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USAID Education Data Activity Quarterly Performance Report

Fiscal Year 2020 Quarter 2 – January 1, 2020 to March 31, 2020

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I. ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Program Name	USAID Education Data Activity
Activity Start Date and End Date	April 9, 2018 to October 08, 2021
Name of Prime Implementing Partner	DevTech Systems, Inc.
Contract/Agreement Number	72061118C00005
Name of Subcontractors/ Sub awardees	Management Systems International (MSI) Khulisa Management Services (Pty) Ltd.
Major Counterpart Organizations	Ministry of General Education (MOGE) Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ)
Activity Goal	Provide distinct assessment, data management, and research and evaluation services to monitor and track the progress of USAID's <i>Let's Read Project</i> bilateral activity.
Activity Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To complete 2 large scale EGRAs (baseline in 2018 and midline in 2020) Strengthen the capacity of ECZ to independently conduct EGRA in the future to inform policy level decisions aimed at improving learning outcomes Conduct research on topics agreed upon with USAID and in collaboration with MoGE
Geographic Coverage	The target population comprise 4,250 schools, in 425 zones, 56 districts in 5 targeted provinces: North Western, Western, Eastern, Muchinga and Southern.
Target Beneficiaries	Grade 2 learners and ECZ staff
Reporting Period	January 1 st , 2020 – March 31 st , 2020

2. ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

This quarterly report presents USAID/Zambia Education Data activity performance progress covering the period from January 1, 2020 to March 31, 2020. The performance report incorporates major project accomplishments in collaboration with MoGE and ECZ. The report is organized according to the contracted tasks under the activity.

2.1 Key Highlights Summary

During the reporting period, January 1 to March 31, 2020, the Education Data activity's deliverables related to contracted tasks include:

Periodic Progress Reports. Education Data activity submitted the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Quarter (Q1) I progress report on January 15, 2020. USAID provided feedback on January 28, 2020. Education Data activity submitted a revised version based on USAID feedback on February 11, 2020. The FY2020 Q1

report was approved by USAID on March 3, 2020 and the report can be accessed on the DEC at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00WGSQ.pdf.

Education Data activity submitted a request for an extension for the FY2020 Q1 Financial Report to USAID on January 28, 2020 due to the unfortunate passing of Ms. Dorothy Daka, Education Data activity's Finance and Operations Manager. USAID/Zambia granted the extension request on February 13, 2020. Education Data activity submitted the FY2020 Q1 Financial Report to USAID/Zambia on February 14, 2020.

Task 7: Conduct Research Studies

The following are key activities conducted in FY2020 Q2 under Task 7.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application. On December 17, 2019, Education Data activity submitted an express IRB review application for the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Baseline Research Study to the University of Zambia (UNZA) Directorate of Research Studies. UNZA approved the ECE Baseline Research Study IRB application on January 9, 2020 and granted Education Data activity permission to conduct the research for a period of one-year subject to renewal.

Procurement of Competitive Local Survey Firm. Education Data activity reviewed proposals from local survey firms to provide administrative and logistical support for the ECE Baseline Research Study data collection. Following the proposal review, Education Data activity engaged the Centre for the Promotion of Literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa (CAPOLSA), a research centre located in the Department of Psychology, UNZA, as the firm with the highest-ranking proposal. During the period of performance, CAPOLSA assisted the ECE Baseline Research Study with preparations for the baseline data collection and enumerator training, assessor recruitment, financial and logistical support, collection and organization of all materials, and provided regular field summaries throughout data collection. Through working with local research institutions such as UNZA and CAPOLSA, Education Data activity contributes to the Government of Zambia's journey to self-reliance by supporting Zambian-led institutions

Programming of the ECE Research Study Tools for Electronic Data Collection. In FY2020 Q1, Education Data activity explored multiple data collection software options to find a suitable option for the data collection tools. Based on this analysis, Education Data activity chose KoBoToolbox, a free and open source data collection platform intended for humanitarian crises and field research in developing countries. Education Data activity coded the finalized, adapted research study tools—the Save the Children International Development Education Learning Assessment (IDELA) in Cinyanja and Silozi and the Measuring Early Learning Environment (MELE) in English created by Measuring Early Learning Quality and Outcomes—into KoboToolbox in early January 2020. Based on the results of the pre-tests conducted in Lusaka in January and a review of the tools by Cinyanja and Silozi language experts at the Directorate of Research Studies, UNZA, Education Data activity revised the tools to ensure they were user-tested, of high-quality, and contained accurate translations.

Pre-Tests of ECE Baseline Research Study Tools. On January 9, 2020, Education Data activity received permission from the MoGE to pre-test the IDELA and MELE tools in Lusaka Province. On January 27, 2020, the Education Data activity Program Manager and Deputy Program Manager (DPM) trained the CAPOLSA Principal Investigator, Co-Investigators, and four research assistants to administer the IDELA and MELE tools. On January 29 – 30, 2020, staff from Education Data activity, CAPOLSA and research assistants pre-tested the research tools at two primary schools in Lusaka province. A total of 21 girls and 19 boys were assessed using the IDELA tool, with equal representation from both ECE and Grade 1

learners. Education Data activity also administered the MELE in an ECE classroom at both primary schools. Based on the results from the pre-tests, Education Data activity made revisions to the tools and also prepared additional guidance for the Quality Control Officer (QCO) and assessor training.

Recruitment and screening of QCO and Assessors. In preparation for the QCO and assessor training, CAPOLSA staff recruited and screened candidates to serve as QCOs and assessors based on their academic, research and language backgrounds, in addition to their experience working with children. The criteria for selecting QCOs and assessors for EGRA as outlined in the Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP) were adapted and used by CAPOLSA to screen and select individuals for the ECE Research Studies. A total of 34 participants, 19 females and 15 males were selected to participate in training.

ECE Baseline Research Study QCO and Assessor Training. Education Data activity in collaboration with CAPOLSA, held the ECE Baseline Research Study QCO and Assessor Training at Nomads Lodge in Chudleigh, Lusaka province from February 3-7, 2020. Staff from the Directorates of Planning and Information, the Directorate of ECE and the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) participated throughout training. The Education Data activity Program Manager from Washington D.C., Program Manager/Team Lead, and Deputy Program Manager in addition to the CAPOLSA Principal and Co-Investigators served as master trainers. Training sessions included but are not limited to teaching assessors about the research study design and methodology, research ethics, obtaining consent, IDELA and MELE test administration, at-school sampling techniques using the MyRandom application, how to administer and upload the assessments to the server using KoboCollect, conducting inter-rater reliability (IRR) assessments, safety and contingency planning, and QCO and assessor roles and responsibilities. The Directorate of ECE, facilitated trainings on MoGE curriculum and ECE guidelines in addition to the ECE school environment. Please see *Table 1: Training Participants* for additional information on the participants.

Table 1: Training Participants			
Category	Males	Females	Total
Assessors	15	19	34
Directorate of ECE	0	1	1
Directorate of Planning	0	1	1
Examinations Council of Zambia	1	0	1
UNZA CAPOLSA	2	3	5
Education Data activity	2	2	4
USAID	0	2	2
Total:	20	28	48

As part of the QCO and assessor training, all training participants practiced administering the tools in Silozi and Cinyanja with ECE and Grade I learners in Mumbwa, Central province. Education Data activity chose to conduct practice test administration in Mumbwa due to its unique linguistic characteristics of having both Cinyanja and Silozi learners, allowing trainees to practice administering the assessments in both Lol. Trainees administered the IDELA and MELE at two primary schools on February 6, 2020. Education Data activity and CAPOLSA master trainers followed the Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP) procedures to monitor the ECE research study assessor training, data collection, and monitoring. Specific to the assessor training, master trainers monitored all participants to ensure they administered the IDELA and MELE tools with fidelity according to their respective test manuals with ECE and Grade I learners in the language of assessment. In addition, Education Data activity administered formal inter-rater reliability (IRR) tests to assess trainees' competencies in test administration and marking procedures before data collection. Each IRR test consisted of assessors watching an IDELA being administered or an ECE classroom and entering the ratings within the data collection software. Each assessor's answers were

then analyzed to determine agreement with the correct evaluation according to the IDELA and MELE test administration procedures. By the end of training, all 34 QCOs and assessors scored above the gold standard permitting them to participate in data collection. Based on IRR formal test scores, training participation, and comprehension of the training material, Education Data activity and CAPOLSA selected a total of 24 assessors and six QCOs, out of the 34 trainees to conduct data collection in Eastern and Western Provinces. Please see *Table 2: QCOs and Assessors* for the breakdown of data collection teams by province and sex.

Dry Runs, ECE Baseline Research Study. Data collection began by first conducting dry runs between February 11-14, 2020 in Chipata, Katete, and Nyimba districts in Eastern province and Limulunga, Mongu, and Mwanzi districts in Western province. Education Data activity, CAPOLSA and MoGE staff monitored assessors and QCOs during the dry-runs to provide feedback and answer questions on data collection and school procedures as they arose. Prior to visiting schools, data collection teams briefed the provincial education offices (PEO) on the research study and the data collection process. After observing provincial and district protocols, DEBs and PEOs helped data collection teams to identify dry-run schools not in the sample that fit the research parameters. In total, 96 IDELA assessments (40 boys and 56 girls) and 12 MELE assessments were conducted as part of the dry-runs. Please see *Table 3: Dry Runs, ECE Baseline Data Collection* for additional information.

Table 3: Dry Runs, ECE Baseline Data Collection						
Province	District	IDELA				MELE ¹
		ECE		Grade I		
		Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	
Eastern	Chipata	4	5	8	3	2
	Katete	5	6	7	5	2
	Nyimba	3	3	3	3	2
Western	Limulunga	0	2	4	2	2
	Mongu	4	3	6	5	2
	Mwanzi	2	3	5	5	2
Subtotal		18	22	33	23	12
Total		96				12

Data Collection, ECE Baseline Data Collection. Data collection occurred between February 12 – March 13, 2020 in 52 government-run primary schools in Eastern and Western provinces. Each team coordinated with the DEBs of the sampled school(s), and where possible, with the headteacher as well. Due to the short school day for both ECE and Grade I learners, data collection teams conducted the IDELA in each school over two days. A preliminary analysis of the raw, un-cleaned dataset shows that approximately 1,090 Grade I and ECE learners were assessed, with equal gender representation, and 50 ECE teachers were observed by two assessors using the MELE tool. To ensure quality assurance during data collection, Education Data activity used a test administration manual (TAM) to guide the data collection process and to serve as a reference guide for teams while they were in the field. Per the QASP quality assurance measures, Education Data activity collected IRR data from 10% of all learners or approximately 100 ECE and Grade I learners. In addition, two assessors observed each ECE teacher simultaneously to measure the agreement in marking on the MELE tool. During the next period of performance, Education Data activity will carefully clean and analyze the IDELA and MELE datasets to be able to report findings against

¹ For each ECE classroom observation, two assessors independently administered the MELE tool marking what they observed in the classroom. By having two assessors observe the same classroom, Education Data activity will be able to examine the degree of consistency in the marking of the MELE tool.

the baseline research questions. Additional information on assessments disaggregated by province, gender, and Grade, is outlined in Table 4: Preliminary Analysis, ECE Baseline Data Collection.

Table 4: Preliminary Analysis of the ECE Baseline Data Collection ²						
District assessed	No. of Schools	IDELA				MELE
		ECE		Grade I		
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
EASTERN PROVINCE						
Chadiza, Chipata, Katete, Lumezi, Mambwe, Nyimba, Lusangazi, Sinda, and Vubwi	27	145	149	143	154	52
WESTERN PROVINCE						
Kalabo, Kaoma, Limulunga, Lukulu, Mongu, Mulobezi, Mwandu, Nkeyema, Senanga, Sesheke, Shangombo, Sioma	25	131	139	154	157	48
Subtotal	52	276	288	297	311	100
Grand Total	Schools		IDELA		MELE	
	52		1196³		100⁴	

Monitoring, ECE Baseline Research Study Data Collection. Between March 1 – 6, 2020, two teams consisting of two individuals from Education Data activity, MoGE, and ECZ visited Nkeyema district in Western province and Katete district in Eastern province to monitor the quality of data collection for the ECE Baseline Research Study. Education Data activity first briefed the local DEBs on the purpose of the monitoring visit and then proceeded with each team to two schools. After data collection was conducted at each school, monitoring teams debriefed with the data collection teams to discuss their successes, challenges, and mitigation strategies. Specific to Western province, the data collection team relocated from Mongu to Nkeyema district after increased safety concerns following gassing incidents and localized violence. The monitoring team, comprised of the Deputy Program Manager, Education Data activity and a Senior Education Officer from the Directorate of ECE, supported the team by alerting the DEBs, ensuring at least one DEBs representative accompanied the data collection team, and contacting DEBs in neighboring districts to assess safety risks. No data collection team member was harmed, and everyone returned to Lusaka safely. Per the QASP and in addition to on-site monitoring, Education Data monitored data collection virtually through KoboCollect and additional recommendations and mitigation strategies were communicated to data collection teams.

2.2 Implementation Status Table

The table below provides a summary as well as status of activities for each contracted task that took place between January 1, 2020 - March 31, 2020.

² Data reported represents raw, un-cleaned data submitted to the KoboToolbox server by data collection teams. During the data cleaning process, each individual assessment will be reviewed for learner and teacher consent, the completeness of the assessment and other input errors before being included for analysis. As a result, the total number of assessments after cleaning may be slightly less than the raw, un-cleaned number presented.

³ Data reported for IDELA are inclusive of IRR assessments, and therefore includes the double assessment of approximately 100 learners. During the cleaning process, IRR assessments will be separated out to measure and report the consistency of marking among assessors.

⁴ Data reported for MELE are inclusive of IRR assessments, and therefore includes the double assessment of each classroom observation by a second assessor. During the cleaning process, IRR assessments will be separated out to measure and report the consistency of marking among assessors.

Planned Quarter 2: Work Plan Activities	Achievement Status	Implementation Issues	Actions for Next Quarter
Task 1: Start up and Complete a Language Mapping exercise			
Complete: The Language Mapping Report can be accessed through the following link: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00THW7.pdf			
Task 2: Complete preparation for the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and EGRA pilot assessment			
Complete: This was completed for the baseline EGRA in September 2019. The EGRA Data Collection Framework for baseline can be accessed through the following link: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TZM8.pdf			
Task 3: Finalization of the Instruments to conduct EGRA and complete EGRA training			
Complete: This was completed for the baseline EGRA in October 2018. Additional information on the EGRA baseline instruments and training protocols can be found in the Baseline EGRA report, linked under Task 4 below.			
Task 4: Conduct EGRAs and Complete reports			
Complete: The Baseline EGRA report was completed in August 2019, and it can be accessed through the following link: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TZM9.pdf			
Task 5: ECZ Capacity Building			
5.1 Transition Strategy (Deliverable)	Complete: The Transition Strategy was completed in September 2019 and can be accessed through the following link: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00W4Q6.pdf		
5.2 Skills Workshop 2: data cleaning and analysis	Incomplete: Following a meeting held with USAID on February 14, 2020 to discuss the Midline EGRA to be conducted in 2020 in all 10 provinces, Education Data activity began co-planning with ECZ. Because the skills workshops are directly linked to EGRA activities, Education Data activity has proposed to ECZ that the remaining sessions of workshop 2 take place in November 2020 to enable ECZ to apply the skills during the workshop to clean and analyze the Midline EGRA data.		Once, Education Data activity receives feedback from ECZ on this proposal, tentative dates for Workshop 2 will be set.
5.3 Skills Workshop 3: Budgeting for EGRA, EGRA Sampling, and Midline EGRA Tools Validation	Incomplete: During Skills Workshop 3, ECZ in collaboration with Education Data activity will apply sampling techniques to finalize the Midline EGRA sample. As a result, Education Data activity has proposed that the workshop be rescheduled for after the contract modification and expanded geographic scope		Once the contract modification and Midline EGRA research design are finalized, Education Data activity will confirm the dates

	has been agreed with USAID. Education Data activity has tentatively suggested it take place during the first week in June.		for Workshop 3 with ECZ.
5.4 Submission of participant data from the QCO and assessor training for the Baseline ECE Research Study to TraiNet (Deliverable)	Incomplete: In early February, TraiNet informed its users that it will be migrating to a new system, TEAMS, and as a result only training data through the close of the Fiscal Year 2019 was to be entered into the old system. All implementers are expected to submit FY2020 data to TEAMS once it launches in April 2020.		Once TEAMS is launched on April 20, 2020, Education Data activity will input FY2020 Q2 training data from the Baseline ECE QCO and assessor training.
5.4 Formation of EGRA planning Working Group with ECZ	Incomplete: In September 2019, Education Data activity proposed to form a Midline 2020 EGRA Working Group with ECZ for the purpose of coordinating all EGRA activities. After USAID confirmed on February 14 that the Midline EGRA would be conducted in 2020, Education Data activity continued to work to establish the Working Group. On March 11, Education Data activity met with staff from ECZ's Research Unit to discuss the revised Midline EGRA timelines. ECZ staff requested that Education Data activity send a formal letter to the Director of ECZ, to officially establish the Midline EGRA Working Group.		Submit the formal request to the Director of ECZ to establish the Midline EGRA Working Group and plan a virtual kick-off meeting with all Working Group members.
Task 6: Disseminate EGRA results to key stakeholders			
Complete: Education Data activity completed all baseline dissemination of the EGRA results to stakeholders in June 2019.			
Task 7: Conduct Research Studies			
7.1 IRB Approval	Complete: The Directorate of Research Studies, UNZA approved the IRB application for the ECE Research Study on January 9, 2020. Approval lasts for a period of one year from January 9, 2020 – January 8, 2021 and is subject to renewal afterwards.		
7.2 Procurement of local survey firm	Complete: UNZA, CAPOLSA signed a professional service contract on January 14, 2020 to provide logistical and administrative support for the ECE Baseline Research Study data collection.		
7.3 Programming research tools for electronic data collection	Complete: Education Data activity uploaded and deployed the final versions of the IDELA and MELE in KoboToolbox on February 9, 2020 ahead of the dry-runs. During the period of performance, the tools were revised based on feedback from the pre-tests and an		

	independent review from Cinyanja and Silozi language experts from UNZA.		
7.4 Seek MoGE permission to conduct the baseline ECE data collection	Complete: On January 29, 2020, Dr. Jabbin Mulwanda, Permanent Secretary-Administration, MoGE, granted Education Data activity permission to conduct the baseline ECE data collection in Eastern and Western provinces		
7.5 QCO and assessor training	Complete: QCO and assessor training occurred from February 3-7, 2020 and a total of 34 assessors, 15 male and 19 females were trained by Education Data activity and CAPOLSA master trainers with 48 attendees overall. Thirty (30) assessors were chosen based on IRR scores, training participation, and comprehension of the training material to conduct the baseline data collection.		
7.6 Dry runs	Complete: Dry runs occurred in Chipata, Katete, and Nyimba districts in Eastern province and Limulunga, Mongu, and Mwanzi districts in Western province between February 11–14, 2020. In total, 96 IDELA assessments and 12 MELE school observations were conducted.		
7.7 Baseline data collection	Completed: Data collection occurred from Feb 12, 2020 – March 13, 2020. Six data collection teams, three in Eastern province and three in Western province assessed approximately 1,090 ECE and Grade 1 learners from 52 government-run primary schools and conducted observations of 50 ECE teachers.		During FY2020 Q3, Education Data activity will clean and analyze the baseline IDELA and MELE datasets to present findings in the Baseline ECE Report consistent with the Year 2 Annual Work Plan.
7.8 National Estimates Research Study – Concept Note	Incomplete: At the direction of the Director of ECZ, Education Data activity and the ECZ Research Unit met on February 25, 2020 to discuss the proposed National Estimates Research Study, which would provide national EGRA estimates for all 10 provinces. During the meeting, ECZ agreed to draft a Concept Note for the Study. ECZ submitted an initial draft of the Concept Note to Education Data activity on February 28, 2020. During a follow-up meeting held on March 11, Education Data activity provided feedback on the Concept Note. ECZ		Once ECZ submits the revised Concept Note, the team will review it to ensure alignment with contractual timelines and then Education Data activity will share it with USAID for their consideration.

	agreed to revise and resubmit the Concept Note to Education Data activity.		
Other Accomplishments			
8.1 FY2020 Q1 Quarterly Performance Report (Deliverable)	Complete: Education Data activity submitted the FY2020 Q1 Quarterly Performance Report to USAID on January 15, 2020. USAID provided feedback on January 28, 2020. Education Data activity submitted a revised version to USAID on February 11, 2020. The FY2020 Q1 report was approved by USAID on March 3, 2020 and the report can be accessed on the DEC at: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00WGSQ.pdf .		
8.2 FY2020 Q1 Financial Report (Deliverable)	Complete: Education Data activity submitted a request for an extension for the FY2020 Q1 Financial Report due to USAID on January 28, 2020 due to the unfortunate passing of Ms. Dorothy Daka, Education Data activity's Finance and Operations Manager. USAID/Zambia granted the extension request on February 13, 2020. Education Data activity submitted the FY2020 Q1 Financial Report to USAID/Zambia on February 14, 2020.		

2.3 Management and Administrative Issues

The Program Manager/Team Lead (PM/TL) and Deputy Program Manager (DPM) established regular communication with the Education Data activity Task Order Contracting Officer Representative (TOCOR) through weekly meetings held at the project office. The PM/TL and DPM also maintained frequent communication with the Home Office (HO) through weekly Skype calls.

Midline EGRA changes. On February 14, 2020, Education Data activity and USAID held an in-person meeting to discuss three Midline EGRA scenarios: (1) all 10 provinces in 2021; (2) all 10 provinces in 2020; and (3) the 5 target provinces of Let's Read in 2020. As a result of the meeting, USAID requested that Education Data activity implement Scenario 2, to conduct the Midline EGRA in all 10 provinces in 2020. Additional provinces considered for the Midline EGRA are Central, Copperbelt, Luapula, Lusaka, and Northern. Based on implementation considerations, data analysis, and the request to conduct a nationally representative EGRA in 2020, Education Data activity completed or conducted the following:

1. *Contract modification – national EGRA in 2020.* Following cost implication and level-of-effort analysis, Education Data activity submitted a contract modification to the Contracting Officer at the request of USAID on March 10, 2020. The modification includes changes associated with language mapping, Midline EGRA, dissemination activities, a national estimates research study to be conducted in collaboration with the Examinations Council of Zambia, and the procurement of a local survey firm to provide Midline EGRA logistical and administrative support.

2. *Terms of Reference (TOR) for the local survey firm or institution support.* Following the submission of the Contract Modification on March 10, 2020, Education Data activity revised the Terms of Reference for local survey firm support to include optional activities that could be exercised should the modification be approved to conduct the EGRA in the additional 5 provinces. The revised TOR was shared with the COR on March 13, 2020. During FY2020 Q3, Education Data activity plans to advertise the TOR both on DevTech's website and to share it directly with local survey firms to competitively procure administration and logistical support for the Midline EGRA.
3. *Research design and sampling options.* On March 25, 2020, USAID/Zambia sent additional questions regarding the Midline EGRA research design and sampling methodology to Education Data activity. To respond to these questions, Education Data activity presented two research methodologies, a longitudinal design and cross-sectional design, as options along with the pros and cons of each to USAID for their consideration.

Staff Restructuring. Education Data activity's Finance and Operations Manager unexpectedly passed away in January 2020. Education Data activity advertised the Finance and Operations Manager position during the period of performance, conducted interviews with qualified candidates both in Zambia as well as remotely from the HO and selected a candidate for the position. The new Finance and Operations Manager is anticipated to start in FY2020 Q3. The Finance and Operations Manager will work in close collaboration with the Program Manager/Team Lead, Deputy Program Manager, and finance staff at DevTech Systems, Inc. headquarters in Washington, D.C., to provide financial and operational management support to execute key project activities and deliverables.

2.4 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan Update

Education Data Activity's AMELP report and PIRS can be accessed on the DEC at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00THW6.pdf.

Collaboration, learning and adaptive management (CLA) highlights for this reporting period are:

Collaboration. Education Data activity collaboration with various stakeholders in education in Zambia are reported under *Section 3, Stakeholder Involvement*.

Learning Key activities related to learning that took place during this performance period include:

1. *Quality Control Officer and Assessor Training.* Education Data activity conducted a five-day, in-person training on research ethics, school procedures, and IDELA and MELE test administration. Through observing trainees practicing administering the data collection tools both at the training venue and closely at schools with actual learners, master trainers were able to identify areas with low consistency or confusion to provide gap training prior to the dry-runs in each of the provinces. Specific areas that Education Data activity observed to require gap skills training included: (1) how to properly administer the practice items within the IDELA's Inhibitory Control sub-task; (2) when is it appropriate to probe learners and when it is not; (3) the purpose of and how to accurately mark inter-rater reliability assessments within KoboCollect; (4) the difference between marking an IDELA item as incorrect and no response and; (5) best practices to efficiently begin data collection at the school such as sampling before schools starts if learner lists are available; (6) clarification on the requirement that all items on MELE must be physically observed by the assessors to be accurately marked rather than relying on teacher

reported information; (7) how to properly establish a rapport with the ECE teacher prior to the administering the teacher questionnaire including ensuring assent to proceed as well as the anonymity of their responses.

2. *Managing a local survey firm.* During this period of performance, Education Data activity engaged a local survey firm to provide logistical and administrative support for the Baseline ECE data collection. Based on Education Data activity's experience working with the local survey firm, some successes and lessons learned that the team will utilize to inform its approach for procuring and working with a local survey firm for the Midline EGRA include: (1) it is highly beneficial to dedicate sufficient time during the initial kick-off meeting to go through the sub-contract with the local survey firm to ensure mutual agreement and understanding of the expectations; (2) wherever possible and applicable, Education Data activity should leverage existing templates from the baseline EGRA to support the local survey firm to efficiently and effectively prepare for data collection; (3) establishing transparent and open lines of communication between Education Data activity, local survey firm staff and directly with data collection teams can support efficient and informed decision-making, coordination of efforts and increased quality control over data collection processes; (4) conducting data collection during the rainy season adds additional challenges to reach schools, and it is important to talk through mitigation strategies and contingencies with the local survey firm before teams are sent to the field and; (5) due to the high degree of turnover in teaching staff and inconsistent attendance of learners in rural schools, it is essential that the local survey firm not only communicate with DEBS but also directly with schools to support efficiency in the data collection process.

Adapting. Key technical and management activities related to adapting that took place during this performance period include:

1. *2020 Midline EGRA Changes.* On February 14, 2020, USAID/Zambia requested that Education Data activity conduct the 2020 Midline EGRA in all 10 provinces, expanding the geographical scope to include Central, Copperbelt, Luapula, Lusaka, and Northern provinces in addition to the five target provinces of Let's Read which were assessed at baseline. To respond to USAID's request, Education Data activity initiated the following activities: (1) additional co-planning meetings with ECZ to share revised timelines to accommodate the 5 additional provinces as well as its approach for ECZ involvement; (2) revisions the original TOR developed in November 2019 to include optional activities should the expanded scope to all 10 provinces be approved; (3) provision of technical assistance to ECZ to develop a Concept Note for the National Estimates Research Study for USAID's consideration and; (4) conducted additional research into alternative methodologies to inform the design of the language mapping exercise that is proposed to take place in the additional 5 provinces in FY2020 Q3.
2. *ECE Research Study Data Collection.*
 - a. *Replacement Schools.* In the Baseline ECE Research Study design, a sample of 52 primary schools were selected for inclusion. However, a total of 14 of the original sampled schools required replacement due to: (1) road closures as a result of heavy rain; (2) closure of ECE programs due to staff transfers or a lack of funding, and; (3) public gassing attacks which closed some schools or made it too risky for teams to travel to affected regions. Replacement schools represented 27% of the total sample. However, Education Data activity carefully reviewed the sample frame to ensure to the extent possible that replacement schools adhered to the sample parameters.

Table 5. School Replacements			
Province	District	No. of Replacements	Reason (s)
Eastern	Katete	1	Inaccessible due to heavy rains
	Lumezi	1	Inaccessible due to heavy rains
	Mambwe	3	Inaccessible due to heavy rains; security due to gassing attacks
	Lusangazi	2	No ECE offered in 2020
Western	Kalabo	1	Lack of staffing resulted in no ECE learners enrolled in 2020
	Kaoma	1	No ECE offered in 2020
	Lukulu	1	Inaccessible due to heavy rains
	Mwandi	2	Inaccessible due to heavy rains; schools closed due to lack of funds
	Nkeyema	1	Inaccessible due to heavy rains
	Shangombo	1	Inaccessible due to heavy rains
Total		14	

- b. *Public gassing.* Coinciding with heavy rains, national incidents of public gassing attacks and ritual killings resulted in community-borne mob violence targeted at any non-community members deemed to be a suspect of gassing. As a result of increased risk to data collection teams, Education Data activity worked in close collaboration with CAPOLSA to ensure data collection teams were safe and supported by revising its procedures and protocols. Additional security measures taken included but were not limited to: (1) increased the frequency of communication between data collection teams, CAPOLSA, and Education Data activity; (2) ensured QCOs call each school prior to travel to evaluate localized safety conditions; (3) informed DEBs and the police when traveling to and from districts; (4) instituted a policy recommending teams to travel with a representative from the local DEBs or police to schools; (5) removed teams from districts experiencing elevated risk; and (6) recommended one team to return to Lusaka and to resume data collection once the security risks had subsided. As a result of the revised policies, there were no safety incidences and all data collection teams were able to complete data collection in the sampled schools.
3. *COVID-19 Contingency Planning and Adaptations.* On March 18, 2020, the Minister of Health confirmed the presence of COVID-19 in Zambia, prompting Education Data activity to adapt its operating procedures to align to the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) guidelines. Education Data activity's response included:
- a. *Repatriation of the Deputy Program Manager.* Due to international border closures in neighboring Sub-Saharan African countries and recommendations from the U.S Embassy, Education Data activity submitted a request to USAID/Zambia on March 20, 2020 to request approval to temporarily repatriate the Deputy Program Manager to the United States and to enable her to work remotely while in the United States. USAID Mission Director, Sheryl Stumbras, provided approval for the repatriation on March 21, 2020. The DPM safely repatriated to the United States on March 25, 2020.

- b. *Telework Policy for Zambian staff.* Education Data activity established a telework policy to safeguard its staff in Zambia. The revised policy was shared with USAID/Zambia on March 23, 2020 prior to implementation. Education Data activity continues to closely monitor the situation and national trends.
- c. *Collaboration with ECZ.* In order to continue close collaboration with ECZ staff, Education Data activity revised its plans for in-person meetings and is working through electronic teleconferencing means to continue to prepare and plan for the implementation of the Midline EGRA tasks in 2020.

3. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

A key component of the Education Data activity is engaging GRZ and other key education stakeholders to promote sustainability and ensure alignment of activities. The Education Data activity held and participated in several meetings and discussions to support stakeholder involvement. They are discussed in the following sections.

3.1 Inter-Activity Collaboration

Education Data activity engaged USAID Let's Read in February 2020 to foster inter-activity collaboration with the purpose of better understanding Let's Read implementation timelines to inform potential changes to the 2020 Midline EGRA. Let's Read explained when teacher training and the delivery of accompanying instructional materials would occur. This information was later used to inform the February 14, 2020 meeting between USAID and Education Data activity to discuss potential changes to the Midline EGRA. On February 20, 2020, Dr. Hatfield, Director of DevTech's Education, Gender & Youth Practice and Senior Technical Advisor to Education Data activity was met with Let's Read senior management in their office in Lusaka to discuss on-going collaboration between both projects.

Additional engagements occurred in March 2020 to inform potential updates and contingency plans as a result of COVID-19 entering Zambia on March 18, 2020. Discussions and planning are on-going as needed.

3.2 Education Sector Participation

During this reporting period, Education Data activity supported stakeholder involvement through the following key activities: (1) the ECE Baseline Research Study QCO and assessor training activities; (2) ECE Baseline Research Study dry runs; (3) HO consultative meetings with key stakeholders; (4) 2020 Midline EGRA planning; and (5) ECE Baseline Research Study data collection monitoring.

- I. From February 3 – 7, 2020, GRZ officials from ECZ and the Directorates of Planning & Information and ECE, MoGE attended the ECE Baseline Research Study QCO and assessor training. The Director and Assistant Director of the Directorate of ECE provided opening remarks for participants, elaborating on the state of ECE in Zambia and the critical need for reliable ECE data consistent with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. A Senior Education Officer from the Directorate of ECE facilitated sessions on the ECE environment and MoGE ECE guidelines and standards. Officials from the Directorate of Planning and Information, Research Coordinating Committee and ECZ provided updates on the tools adaptation, translation, and validation processes for participants.

2. From February 9 – 11, 2020, ECZ and MoGE officials from the Directorates of ECE, Planning and Information conducted dry runs in Chipata, Eastern province and Mongu, Western province together with Education Data activity staff. MoGE, ECZ, Education Data activity, and data collection teams briefed PEOs and DEBs on the research study methodology and responded to additional inquiries from local officials. MoGE and ECZ officials conducting dry runs in the field also participated in the research study tools adaptation, translation, and validation workshops held in December 2019. Due to this, they were able to provide contextualized and relevant feedback on test administration procedures to data collection teams.
3. From February 13 – 23, 2020, Dr. Randy Hatfield, Director, Education, Gender & Youth Practice and Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Associate/Program Manager from DevTech Systems, Inc. Headquarters in Virginia, United States engaged in consultative outreach with ECZ and MoGE stakeholders alongside the Lusaka Field Office staff. The purpose of the meetings was to continue to build partnerships and assess stakeholder needs. Education Data activity staff also held meetings with UNZA, ECZ, and the Directorates of ECE and Teacher Education during their visits.
4. On February 19, 2020, Education Data activity and USAID met with Dr. Chilala, the Director of ECZ and senior members of the ECZ Research Unit to discuss potential changes in the scope of the 2020 Midline EGRA and to continue collaboration with ECZ to conduct all EGRA tasks. Dr. Chilala provided a history of ECZ and gave an overview of the core Research Unit functions and responsibilities, adding that the Research Unit is uniquely situated and eager to assist in 2020 Midline EGRA activities.
5. On February 25 and March 10, 2020, Education Data activity met with the Research Unit at ECZ following mutual agreement to continue collaborating on 2020 Midline EGRA tasks. During this meeting, Education Data activity discussed the possibility of ECZ leading the national EGRA estimates research study in the five additional provinces based on their previous experience conducting EGRAs. In Year I of the project, ECZ identified workshops of interest with the purpose of building internal capacity related to EGRA tasks. During these meetings, ECZ and Education Data activity discussed capacity-building workshop revised schedules and anticipated timelines for conducting both the baseline and midline comparability and national estimates analyses. ECZ provided feedback to EGRA timelines and is drafting a concept note outlining the methodology to conduct the research study in partnership with Education Data activity.
6. From March 1 – 6, 2020, Education Data activity engaged ECZ and MoGE officials from the Directorates of ECE and Planning & Information to assist in the monitoring of the ECE Baseline Research Study data collection. Two monitoring teams composed of Education Data activity, ECZ, and MoGE staff visited data collection teams in Katete district, Eastern province and Nkeyema district, Western province. The monitoring teams first visited the DEBs offices and monitored the data collection process in accordance with test administration and school procedures.

4. CROSSCUTTING ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

During this reporting period, the following crosscutting issues were considered in the implementation of Education Data activities:

4.1 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

During this period of performance, equal male and female opportunity and inclusion were considered in the planning and implementation of activities. For instance, both men and women were encouraged to

apply for QCO and assessor positions for the ECE Baseline Research Study data collection, resulting in equal numbers of male and female QCOs and more female assessors than male, 16 and 14, respectively. Gender equality was also built into the ECE Baseline Research Study methodology by designing sample parameters resulting in equal female and male learner assessments. Considering factors outside data collection control, such as unequal gender representation in ECE or Grade 1 enrollment, a preliminary analysis of the baseline dataset indicates that equal female and male representation for learner assessments was achieved. During the next period of performance, Education Data activity will examine what differences, if any, are observed in boys and girls outcomes on the IDELA assessment, and among male and female ECE teachers on the MELE.

4.2 Environmental Compliance

A categorical exclusion has been assigned for the Intermediate Result (IR3.1), Educational Achievement in Reading Improved, which applies to the Education Data activity contract. Nonetheless, Education Data activity ensured all activities conducted during the reporting period did not negatively impact the environment. The Education Data activity does not partner with or procure from organizations and/or companies that engage in environmental degradation. The Education Data activity team regularly checks project deliverables and communication materials to ensure that information sharing does not promote practices that would negatively impact the environment, and that the information sharing sessions themselves have negligible impact on the environment. During this performance period, Education Data activity conducted electronic data collecting using Samsung tablets as opposed to conducted data collection using paper-based instruments. In addition, Education Data activity encouraged CAPOLSA to directly transfer MTN talk time to the registered SIM cards within each tablet to enable assessments to be uploaded to the server rather than purchasing paper-based talk timecards to reduce waste.

4.3 Science, Technology, and Innovation

Education Data activity explored the use of different survey platforms, ultimately choosing KoboToolbox as the most cost effective and appropriate platform for the ECE Baseline Research Study. Through KoboToolbox, Education Data activity pilot tested the use of a new geospatial tracking feature during the baseline ECE data collection to monitor the quality and accuracy of data collection against data collection plans. During the following period of performance, Education Data activity will closely review the geospatial data to determine how it may be useful for the creation of dissemination materials. For example, Education Data activity will explore the possibility of overlaying the assessments results onto the collected geospatial codes to create an interactive map in Tableau to enable stakeholders to explore the results.

4.4 Sustainability

In order to promote sustainability, Education Data activity works closely with ECZ, MoGE, and other stakeholders. During this quarter, Education Data activity and stakeholders from the MoGE—specifically the Directorates of Planning and Information and ECE—participated in the ECE Baseline Research Study from the design through data collection. This level of involvement, including the adaptation, translation and validation of the IDELA and MELE tools, conducting QCO and assessor training, monitoring dry runs and data collection, enabled MoGE to participate and contribute to each step in the process. During the next period of performance, Education Data activity will solicit feedback and input from the MoGE and ECZ to prepare the Baseline ECE Research Study report and other dissemination materials.

4.5 Journey to Self-Reliance

USAID’s Journey to Self-Reliance Country Roadmaps measure country progress across dimensions of commitment and capacity. Several primary indicators relate to Education Data activity’s objectives, including education quality, the quality of public services and the quality of policy formation and implementation. Education quality is measured as the percent of learners that reach minimum proficiency in reading by the end of primary school, and according to Zambia’s FY2019 Roadmap, 4 percent of learners in Zambia met the minimum proficiency in reading in 2017.

The use of standardized assessments, such as the EGRA, IDELA and MELE tools, at regular intervals enables stakeholders at various levels to make comparisons across time to determine if progress is being made. During this period of performance, Education Data activity aimed to sustainably build the internal capacity of the MoGE and ECZ to prepare for and conduct research studies, through involving them in the ECE Baseline Research Study QCO and assessor training, dry runs, and monitoring of data collection. Also, through working closely with and supporting local research institutions such as UNZA, Education Data activity contributes to the Government of Zambia’s journey to self-reliance. In Q3 FY2020, Education Data activity hopes that the data and findings from the Baseline ECE Research Study will assist MoGE and other stakeholders to access timely, accurate data to inform programmatic, budgetary and policy decisions.

In ECZ’s Strategic Plan 2016-2021, one of its primary objectives is to “Enhance Operational Efficiency and Institutional Capacity of ECZ and Its Staff” and “Strengthen the Conduct of Education and Examination-Related Research Development and Information.” In support of these aspirations, Education Data activity aims to strengthen the capacity of the Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ) and the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) to track, collect and disseminate data at various levels within the education system. Consistent with ECZ’s Strategic Plan to build institutional capacity, ECZ has agreed to lead the National Estimates Research Study should the modification be approved including leading the EGRA data collection in the five additional provinces not assessed at baseline. Through on-going collaboration to co-lead EGRA tasks with ECZ, Education Data activity believes these jointly planning and implemented activities will positively enable ECZ to meet its Strategic Plan objectives.

5. UPDATES FROM LAST PERFORMANCE REPORT

#	Issue	Agreed Action Item	Current Status March 2020	Outstanding action items
1	Issue raised in Q1 FY2020 on how timelines and implementation may be affected by any change in scope to the 2020 Midline EGRA.	Education Data activity to provide USAID EGRA scenarios to inform decision-making on any changes in scope to the Midline EGRA.	Education Data activity submitted the EGRA scenarios to USAID on January 16, 2020. On February 14, 2020, USAID requested that the Midline EGRA be conducted in 2020 in all 10 provinces, thereby expanding the geographical scope to the 5 additional provinces where Let’s Read is not implemented. On March	Education Data activity will continue planning for the 2020 Midline EGRA activities and also notes contingency strategies amid the worldwide COVID-19 crisis that may require additional consideration.

			10, 2020, DevTech Systems, Inc. submitted a contract modification for USAID review consistent with the request to expand the geographic scope of the EGRA.	
2	Issue raised in Q1 FY2020 of changes to Let's Read implementation timelines for ECE.	Education Data activity revised the proposed timeline for the endline ECE Research Study from October 2020 to January - February 2021 to maximize the time after the ECE training has taken place to assess the fidelity of implementation of the new pedagogical approaches by ECE teachers.	Due to COVID-19, the Ministry of Health mandated school closures nationwide, thereby delaying the implementation of the ECE Let's Read training for ECE teachers from April to August – September 2020.	Education Data activity will closely monitor the situation and recommend any revisions to the ECE End line Research Study for USAID consideration.

6. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

Based on the approved Annual Work Plan, Education Data activity plans to conduct the following activities during the next quarter. However, the Education Data activity team continues to closely monitor the COVID-19 crisis and expects to conduct contingency planning throughout the quarter should adapting activities be necessary to adhere to the most up to date health recommendations and guidelines.

#	Key Tasks/Interventions/Action Items	Opportunity for USAID/Zambia Involvement	Tentative Date planned
1.	Submit the Annual Foreign Tax Report	USAID/Zambia involvement	April 8, 2020
2.	Submit the Annual Property Report	USAID/Zambia involvement	April 8, 2020
3.	Submit the FY2020 Q2 Quarterly Performance Report	USAID/Zambia involvement	April 15, 2020
4.	Submit the FY2020 Q2 Financial Report	USAID/Zambia involvement	April 30, 2020
5.	Finalize the contract modification with USAID/Zambia	USAID/Zambia involvement	April 2020

6.	Review the EGRA pilot data to put together initial drafts of the Midline EGRA and SSME tools incorporating common-item test equating procedures	USAID/Zambia involvement	April-May 2020
7.	Plan for language mapping in the additional 5 provinces	USAID/Zambia involvement	April-May 2020
8.	Procure a local survey firm to support logistical and administrative tasks for the 2020 Midline EGRA and seek CO approval for the resulting sub-contract	USAID/Zambia involvement	May-June 2020
9.	Conduct language mapping in additional 5 provinces	USAID/Zambia opportunity for site visit	May 2020
10.	Produce language mapping report and database	USAID/Zambia involvement	June 2020
11.	Conduct the EGRA budget/sampling workshop	USAID/Zambia involvement	June 2020
12.	Conduct the EGRA Myna workshop	USAID/Zambia involvement	June 2020
13.	Clean and analyze the Baseline ECE research study datasets	N/A	March – June 2020
14.	Write and submit the draft ECE Baseline Research Study report	N/A	June 30, 2020
15.	Draft and submit the Midline EGRA sampling plan to USAID	USAID/Zambia involvement	July 30, 2020
16.	Contingency Planning due to COVID-19	USAID/Zambia involvement	On-going

ANNEX I: INDICATOR RESULTS SUMMARY

Year 2 October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020												
Indicator	Standard/ Custom	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total		Explanation
		Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	
IR Indicator 1: Number of EGRA available for use by USAID and Ministry of Education	Custom	00	00	00	00					00	00	Per the AMELP, the midline EGRA data collection is expected to take place in September – October 2020. Midline EGRA data as a result will be available in Year 3. The target for Year 2 is zero.
Indicator 1.1: Number of schools with language profile verified	Custom	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a					4,250	4,626	The language profile of 4,626 schools were verified in Year 1. Per the AMELP, no additional language profiles are planned for Year 2. School data of each of the sampled schools will be collected alongside the midline EGRA.
Indicator 1.2: Score of EGRA instrument completion	Custom	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a					100%	0%	All EGRA and SSME instruments in each of the 7 local languages and English were completed in Year 1. In FY2020 Q4, Education Data activity and ECZ will determine if adjustments are required ahead of the midline EGRA and will seek USAID approval.
Indicator 1.3: Number of EGRA assessors trained	Custom	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a					180 with at least 135 (75%) attain ing the gold standa rd	00	Assessor training is currently planned for FY2020 Q4 ahead of the midline EGRA
Indicator 1.4 Number of schools in which EGRA is completed	Custom	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a					1,000	00	Education Data will assess Grade 2 learners from 1,000 schools in the five target provinces of Let's Read at midline in September - October 2020.
IR Indicator 2: % of stakeholders reporting having access to EGRA results	Custom	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a					00	00	Per the AMELP, Year 2 targets for Indicator 2 will be set with MoGE and USAID. Further discussions will be planned in FY2020 Q3 to determine appropriate targets for inclusion.

Indicator	Standard/ Custom	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total		Explanation of Actuals & Deviation
		Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	
Indicator 2.1: Number of EGRA dissemination activities conducted	Custom	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a					00	00	Dissemination of baseline EGRA results took place in FY2019 Q3. No further dissemination events are planned for Year 2. Dissemination of the midline EGRA results is planned for Year 3.
Indicator 2.2: Number of research studies completed	Custom	01	00	01	00					01	00	Data collection for the first Research Study took place during this quarter. Data cleaning, analysis and report writing will take place in FY2020 Quarter 3.
IR Indicator 3: Institutional capacity index to implement EGRA	Custom	60% of tasks with more than an average score of 3.5.	36%	60% of tasks with more than an average score of 3.5.	36%					60% of tasks with more than an average score of 3.5.	36%	Per the AMELP, Year 2 target is 60% of tasks with more than an average score of 3.5. Baseline institutional capacity index was 36%. Education Data activity plans to assess ECZ capacity in FY2020 Q4 after skills workshop 3 and 4 are conducted.
Indicator 3.1: Number of individuals trained in implementing EGRA at ECZ and MoGE	Custom	50	00	50	00	50		50		50	00	Per the AMELP, at least 50 persons at MoGE/ECZ are expected to be trained on various EGRA tasks. Skills workshops 3, 4 and 5 are planned to take place with ECZ in FY2020 Q3 and 4 ahead of the Midline EGRA.
Indicator 3.2: % of EGRA tasks implemented by ECZ staff	Custom	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a					33%	27%	At baseline, ECZ participated in 3 of 11 EGRA tasks (27%), including the Tool adaptation and validation, EGRA Training and the dissemination of the Baseline results. Per the AMELP, EGRA tasks accumulate over the two rounds of EGRA, with the target that ECZ conduct 33% of all tasks by the end of Year 2.
ES.1-1. Percent of learners who demonstrate reading fluency and comprehension of grade level text at the end of Grade 2 with USG assistance	Standard (ES 1-1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a					1,000 schools with up to 20 learner s in each school	00	In Year 2, 1,000 schools sampled with up to 20 learners in each school assessed in one of the seven languages of instruction. This will form the denominator for calculating the indicator at midline. Assessments provide data for calculating numerator reported in 2021.

ANNEX 2. SUCCESS STORY

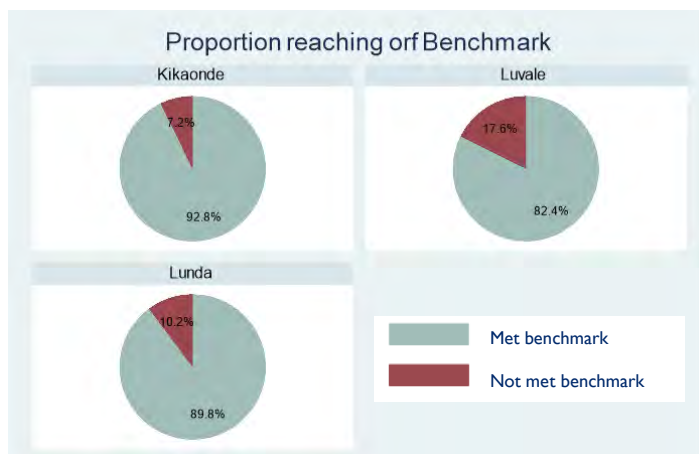
Applying Lessons from Skills Building Workshops to Strengthen ECZ Internal Capacity in EGRA sub-tasks.

The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) is tasked with conducting assessments of Zambian learners according to government benchmarks. Consistent with the ECZ Strategic Plan of 2016 – 2021 objectives to “enhance operational efficiency and institutional capacity of ECZ and its staff” and “strengthen the conduct of education and examination related research development and information,” Education Data activity is partnering with ECZ to assist in transferring greater technical oversight to conduct EGRAs and large-scale assessments. Based on results from the ECZ capacity assessment, Education Data activity facilitated a seven-day workshop on psychometrics and test equating and a two-day workshop on data visualization in FY2019 Q4.

Workshop participants gained knowledge of psychometric principals and test equating concepts such as classical and item response theory. During the data visualization workshop, participants learned how to analyze and create a variety of graphs using STATA. To ensure learning is applied to ECZ institutional capacity, Education Data activity has consistently followed up with workshop participants from the ECZ Research Unit to better understand how workshop material and lessons are applied and to assess additional skills gap that may be supported through subsequent activities.

ECZ Research Unit staff explain that they have been empowered by trainings in their everyday job functions to create and support national assessments including both during the test creation and through dissemination of national test results to key stakeholders. Mr. Joseph Kanswe, Research Officer explains that, “as a research unit, we understand with much clarity the conceptual basis of measurement and statistical concepts specific to psychometrics as we carry out our core functions in assessment reports.” Having a strong conceptual basis and understanding required for assessments is demonstrated by Mr. Simwinda, who adds that as a researcher responsible for test construction, he better understands and appreciates the theoretical components involved in constructing assessments. “The CT [classical theory] and IRT [item response theory] offered me an opportunity to fully understand what goes into test construction...which I have used to construct national examinations.”

Practical application of skills learned from workshops continue beyond test creation. Mr. Kanswe explains that applying skills learned through practical tasks has empowered ECZ Research Unit staff to analyze and visualize data. For example, lessons on interpreting classical and item response theory have been applied in data analysis for national examination results for grade nine, twelve, and teacher education. In addition, lessons learned from the data visualization workshop have assisted ECZ to create data summaries of examination results for grades seven, nine, twelve, and teacher education. Through ECZ utilizing lessons learned from skills building workshops to analyze and visualize national



ECZ-developed pie charts present the percentage of learners who met the MoGE oral reading fluency benchmark of 20 correct words per minute by the different LOIs in North-Western Province.

assessment data, the skills building workshops enable ECZ to increase their organizational capacity and progress towards sustained self-reliance.



Education Data activity and USAID meet with Dr. Chilala, Director of ECZ, to foster on-going collaboration to implement the Midline EGRA in 2020.

ANNEX 3. MOGE REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

ACTIVITY TITLE AND DESCRIPTION

The USAID Education Data activity began implementation in April 2018, with the objective to provide education assessment, data management, and research and evaluation services in support of the USAID Let's Read Project that targets Eastern, Muchinga, North-Western, Western, and Southern Provinces. The USAID Education Data activity also aims to strengthen the capacity of the Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ) and the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) to track and collect data to improve learning outcomes in Zambia. The Education Data activity is funded by USAID/Zambia and ends by October 2021.

PARTNERS

USAID Education Data activity is implementing its activities in partnership and collaboration with:

- Ministry of General Education
- Examinations Council of Zambia
- Let's Read Project
- USAID/Zambia

REPORT PERIOD DELIVERABLES AND RESULTS

No activities to report during this period of performance.

SUCCESSSES

During this performance period, USAID Education Data activity worked with MoGE and ECZ officials to conduct data collection for the ECE Baseline Research Study. Education Data activity engaged three officials from the Directorate of ECE, two officials from the Directorate of Planning and Information, and two officials from ECZ to conduct dry runs of the research tools, data collection, and monitoring to ensure data was collected according to ethics principles and at a high quality.

Following a planned change of scope for the 2020 Midline EGRA, Education Data activity engaged seven ECZ officials to begin planning for EGRA, including having ECZ lead the proposed National Estimates Research Study to conduct EGRA in the five additional provinces in 2020. Education Data activity is actively collaborating with ECZ to realign timelines, assist ECZ to lead the research study efforts, and plan for skills building workshops 3 and 4.

CHALLENGES

1. **Contingency planning amid localized unrest:** Due to localized unrest in some areas, several baseline ECE data collection teams faced increased security risks to access rural schools. Education Data activity worked closely with MoGE provincial and district-level staff to monitor the security situation and to implement additional measures to ensure data collection teams remained safe. Due to the invaluable support provided by MoGE staff, all data collection teams were able to assess learners from each of the 52 sampled schools and return safely to Lusaka.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Frequent and streamlined communication with ECZ and MoGE staff is vital to ensure that all stakeholders understand each other's expectations and to plan within the human resources, time and financial resources available to carry out the tasks.

ANNEX 4. PLANNED MONITORING SCHEDULE FOR NEXT QUARTER

Education Data activity conducts data quality assessments on a regular basis per the timelines set out in the AMELP. In the next quarter, April – June 2020, the below scheduled DQA assessment is scheduled to take place.

#	Location	Date	Visit type/purpose	Point(s)-of-Contact	Issues/Comments
1	Lusaka	June 30, 2020	DQA of Indicator 3: Institutional capacity at ECZ to implement EGRA	Dr. Francis Sampa, USAID Education Data	