



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



USAID EDUCATION PROGRESS REPORT 2018–2021

In Memoriam



Rebecca Rhodes on the job in Mozambique.
Photo credit: Kate Maloney

This report is dedicated to the memory of our dear USAID friend and colleague Rebecca Rhodes.

Rebecca was an outspoken champion for improving foundational learning for *all* children and youth. She provided technical guidance on the design, implementation, and evaluation of USAID reading, literacy, and numeracy programs in over 40 countries, and was instrumental in shaping the Agency's focus on learning outcomes, particularly in early grade reading.

Rebecca was a mentor, colleague, and friend who supported the professional development of countless education professionals within USAID and beyond. The passion Rebecca brought to each Mission with whom she worked reflected not only her technical expertise, but also her deep understanding of and love for each of the countries they represented. Rebecca's dedication to education and energy for her work were legendary, and her impact on the global education sector monumental.

THIS REPORT PRESENTS AN ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW OF USAID'S EDUCATION SECTOR PROGRESS FROM 2018–2021



Inside Cover: 'We are the Future' | Empowering girls in Tanzania to realize their dreams.
Photo Credit: Rachel Chilton, USAID/Tanzania

Front Cover: Roziya Boboeva, a teacher in Tajikistan, visits the homes of four of her students who have low vision — including Manija Sharipova — with USAID-donated braille books and books with large print. During the school closure for COVID-19 in Tajikistan, USAID supported teachers to make home visits to assist students who have low vision continue learning to read. [Read more](#) about how USAID is supporting persons with disabilities to face the challenges of COVID-19.
Photo Credit: Rustam Mailov for USAID

Introduction

Since 2018, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has worked in more than 80 countries to ensure that children and youth have access to the education and skills they need to be productive members of society.

The launch of USAID's Education Policy in 2018 encouraged USAID Missions to be as adaptive, flexible, and responsive to the needs of learners and educators as possible. This USAID Education Progress Report highlights what USAID has been able to change and achieve during the first three years of implementation of the policy (2018–2021).¹

USAID's education programming is helping advance the Agency's collective mission, to build a more just and peaceful world that upholds every person's individual dignity, including children and youth. USAID is also proud to contribute towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #4: *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*

Content for this report was sourced from USAID performance and program data and informational interviews with Mission and Washington-based USAID staff. Bethany Johnson, Adam Weber, and Chris Ying led the development of the report, with support from EnCompass LLC and its partner MSI, a Tetrattech company, for the USAID Data and Evidence for Education Programs (DEEP), Contract No. GS-10F-0245M. Special thanks to USAID staff, in particular: Brynn Acker, Christine Capacci-Carneal, Lee Marshall, Lubov Fajfer, Michael Lisman, Mitch Kirby, Monica Villanueva, Rina Dhalla, and Stephanie Mikulasek for their contributions.



United Nations SDG #4 QUALITY EDUCATION

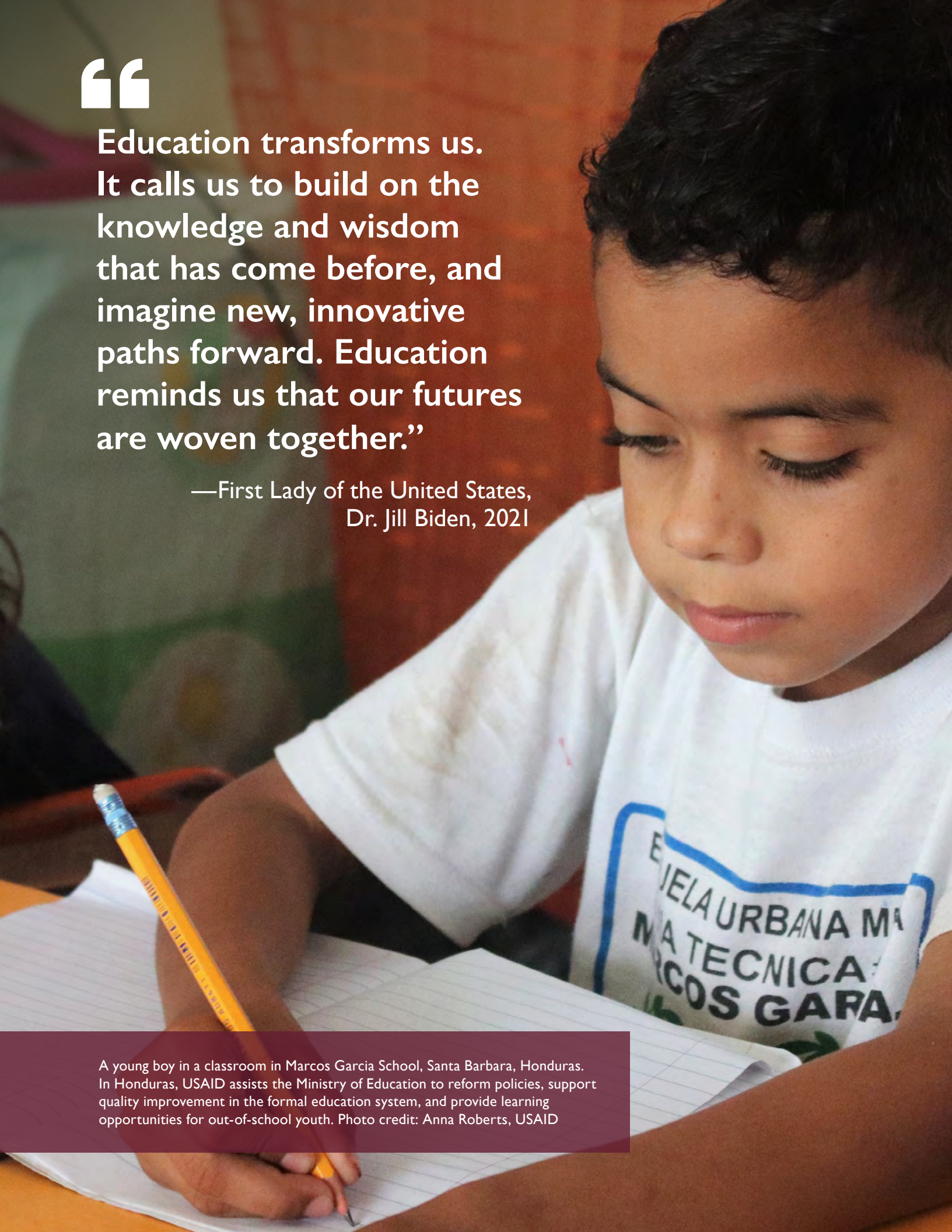
Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

¹ It is still early in terms of lag time between the launch of the policy and application to a full cycle of programming. Some USAID Missions have only recently established new programs aligned with the policy. In this progress update, we celebrate achievement to date and progress we anticipate over the coming years.

“

Education transforms us. It calls us to build on the knowledge and wisdom that has come before, and imagine new, innovative paths forward. Education reminds us that our futures are woven together.”

—First Lady of the United States,
Dr. Jill Biden, 2021

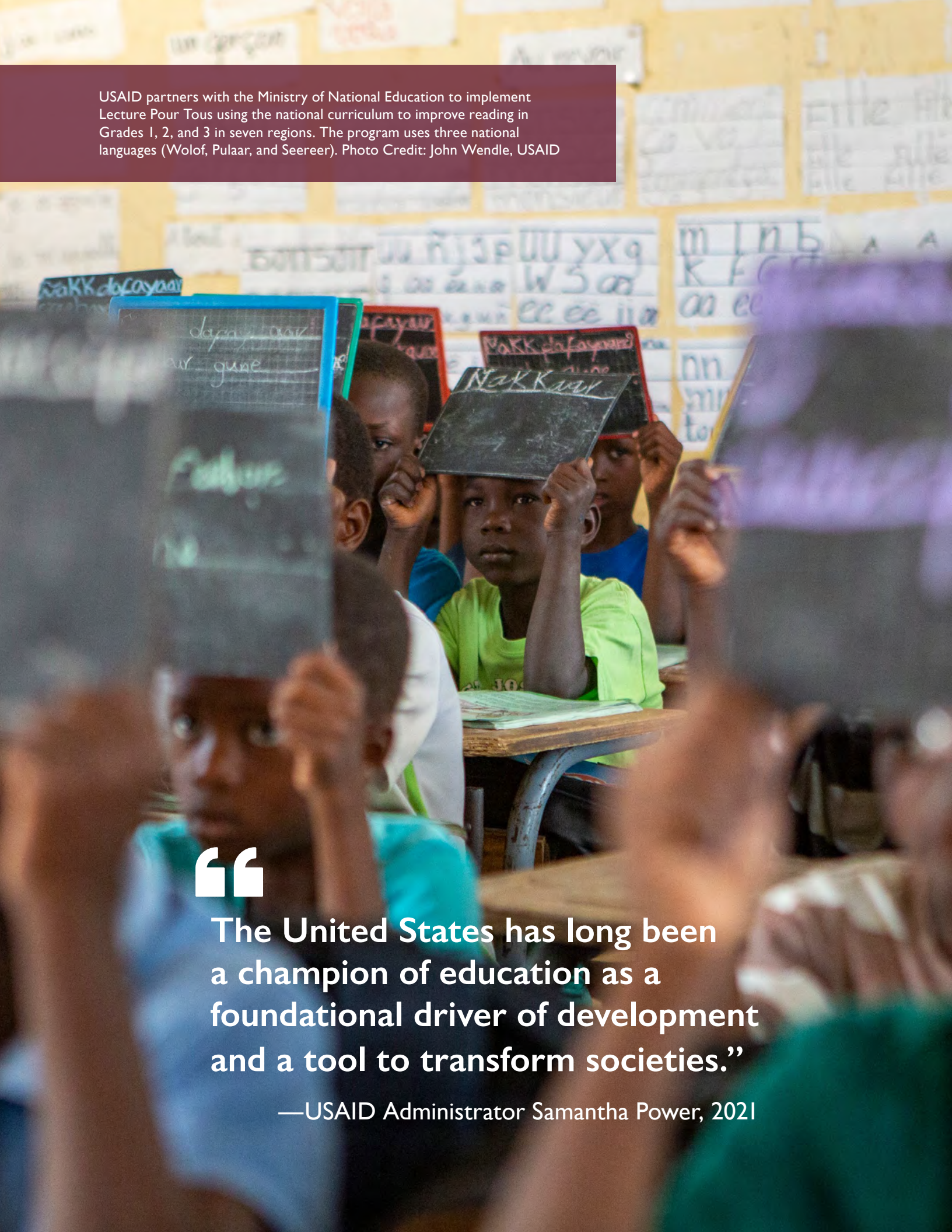
A young boy with dark, curly hair is focused on writing in a notebook. He is wearing a white t-shirt with blue text that reads "ESCUELA URBANA MARCOS GARCIA" and "MATECNICA". He is holding a yellow pencil. The background is a blurred classroom setting.

A young boy in a classroom in Marcos Garcia School, Santa Barbara, Honduras. In Honduras, USAID assists the Ministry of Education to reform policies, support quality improvement in the formal education system, and provide learning opportunities for out-of-school youth. Photo credit: Anna Roberts, USAID

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USAID partners with the Ministry of National Education to implement Lecture Pour Tous using the national curriculum to improve reading in Grades 1, 2, and 3 in seven regions. The program uses three national languages (Wolof, Pulaar, and Seereer). Photo Credit: John Wendle, USAID



“

The United States has long been a champion of education as a foundational driver of development and a tool to transform societies.”

—USAID Administrator Samantha Power, 2021

Letter from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator

Now, more than ever, we value engagement with diverse education stakeholders.

For decades, the global education sector has faced a learning and financing crisis, both of which have been exacerbated by the secondary impacts of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. At the peak of the pandemic's impact on global education, approximately 1.6 billion learners were affected by school closures in at least 190 countries.

In response, USAID has accelerated work with governments, multi-stakeholder organizations, and other partners to address persistent vulnerabilities and gaps in education systems and mitigate learning loss. To build back better, we are focusing on resilience and equity—especially for women and girls, people with disabilities, and gender and sexual minorities.

Our core technical work continues to build on our legacy of global leadership in foundational skills, such as reading, that unlock lifelong learning opportunities. At the same time, we are embracing new areas of focus, such as numeracy and social-emotional learning that will further enhance foundational skills of learners, as well as integrating new solutions from local and international education leaders, including the private sector.

I have immense gratitude and appreciation for all our champions, including the United States Congress, universities, students and scholars, practitioners, and other global education stakeholders. With your support, USAID is branching into previously under-resourced areas of education to meet the diverse and changing needs of learners.

LeAnna Marr

Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Development, Democracy and Innovation
U.S. Agency for International Development



Look for global, regional, and country examples throughout this report that illustrate USAID's pandemic response.

Background

Congressional Support

With bipartisan support, the United States Congress consistently acknowledges the potential of education to advance American foreign assistance objectives. Congress directs funds to USAID's education initiatives through the Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs appropriations process and updates to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. In December 2020, Congress formally named funding for international basic education programs the "Nita M. Lowey Basic Education Fund" in honor of Congresswoman Nita Lowey (D-NY), a longtime champion for international education.

The [Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development \(READ\) Act](#) ensures the efficiency and effectiveness of basic education investments. As directed by the READ Act, USAID led the development of the first-ever [U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education](#) ("the strategy"). The strategy, published in October 2018, called for increased collaboration and coordination across ten U.S. Government Departments and Agencies working to improve basic education in partner countries. The Departments and Agencies include: USAID, Department of State, Department of Agriculture, Millennium Challenge Corporation,

Peace Corps, Department of Labor, Department of Education, The Treasury, the National Security Council, and the Department of Defense.

The strategy has two principal objectives:

- 1. Improve learning outcomes**
 - 2. Expand access to quality basic education for all, particularly marginalized and vulnerable populations**
-

USAID leads coordination and reporting of all U.S. Government efforts under the strategy and directly contributes to its principal objectives by funding programs for basic education guided by the policy. The 2019–2020 Report to Congress is [here](#).

As stewards of American taxpayer dollars, USAID is responsible for investing funds in alignment with broader U.S. foreign assistance objectives and in the spirit in which they are intended by Congress. USAID's Center for Education, in the Bureau for Development, Democracy and Innovation (DDI/EDU), provides detailed guidance for use of education funds in the [Education Policy: Program Cycle Implementation and Operational Guidance](#).

USAID Education Principles

USAID utilizes education expertise, global influence, and resources to support partner countries' capacity to plan, finance, and deliver quality education for all learners.

The policy promotes six key principles to guide all of USAID's education investments:

- 1. Prioritize country focus and ownership**
 - 2. Focus and concentrate investments on measurably and sustainably improving learning and educational outcomes**
 - 3. Strengthen systems and develop capacity in local institutions**
 - 4. Work in partnership and leverage resources**
 - 5. Drive decision-making and investments using evidence and data**
 - 6. Promote equity and inclusion**
-

These principles inform budget requests and allocations, country and regional strategic plans, good-practice documents and project designs, evaluations and learning agendas, and overall engagement with partners. USAID's leadership and staff in Washington D.C. and in USAID's Missions around the world direct USAID's education investments and ensure they adhere to the principles set out in the policy.



Education is essential for countries to achieve economic growth, poverty alleviation, social stability, and participatory democracy.”

—Representatives Mike Quigley and Brian Fitzpatrick, Co-Chairs of the Bipartisan Congressional International Basic Education Caucus

Where We Work

USAID's vision is of a world where education systems in partner countries enable all individuals to acquire the education and skills needed to be productive members of society.

AFRICA

Benin	Kenya	Sierra Leone
Burkina Faso	Liberia	Somalia
Burundi	Lesotho	South Africa
Cote d'Ivoire	Madagascar	South Sudan
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Malawi	Sudan
Djibouti	Mali	Tanzania
Ethiopia	Mauritania	Uganda
Gambia	Mozambique	Zambia
Ghana	Niger	Zimbabwe
Guinea	Nigeria	
	Rwanda	
	Senegal	

ASIA

Afghanistan	Kyrgyz Republic	Tajikistan
Bangladesh	Laos	Thailand
Burma	Nepal	Timor-Leste
Cambodia	Pakistan	Turkmenistan
India	Philippines	Uzbekistan
Indonesia	Sri Lanka	Vietnam
Kazakhstan		

EUROPE AND EURASIA

Armenia	Georgia	North Macedonia
Azerbaijan	Kosovo	Serbia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Moldova	Ukraine

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Barbados and Eastern Caribbean	Dominican Republic	Jamaica
Brazil	El Salvador	Mexico
Colombia	Guatemala	Nicaragua
	Haiti	Paraguay
	Honduras	Peru

MIDDLE EAST

Egypt	Libya	West Bank/Gaza
Iraq	Morocco	Yemen
Jordan	Syria	
Lebanon	Tunisia	

These countries received education funding and/or technical education support from USAID at some point between 2018-2021.

Results and Progress

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, USAID's global education programs achieved the following:



Over **24 million**

learners reached across the spectrum of pre-primary through higher education



Over **300,000**

educators, administrators, and officials trained



Over **580**

higher education institutions (HEIs) provided with capacity development support



Over **93,000**

public and private schools assisted at the pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels



PRINCIPLE I: Prioritize Country Focus and Ownership

USAID takes a flexible, country-driven approach at all stages of lifelong learning.



USAID helps governments in partner countries identify and tackle their own unique and wide-ranging challenges. To address global trends in foreign assistance and the education sector, USAID takes a flexible, country-driven approach at all stages of lifelong learning from pre-primary through higher education. The responsive nature of the policy helps USAID adapt to evolving humanitarian and development issues.

Collaborating with Local Experts and Leaders

USAID's education investments are increasingly informed by the ingenuity and knowledge of experts and leaders in partner countries.

USAID depends on high levels of collaboration with local partners—civil society groups, academia, faith-based organizations, small businesses, communities, parents, and Departments and Ministries of Basic and Higher Education—as well as international organizations that have locally led operations and often significant private and non-U.S. Government funding. Through local collaboration, USAID's education investments are increasingly informed by the ingenuity and knowledge of experts and leaders in partner countries.

In 2018, USAID launched YouthLead, a global network of youth changemakers that includes approximately 12,600 members, connected through the YouthLead.org platform. The network is focused on connecting youth leaders and youth advocates with ideas and resources to tackle critical issues affecting young people around the world. The YouthLead Ambassador program is a six-month professional development and leadership opportunity for young changemakers with a proven track record for mobilizing other young people to make a positive impact in their community. YouthLead Ambassadors design and implement awareness campaigns on topics affecting young people and host learning events that contribute to knowledge, skill building, local engagement, and peer-to-peer networking. In 2020 and 2021, YouthLead organized campaigns titled “Acts of Good” and “Watch Our Impact Digital Storytelling” that mobilized youth to take action on COVID-19 response and prevention as well as creating positive change in their communities.



While working with my international peers in the [YouthLead] Youth Advisory Group, I am gaining an in-depth insight of how challenges are dealt with by young people operating in other countries. I feel more empowered to apply these lessons in critically assessing the weaknesses of my current local programs, setting up more effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks for our activities, and drafting more pertinent recommendations to local authorities.”

—Nandini Tanya Lallmon, Youth Advisory Group, Mauritania, 2020. [Learn more](#) about how Young Changemakers make an impact.

In 2020, the United States Library of Congress selected the Pakistan Reading Project, a literacy program funded by USAID, as the International Literacy Program of the Year. From 2013–2020, USAID worked with Pakistani education officials to improve the reading skills of 1.7 million students by delivering instructional materials to classrooms, training teachers in new techniques, and encouraging schools to dedicate more classroom time for reading. Pakistani community based organizations, school management committees, and parent/teacher committees joined together to promote a culture of reading in Pakistan. Learning from the program reinforced that with a well-coordinated effort, where the host government owns the change process, it is easier to sustain new initiatives. Now that the Pakistan Reading Project has ended, the provincial governments and other donors and development partners are building on USAID's efforts and scaling up the project's reading initiatives.



MALAWI

The Accelerating Local Potential (ALP) program builds the research and scientific capacity of HEIs in Malawi, Ghana, Kenya, and other countries to become global leaders in science education and research. In Malawi, the USAID-supported Innovation Scholars Program (ISP) under ALP has strengthened capacity, innovative skills, and ideas to address local development challenges. To promote local ownership, Michigan State University and Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources co-designed aspects of the program, including the application and selection process, curricular design, scholar tracks, and desired outcomes; the program later expanded to include the Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST). In 2019, ISP launched an “Innovation Garage” at MUST and in 2020 and 2021, the ISP scholars from MUST were at the forefront of developing innovations to respond to local challenges due to COVID-19, including a mobile solar-powered hand sanitation station and a COVID-19 data tracking platform.

PAKISTAN



USAID | PAKISTAN

**COVID-19
RESPONSE:
VIETNAM**



The USAID Improving Access, Curriculum and Teaching in Medical Education and Emerging Diseases Alliance (IMPACT-MED) partnered with the global healthcare company Novartis to train nearly 2,500 final-year medical students at ten Vietnamese medical schools on COVID-19 care and treatment. To better respond to the pandemic, the Danang Department of Health enlisted several hundred students at medical training institutions trained through USAID IMPACT-MED to work in local hospitals and help deliver care and treatment services to COVID-19 patients.



Planning for Diverse Contexts

Under the broad mandate of the policy, the effectiveness of investments hinges on the strategic decision-making and diplomacy skills of education field staff. USAID Education Officers and Foreign Service Nationals working in USAID Missions must balance local and multi-sector development priorities, U.S. foreign policy priorities, technical best-practices, available budget, and funding constraints in the specific countries in which they work. They must also forge productive relationships with local education leaders, partners, and other donors to foster local ownership and sustainability.

USAID is taking steps to ensure that all education staff are well-placed and equipped for success in diverse contexts. In 2020, USAID helped train a new cohort of Education Officers and is working to recruit and train even more Education Officers in 2021 for an anticipated total increase of approximately 30 newly qualified USAID Education Officers between 2018 and 2022. Since the release of the policy, USAID has published 146 education resources via [EducationLinks](#) and fulfilled 259 requests from field staff to support implementation of the policy and technical best practices.

GLOBAL



In 2020, USAID's professional development and technical education experts produced the Education Overview Course (EOC) to orient USAID staff on how to structure programs in alignment with the policy. USAID staff participate in the EOC to build on and broaden their technical and policy knowledge so that they can lead programming across the education continuum and in the diverse contexts where USAID works. At the time this report was published, more than 120 USAID staff had begun the EOC. During the COVID-19 pandemic, USAID also held monthly calls for field-based education staff to jointly address new education challenges as a result of COVID-19-related disruptions to education.

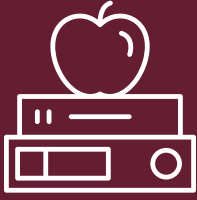
In 2020, USAID offered the virtual [Global Education Learning Series](#). The series provided opportunities for USAID staff, implementing partners, donors, and local stakeholders to strengthen networks across sectors and countries and share collective knowledge, evidence, and experience. As part of the series, USAID convened ten webinars, created ten ignite talks as well as a LinkedIn-based discussion group with 261 members, and released seven online learning modules on pre-primary education, disability inclusive education, youth workforce development, reading and literacy, social and emotional learning, higher education, and education in crisis and conflict. USAID convened 52 subject matter experts and reached approximately 1,000 education practitioners with timely, relevant information and resources to respond to the ever-changing global education landscape.

“

[The online learning modules] gave me a big picture of all of the different fields and areas covered by USAID and what the priorities are... It's knitting a web of understanding and frames all of the work that I do.”

—Learning Module Participant, 2020





PRINCIPLE 2: Focus and Concentrate Investments on Measurably and Sustainably Improving Learning and Educational Outcomes

USAID continues to prioritize gaps in reading and instruction, youth and workforce development, education in crisis and conflict, and higher education, with updated approaches to maximize outcomes.



In the seven years preceding the release of the policy, USAID's basic education investments reached 109 million children and youth in partner countries. These initiatives established an evidence base for effective programming in three specific areas of education—reading, workforce development, and education in crisis and conflict. USAID continues to produce and publicly share guidance and tools to carry forward the momentum for learning in these areas of expertise. With the release of the Agency-wide [USAID Higher Education Learning Agenda](#) in 2020, USAID is also working to improve the evidence base for effective programming in higher education.

Upon release of the policy, many of USAID's partner countries had greatly improved rates of enrollment in primary education; fewer children and youth were missing out on the opportunity to attend school. However, low learning rates persisted in many countries, despite increasing local and international investment. Guided by the policy, USAID continues to prioritize gaps in reading and instruction, youth and workforce development, education in crisis and conflict, and higher education, but with updated approaches to maximize outcomes.



Engaging the Entire Education Continuum

USAID is embracing the important role of pre-primary education and centering HEIs as key actors in development.

Upon release of the policy, USAID established an internal technical working group for pre-primary education and expanded the scope of the social-emotional learning working group to include pre-primary. USAID's Missions are continuing to extend appropriate evidence-based interventions from the primary education level to include pre-primary. Since 2018, more than 20 Missions have supported programming in pre-primary education.

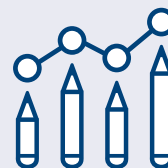
Since the release of the policy, USAID has built upon its legacy of promoting higher education as a central actor in locally led development. As documented within the [Higher Education Retrospective](#), HEIs have long been both partners in and beneficiaries of USAID development assistance. USAID is also harnessing the capacity of HEIs to advance and apply research towards addressing the world's development challenges. USAID Missions continue to invest in the knowledge and expertise of local HEIs. In 2020, 589 HEIs received capacity development support as part of USAID activities.

ASIA REGIONAL

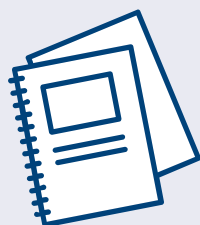


In 2018, USAID's Asia Regional Bureau conducted an analysis of pre-primary education in ten countries in the Asia region and developed guidelines for effective pre-primary programming in the areas of curriculum and standards, early learning assessments, approaches to teaching and learning, and teacher workforce development. The analysis and guidance helped inform subsequent pre-primary work across the Agency.

AFRICA REGIONAL



In 2019, USAID's Africa Regional Bureau commissioned work from the Consortium on Pre-Primary Data and Measurement in Africa (CPDMA) to engage researchers, experts, and other stakeholders to address questions of how data can inform programming in pre-primary education.



GLOBAL

In 2021, DDI/EDU published two new technical documents on pre-primary education which define USAID’s approach in this new area of engagement. The How-to-Note: Developing High Quality Pre-Primary Programs provides an overview of the key components of high-quality pre-primary programs. The literature review Examining What Works in Pre-Primary summarizes the evidence on best practices and impacts of pre-primary with a focus on research from low and middle-income contexts. USAID will use these knowledge products to inform decisions about where and how to invest in high-quality pre-primary programming.

With a shift towards locally led development, partnerships such as the Program of Rule of Law and Culture of Integrity in Paraguay are leveraging the expertise of local institutions in service to national development objectives. Led by Instituto Desarrollo, a local HEI, the Program of Rule of Law and Culture of Integrity in Paraguay is supporting public universities and training centers to improve the rule of law and culture of anti-corruption.



The Center for Applied Research and Innovation in Supply Chain-Africa (CARISCA) will be a global center for training, generating and translating supply chain management research and innovations into positive development outcomes in Ghana and across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Designing for Scale

USAID-funded programs are being scaled-up more than ever before.

Where USAID's programs demonstrate potential for positive impact at large scale, they provide a model that can be continued on a nationwide scale by partner countries. USAID-funded programs are being scaled-up more than ever before. This shift is particularly notable in USAID's Missions in Asia, where early grade reading programs in the Philippines, Cambodia, India, Tajikistan, and the Kyrgyz Republic have intentionally incorporated scale-up plans in new program designs.

NEPAL



In FY 2019, interventions under USAID/Nepal's Early Grade Reading Program (NEGRP) reached more than 500,000 students in more than 5,000 schools in 16 target districts. In 2020, NEGRP reached more than 600,000 students in approximately 7,000 schools. USAID/Nepal is focused on ensuring the government continues expansion of NEGRP beyond the initial 16 districts. The Government of Nepal scaled up NEGRP to four more districts in 2019 and ten more districts in 2020. The addition of eight districts in 2021 brings the total to 38, with the expectation that full national coverage will be achieved in subsequent years.

LEBANON



USAID's Middle East Regional Bureau also demonstrated the potential for large-scale impact, with an applied research pilot in Lebanon to test the efficacy of eLearning games that integrate psychosocial support in literacy and math modules. The tablet-based content, developed with local partners, improved math and psychosocial outcomes for students, including Syrian refugees in crisis. These positive results led to interest in scaling the program; the Lebanese Ministry of Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding to use the literacy and numeracy materials in all public schools.

HONDURAS



USAID/Honduras' Securing Your Wellbeing (Asegurando Tu Bienestar) campaign to keep youth in school reached an estimated 332,000 people by March 2020. Social isolation and toxic stress resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic demanded psychosocial and social-emotional support in the home. The campaign provided trustworthy, relevant information and emotional health and wellbeing support for families across Honduras through social media and public service announcements on radio and TV stations. Between July and October of 2020, the campaign provided 465,000 students with social-emotional support, and between April and October of 2020, the campaign reached 9,500 teachers with information on teacher wellbeing. Campaign materials have been shared with the broader community in Honduras and the Ministry of Security has adapted the materials to provide psychosocial support to police officers to help them deal with challenges and issues arising from the pandemic.

Enhancing Quality of Instruction

USAID is supporting the transformation of teacher policies and professional development systems.

As noted in the policy, teachers are central to learners' success, but often do not have the training and resources needed to be effective. USAID is supporting the transformation of teacher policies and professional development systems to increase the availability of qualified teachers and improve instruction.

LIBERIA



In 2017, USAID/Liberia launched the five-year Read Liberia Activity in collaboration with the Ministry of Education to train teachers and teacher trainers to help early grade readers improve their reading skills. Over 1,000 teachers have been trained and several have received awards in teaching excellence, which has lowered attrition rates and raised the recognition of quality teachers. As a result, grade two reading levels jumped from 12.9 percent in 2017 to 35.5 percent in 2021.

In FY 2020, USAID in Bosnia and Herzegovina's Enhancing and Advancing Basic Learning and Education (ENABLE) and General Education Activity (TABLA) worked to improve the quality of pre-service and in-service teacher training. ENABLE rolled out new standards and guidelines for improved STEM teaching methods in pre-service teaching programs. The activity also held a series of meetings with Ministries/Departments of Education and STEM teachers to promote the integration of STEM into the education system. In cooperation with two cantonal Ministries of Education, TABLA helped draft a framework for education training with certification/accreditation for in-service teacher training programs in Sarajevo Canton and Herzegovina-Neretva Canton.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

**COVID-19
RESPONSE:
SENEGAL**



In response to school closures, USAID supported the Ministry of Education to develop radio and television-based educational content to help students continue to learn from home. The program created a one-stop-shop for teachers to access distance learning resources from home and provided ongoing support through text messages. As schools began to safely reopen, USAID supported the Ministry's back-to-school communication campaign and worked to ensure teachers were equipped with the tools needed to stem learning loss caused by the COVID-19 crisis once back in the classroom.





A SAMPLING OF RECENT TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [Toolkit for Designing a Comprehensive Distance Learning Strategy \(2021\)](#)
- [Developing High-Quality Pre-Primary Programs: USAID Education How-to-Note \(2021\)](#)
- [Examining What Works in Pre-Primary: A Review of the Evidence \(2021\)](#)
- [Returning to Learning during Crises: Decision-making and Planning Tools for Education Leaders \(2020\)](#)
- [Higher Education Learning Agenda Evidence Review \(2020\)](#)
- [Supporting Teachers in Providing Effective Reading and Language Instruction \(2020\)](#)
- [USAID Reading MATTERS Conceptual Framework \(2019\)](#)
- [Social and Emotional Learning and Soft Skills Toolkit \(2019\)](#)



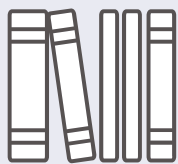
PRINCIPLE 3: Strengthen Systems and Develop Capacity in Local Institutions

USAID is strengthening entire education systems: the diverse actors, their interrelationships, and the policies and practices that guide them.



Improving Supply Chains

Historically, a significant portion of USAID’s education investments have focused on the development of quality early grade reading materials. But inefficiencies and breakdowns in the book supply chain—from writing, publishing, planning and forecasting, purchase and distribution, to use—pose fundamental challenges to providing children with the tools they need to learn to read, and teachers with the resources they need to teach.

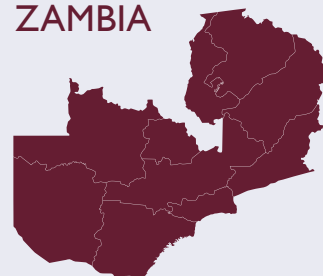


GLOBAL

Since its launch in 2018, USAID has supported the secretariat of the [Global Book Alliance](#) (GBA), a partnership of bilateral, multilateral, and nongovernmental organizations that coordinate efforts to ensure that all children have access to the materials they need to learn to read. Leveraging evidence and best practices from the GBA, USAID Missions work with ministries, publishers, printing companies, digital content providers, logistics agents, and others to build an enabling environment, create a positive culture of reading, foster sustainable markets, and holistically strengthen national book supply chain systems.

In 2020, the GBA piloted a new framework and research tool, the [Book Supply Chain Analysis](#), to help GBA members and Ministries of Education in four partner countries understand and respond to context-specific challenges across the book supply chain. In Zambia, the tool is helping to inform the work of the GBA as well as that of the [Zambian Ministry of General Education](#), USAID/Zambia, and other key development partners in the country. Based on findings from the [Book Supply Chain Analysis](#), the GBA is providing recommendations and follow-up support to the [Zambian government](#). Ultimately, the GBA seeks to conduct similar research across contexts and support USAID Missions and other key partners to use the findings to strengthen national book supply chain systems.

ZAMBIA



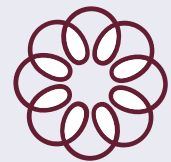
Building Resilience

USAID is helping education systems in partner countries prevent, mitigate, and recover from crises.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 80 percent of countries where USAID works were affected by acute crisis, recovering from crisis, or experiencing smaller-scale upheaval. The policy emphasizes the critical role resilience plays in strengthening these investments and helping partner countries prevent, mitigate, and recover from crises. Because education institutions and actors operate at a large scale and serve as a local hub within a community, resilient education systems can improve the reach, acceptability, and effectiveness of resilience programming across sectors.

In 2020 and 2021, USAID's education resilience experts participated in formal cross-sector conversations with USAID's Resilience and Food Security Bureau and hosted professional development opportunities for key members of USAID staff about how to develop education programming to increase resilience at all levels, from individual and community to the national level.

GLOBAL



THE BAHAMAS



In 2020, USAID supported the Government of The Bahamas to conduct a post-disaster education sector assessment in the wake of Hurricane Dorian. The Honorable Jeffrey L. Lloyd, Minister of Education of The Bahamas, requested that USAID provide technical assistance in conducting a comprehensive assessment of the education sector. USAID took a highly collaborative approach to the assessment, with joint leadership from The Bahamas Ministry of Education and active participation from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The assessment found that there were many assets and enabling factors prior to and after Hurricane Dorian that could be leveraged, strengthened, and/or scaled to support disaster preparedness, planning, and recovery in the education system. Findings included (1) resilient local school systems contributed to the overall resilience of communities, (2) well-constructed school buildings were used as shelters during the storm, and (3) schools that reopened quickly after the hurricane provided a safe place for children and youth to regain a sense of normalcy, and enabled adults to focus on rebuilding homes and businesses. Based on the findings and conclusions of the assessment, USAID offered key recommendations for short-, mid-, and long-term efforts. The report and its recommendations serve as a positive example for how education systems can 'build back better' and make use of existing resources, as well as new procedures, to improve resilience.

Strengthening Higher Education Systems

USAID's higher education investments focus on developing the capacity of individuals and HEIs. Through capacity development, HEIs improve their administrative, research, and instructional performance. HEIs with improved performance are better positioned to achieve a variety of developmental outcomes, both within the higher education system and within broader systems that affect a country's development.

GLOBAL



Due to COVID-19 impacts, governments and HEIs are facing difficult decisions on how to continue to provide education to millions of students. In response USAID, with support from Virtual Student Federal Service interns, published the [Higher Education Response to COVID-19 Landscape Map](#), an analysis of higher education response in 24 USAID partner countries to help to inform these decisions and build the knowledge base on the development impacts of COVID-19 vis-a-vis higher education systems.

In 2020, DDI/EDU launched the Higher Education for Leadership, Innovation and Exchange (HELIX) Annual Program Statement to support activities that increase capability and contributions of individuals, enhance sustainable HEIs, and strengthen higher education systems.



USAID | CENTRAL ASIA

Supporting Future Leaders

USAID is contributing to long-term sustainable development across sectors by preparing the next generation of leaders with the education and skills they need to address persistent problems, grow their local economies, and bring about system-level reforms in education and other sectors. As part of this work, USAID supports higher education scholarships for talented and disadvantaged students. In 2021, USAID produced a [Higher Education Scholarships Toolkit](#). The toolkit will help users improve activity design and implementation of higher education scholarship programming as a way to broadly advance development objectives across sectors.

INDONESIA



In Indonesia, a new generation of public and private-sector leaders received USAID scholarships to study in the U.S. to gain skills in areas including economics, health, environment, management, and leadership.

USAID/Egypt provides scholarships to thousands of students from underprivileged backgrounds, including students with disabilities, to attend university programs in fields that solve Egypt's development challenges. In the 2019 academic year, USAID/Egypt funded scholarships for 1,318 young men and women.

EGYPT



COVID-19 RESPONSE: GUATEMALA



USAID supported 2.4 million primary and lower secondary students in the public education system to transition to a virtual learning platform under the Ministry of Education's Aprendo en Casa (I Learn at Home) strategy. USAID partnered with the Ministry to develop protocols to safely and responsibly open schools, including guidance on emotional support, school sanitization, and the provision of face coverings to all students, teachers, and administrators in half of Guatemala's public primary schools.



Developing the Workforce

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated young people’s already precarious economic role. Many young people who previously worked as salaried employees are being employed as temporary or casual workers; those youth who had their own businesses or income-generating activities are losing access to markets and much needed income. USAID is supporting multiple strategies such as integrated training curricula, market linkages, job placement, and career services appropriate for reaching youth. USAID is also placing a greater emphasis on social-emotional and soft skills to address youth’s psychosocial needs due to loss of income and isolation from the secondary effects of the pandemic.

EUROPE AND EURASIA



The Supporting Entrepreneurship Education in Europe and Eurasia (SEEEE) activity has two main objectives to support workforce development: (1) equip students at upper secondary level with the skills they need to start a business or get a job, and (2) strengthen the capacity and sustainability of local Junior Achievement (JA) organizations in Serbia, North Macedonia, Moldova, and Georgia. The program involves teachers and business volunteers in the role of coaches and mentors and serves students from diverse backgrounds, including rural youth and ethnic and religious minorities. In 2020, in response to mass school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, JA organizations swiftly launched the Keep Learning Initiative, with resources to enable students, teachers, and school systems to continue activities at home. The JA network of CEOs regularly gathered online to share best practices on how to cope with the COVID-19 emergency response across country borders.

29th Junior Achievement Europe Company of the Year Competition in Belgrade, Serbia, July 2018. Photo Credit: Junior Achievement Europe





A SAMPLING OF RECENT TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [Higher Education Scholarships Toolkit \(2021\)](#)
- [Integrating Mental Health and Psychosocial Support into Youth Programming: A Toolkit \(2021\)](#)
- [Pandemic-Era Responses in Higher Education \(2021\)](#)
- [Resilience in the Return to Learning during COVID-19 Country Case Studies and Synthesis Report \(2021\)](#)
- [Youth Civic Education, Engagement and Leadership Development Global Landscape Analysis \(2021\)](#)
- [Higher Education Program Framework \(2020\)](#)
- [Transforming Systems in Times of Adversity: Education and Resilience \(2019\)](#)
- [ResilienceLinks: Human Capital Web Page](#)
- [Education in Crisis Interactive Evidence Pathways \(2019\)](#)



PRINCIPLE 4: Work in Partnership and Leverage Resources

USAID is collaborating and coordinating with local, regional, and international stakeholders.



A core tenet of all USAID programming is to collaborate and coordinate with local, regional, and international stakeholders to increase efficiency, reduce duplication, and leverage investments so as to ensure sustainability. These stakeholders include partner country governments, civil society, local partners, the private sector, other U.S. Government Departments and Agencies, teachers and teachers' associations, parents and caregivers, students, bilateral donors, multilateral organizations, academia, and international organizations.



GLOBAL



Since the release of the policy, USAID has made particular progress in forging new partnerships with the private sector. The [USAID Private-Sector Engagement \(PSE\) Policy \(2019\)](#) is an Agency-wide call to action to work hand-in-hand with the private sector to design and deliver development and humanitarian programs. The PSE policy signals an intentional shift to pursue market-based approaches and enterprise-driven investment as a means to accelerate countries' progress towards sustainable development across sectors.

As mandated by the PSE policy, USAID incorporated PSE and development financing principles into the USAID Education Policy and developed a [Private-Sector Engagement in Education Plan](#).² The plan seeks to build USAID staff skills for working with the private sector, creating more strategic partnerships, and expanding evidence and learning about the contribution of private-sector engagement to education and development goals.

2. The 2019–2020 PSE in Education Plan will be updated based on Agency and sector developments and trends. New PSE guidance for the education sector will be developed in late 2021—early 2022 to align with the new DDI/PSE Hub Strategy, PSE indicators, Industry Relationship Management Network, and Customer Relationship Management Platform that institutes a corporate relations approach to make USAID a partner of choice.

Catalyzing Investment

In 2019, USAID documented an annual global funding gap of \$40 billion to meet primary and secondary education needs alone. The vast majority of this gap will not be made up by donors; it must be made up through domestic resource mobilization and expanded private-sector investment. The policy promotes co-investing and co-financing of education activities to help narrow this gap.



GLOBAL



USAID ZAMBIA | CHANDO MAPOMA

USAID recognizes that engaging non-state education is an opportunity to reach wide swaths of school-age populations in partner countries. Partner country governments are eager to engage the non-state education sector. To capitalize on this opportunity, in 2020, USAID launched an EduFinance Community of Practice. The community of practice seeks to improve collaboration and dialogue among private providers of finance and private education service providers, government, civil society, and the community of educators. Increased engagement aims to strengthen the evidence base and build sustained linkages among stakeholders that can contribute to boosting education outcomes for all learners, especially the most marginalized.



Engaging the Business Community

USAID is identifying key gaps, core challenges, and natural intersections within the education ecosystem and along the education continuum, where the private sector plays a role or holds a mutual interest. Businesses engage with the education sector through their core business or investment strategy, corporate social responsibility, or philanthropic activities. USAID works together with businesses through co-leadership, co-design, and/or co-investment of education programs.

GLOBAL



As previously mentioned, the policy incorporates pre-primary education, a new space for USAID, requiring expertise around social-emotional learning and engagement with pre-primary education providers, usually non-state schools. To address these needs, USAID and the LEGO Foundation launched a partnership to leverage resources, field presence, research, and comparative strengths. Through partnership we seek to meet the pre-primary and primary education needs of children in developing countries, especially those affected by crisis and conflict, and to promote the LEGO Foundation's "Learning through Play" approach.

MOROCCO



USAID/Morocco's collaboration with EON Reality (EON) exemplifies a shift from a transactional or project-based PSE approach to one of strategic collaboration and regional sustained development. EON is a multimillion dollar U.S. company providing augmented and virtual reality education and industry solutions with over 8,000 applications and 40 million users around the world. Their double bottom line of corporate and social impact is the backbone for their long-term strategy. EON brought together stakeholders including USAID, the Government of Morocco, the technical/vocational and higher education communities, industry, and other research and scientific entities to establish Morocco's Interactive Digital Center located at Mohammed VI Polytechnic University in Ben Guerir. The Center is a model for USAID's enterprise-driven development to advance education, youth employment, and economic growth strategies.

KENYA

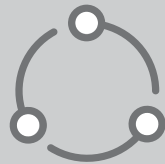


USAID/Kenya promotes a cross-sectoral approach to private-sector engagement and has become a partnership model for advancing development goals. Kenya is part of the USAID Africa Bureau's *Practical, Innovative, On-the-job Training* initiative to integrate PSE at the Mission level. As a result, the youth and education specialists are working more closely with colleagues from agriculture, environment and biodiversity, and economic growth not only to build a more strategic and holistic approach to skills development, employment, and economic growth, but also to establish collaborations with employers and industry. Another enterprise-driven partnership with USAID, currently in process, will soon link education, youth, and biodiversity and conservation.³

³ At the time of publication, this private-sector partnership has been funded, but is in the initial stages of co-creation and the Global Development Alliance Process.

Leading with Multi-stakeholder Initiatives

USAID has stepped up engagement with bilateral and multi-stakeholder organizations to improve overall effectiveness, sustainability, engagement with the private sector, and impact of collaboration.



At the 2019 United Nations General Assembly, USAID, the State Department, and the LEGO Foundation made a joint pledge of \$24.5 million to Education Cannot Wait (ECW), which serves as a model for donor-private sector partnerships to support education in emergencies.

On May 5, 2021, the USAID Administrator Samantha Power represented the United States virtually at the G7 Foreign and Development Ministerial. With the COVID-19 pandemic pulling millions of girls out of school around the world, Administrator Power and the foreign and development ministers discussed how to decrease the risk that many will never return. On behalf of the United States, Administrator Power endorsed the [G7 Declaration on girls' education: recovering from COVID-19 and unlocking agenda 2030](#), which sets two new ambitious global targets on girls' education in low and lower middle-income countries including an increased number of girls in school (40 million) and able to read (20 million) by 2026.

GLOBAL



USAID INDONESIA | UNICEF

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, USAID and the LEGO Foundation also partnered with the International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). INEE convened and launched a [Global Distance Learning Hub](#) for use during mass school closures that expands access to USAID's extensive education radio broadcasting and digital audio resources.



In April 2020, USAID began technical engagement with the World Bank, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the U.K.'s Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), and UNICEF on the *Foundational Learning Compact*, a new umbrella trust fund that leverages strong commitment, sound policy design, and a relentless focus on learning outcomes to speed up countries' progress in improving early grade reading and foundational skills. Coordinated efforts are being rolled out in a select group of eight "accelerator countries," with an aim of showing improvements in foundational skills at scale over the next three to five years. USAID's Missions and World Bank counterparts in accelerator countries are already in bilateral conversation about details of the collaboration. As recognized global leaders in early grade reading programming, USAID will contribute technical expertise in evidence-based strategies for sustaining and scaling strong reading outcomes.

USAID funded the Global Book Alliance to create a cross-platform search engine, called the Global Digital Library, that allows users to find quality open-source reading materials. The search currently covers resources in more than 150 languages, with the goal of expanding to more than 250 languages.

GLOBAL



Through USAID's leadership on the Board of Directors of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the Steering Committee of ECW, USAID has a voice in influencing global agendas in education. USAID helped to shape GPE's \$500 million COVID-19 response. And, through USAID's Missions, USAID supported GPE's 67 partner countries to develop quality grants in response to COVID-19. USAID's influence also helped shape GPE's new 2021–2025 strategic plan and operating model to better support countries through greater focus on country ownership, system transformation, resilience-building, and the use of data and evidence. USAID provided critical input to shape the ECW's governance and operations during its first strategic period and USAID engagement continues to strengthen accountability and transparency of the fund. Due in part to USAID's leadership, ECW has been able to steadily increase non-traditional donor contributions to the field of education in emergencies.

Coordinating Across Agencies

The policy aims to improve coherence between humanitarian and development efforts, especially through increased coordination, layering, and sequencing of education and protection investments with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) and with USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Affairs (BHA).

COLOMBIA

In Colombia, PRM is supporting the education needs of Venezuelan migrants by connecting beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance to government services and development programs. BHA is restoring routine and normalcy for migrant children and youth with child-friendly spaces and investments in early childhood education. In complement with this work, USAID is investing in the Colombian education system so it can better respond to the needs of both Colombian and migrant students over the medium to long term. USAID-supported education activities blend humanitarian and development assistance to increase access to safe, quality, and relevant education in communities with large migrant populations. USAID is also coordinating with ECW to ensure investments are aligned and additive for shared beneficiaries.

USAID has made strides toward harmonizing reporting practices and increasing transparency among ten U.S. Departments and Agencies working together under the U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education (2018). In addition to the common indicators that measure progress across all U.S.-funded programs, the Departments and Agencies are adopting common indicators for measuring learning outcomes in reading, math, and workforce development. To increase transparency, an [interactive map](#) highlights countries with basic education programs by agency and program level. Additional information on the strategy and examples of how the increased collaboration is improving communication, information-sharing and, ultimately, more effective use of resources at the country level can be found in the [Annual Report to Congress](#) and on the [Strategy EducationLinks page](#).

GLOBAL

COVID-19 RESPONSE: KOSOVO



To address the challenges of returning to school during COVID-19, USAID, in partnership with UNICEF, implemented the "Back to School" initiative to supply pre-university and primary education institutions with protective kits against the coronavirus. USAID and UNICEF distributed about 10,000 kits containing masks, hand sanitizer, and other hygiene materials to students and teachers across Kosovo. This assistance is part of a \$1.6 million assistance package to increase Kosovo's response capability and stop further transmission of COVID-19.



In Morocco, USAID is providing new opportunities to acquire employability skills with career centers, where students and recent graduates of universities and vocational training schools can receive work readiness counseling and training, including online at www.careercenter.ma. Photo credit: USAID/Morocco



A SAMPLING OF RECENT TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [U.S. Government COVID-19 International Basic Education Response \(2021\)](#)
- [EducationLinks PSE Main Page \(External\)](#)
- [PSE Evidence Gap Map \(External\)](#)
- [What Works in Partnering with the Private Sector for Youth Workforce Development \(2020\)](#)
- [PSE Hub \(Internal to USAID\)⁴](#)
- [Guiding Principles on Engaging Non-State Schools \(2020\)](#)
- [Humanitarian Development Coherence White Paper \(2019\)](#)

⁴ The PSE Hub Intranet Page includes an Education-specific section, program design and partnership building resources, all the Agency PSE plans with a progress tracker; an [Evidence Gap Map](#), [Global PSE Points of Contact](#), and first-class communication guides that have helped DDI/EDU operationalize the PSE in Education Plan.



PRINCIPLE 5: Drive Decision-Making and Investments Using Evidence and Data

USAID is creating new metrics, helping partners utilize data and evidence, and prioritizing cost analysis.



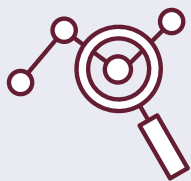
The policy reinforces a need for robust data and evidence to inform a broader scope of technical programming. In response, USAID's evidence and measurement experts created new metrics to measure learning outcomes and other education impacts in areas such as reading, math, social-emotional learning, systems strengthening, workforce development, and higher education. DDI/EDU launched this more comprehensive measurement framework in 2019.

Investing in Research

In deliberate, collaborative consultations with internal and external stakeholders, as well as reviews of the literature and available evidence, USAID identified critical gaps in evidence across the spectrum of education-related technical areas. Based on these gaps, USAID produced four associated learning agendas. Each learning agenda focuses on one technical area of education and incorporates cross-cutting themes such as gender, equity, disability inclusion, education finance, cost, and information and communications technology. Some examples of learning agenda questions include:

- **How can countries most effectively address issues related to language of instruction to improve learning for all students?**
- **Which education interventions are the most effective in improving student wellbeing in crisis and conflict contexts?**
- **To what extent do common USAID workforce development interventions (e.g., soft skills training, mentoring, career counseling) have differential results for women vs. men?**
- **How can financing of higher education systems and institutions become more sustainable?**

GLOBAL



USAID is helping partner countries develop and implement their own learning agendas to advance the knowledge base related to specific priorities of the country's education system. Through a new mechanism called [Supporting Holistic and Actionable Research in Education \(SHARE\)](#), USAID is collaborating with partner governments, HEIs, local research organizations, donors, and other in-country stakeholders to ensure that relevant data and evidence are collected and used to inform education policy and programmatic decisions.

Helping Partners Utilize Data and Evidence

The real-world conditions of educators and learners in each of USAID's partner countries vary considerably, and how interventions are implemented in each influences their effectiveness. USAID is beginning to engage in implementation research, generating data and evidence that illustrate how and why implementation is working or not working in different contexts. This data and evidence are elevating the perspectives and opinions of local stakeholders and helping translate effective interventions into real-world policy and practice.

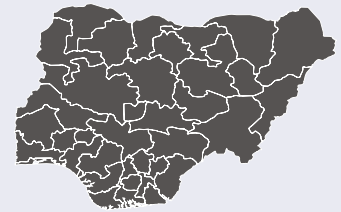
In 2020, USAID launched a global program called Youth Excel that supports young leaders and youth-led and youth-serving organizations around the world to conduct quality implementation research. Youth Excel addresses the twin objectives of positioning local youth organizations with more resources and opportunities to lead youth development and equipping youth with research expertise. Youth Excel funds and builds the capacity of youth organizations to synthesize data and learning to improve their own cross-sectoral positive youth development programs. Youth leaders dialogue with adult decision-makers to help shape policies, norms, and programs that affect youth in their communities.



Youth voice has a tremendous impact on program participation, outcomes, and goals. I'm honored to be part of the youth researchers that used their voice."

—Youth Excel Partner, Kenya, 2021

NIGERIA



In Northeast Nigeria, access to educational opportunities was disrupted due to the Boko Haram insurgency and the resulting displacement of families and communities. In 2020, USAID/Nigeria helped establish 40 data hubs that make it possible for local education authorities to collect data in real time and upload them onto a centralized database. Establishment of the data hubs helps mitigate risks and costs associated with traveling to remote areas for data collection in addition to improving efficiency in collection of quality data. Local authorities analyze and use this information to prioritize education funding and coordinate education partners working in Borno and Yobe states. As a result, Nigerian education authorities are better able to supervise and coordinate formal and non-formal education, avoid duplication of efforts by partners, and progressively restore education services as security improves and displaced families return to their villages. With a \$3 million investment by FCDO in 2020, these hubs have expanded to 35 accessible local government areas out of 44 in Borno and Yobe States.

Analyzing Costs

USAID must ensure that limited financial resources are spent efficiently and effectively. However, until recently, USAID collected limited information on the costs and cost-effectiveness of specific components of education programs in different contexts.

In 2017, DDI/EDU launched a Cost Measurement Initiative, which provided guidance and training to support cost data collection, analysis, and use by USAID's Missions and partners. This cost analysis work is laying the foundation for better budgeting and comparison of cost-effectiveness of different education interventions. Moreover, cost data is being used to help improve sustainability by providing critical information to partner country governments on the costs of scaling up effective education interventions without donor assistance.

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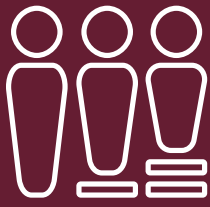
RWANDA

In 2016–2021, USAID/Rwanda invested in a five-year nationwide program to improve reading outcomes for primary school students. Following USAID's 2018 Cost Reporting Guidance, the implementing partner collected detailed information on the costs of various interventions that comprised the program. Specific interventions ranged from production of textbooks and supplemental reading materials to provision of a ten-day in-service training for teachers. Cost analysis produced unit costs for each component of the program. In November 2020, the Mission reflected on lessons from the program to inform what types of reading strategies to invest in moving forward and how to budget for each. Analysis of the cost information prompted the Mission to think more deeply about the intersection between direct service delivery (e.g., provision of textbooks), behavior change (e.g., adoption of new teaching practices), and system strengthening (the ultimate goal). Cost analysis will support planning and budgeting for sustaining effective education interventions by the Rwandan government. This study was the first data collection and analysis of its kind completed under the policy, and sets the stage for a richer collection, analysis, and use of cost data in the future.



A SAMPLING OF RECENT TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [Learning from the Multi-Country Study on Inclusive Education \(2021\)](#)
- [Policy Linking for Measuring Global Learning Outcomes \(2021\)](#)
- [USAID Education Reporting Toolkit \(2020\)](#)
- [USAID WORQ Toolkit \(2020\)](#)
- [USAID Education Learning Agendas \(2019\)](#)
- [USAID Education Cost Measurement Initiative \(2018\)](#)



PRINCIPLE 6: Promote Equity and Inclusion

USAID is mitigating marginalization within education systems and embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Reducing Disparity

USAID seeks to measure, understand, and ultimately reduce disparity through education. Gender, poverty, disability status, and refugee or displacement status tend to be among the common dimensions impeding access to quality education, and have been prioritized by USAID when considering where to commit limited resources. USAID's efforts to mitigate marginalization consider how multiple dimensions of a person's identity relate to that person's likelihood of accessing and benefiting from education. USAID invests additional resources in programs specifically designed to support the most marginalized learners. Equity, inclusion, and safety are central to USAID's COVID-19 response.

GLOBAL



USAID is using data and evidence to surface the needs of marginalized populations. In contexts where data is unavailable, USAID is supporting the generation and use of new data. For example, USAID is partnering on the Multi-Country Study on Inclusive Education to build the capacity of local research partners, including organizations of persons with disabilities and universities to monitor the effectiveness of disability-inclusive education activities in Asia. Local partners are trained on disability data collection and analysis and contribute locally led learning on issues of equity and inclusion for marginalized populations.

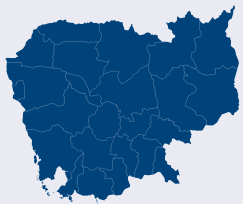
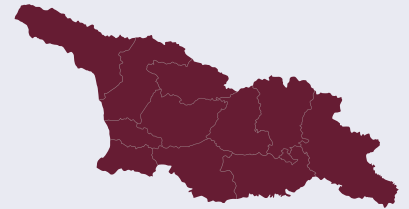
USAID also collects data through Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA), a “good enough” qualitative analysis that examines the education sector, the learners, and the community as a dynamic system of multiple risks and assets. USAID/Bangladesh commissioned a RERA to understand the impact of the Rohingya influx on pre-primary through secondary education in Bangladeshi schools in Cox’s Bazar. The rapid influx of Rohingya people from Myanmar from 2017 through 2020 presented a shock to the communities in Cox’s Bazar. Among other findings, the assessment concluded that the influx has affected access to education, especially for young women, and disproportionately affected the most marginalized learners. The results of the RERA will help to ensure that future investments in education in Cox’s Bazar serve the learners most in need.



BANGLADESH

From 2020–2021, USAID’s Basic Education Program trained 130 teacher trainers on the basics of student-centered instruction and supported the professional development of 7,118 lead teachers from 2,075 public schools. The program included 1,329 teachers from Georgia’s Armenian and Azerbaijani schools—98 percent of primary grade teachers from ethnic minority schools in the country. To support students with disabilities, the program developed online training courses on inclusive education and the Multi-Tiered Support System. By advancing the student-centered instruction skills of the teachers serving Armenian and Azerbaijani youth and students with disabilities, USAID/Georgia is contributing to the inclusive and sustainable development of Georgia’s education system.

GEORGIA



CAMBODIA

Since 2018, USAID has made particular progress towards inclusion of learners with disabilities in education programming. For example, the All Children Reading-Cambodia program applied principles of Universal Design for Learning in the development of supplemental teaching and learning materials for early grade reading programs for children with and without disabilities. The Core Early Grade Reading package was adapted into Cambodian Sign Language (CSL) and braille. Tips to support children with disabilities were integrated into the teacher’s guide and teacher training. Student supplemental books contained larger fonts, a less dense layout, and a varied color scheme to support those with low vision. Braille versions of supplemental textbooks and stories were created and published, and video versions of decodable stories were also produced, including narration in Khmer and CSL to increase accessibility for all. Literacy assessment tools (International Development and Early Learning Assessment [IDELA] and Early Grade Reading Assessment [EGRA]) have been adapted and piloted for use in CSL and braille.

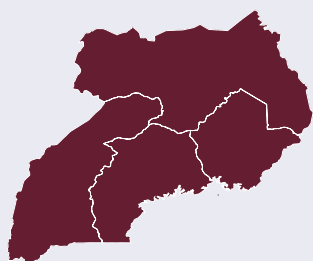


CHANNAN PRAK, CAMBODIAN CHILDREN'S TRUST

Advancing Gender Equality

Global efforts to improve girls' education have resulted in substantial progress toward gender parity in education. Yet learners continue to be marginalized on the basis of gender. USAID is working to advance gender equality in and through education. With diverse, context-specific strategies, USAID is helping the most marginalized learners, especially girls and young women and LGBTQI+ youth, stay safe and connected to learning during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

UGANDA



USAID/Uganda worked closely with the Ministry of Education and Sports to develop and scale up a nationally mandated school-based curriculum to prevent school-related gender-based violence. They developed a protocol for creating and sustaining safe and positive learning environments to prevent and reduce incidents of violence. These protocols informed the development of a new National Strategic Plan on Violence Against Children in Uganda. In response to mass school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, USAID/Uganda provided psychosocial support to teachers and learners by opening up a call center managed by professional counselors. The call center reached more than 34,000 teachers and 1.7 million learners with regular SMS and interactive voice recording messages.

USAID is thinking beyond the male-female binary to ensure that education programming is inclusive and welcoming of all forms of gender identity and expression. In support of the 2021 [Presidential Memorandum on Advancing the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex \(LGBTQI+\) Persons Around the World](#), DDI/EDU collaborated with USAID's Center for Inclusive Development to produce guidance for [Integrating LGBTQI+ Considerations into Programming](#). Moving forward, USAID will strengthen efforts to fight the targeted discrimination of gender and sexual minorities.



Elevating the status of women and girls globally is the right thing to do—it is a matter of justice, fairness, and decency, and it will lead to a better, more secure, and more prosperous world for us all.”

—President Biden, 2021

Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within USAID

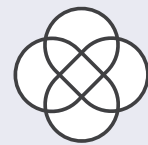
In 2021, USAID updated the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Plan. This plan will serve as a resource for USAID to take tangible actions and make measurable progress towards increasing diversity and ensuring equity, inclusion, and access at USAID. The plan will operationalize goals and strategies across hiring mechanisms, leverage advancement through pragmatic approaches, and create shared responsibility at all levels of the Agency to institutionalize and sustain DEI principles and practices. The completion of this plan is a key milestone that provides a framework to guide USAID's efforts to be a place where every individual can contribute to the Agency's success.



We must grapple with our country's own legacies of inequity—against women, against people of color, against LGBTQ+ people, and against people with disabilities.”

—USAID Administrator **Samantha Power**,
June 21, 2021

GLOBAL

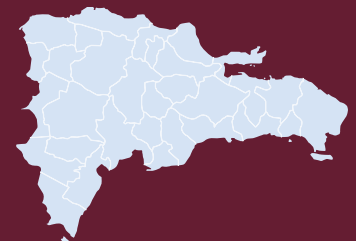


The education sector is mobilizing around the Agency's commitment to DEI. In 2020, DDI/EDU established the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Action (IDEA) group to help create a work environment that motivates all staff to gain understanding of structural inequalities and implicit bias, cultivate authentic relationships, and adopt a changemaker mindset. IDEA offers awareness raising opportunities such as trainings for staff, advocates for diverse hiring, and tracks progress on creating an inclusive work culture.

COVID-19 RESPONSE: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



USAID's Read activity improved learners with disabilities' reading skills. Its Gender Equality, Inclusion, and Safe School/School Violence Prevention (GISS) component received the highest award from the National Disability Council for its work promoting inclusion in public schools. GISS mentors coordinated with the Ministry of Education to ensure students with disabilities received the services they needed. Parents of students with disabilities were supported with strategies to support their children's learning at home during COVID-19 related school closures.



USAID, with private sector support from the Volvo Group and Standard Chartered, is committed to empowering young women and unlocking their potential to transform their communities and the world. Through the Young Women Transform Prize, USAID supports youth in developing countries to develop their own solutions to advance the economic empowerment of young women in their communities. Photo Credit: USAID/Dominican Republic



A SAMPLING OF RECENT TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [Advancing Gender Equality in and through Education Data Brief \(2021\)](#)
- [Advancing Disability Inclusive Education Data Brief \(2021\)](#)
- [Integrating LGBTQI+ Considerations into Education Programming \(2021\)](#)
- [Making Youth Programs Accessible for Youth with Disabilities Starter Kit \(2021\)](#)
- [School-Related Gender-Based Violence Measurement Toolkit \(2021\)](#)
- [Youth and Gender Analysis Toolkit \(2021\)](#)
- [Putting Equity at the Center of Education in Crisis and Conflict \(2019\)](#)
- [Safer Learning Environments Assessment Toolkit \(2018/2019\)](#)
- [Universal Design for Learning to Help All Children Read Toolkit \(2019\)](#)



Early Education in Senegal: A first grade class in the El Hadji Amadou Cissé school in Kaolack Commune.
Photo Credit: John Wendle, USAID

Looking Forward



The President's FY 2022 discretionary request for the State Department and USAID represents a historic commitment to diplomacy and development. The discretionary request proposes the most robust commitment in the Agency's history to strengthen USAID's development and humanitarian assistance around the world, including the highest request for education since FY 2012.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted a significant need for increased partnership and collaboration at global and local levels. USAID is fully committed to re-engaging on the global stage, and to co-creating and sharing global public goods such as the [Global Proficiency Framework](#) and the [Global Digital Library](#).

USAID's education sector will advance its global leadership in foundational skills and distance learning, while remaining committed to no, low, and high-tech innovations, to ensure that all learners are reached. USAID will continue leading in cutting-edge cost analysis and effectiveness efforts, and will support partner countries' education systems to be more resilient to future shocks and stressors, including the mounting climate crisis. And, through its education learning agenda, USAID will contribute primary research to the global evidence base, reflect, adjust, and further guide Missions to

integrate research into their programs as the world continues to change. Both in Washington, D.C. and around the globe, USAID will expand DEI initiatives and strengthen support for USAID employees.

As USAID works hard to respond and grow, we are fortified by reflecting on how past USAID investments for children and youth continue to pay dividends today. Gebisa Ejeta, winner of the 2009 World Food Prize for his ground-breaking work developing drought and parasite-resistant sorghum, attended the USAID-established Alemaya College of Agriculture in Ethiopia and was a recipient of USAID scholarships throughout his academic career. Grace Barnard, a fifth grader in Tanzania was fourth out of 76 pupils at her school who sat for the national exam this past year. She and her parents attribute her success to the support they all received through USAID's Tusome Pamoja (Let's Read Together) project.

USAID is committed to continue working together with diverse partners and stakeholders, moving forward. Together, we can build on decades of experience to support the next generation of talent and potential.

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