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EARLY GRADE LEARNING PROGRAM RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND ANALYTICAL REPORT

January 14, 2013

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Technical Assistance for New Early Grade Learning Program in Egypt

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DISCLAIMER

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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Technical Assistance for New Early Grade Learning Program in Egypt

ACRONYMS

CCIMD	Center for Curriculum and Instructional Materials Development
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
EGLP	Early Grade Learning Program
EGMA	Early Grade Mathematics Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EGRP	Early Grade Reading Program
ENLA	Egyptian National Learning Assessment
ESF	Education Support Fund
FARA	Fixed Amount Reimbursement Agreement
GILO	Girls Improving Learning Outcomes
GoE	Government of Egypt
MoE	Ministry of Education
NCEEE	National Center for Examination and Education Evaluation
PAT	Professional Academy for Teachers
RFA	Request for Assistance
RFP	Request for Proposal
TDC	Technology Development Center
TILO	Technology Improving Learning Outcome
TLM	Teaching and Learning Materials
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview: As part of the G2G mechanism, the USAID/Egypt Mission intends to issue a short (six-month) and long-term (four-year) Fixed Amount Reimbursement Agreement (FARA)¹ to the Ministry of Education (MoE) to support the development of an Early Grade Learning Program (EGLP), which includes Arabic language and mathematics. Additionally, a four-year (US) \$9.5 million dollar RFA/RFP solicitation to assist the MoE with the development and implementation of EGLP will be issued in FY 2014. The technical assistance is intended to provide services to assist the MoE in providing 7.5 million grade 1-3 learners with improved literacy and numeracy skills. To lay the groundwork for the forthcoming RFA/RFP and FARAs, a series of meetings with education officials was conducted and a three-day workshop (December 11-13, 2012) held to identify the vision, objectives and key activities of EGLP.² The goal of the workshop was to “brainstorm components of EGLP to assist the Ministry of Education in developing a national early grade priority program, with a focus on Arabic and mathematics”. Information from the workshop forms the basis of USAID’s results framework to support the MoE’s efforts in the area of Arabic language and mathematics (grades 1-3).

To ensure USAID/Egypt’s work is integrated thoroughly into the MoE strategic program priority components, the EGLP framework and analytical report is developed from the findings of the joint MoE and USAID workshop and conversations with various education officials.

EGLP Development Hypothesis: If targeted technical assistance, including capacity-building, is provided to the Ministry of Education to expand and broaden the achievements of EGRP, the Ministry of Education will be able to develop a comprehensive early grade program and accelerate the spread of EGLP to all governorates. A quality early grade education program will contribute to an increasingly productive and stable Egypt by building the foundation of a literate and numerate youth base.

EGLP Development Objective: Increased literacy and numeracy through the provision of core skills and organizational reform to the Government of Egypt’s Ministry of Education to assist 7.5 million learners in mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills.

EGLP Intermediate Results and Key Activities: The activities, described below, are premised on the technical assistance provider working in full partnership with the MoE, governorates education teams, and other education entities. The technical assistance provider shall work with other USAID implementing partners to ensure complementarity and overall coordination of USAID resources dedicated to the education sector.

IR 1: Improved Arabic and Mathematics learning materials and instructional approach.

- **Activity 1: Assist with analysis and refinement of Arabic and mathematics teaching and learning materials for grades 1-3:** The focus of this component is to support the Center for Curriculum and Instructional Material Development (CCIMD) work in analyzing,

¹ In April 2013, USAID intends to issue the short-term FARA to serve as a bridging mechanism from Girls Learning Improved Outcomes (GILO) project and the start-up of the new technical assistance project, tentatively scheduled to start October 2013. USAID intends to issue a long-term FARA to compliment the long-term technical assistance acquired through a competitive solicitation (RFA/RFP).

² See Annex 3 for list of officials consulted.

revising/developing, trialing and finalizing student workbooks and supplementary materials for Arabic language and mathematics subject areas (grades 1-3) and support Professional Academy for Teachers (PAT) in the development and review of teacher manuals for Arabic language and mathematics.

- **Activity 2: Evaluate Arabic and mathematics materials:** The focus of this task is to enable CCIMD, National Center for Examinations and Education Evaluation (NCEEE), National Center for Research, and Governorate EGLP teams to review and reflect on the effectiveness of the Arabic and mathematics materials in grades 1-3 for the purpose of improving students' learning standards and quality of educational materials. The USAID Technical Assistance will support the MoE in facilitating linkages between the center and governorates for EGLP analysis, write-up and dissemination of results.
- **Activity 3: Create E-learning materials for Arabic and mathematics:** The focus of this task is to assist the MoE, in particular the Technology Development Center (TDC), and PAT with the adaptation of traditional pen and paper materials into an e-learning format.
- **Activity 4: Develop assessments for Arabic and mathematics:** The USAID Technical Assistance shall support the MoE and NCEEE in the development of an innovative and cost-effective national learning assessment for Arabic and mathematics (grades 1-3). As part of this work, low cost technology methods that leverage readily available technology and media used within Egypt may be proposed. Additionally, innovative ways to integrate and leverage existing NCEEE platforms, materials, and resources may be explored.

Intermediate Result 2: Institutionalized professional development systems for teachers and supervisors.

- **Activity 1: Assist with continuous professional development of grade 1-3 teachers in reading and numeracy.** The focus of this component is to enable the PAT to develop a continuous professional development (CPD) program for teachers in the early grade levels, with a focus on Arabic language and numeracy. The USAID Technical Assistance shall support PAT in their endeavor to develop a comprehensive, sustainable model for early grade teacher training that identifies elements that will motivate teachers to advance in their professional field.
- **Activity 2: Collaborate with PAT on continuous professional development (CPD) for supervisors.** The USAID Technical Assistance shall support PAT in the development of EGLP supervisors CPD modules and training of supervisors. The content of the CPD modules may provide models on how to help supervisors model, observe, provide feedback, and coaching in the new methodologies. Additionally, identification of steps that need to be taken to put in place a quality assurance component to the training is also important. The USAID Technical Assistance shall support the MoE TDC and CCIMD as they develop supplementary supervisors' certification e-learning materials as a way to blend face to face workshop trainings with other forms of appropriate low-cost readily accessible technology.
- **Activity 3: Teacher and supervisors certification in Early Grade Learning.** The USAID Technical Assistance will assist PAT in the development of a EGLP teacher and supervisor

certification program that follows the requisite skills and competencies transmitted in the teacher and supervisor continuing professional development modules.

IR 3: Enhanced system delivery of early grade learning program

- **Activity 1: Build capacity of Governorate and Idara Early Grade Learning Teams.** The USAID Technical Assistance shall support the MoE and 27 Governorates to develop and implement capacity-development, decentralization, and systems-strengthening activities designed to support the MoE in the implementation of EGLP at all levels. The USAID Technical Assistance shall enable the MoE to expand the EGR teams in place at the governorate level to become the Early Grade Learning Planning Teams with teams at the Idara and school level. As part of this work the USAID Technical Assistance shall support the MoE as it identifies capacity-building needs, devises a system to meet these needs, and provides all governorates are provided with sufficient capacity-building activities.
- **Activity 2: Dialogue on EGLP resources.** The focus of this activity is to support the MoE in the initiation of dialogues with Governorate, Idara and school level structures to identify challenges affecting EGLP implementation. As part of the dialogues, consideration of venues through which to distribute the information gathered to promote open communication with communities, parents, and other education stakeholders may be considered, as well as challenges affecting EGLP implementation.
- **Activity 3: Collaborate with decentralized levels on an incentive system for performing supervisors, teachers and schools.** The focus of this activity is to enable the governorates' EGLP teams to develop, promote and sustain best practices of an incentive system for high performing EGLP education personnel and schools. Part of this work, may include evaluations of incentives and a measurement of their impact on supervisor/teacher motivation.
- **Activity 4: Quality innovations to improve EGLP.** To ensure EGLP is being implemented in an environment conducive to achieving results and measurable learning outcomes the USAID Technical Assistance will support the MoE in proposing innovative and cost-effective activities that improve the quality of early grade learning. The focus of this activity is to identify and trial pilot activities which: 1) expand key elements of EGLP outside of the public (Government of Egypt) schools and 2) promote decentralization.

EARLY GRADE LEARNING PROGRAM RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND ANALYTICAL REPORT

This report presents the Early Grade Learning Program (EGLP) Results Framework and Analytical Report for USAID's forthcoming program. It is based primarily on the results of a three-day workshop (December 11-13, 2012) jointly sponsored by USAID/Egypt and the Egyptian Ministry of Education (MoE) as well as interviews conducted prior to the workshop with MoE and other experts.³ As agreed with USAID/Egypt, this report is presented in the following sections: Section 1 starts with an overview of the work of the Early Grade Reading Program (EGRP) followed by critical assumptions and opportunities (Section 2) setting the stage for the new EGLP results framework. Section 3 articulates the development hypothesis, development objective and intermediate results for the proposed framework followed by proposed activities (Section 4) and special considerations (i.e., e-learning, public-private partnerships, gender, and special needs) (Section 5). The report concludes with suggested performance monitoring indicators (Section 6).

SECTION I: BACKGROUND (OVERVIEW)

In 2008-2009, a baseline Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) was conducted in the 28 USAID-support Girls Improved Learning Outcomes (GILO) schools and 30 control schools. The EGRA results showed the majority of early grade students had limited reading skills in Arabic. Based on the EGRA results, the Ministry of Education formally requested GILO's support to improve the instruction of early grade reading. Collaborating with the MoE Working Group for Early Grade Literacy, GILO developed instructional packages consisting of draft lesson plans and literacy resources for 166 schools in four governorates: Fayoum, Minia, Qena and Cairo. In 2011-2012, the MOE Planning Teams formed Early Grade Reading planning teams in the 27 governorates to lead EGRP.

The USAID-supported GILO project is scheduled to end in March 2013. As an interim measure, the Mission plans to issue a short-term Fixed Amount Reimbursement Agreement (FARA) to the MoE Education Support Fund. The key objectives of the FARA include:

- Strengthen the quality of Grade 1 and 2 reading instruction nationwide through monitoring the implementation of EGRP and provide professional development activities to address performance gaps;
- Train grades 1 -3 teachers in early grade reading techniques;
- Develop the training and learning materials (guidebooks with lesson plans, technical criteria and standards for textbooks) and support professional development activities of grade 3 teachers; and,
- Strengthen the capacity of the governorate and district level supervisors to monitor and evaluate early grade reading progress nationwide.

³ See Annex 3 for list of education officials interviewed.

As part of the G2G mechanism, the USAID/Egypt Mission intends to issue a short (six-month) and long-term (four-year) Fixed Amount Reimbursement Agreement (FARA)⁴ to the Ministry of Education (MoE) to support the development of EGLP, which includes Arabic language and mathematics. Additionally, a four-year (US) \$9.5 million dollar RFA/RFP solicitation to assist the MoE with the development and implementation of EGLP will be issued in FY 2014. The technical assistance is intended to provide services to assist the MoE in providing 7.5 million grade 1-3 learners with improved literacy and numeracy skills. To lay the groundwork for the forthcoming RFA/RFP and FARAs, a series of meetings with education officials was conducted and a three-day workshop (December 11-13, 2012) held to identify the vision, objectives and key activities of EGLP.⁵ The goal of the workshop was to “brainstorm components of EGLP to assist the Ministry of Education in developing a national early grade priority program, with a focus on Arabic and mathematics”. Information from the workshop forms the basis of USAID’s results framework to support the MoE’s efforts in the area of Arabic language and mathematics (grades 1-3).

To ensure USAID/Egypt’s work is integrated thoroughly into the MoE strategic program priority components, the EGLP framework and analytical report is developed from the findings of the joint MoE and USAID workshop and conversations with various education officials.

SECTION 2: CRITICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Critical Assumption: *The MoE, Professional Academy for Teachers (PAT) and National Center for Examination and Educational Evaluation (NCEEE) will allow USAID to provide targeted technical assistance to enhance the education sector technical, administrative and managerial capacity in early grade learning.* During the EGLP workshop, education officials indicated a need for external technical assistance to support the development of Arabic language and mathematics materials and assessment tools. A follow-up meeting with the Director of the Education Support Fund provided concurrence for the EGLP Results Framework proposed (key) activities.

Critical Assumption: *The MoE demonstrates a willingness to champion and lead EGLP.* From the inception of the dialogue on early grade learning, MoE officials have provided direction for the development of an EGLP program priority area for the new MoE Strategic Plan (2012-2017). The development of the forthcoming framework provides an opportune entry point to systematize the MoE’s high level of motivation and commitment into a comprehensive early grade program. Participants at the workshop proposed the development of a Ministry Taskforce composed of EGLP stakeholders (e.g., representatives from the respective MoE Departments and Units) to follow the implementation of EGLP, with similar taskforces formed at the governorate and district levels.

Critical Assumption: *Sufficient funds will be available from the Government of Egypt (GoE) to implement EGLP.* Throughout the workshop, the topic of sufficient funding surfaced repeatedly, e.g.,

⁴ In April 2013, USAID intends to issue the short-term FARA to serve as a bridging mechanism from Girls Learning Improved Outcomes (GILO) project and the start-up of the new technical assistance project, tentatively scheduled to start October 2013. USAID intends to issue a long-term FARA to compliment the long-term technical assistance acquired through a competitive solicitation (RFA/RFP).

⁵ See Annex 3 for list of officials consulted.

education officials expressed concerns over inadequate budget lines for transportation and training allowances.⁶

Currently, the expectation is that the G2G mechanism will be the primary funding source for EGLP. However, a wider collaboration between the GoE, USAID, and other development partners along with potential private sector partners should be explored as potential additional funding mechanisms. Private sector partnerships, particularly in the area of material production (printing), technology and internet, merit further dialogue. *Consideration should be given to creating a milestone which encourages the active recruitment of private public partnerships in the four-year Fixed Amount Reimbursement Agreement.*

Opportunity: *The positive reception of EGRP teaching techniques and materials, both by teachers and learners, may be transferred to other subject areas through the promotion of Arabic language across the curriculum.* The Center for Curriculum and Instructional Materials Development (CCIMD) indicated it has repeatedly received requests from teachers to link literacy skills across the curriculum, in particular mathematics, to promote a coherent curriculum which builds upon skills in a sequential manner. The evident success of EGRP provides an opportune entry point to widen parent and community involvement in the school.

Opportunity: *The 166 GIL0-supported schools in four governorates provided the catalyst for a nation-wide expansion of the program to all 27 governorates.* The MoE has taken significant actions to institutionalize EGRP including, certification of the EGRP teacher training program and manuals by PAT, the certification of EGRP trainers, and the alignment of grade one textbooks with the EGRP strategy. Sustaining the momentum achieved through the organic spread of EGRP into a sustainable systemic national EGLP at the central and decentralized levels is vital. Critical to the successful transfer is the development of documents to guide the larger process, which, in turn, may be contextualized at the governorate level to manage the details. Guiding documents to be developed include:

1. *EGLP Strategic Plan* may be developed as a Program Priority Area for the MoE Strategic Plan (2012-2017). Initial work has begun on this priority area at the joint USAID-MoE joint workshop held in December (2012).
2. *EGLP Implementation Plan* serves as a costed five-year work plan which outlines EGLP costs covered by the MoE central budget and identifies potential budget lines for future decentralization to the governorate level. This plan serves as the basis for the annual workplan.
3. *EGLP Monitoring and Evaluation Plan* articulates the outcome and output indicators (for the goals, objectives, and activities as outlined in EGLP Program Priority Area and Implementation Plan) along with data collection and analysis protocols. The plan may also articulate how the results of EGLP will be disseminated.
4. *EGLP Procurement Plan* lists the items the MoE will procure (e.g., production of teacher manuals and student workbooks, materials for the development of teaching and learning materials).

⁶ Given the limited foreign currency reserves available in Egypt (currently a three-month period), a (US\$) 4.8 billion loan⁶ from the International Monetary Fund on hold pending the outcome of successful implementation of conditionalities, and an eight-year low for the Egyptian pound against the US dollar, this is a realistic concern.

5. *EGLP Human Resource Development Plan* serves as a comprehensive training plan for teachers, supervisors and other education personnel in early grade learning (and may be used to assist with the certification process).
6. *EGLP Communication Plan* contains the media plan to communicate with stakeholders (parents/community members, private sector, religious and moral leaders, etc.) the goals of EGLP, results of EGLP annual assessments, and innovative techniques used by schools to enhance quality of teaching and learning, etc.

Using the EGLP documents as a guide, each governorate needs to develop: (1) a five year strategic plan which includes training, monitoring and evaluation and communication components; and (2) an annual Governorate EGLP workplan, budget, and procurement plan.

SECTION 3: DEVELOPMENT HYPOTHESIS, DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE AND INTERMEDIATE RESULTS

Purpose of USAID/Egypt reading activity: The purpose of the USAID/Egypt Early Grade Learning Program is to assist the Government of Egypt efforts to improve the reading and numeracy skills of learners in Grades 1 – 3. The program is aligned with the priorities of the new USAID Education Strategy as well as the forthcoming Ministry of Education (MOE) Strategic Plan 2012-2017. The USAID/Egypt EGLP is a key component of USAID’s planned interventions to support the GoE’s efforts to improve reading and linking literacy to other subject areas, i.e. mathematics, to provide a strong foundation for learning.

EGLP Results Framework Components: To ensure USAID/Egypt’s work is integrated thoroughly into the MoE strategic program priority areas/components, the EGLP framework is developed from the findings of the joint MoE and USAID workshop. The vision, key objectives and activities provide the basis for the Development Objective, Intermediate and sub-Intermediate Results.

MoE’s Vision for an Early Grade Learning Program: Educate a child (early grade learner) so she/he is able to master the basic skills of Arabic language and math for the purpose of preparing the learner to participate actively in civic life according to the national standards set.⁷

EGLP Development Hypothesis: If targeted technical assistance, including capacity-building, is provided to the Ministry of Education to expand and broaden the achievements of EGRP, the Ministry of Education will be able to develop a comprehensive early grade program and accelerate the spread of EGLP to all governorates. A quality early grade education program will contribute to an increasingly productive and stable Egypt by building the foundation of a literate and numerate youth base.

⁷ Note—the literal translation of the proposed vision is: Building and preparing a child (an early grade learner) who is able to master the basic skills of Arabic language and math to the purpose of active participation in life according to national standards”.

EGLP Development Objective: Increased literacy and numeracy through the provision of core skills and organizational reform to the Government of Egypt’s Ministry of Education to assist 7.5 million learners in mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills.

MoE’s Objectives⁸:

- Students are able to master the skills of Arabic and math for grades 1-3 (basis for EGLP IR 1).
- MoE/PAT provide professional development for the teacher to be able to communicate (active learning instruction) with the early grade learner (basis for EGLP IR 2).
- MoE develops an administrative and institutional system to ensure the quality of learning and teaching (basis for EGLP IR 3).
- Students are able to use technology to enable him/her to master Arabic language and math (basis for EGLP cross-cutting theme).

⁸The objectives wording is taken directly from workshop notes.

Graphic 1: USAID/Egypt EGLP RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Development Objective: Increased literacy and numeracy through the provision of core skills and organizational reform to the Government of Egypt's Ministry of Education to assist 7.5 million learners in mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills.

- 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 agreed-upon by national experts.
- 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.
- Proportion of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they have acquired basic numeracy skills.
- Number of learners receiving reading interventions at the primary level.

IR 1: Improved Arabic and Mathematics learning materials and instructional approach

Indicator:

- Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with USG support.
- Number of standardized learning assessments supported by USG.

Sub IR 1: Arabic and Mathematics teacher manuals, textbooks and supplementary materials developed.

Sub IR 2: Student Arabic and mathematics assessments implemented.

IR 2: Institutionalized professional development systems for teachers and supervisors

Indicator:

- Number of teachers who successfully completed in-service training or received intensive coaching with USG support.
- Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support.

Sub IR 1: Early grade learning teachers certified.

Sub IR 2: Early grade learning supervisors certified.

IR 3: Enhanced system delivery of early grade learning program

Indicator:

- Number of laws, policies, regulations, or guidelines developed or modified to improve primary grade reading programs or increase equitable access.

Sub IR 1: Management systems for early grade learning institutionalized.

Sub IR 2: Innovations to strengthen quality of early grade learning systematized.

Cross-cutting theme: E-learning to support early grade learning effectively used.

Indicator: Number and proportion of schools using Information Communication Technology due to USG support.

SECTION 4: EGLP FRAMEWORK INTERMEDIATE RESULTS AND ACTIVITIES

The activities, described below, are premised on the technical assistance provider working in full partnership with the MoE, governorates education teams, and other education entities. The technical assistance provider is expected to work with other USAID implementing partners to ensure complementarity and overall coordination of USAID resources dedicated to the education sector.

EGLP has three main task areas as outlined below. The USAID Technical Assistance's proposed interventions under these components should complement each other to improve reading and numeracy skills and should not be seen as distinct and separate components with independent objectives. Gender and private-public partnership, as special considerations, should be infused, as appropriate, into relevant activities.

Each Intermediate Result outlines the current status of key activities, followed by an approximate amount of funding for the component and a narrative that describes proposed activities for EGLP.

IR 1: Improved Arabic and Mathematics learning materials and instructional approach

Current status of early grade Arabic reading materials:

- Grade 1: Arabic language materials have been developed and are in use in grade 1. Grade 1 teachers trained.
- Grade 2: Arabic language materials have been analyzed and reviewed. Teacher manual developed and grade 2 teachers trained. A short-term (bridging) FARA will provide funding to complete Grade 2 revisions and ready materials for printing. It is anticipated Grade 1 and 2 teachers will be provided refresher training prior to start of school year (September 2013).
- Grade 3: No work has been initiated on grade 3 materials. It is anticipated this work will be conducted under the short-term FARA.

Status of early Mathematics materials:

- Grade 1: Based on the success of the early grade Arabic reading program, the CCIMD has started the process of reviewing and simplifying the grade 1 mathematics curriculum to follow the grade 1 Arabic language curriculum.⁹ The CCIMD goal is to have a draft grade 1 textbook ready to pilot at the start of the new school year (September 2013). It is anticipated that final revisions will be made by March 2014. Additionally, a supplementary pack of active learning materials (e.g., board game, flash cards, etc.) is expected to be ready to augment the revised teacher training manual. The plan is to introduce the simplified mathematics curriculum during the teachers' refresher training for Arabic language in (July/August 2013).
- Grade 2 and 3: CCIMD plans to follow a similar process outline for grade 1.

⁹ CCIMD officials indicated *every* grade 1 teacher they have spoken to indicated the importance of revising mathematics materials to follow the Arabic language materials.

Current status of literacy and numeracy assessments activities:

- Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA): In 2009, a preliminary EGRA baseline was conducted in three governorates: Fayoum, Minia and Qena in 28 GILO (USAID-funded) and 30 control schools. In 2011, a post-intervention EGRA was conducted. In 2011, MOE conducted a baseline EGRA of 1098 Grade 1 students (half boys, half girls) in 60 Beheira and Cairo schools. USAID/Washington will fund a national EGRA starting FY 2013 for a three-year period.
- Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA): In 2012, the EGMA was piloted in Egypt. The MoE did not participate in the adaptation process and, thus, there is no assurance of wide-spread buy-in. The EGMA consultant has recommended that an abbreviated adaptation process for EGMA is undertaken with the MoE to ensure ownership of the assessment. The EGMA is designed primarily for grades 2 and 3, although Grades 1 and 4 can be included with some test modifications. It is estimated a minimum of six months is required from test preparation to report out for the EGMA.
- Egyptian early grade learning assessment (Arabic and mathematics): The Director of the Professional Academy for Teachers (PAT) indicated the Minister of Education has stated that a national learning assessment should be administered to grade 3 students to ensure they possess basic skills in Arabic and mathematics prior to promotion to grade 4. (Egypt practices automatic promotion for grades 1—3).

According to members of the NCEEEE, there is currently no national assessment that measures Arabic language and mathematics in grades 1-3. In 1996, the World Bank through the Enhancement of Education program, funded NCEEEE to develop a mathematics, Arabic and critical thinking assessment test, however, it has not been used. The grade 3 mathematics test component was deemed too difficult to administer. Recently, NCEEEE has worked with UNICEF to develop an aptitude test for kindergarten students in the areas of mathematics, Arabic language and critical thinking skills. The test may also be applied to grade 1 learners.

According to NCEEEE, a national examination may be written in a two week period. This would be followed by a two-month timeframe for piloting, revising and validating the examination prior to large-scale administration. [Questions about quality of test need to be further explored.]

Approximate amount of funding dedicated to this IR is \$ 1 million dollars.

This IR is broken down into four activities:

Activity 1: Assist with analysis and refinement of Arabic and mathematics teaching and learning materials for grades 1-3: The focus of this component is to support the CCIMD's work in analyzing, revising/developing, trialing and finalizing student workbooks and supplementary materials for Arabic language and mathematics subject areas (grades 1-3) and support PAT in the development and review of teacher manuals for Arabic language and mathematics. The MoE has indicated that the Arabic language curriculum is the basis for linkages to other subject areas, i.e., mathematics, to promote literacy across the curriculum. The recently revised MoE Arabic language grades 1 and 2 and mathematics grade 1 materials will serve as the basis for future teacher manuals, student workbooks and supplementary active learning teaching materials. The Arabic materials focus on the delivery of teaching oral reading fluency and comprehension with mathematics materials

building upon the Arabic language materials and including active learning games/supplementary materials. Materials include scripted lesson plans for teachers and leveled and decodable readers for learners and build off the previous grade level to ensure coherent material development from grades 1-3 as well as link Arabic language and mathematics subject content.

Public-private partnerships in this area may be explored to promote synergies between various learning platforms.

Activity 2: Evaluate Arabic and mathematics materials: The focus of this task is to enable CCIMD, NCEEE, National Center for Research, and Governorate EGLP teams to review and reflect on the effectiveness of the Arabic and mathematics materials in grades 1-3 for the purpose of improving students' learning standards and quality of educational materials. The USAID Technical Assistance will support the MoE in facilitating linkages between the center and governorates regarding EGLP analysis, write-up and dissemination of results.

Activity 3: Create E-learning materials for Arabic and mathematics: The focus of this task is to support the MoE, in particular the Technology Development Center (TDC), and PAT with the adaptation of traditional pen and paper materials into an e-learning format. Existing e-learning materials and activities developed under previous USAID supported activities—such as the Girls Improving Learning Outcome (GILO) and Technology Improving Learning Outcomes (TILO)—may be considered effective complimentary materials. Public-private partnerships at the governorate and district levels may be explored to identify ways to enhance learning possibilities.

Activity 4: Develop assessments for Arabic and mathematics: The USAID Technical Assistance shall support the MoE and NCEEE in the development of an innovative and cost-effective national learning assessment for Arabic and mathematics (grades 1-3). As part of this work, low cost technology methods that leverage readily available technology and media used within Egypt may be proposed. Additionally, innovative ways to integrate and leverage existing NCEEE platforms, materials, and resources may be explored.

National assessment considerations to address include but are not limited to: sampling process, training of assessors/data collectors, data capture, cleaning, analysis and report writing.

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. In addition to national assessment tools, the USAID Technical Assistance shall enable NCEEE and CCIMD to develop tools which allow teachers to assess on a semester basis students' skills in Arabic language and mathematics. Assessments will cover all three grade levels and build sequentially. Assessments shall be integrated into the materials development package with a clear alignment between expected learning outcomes and the knowledge/skills assessed.

Intermediate Result 2: Institutionalized professional development systems for teachers and supervisors.

Current status of Early Grade Reading Program certification:

- **EGRP Trainers program:** PAT has certified the EGRP trainers program. There is currently no certified continuous professional development program for EGRP teachers or supervisors (reading or mathematics.) At the December workshop, it was recommended that a certificate in EGLP be developed both for teachers and supervisors.

Approximate amount of funding dedicated to this IR is \$5 million dollars.

This IR is broken down into three activities:

Activity 1: Assist with continuous professional development of grade 1-3 teachers in reading and numeracy. The focus of this component is to enable PAT to develop a continuous professional development program (CPD) for teachers in the early grade levels, with a focus on Arabic language and numeracy. Elements of the program may include, but not be limited to, 1) training teachers on effective reading instruction including, 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; and active learning techniques in Arabic and mathematics; 2) assessing learners through continuous assessment techniques in both Arabic and mathematics; and 3) providing support to learners' reading practices. The existing materials developed in Arabic and mathematics for early grade learning are key components of future training packages.

The USAID Technical Assistance shall support PAT in their endeavor to develop a comprehensive, sustainable model for early grade teacher training that identify elements that will motivate teachers to advance in their professional field. The training may include multiple components, including but not limited to: face-to-face training sessions, coaching, and action research at a school level. USAID Technical Assistance must also identify steps that need to be taken to put in place a quality assurance component to the training; this may take the form of self-assessment tools or classroom observation tool. Additionally, the USAID Technical Assistance shall provide support to the MoE TDC and CCIMD for the development of supplementary e-learning materials to support the Teacher CPD modules. Public-public partnership options on low-cost technology options to support the CPD modules is an additional option which may be explored.

Illustrative considerations to include in the training are:

- CPD trainings should be closely coordinated with Governorate education teams to ensure minimum disruption to the classroom timetable.
- Twinning public with private schools for capacity-building workshops may be formalized with education officials.
- School leadership is the catalyst for quality education in this learning environment. Ways to ensure principals and other key education personnel to serve as reading champions should be explored.

Special consideration for gender: As part of the training, critical issues which influence classroom teaching and identify ways to ensure teachers are employing gender-friendly strategies in the classroom may be identified. Teachers may be assessed through classroom observations or a modified Master Monitoring Tool.

Additionally, the training model should address these following considerations:

- High density (high pupil-teacher ratio) classrooms which limit active learning techniques;
- Motivation of teacher and supervisor to learn new reading and numeracy methodologies.
- Provision of adequate professional development given limited time available for teachers to participate in face to face workshops.

Activity 2: Enable PAT to develop continuous professional development program for supervisors. Supervisors are vital to the success of the Early Grade Learning Program. They provide a supportive environment to teachers and assist them with learning and reflecting on new methodologies as well as provide general coaching and consultation skills, in addition to knowledge of and experience in the Arabic and mathematics content areas.

The USAID Technical Assistance shall support PAT in the development of EGLP supervisors; CPD modules and training of supervisors. The content of the CPD modules may provide models on how to help supervisors model, observe, provide feedback, and coaching in the new methodologies. Additionally, identification of steps that need to be taken to put in place a quality assurance component to the training is also important. The USAID Technical Assistance shall support the MoE Technology Center and CCIMD as they develop supplementary e-learning materials to support supervisor certification as a way to blend face to face workshop trainings with other forms of appropriate low-cost readily accessible technology.

Activity 3: Teacher and supervisors certification in Early Grade Learning. The USAID Technical Assistance will assist PAT in the development of an EGLP teacher and supervisor certification program that follows the requisite skills and competencies transmitted in the teacher and supervisor continuing professional development modules. Included in this work may be a review and revision of job descriptions for EGLP personnel according to the Standards of the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation.

IR 3: Enhanced system delivery of early grade learning program

While elements of EGRP have been institutionalized (e.g., the establishment of an Early Grade Reading Coordinator position, certification of EGRP trainers program, etc.), multiple pieces are still managed by GILO. It is anticipated that a bridging FARA (April-September 2013) will be implemented to ensure the continuation of basic elements of EGRP. However, it is vital to work with the MoE to develop a long-term plan and structure for the institutionalization (sustainability) of an expanded EGLP.

Decentralization is an emerging concept and is currently represented with *targeted elements of deconcentration*. At the decentralized level, governorates provide cash advances to public schools (for school maintenance) in line with school plans and budgets. The new EGLP provides an opportunity

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to promote a planning and budgeting process that follows from the central to the school level. At the workshop, the following suggestions was provided: “Through a ministry decree form taskforces composed of stakeholders to link and follow-up implementation of programs while forming similar taskforces at the level of governorate and department (district).”

Approximate amount of funding dedicated to this is \$ 3.5 million dollars.

This IR is broken down into four activities:

Activity 1: Build capacity of Governorate and Idara Early Grade Learning Teams. The sustainability of EGLP depends on the development of a long-term plan and structure from the center to the school level. Decentralization is an emerging concept in Egypt, with specific line items, such as school maintenance, deconcentration the school level through a cash advance system. EGLP provides an opportunity to promote a decentralized planning and budgeting process that flows down to the school level. The USAID Technical Assistance shall support the MoE and 27 Governorates to develop and implement capacity-development, decentralization, and systems-strengthening activities designed to support the MoE in the implementation of EGLP at all levels. The USAID Technical Assistance shall enable the MoE to expand the EGRP teams in place at the governorate level to become the Early Grade Learning Planning Teams, with additional teams at the Idara and school level. As part of this work the USAID Technical Assistance shall support the MoE as it identifies capacity-building needs, devises a system to meet these needs, and provides all governorates are provided with sufficient capacity-building activities. Considerations for areas of capacity building may include: 1) preparation of governorate education plans and budgets which ensure a focus on early grade learning, 2) lobbying (advocacy) MoF for funding; 3) marketing EGLP plans at governorate, districts and school levels for additional funding (from private sector and parents); and 4) analyzing national reading and mathematics and preparing reports to document progress of EGLP.

Activity 2: Dialogue on EGLP resources. The USAID Technical Assistance shall support the MoE in the initiation of dialogues with Governorate, Idara and school level structures to identify challenges affecting EGLP implementation. As part of the dialogue consideration of venues through which to distribute the information gathered to promote open communication with communities, parents, and other education stakeholders may be considered as well as challenges affecting EGLP implementation. Challenges may include, examining transfer directives to ensure qualified Early Grade Learning teachers and supervisors who are transferred to another school are replaced by qualified personnel, ensuring adequate funds are available for training and transportation allowances, and other resources needs.

Activity 3: Collaborate with decentralized levels on an incentive system for performing supervisors, teachers and schools. The USAID Technical Assistance shall enable the governorates EGLP teams to develop, promote and sustain best practices of an incentive system for high performing EGLP education personnel and schools. Part of this work, may include evaluations of incentives and a measurement of their impact on supervisor/teacher motivation.

Illustrative considerations:

- Allow Board of Trustees to participate in deciding how teachers are rewarded.

- Each governorate EGLP may draw up a plan outlining teacher incentives and involve the community, private sector, etc. in this work.

Activity 4: Quality innovations to improve EGLP. In order to ensure that the Early Grade Learning Program is being implemented in an environment conducive to achieving results and measurable learning outcomes, the USAID Technical Assistance shall work with the MoE to propose innovative and cost-effective activities that improve the quality of early grade learning. The focus of this activity is to identify and trial pilot activities which: 1) expand key elements of EGLP outside of the public (Government of Egypt) schools and 2) promote decentralization.

Illustrative examples:

- Find innovative ways to train Al Azhar teachers¹⁰ in early grade learning (Arabic and mathematics) techniques and new materials.
- Identify governorates to trial block grants to be given to the governorate and then disbursed to schools (using the cash advance system currently in place for school maintenance) to promote EGLP activities. This activity may also be linked to the training provided through the Education Support Program to Boards of Trustees to further strengthen planning processes.

SECTION 5: SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

E-learning: E-learning is an integral cross-cutting theme. All activities, to the fullest extent possible, will utilize cost-effective, locally available technologies and ensure e-learning technologies are linked to EGLP’s capacity-building for teacher and supervisor continuous professional development and to learners’ materials. The USAID Technical Assistance should consider how assessment may be incorporated into the materials. The USAID Technical Assistance is encouraged to pursue public-private partnerships.

Public-Private Partnerships: The USAID Technical Assistance is encouraged to develop partnerships and leverage the efforts and resources of local universities, private mobile and internet providers, technology organizations, research institutions, publishers, printers, book distributors and other relevant stakeholders. These partnerships must be mutually beneficial and serve the best interest of the students, the Government of Egypt, and the United States Government

Gender: The USAID Technical Assistance must address major areas of concern regarding girls and their achievements in the lower primary grade levels. Significant efforts are needed to ensure that girls not only get equitable access to education but equitable learning outcomes from the education system.

Students With Special Needs/Learning Disabilities: The USAID Technical Assistance must ensure that students with special needs or learning disabilities will be able to access material developed under this contract. Coordination between the implementing partner and other

¹⁰ Al Azhar follows the MoE curriculum and like the government public school teachers are trained by PAT. The Director of PAT suggested Al Azhar teachers be provided training to strengthen overall teaching standards and introduce the teachers to the new methods being used in public schools for early grade reading.

organizations and GoE entities working on special needs education will be required. Coordination and leveraging of these existing on-going activities is highly encouraged.

SECTION 6: PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN FOR EGLP RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The matrix below outlines suggested outcome and output indicators.

Indicator	Remarks
Outcome: 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 agreed-upon by national experts.	Standard Indicator. Disaggregated by gender and region/governorate. Students refer to public (GoE) primary learners. The national (Egyptian) learning assessment which is to be developed will be used to evaluate learners' performance.
Indicator	Remarks
Outcome: 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.	Standard Indicator. Disaggregated by gender and region/governorate. Students refer to public (GoE) primary learners. The national (Egyptian) learning assessment which is to be developed will be used to evaluate learners' performance.
Outcome: Proportion of students, who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they have acquired basic numeracy skills.	Custom Indicator. Disaggregated by gender and region/governorate. Students refer to public (GoE) primary learners. The national (Egyptian) learning assessment which is to be developed will be used to evaluate learners' performance.
Outcome: Number of learners receiving reading interventions at the primary level	Standard Indicator. Disaggregated by gender. Indicator based on school enrollment records
Output: Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with USG support.	Standard indicator. Indicator may measure number and type of materials which the USAID Technical Assistance provided.
Output: Number of standardized learning assessments supported by USG.	Standard indicator. Indicator may measure number and type of assessments which the USAID Technical Assistance provided.
Output: Number of teachers who successfully completed in-service training or received intensive coaching with USG support.	Standard indicator. Disaggregated by gender and governorate. Indicator may be listed as a milestone in short and long-term FARAs signed with MoE.
Output: Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support.	Standard indicator. Disaggregated by gender and governorate. Indicator may be listed as a milestone in short and long-term FARAs signed with MoE.
Output: Number of laws, policies, regulations, or guidelines developed or modified to improve primary grade reading	Standard indicator. Types of guidelines may include supporting EGLP documents, e.g., EGLP implementation plan, procurement

programs or increase equitable access.	plan, etc. Indicator supporting narrative should outline types of laws, policies, decrees or guidelines developed and how the documentation supports EGLP implementation.
Output Number and proportion of schools using Information Communication Technology due to USG support.	Standard Indicator. Disaggregated by governorate.
Output: Extent to which innovations are integrated into the system	Custom Indicator. Qualitative indicator which may be measured by milestones on progress of indicator.
Output: Number and type of e-learning materials developed	Custom Indicator
Output: Number and type of private-public partnerships established.	Custom Indicator.
Indicator	Remarks
Output: Number and type of incentives piloted	Custom Indicator.

ANNEX I: COHORT TRACKING MATRIX (2013-2017)

Year 5 (2016-2017)		
ENLA administered for Grades 2 and 3		Cohort 5 (2017): 3 years of EGR and 3 years of math
MMT administered for Grades 2 and 3		
Full package of interventions for Grade 3 (3 years of EGR and EGM); ENLA track results over a three-year period		Cohort 6 (2018): 2 years of EGR and 2 years of math
Year 4 (2015-2016)		
Reading: In grades 1-3 (review of reading materials)		Cohort 4 (2016): 3 years of EGR and no math
Math: In grades 1-3		
ENLA administered for Grades 1 and 2		Cohort 5 (2017): 2 years of EGR and 2 years of math
MMT administered for Grades 1 and 2		Cohort 6 (2018): 1 year of EGR and 1 year of math
Year 3 (2014-2015)		
EGRA administered for Grade 3: All schools with three years of intervention	Cohort 3 (2015): 3 years of EGR (no math)	Math: Implemented for grades 1 and 2; developed for Grade 3
	Cohort 4 (2016): 2 years of EGR (no math)	ENLA administered for Grades 1 and 2 (grade 2 control baseline)
	Cohort 5 (2017): 1 year of EGR and 1 year of math	MMT administered for Grades 1 and 2 (Grade 2 control group for math instruction)

Year 2 (2013-2014)		
EGRA administered for Grade 3: 166 GILO schools three years of full intervention and all other schools two years of intervention	Cohort 2a (2014): 166 GILO 3 years of EGR (no math)	Reading: Developed for Grade 3; implemented in grades 1 and 2. Math: Implemented for Grade 1; developed for grade 2.
	Cohort 2b (2014) 2 years EGR (no math)	Egyptian National Learning Assessment (ENLA) for EGR and EGM developed and trialed
	Cohort 3 (2015): 2 years of EGR (no math)	Master Monitoring Tool (MMT) revised (to include classroom observation component)
	Cohort 4 (2016): 1 year of EGR (no math)	
Year 1: Baseline (2012 -2013)		
Cohort 1 (2013) No EGR –(no math)	Reading: 166 GILO schools (in 4 governorates) received two years of EGR instruction; # of schools (nationally) received	
Cohort 2a (2014): 166 GILO 2 years of EGR; (no math)	EGRA administered to Grade 3 (control group-baseline) Math: Grade 1 curriculum simplification in progress (to link to Arabic)	
Cohort 2b (2014): 1 year of EGR (no math)		
Cohort 3 (2015) 1 year EGR (no math)		

ANNEX 2: KEY ACTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF A NATIONAL EARLY GRADE LEARNING PROGRAM

The list of Below is a list of initial actions for the institutionalization of an Early Grade Learning Program.

National Structure

EGLP National Champion¹¹ is an individual willing to be a high-level advocate for EGLP; however, he/she may not have the time to provide the oversight needed to coordinate the various technical components.

EGLP National Coordinator oversees the National EGLP Resource Team to ensure the successful implementation of EGLP.

- Close coordination and joint planning with curriculum and materials development department, National Center for Examinations and Educational Evaluation Professional Academy for Training, General Education (Math and Arabic Focal Points), Planning and Strategic Policy Unit and liaises with Education Support Fund.
- Coordinates with governorates to ensure national training schedule/capacity-building program
- Work with ESF and Decentralization Units to develop EGLP procurement plan
- Oversight of monitoring/quality assurance of EGLP
- Ensure Governorates receive timely advisory support
- Participate and support activities of relevant MoE working groups which focus on early grade learning subjects.

At the workshop there was general consensus that EGLP should be placed in the General Education Department and a specific EGLP Unit developed. Potential EGLP Unit roles and responsibilities include: 1) initiate, manage and administer the program, 2) lobby for funding (and ensure the funds are included in the appropriate budgets) and 3) report on progress of EGLP.

National EGLP Resource Team is a group of MOE departments and education related organizations which work together to implement EGLP. This may include:

- General Education to provide oversight of Arabic and Math Supervisors (technical content as well as supervision).
- Planning and Strategic Policy Unit (national planning of EGLP and decrees/policies required to implement the program in collaboration with General Education).
- Finance Department (EGLP budgetary allocations).
- Professional Academy of Teachers (certification of EGLP personnel).

¹¹ National Champion and National Coordinator may be the same person (if time permits) or two different individuals.
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- Curriculum and Instructional Materials (develop textbooks and teaching materials).
- National Center for Examination and Education Evaluation (student assessment).
- Monitoring and Evaluation Department: Oversight of monitoring and evaluation to ensure quality EGLP implementation.

Governorate Early Grade Learning Program Team (this may replace the Early Grade Reading Planning Team currently in place.).

District Early Grade Program Team (follows the structure of the Governorate EGLP Team).

School Level Early Grade Program Team (linked to Boards of Trustees)

At the workshop, the idea that EGLP should be linked to the decentralization process was suggested. A planning and budgeting process which follows EGLP from the central to the school level was discussed and the following statement issued “Through a ministry decree form taskforces composed of stakeholders to link and follow-up implementation of program while forming similar taskforces at level of governorate and department (district).”

Key Products of National and Governorate EGLP Team

- Annual EGLP Capacity-Building Plan (for teacher and supervisor certification)
- Annual EGLP Procurement Plan (for materials which need to be sourced, e.g., student workbook)
- Annual EGLP Financing Plan
- Annual EGLP Monitoring and Evaluation Plan—for quality control of program

Media/Public Awareness Campaign

Public Relations Campaign: To increase public awareness (communities, parents and private sector) of EGLP and the benefits of promoting early grade learning, in particular in Arabic and Math. Campaign may also build community participation and private sector involvement in the local school environment.