes and skills development*.<sup>63</sup> The policy will work to strengthen education systems, including public and private institutions, in partner countries to promote sustainability and advance

self-reliance. The policy will also ensure that USAID's investments support country partners in delivering on the following key outcomes:

- Children and youth, particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable, have increased access to quality education that is safe, relevant, and promotes social well-being;
- Children and youth gain literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills that are foundational to future learning and success; and
- Youth gain the skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment, and positively contribute to society.

USAID will build on the progress and significant investments it has made in the education sector, while adapting our approach to new global developments.<sup>64</sup> The Agency has acquired substantial experience, expertise, and momentum through its focus on targeted outcomes in basic education, particularly in early grade reading, education in crisis and conflict, and the skills young people need to be successful in work and life. USAID has also strengthened its own organizational capacity by improving professional development and training for education officers, investing in evaluation and research, and building internal communities of practice linked to external experts.

Improving learning outcomes and skills-development for children and youth remains our key objective. To achieve this, we will ensure our policies are flexible and adaptable to the contexts in our partner countries, to allow programs to target a greater range of learning outcomes, education levels, and institutions. The USAID Education Policy will align education sector programs and investments with country-driven, context-specific approaches informed by data and research, and will support education reform. This will allow the Agency to identify where it is best-positioned to add value and help ensure our investments have a substantial impact on educational outcomes—from early childhood education through higher education.

USAID will continue to expand access to equitable, safe, and inclusive education across all programming, in both public and non-public institutions. In particular, the USAID Education Policy will highlight the importance of equality for girls and boys and disability-inclusive education throughout the Agency's programming. USAID will release new resources related to these topics that provide support and guidance to our education officers and implementing partners. USAID will promote inclusive education by breaking down barriers that keep children and youth from learning and leading.

### Areas of Greater Emphasis

While maintaining our focus on learning outcomes and skills development, USAID will look to strengthen our education programs by:

- Renewing and increasing our emphasis on *education for children and youth facing adversity, conflict, and crisis*—with particular attention to girls and those who are displaced. USAID will: emphasize dual educational outcomes (learning and protection); incentivize national government leadership in the education sector to integrate refugees into host country systems; better serve internally-displaced peoples and children and youth affected by violence; and continue to support external coordination groups to increase coherence between humanitarian and development efforts in education.
- Increasing engagement with *non-state actors* and promoting *finance and delivery innovations* to expand

access to quality education—including with non-state schools and other education providers (such as not-for-profit, for-profit, faith-based, and community schools), the private sector, and the investment community.

- Improving country capacity to *generate and use education data* to drive transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making. This includes a range of types of data (on learning outcomes, students, staffing, finances, and infrastructure, among others). Improved data and analysis will help decision-makers, parents and caregivers, and stakeholders gain insight into the functioning of education systems, better target reforms and resources, and equitably improve outcomes.
- Transforming *teacher policies and professional development* systems to increase the number of qualified teachers and improve the quality of instruction by using research-based instructional approaches and materials to improve their practices in the classroom—thus improving student learning outcomes. This includes increasing engagement with universities and other pre-service teacher training institutions.

## Technical

### Learning and Research

USAID will build on its strong focus on data and evidence to develop and implement learning agendas<sup>65</sup> that correspond to the priority areas in its education policy, close evidence gaps, and improve technical and operational approaches.

### Knowledge Sharing Platform

USAID will launch and support “EducationLinks,” a new, publicly available, online platform for education practitioners and policymakers to find the latest USAID programming guidance and global evidence in the field of international education. The Agency will post information and resources developed through learning agendas to make them publicly available. The platform will also feature resources from all other U.S. Government departments and agencies involved in international basic education.

### Strengthening the Capacity of Partner Countries to Gather and Process Data

USAID will work to strengthen the capacity of partner countries to collect and use education data—including on learning outcomes, displaced and disadvantaged populations, and those who are out-of-school. This verifiable, disaggregated data will increase transparency and accountability in partner countries and inform decision-making to improve learning outcomes.

### Improving the Accessibility, Use, and Collection of USAID Data

USAID will increase the accessibility of its education datasets in the Development Data Library (DDL) (<https://www.usaid.gov/data>), USAID’s public repository of Agency-funded data. The DDL includes data on all priority areas in the education policy, such as the extensive collection of datasets from early grade reading assessments. USAID will also work to collect more comprehensive cost data for its programs. This information will inform our own investments, as well as decisions in partner countries, pertaining to scaling and replicating programs, increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of activities, and promoting sustainability.

## Impact and Results

USAID will work with partner country counterparts to develop and implement ambitious programs to improve learning outcomes and skills development measurably, while also reaching the most marginalized and vulnerable. USAID will develop policy guidance to support our Missions in setting bold targets to improve learning outcomes and strengthen system capacity in areas such as teacher training and the engagement of parents and communities (see list under Foreign Assistance Indicators below). Guidance will draw from country-level data, analysis, and projections in annual planning and reporting processes.

Headquarter units will consolidate all education performance data from Missions and report on Agency-level progress and results on an annual basis. USAID will also take the lead in developing a consolidated U.S. Government annual results report, which will be publicly available.

Additionally, USAID has identified “percentage of students attaining a minimum proficiency in reading at the end of primary school” as a key Self-Reliance Metric (<https://www.usaid.gov/selfreliance/what-self-reliance-metrics>). This important indicator, along with others, can show the extent to which education institutions in partner countries are fulfilling their responsibility to deliver high-quality education for all children and youth.

### Education-Related Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators

USAID will continue to update and refine its standard foreign assistance indicators for education and workforce development (<https://www.state.gov/f/indicators>), and provide additional resources to develop custom indicators for specific projects and activities. As part of the U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education, USAID will collaborate with its U.S. Government department and agency partners to develop and report on common indicators. USAID currently uses the following standard indicators (<https://www.state.gov/f/indicators/>) below, disaggregated by sex, for basic education, in addition to custom indicators developed for individual projects and activities:

#### Learning Outcomes

- Percent of learners who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of grade two with U.S. Government assistance; and
- Percent of learners who attain minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of primary school (or grade six, whichever comes sooner) with U.S. Government assistance.

#### Learners and Students Reached

- Number of learners in primary schools and/or equivalent non-school based settings reached with U.S. Government education assistance;
- Number of learners in secondary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with U.S. Government education assistance; and
- Number of learners reached in reading programs/interventions at the primary level.

### Teachers

- Number of primary or secondary educators who complete professional development activities with U.S. Government support;
- Number of primary school educators who complete professional development activities on implementing evidence-based reading instruction with U.S. Government assistance;
- Number of primary or secondary school educators who complete professional development activities on teaching students with special educational needs with U.S. Government assistance; and
- Number of primary or secondary school educators who complete professional development activities on peace education, conflict sensitivity, or conflict transformation with U.S. Government assistance.

### Teaching and Learning Materials

- Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) purchased with U.S. Government assistance; and
- Number of primary school classrooms that receive a complete set of essential reading instructional materials with U.S. Government assistance.

### Management and Administration

Number of education administrators/officials who complete professional development activities with U.S. Government support.

### Parent and Community Engagement

Number of parent-teacher associations (PTAs) or community-governance structures engaged in primary or secondary education supported with U.S. Government assistance.

### Infrastructure

Number of primary or secondary classrooms built or repaired with U.S. Government assistance.

### Employment

- Number of individuals with new employment following their completion of U.S. Government-assisted workforce-development programs; and
- Number of individuals with increased earnings following their completion of U.S. Government-assisted workforce-development programs.

### Skills Development

Number of individuals with improved skills following their completion of U.S. Government-assisted workforce-development programs.

### Individuals Reached

Number of individuals who complete U.S. Government-assisted workforce-development programs.