USAID Education Data Activity Quarterly Performance Report

Fiscal Year 2021 Quarter 2 – January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021

Submission Date: April 15th, 2021

Contract Number: 72061118C00005 under IDIQ AID-OAA-I-14-00057-ABE ACR

Contract/Agreement Period: April 9, 2018 to October 08, 2021
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1. ACRONYMS

ATACOR	Alternative Task Order Contracting Officer Representative
AMELP	Activity Learning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Plan
CAPOLSA	Centre for the Promotion of Literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa
CO	Contracting Officer
CLA	Collaboration Learning and Adaptive Management
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DPM	Deputy Program Manager
DDL	Development Data Library
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessments
ECZ	Examinations Council of Zambia
FY	Fiscal Year
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HO	Home Office
IDELA	International Development and Early Learning Assessment
INESOR	Institute of Economic and Social Research
KII	Key Informant Interview
LoI	Language of Instruction
MSI	Management Systems International
MELE	Measuring Early Learning Environments
MoGE	Ministry of General Education
OAA	Office of Acquisitions and Assistance
PM	Program Manager/Team Lead
QCO	Quality Control Officers
RCC	Research Coordinating Committee
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistants
TACOR	Task Order Contracting Officer Representative
NERS	National Estimates Research Study
UNZA	University of Zambia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value Added Tax
ZRA	Zambia Revenue Authority

2. 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 *Let's Read Project* bilateral activity.
Activity Objectives	• To complete 2 large scale early grade reading assessments (EGRA) (baseline in 2018 and midline in 2021) • 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 56 districts in 5 targeted provinces: North Western, Western, Eastern, Muchinga and Southern. The National Estimates Research Study (NERS) target population comprises 4,113 schools in 53 districts in the 5 additional provinces: Lusaka, Copperbelt, Central, Northern, and Luapula provinces.
Target Beneficiaries	Grade 2 learners and ECZ staff
Reporting Period	January 1, 2021 – March 31, 2021

3. ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

This quarterly report presents USAID/Zambia Education Data activity's performance progress covering the period from January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021. The performance report incorporates major project accomplishments in collaboration with the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) and the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ). The report is organized according to the contracted tasks under the activity.

3.1 Key Highlights Summary

During the reporting period, Key outputs from the Education Data activity include:

1. **Completion of the Midline Language Mapping Exercis**e in Lusaka, Copperbelt, Central, Luapula, and Northern province to generate a reliable and valid sampling frame for the National Estimates Research Study (NERS). **4,113 schools verified** across the five additional provinces.

2. **Procurement of Local survey firm to assist with logistical and administrative implementation during the anticipated Midline EGRA** data collection. Re-negotiation of the technical and financial proposals with the Institute of Economic and Social Research (INESOR) at the University of Zambia (UNZA).

3. **Training of seven ECZ staff on statistical sampling methods and foundational concepts and approaches to sampling prior to drawing the NERS** sample in preparation for data collection.

4. **Dissemination of Baseline Early Childhood Education Research Study** findings via DEC.

5. **Women empowerment and placement in leadership positions.** Education Data activity recruited two new female staff, including the Program Manager/Team Lead. As a result, management consists primarily of female staff in both technical and non-technical roles, including the Home Office Program Manager and Field Office Program Manager/Team Lead and Deputy Program Manager.

Deliverables related to contracted tasks include:

Periodic Progress Reports. Education Data activity submitted the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Quarter 1 report on January 15, 2021. Once approved, Education Data activity will upload the report to the DEC.

Quarterly Financial Report. Education Data activity submitted the FY2021 Q1 Financial Report to USAID/Zambia on January 28, 2021.
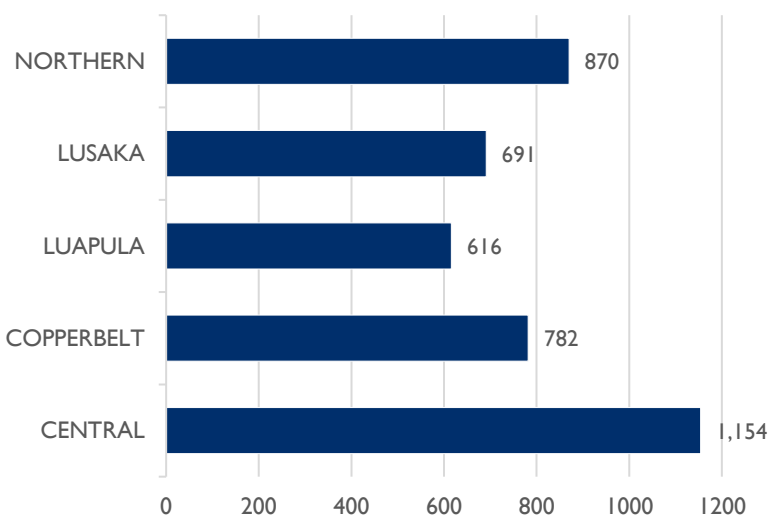
FY2020 Annual Performance Report. Education Data activity resubmitted the revised FY20 Annual Performance Report to USAID/Zambia on December 17, 2020 and on January 8, 2021 USAID/Zambia approved the report. Education Data activity uploaded the report to the DEC on January 8, 2021, which can be found here.

Task 1: Midline Language Mapping Exercise
Education Data activity staff and Short-Term Technical Assistants (STTA) completed the Midline Language Mapping Exercise in Lusaka, Copperbelt, Central, Luapula, and Northern province—referred to as the five additional provinces—during the performance period. The purpose of the this exercise is to generate a reliable and valid sampling frame for the National Estimates Research Study (NERS) (see Task 7) and ascertain the predominant Language of Instruction (LoI) in each district at each school, either Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) or community school. Determining LoI ensures learners are assessed in the language they are taught in at school. To map languages, Education Data activity completed several tasks related to data cleaning and analysis which are described in the sections that follow.

Data Cleaning. Education Data activity staff and STTA completed cleaning the language mapping dataset by identifying data gaps and verifying and updating school-level information with district-level MoGE staff. Education Data activity identified misaligned or missing information on staffing, enrollments, district placements, and (Early Childhood Education) ECE enrollments. Once data gaps were identified, Education Data activity contacted most districts via email, WhatsApp, socially distanced in-person meetings, and phone calls. This included a two-day in-person visit in December 2020 with Lusaka District Education
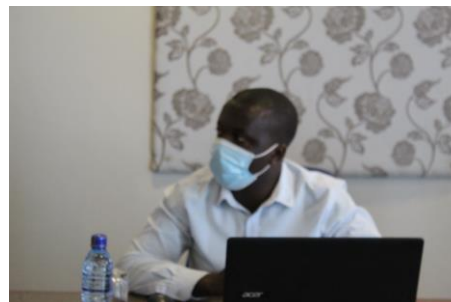
FIGURE 1: PROVINICIAL SCHOOL TOTALS AFTER LANGUAGE MAPPING EXERCISE

Province	Schools
NORTHERN	870
LUSAKA	691
LUAPULA	616
COPPERBELT	782
CENTRAL	1,154

Board Secretary (DEBS) officials following data gaps for Lusaka district. In addition to updating information received from district-level follow up, Education Data activity updated LoI data based on responses from Key Informant Interview (KII) questionnaires. After data cleaning, Education Data activity staff verified **4,113 primary schools in total, or 239 additional schools prior to field visits**. Of the 4,113 total, 2,817 are GRZ and 1,296 are community schools. As shown in Figure 1, Central province has the most schools followed by Northern, Copperbelt, Lusaka, and Luapula provinces.

Report Findings. After data cleaning, Education Data activity analyzed the data and drafted the 2021 Language Mapping Report containing overall and provincial findings for the five additional provinces as outlined below. Education Data activity submitted the report and accompanying dataset to USAID/Zambia on February 12, 2021.

1. *Overall Findings*. As shown in Table 1, Education Data activity verified a total of 4,113 schools across the five additional provinces. Of the school total, 2,208 (54 percent) have ECE programs and most schools are located in rural (74 percent) as opposed to urban (26 percent) settings. Generally, most schools use the MoGE designated LoI and there are approximately 15

Peter Mumba, Mid-Level Research Assistant STTA, assists in data cleaning and report findings. Courtesy of Education Data activity. Photo taken with consent.

other major languages in the five additional provinces. These languages include English, Chikunda, Lenje, Soli, Icilamba, Ila, Iala, Swaka, Sala, Swahili, Bisa, Icilungu, Icimambwe, Tabwa, and Ushi. All schools in the additional provinces use only one LoI except Lusaka and Central provinces, which use two and three, respectively. Lusaka predominantly uses Cinyanja but two districts, Chilanga and Chirundu, use both Chitonga and Cinyanja. Central province uses Icibemba, Chitonga, and Kiikaonde. USAID Education Data activity found that all schools use the MoGE designated LoI except one school in Central province that uses Kiikaonde, an LoI of Northwestern province.

Table 1: Summary of Schools After Language Mapping Field Visits by Language of Instruction, School Type, ECE and Districts.

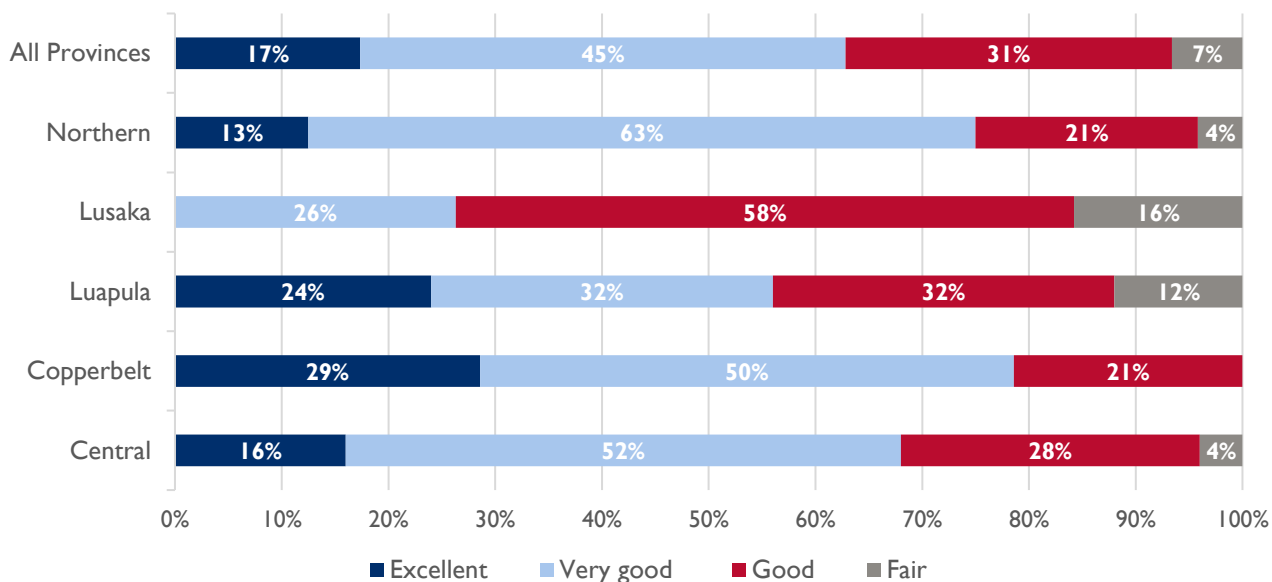| Province	MoGE designated LoI	Language Mapping Exercise Verified LoI	Other Major Languages	Schools	GRZ	Comm	ECE	Districts*
Lusaka	Cinyanja	Cinyanja	Chikunda, Chitonga, English, Lenje, Soli	657	256	399	397	6
	Chitonga	Chitonga	Cinyanja, English	34	26	8	30	2
Central	Icibemba	Icibemba	Chitonga, Icilamba, Ila, Lala, Lenje, Swaka	698	497	201	388	9
	Chitonga	Chitonga	Cinyanja, Icibemba, Icilamba, Kiikaonde, Ila, Lenje, Sala, Silozi	455	332	123	363	5
		Kiikaonde**	Ila	1	1	0	1	1
Copperbelt	Icibemba	Icibemba	English, Cinyanja, Lamba, Swahili	782	544	238	549	10
Northern	Icibemba	Icibemba	Bisa, Icilungu, Icimambwe, Tabwa	870	659	211	260	12
Luapula	Icibemba	Icibemba	Ushi	616	500	116	220	12
TOTAL				**4,113**	**2,817**	**1,296**	**2,208**	**57**

*The number of districts (Lusaka and Central) that use more than one LoI exceeds the total number of districts (53) because some districts use more than one LoI.
**Only one school in Mumbwa district uses Kiikaonde.

In addition to school totals and major languages, Education Data activity found that most MoGE staff believe teachers are fluent in the MoGE designated LoI in the district and/or province where they teach. As reported in the previous quarter, Education Data activity conducted 121 KIIs with MoGE staff at the national-, provincial-, district- and school-levels. As shown in Figure 2, 45 percent of respondents estimate that teachers are "very fluent" in the MoGE designated LoI in the district and/or province where they teach. Across all provinces, 17 percent and 45 percent of KII respondents rate Grade 2 teachers' abilities to read and write in the LoI as "excellent" and "very good," respectively. Copperbelt and Northern provinces received the largest percentage of "excellent" and "very good" ratings and Lusaka province received the largest percentage of "fair" ratings. The ratings suggest that most Grade 2 teachers can read and write in the provincial-LoI or district-LoI, despite the teacher's mother tongue.

FIGURE 2: KII PERCEPTIONS ON GRADE 2 TEACHER ABILITY TO READ AND WRITE IN THE PROVINCIAL LOI

Province	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair
All Provinces	17%	45%	31%	7%
Northern	13%	63%	21%	4%
Lusaka		26%	58%	16%
Luapula	24%	32%	32%	12%
Copperbelt	29%	50%	21%	
Central	16%	52%	28%	4%

2. *Provincial Findings.*

a. *Lusaka Province.* **The team verified a total of 691 schools across the seven districts in Lusaka.** There are 399 GRZ public and 258 community schools. Of these, 69 percent operate ECE programs. During provincial- and district-level language mapping visits, interviews with provincial officers show that Chilanga and Chirundu districts use Chitonga and Cinyanja in schools. While Cinyanja is the MoGE designated LoI in Chilanga district, three schools use Chitonga for instruction. Redistricting of Shibuyunju district between Central and Lusaka province may be a possible explanation for the use of Chitonga in schools. While KII respondents rate the ability of Grade 2 teachers to teach Cinynaja as good, some respondents raise concerns that teachers are deployed to Lusaka from other provinces and therefore may be learning Cinyanja at their teaching posts. If teachers are not able to proficiently read and write in the LoI, an expectation is that learners may experience difficulty reading and writing in Grade 2.

b. *Central Province.* **The team verified a total of 1,154 schools across 12 districts.** There are 830 GRZ public and 324 community schools. Of these, 751 (65 percent) offer ECE. Most of the schools (65 percent) operate in rural areas. Icibemba and Chitonga are the LoIs in Central province. While most people speak Icibemba, interviews with MoGE officials at the provincial-, district- and school-levels reveal that some schools use other LoIs. Of the 12 districts, five report Chitonga as the LoI. These districts are Chibombo, Chisamba, Itezhi-Tezhi, Mumbwa and Shibuyunji. According to MoGE officials, there is one school in Mumbwa district that uses Kiikaonde. The use of Kiikaonde is likely due to civic or tribal leadership preference, where leaders decreed that the school is to use Kiikaonde instead of Chitonga or Icibemba. Overall, Central province KII respondents agree that most schools in the province use Icibemba and rate teachers' abilities to instruct in the language as "very good."

c. ***Copperbelt Province.*** **The team verified a total of 782 schools in the ten districts of Copperbelt province.** There are 544 GRZ public and 238 community schools. Of these, 549 (70 percent) offer ECE. Icibemba is the official LoI and the most widely spoken language in the ten districts Copperbelt province although there are other languages spoken in the province. The LoI in all ten districts in Copperbelt province is Icibemba. Copperbelt KII respondents had the most "excellent" (29 percent) and "very good" (50 percent) ratings for teacher abilities to read and write in Icibemba, suggesting that teachers have a strong understanding of the language. Despite high ratings, KII respondents also note that Lamba is used to further explain concepts in the classroom. Lamba is not an officially recognized LoI, so there are no MoGE produced instruction or guidance materials in the language. Other than Icibemba and Lamba, English is the most cited major language in the province among KII respondents and MoGE officials. All ten districts cite English as another major language.

d. ***Northern Province.*** **The team verified a total of 870 schools in the 12 districts of Northern province.** There are 659 GRZ public and 211 community schools. Of these, 260 (30 percent) offer ECE. Icibemba is the official LoI and most widely spoken language in all 12 districts of Northern province although there are other spoken languages. According to the 2010 Zambian Census, most people in Northern province speak Icibemba (69 percent) followed by Mambwe (14 percent), Icilungu (6.9 percent) and Bisa (6.4 percent). Most KII respondents rate teacher abilities to read and write in Icibemba as "excellent" (13 percent) and "very good" (63 percent).

e. ***Luapula Province.*** **The team verified a total of 616 schools in the 12 districts of Luapula province.** There are 500 GRZ public and 116 community schools. Of these, 220 (36 percent) offer ECE. All 12 districts in Luapula province use Icibemba as the LoI. Like Northern province, Luapula is predominantly Icibemba speaking and most of the population speak Icibemba (71.3 percent). MoGE officials document that all 12 districts use Icibemba and note no other major languages used in schools. Other major languages generally include Ushi and English. Of the KII respondents for Luapula province, no one cites other LoIs, suggesting a high fluency rate in Icibemba throughout the province.

Task 4: Conduct EGRAs and Complete Reports

Local Survey Firm Procurement. During the performance period, Education Data activity re-negotiated the technical and financial proposals with the Institute of Economic and Social Research (INESOR) at the University of Zambia (UNZA). The purpose of the procurement is to hire a local survey firm to assist with logistical and administrative implementation during the anticipated Midline EGRA data collection in late 2021. INESOR will be responsible for recruiting 360 quality control officers (QCO) and assessors for all seven Zambian languages; assisting in training preparations in one QCO training in Lusaka and five simultaneous QCO and assessor trainings in the provinces prior to dry-runs; and verifying QCOs and assessors conduct EGRA in the NERS and EGRA sample schools according to the Test Administrative Manual. For more information, see *Section 2.3 Management and Administrative Issues* and *Section 2.4 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan Update.*

Task 5: ECZ Capacity Building

Dr. Jere-Folotiya, Program Manager/Team Lead and Mr. Shadreck Nkoya, Assistant Director for Research and Development, welcome participants to the sampling methodology workshop. Courtesy of Education Data activity. Photo taken with consent.

Sampling Workshop. As part of the sustainable transition of 50 percent of EGRA tasks to ECZ, on March 29 – 31, 2021, Education Data activity, ECZ, and MSI trained seven ECZ staff and conducted the first component of the Sampling Methodology Workshop. The purpose of the workshop is to understand foundational concepts and approaches to sampling prior to drawing the NERS sample in preparation for data collection. The first two days comprised of overviews for sampling concepts and approaches, such as but not limited to: population, unit of analysis, sampling frame, parameter estimate, standard error, sample weights, sampling bias. The sampling approaches discussed in the workshop include simple random, systematic, stratified random, cluster, and multistage. The last day comprised preparations and overview to draw the NERS sample using lessons learned from the first two days.

Following USAID/Zambia guidance on COVID-19, Education Data activity explored virtual and in-person options and substantially involved USAID/Zambia in workshop preparation discussions. On March 12, 2021, Education Data activity requested USAID/Zambia approval to conduct an in-person, socially distanced workshop with a limited number of participants or conduct a virtual workshop and provide Internet data bundle allowances to increase GRZ connectivity. Following discussions with USAID/Zambia, Education Data activity conducted an in-person workshop and trained seven ECZ Research Unit members. In compliance with international health standards, Education Data activity conducted the following safety measures to minimize COVID-19 exposure:

- Checked body temperatures and did not allow participation for individuals with temperatures exceeding recommended guidelines;
- Encouraged double masking and provided adequate masks;
- Ensured adequate air circulation by opening doors, windows, and having air conditioning;
- Ensured participants had his/her own conference pack with water, and hand sanitizer;
- Each participant had his/her individual table, which enabled social distancing of about 2 meters between participants;
- Provided hand washing facilities and hand sanitizer at the entrance;
- Sanitized the conference room with air purifiers; and
- Discouraged participants from using others' workshop tools including computers and materials.

The workshop comprised of three components. The first was an explanation of basic concepts and principals foundational to sampling. Key concepts included population, unit of analysis, sample, sample size, sample frame, parameter estimates, standard error, sampling weights, and sampling bias. Together with presenters Sean Kelly, Technical Associate and Dr. Abdullah Ferdous, Technical Director at MSI, ECZ, DevTech, and MSI applied key terms using activities on actual samples used in Zambia. Next, ECZ participants learned about various sampling techniques and associated advantages and disadvantages. Probability sampling techniques included simple random, systematic, stratified, cluster, and multi-stage. ECZ shared previous sampling techniques the Research Unit used in the past, including a sample random sampling technique for the National Assessment Survey. Last, the participants discussed power calculations and sample characteristics for the NERS sampled found in Table 2, including how many schools per LoI

are needed for the nationally representative sample. ECZ, Education Data activity, and MSI engaged in the discussion to prepare for drawing the NERS sample in the next quarter.

Table 2: School Sample Size

Language	Province(s)	Schools
Chitonga	Central, Lusaka, Southern	55
Cinyanja	Eastern, Lusaka, Muchinga	74
Icibemba	Central, Copperbelt, Luapula, Muchinga, Northern	80
Kiikaonde	Central, Northwestern	70
Lunda	Northwestern	57
Luvale	Northwestern	74
Silozi	Western	78
TOTAL		**488**

Task 7: Research Studies

Learning Loss Research Study Proposal. In response to interest to assess learning loss due to school closures caused by COVID-19, on December 15, 2021 Education Data activity submitted a request to conduct the Learning Loss Research Study for USAID/Zambia review. Following the request, USAID/Zambia and Education Data activity discussed the proposal, including other implementing partners that have conducted assessments that can measure learning loss. On January 11, 2021, USAID/Zambia disapproved the research study proposal. The disapproval was based on other USAID/Zambia projects able to collect learning loss data and the need to prioritize EGRA preparations. As a result, Education Data activity adapted research study approaches to conduct the Endline ECE Research Study. More information on this adaption can be found in *Section 2.4 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan Update*.

Baseline Early Childhood Education Research Study. The Baseline Early Childhood Education (ECE) research study: (1) answered key fidelity of implementation questions of interest to the MOGE; (2) established a baseline level of ECE teachers' pedagogy and ECE learner outcomes in the absence of the USAID Let's Read ECE intervention; and (3) examined differences in skills among learners who attended ECE and those that did not. The End line ECE research study will assess changes over the course of a year in teachers' pedagogy and learner outcomes in several domains of early childhood development. While the End line ECE research study was originally planned for January – March 2020, due to changes in USAID Let's Read implementation and COVID-19 safety concerns, Education Data activity anticipates conducting the End line ECE research study in January – March 2022 pending contract modification approval.

In the previous quarter, Education Data activity revised and resubmitted the Baseline ECE report for USAID/Zambia approval on December 12, 2020. On January 28, 2021, USAID/Zambia approved the report, which was uploaded to the DEC on February 10, 2021 and is accessible here. The Baseline ECE research study found that ECE programming in the sampled schools positively contribute to learners' skills development, but Grade 1 learners with ECE still exhibit low initial literacy skills. Second language learners perform wore than those that learn in the language they speak at home. Most ECE teachers primarily use repetition across subject areas, but the research demonstrated that learners tend to learn better when they have opportunities for free play or choice. Few ECE teachers provide opportunities for expressive

language and listening skills development, and most ECE teachers are new to the profession and have not received specific training.

In December, Education Data activity sought MoGE guidance to assist in the results dissemination events. Prior to dissemination, ECZ, the Directorate of ECE, and the Centre for the Promotion of Literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa (CAPOLSA), UNZA received report copies while Education Data activity collaborated with the Research Coordinating Committee (RCC), Directorate of Planning and Information and USAID/Zambia on report dissemination approvals. To this end, Education Data activity drafted a letter addressed to the Permanent Secretary, MoGE seeking approval to conduct two provincial and one national dissemination events. Education Data activity sent the draft letter to the Permanent Secretary for USAID/Zambia review on January 25, 2021. On March 18, 2021, USAID/Zambia provided feedback on the letter, which Education Data activity delivered to MoGE on March 22, 2021. In the next performance period, Education Data activity intends to disseminate the Baseline ECE Report findings to national and provincial stakeholders.

3.2 **Implementation Status Table**

The table below provides a summary and status of activities for each contracted task that took place between January 1, 2021 – March 31, 2021.

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 Baseline Language Mapping Report can be accessed through the following link: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00THW7.pdf			
1.1 Midline Language Mapping Exercise Data Cleaning and Analysis	**Complete:** During the period of performance, Education Data activity staff and the Senior- and Mid-Level Research Assistant STTAs completed transcribing, compiling, verifying, and cleaning data collected during field visits and produced a dataset of GRZ and community schools in Lusaka, Copperbelt, Central, Luapula, and Northern provinces. Based on this exercise, Education Data activity verified a total of 4113 schools. The language mapping dataset will be used as the NERS sampling frame.		

	Complete: Education Data activity submitted the first draft of the second Language Mapping Report on February 12, 2021 verifying the LoI in all GRZ and community schools in the five additional provinces. The report will be updated and finalized upon completion of EGRA data collection based on additional school-level verification.		
1.2 Midline Language Mapping Report			

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			

2.1 Midline Sampling Methodology Plan (Deliverable)	**Incomplete:** Based on the agreement with USAID/Zambia to postpone the Midline EGRA to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Education Data activity submitted a request on September 15, 2020 for an extension for the Midline Sampling Methodology Plan among other deliverables affected by this change. Based on USAID/Zambia approval on October 29, 2020, this deliverable will now be due to USAID/Zambia on May 31, 2021 in Q3 FY21.		Draw the NERS sample with ECZ staff during the Sampling Capacity Building Workshop
2.2 Procurement of EGRA Materials	**Incomplete:** During FY20 Q4, Education Data activity submitted a request to USAID/Zambia to procure IT equipment to support the Midline EGRA. Based on USAID/Zambia approval of this request on November 10, Education Data activity procured 2 additional laptops for the field office and flash drives for dissemination activities. During this performance period, Education Data activity solicited quotations and prepared request for proposals for tablets and computers. Following changes in Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) policies to exclude Value Added Tax (VAT), Education Data activity will procure items in the next quarter.		Finalize ZRA VAT exemptions to procure tablets and solicit quotations for computers, power banks, and other EGRA preparatory items consistent with the USAID/Zambia IT approval.
2.3 Updates to the Myna Server	**Complete:** MSI staff implemented critical updates to the Myna server for Zambia. These updates offer several important new features that support data quality and tracking performance of assessors and teams during data collection. It allows project staff to define and establish new data quality criteria and will automatically flag that does not meet these standards. In addition, the new features will automatically push the latest updates to the Myna server in Zambia before each round of		

	data collection. Previously all project servers required manual updates.		
Task 3: Finalization of the Instruments to conduct EGRA and complete EGRA training			
Complete: The Baseline EGRA instruments and EGRA training were completed 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.			
3.1 EGRA Tools Assembly and Validation	**Complete:** As part of capacity-building workshop 3, Education Data activity worked with ECZ and Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) language specialists to draft, assemble, and validate the Midline EGRA tools in all seven LoI during FY20 Q3. Education Data submitted the final Midline EGRA tools to USAID/Zambia on July 8 for approval.		
3.2 SSME Tools	**Incomplete:** Based on the agreement with USAID/Zambia to postpone the Midline EGRA to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Education Data activity anticipates needing to revise the learner, teacher, and headteacher questionnaires and translate the learner questionnaire. During the performance period, the team revised the learner questionnaire following schools opening after COVID-19 lockdowns. In the next quarter, Education Data activity will complete revisions to all SSME tools and have the learner questionnaire translated into all seven Zambian languages.		Once the Midline EGRA timeline is finalized, work with Let's Read and ECZ to review and, revise the SSME tools, as needed.
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:** 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 immediately after Midline EGRA data is collected for cleaning and analysis. Based on the MoGE revised calendar for the 2021 school year, Education Data activity anticipates Skills Workshop 2 will be conducted between December 2021 – January 2022.		Once the Midline EGRA timeline is finalized, Education Data activity will consult ECZ to schedule the data cleaning and analysis sessions of Workshop 2.

5.3 Workshop 3: EGRA Sampling	**Incomplete:** Education Data activity completed the first component of the Sampling Methodology workshop on March 29, 30, and 31 with a total of 7 ECZ Research Unit Staff. Participants discussed key concepts and principles of sampling, and different sampling approaches, such as simple random, systematic, stratified random, cluster, and multistage. During the next quarter in the second portion of the workshop, ECZ and Education Data activity will draw the NERS sample using the concepts and approaches learned in the first component of the workshop.		Draw the NERS sample using concepts and approaches learned in the first component of the Sampling Methodology workshop.
5.4 Skills Workshop 4: Myna and Electronic data collection	**Incomplete:** Due to the revised schedule for conducting the Midline EGRA and hands-on nature of the Myna workshop, Education Data activity recommended that this workshop be postponed until May – June 2021, when STTA support can travel to Zambia and the finalized tools will be ready for programming.		Education Data activity will share a description of the workshop once international travel is possible.

Task 6: Disseminate EGRA results to key stakeholders
Complete: Education Data activity completed all baseline dissemination activities of the EGRA results to stakeholders in June 2019.

Task 7: Conduct Research Studies

7.1 Baseline ECE Research Report	**Complete:** Education Data activity resubmitted the Baseline ECE Research Report to USAID/Zambia on December 11, 2020 and USAID/Zambia approved the report on January 28. On February 10, 2021 the report was uploaded to the DEC and can be found here.		
7.2 Preliminary Results Presentation to USAID/Zambia	**Complete:** On October 29, Education Data activity presented the Baseline ECE results to USAID/Zambia Education Office staff. Based on feedback from USAID, Education Data activity revised the PowerPoint Slide deck and shared it along with an audio recording with USAID/Zambia on November 2, 2020.		
7.3 Submission of Baseline ECE dataset to the DDL	**Complete:** On December 18, 2020, Education Data activity submitted the final Baseline ECE dataset to USAID/Zambia Development Data Library (DDL). In response to a request for additional information, Education Data activity uploaded the Baseline International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA) and Measuring Early Learning		

	Environment (MELE) questionnaires to the DDL on December 31, 2020.		
7.4 Results Dissemination	**Incomplete:** On January 25, 2021, Education Data activity sent a draft letter to the Permanent Secretary seeking approval to conduct results dissemination for USAID feedback. On March 18, 2021, USAID sent feedback and on March 2, 2021, Education Data activity sent the letter to the Permanent Secretary. Following MoGE approval, Education Data activity will solicit MoGE feedback and conduct results dissemination in the next quarter.		Plan results dissemination event with MoGE and education stakeholders observing COVID-19 guidelines.
Other Accomplishments			
8.1 FY2021 Q1 Performance Report (Deliverable)	**Complete:** Education Data activity submitted the FY21 Q1 Performance Report to USAID/Zambia on January 15, 2021.		Once the report is approved, Education Data activity will upload it to the DEC.
8.2 FY2021 Q1 Financial Report (Deliverable)	**Complete:** Education Data activity submitted the FY2021 Q1 Financial Report to USAID/Zambia on January 28, 2021.		
8.3 FY2020 Annual Performance Report	**Complete:** Education Data activity resubmitted the revised FY20 Annual Performance Report to USAID/Zambia on December 17, 2020 and on January 8, 2021 USAID/Zambia approved the report. Education Data activity uploaded the report to the DEC on January 8, 2021 and can be found here.		

3.3 **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) and Alternative Task Order Contracting Officer Representative (ATOCOR) through weekly meetings held over Microsoft Teams. The PM/TL and DPM also maintained frequent communication with the Home Office (HO) through weekly virtual calls.

Project Activity Changes.

Based on the agreement to postpone the Midline EGRA to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Education Data activity and USAID/Zambia continued discussions on the appropriate timeline and preparations to conduct Midline EGRA. During the period of performance, Education Data activity completed or conducted the following:

a. ***Request to Conduct Learning Loss Research Study.*** In the previous quarter, Education Data activity submitted a request to conduct the learning loss research study. The study would quantify learning loss and examine the psychosocial well-being of learners due to COVID-19 school closures. On January 11, 2021, USAID/Zambia disapproved the request to conduct the research study. Instead, Education Data activity will continue preparations for Midline EGRA and the End line ECE research study.

b. ***Request to Embed Staff at the Examinations Council of Zambia.*** Following discussions with USAID/Zambia on methods to increase collaboration and the successful implementation of EGRA and research studies with ECZ, during the period of performance Education Data activity and ECZ discussed embedding Education Data activity staff at ECZ. The Deputy Program Manager and Assistant Director of Research and Test Development at ECZ met on January 12 and 27, 2021 to discuss the possibility of embedding Education Data activity staff at ECZ. As a result of the meetings, potential office spaces were identified and initial discussions took place with the Deputy Director and Director of ECZ. Further, the Deputy Program Manager engaged VVOB as an organization embedded within the CDC to understand best practices and lessons learned for embedding. Subsequent discussions with USAID/Zambia resulted in drafting a letter addressed to the Director of ECZ. Education Data activity shared the draft letter to embed with USAID/Zambia on February 18, 2021. Following discussions with the Office of Acquisitions and Assistance (OAA) at USAID/Zambia, Education Data activity and USAID/Zambia discussed next steps and cost allowability on March 4, 2021. USAID/Zambia submitted feedback on the request to embed letter on March 11, 2021, and following revisions, Education Data activity submitted a hard copy and electronic letter via email to the Director of ECZ on March 16, 2021. The letter requested a meeting with ECZ to discuss the embedding process. In the next period of performance, Education Data activity and ECZ will hold discussions to advance the request to embed at ECZ, upon receipt of a meeting date from ECZ.

c. ***Pending modification.*** Education Data activity prepared and submitted a contract modification 03 request to USAID/Zambia on November 17, 2020. The contract modification would extend the period of performance for Education Data activity to December 2022, enabling the project to conduct Midline EGRA in FY22 Q1 or Q2 depending on school calendars. As part of Midline EGRA preparations, Education Data activity seeks to subcontract INESOR, UNZA and has negotiated a scope of work and accompanying budget following the Midline EGRA postponement due to COVID-19.

d. ***Request to Increase Funding*** Based on the most recent financial invoices, the Education data activity obligation balance is insufficient to support project operations, salaries, and planning activities in addition to the approved subcontract budget ceiling for INESOR. As a result, on March 17, 2021 Education Data activity submitted an obligation request for subcontractor INESOR to support the needed preparations for Midline EGRA.

e. ***Request to Conduct In-Person or Virtual Workshops.*** On February 1, 2021, USAID/Zambia sent all implementing partners the COVID-19 United States Government (USG) posture under current circumstances and guidance on in-person meetings. Based on the guidance to strongly avoid in-person meetings and explore virtual options, on March 12, 2021, Education Data activity requested permission to conduct the skills-building workshop with ECZ in-person observing international safety standards or pay GRZ staff a data allowance to support video conferencing connectivity. Following discussions with USAID/Zambia, Education Data activity held an in-person

training with ECZ while observing Ministry of Health and international COVID-19 guidelines outlined in *Section 2.1 Key Highlights Summary*.

The following personnel recruitment and management activities occurred during the period of performance:

1. ***Replacement of Home Office Program Manager.*** During this period of performance, Dr. Carla Paredes replaced Ms. Rebecca Westbrook as the Home Office Program Manager. Dr. Paredes is an education and development specialist with more than ten years of international development experience. Prior to joining DevTech, Dr. Paredes supported USAID early grade reading projects in Africa as a Researcher at the Learning Systems Institute at Florida State University. Dr. Paredes also worked at the World Bank and managed child health programs at the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization. She holds a Ph.D. in Education Policy and Evaluation from FSU and MA in International Development from the American University.

2. ***Program Manager/Team Lead (PM/TL) Onboarding.*** On December 16, 2020, Education Data activity submitted a request for key personnel approval for Dr. Jacqueline Jere-Folotiya. USAID/Zambia approved the request on January 7, 2021, and Dr. Jere-Folotiya joined Education Data activity as the PM/TL on March 1, 2021. Dr. Jere-Folotiya is an Educational Psychologist with over 10 years' experience in developmental research, monitoring and evaluation, strategic planning, policy dialogue and collaboration with government and non-governmental stakeholders, program design and implementation. She led CAPOLSA, UNZA, which conducts research and evaluations to support data-driven literacy programming. Dr. Jere-Folotiya will provide managerial strategy and lead the Field Office in Lusaka, Zambia to conduct all technical activities, including but

Dr. Jere-Folotiya, Program Manager/Team Lead. Courtesy of Education Data activity. Photo taken with consent.

not limited to Midline EGRA and NERS data collection and the Endline ECE Research Study. As part of onboarding, Dr. Jere-Folotiya and the Deputy Program Manager engaged education stakeholders to discuss ongoing collaboration and priorities. For more information on stakeholder engagement meetings, see *Section 3.2 Education Sector Participation*.

3. ***Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist Recruitment Onboarding.*** During the period of performance, Education Data activity recruited and hired Mr. Douglas Milasi for the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist position in the Lusaka, Zambia Field Office. Education Data activity reviewed over 50 applicants and selected and interviewed the top five for a panel interview consisting of the Field Office Program Manager/Team Lead and Deputy Program Manager and Home Office Program Manager. All applicants completed a performance-based task analyzing and producing visuals using a large dataset. Education Data activity chose Mr. Milasi based on his relevant experience and interview scores. Mr. Milasi has over five years of education research and data analysis experience and has

Mr. Douglas Milasi, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. Courtesy of Education Data activity. Photo taken with consent.

worked on education research projects with the ECZ, the CDC, UNICEF, CAPOLSA, and the American Institutes of Research. Previously, Douglas served as a QCO for the Baseline EGRA and Baseline ECE Research Study with Education Data activity. As M&E Specialist, Mr. Milasi will be responsible for EGRA data collection preparations, data quality control, tracking, and data cleaning and analysis. He will also work closely with ECZ in skills-building workshops and assist Education Data activity track and report on performance indicators.

4. ***Administrative Assistant Recruitment.*** During the period of performance, Education Data activity identified Mrs. Muchimba Syachaba-Tembo for the Administrative Assistant position in the Lusaka, Zambia Field Office. Education Data activity reviewed over 240 applicants and selected and interviewed the top five for a panel interview with the Field Office Program Manager/Team Lead, Deputy Program Manager, and Finance and Operations Manager. All applicants completed a performance-based task creating a 90-day orientation plan and field travel plan for staff. Education Data activity chose Mrs. Syachaba-Tembo based on her 15 years of experience in administration and interview scores. Mrs. Syachaba-Tembo previously worked as part of the European Union, COMESA, FHI360, AMG Global, and Chartered Accountants. As Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Syachaba-Tembo will be responsible for scheduling meetings, note taking, office management and replenishments, and coordinating travel and activities.

5. ***Short-Term Technical Assistance –Recruitment of Researchers for Language Mapping.*** On January 15, 2021 Education Data activity requested to increase STTA support for the Senior and Mid-Level Research Assistant, Mr. Kalima Kalima and Mr. Peter Mumba, respectively. The Senior and Mid-Level Research Assistants supported the language mapping exercise in Lusaka, Central, Copperbelt, Northern, and Luapula provinces. Mr. Kalima has over 15 years of experience in education, psychology, and research with UNZA, Project Concern International, and the MoGE. Mr. Mumba is a demographer, researcher, and evaluator and has completed several consultancies with Zambian firms. USAID/Zambia approved the request to increase level of effort for local consultants on February 22, 2021. The Senior and Mid-Level Research Assistants will provide additional assistance to support analysis and findings for the Midline language mapping exercise during the NERS and Midline EGRA data collection. They will also assist to verify the open or closed school designations in the 816 schools assessed during the 2018 Baseline EGRA, in addition to supporting preparations and training for Midline EGRA.

3.4 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 are reported under *Section 3, Stakeholder Involvement.*

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

1. *Composition and Technical Capacities at ECZ.* Following discussions with ECZ to increase collaboration, Education Data activity learned about ECZ office composition and organization. The Assistant Director of Research and Test Development provided a tour to the Deputy Program Manager, where he explained the composition of various offices and their expertise, including how various offices collaborate. Education Data activity learned about ECZ's assessment cycle and various security

measures to ensure assessments are confidentially marked. Previously, Education Data activity understood ECZ security measures would bar the project from being embedded due to national examinations sensitivity. After discussions with ECZ staff, Education Data explored the possibility of the project being physically embedded at ECZ offices. In the next performance period, ECZ and Education Data activity will continue discussions on embedding staff and collaboration.

2. *Zambia Revenue Authority Policies.* During the period of performance, Education Data activity used all value added tax (VAT) exempt local purchase orders. Originally, Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) issued local purchase order a booklet allowing the project to make VAT exempt purchases. USAID/Zambia clarified that the policy to make VAT exempt purchases has changed, resulting in ZRA no longer issuing VAT exemption booklets. Instead, implementing partners provide ZRA with documents to register VAT exemption, including annual budgets for items that may attract VAT and a USAID/Zambia and implementing partner signed agreement letter. During the period of performance, Education Data activity sought additional ZRA guidance and compiled itemized costs that may attract VAT. In the next quarter, Education Data activity intends to finalize VAT exempt status through the new ZRA online LPO application process.

Workshop Modalities. On March 29 – 31, 2021, ECZ, Education Data activity, and MSI participated in the in-person Sampling Methodology skills-building workshop. Based on adaptations to increase participant safety, Education Data activity learned workshops and trainings can be successfully conducted with some modifications to maintain participant safety. Due to the hands-on nature of sampling in statistical software, Education Data activity opted to conduct an in-person workshop to conduct sampling methodology while also maintaining social distancing. Adaptations included conducting group activities while ensuring each participant had his or her own materials and workstations. Conducting the in-person, socially distanced workshop allowed for increased collaboration while also observing international health guidelines, including but not limited to organizing individual socially distanced spaces for participants, using air purifiers, double-masking, and ensuring increased airflow.

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

1. *Learning Loss Research Study.* In the previous quarter, Education Data activity submitted a request to conduct the learning loss research study. The study would quantify learning loss and examine the psychosocial well-being of learners due to COVID-19 school closures. On January 11, 2021, USAID/Zambia disapproved the request to conduct the research study. Instead, Education Data activity will continue preparations for Midline EGRA and the Endline ECE research study. When Education Data activity receives USAID/Zambia feedback on Modification 3 submitted on November 17, 2020, the team will include the Endline ECE Research Study under Task 7, Research Studies following the Learning Loss Research Study disapproval.

2. *COVID-19 Workshop Modalities.* On February 1, 2021, USAID/Zambia sent all implementing partners the COVID-19 United States Government (USG) posture under current circumstances and guidance on in-person meetings. As a result of the guidance, Education Data activity explored virtual options to conduct the Sampling skills-building workshop with ECZ. Education Data activity conducted market research on the amount of data bundles that may be needed to conduct virtual workshops. On March 12, 2021, Education Data activity requested USAID/Zambia permission to conduct the workshop in-person observing international COVID-19 safety guidelines or virtually with the support of Internet data bundles for GRZ staff.

3. *INESOR Subcontract Negotiations.* On January 21, 2021, Education Data activity and INESOR analyzed the technical and budget proposals to provide logistical and administrative support for Midline EGRA. Based on COVID-19 safety guidelines and school operation in Zambia, Education Data and INESOR adapted the team compositions to include three assessors and one QCO. Based on the total human resources needed to conduct the EGRA and pupil, head teacher, and teacher questionnaires and school inventory, the team agreed to adapt the composition and accommodate for an additional assessor. Further, the team adapted the QCO and assessor recruitment model for enumerators based on lessons learned from the Baseline ECE Research Study. During Baseline ECE data collection, Zambia experienced gassing attacks and mob violence, making enumerators not originally from the province where data collection occurred to be a target. To prepare for contingencies and increase the likelihood enumerators possess strong language skills, the team recommends adaptions to recruit QCOs and assessors in the provinces where Midline EGRA and the NERS data collection are to occur. On February 17, 2021, Education Data activity and INESOR finalized the technical and budget proposals.

4. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

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

4.1 Inter-Activity Collaboration

Education Data activity engaged the USAID/Zambia Let's Read project on March 26, 2021 with Dr. Jere-Folotiya, Program Manager/Team Lead and Mrs. Denise Reeves-Clark, Chief of Party, Let's Read. The purpose of the meeting is to conduct introductions and better understand Let's Read implementation strategies and timelines that may inform potential changes in preparation for Midline EGRA and the End line ECE Research Study. As noted in *Section 2.3 Management and Administrative Issues*, the Deputy Program Manager engaged in a discussion with VVOB to understand lessons learned for embedding staff in MoGE offices. The purpose of the meeting was to gather additional information on embedding processes prior to discussions with ECZ. Education Data activity will continue collaborating with USAID/Zambia implementing partners to ensure project activities are successfully planned for and implemented.

4.2 Education Sector Participation

During the period of performance, Education Data activity supported stakeholder involvement through the following key activities: (1) Sampling skills-building workshops; (2) Request to embed at ECZ offices; and (3) Program Manager/Team Lead introductions.

1. *Sampling Skills-Building Workshop.* On January 27, 2021, Education Data activity shared a tentative workshop schedule with ECZ based on the agreement to conduct a sampling methods workshop in March 2021. The workshop comprises two parts, the first on sampling theory and approaches. The second part will take place in the next quarter and consist of drawing the NERS sample. The workshop objectives include explaining basic concepts and principles foundational to sampling, and identification of different sampling approaches. Education Data activity shared the proposed workshop agenda for ECZ feedback on February 2, 2021, and ECZ reviewed and approved the agenda on February 5, 2021. To prepare for the workshop and revisit sampling procedures ECZ proposed for the NERS, ECZ, Education Data activity, and MSI met on March 25, 2021. The workshops occurred on March 29, 30,

and 31 at the Radisson Blu hotel in Lusaka, Zambia. A total of seven male and no female ECZ staff participated and 100 percent of participants noted an increase of knowledge and understanding in sampling methodology. Because the ECZ Research Unit only has males, no females were trained.

2. *Request to embed at ECZ offices.* Throughout January 2021, Education Data activity and ECZ held multiple meetings and discussions to discern if it would be possible to embed Education Data activity staff at ECZ offices. For more information, see *Section 2.3 Management and Administrative Issues.*

3. *Program Manager/Team Lead introductions.* Dr. Jere-Folotiya joined Education Data activity as the PM/TL on March 1, 2021 following her approval from USAID/Zambia as key personnel. To support the transition and increase collaboration with MoGE partners, Education Data activity and multiple MoGE offices held stakeholder engagement introductions and meetings, outlined here:

   a. *Examinations Council of Zambia:* Education Data activity and ECZ met on March 4, 2021 to introduce ECZ to Dr. Jere-Folotiya and discuss collaboration and preparation for the NERS sampling and Midline EGRA preparations.

   b. *Directorate of ECE:* Education Data activity and the Directorate of ECE met on March 10, 2021 to conduct introductions and present preliminary results for the Baseline ECE Research Study. In total seven (7) MoGE staff participated and discussed potential dissemination events understanding that the Permanent Secretary must first approve for results to be disseminated to a larger audience.

   c. *Directorate of Planning & Information:* Education Data activity and the RCC, Directorate of Planning & Information met on March 11, 2021 to conduct introductions and learn about the RCC's roles and responsibilities, including next steps for collaboration on language mapping, ECE dissemination, and Midline EGRA preparations.

   d. *USAID/Zambia:* Education Data activity participated in the USAID/Zambia Education Office implementing partners meeting on February 25, 2021. During the meeting, USAID/Zambia and implementing partners discussed COVID-19 adaptations, performance reporting, and budgets.

CROSSCUTTING ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

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

4.3 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

During this period of performance, the planning and implementation of all activities considered equal male and female opportunity and inclusion. During the performance period, Education Data activity recruited two new female staff, including the Program Manager/Team Lead. As a result of recruitment, Education Data activity management consists primarily of female staff in both technical and non-technical roles, including the Home Office Program Manager and Field Office Program Manager/Team Lead and Deputy Program Manager. Another example is the composition of the Sampling skills-building workshop and Midline EGRA preparations with INESOR. Both men and women were encouraged to participate equally. Further For more information on staff changes, see *Section 2.3 Management and Administrative Issues*.

During the next quarter, Education Data activity will build on previous activities to encourage female inclusion in all 2021 EGRA planning activities with ECZ and the local survey firm in addition to conducting the Baseline ECE dissemination activities with key stakeholders.

4.4 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 the period of performance, Education Data activity maintained using a reduced amount of paper-based documents due to virtual working modalities including primarily using Microsoft Teams for most meetings. This includes sharing materials such as the Baseline ECE Research Study Report with ECZ and other MoGE Directorates. Instead of printing large documents, Education Data activity provided GRZ staff with a USD containing pertinent materials. By conducting virtual work activities and providing participants and stakeholders with electronic versions of documents as well as flash drives for future use, Education Data activity reduced waste and increased the likelihood that participants will be encouraged to also adopt the practice of using electronic means to share documents in the future.

4.5 Science, Technology, and Innovation

Education Data activity explored increasing efficiencies to use different virtual meeting platforms to **continue seamless planning activities across different locations and time zones,** ultimately choosing Microsoft Teams as a cost effective and appropriate platform for meetings and workshops. During the period of performance, the Deputy Program Manager onboarded new Education Data activity staff using Microsoft Teams, **making the virtual platform a prime component of onboarding.** In total, the Program Manager/Team Lead, Finance and Operations Manager, and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist all received Microsoft Teams onboarding to conduct virtual meetings. In addition, WhatsApp groups were created to enable seamless communication with Education Data activity staff, in addition to GRZ provincial-, district-, and school-level staff as part of the language mapping verification. Last, all panel interviews for Education Data activity staff—including the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist and Administrative Assistant, were conducted using Microsoft Teams rather than in-person meeting to minimize risk and exposure to COVID-19. Given the continued presence of COVID-19 in Zambia, Education Data activity expects to continue exploring new innovative ways to adapt in-person activities using virtual platforms.

4.6 Sustainability

In order to promote sustainability, Education Data activity works closely with ECZ, MoGE, and other stakeholders. During this quarter, Education Data activity and ECZ participated in discussions to embed offices at ECZ headquarters. The potential move holds promise of increasing project collaboration on the NERS and Midline EGRA to transition at least 50 percent of EGRA activities to ECZ. During the next quarter, ECZ and Education Data activity will meet with the Director of ECZ to discuss next steps for embedding before data collections occur. In addition, ECZ staff participated in a skills-building workshop to increase knowledge on sampling techniques and approaches. The workshop is a precursor to build theoretical sampling techniques prior to drawing the NERS sample of up to 500 schools in Lusaka, Copperbelt, Central, Northern, and Luapula provinces. Drawing the sample is one of the EGRA tasks outlined in the Transition Strategy to help support EGRA and other national assessments. During the next

performance period, Education Data activity will work closely with MoGE and ECZ to plan for the Midline EGRA and NERS, draw the NERS sample, and advance negotiations to embed at ECZ.

4.7 Local Commitment

USAID documents 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 2005. However, the 2018 baseline EGRA found that 10.2 percent of Grade 2 learners could read an age appropriate text with fluency and comprehension by the end of school year. The Midline EGRA and NERS will enable MoGE, Let's Read, USAID/Zambia, and other key stakeholders to examine trends over team in learners' performance in support of data-driven decision making.

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 ECZ and 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 NERS and demonstrates commitment through their involvement in leading the language mapping exercise, sampling workshop, and Midline EGRA preparations. ECZ also demonstrates commitment to ECZ and Education Data activity collaboration through advancing negotiations to allow Education Data activity to embed at ECZ offices. Through on-going collaboration to co-lead EGRA tasks and willingness to embed Education Data activity staff at 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 2021	Outstanding action items
1	Issue raised in the FY2020 Annual Performance Report and Request to Conduct the Learning Loss Research Study regarding if the study will occur to prepare for data collection in Q2 FY2021	After USAID/Zambia disapproval of the Learning Loss Research Study, DevTech will remove the Learning Loss Research Study and add the Endline ECE Research Study in anticipation of USAID feedback on contract modification 3 submitted on November 16.	USAID/Zambia has informed DevTech that the contract modification 3 requires additional review, including USAID/DC collaboration. Based on this timeline, the TOCOR explained that USAID/Zambia will process a request for incremental funding.	Based on USAID/Zambia's feedback and agreement, Education Data activity will incorporate revisions for modification 3 and resubmit for USAID review and approval.

2	Based on 2021 invoicing and the approved consent to subcontract, DevTech raised the issue of a request to obligate additional funding to support project operational costs to support EGRA data collection and subcontractors	After discussions with USAID/Zambia on estimated disbursements for subcontractors based on budget ceilings, DevTech drafted and submitted an obligation request on March 16, 2021.	USAID/Zambia is analyzing the obligation request for subcontractor INESOR and processing a request for incremental funding to ensure the project has adequate liquidity for project activities.	Continue liaising with USAID/Zambia on the request for incremental funding.
3	Issue raised in discussions with USAID/Zambia on conducting virtual skills-building workshops with GRZ staff and the request to supplement Internet data for participants	Based on discussions with USAID/Zambia, Education Data activity submitted a request to conduct virtual meetings with the provision to pay GRZ staff a data bundle allowance or conduct an in-person meeting observing international COVID-19 safety provisions.	USAID/Zambia will revert to Education Data activity on guidance to move forward with skills-building workshops	Education Data activity prepared both virtual and in-person scenarios to conduct workshops conducted an in-person workshop after presenting both workshop options to USAID/Zambia.

6. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

Based on the approved Year 3 Annual Workplan, 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 updated health recommendations and guidelines.

#	Key Tasks/Interventions/Action Items	Opportunity for USAID/Zambia Involvement	Tentative Date planned
1.	Draw the NERS Sample through ECZ Skills-Building Workshop	USAID/Zambia involvement	Early April 2021
2.	Submit the FY2021 Q2 Quarterly Performance Report	USAID/Zambia involvement	April 15, 2021
3.	Submit the Annual Inventory Report	USAID/Zambia involvement	April 15, 2021
4.	Submit the Annual Foreign Tax Report	USAID/Zambia involvement	April 15, 2021

5.	Submit the FY2021 Q1 Financial Report	USAID/Zambia involvement	April 30, 2021
6.	Submit the Semi-Annual Report		April 30, 2021
7.	Onboard the Administrative Assistant		Early April
8.	Plan for the Baseline ECE results dissemination events with MoGE and ECZ	USAID/Zambia involvement	Early April
9.	Verify Let's Read sampled EGRA schools in preparation for Midline EGRA	USAID/Zambia involvement	April 2021
10.	Finalize SSME tools	USAID/Zambia involvement	April – May 2021
11.	Translate pupil questionnaire	USAID/Zambia involvement	May 2021
12.	Seek IRB approval for Midline EGRA and NERS		May – June 2021
13.	Finalize subcontracting agreement with INESOR		May – June 2021
14.	Conduct the Baseline ECE Results Dissemination events with MoGE and ECZ	USAID/Zambia involvement	May – June 2021
15.	Conduct ECZ Skills-Building Workshop, Myna and Electronic Data Collection	USAID/Zambia involvement	May – June 2021
16.	Submit the Midline Sampling Methodology report to USAID/Zambia	USAID/Zambia involvement	May 30, 2021
17.	Finalize terms and conditions for embedding at ECZ offices	USAID/Zambia involvement	June 2021
18.	Draft descriptions for QCO and assessor recruitment to begin recruitment	USAID/Zambia involvement	June 2021
19.	Conduct EGRA working group meetings with ECZ and USAID/Zambia	USAID/Zambia involvement	Ongoing
20.	Finalize the contract modification with USAID/Zambia	USAID/Zambia involvement	Ongoing
21.	Contingency Planning due to COVID-19	USAID/Zambia involvement	Ongoing

ANNEX 1: INDICATOR RESULTS SUMMARY

		Year 3 October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021										
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							01	00	Per the postponement of EGRA due to COVID-19, the timeline for achieving the targets for this indicator will be revised based on agreement with USAID/Zambia.
Indicator 1.1: Number of schools with language profile verified	Custom	4,626	00	4,626	4,113					4,626		Per the AMELP, school data of each of the sampled schools will be collected alongside the midline EGRA. Per the postponement of EGRA due to COVID-19 and expansion of EGRA under the NERS to the additional 5 provinces, Education Data activity verified 4,113 GRZ and community schools in Lusaka, Copperbelt, Central, Luapula, and Northern provinces.
Indicator 1.2: Score of EGRA instrument completion	Custom	100%	75%							100%	75%	For the midline, the score of EGRA is calculated as 50% IRB clearance of tools and protocols and programming into tablets, 25%; Approval of tools by MoGE and USAID approval: 25%. In Year 2, the Midline EGRA tools were assembled and validated by ECZ and the MoGE. Education Data activity secured IRB approval for the midline EGRA in 2018. Education Data activity submitted the EGRA tools for approval in July 2020 and they will be programed into Myna with ECZ during Skills Workshop 4.
Indicator 1.3: Number of EGRA assessors trained	Custom	180 with at least 135 (75%) attaining the gold standard	00							180 with at least 135 (75%) attaining the gold standard	00	Per the AMELP, 60 QCOs and 120 assessors will be trained for Midline EGRA. Per the postponement of EGRA to 2021, the timeline for achieving this indicator will be revised based on agreement with USAID/Zambia.

Indicator	Standard/ Custom	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total		Explanation of Actuals & Deviation
		Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	
Indicator 1.4 Number of schools in which EGRA is completed	Custom	1,000	**00**							1,000	**00**	Education Data will assess Grade 2 learners from the same 816 schools in the five target provinces of Let's Read at midline in addition to a representative sample of up to 500 schools across all 10 provinces. Per the postponement of EGRA to 2021 and expansion to 10 provinces, the target and the timeline for this indicator will be revised based on agreement with USAID/Zambia.
IR Indicator 2: % of stakeholders reporting having access to EGRA results	Custom	100 people receive; 75% acknowledge receipt; 60% report use	**00**							100 people receive; 75% acknowledge receipt; 60% report use	**00**	Per the AMELP, the target for 2021 is 100 people receive; 75% of receivers acknowledge receipt; 60% report use. However, due to the EGRA postponement to 2021 the timeline for this indicator will be revised based on agreement with USAID/Zambia.
Indicator 2.1: Number of EGRA dissemination activities conducted	Custom	1 National; 2 regional level	**00**							1 National; 2 regional level	**00**	Per the AMELP, Dissemination of the midline EGRA results is planned for Year 3. However, due to the EGRA postponement to 2021 the timeline for this indicator will be revised based on agreement with USAID/Zambia.
Indicator 2.2: Number of research studies completed	Custom	03	**01**	03	**01**					03	**01**	Per the contract Education Data activity will complete three research studies, Baseline ECE in 2020 and Midline EGRA and NERS in 2021. On January 28, 2021, USAID/Zambia approved the Baseline ECE Research Study report.
IR Indicator 3: Institutional capacity index to implement EGRA	Custom	80% of tasks with more than an average score of 3.5.	**50%**				.			80% of tasks with more than an average score of 3.5.	**50%**	Baseline institutional capacity index was 36%. Education Data activity assessed ECZ capacity in FY2020 Q3. Survey results indicate an increase in self-report capacity by 14%. An additional survey will be conducted in 2021 and after dissemination to assess trends overtime.
Indicator	Standard/ Custom	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Total		Explanation of Actuals & Deviation
		Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	

Indicator 3.1: Number of individuals trained in implementing EGRA at ECZ and MoGE	Custom	10	**00**							10	**00**	Per the AMELP, at least 10 persons at MoGE/ECZ are expected to be trained on various EGRA tasks in 2021. Thus far, 9 males and 7 females were trained in Midline EGRA tools assembly and in EGRA budgeting. Due to the postponement of EGRA, the target and timelines will be revised based on agreement with USAID/Zambia
Indicator 3.2: % of EGRA tasks implemented by ECZ staff	Custom	50%	**27%**							50%	**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. For Midline, ECZ has implemented the EGRA tools assembly and validation process thus far. Per the AMELP, EGRA tasks accumulate over the two rounds of EGRA, with the target that ECZ conduct 50% of all tasks by the end of the contract
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)	1,000 schools with up to 20 learners in each school	**00**							1,000 schools with up to 20 learners in each school	**00**	Per EGRA postponement to Year 3, the timeline for reporting targets for this indicator will be revised based on USAID agreement. In Year 3, it is anticipated that up to 816 schools sampled from the Let's Read provinces with up to 20 learners per school will be assessed using EGRA. This will form the denominator for calculating the indicator at midline to examine progress over time. Per Let's Read project targets - at least 40% of sampled learners are expected to achieve the benchmarks of 15 correct non-words per minute; 20 CWPM in ORF and 40% comprehension of the passage read.

ANNEX 2. UNDERSTANDING NATIONAL LITERACY LEVELS: SAMPLING METHODOLOGY WORKSHOP IN PREPARATION FOR THE NATIONAL ESTIMATES RESEARCH STUDY

During March 2021, Education Data activity working in partnership with ECZ and MSI, conducted the Sampling Methodology skills-building workshop in Lusaka, Zambia. The purpose of the workshop is to build the capacity of the ECZ Research Unit staff to understand foundational sampling concepts and techniques, in addition to understanding sample parameters to draw the National Estimates Research Study (NERS) sample. The NERS sample will provide baseline literacy levels per province and language and will contain approximately 488 Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) and community schools across all ten Zambian provinces.

To increase collaboration while still observing COVID-19 international guidelines, Education Data activity conducted various safety measures to minimize exposure, including but not limited to checking body temperatures, double masking, opening doors and using air conditioning, and having separate workstations complete with hand sanitizers and washing stations. Over the course of the three-day workshop, participants learned basic concepts and principals foundational to sampling, various sampling techniques and demonstrations in STATA, and the proposed NERS sampling design including power calculations for the number of schools for each language. ECZ staff practiced sampling techniques in STATA and applied foundational sampling concepts to activities using actual samples in Zambia, such as the 2018 EGRA.

Senior Research Officer Akakulubelwa Nalishuwa double-masks for the workshop to learn about sampling techniques and concepts. Courtesy of Education Data activity. Photo taken with consent.

Based on the ECZ self-reported capacity assessments to conduct large-scale evaluations in 2018 and 2019, ECZ staff self-reported that creating a sampling methodology plan was one of the more difficult tasks in the eleven identified tasks to conduct large-scale evaluations. From 2018 to 2020, ECZ self-reported this decreased. Some explanations for this may include staff turnover and a lapse in drawing large-scale samples. With this understanding, ECZ, Education Data activity, and MSI conducted the three-day workshop and concentrated on increasing knowledge of sampling concepts and approaches to apply learning to drawing the NERS sample.

The workshop survey results indicate that 100 percent of participants increased knowledge of sampling methodology principles and techniques. Senior Research Officer Akakulubelwa Nalishuwa explained that the workshop helped staff understand how core concepts and techniques have barring on policy implications. Giving the example of the National Assessment Survey (NAS), Mr. Nalishuwa explained that without understanding sampling, survey results that serve to inform policy decisions may not be generalizable or representative to other populations. Because policies may change based on research study results, it is critical to ensure the sample and research design is sound and defensible Other research participants noted that they would be able to apply "…appropriate sampling technique[s] as demanded by a specific survey" and "…relate theoretical sampling knowledge to practice particularly using [the] STATA app." Using the sampling concepts and techniques covered in the workshop, ECZ will draw the NERS sample in the next period of performance.

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, Northwestern, 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

During the period of performance, Education Data activity submitted the Language Mapping Report in the five additional provinces with the support from ECZ and Directorate of Planning and Information. As a result, ECZ and Education Data activity will use the language mapping dataset as a sampling frame for the NERS in preparation for the Sampling Methodology Report. Further, Education Data activity submitted the request to conduct the Baseline ECE dissemination events with MoGE and ECZ to the Permanent Secretary. During the next quarter, Education Data activity wil conduct outreach to the MoGE, including the RCC, Directorate of ECE, ECZ, and other partners to solicit input and feedback in preparation for the results dissemination events.

SUCCESSES

During the performance period, Education Data activity worked with ECZ officials on preparations for the Sampling skills-building workshop, including verifying Stata licenses, and creating the workshop agenda, understanding the language mapping dataset sampling frame. DEBS officials also provided critical information to verify school-level data, including EMIS numbers, enrollments, and teacher counts. Further, Education Data activity and ECZ advanced discussions for the project team to embed at ECZ offices, a prospect originally believed to not be possible.

CHALLENGES

1. **Alternative models for conducting skills-building workshops:** Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic and MoH guidelines to limit in-person gatherings, Education Data activity weighed options on how to safely conduct orientation training and field visits. Market research was conducted to understand current venues and available space to keep participants two meters apart. Education Data activity liaised with ECZ and USAID/Zambia to request permission to conduct workshops and substantially involve the TOCOR.

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.

- Given the uncertainty due to COVID-19, Education Data activity, ECZ and other staff must continue to be flexible and to explore innovative ways to adapt activities and timelines as needed to minimize risk, reduce transmission all the while working to achieve activity objectives.

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. However, due the postponement of the Midline EGRA and NERS to late 2021 or early 2022, Education Data activity will continue to hold discussions with USAID/Zambia on how to revise the timeline for all affected monitoring activities consistent with revised timelines for activities. In the next quarter, April - June 2021, two DQAs programmed to take place in 2020 during EGRA data collection are anticipated to take place consistent with activities planned for the forthcoming quarter. Additional details are included in the table below.

#	Location	Date	Visit type/purpose	Point(s)-of-Contact	Issues/Comments
1	Lusaka	July 31, 2021	DQA Indicator 1.2: Score of EGRA instrument completion	Douglas Milasi, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, USAID Education Data activity	Tentatively scheduled for July 2021 pending agreement of the Midline EGRA timeline with USAID/Zambia
2	Lusaka	July 31, 2021	DQA Indicator 3.1: Number of individuals trained in implementing EGRA at ECZ and MoGE	Douglas Milasi, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, USAID Education Data activity	Tentatively scheduled for July 2021 pending agreement of the Midline EGRA timeline with USAID/Zambia