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FY 2021, Quarter 3 Report

APRIL – JUNE 2021

USAID LEARN TOGETHER ACTIVITY

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July 30, 2021, revised October 20, 2021

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Contract No. 72011520C00006

DEC Submission Requirements

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ACRONYMS

ACOR	Alternate Contracting Officer's Representative
CBMU	Community Based Methodological Unit
CO	Contracting Officer
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DED	District Education Department
EGMA	Early Grade Math Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EMIS	Electronic Management Information System
EU-QESP	European Union - Quality Education Support Programme
FY	Fiscal Year
GBAO	Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast
GESI	Gender Equity and Social Inclusion
GoT	Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IDP	International Development Partners
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LTA	Learn Together Activity
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
PITT	Performance Indicator Tracking Table
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheet
PSA	Public Service Announcement
RTTI	Republican Teacher Training Institute
RWM	Read with Me
SINIDI	See it, Name it, Do it
SSME	Snapshot of School Management Effectiveness (instruments)
TOT	Training of Trainers
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the reporting period, the project engaged two short-term education curriculum experts in review of the first draft primary education standards developed by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) curriculum working group with the USAID Learn Together Activity (LTA) technical team. Based on the feedback from the international experts, the working group in partnerships with USAID LTA will develop the final draft of the competency-based standards and prepare them for the pilot.

In quarter 3, the USAID LTA team participated in several meeting organized by development partners. USAID LTA and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported the Republican Teacher Training Institute (RTTI) in hosting an international conference on Inclusive Education. The conference was held May 14-15 in Dushanbe and participants included representatives of different institutions from different countries such as Russia, Uzbekistan, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The focus of the conference this year was teacher's professional development and was titled: Inclusion- A Way to Equity: Engaging Teachers with Principles of Inclusive Education. Representatives from MoES, USAID LTA, local and international organizations working on inclusive education delivered a presentation at the conference.

USAID LTA continued supporting the MoES working group on the assessment concept paper. USAID LTA, in partnership with UNICEF and the European Union - Quality Education Support Programme (EU-QESP), supported the process by contributing to the concept paper, developing supplementary documents, and facilitating working group meetings.

On April 7, 2021, USAID LTA conducted an orientation meeting for the MoES Curriculum Review Working Group. The First Deputy Minister of Education led the workshop. USAID LTA introduced aims and objectives of the primary education curriculum review, plan, and term of reference for each member of the working group. In the first session, working group members discussed and agreed on the process of review of the standards including evaluation and analysis tools.

In June 2021, USAID LTA conducted two phases of district-level trainings for over 901 school-based summer camp counselors from 450 schools across Tajikistan. Teachers serve as counselors during summer camps for primary grade students, which are organized by the Additional Education Center (an affiliate of MoES). USAID LTA summer camp trainings taught teachers how to utilize children's books and other reading materials donated by USAID to run interactive activities for primary grade students that strengthen their reading skills. The school-based summer camps began on June 15 and continued until July 15.

This quarter, USAID LTA continued to extensively engage with TogetherEd (Learn Together Activity subcontractor) to analyze numeracy data gathered from the field. Additionally, TogetherEd conducted a series of 'See it, Name it, Do it' ICT trainings with the LTA team. This was an important trial-run for the extensive Community Based Monitoring Units (CBMU) trainings that USAID LTA will be conducting under Activity 1.1.5 over the coming months.

In Quarter 3, USAID LTA continued the competitive recruitment of staff. By the end of June 2021, USAID LTA had either fully recruited or advertised for all long-term positions on the project, including staff for the regional offices. Formal recruitments and onboarding of the staff will be completed in August 2021.

This quarter saw a significant increase in COVID-19 cases in Tajikistan which led to the USAID LTA office being closed, some trainings being cancelled and some team members falling ill. This has caused certain deliverable dates to be pushed back as the USAID LTA team remains flexible to the ongoing situation.

USAID LTA is implemented in partnership with subcontractors EdIntersect, Together Education, Inclusive Development Partners, and blueTree Group.

Section A: Major Activities and Achievements

Component 1: Improved Instruction and Availability of Supplemental Materials Related to Reading Subjects

Sub-component 1.1: Effective Teacher Professional Development (PD) including In-Service and Pre-Service

Activity 1.1.1 Support the MoES to update the Primary Grade Tajik Language Standards and Syllabus

Activity 1.1.1a. Conduct evaluation of effectiveness of primary Tajik Language competency-based standards and other curriculum documents (linked with 1.2.2.a; 2.1.2.a.)

On April 7, 2021, USAID LTA conducted an orientation meeting for the Curriculum Review Working Group. The First Deputy Minister of Education led the workshop. USAID LTA introduced aims and objectives of the primary education curriculum review, plan, and terms of reference for each member of the working group. In the first session, working group members discussed and agreed on planned activities and during the second session members received a curriculum review evaluation checklist and guidance on how to complete the evaluation.

#	Working Group	Members	Tajik	Russian
1	Tajik Language Subject Standards and Syllabus	8	8	-
2	Math Subject Standards and Syllabus	10	8	2
3	Nature Subject Standards and Syllabus	7	5	2
4	State language (Tajik) Subject Standards and Syllabus for non-Tajik schools	6	6	-
5	Russian language Subject Standards and Syllabus for non-Russian schools	7	-	7
6	Russian language and Reading Subject Standards and Syllabus for Russian schools	8	-	8
7	Art and Crafts Standards and Syllabus for primary grades	4	4	-
8	Music and Singing Standards and Syllabus for primary grades	5	5	-
9	PE Standards and Syllabus for primary grades	2	2	-
10	English Language Standards and Syllabus for primary grades	5	5	-
	Total	**62**	**43**	**19**

The evaluation of the effectiveness of Primary Grade Tajik Language standards covered the following 10 indicators:

(1) Clear description of subject aims and objectives.
(2) To what extent the competencies will help teachers and other educators to elicit appropriate information to report on students' learning progress.
(3) Do competencies specifically describe skills instead of being a list of tasks?
(4) After thorough audit, define additional competencies that are missing.
(5) Do the presented competencies allow students to produce differentiated outcomes?
(6) Do competencies show progression, consistency, and coherence within the grade level and withing primary education level?
(7) How are learning strands and sub strands defined in the curriculum document?
(8) Do curriculum documents (standards and syllabus) support differentiation, multiple learning styles and multimodal approach? What do you suggest?
(9) Does the assessment criteria reflect the level of mastery and differentiated outcomes?
(10) Describe additional aspects not covered by above criteria.

All members of the group reviewed and analyzed the primary education standards and specifically looked at the Tajik Language Standards and Curriculum. USAID LTA collected all completed checklists, grouped the responses, processed the data, and derived conclusions that were shared during the first development workshop described in the below sections.

USAID LTA conducted an orientation meeting for the Curriculum Review Working Group

The summary of findings shows that there is a strong need for revision of the standards. Below are key findings of the review:

(1) "*Subject aims and objectives of Tajik Language in Primary grades needs to be revised to reflect missing key subject learning strands and sub-strands*". The reviewers believe that this will help to set a conceptual framework for the teaching and learning of each subject. The same suggestion was made by the short-term education curriculum experts in their early analyses.

(2) "*Language competencies reflect general outcomes and are not specific enough to gather appropriate data. Several tools and questions are needed to measure students' progress and most teachers and other educators may describe competencies differently and subjectively.*" For example, "Students will be able to apply some basic reading strategies to comprehend the text" – here the reviewers asked many questions: What are these strategies? How you measure them? Do you need one assessment instrument or several to measure the progress? Do all teachers have the same understanding of the reading strategies? These findings and questions suggest rethinking the presentation of strands and sub-strands and how competencies are structured. The group, including the short-term education curriculum experts, agreed that "a 'competency' is a criterion-referenced learning objective enabling student assessment to be integrated within formative teaching and learning." Changing the definition and construction of competencies enables teachers and other educators to use a single tool/question/item to measure students' progress and integrate features of assessment criteria which allows for a shared understanding of what should be taught and assessed.

(3) "*Tajik language standard document covers reading, writing, listening, and speaking strands; however, they do not detail to reflect specific sub-strands for each of the above-mentioned skills. This structure will not allow teachers to select, plan, teach, and assess specific skills that constitute the competencies.*" The working group suggests that the strands need to be specific and reflect different parameters of the strand and be coherent with the subject domain. Thus, the short-term education curriculum experts worked with the LTA literacy specialist and literacy materials specialist to agree on sub-strands.

(4) "*The Tajik Language competencies for grades 1-4 show progression, but this progression is described by wage adjectives, such as "some", "several", "majority". This style of representation of the progression do not support teachers and other educators to plan learning outcomes/objectives, teach and assess using shared indicators*". Therefore, the reviewers suggest specifying the learning objectives and show clear progression within the grade level and across primary education.

(5) "*The competencies and indicators do not reflect differentiated outcomes and structured based on "one fits all" approach. The standards and syllabus for Tajik Language do not support the concept of students' demonstrating different "outcomes/products" for the same learning outcome or use different ways to achieve those outcomes*". The reviewers and the short-term education curriculum experts suggest structuring the learning outcomes in a way to enable students to demonstrate the learning outcomes through different means and products.

(6) "*The assessment criteria are given under each competency and they just confirm the end results without showing different levels.*" The reviewers find these features of the assessment criteria confusing, as teachers will not be able to define whether the student is confirming the achievement or exploring. The suggestion to integrate assessment/criteria-based learning outcomes (competencies) will solve this problem.

To explore more opportunities for integration of the literacy skills in other subjects in primary grades USAID LTA supported MoES to review and evaluate different language and arts subjects, including, Russian Language, State (Tajik) Language for non-Tajik schools, English, Arts and Crafts, and Music and Singing. In most cases, the reviewers made the same conclusions and provided recommendations as mentioned above. However, cross curriculum review of language subjects showed that there is inconsistency among these subjects in introducing language content, skills, and grammar structure. For example, one of the summaries of the reviewers stated, "in Russian Language Subject for Grade 2 Tajik (first year of learning this subject) students are required to retell stories in Russian or write complex sentences". The reviewers, including the short-term education curriculum experts suggest having single strands and sub-strands, with some specification, for all language subjects and align introduction of competencies and apply skills learned in mother tongue for mastering other languages.

All members of the working group reviewed and finalized their evaluation notes, defined, and prioritized the revision areas which were then collected by USAID LTA analyzed. USAID LTA will present the findings and a summary report with recommendations during a round table planned in Quarter 4.

Activity 1.1.1b. Conduct round table on the result of the curriculum effectiveness evaluation
During Quarter 2, USAID LTA conducted a capacity building workshop for the curriculum review working group (see Activity 1.1.1e) where the primary results of the curriculum effectiveness evaluation were presented to all working group members.

Due to recent COVID-19 restrictions, the round table with involvement from education sector stakeholders planned in June 2021 has been postponed to the next quarter.

Activity 1.1.1c. Conduct capacity building trainings and workshops for Curriculum Development Working Group
On May 26-28, 2021, USAID LTA conducted the first round of capacity building workshop for the Primary Education Curriculum Review Working Group. The workshop was split into two parts: (1) presentation of the results of the evaluation on curriculum effectiveness and (2) presentation and discussion areas for further revisions. During the first part of the workshop every subject group (9 subjects) presented the outcomes of the evaluation, discussed findings, and agreed on shared (cross curriculum) adjustments. USAID LTA involved the short-term education curriculum experts to attend the workshop virtually and participate in question and answer sessions on a daily basis.

During the second part of the workshop, USAID LTA presented a draft concept of subject competencies grouped by strands and sub-strands. Overall, the Tajik Language group positively accepted the new concept and worked with the short-term education curriculum experts to get more clarification and guidance.

One of the concerns shared by the Tajik Language Working Group and supported by members of other subject groups was integrated teaching of Mother Tongue/Language and Reading Subjects. The Tajik Working Group fully supports separation of these two subjects and developing new curriculum for these two subjects. The group communicated this to the First Deputy Minister, who expressed interest in initiating discussion at the MoES level on the issue with separation of these two subjects as the amount of instructional time for primary education is estimated to be 548 hours per year, that is well below the average of 799 hour in OECD countries. This split will help the system to ensure greater focus and more time on task on students' reading and language

skills. Currently, the integrated approach does not provide an opportunity both for teachers and students to pay enough attention to these two critical learning strands.

This workshop played a great role in creating collaboration among primary education experts from different subjects. For the first time, USAID LTA created an opportunity for them to discuss problems in primary education, especially in understanding the roles of each subject in children's development and brainstorming for opportunities to strengthen the contents. The workshop brought the following outcomes:

- All participants agreed on the necessity of revising subject standards and curricula to adjust evaluation results
- All subject language groups accepted aligned subject standards and sub-strands
- All participants agreed to a new structure of the subject standards. For example, this structure could present learning outcomes by strands and sub-strands showing clear progression among grade levels
- Shared definition of competences and competence-based standards
- Increased collaboration among subject groups
- Working groups accepted the leading role of USAID LTA technical team members assigned to support them

USAID LTA conducted the first round of capacity building workshop for the Primary Education Curriculum Review Working Group.

Activity 1.1.1d. Revise Primary Grade Subject Standards and Syllabus for Tajik Language Grade 1-4 based on the evaluation outcomes

During Quarter 3, after evaluating the effectiveness of Primary Education Curriculum and the first workshop USAID LTA actively involved the Tajik Language Working Group to review and adjust the new draft of subject standards presented by the short-term education curriculum experts. As a result, the draft consists of 4 strands and 24 sub-strands.

USAID LTA actively involved the Tajik Language Working Group

In comparison with current Primary Education Standards (2017) the new revised draft consists of sub-strands that allow for defined learning outcomes and criteria.

Table 1. Draft Primary Education Strands and Sub-Strands

Strands	Sub-strands
Listening	• Listening and retelling • Attentive listening • Listening and asking questions • Listening and responding • Listening and comprehension

Speaking	• Vocabulary • Grammar/Sentence Structure • Retelling • Speaking and social communications
Reading	• Letter knowledge and phonemic awareness • correct pronunciation • Reading fluency • Vocabulary • Reading comprehension • Types and genres of children's literature (basic literature conventions)
Writing	• Handwriting • Punctuation • Vocabulary • Spelling • Recognition of text genres • Grammar (Morphology) • Grammar (Syntax / Sentence structure) • Creating of idea and text • Editing and improving

By the end of June 2021, Tajik Language Working Group developed draft learning outcomes for each sub-strand and shared them for final review with the short-term education curriculum experts. During the next quarter, USAID LTA will support the Working Group to adjust final comments and prepare a pilot version of the subject standards.

The Tajik Language Working Group conducted 9 weekly working meetings during Quarter 3. The below table presents meeting dates and contents of these meetings.

Table 2. Tajik Language Working Group Meeting Schedule

Dates	Meeting contents
20.04.2021	Introduced curriculum effectiveness evaluation instrument. Discussed the review and reporting process.
27.04.2021	Discussed the questions and issues related to the curriculum effectiveness evaluation.
4.05.2021	Discussed the results of analyses. Began defining gaps in teaching Tajik Language and Reading.
11.05.2021	During this meeting feedback received from the short-term education curriculum experts was presented and discussed. Began development of draft standards for reading and writing.
18.05.2021	Presented drafts developed by working group(reading and writing). Peer evaluation and provision of feedback.
25.05.2021	Prepared for three-day workshop. Developed presentations.
1.06.2021	Discussed distribution of roles and responsibilities. Developed reading, writing, speaking, and listening strands based on the workshop results.
8.06.2021	Reviewed drafted reading and writing strands. Presented new model with follow up discussion and analyses.

15.06.2021	Reviewed the drafted listening and speaking strands. Presented new samples with follow up discussion and analyses.

USAID LTA also supported other primary language and literacy related subjects to revise subject standards and received feedback from the short-term education curriculum experts.

The following outcomes are notable for this quarter:
- Agreed structure of the standards, including strands and sub-strands
- First draft of all learning outcomes ready for further review and improvement

During this quarter USAID LTA also worked closely with Primary Grade Subject Standards and Syllabus Working Groups across the primary subjects to revise the standards, define strands and sub-strands, and develop drafts of learning outcomes.

Activity 1.1.2 Conduct training for Pilot Teachers (in conjunction with 2.1.3)

Activity 1.1.2a. Evaluate the needs and develop additional training modules and adjust to the Teacher's Digital Platform
During Quarter 3, USAID LTA defined training outcomes for the teacher training program and agreed on the training model and approach. The contents of teacher training will be focused on three key areas of literacy development (1) enabling learning and formative pedagogy; (2) literacy skills development and (3) numeracy skills development.

USAID LTA defined themes for each key area and aligned them with the updated Primary Education Tajik Language strands and sub strands. The three areas are briefly presented in the table below:

Table 3. Training Areas and Relevant Themes

Training Areas	Themes
Enabling Learning Environment & Formative Pedagogy	• Inclusive Education; Universal Design for Learning (UDL); Introduction to the universal design approach and three main principles; Integrating UDL in Teaching and learning process • Classroom Management: Transmission and transaction model of innovative teaching techniques and practices; Grouping/cooperative learning • Techniques for getting students back on task: Attract students' attention to the activity (see it, name it and do it); Increase Number of Students Participating • Increase Quality of Student Participation: Asking Questions; Everyone Must Answer; Getting Correct Answers • Positive attitude/encouraging environment, Gradual Release of Responsibility • Defining Formative Assessment approach; Formative assessment as an integral part of teaching pedagogy to impact learning outcomes.

	Important factors in making a successful link between teaching, learning and assessment; Definition of formative assessment
	• Formative assessment strategies: Differentiation Strategy; Guided group; Self-regulating learning; Analysis and feedback; Observation and evidence elicitation; Reflective practice; Dialogue and dialogic learning; Co-construction; Practical implications for application of classroom based formative assessment and classroom observation tools;
	• Recognizing effective formative assessment in the classroom Fluidity of roles between teacher and pupil; Effective Classroom environment which involves all pupils as active learners; Formative assessment supports the three key principles of teaching and learning: time, pace, depth.
Literacy Skills Development	• Developing listening and responding skills; Hearing; Attention; Questions; Comprehension
	• Developing speaking skills; Vocabulary; Grammar; Storytelling; Conversation and social skills
	• Multimodalities: Socio-Cultural - Affective and Conative; Multicultural - Cognitive
	• Developing Reading Skills: Phonemic awareness; Phonics; Fluency; Vocabulary; Comprehension
	• Developing writing (composition) skills
	• Knowledge of the text types (Genre); Vocabulary; Sentence Structure; Developing and organizing ideas; Editing and redrafting
	• Developing writing (transcription) skills: Spelling; Phonological awareness and phonics; Handwriting; Punctuation
Numeracy Skills Development	• Number and algebra: Number and place value; Money (real life) mathematics; Pattern and algebra; Fractions and decimals
	• Measurement and geometry: Using units of measurement; Geometric reasoning (space); Location and Transformation; Shape
	• Statistics and probability: Chance Data representation and interpretation

During Quarter 3, USAID LTA reviewed available resources, including USAID RWM training materials, READ 2 training materials on Formative Assessment, and selected key methods and strategies that will constitute the contents of the training program.

Activity 1.1.2b. Train pilot teachers to pilot revised curriculum, textbooks and supplementary materials

This activity was moved to Year 2.

Activity 1.1.3 Mentoring of pilot teachers

Activity 1.1.3a. Develop pilot methodology, including pilot data collection instruments, classroom observation and mentoring approaches (including virtual)

This activity will begin in August 2021.

Activity 1.1.4 Develop capacity of community-based trainers for mentoring

Activity 1.1.4a. Finalize the list of CBMUs for each district and define potential trainers

This activity is completed. 1,200 trainers were identified, though over the next 9 months, though there may be replacements because of teacher turnover.

USAID LTA received the list of potential trainers from District Education Departments. USAID LTA conducted the first screening to evaluate the candidates' professional achievements, experience and active involvement in providing mentoring support. The list will be approved prior to the first round of trainings planned early August 2021.

Activity 1.1.4b. Conduct first round of TOT for CBMU level

In June 2021, USAID LTA involved five local consultants, from the Center for Information Technologies under the MoES to develop the training program and materials for the first round of Training of Trainers (TOT) for CBMU-level trainers on information and communications technology (ICT) skills. On June 15-17, 2021 USAID LTA conducted a three-day orientation workshop on defining the scope and structure of the training sessions applying "See it, Name It and Do It" approach. A teacher training expert from TogetherEd provided online support during the workshop.

ICT Training Program and Materials Development

Activity 1.1.5. Develop Retraining Programs for non-specialized primary teachers (with 3.1.5)

Activity 1.1.5a. Develop a retraining program for non-professional primary teachers

This activity will begin in consultation with USAID including MOES and RTTI when the formal agreement is signed between the Government of Tajikistan and USAID.

Activity 1.1.6 Analysis of primary pre-service teacher training and program development (with 2.1.5)

Activity 1.1.6a. Conduct need analysis of methodology of teaching language, mathematics, primary pedagogy and psychology, teaching/practicum numeracy and literacy at 6 selected pre-service institutions and colleges.

In Quarter 3, USAID LTA collected data through classroom observation and faculty staff interviews from 17 Pedagogical Universities and Colleges across the country for analysis. The main purpose of the study is to identify the needs of Higher Education Institution (HEI) instructors in teaching these subjects and their use in planning. Upon completion of this activity, the results will be available for use by USAID LTA team and consultants. The data is being processed and the analysis and report will be available in Quarter 4.

The analysis reviews the following types of activities:
- Lecture
- Practical lesson

- Independent work under the guidance of an instructor
- Independent work of the student
- Data on teaching mathematics

The study was conducted by higher education training facilitators in 17 HEIs and colleges. A total of 131 forms were completed:
- Mathematics: 12 lecture lessons, 12 practical lessons, 10 lessons under the guidance of an instructor, and 12 independent lessons;
- Tajik language: 9 lectures, 9 practical lessons, 9 lessons under the guidance of an instructor, 9 independent lessons
- Pedagogy 5 lessons;
- Psychology 4 lessons;
- 22 interviews with instructors were reviewed.

Sub-component 1.2: Materials Development

Activity 1.2.1 Prepare and print additional reading books for schools
In Quarter 3, USAID LTA evaluated 20 titles of children's books to ensure gender and inclusion, and their alignment with the children's book criteria developed by USAID RWM. Based on this evaluation two titles were changed, as they do not meet several criteria on gender and inclusion.

USAID LTA, in collaboration with the Writer's Union, initiated translation of 10 titles. LTA literacy materials specialist reviewed the remaining 10 titles suggested by the MoES and returned the titles for further editing.

Table 4. Titles of Children's Books Recommended for Translation

#	Title	Author	Number of pages	Translation status
1.	Puss in Boots	Charles Perrault	14	Translated
2.	The Bremen Town Musicians	Brothers Grimm	16	Translated
3.	Fairy tales	William Gough	224	Translated
4.	Mowgli	Rudyard Kipling	184	Translated
5.	The Scarlet Flower	Aksakova S.T.	21	Translated
6.	Wild Swans	Anderson H.K	32	Translated
7.	Little Longnose	Gough W	61	Translated
8.	Winnie the Pooh	Milne A.A.	157	Translated
9.	Flower-seven-flower	Kataev V.	20	In progress
10	Short Stories	Tolstoy L.N.	20	In progress
11.	Dr. Aibolit	Chukovsky K.	24	In progress
12.	Blueberries for Sali (Sasha)	Robert Makkloski	56	In progress
13.	Alenushka's tales	Mamin-Sibiryak D.N.	87	Translated
14.	Stories from Georgian authors		48	In progress
15.	Golden Antelope	Indian tale	14	Translated
16.	Crocodile Gena and his friends	Uspenskiy E.N.	60	In progress

17.	Little Princess	Francis Barnett	220	In progress
18.	Stories	Tompson E.C.	64	In progress
19.	The wizard of oz	Laiman Frank Baum	160	In progress
20.	The Snow Queen	Anderson H.C.	100	In progress

In June 2021, USAID LTA initiated hiring of local illustrators and designers to illustrate newly translated titles.

Activity 1.2.2 Develop supplementary learning materials to complement revised standards and textbooks

Activity 1.2.2a. Develop concept and outlines of supplementary learning materials.
In Quarter 3, USAID LTA conducted a literature review of the training materials developed by different development programs in primary education, especially in literacy development. The review defined different types of methods, strategies and approaches aimed at developing primary students' literacy skills and compared them with revised Tajik Language Strands and sub-strands. As a result, USAID LTA developed a matrix that presents different methods aligned with the Tajik Language strands and sub-strands. Along with the methods, the matrix shows needed supplementary materials to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

In June 2021, USAID LTA identified local experts to develop supplementary learning materials. In Quarter 4, USAID LTA will initiate the development of supplementary learning materials based on this matrix and conceptual framework.

Group #1

#	Position and Institution
1	Director of RTMC
2	Lead Specialist RTMC
3	Lead Specialist EDI
4	RTMC specialist
5	RTMC Specialist
6	EDI
7	Primary Teacher, Kulob
8	Primary Teacher, Vahdat
9	Primary Teacher, Dushanbe
10	Senior editor of Marifati Omuzgor
11	Writer's Union

Group #2

#	Position and Institution
1	EDI
2	EDI

3	Textbook Center
4	Primary Teacher, Lyceum B.Gafurov district
5	Primary Teacher, Yovon
6	DED B.Ghafurov
7	GBAO TTI

*Information for all WGs is presented in Attachment #1.

Activity 1.2.2b. Conduct series of capacity building trainings and workshops for Working Group on developing supplementary learning materials
This activity was postponed to August 2021 due to delayed revisions of subject standards and syllabus.

Activity 1.2.3 EGRA baseline preparation

Activity 1.2.3a. Review RWM EGRA, SSME, classroom observation endline tools, and lessons learned
In Quarter 2, USAID RWM shared the preliminary results from the RWM endline EGRA with subcontractor EdIntersect who began reviewing the RWM EGRA tools against the results.

Activity 1.2.3b. Develop capacity-building plan to reinforce govt capacities to conduct EGRAs
USAID LTA will draft the plan internally during Quarter 4 in anticipation of meetings with MoES and the NTC after the signing a formal agreement between the USG and GoT/MoES.

Activity 1.2.3c. Develop EGRA, SSME, classroom observation baseline tools
This activity will begin once the agreement with the MoES is signed and an assessment Working Group is formed by MoES. In the meantime, USAID LTA with EdIntersect are reviewing the RWM tools to determine what changes, if necessary, will be needed for the baseline in 2022.

Component 2: Improved Instruction and Availability of Supplemental Math Materials

Sub-component 2.1: Effective Teacher PD (for pre-service and in-service)

Activity 2.1.1 Conduct analysis of teacher instructional practices and understanding of math and numeracy
In May 2021, USAID LTA fully completed the data collection from 327 schools across Tajikistan (initially 350 schools were randomly selected from 1009 schools from RWM's Cohort 4). Overall 1,248 classroom observations were conducted and 1,132 teachers were interviewed. USAID LTA involved RWM District Training Facilitators to conduct classroom observations and teacher interviews. The classroom observations were directly uploaded onto the digital platform. The teacher interviews, due to the features of the instruments (qualitative) were collected on paper. USAID LTA Data Lead supported by TogetherEd processed and analyzed data and developed a draft report on "Analysis of Teacher Instructional Practices and Understanding of Math and Numeracy". Initial recommendations based on findings can also be found in the report, which will be shared with USAID once the report is complete in October 2021.

The key findings of the analysis are:

- In 90% of observed classrooms at least a few students are asked to share their thinking. This thinking could be shared in the form of giving the solution to a problem. The LTA approach to math instruction is to encourage a greater number of students to express their thinking and understanding of the concepts being taught.
- The textbooks are the main teaching tool in primary school. An additional 40% of classes were observed to have additional teaching materials. Almost 50% of observers found the teaching materials to have a small, monolingual font, and pictures with little connection to the text. The purpose was to ascertain if the texts (including visuals) support student learning.
- The data on assistive technologies stands out with 46% of schools showing no assistive technology at all. UDL is a new focus of teacher competencies and will require training of all teachers. Unsurprisingly the provincial breakdown also shows very low levels of assistive technology. Almost 34% of observed classrooms are already using oral and visual presentation.
- Almost 75% of all observed classrooms was arranged for individual or whole-class work. A much smaller portion of classrooms were arranged to foster group or partner work. This does not necessarily mean partner work and group work are absent from the classroom. It's feasible that other types of work do occur, however they may require moving of furniture. Most classrooms are arranged for individual work.
- In 67% of classrooms that teachers are speaking for most of the class time. This leaves little time for students to practice the skills they have just been taught.

USAID LTA will use the results of the analyses to inform teacher training materials development.

Activity 2.1.2 Support the MoES to update the Primary Grade Math Standards and Syllabus

Activity 2.1.2a. Conduct evaluation of effectiveness Math competency-based standards and other curriculum documents
In April 2021, USAID LTA initiated an additional round of evaluation involving the Math Curriculum Review Working Group. On April 7, 2021, LTA conducted an orientation meeting with the Working Group consisting of 10 primary math experts. During the orientation meeting, the working group members were introduced to the draft curriculum review plan, with more detailed description of the first task related to evaluation of effectiveness of math competency-based standards and other curriculum documents. In May 2021, the working group conducted a literature review based on the agreed evaluation checklist. USAID LTA Data Lead processed and derived key conclusions. In June 2021, during the first capacity building workshop, the Math Curriculum Review Working Group presented these findings to other primary education subject groups.

The evaluation tool consisted of the following indicators:
(1) The structure of standards
(2) The content of standards
(3) Math competencies and indicators
(4) Coherence among standards, syllabus, and textbooks
(5) Key challenges
(6) Recommendations to update the standards and syllabus

The summary of conclusions and recommendations are presented below.

(1) **The structure of standards**. Primary Math Standards are not a separate, but ingegrated in the Primary Education Subject Standards. The key competencies are not explicitly presented and described in the standards. Some learning strands can be merged or integrated. The assessment section does not provide detailed information and needs thorough revision.

(2) **The contents of standards**. Some terms need more explanation. The subject competencies, indicators and key competencies need revision to describe the contents of math teaching and learning in primary grades.

(3) **Math competencies and indicators**. The math competencies are grouped into five strands and each competence supported by indicators of achievements. The evaluation showed that the indicators are lacking progression and need revision to demonstrate clear progression trajectory. It is recommended that the competencies should be grouped under three key strands with detailed sub-strands.

(4) **Coherence among standards, syllabus, and textbooks**. Although most of the syllabus topics and textbook content support development of students' competencies, there is not enough time and opportunities for students to master these learning outcomes. The topics, questions and tasks in the textbooks do not support systematic development of students' skills, but are instead designed for remembering the information and rules.

(5) **Key challenges**. Lack of continued evaluation of students mastering the learning outcomes is one of the system challenges. The revision of the standards and syllabus should be based on these types of evaluation and studies.

Activity 2.1.2b. Conduct *round table on the result of the Curriculum Effectiveness evaluation (with 1.1.1.b)* This activity will begin once a formal agreement is signed between USAID and the GoT/MoES so that USAID LTA can initiate activities with ministry counterparts.

Activity 2.1.2c. Conduct series of capacity building trainings and workshops for Working Group on Revision of Math Curriculum
On May 26-28, 2021, USAID LTA conducted the first round of capacity building workshop for the Primary Education Curriculum Review Working Group (linked with Activity 1.1.1). The Math curriculum working group presented the results of curriculum effectiveness evaluation and shared recommendations for further revisions. In addition, USAID LTA presented the proposed new structure of the Primary Education Math Standards with new strands and sub-strands. The math working group consists of 8 experts and the team leader and met 7 times during Quarter 3. During these meetings, the members of groups shared the draft materials to discuss and provide feedback. On the third meeting, USAID LTA introduced the recommended structure and contents of the revised standards. These meetings helped to develop the working group members' capacities and facilitated the development of key items to improve math curricula.

Activity 2.1.2d. Revise Primary Grade Subject Standards and Syllabus for Math Grade 1-4 based on the evaluation outcomes
During Quarter 3, the Math Working Group met 8 times to share the revised drafts and agree on changes. In June 2021, the Working Group developed the first draft of revised primary math standards and shared with the short-term education curriculum experts for further review and feedback. The Math standards are presented in three strands and detailed sub-strands described in the table below.

Table 5. Draft Primary Math Education Strands and Sub-Strands

Strands	Sub-strands

Number and Algebra	• Number and place values • Money (real life) mathematics • Patterns and algebra • Fractions and decimals
Measurement and geometry	• Using units of measurement • Geometric reasoning (space) • Location and transformation • Shapes
Statistics and probability	• Chance • Data representation and interpretation

For detailed descriptions of each strand and sub-strand see Attachment #2.

Activity 2.1.2e. Support the MoES to review the Primary Grade Math Textbooks

This activity was postponed to August 2021 due to delays in revision of subject standards and syllabus.

Activity 2.1.3 Conduct training for Pilot Teachers (with 1.1.2)

Activity 2.1.3a. Develop set of teacher training modules

This activity will begin in Quarter 4.

Activity 2.1.3b. Train pilot teachers to pilot revised curriculum, textbook and supplementary materials

This activity will begin in Quarter 4.

Activity 2.1.4 Mentoring of Pilot Teachers (in conjunction with 1.1.3)

Activity 2.1.4a. Develop pilot methodology, including pilot data collection instruments, classroom observation and mentoring approaches (including virtual)
This activity will begin in Quarter 4.

Activity 2.1.5 Analysis of primary pre-service teacher training and development (see 1.1.6)

Activity 2.1.5a. Review status and alignment of the pre-service program with the Primary Education competency-based learning standards of the MoES.
Activity progress is reported under 1.1.6.

Sub-component 2.2: Materials Development

Activity 2.2.1 Develop supplementary learning materials to complement revised standards and textbooks for Math Grade 1-4

Activity 2.2.1a. Conduct market analysis and curriculum needs for types of supplementary learning materials to support revised primary grade curriculum and textbooks
This activity is completed.

Activity 2.2.1b. Conduct series of capacity building trainings and workshops for Math Supplementary Learning Materials Development Working Group
This activity was postponed to August 2021 due to delays in revision of subject standards and syllabus.

Activity 2.2.1c. Develop sets of pilot supplementary teaching, learning and assessment materials to support revised math competency-based standards, syllabus, and textbooks
This activity may begin around August 2021, with the pilot to start around November 2021.

Activity 2.2.2 EGMA baseline preparation

Activity 2.2.2.a Convene Assessment Working Group
The Assessment Working Group will be proposed to MoES during Quarter 4.

Activity 2.2.2b Subtask Development Workshop
The Assessment Working Group may convene to develop subtasks after the finalization of a formal agreement between the U.S. government and the MOES of Tajikistan. In the meantime, subcontractor EdIntersect began conversations with USAID LTA team to discuss the most relevant elements given the developed strands and sub-strands of the tentatively revised standards to map these against the EGMA subtasks.

Component 3: Increased Government Capacity to Develop and Implement Cohesive Primary Education Policies and Programs

Sub-component 3.1: Systems Strengthening and Improved Organizational Performance

Activity 3.1.1 Conduct quarterly meetings with MoES and affiliates at the national level.
This activity will begin once a formal agreement is signed between USAID and theMoES that enables USAID LTA to initiate activities with ministry counterparts. This activity is slated to commence in Quarter 4 and USAID LTA plans to present the work plan at the first meeting (if approved by USAID) to initiate dialogue on the project's vision and initial activities. During the meeting, potential areas of partnership and project expectations from MoES will be highlighted. USAID LTA will promote and facilitate discussion as a needed endorsement of critical activities and products. USAID LTA will share successes, challenges, opportunities, inform next steps, and discuss specifics of collaboration between the project, MoES, and affiliates.

Activity 3.1.2 Participate in MoES and development partners working group on assessment
On June 1, 2021, MoES released an order to establish an assessment working group, which will be chaired by the new Deputy Minister to develop all regulatory documents on assessment. USAID LTA, in partnership with UNICEF and EU-QESP, will support the working group in development of the supplementary documents, specifically the formative assessment paper and their capacity building to partner in the administration of the national standardized assessment. USAID LTA organized a presentation on how to analyze and use assessment data for strategic planning, accountability and education improvement purposes.

Activity 3.1.3 Initiate organizational capacity assessments for MoES and its affiliates
This activity will begin once a formal agreement is signed between USAID and the GoT/MoES that enables USAID LTA to initiate activities with ministry counterparts.

Activity 3.1.4 Support MoES to review the in-service training structure
This activity will begin once a formal agreement between USAID and the Government of Tajikistan is signed.

Activity 3.1.5 Develop a framework for a certified retraining program for non-specialized primary teachers (with 1.1.5)
This activity will begin once a formal agreement is signed between USAID and the MoES, national and regional TTIs, Republican Methodological Center, AoE, EDI that enables USAID LTA to initiate activities with ministry counterparts.

Activity 3.1.6 Strengthen pre-service professional development systems

Activity 3.1.6a. Analysis of primary pre-service practicum
Beginning in May 2021, USAID LTA conducted a desktop review of the pre-service practicum of Tajikistan and compared it with Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic. The analysis was used in development of the practicum analysis plan.

As mentioned in activity 2.1.5, USAID LTA collected data on the current status of teaching of Tajik language, mathematics, pedagogy and psychology at the HEIs. USAID LTA will complete the analysis of the data in Quarter 4. This analysis will be used in development of a students' practicum guide. USAID LTA will work with pre-service institutions to apply the student practicum to utilize the recently restructured methodological support system through CBMUs to maximize support to students' teachers during their practicum.

Activity 3.1.6b. Draft pre-service blended learning concept note
This activity will begin in Quarter 4.

Sub-component 3.2: Innovations

Activity 3.2.1 Innovation in In-service

Activity 3.2.1a Conduct a 2-day orientation with Regional Education Departments and Teacher Training Institutes on value and opportunities of evidence-based intervention in education activities
This activity will begin in August 2021.

Activity 3.2.1b Upgrade capacity of Republican Teaching and Methodological Center to accommodate Teacher In-Service Professional Development Information System
This activity will begin once a formal agreement has been signed between the U.S. government and the Government of Tajikistan.

Activity 3.2.2 Innovation in pre-service professional development
Learn Together promoted the use of a blended learning platform in selected universities such as Khorog State University, Khujand State University, and Bokhtar State University by students and faculty members (in total 88 people used the platform). The students showed high interest in the use of the learning materials from the platform for self-learning. Subject to availability of internet connection, the system could be well integrated into the pre-service system and used for development of additional courses in primary pedagogy and psychology, primary methodology, and primary math.

Activity 3.2.3 Innovation in supplementary and students' learning materials
USAID Learn Together started initial discussion on determining new episodes for the "Time to Learn" TV program to focus on other primary subjects such as mathematics, logic, and critical thinking. LTA is also looking promoting the use of technology in learning; improving access to project reading and math materials; and capacity building of the national and regional TV in developing attractive education programs to ensure sustainability of such efforts. LTA will develop new episodes by August and prepare for airing to begin in September 2021.

Sub-component 3.3: Strengthen Public and Private Partnerships

Activity 3.3.1 Develop a plan for engaging public and private sector entities to support LTA activities
This will be developed in Quarter 4 now that the Partnerships Specialist has been successfully recruited.

Activity 3.3.2 Update Summer reading camp materials with activities related to new reading materials

Activity 3.3.2a. Spring camps – shared with RWM
This activity was combined with 3.3.2b (See below).

Activity 3.3.2b. Summer camps – LTA
In June 2021, USAID LTA conducted two phases of district-level trainings for over 900 school-based teachers from 450 schools across Tajikistan. Teachers serve as counselors during summer camps for primary grade students, which are organized by the Additional Education Center (an affiliate of the Ministry of Education and Science). USAID LTA continued the positive partnership established by the USAID Read with Me (RWM) project to strengthen out-of-school reading reinforcement activities during the summer. USAID's summer camp trainings taught teachers how to utilize children's books and other reading materials donated by USAID to run interactive activities for primary grade students that strengthen their reading skills. Summer camps provide children with an important opportunity to engage with reading outside of the classroom, thereby making it more likely that children will view reading as an enjoyable activity. Additionally, the emphasis on interactive reading reinforcement activities and the use of non-textbooks also builds the skills of children who might have struggled with reading during the school year, by providing them with additional opportunities and new methods to work on these skills. The school-based summer camps ran from June 15 to July 15. During the reporting period, over 10,000 students across Tajikistan participated in the camp.

Summer camp trainers preparing for interactive presentation of USAID-donated books to students.

Activity 3.3.3 Conduct Reading Corner Competition
During this quarter 473 schools expressed interest to participate in the National Reading Corner Competition. The proposed schools were shortlisted in coordination with the REDs. Participation in the competition was nearly double that of 2019, with significant contributions from parents and the school community.

On Friday, May 14, the MoES approved a list of national-level MoES staff who participated in the evaluation of schools in this year's Reading Corner competition. On May 18, RWM staff, LTA staff, and Ministry representatives at the national and regional levels began the evaluation of over 442 schools that participated in the second National Reading Corner competition. The evaluation committees used evaluation criteria developed by the project which aims to ensure an equitable competition between rural and urban schools that have different levels of resources. Evaluation committees also calculate the leverage contributed by the school community. The evaluation of schools was completed by May 31, after which the evaluation committee results were collected and 150 new Reading Corner winners were chosen for award. LTA oversaw the coordination of the evaluation and the related procurement of IT equipment for awards, while RWM staff supported the evaluation and facilitating the formal approval processes with the MoES.

Reading Corner Leverage: $53,990 from schools and $58,571 from parents and other sources. USAID LTA will organize the award ceremony in the next quarter.

A primary teacher from Khujand commented that "…Reading Corners are promoting self-engagement of children in reading. I am so excited to learn it."

Activity 3.3.4 Outreach

Activity 3.3.4a. Broadcasting existing and new PSAs
This activity will begin in July 2021 and will consist of developing six PSAs for broadcasting in year 2 (immediately after the baseline).

Activity 3.3.4b Conduct International Book Day and Literacy Day outreach events (jointly with RWM)
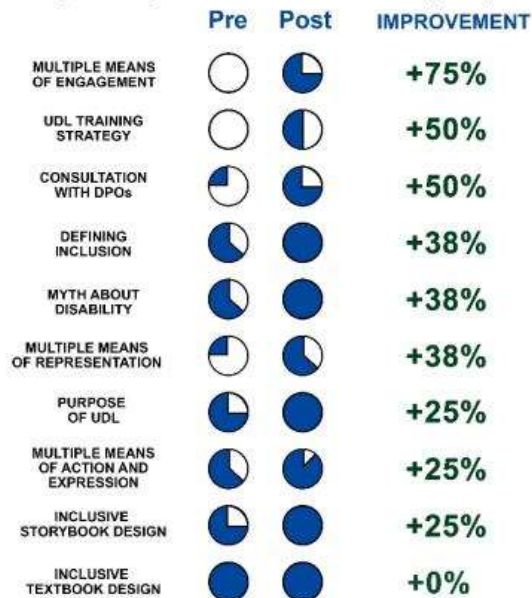This activity will begin in September 2021.

Gender and Inclusive Education
Training on UDL
In April 2021, to measure the change and identify potential intervention for the previously implemented UDL training, USAID LTA reviewed all information of the pre and post-test results and shared the analysis with the Inclusive Development Partners (IDP) team. IDP produced a brief analysis on the impact of the training and the report suggests that the participants have improved their understanding of UDL principles (multiple means of engagement, multiple means of representation and multiple means of action and expression) and inclusive education in general. As the table below suggests, while the participants have had an overall understanding about inclusive education, UDL as an approach to inclusive education was new to all of them. It is also interesting to observe that inclusive textbook design was an area that USAID LTA staff were been familiar with which relates to capacity building that the RWM project contributed to.

Pre-Post Test Results for LTA Staff
(0% of respondents who answered correctly; N=8)

	Pre	Post	IMPROVEMENT
MULTIPLE MEANS OF ENGAGEMENT			+75%
UDL TRAINING STRATEGY			+50%
CONSULTATION WITH DPOs			+50%
DEFINING INCLUSION			+38%
MYTH ABOUT DISABILITY			+38%
MULTIPLE MEANS OF REPRESENTATION			+38%
PURPOSE OF UDL			+25%
MULTIPLE MEANS OF ACTION AND EXPRESSION			+25%
INCLUSIVE STORYBOOK DESIGN			+25%
INCLUSIVE TEXTBOOK DESIGN			+0%

IDP also made general comments and shared recommendations to integrated UDL further:

General Observations
• USAID LTA staff were generally well-versed around issues of challenging stigma and discrimination, and producing inclusive stories and images
• USAID LTA staff were generally less familiar with specific pedagogical strategies to promote engagement of diverse learners

Recommended Future Actions
• Identify opportunities to embed UDL into teacher training programs, including modeling of UDL practices by trainers
• Ensure consultation with and representation of vulnerable groups including persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, people living in poverty, etc. throughout project decision-making
• Document the implementation of UDL in practice (including through photo and video) to contribute to a growing national and international evidence base
• Consider opportunities to ensure school leadership and school-based monitoring activities reinforce accountability mechanisms for inclusive education
• Advocate with government stakeholders for inclusive assessment systems that build off a Universal Design for Assessment (UDA) framework

International Conference on Inclusive Education

During Quarter 3, USAID LTA participated in an international conference on Inclusive Education hosted by RTTI supported by development partners including LTA USAID. The conference was held in May 14-15 in Dushanbe and participants included representatives of different institutions from different countries such as Russia, Uzbekistan, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. The focus of the conference this year was teacher's professional development and the title of the conference was: "Inclusion- A Way to Equity: Engaging Teachers with Principles of Inclusive Education." Representatives from the MoES of Tajikistan, local and international organizations working in the area of inclusive education, also participated and delivered presentations at the conference.

USAID LTA was invited to present two relevant topics at the conference: "Blended learning approach as an inclusive approach to teacher training" and "Towards inclusive pedagogy with UDL". Both presentations received positive feedback from the audience and constructive discussions were held as a result of the presentations. In addition, USAID LTA had an opportunity to present project resources on inclusive education during the conference.

As a result of the conference, a resolution document with recommendations to improve inclusive education in the country was produced. The document was shared with LTA USAID for suggesting any points and recommendations.

International Conference on Inclusive Education

Communications Activities
USAID LTA has not initiated any communications activities during Quarter 3.

Monitoring and Evaluation
During this quarter the MEL team reviewed the project Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (AMELP) and will propose some small changes to the targets for Year 2 based on the Year 1 experiences.

The MEL team developed a database for the Reading Corner Competition that was used to finalize the evaluation scores and determine the winners of the competition. This database will be used for future competitions.

USAID LTA MEL team also worked on adapting the monitoring form from RWM for LTA. The team created a database in Access for registration of training and participants. Some of the forms such as the summer camp report form have been used this quarter.

Coordination with Key Stakeholders and Existing Projects

In Quarter 3, USAID LTA jointly with UNICEF and EU-QESP continued active participation in developing the capacity of the MoES assessment concept development working group. MoES resumed work on the development of additional documents which will be guiding the process of implementing concepts on learning assessment. On June 11 at the Hilton Hotel, the MoES initiated a meeting of an assessment technical group to discuss and receive feedback on the National Learning Assessment Draft. USAID LTA made a presentation on formative assessments during the meeting. In addition, LTA proposed involving the best teachers and facilitators from schools that are successfully implementing formative assessments after USAID RWM intervention. LTA involved international consultant support in the review of the assessment paper and provided feedback.

During Quarter 3, USAID LTA supported RTTI preparation for the international conference on inclusive education. LTA reviewed and commented on the pre-final version of Inclusive Education Concept Document. In discussion with UNICEF, the importance of including UDL concepts into the document was highlighted and incorporated in the document. In addition, USAID LTA participated in the exhibition during the conference and presented all educational resources developed during RWM project. The exhibition was an effective way to raise awareness about USAID project activities and feedback was positive. USAID LTA presented two topics on the conference on "Blended learning approach to teacher training" and "Universal Design for Learning as an approach to inclusive pedagogy". Both presentations were well received, and a constructive discussion was held during and after the presentations. Representative of MoES, Academy of Education and RTTI have conveyed their gratitude to USAID leadership for the continues support.

USAID LTA provided feedback on the resolution document which was produced as an outcome document from the International Conference on Inclusive Education, which was conducted on May 14-15, 2021. The following items have been suggested to be add to the document:
- Consider UDL principles as an effective approach to inclusive education and accessing curriculum for all children.
- Consider blended learning as a mechanism to restructure/reposition the system of education.
- Consider integrating and financing Assistive Technology in schools to meet the needs of children.
- Consider integrating multilingual approach to ensure access to education for all
- Consider creating an environment for institutional ownership to adapt the curriculum to the needs of students.

Staffing & Operations Activities
In Quarter 3, USAID LTA continued the competitive recruitment of staff. By the end of June 2021, USAID LTA had either fully recruited or advertised for all long-term positions on the project, including staff for the regional offices.

Operations. In Quarter 3, USAID RWM and USAID LTA continued to share office space in Dushanbe and also continued to share costs of goods and services that were procured for staff on both projects. The projects applied a split percentage ratio to all associated costs based on the number of staff working for USAID RWM and USAID LTA, such as office rent, expendable supplies, and communication costs. USAID RWM formally dispositioned many office materials to LTA, a cost savings to LTA.

Procurement. In April 2021, USAID LTA received the first procurement of IT equipment for office needs. The procurement team also issued procurements for equipment for Reading Corner awards, tablets for CBMU trainings, as well as standard procurements for general goods and services needed to implement the project. These will be delivered in Quarter 4.

COVID-19 protocols. In Quarter 3, USAID LTA continued to follow the Chemonics home office approval for projects to begin partial office re-opening given the COVID-19 context in Tajikistan. At the end of June 2021, Chemonics understood that COVID-19 cases were significantly increasing in Tajikistan, and therefore transitioned all staff back to remote working on June 24 until the situation stabilizes. Only essential staff are allowed to visit the office on a pre-approved basis.

USAID LTA jointly with RWM will continue to develop COVID-19 risk mitigation plans for all activities, which are shared with USAID for feedback. All USAID LTA staff and visitors continue to sign mandatory COVID-19 information and disclaimer forms for project activities.

Section C: Success Stories
Story 1

USAID'S LEARN TOGETHER ACTIVITY SUMMER READING CAMP – MOVING TOWARD OWNERSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

Strengthening school-based summer camps is one of the key areas of the new USAID Learn Together Activity, which is implemented in partnership with the Republican Additional Education Center under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan. In the first year of operation, the project helped 450 general education institutions to strengthen the quality of reading among primary school students by conducting effective school-based summer camps.

Trainers practice creativity reading strategies during summer camp Training of Trainers

"From the very beginning of my studies, it was difficult for me to read books, because of this I had a complex, did not dare to read aloud. On the recommendation of our teacher, I attended a summer camp. She said that you will improve your reading skills in this camp and meet your peers who read well. There I saw with my own eyes how my peers read, and I wanted to read as clearly and fluently as they did. Our teacher helped me as well as my friends. We read new books that we borrowed from the school library. We also played many interactive games at camp, which I really enjoyed. Chess, checkers, for staged various competitions. We watched a lot of cartoons. Thanks to this camp, I made new friends, began to read well. At home I read for my brothers and sisters. Mom says that thanks to my visit to the camp, I began to read well, became attentive. In the future, I want to become an astronaut, and for this I need to re-read a lot of books," said Azizbekov Amriddin, a 2nd grade student from Khorog who participated in the summer camp,.

The project trained over 900 camp counsellors and representatives of the regional branches of the Additional Education Center to serve as regional trainers in May – June 2021.

"During the summer camp training, trainers were introduced to the concept of learning and the learning process including the importance of reading and how to develop reading skills through interactive and creative activities. The training was structured in a way that we learned and practiced fourteen strategies for conducting reading activities at the school-based summer camp. I was so excited to learn these new ideas and eager to implement them with students at the summer camp and in my language lesson next year," stated Dilorom Mirzoeva, one of the camp trainers.

The summer camp sessions at the regional level were facilitated and monitored by the Regional Education Departments and their affiliates. Odinasho Mardov, the head of the Regional Education Department in Gorno-Badakhshan, closely monitored the camp sessions and visited camp sites to collect feedback from participants to better understand the goal of the project and its expected results.

"For a long time, we were thinking of how to integrate academic activities in summer camps and make them more enjoyable for students," Mardov said during his first visit to the camp in Khorog. "Now I have seen it in practice and have an answer. We will work with the Additional Education Center and adopt these activities for all our camps next year. I believe our development partners will continue supporting us in this important initiative".

Odinasho Mardov, head of Regional Education Department GBAO, visits a summer camp in Khorog

More than 10,050 students across Tajikistan benefitted from attending a summer camp during this term. USAID Learn Together will extend its partnerships with the MoES and its affiliates to make camp activities more accessible and sustainable in future.

Story 2

USAID LEARN TOGETHER IS LEVERAGING EDUCATION FUNDS

The USAID Learn Together Activity, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan, promoted the establishment of 442 additional reading corners to encourage children to read more books in the school libraries To incentivize schools further, USAID's Learn Together launched a competition among primary schools to show off their reading corner with prizes for participating schools.

According to Salomiyon Muhammaddovud, the first deputy Minister of Education who was involved in the assessment of reading corners "… this is one of the best initiative of the project. It contributes significantly to promoting culture of reading from early grades and developing reading skills. I was very pleased to see active involvement of school management and parents in developing conducive reading environment".

First Deputy Minister visit for assessment of reading corners in GBAO.

In total, 442 schools participated in the competition on the establishment of reading corners from May to June 2021. The transparent results of the contest will be announced by the Ministry of Education and Science and project representatives upon signing the MOU with USAID. The USAID Learn Together Activity will donate electronic boards, projectors, computers, and TVs to 150 schools. According to Kobilova Mutriba, librarian of Secondary School №21 in the Khujand region, "such initiatives by the USAID Learn Together Activity and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan will have a very positive impact on children's motivation to read.

Primary students using the reading corners with their peers and teacher.

At the end of the lessons, students have the opportunity to read any available books from the reading corner and such an opportunity stimulates their interest not only in reading, painting, book-making, but also in creative work."

Newly created reading corners which were supported by parents in Khujand

USAID's Learn Together Activity supports the efforts of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan in developing and implementing strategies and programs relevant to primary education, including strengthening the public-private partnership system. From this activity alone, USAID's Learn Together leveraged in-kind $53,990 from schools and $58,571 from parents and private sector sources.

Section D. Indicator Data Table

Number	Indicator	Data Source, Collection Frequency, and Disaggregation	Baseline/Annual Targets/ LOP Target	Actuals	
				Annual	Quarterly
Purpose: Improve primary students' learning skills (Grades 1-4), with a particular focus on improving reading comprehension, critical thinking, and mathematics					
Outcome-level indicators					
1 **ES.1-1**	Percent of learners targeted for USG assistance who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of grade 2	**Data source:** Baseline, midline, endline EGRA **Collection frequency:** Three times during life of project **Disaggregation:** Urban/rural schools, region, language of instruction, sex	**B:** TBD **Y1:** N/A **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** +4 from baseline **Y4:** N/A **Y5:** +8 from baseline	**B:** 0 **Y1:** N/A **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** N/A **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** N/A **Q2 :** N/A **Q3 :** N/A **Q4 :** N/A
2 **ES.1-2**	Percent of learners targeted for USG assistance who attain minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of grade 4	**Data source:** Baseline, midline, endline EGRA **Collection frequency:** Three times during life of project **Disaggregation:** Urban/rural schools, region, language of instruction, sex	**B:** TBD **Y1:** N/A **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** +4 from baseline **Y4:** N/A **Y5:** +8 from baseline	**B:** 0 **Y1:** N/A **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** N/A **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** N/A **Q2 :** N/A **Q3 :** N/A **Q4 :** N/A
3 **Supp-3**	Percent of learners targeted for USG assistance who attain minimum grade-level proficiency in math at the end of grade 2	**Data source:** Baseline, midline, endline EGMA **Collection frequency:** Three times during life of project **Disaggregation:** Urban/rural schools, region, language of instruction, sex	**B:** TBD **Y1:** N/A **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** +4 from baseline **Y4:** N/A **Y5:** +8 from baseline	**B:** 0 **Y1:** N/A **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** N/A **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** N/A **Q2 :** N/A **Q3 :** N/A **Q4 :** N/A
4 **Supp-5**	Percent of learners attaining minimum grade-level proficiency in math at the end of grade 4 with USG assistance	**Data source:** Baseline, midline, endline EGMA **Collection frequency:** Three times during life of project **Disaggregation:** Urban/rural schools, region, language of instruction, sex	**B:** TBD **Y1:** N/A **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** +4 from baseline **Y4:** N/A **Y5:** +8 from baseline	**B:** 0 **Y1:** N/A **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** N/A **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** N/A **Q2 :** N/A **Q3 :** N/A **Q4 :** N/A
Notes	Targets for indicators will be reviewed and determined upon completion of the RWM endline, to be conducted in Spring 2021. Actuals will be recorded annually upon completion of the EGRAs and EGMAs				

Number	Indicator	Data Source, Collection Frequency, and Disaggregation	Baseline/Annual Targets/ LOP Target	Actuals	
				Annual	Quarterly
Component 1: Improved instruction and availability of supplemental materials related to reading subjects; and **Component 2:** Improved instruction and availability of supplemental mathematics materials					
Sub-component 1.1 and Sub-component 2.1: Effective Teacher Professional Development including In-Service and Pre-Service					
5 **ES.1-6**	Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	**Data source:** Electronic Management Information System (EMIS) **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Target Group (Cohort), Sex, Type of school, Trained in reading instruction	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 280 **Y2:** 7,546 **Y3:** 11,318 **Y4:** 11,318 **Y5:** 30,462 (LOP)	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 0 **Q4 :**
6 **ES.2-52**	Number of individuals affiliated with higher education institutions receiving capacity development with USG assistance	**Data source:** Project data **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Focus of Capacity Building, Sex, Administrators, Faculty, Staff, Youth (under 30)	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 0 **Y2:** 120 **Y3:** 270 **Y4:** 270 **Y5:** 660 (LOP)	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 0 **Q4 :**
7 **ES.1-3**	Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG education assistance	**Data source:** EMIS (updated with project data) **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Region, Urban/rural, Language of instruction, Grade, Sex	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 8,400 **Y2:** 182,086 **Y3:** 273,128 **Y4:** 273,128 **Y5:** 736,542(LOP)	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 0 **Q4 :**
8 **ES.1-50**	Number of public and private schools receiving USG assistance	**Data source:** EMIS (updated with project data) **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Region, Urban/rural, Language of instruction, Public/private	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 70 **Y2:** 1,050 **Y3:** 2,100 **Y4:** 3,190 **Y5:** 3,190	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 442 **Q4 :**
Notes	Indicator 5, 7, and 8: Learn Together assumes that the majority of educators will be reached years 2-4, due to training timelines. The targets are based off of a high-level understanding of 2018-2019 EMIS. When the school selection is complete, targets will be updated with numbers that more closely reflect the school makeup, as there can be a large discrepancy between urban/rural schools.				
Sub-component 1.2 and Sub-component 2.2: Materials Development					
9 **Custom**	Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided with USG assistance	**Data source:** Project Data **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Math or Reading, Type of materials, Language, Grade Level, procured or developed	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 0 **Y2:** 64,920 **Y3:** 635,080 **Y4:** 500,000 **Y5:** 1,200,000 (LOP)	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 0 **Q4 :**

Number	Indicator	Data Source, Collection Frequency, and Disaggregation	Baseline/Annual Targets/ LOP Target	Actuals	
				Annual	Quarterly
10 **ES.1-55**	Percent of primary grade learners targeted for USG assistance who have the appropriate variety of reading materials in the language of instruction with inclusive representation of diverse populations	**Data source:** Project Data **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Language, Grade Level	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 0 **Y2:** 0 **Y3:** 3% **Y4:** 5% **Y5:** 8% (LOP)	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 0 **Q4 :**
Notes	Indicator 10: Due to the prescriptive definition in the Standard PIRS about what constitutes an "appropriate variety of reading materials" for learners, specifically the MoES' reluctance to approve decodable readers, the lack of appropriately levelled readers available in most schools (as provided by other donors and government), and Learn Together's budget and contractual obligations, we expect to make only conservative progress on this indicator over time.				
Component 3: Increased government capacity to develop and implement cohesive primary education policies and programs					
Sub-component 3.1: Systems Strengthening and improved organizational performance					
11 **ES.1-12**	Number of education administrators and officials who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	**Data source:** Project Data **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Position, sex	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 352 **Y2:** 798 **Y3:** 1,196 **Y4:** 1,196 **Y5:** 3,552 (LOP)	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 48 **Q4 :**
12 **ES.2-1**	Number of host country higher education institutions receiving capacity development support with USG assistance	**Data source:** Project Data **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Type of institution, Public/Private, Region	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 0 **Y2:** 6 **Y3:** 8 **Y4:** 8 **Y5:** 0	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2: TBD** **Y3: TBD** **Y4: TBD** **Y5: TBD**	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 0 **Q4 :**
13 **CBLD-9**	Percent of U.S. Government-assisted organizations with improved performance	**Data source:** Project Data **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Type of institution	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 0 **Y2:** 80% **Y3:** 80% **Y4:** 80% **Y5:** 80%	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 0 **Q4 :**
Notes	Indicator 13 – Learn Together has planned an initial activity designed to produce Learn Together's approach to organizational improvement with our government counterparts. This activity will consider data collection on this indicator, which may require an update to the targets at the Y2 annual workplan.				
Sub-component 3.2: Innovations					

Number	Indicator	Data Source, Collection Frequency, and Disaggregation	Baseline/Annual Targets/ LOP Target	Actuals	
				Annual	Quarterly
14	Number of new products, approaches, creations, adaptations or refinements of a solution, or applications from another field or discipline for literacy and/or numeracy	**Data source:** Project Data **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Grade level, language of instruction, target audience, innovation type	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 5 **Y2:** 20 **Y3:** 30 **Y4:** 45 **Y5:** 100 (LOP)	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 2 **Q4 :**
Sub-component 3.3: Strengthen Public and Private Partnerships					
15 **ES.1-13**	Number of parent teacher associations (PTAs) or or community- based school governance structures engaged in primary or secondary education supported with USG assistance	**Data source:** Project Data **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Region, Language of Instruction	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 0 **Y2:** 250 **Y3:** 1,000 **Y4:** 2,000 **Y5:** 3,000	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 131 **Q4 :**
16 **Custom**	Number of reinforcement and out-of-school activities held	**Data source:** Project Data **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Region, Language of Instruction, Type of Activity, Grade Level	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 0 **Y2:** 50,000 **Y3:** 300,000 **Y4:** 700,000 **Y5:** 1,050,000 (LOP)	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 0 **Q4 :**
Notes	Indicator 15: Learn Together assumes that librarians trained by RWM will continue to send in data on out-of-school activities. Targets are conservative as school selection is not complete. Once this is done, we may revise targets to reflect any additional data collection training that may take place for schools not targeted by RWM.				
Crosscutting					
17 **Custom**	Percent of women participating in school management and other decision making	**Data source:** Annual survey, project files **Collection frequency:** Annually **Disaggregation:** Region, Position	**B :** 0 **Y1 :** 20% **Y2 :** 20% **Y3 :** 30% **Y4 :** 35% **Y5 :** 40%	**B :** 0 **Y1 :** TBD **Y2 :** TBD **Y3 :** TBD **Y4 :** TBD **Y5 :** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 0 **Q4 :**
18 **Custom**	Number of public outreach activities/media campaigns held	**Data source:** Project Files **Collection frequency:** Quarterly **Disaggregation:** Region, Language, Type of campaign	**B:** 0 **Y1:** 2 **Y2:** 5 **Y3:** 3 **Y4:** 5 **Y5:** 18 (LOP)	**B:** 0 **Y1:** TBD **Y2:** TBD **Y3:** TBD **Y4:** TBD **Y5:** TBD	**Q1 :** 0 **Q2 :** 0 **Q3 :** 0 **Q4 :**
Note	Indicator 17: Depending on the outcome of the GESI analysis, Learn Together will revise, update, or replace this indicator and its targets.				

1	Development of Regulation of In-service Teacher Training using Blended Learning Approach	The WG will review the Concept on Blended Learning Developed by a short-term education curriculum expert. Work with USID LTA to adapt the concept and develop formal regulations that described how to organize and conduct in-service teacher training using Blended Learning. This WG will also review and present USAID LTA Teacher Training Program and outline to the MOES.
2	WG on Development of Chrestomaty and Language Practice Book	The WG will develop 4 Chrestomaty (Collection of Texts with Tasks, further Reading Textbook) and 4 Language Practice Book (future Tajik Language Textbook). In Year 1 we planned to support the MOES to review Tajik Language Textbooks, this activity is now adjusted to develop Chrestomaty and Languag practice Books. The work will be splited into two periods. 1) Teh team will develop materials for the first two quarters of the schooling year (for piloting purposes) and 2) develop materials for the third and fourth terms of school year. We already integrated this into Year 2 plan.
	Chrestomaty Editors	Edit Chrestomaty
3	WG on developing of Teacher Training Program and Materials (Tajik and Russian Schools)	This team will develop trainer's guides for 96 sessions (based on SINIDI model, both in Russian and Tajik) based on the agreed teacher training utlines. The WG will be teamed by sub-groups that will focus on specific aspects of the training (e.g. develop training materials on UDL, FA, Literacy and Math). They wil also develop teacher's toolkit and teacher's worker book. The team will be involed in adaptation of teh materials into Teacher's Digital Platform
4	WG on development of supplementary materials for numeracy in pirmary grades	This WG will develop concept of supplementary materials for the numeracy in primary grades. The develop 4 sets of supplementary materials to support implementation of the revised standards.

5	WG on developing supplementary materials for Tajik Language in primary grades	This WG will develop concept of supplementary materials for the Tajik Language in primary grades. The develop 4 sets of supplementary materials to support implementation of the revised standards.
6	WG on developing supplementary reading materials for Russian Language and Reading in Primary Gardes (For Russian Schools)	This WG will develop concept of supplementary materials for the Russian Language and Reading in primary grades (Russian Schools). The develop 4 sets of supplementary materials to support implementation of the revised standards.
7	WG on Developing Russian Language And Reading Standards and Syllabus for Grades 1-4 Russian Schools	The WG will develop standards and syllabus for Russian Medium Schools in the RT
8	WG on revision of Math Textbooks for Grade 1-4	The WG will review the existing math textbooks for grads 1-4 and update them in accordance with the revisions made in the subject standards and syllabus

9	Assessment Working Group (EGRA and EGMA, Russian and Tajik)	The WG will be involved in designing/adapting EGMA and EGRA

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