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Georgia Primary Education Project  
საქართველოს დანახვითი განათლების პროექტი

# GEORGIA PRIMARY EDUCATION PROJECT

**MONTHLY REPORT**  
**AUGUST 1 – AUGUST 31, 2012**

**Contract No. AID-114-C-09-00003**  
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## **MONTHLY REPORT**

### **August 1 – August 31, 2012**

During this reporting period, G-PriEd staff continued to organize orientation meetings with the newly appointed ministry staff to explain the project activities and seek their full understanding and support. Two major topics were given special time and preparation: (1) USAID's impact assessment and the parameters for sampling pilot schools and (2) G-PriEd's concepts of school-based professional development.

G-PriEd continued working with the diagnostic assessment task forces to create items for diagnostic assessments in reading and math and working with the leveled reader writers to create children books. In parallel, G-PriEd together with the relevant Ministry agencies continued to recruit additional item writers for the diagnostic assessment tool and to fill other positions for both task forces to foster the process.

In August, G-PriEd concluded its contract with IPM, which completed and submitted to NAEC/G-PriEd the report for the administration of assessments of the first grade students in Georgian as a second language and of the fourth-grade students in reading and math. UGT, one of the two subcontractors selected to procure educational supplies for the Ministry agencies and schools, has delivered the items to G-PriEd, which has submitted a request to USAID for disposition of assets to NAEC and TPDC.

In addition, in August, G-PriEd prepared and issued a RFQ for procurement of video films that will become part of the teachers' training modules. G-PriEd also drafted an RFP for design of Principal Professional Development course that will be in line with G-PriEd educational activities.

Below, we provide further detail of this month's activities, as per the updated workplan and the logframe.

#### **Outcome 1: Reading and Math Instruction Improved**

##### **Output 1.1: Improve Teacher Effectiveness in Teaching Reading and Math, as Well as in Using the Diagnostic-Assessment-Based Teaching Approach in Reading and Math**

###### **A: Develop and propose school-based professional development as a mechanism for training reading and math teachers**

*1. Concept paper for school-based professional development.* The re-design of the project's concept for school-based professional development continued to be a core activity during the month. To address the findings of the school principal focus groups held in July, as well as the feedback of the MES on the proposed school-based professional development system, G-PriEd developed three different models of teacher professional development:

- Option 1: School-based Leaders: Ongoing School-based Learning
- Option 2: Teacher's Networks: Collaborative Peer Learning
- Option 3: Teacher House Consultants: External Support for Professional Development

For each option, the project team provided the following information:

- Roles and responsibilities of teachers under the school-based professional development scheme
- Number of teachers and leaders to be trained
- Number of pilot and expansion schools to be covered
- Responsibilities of G-PriEd and MES
- Pros and cons of each model

G-PriEd made a presentation of these models to the project's COR, the head of USAID's Health and Social Sector, and the Mission Director to seek their feedback on the models in preparation for a presentation to the Ministry. Project staff also made a similar presentation to TPDC in late August. Thea Kvintradze and Teona Kupatadze, Deputy Directors at TPDC, as well as Nato Javakhishvili, the head of the International Relations and Programs Department at the MES participated in the meeting. It was

agreed that TPDC will review the proposed options of teacher professional development and provide feedback to G-PriEd. G-PriEd plans to incorporate the feedback from TPDC in the proposed options and present them to the MES in the beginning of September.

In parallel, G-PriEd proposed to conduct teachers' focus groups covering all types of potential pilot schools, such as urban/rural, small/medium/large and multi-sectoral, as G-PriEd believes that one of the important factors for successful implementation of the teacher professional development programs is the motivation of teachers to participate and take the leadership role in their professional development as appropriate. G-PriEd, in agreement with TPDC and MES, is planning to conduct teacher focus groups in order to explore how to motivate teachers to take the leadership role in the teacher professional development activities implemented at the school level.

G-PriEd plans to hold six focus groups that vary according to the following parameters: (a) size of the school; (b) location of the schools: rural-urban; (c) language of instruction: Georgian language and minority schools; (d) status of teachers: certified and non-certified teachers, as per the illustrative table below:

#	District	School Type and Size	Type of Teachers	Location	Proposed Date
FG 1	Tbilisi	Large	Certified	G-PriEd	12.09.
FG 2	Kvemo Kartli	Small-size schools	Non-certified	G-PriEd	13.09.
FG 3	Kvemo Kartli	Mixed Minority	Non-certified (1) math teachers; (2) Georgian Language teachers	Bolnisi ERC	13.09.
FG 4	Kakheti	Medium	Non-certified	Telavi ERC	14.09.
FG 5	Imereti	Small	Non-certified	Kutaisi ERC	17.09.
FG 6	Imereti	Large	Certified	Kutaisi ERC	17.09.

G-PriEd staff developed research questions for the focus groups, which are organized around four main topics: (a) formative assessment; (b) small-group teaching; (c) cross-cutting competencies; (d) teachers' motivation for school-based professional development. The plan for conducting focus groups was communicated with the MES for their approval.

## **B. Identify national trainers of reading and math, design TOT program for them, and provide training/consultation on training the leader-teachers**

*1. Identify and engage national trainers.* In previous months, G-PriEd staff identified national trainers to be assigned to the training cohorts. However, since the school-based professional development model is not yet determined, contacting national trainers has been put on hold. Whether or not G-PriEd hires national trainers (and the number hired) will depend on the preferred model, since different models deliver training in different ways (via national trainers vs. Teacher House consultants). As soon as the Ministry makes the final decision concerning the professional development model, the G-PriEd team will select national trainers and assign them to the training cohorts.

*2. Create a working group together with TPDC representatives and local and international experts to develop the TOT manuals.* In August, G-PriEd's Reading Improvement Director continued working with the module writers' working group to create the project's training manuals. The group has begun developing an additional training module for Georgian as a second language (GSL) teachers, based on the group's work with the international consultant Alan Crawford. This training module will include effective oral/aural language, informal reading instruction topics, and activities that are necessary for raising GSL students' readiness to start the formal reading instruction in Georgian language.

*3. Develop TOT manuals for national trainers in reading to use in their trainings for coach-teachers.* The team of module writers continued developing the reading professional development manual. During August, they revised and developed a major part of materials for the first five days of the training.

*4. Develop TOT manuals for national trainers in math to use in their trainings for coach-teachers.* In August, the math module writing group focused on Grade 1-4 teacher training module development. The

group drafted nearly all draft materials for five math topics (from a total of six topics). They also drafted materials for the training philosophy, introduction for differentiated instruction in math, training purposes and training alignment with National Curriculum, purposes of teaching selected math topics and trajectories of student learning, teaching/learning resources for selected math topics.

5. *Video and multimedia supplements for trainings.* In August, G-PriEd and TPDC determined how to collaborate on creating relevant videos. Together with Natia Natsvlishvili (TPDC) and the task forces, the Reading and Math Directors have produced a draft work plan for developing instructional videos, the description of the products as well as the list of requirements for applicants. Based on this, G-PriEd has prepared and announced a Request for Quotations for development of nine video films.

### **C. Support national trainers to train leader-teachers in the pilot schools to teach reading and math**

1. *Develop the list of the pilot schools.* Once the agreement is reached with the Ministry regarding the teacher professional development approach, project staff will revisit the list of the pilot schools. The project's goal is to have project schools that include at least 200 students from each region and include a representative number of schools by size (small/medium/large), type (urban/rural), and language of instruction (Georgian- and minority-language). While the initial number of pilot schools was set at 318, G-PriEd now intends to provide direct training for every Georgian-language and math teacher in grades 1-6. Given this expanded training plan, and depending on the teacher professional development model, project staff expect the pilot to cover from 85 to 100 schools, and from 350 to 550 additional schools during the expansion phase.

2. *Develop the list of control schools.* Control schools have been selected. However, they may need to be modified depending on the final number of pilot group schools.

3. *Develop quality assurance plan to support the national trainers in delivering high quality training.* The draft of the training quality assurance plan was developed according to the school-based professional development model designed by G-PriEd team originally, where school-based professional development leaders would (1) conduct the trainings and (2) provide follow-up support for the teachers. The draft model of the quality assurance was reviewed by the home office. G-PriEd staff will update and adopt the model based on the Ministry's response regarding the professional development model.

## **Output 1.2: Increase the Availability and Use of Age and Language-Appropriate Reading Materials and Supplies for Learning Math**

### **A. Develop age- and language-appropriate reading and math materials (paper-based and electronic)**

1. *Develop readability criteria and benchmarks for levels of reading.* International expert Mary Spor together with the Reading Improvement Director planned and facilitated two workshops:

- August 3-4, 2012: "*Readability: What it is, Why it is Important to Reading and Learning*". Representatives of all stakeholders (MES, LEPLs, publishers, Universities) were acquainted with the concept of readability and its role in providing the best learning resources for reading instruction. Participants developed the draft criteria for evaluating text readability and selecting appropriate texts for instruction.
- August 8-10, 2012: "*Supplemental Reading Books: A Collaborative Writing Model*" for recruited children book writers. Writers were acquainted with the aims and the timeline of the supplemental reading materials component. They practiced effective techniques of producing leveled readers, big books and other reading materials.

The Reading Improvement Director facilitated several meetings with the book writers' team. The team has developed a set of texts according to the grade levels. A linguist was recruited and joined the team to review the materials and consult in the process of writing. A special call for illustrators will be

announced in the beginning of next month. International expert Alan Crawford attended one meeting and provided useful recommendations for developing little leveled books, big books, and other supplemental materials. In September, G-PriEd will announce another RFQ for printing services.

## **B. Distribute age- and language-appropriate reading and math materials, paper-based and electronic**

*1. Provide visual aids and manipulatives for math learning to the pilot and other target schools; Provide grade-appropriate visual aids and manipulatives for math learning to the pilot and the other target schools of the project.* In August, UGT delivered the equipment and supplies (interactive boards, printer/copiers, projectors and projector screens), which were inspected and accepted by G-PriEd. The Project submitted a revised request for disposition of assets intended for the use by the MES agencies: TPDC and NAEC (which absorbed the functions and the staff of EQE, the original intended recipient of G-PriEd-procured products). A request for disposition for items originally intended for G-PriEd pilot and other public schools of Georgia will be prepared and submitted to USAID once the pilot schools are identified.

Premier Plus, the supplier of math manipulatives which are expected to arrive at the end of September, was forced to procure a minimum quantity order of 1,000 items of three out of five types of manipulatives, and has offered a significant discount to G-PriEd should the project decide to increase the quantity from the contract-defined 330 units to 500 or 1,000 units. In order to make the decision, G-PriEd worked with the math module writers to determine the criteria and the best rationale for distributing math manipulatives among grades 1-6 in G-PriEd pilot schools, and to integrate them into the math training modules for math teachers. The decision will be made in mid-September.

## **Outcome 2: Reading and Math Delivery Systems Improved**

### **Output 2.2: Strengthen the System for Testing Reading and Math Outcomes Through Classroom Diagnostic Assessments**

#### **A: Develop formative assessment methodology in reading and math**

*1. Create task forces.* In August, G-PriEd continued working with the members of the reading assessment task force. By end of the month, four Georgian language teachers and the early childhood psychologist were recruited and joined the team. Three of them have experience in teaching Georgian as the second language.

*2. Develop the formative assessment methodology (reading).* During August, G-PriEd's Reading Improvement Director facilitated several task force meetings. The team of item writers developed materials (reading passages) for two sub-tests. International experts Mary Spor and Alan Crawford attended the task force meetings and provided recommendations for creating relevant test items. In addition, IT specialist Zaal Tsereteli developed the WordCalc software, which provides specific data on different features of the target text, such as the word, letter, syllable frequencies as well as word and sentence lengths by letters, syllables and words. This tool will provide a part of the information for identifying and managing text readability.

*3. Develop the formative assessment methodology (math).* In August, the math task force discussed the draft conceptual framework for Georgian formative assessment of mathematics, international examples of diagnostic testing, typical mistakes in primary grades math, distracters for multiple choice math tests, and guidelines for item development. With respect to the conceptual framework, the task force achieved agreement on the majority of the text. In addition, the task force reached agreement on the basic competencies from the National Curriculum to be covered by the assessment tool. Eight additional item developers were recruited to join the team and accomplish the item development task. In addition, the national curriculum expert, the gender expert, the psychologist, the statistician and the education specialist were recruited to contribute to the work of math and reading task forces in development of the diagnostic assessment instrument.

In September, the task force will conclude discussions related to the conceptual framework for Georgian formative assessment of mathematics, and will continue with creation of test items according to the criteria proposed by John Olson, international consultant, who will visit Georgia.

### **Output 2.3: Strengthen the System for Testing Reading and Math Outcomes Through National Assessments Against Objectives of National Curricula**

#### **A: Build the capacity of the NCEQE to conduct national assessments**

*1. Work with NCEQE to build internal capacity to conduct national assessments.* In August, G-PriEd finished monitoring IPM's contract, which concluded with receipt and acceptance of the report on the national assessment of first-grade Georgian-as-a-second-language students and of fourth-grade reading and math students.

### **Outcome 3. Community and Public Engagement, Accountability, and Transparency Enhanced**

#### **Output 3.1: Promote Expanded Student Participation in Reading/Math Activities and Parent Engagement in Children's Reading/Math Outcomes Through School-Based Committees and Implementation Plans**

##### **A: Promote expanded student participation in reading/math activities and parent engagement in children's reading/math outcomes through school-based committees and implementation plans**

*1. Work with MES to develop a model of parent engagement.* The Ministry agreed to continue with the parent engagement component that would include the following consecutive steps:

- In September, G-PriEd will conduct the working group with the Ministry's staff to provide an overview of different models of the parent engagement and to agree on the model/s that best fits the Ministry's policy and needs;
- In September, the selected model/s will be discussed with the focus groups comprised of school principals and parents;
- In October, G-PriEd expects Joni Samples, G-PriEd International Parent Engagement consultant, to join the process and support the team to finalize the focus group results and come up with the recommendations to the Ministry with the best suitable model;
- Once the agreement is reached with the Ministry regarding the model to be implemented, G-PriEd will develop a plan to roll out the new model in the project pilot schools.