



LAC Reads Capacity Program

Work Plan Year 5-6

October 1, 2018 – March 31, 2020

**USAID/LAC Reads Capacity Program
Cooperative Agreement No.: AID-OAA-A-14-00058**

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Introduction

The 5-year regional USAID/LAC Reads Capacity Program (LRCP), Cooperative Agreement No.: AID-OAA-A-14-00058), implemented by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and Juárez and Associates (J&A) and national-level implementing partners, increases the impact, scale, and sustainability of early grade reading interventions in the LAC region. This is achieved through the development and dissemination of state-of-the-art knowledge resources and the provision of technical assistance to host country governments and other key stakeholders. The program, implemented from 2014-2019, enhances efforts to boost early grade reading outcomes.

LAC Reads Capacity Program goals are achieved through the implementation of the following four results:

1. Evidence on early grade reading collected, consolidated and systematized for practical use by LAC region stakeholders.
2. Up-to-date knowledge about early-grade reading actively disseminated to targeted audiences and stakeholders.
3. Institutional capacity to implement proven approaches for improving early-grade reading outcomes for poor and disadvantaged children is expanded.
4. Sustainable platforms are in place through which efforts to improve early grade reading in priority LAC countries will be continued and strengthened.

No Cost Extension:

As we move into year 5 of the program, the LRCP team is mobilizing to request a no-cost extension which would specifically enable a few key subs to continue their work as well as giving us more time to focus on achieving sustainability for the Central America and Caribbean Literacy Network (RedLEI). For the no-cost extension, LRCP is requesting that AIR subawardees CIASES, and UVG extend for an additional 6 months and that J&A subawardees ASIES and the Dominican Republic (no sub, just staff) extend for the same 6 months. This would extend their work through January of 2020. In addition, the LRCP Haiti component will also continue during the extension period for an additional 4 months.

Note on LRCP Haiti

In late August 2016, in response to a request from USAID, the team developed and submitted a proposal for expanded work in Haiti during the remaining three years of the LRCP. The expanded scope of work and the related funds (\$4.9m) were approved and incorporated into the LRCP cooperative agreement in late September 2016.

In November 2017, USAID requested a revised workplan and budget for LRCP/Haiti work, which was submitted in December 2017. Details are still being finalized, but the resulting modification is expected to add over \$3M in additional funding for the implementation of the revised workplan. The revised workplan focuses on five main activities. These include: providing technical assistance and structure to the process of developing and finalizing EGL materials in French and Creole for grades one through four; training teachers in the implementation of the Early Reading Project, including use of the EGL classroom materials, in 200 schools; developing and implementing monitoring procedures and feedback loops among schools, districts, zones, departments, and LRCP/Haiti and USAID personnel; supporting the Coordination Committee with USAID and the MENFP; and conducting two EGL-policy related studies per year and sharing the results.

In 2018, The USAID mission in Haiti and the LRCP Haiti team agreed upon additional changes to the scope of work due to the political situation with the Ministry. In addition, LRCP Haiti made changes to the scopes of some of our sub awardees. The major changes in scope agreed upon were:

- LRCP Haiti will no longer be responsible for the development of grade 4 materials.
- LRCP Haiti will instead be responsible for developing an EGL certificate program in collaboration with key stakeholders.
- LRCP Haiti will work in only 150 as opposed to 200 schools
- LRCP Haiti through the Université de Quisqueya will conduct and disseminate two research studies over the life of the project instead of two per year.

The following work plan and projected activities correspond to Year 5 of the LAC Reads Capacity Program plus the six-month extension into Year 6. The work plan includes a brief narrative description of the major objectives to be reached and activities to be carried out under each program result as well as under cross-cutting areas, including program staffing and management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and reporting. More detail is provided in the attached workplan chart, where the activities and anticipated time frames are detailed.

Cross-cutting areas

Cross-cutting project areas include program and partner management and staffing, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and project reporting.

In terms of program management and staffing, the LRCP team underwent a few changes going into Year 5. In July, 2018, the Project Manager, Bridget Drury, left AIR and was replaced by an interim manager, Sabina Henneberg. She worked closely with the project technical coordinator until a new project manager was found. Dr. Rebecca Stone, the project literacy specialist, increased her role to also include project management and was officially recognized as key personnel in October of 2018. Dr. Stone now serves the dual role of Project Manager and Literacy Specialist and continues to work closely with _____ Yesly Contreras. Project personnel will continue, throughout Year 5 and 6, to monitor and evaluate the personnel structure and make any adjustments needed, such as for example adding personnel, adjusting roles, or bringing on short term technical experts or consultants for specific tasks.

In the area of national partner management, work continues with the existing national partners FEREMA in Honduras, CIASES in Nicaragua, EduConnectJA in Jamaica, and ASIES in Guatemala. In addition, we officially added the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala (UVG) as a sub in 2018. The LRCP team continues to work closely with the staff member in the Dominican Republic to plan and implement activities in close collaboration with USAID bilateral partner and key stakeholders. Management activities include working with the partners to finalize Year 5 work plans and budgets and the contractual steps necessary to incorporate these into the existing sub awards. This will be followed by implementation of the workplan with the technical supervision and support of the rest of the project team and financial and contractual support from the AIR and Juárez and Associates home offices.

The LRCP never found a viable option for working in Peru and will therefore no longer pursue work in this country during Year 5. While the LRCP does not have national partners in the Eastern Caribbean, it will continue to collaborate with the USAID Early Learners Programme, implemented by the OECS.

The LRCP project team will continue having weekly virtual team meetings, as well as plan at least one in-person core team meeting. The project will also hold virtual meetings with project partner technical staff across partners, as well as meetings with each individual partner team, and will also hold at least one in-person meeting with project partners, planned for November 2018. While significant progress can be made through virtual and at-a-distance meetings and calls and emails, experience to date has reinforced the importance of periodic in-person discussions for effective implementation of LRCP work.

The project team will continue regular meetings and discussions with the AOR, as well as regular technical and financial reporting. We are also submitting a six-month no cost extension package along with this revised workplan.

LRCP personnel will continue to coordinate with other related USAID projects at the central/regional level, including in particular in Year 5 the Global Reading Network¹, and with USAID Missions and projects at the country level (including with EGL-focused bilateral projects such as Leer y Aprender, and the Health and Education Policy Project in Guatemala, CARS in Nicaragua, and LEER in the Dominican Republic, and the Honduras Reading Activity, as appropriate). This coordination will focus on areas for collaboration around knowledge sharing, capacity building, and leveraging sustainability opportunities. In addition we will seek out more ways for the national partners to collaborate with RedLEI to support and sustain their work.

Finally, in the area of M&E, The J&A team, as well as members of the core project staff, will continue to provide technical guidance and quality assurance to the national level partners as they collect data and regularly report on LRCP indicators, , along with the central level indicators collected by AIR, in Year 5. The data collection process, as well as results to date, will be reviewed and discussed in project meetings, in order to clarify questions or concerns, and to use the data collected so far to inform project plans and priorities.

Additionally, during Year 5 an external evaluation of the LRCP will be carried out. The project team will collaborate with the evaluation process and share any information that is needed for the evaluation process to be successfully completed. Once the evaluation is complete, LRCP will use the findings to inform work going forward.

Deliverables due during the year under this result are:

1. Quarterly technical reports: 10/31/2018, 01/31/2019, 04/30/2019, and 07/31/2019
2. Year 5 workplan: November 21, 2018

Result 1: Evidence on early grade reading collected, consolidated and systematized for practical use by LAC region stakeholders

During Year 5, work under RI will focus on several areas, including publication of the systematic review through the Campbell Collaboration and producing a short summary of the findings from the systematic review combined with the update to the review. In addition, the team will hire a firm to collect EGL resources in the Dominican Republic (DR) and will continue to collect and update resources in Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Jamaica. The LRCP team will work with the partners to promote the database and engage new users as well as working towards the handover of the database to the RedLEI team.

Activity 1.1: Update systematic review of early grade literacy evidence

During Year 5 the RI team will submit the systematic review report to the Campbell Collaboration library for publication. We expect to have to make some minor revisions prior to publication. Once the revisions have been completed and approved, the report will then be included in the Campbell Library as well as published by Campbell, and Campbell will produce a plain language summary which can be disseminated along with the review. In addition, the team will produce a summary document which combines the findings from the original systematic review with the systematic review update. This document will be translated into Spanish and shared widely.

Activity 1.2: Conduct resource collection and review

LRCP will provide support to resource collection in project priority countries. In the Dominican Republic, during the previous collection process some of the resources collected did not fit the criteria for relevance and inclusion, and/or did not have the necessary permissions, so LRCP will support work to collect and include relevant resources, and make sure that the needed permissions are obtained. We

¹ Please see R4 narrative for more details.

are currently in the process of hiring a firm to undertake this resource collection process in the DR. In addition, the team will continue to collect and update resources in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Jamaica.

Additionally, in priority countries where teams have previously completed the major initial collection of resources, the national teams will continue to collect new and/or additional relevant resources that they find or are made aware of, with support from the LRCP team in this process. The project staff will also capture, to the degree possible, EGL resources from other countries in the region.

Activity 1.3: Expand content in evidence and resource database and promote use

During Year 5, the evidence and resource database will continue to be updated with additional early grade literacy materials and resources, in particular those collected in Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, and from other locations in the region as well as additional materials found in countries where teams have already done the major initial collection.

LRCP partners will also continue to pursue alliances with other institutions, such as was done by CIASES with the UCA in Managua early in Year 5, to increase exposure, dissemination, and use of the resource database. LRCP will work with our partners to promote and disseminate the database to their key stakeholders. Project personnel will collect feedback from database users and incorporate it into database work going forward, as well as disseminate information about the database and promote its use. Finally the LRCP team will work closely with RedLEI to ensure that the database is transferred over and can effectively be used and promoted through the RedLEI website.

Deliverables due during Year 5 under this result are:

1. Summary of systematic review and update: 01/31/2019
2. Campbell Collaboration Publication: 03/31/2019
3. Updated EGL evidence and additional EGL resources from Guatemala and the Dominican Republic added to the evidence and resource database: 04/30/2019
4. Transfer of database to RedLEI: 05/31/2019

Summary of NCE activities for Result 1:

All of the Result 1 activities will be completed prior to the no-cost extension.

Result 2: Up-to-date knowledge about early grade reading is actively disseminated to targeted audiences and stakeholders

In Year 5, the program will continue to focus strongly on communication and dissemination activities to increase the visibility of the work of the project and of EGL related topics and issues. The team will continue the project newsletter produced by FEREMA, conduct media campaigns in Jamaica and Honduras, support country level dissemination activities, produce a new website called “Guatemala Lee” in Guatemala, participate in the CIES conference as well as supporting the RedLEI launch events in multiple countries, and support communication and dissemination related to the RedLEI network².

Activity 2.1: Develop and disseminate EGL resources to targeted audiences and stakeholders

In Year 5 the project team will continue to update the LRCP website and social media channels. New EGL content created by the program and its partners will be added and shared. The project will also develop and share a newsletter at least twice in Year 5 through the project partner FEREMA. In

² Please see R4 for more information on the RedLEI network.

Guatemala, the program will develop an interactive website with EGL resources called Guatemala Lee. In Dominican Republic, the stakeholder analysis report will be disseminated via the IDEICE Congress and multiple articles will be published in the REVIE academic journal.

Additionally, national media campaigns are planned in both Jamaica and Honduras to encourage EGL and promote best practices. In Honduras, through the national partner, FEREMA, the campaign will be launched in October and run through June 2019. In Jamaica, through the national partner EduConnect JA, the campaign will be conducted October 2018 through March 2019.

Project staff will continue coordinating translation and sharing of existing and upcoming materials developed under the program. These include the Systematic Review Gap Map report, the Curriculum map of the FAS Method, and other documents which be important to the project. In year 4 the following documents were translated and disseminated the Systematic Review Executive Summary (Update), Regional Stakeholder Analysis, and the Landscape report. Lastly, the team will also share preliminary findings from the study of the FAS methodology in Nicaragua as they become available.

Activity 2.2: Provide technical support to national level communications plans and activities

The project team will provide support to communications plans and strategies at the national level, which support the promotion and sharing of technical products and related communication materials developed under the project. These include the stakeholder mapping and analysis reports and country profiles, the evidence and resources collected and shared, and the work and activities of the EGL networks that have been established by project partners in most project locations.

In most countries, national partners are also working to develop and disseminate information for parents and community members to use to support improved EGL among learners in their communities, and several partners develop and share regular EGL-related bulletins/newsletters. In Honduras and Jamaica, plans include an EGL-related media campaign. Jamaica will, additionally, host an EGL research conference, and the Honduras and Guatemala partner plans a workshop with journalists to raise awareness on EGL as part of a larger EGL advocacy campaign. LRCP also may support a national EGL conference in the Dominican Republic. In Nicaragua, the team will hold an event to launch the virtual library developed through the CIASES-UCA collaboration, as well as share the stakeholder mapping and analysis products. Additionally, as possible, preliminary findings from the study of the FAS methodology will be shared.

The project team will develop a regional communication activity for its last implementation phase (FY18-June 2019) to support the design and dissemination of key EGL messages to reinforce local partners' plans to create sustainable structures for continued EGL gains.

Activity 2.3: Participate in regional and international conferences

Project and partner personnel will participate in relevant conferences throughout the year, with an approved objective and strategy and previous discussion with and approval by the AOR. These may include participation by a team member at the CIES conference in San Francisco in March, for work related to the RedLEI network, participation in the ILA conference in New Orleans in October 2019 and/or other conferences and fora throughout the year as appropriate.

Activity 2.4: Support the RedLEI communications strategy

During Year 5, RedLEI staff will be developing and implementing a communications strategy for the RedLEI network, and the LRCP project team will provide technical assistance and support, both the RedLEI communications specialist as needed. This will help to ensure that RedLEI work builds on what has been generated already by the LRCP and that both teams leverage the mutually reinforcing work of each. Activities will include:

- Sharing of LRCP products and materials
- Support to RedLEI launch events in Guatemala and other RedLEI member countries
- Support to development of informational materials about RedLEI
- Support to promoting and disseminating information about RedLEI objectives, activities, and opportunities, including the GRN/RedLEI research grants
- Support to dissemination of RedLEI research and findings

Deliverables due during Year 5 under this result are:

1. Updated regional summary: January 31, 2018
2. Final versions of Regional stakeholder analysis report and Dissemination : December 31, 2018
3. Agenda of and reports on two regional or central level communication/dissemination events: included in the quarterly report for that period
4. Project newsletter: by December 30th, 2018, by March 30th, 2018, and by July 15, 2018
5. Development and Launch of Guatemala Lee – Feb 15, 2018
6. Publications in the REVIE Journal in DR by January 15, 2018

Summary of NCE activities:

For Result 2, the activities that will extend into the no-cost extension period include: maintaining and updating the program website and social networks, and supporting RedLEI through sharing LRCP materials and support to dissemination of RedLEI research and findings.

Result 3: Institutional capacity to implement proven approaches for improving early grade reading outcomes for poor and disadvantaged children is expanded

Capacity building work will be a major focus in Year 5. Capacity building work under LRCP will be informed by the results of the stakeholder mapping and analysis processes, by continuing work with EGL stakeholders in the region and at the national level, including the EGL networks established by the project partners, and engagement with the USAID Missions. These, as well as on the ground national and regional contexts and specific requests, will serve as the basis for capacity building work in Year 5.

Early in Year 5, each national partner will work with the project team to develop national level capacity building plans for the year. The capacity building plans will be discussed in more detail at the in-person partners meeting taking place the second week of March. Any adjustments or refinements to the national level plans, as well as to the regional capacity building plan, will be made then and implementation will continue throughout the rest of the year. Additionally, the LRCP will seek to provide capacity building and technical assistance based on special or complementary requests from USAID and/or MOEs.

Activity 3.1: Develop and implement regional level capacity building activities

The regional capacity building plan for Year 5 includes several capacity building activities that address needs and demands that have been identified across LRCP countries and partners. The regional capacity building events planned for Year 5 include the below:

- An online course on early grade literacy;
- A workshop focused on the creation of culturally relevant, curriculum based EGL materials using the Bloom software and products; and
- A regional early grade literacy forum, which may focus on pre-literacy skills and reading comprehension.

Regional capacity building plans will be developed and discussed in more detail in preparation for and during the partners meeting in March, and refined and presented in more detail after that. Said activities will begin implementation during the second quarter of calendar 2018.

Activity 3.2: Develop and implement country level capacity building plans

The LRCP central and regional team will provide technical support to national capacity building plans and activities as needed. Early in Year 5, each national partner will work with the project team to develop national level capacity building plans for the year. Implementation of these will begin after that, but plans will also be shared and discussed at the in-person partner meeting taking place the second week of March, in order to discuss progress and feedback and to make any adjustments as needed. Some highlights of national-level capacity building plans are below:

- National-level capacity building activities that will be carried out by the **Jamaica** team in Year 5 include the Second Writer's Workshop to be held early in Year 5, to develop culturally relevant, curriculum-based materials for early grade learners. The team will also ensure that newly developed EGL materials are printed and distributed through a variety of local alliances. The Jamaica partner also will continue to collaborate with National Parent Teacher Association of Jamaica, the National Parenting Commission, and the Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning to build parental capacity to engage children in activities to support EGL. Plans are under way in collaboration with the MOEYI to host the first EGL Conference in the country to share research findings in this area with key stakeholders nationally and possibly regionally.
- In **Nicaragua**, planned activities at the national level will include design, planning, and completion of the study of the FAS method. The team will also hold a workshop focused on EGL in Bluefields, in collaboration with the USAID/CARS Project, with exact content and timing to be developed in coordination with the CARS Project and USAID.
- **Honduras** national-level capacity building work will include a third workshop on the systematization of EGL experiences for trainers and specialists, planned for April, and support for capacity building in the content of the Law for the Promotion of Reading and the Book. FEREMA also plans to design and implement an EGL communication campaign which will include a workshop for journalists in the education sector, focused on raising awareness on EGL, during the second quarter of the calendar year. An international conference on EGL is planned for late in Year 5.
- In the **Eastern Caribbean**, the LRCP team will support several capacity building activities. These include a learning mission to Haiti, jointly developed with LRCP Haiti partner Quisqueya University, to build capacity to implement language policy and influence classroom instruction that appropriately considers home and heritage language. LRCP will also support the participation of four participants from the Eastern Caribbean in the training workshop that is being held in Guatemala in February 2018 to train participants in the use of Bloom software to establish a local Enabling Writers Program. In spring 2018 a face to face training in management of Early Grade Reading Assessment – Logistics, Electronic Data Collection (EDC), Data Analysis, and Report Writing, will be held in the Eastern Caribbean, with online follow-up afterwards. The latter activity will be embedded in the continued support provided to the OECS evaluation of the USAID/Early Learners Programme. The end line data collection phase is scheduled during June 2018 (complete evaluation timeline is scheduled for the December 2017-July 2018 period). In summer of 2018, a one week training is planned to strengthen the competencies of Ministry of Education officials in conducting research for improved reading instruction and evaluating program impact.
- In **Peru**, capacity building activities planned for Year 5 include support to the *Dirección Regional de Educación de Apurímac –DREA-* in the design of the EGL investment plan, with a particular focus on EGL outcomes improvement for rural and bilingual populations, where a strategy to acquire Spanish as a second language is needed. The LRCP team will provide general technical assistance support to the design process, backstopping the plan during milestones and providing support for consultants to lead the design process. The LRCP team also plans to provide technical assistance to the regions of San Martin and Ucayali. While this will be further defined

with the USAID LAC Bureau and USAID/Peru Mission, it is anticipated that this may be similar to the activity planned with the DRE in the Apurimac region.

- In the **Dominican Republic**, R3 activities will focus on providing capacity building in evidence generation and knowledge management and support to using knowledge and evidence to promote informed discussion within the sector. LRCP may also support the indexation process for national journals, and support to increase available EGL evidence in the country, in close partnership with local universities and research institutions.
- In **Guatemala**, capacity building plans are still under development since local partner ASIES came on board in mid-Year 3, but plans are being informed by the EGL stakeholder mapping and analysis that has been carried out, as well as discussion and coordination with USAID/Guatemala and other EGL actors. Capacity building plans will be as finalized after the partners meeting in March 2018.
- In Haiti, ?????

Deliverables due under Result 3 this year include:

1. Updated summary regional capacity building plan: April 15th, 2018
2. Summary reports on national level capacity building activities in Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Eastern Caribbean, Jamaica, and Peru carried out to date in Year 5 and planned for the remainder of the year: April 15th 2018.
3. Follow up report for three regional capacity building events, submitted to AOR within 10 work days after close of each one.

Summary of NCE activities:

Result 4: Sustainable platforms are in place through which efforts to improve early grade reading in priority LAC countries will be continued and strengthened

Under Result 4 of the program, the LRCP team has the mandate of developing and implementing strategies to create, support, and strengthen new and existing platforms to improve EGL. This includes the development and incorporation of sustainable strategies under the work of each program objective as well as higher-level, overarching strategies and a platform for EGL work in the region to be continued, deepened, and broadened beyond the life of the LRCP.

Activity 4.1: Establish and implement the RedLEI Network

In order to accomplish the objective of developing a platform for EGL work in the region to be continued and broadened beyond the life of the LRCP, AIR has partnered with the Center for Educational Research at the Research Institutes of the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala to establish and implement the Central American and Caribbean Early Literacy Network, the *Red de Investigación en Lectoescritura Inicial de Centroamérica y el Caribe (RedLEI)*.

As the project's founding partner and implementer of the RedLEI network, the Center for Educational Research at the Research Institutes of the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, leads and hosts RedLEI. The objectives of RedLEI during the life of the LRCP will be focused on activities under the five areas described below.

- Establish a network of key actors in the field of EGL research in Central America and the Caribbean

- Develop and implement a capacity building program for EGL research in Central America and the Caribbean
- Design and carry out a signature research study in EGL with RedLEI members
- Establish a fundraising program to sustain EGL research in the region
- Publish and disseminate research on EGL in Central American and the Caribbean

Main actions related to RedLEI for Year 5 of the project are detailed below and in Annex I. Additional details will be found in the updated UVG workplan, which will be submitted 45 days from signature of the UVG-AIR subaward.

4.1.a. Staffing and operations

Early in Year 5, the subaward with UVG for RedLEI implementation will be finalized and signed. During this period, job descriptions will be developed and recruitment and interviews for RedLEI positions will begin, so that personnel can be hired quickly after signature of the subaward. Most positions are expected to be filled in January 2018. The RedLEI office and team will be established and functional in January 2018. Other staff members, as well as consultants who are not needed immediately, will continue to be recruited and contracted throughout the year, per the needs of RedLEI implementation. As staffing becomes complete, an updated organigram, workflow and reporting lines, and position descriptions will be developed. During this initial phase, the RedLEI team will be training in all important aspects of LAC Reads Capacity, to ensure continuity and complementarity of work and results.

4.1.b. Planning and Design

Significant planning and design work has already taken place, but will continue into 2018, even as implementation is underway. Early in Year 5, the RedLEI Director carried out numerous trips to work with the UVG/RedLEI team and meet with potential founding member organizations who will join RedLEI in its initial phase.

During early 2018, the UVG Rector will officially invite local education experts with experience in education policy, research, and project implementation to the RedLEI Advisory Committee. This group will provide strategic guidance and feedback to RedLEI's overall direction, and sustainability plan beyond the life of the LRCP.

RedLEI personnel will, in early 2018, refine and finalize the theoretical framework for RedLEI, as well as the organizational model and information on founding members in participating counties and the rationale for each. By the end of March the team anticipates having established agreements with these founding members. The RedLEI team will also have regular meetings for planning and discussion with USAID.

Additionally, during the same week as the LRCP partners meeting in Guatemala in March of 2018, the RedLEI team and LRCP core team will have a workshop together to ensure that RedLEI technical planning and work is informed by LRCP work to date, and similarly, that LRCP complements the work of RedLEI. While this is an ongoing process that started in Year 3, this will be the first chance for the full RedLEI team and full LRCP core team to discuss in person and in detail.

4.1.c. Technical Implementation

During Year 5, work in the two main technical areas, capacity building and research, will begin. The RedLEI team will, in early 2018, start to develop the research lines for RedLEI. These will include for national level research to be funded by RedLEI and for the signature research study, which will be designed and carried out by personnel from all of the founding members under the leadership of the RedLEI technical staff.

Additionally, a key and complementary focus in the area of research in Year 5 will be the research grants program funded by URC/Global Reading Network, described in more detail in 4.2 below.

The RedLEI team will also, in the first quarter of calendar year 2018, design the methodology to assess training and capacity building needs in the founding partners, and then will carry out this participatory research. This will be used to form the basis of workshops that will be held later in Year 5, focused on institutional development and capacity building with founding members.

4.1.d. Communications and Dissemination

Socialization and promotion of RedLEI and the network's vision and objectives began late in Year 3, at the CONLES conference. Early in Year 5, the initiative was introduced and discussed in Washington, DC at an event hosted at Inter-American Dialogue with USAID and the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala. This focused on early grade literacy in Central America and the Caribbean, and in the discussion many helpful perspectives to inform RedLEI's work were shared. RedLEI's launch and activities in each country will also be discussed with USAID Missions and Ministries of Education as appropriate during the first quarter of 2018.

In early 2018, the RedLEI team will finalize its communications strategy and plan to position and promote RedLEI. As mentioned in 2.5 above, LRCP personnel will provide support to RedLEI for this until the RedLEI communications position has been filled, and will continue to provide technical support as appropriate after this.

While the strategy, objectives, messages, and specific events will be detailed in the plan, several events are already planned. There will be a RedLEI launch event in Guatemala in March, as well as launch events with each founding member in each member's home country. RedLEI will also promote and publicize the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the GRN for the research grants program³, as well as present the research that will be funded under it.

4.1.e. Sustainable funding

During Year 5 the RedLEI team, with support from AIR and LRCP personnel, will research and pursue funding for the sustainability of RedLEI. Staff will conduct market research into sources for funding as well as other kinds of support (technical assistance, collaboration in joint work, sharing findings, and/or hosting events, etc.). Close collaboration with *Fundación de la Universidad del Valle de Guatemala* -a US-based UVG fundraiser organization- is expected to explore leverage and grants opportunities. Opportunities with international, regional, and national level donors, foundations, private sector organizations, and others will be identified and pursued.

Activity 4.2: Implement the RedLEI/GRN research grants program

The USAID-funded Reading within Reach Project /Global Reading Network, implemented by University Research Corporation (URC) is partnering with the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala and its RedLEI network to fund a research grants program focused on early literacy in Central America and the Caribbean. The research products will be an initial information resource used by RedLEI to expand dialogue in the region on evidence-based best practice in early grade literacy and to develop strategic lines of research.

In January, the position of Research Manager for the grants program will be posted and recruitment will begin. The Research Manager will be responsible for managing the research program. The selected candidate is anticipated to be contracted by URC in February 2018.

At the same time, the RedLEI and GRN teams will finalizing and signing the MOU for this collaboration and working on the design of the research grants program, the details of the application process for research fellows, and the scope of work for research to be carried out by fellows. It is anticipated that

³ Please see 4.2 for more details

there will be at least one research fellow from each of the founding member countries. Given the end date of the GRN contract, the research fellows will have an approximately six month time frame to carry out their research, develop and submit deliverables, and share their work and findings.

Since the timeframe is short, the research program objectives, application process for fellows, and scope of work for fellows, will be carefully designed and managed. The focus will be on meaningful work in the areas of EGL research needs and gaps identified by work done by GRN, LRCP, and key stakeholders in the region that can be carried out within this time frame. Once the grants have been awarded, the Grants Manager will work closely with the fellows to ensure that research proceeds well and milestones are achieved. RedLEI and LRCP team members will also provide technical assistance to fellows as needed throughout the process.

Deliverables due under Result 4 during the year include:

1. Summary report on RedLEI launch event: March 31, 2018
2. Signature of MOUs with all founding member institutions: April 30, 2018
3. Selection of GRN/RedLEI fellows: April 30, 2018
4. Summary report on work of Research Fellows, including Reach Fellow deliverables approved to date: September 30, 2018

Summary of NCE activities:

Annex 1: Workplan chart (attached)

Annex 2: Communications Products and Events (attached)

Annex 3: Country workplans (attached)