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REVIEW OF DISABILITY- INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN USAID ASIA EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

November 2022

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Kate Brolley, Ashley Stone, Anne Hayes, and Valerie Karr of Inclusive Development Partners for Research Triangle Institute International.

REVIEW OF DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN USAID ASIA EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

USAID Asia All Children Reading

Asia Disability-Inclusive Education Review

November 30, 2022

DISCLAIMER

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ACRONYMS

ABC+	Advancing Basic Education in the Philippines
ACR	All Children Reading
ADS	Automated Directives System
AOR	Agreement Officer’s Representative
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CFM	Child Functioning Module
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer’s Representative
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DepEd	Department of Education (Philippines)
DO	Development Objective
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education (Bangladesh)
DPO	Disabled Persons’ Organization
DSS	Department of Social Service (Bangladesh)
EDGE	Evidence and Data for Gender Equality
EGMA	Early Grade Mathematics Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EGRP	Early Grade Reading Project
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSL	Filipino Sign Language
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GIDAP	Gender and Inclusive Development Action Plan
IDP	Inclusive Development Partners
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IIEGRA	Innovation for Improving Early Grade Reading Activity
ILRC	Inclusive Learner Resource Center
IP	Implementing Partner

IRR	Implementing Rules and Regulations
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGU	Local Government Unit
LTA	Learn Together Activity
MATTERS	Mentors, Administrators, Teachers, Texts, Extra Practice, Regular Assessment, Standards
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MFAT	Multi-Factor Assessment Tool
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport
MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NGDO	National Grassroots Disability Organization
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NSL	Nepali Sign Language
PEDP4	Fourth Primary Education Development Program
PRIORITAS	Prioritizing Reform, Innovation, and Opportunities for Reaching Indonesia’s Teachers, Administrators, and Students
RA	Republic Act
READ	Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development
RFA	Request for Application
RFP	Request for Proposal
RQ	Research Question
RTI	RTI International
RWM	Read with Me (Tajikistan)
SEL	Social and Emotional Learning
SEND	Special Education Needs and Disabilities
SPED	Special Education (Philippines)
TLM	Teaching and Learning Material
UDA	Universal Design for Assessment
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USG	U.S. Government
WGQ	Washington Group Questions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Asia All Children Reading (ACR) Inclusive Education Review is to examine disability-inclusive basic education programming,¹ specifically focused on early grade reading, implemented and coordinated by USAID Missions in the Asia region to identify any gaps or potential incentives to improve the education sector's response to disability inclusion.² Specifically, this review looks at USAID Asia early grade education activities that are either ongoing or recently completed (since 2015).

This report presents findings from both a desk review (consisting of a review of activity documentation and surveys of USAID Missions and ongoing activities) of 26 [REDACTED] basic education activities across 11 countries in Asia and three case studies conducted in **Tajikistan**, the **Philippines**, and **Bangladesh**. The primary objective of the case studies was to gain a better understanding of the collaboration on disability-inclusive education between USAID Missions, host governments, implementing partners, and other educational stakeholders within each country. Furthermore, the case studies provided an opportunity to explore how past [REDACTED] basic education activities and education systems within each country have influenced the development and implementation of new basic education activities as they relate to disability inclusion.

Recognizing USAID's twin-track approach to disability programming, this review looks at two types of USAID-funded education programming.

1. **Disability-specific:** Targeted activities designed to support early grade reading for learners with disabilities. This review included three disability-specific education activities.
2. **Broader education:** Early grade reading activities that may, or may not, have some education interventions to support early grade learners with disabilities. This review included 23 broader education activities.

This report first presents findings from the desk review and then presents findings from the case study countries, along with a comparative analysis. The report concludes with recommendations for both USAID and implementing partners, presented against the main phases of USAID's program cycle.

Exhibit I presents a high-level summary of findings from the desk review and the case study against eight research questions.

¹ In this context, early grade education refers primarily to learners in Grades 1–3. In some cases, this extends to Grade 4.

² It is important to note that inclusive education is defined differently for learners who are deaf or hard of hearing. According to the World Federation of the Deaf, inclusive education for learners who are deaf or hard of hearing requires being instructed in sign language rich environments, where learners receive instruction from teachers who are fluent in sign language and are able to communicate directly with their peers, teachers, and school staff.

Exhibit I. High-Level Summary of Findings from the Desk Review and Case Studies

Research Question 1: Within the Asia region, what are the incentives and barriers to conducting disability-inclusive education programming throughout the USAID program cycle?	
Desk Review Findings	Case Study Findings
<p>Contractual obligations, Mission priorities, technical training, access to qualified staff, and funding all emerged as important programming elements that can serve either as an incentive to promoting disability-inclusive education or a barrier depending on the context. Contractual language (either beginning in solicitations or appearing in final activity descriptions) was cited as the key driving force for implementing partners to choose to design disability-inclusive education interventions. Once USAID and activities made the decision to conduct disability-inclusive education programming, two important enabling factors emerged that support the implementation of those interventions: (1) an implementing partner’s alignment of disability-inclusive interventions with the host government’s vision and agenda for inclusive education, and (2) the host government’s demonstrated support to disability inclusion.</p>	<p>As was found in the desk review, stakeholders at all levels (government, USAID Mission, and USAID implementing partner) expressed a strong commitment to strengthening disability-inclusive education, which acts as an incentive and enabler. Other prominent incentives included disability-inclusive contractual language and strong host government policies on inclusive education. A barrier that emerged during the case studies, which was not immediately apparent in the desk review, was the difficulty in generating a local evidence base for what works in improving learning outcomes for learners with disabilities. This becomes more complex in contexts where multiple actors (██████████, civil society organizations, disabled persons organizations) work on often overlapping disability-inclusive education interventions with limited coordination and knowledge-sharing.</p>
Research Question 2: How does USAID’s broader education programming address the education of learners with disabilities within the Asia region?	
Desk Review Findings	Case Study Findings
<p>At a high level, broader education activities tended to take a more expansive view of inclusion, focusing on gender and learners who may be struggling to attain literacy and numeracy skills rather than specifically learners with disabilities. When broader education activities did focus on specific disabilities, they focused largely on sensory disabilities (learners who are blind or have low vision and learners who are deaf or hard of hearing). This finding is also common with disability-specific activities (see Research Question 3). The most common disability-inclusive support that broader education activities provide was through teaching and learning materials (TLMs) and specifically using inclusion checklists to ensure that persons with disabilities are portrayed in a positive light in illustrations and stories. The least common disability-inclusive interventions for broader education activities are screening and assessment adaptation.</p>	<p>Disability inclusion varied widely within broader education activities across the three case study countries and was typically implemented as a one-off intervention rather than integrating disability inclusion across all activity interventions. For example, where activity descriptions did not have explicit language around disability inclusion (e.g., Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development [READ] and the Innovation for Improving Early Grade Reading Activity [IIEGRA] in Bangladesh and Advancing Basic Education [ABC+] in the Philippines), there were limited examples of disability-inclusive interventions. Solicitations for READ, IIEGRA, and ABC+ referenced that the overall approach should consider inclusion but did not include specifics. This reinforces the finding under Research Question 1 on the importance of including robust disability inclusion language in basic education solicitations and final activity descriptions. Among the broader education activities that had some disability inclusion interventions in case study countries, the findings were similar to those of the larger desk review. Specifically, broader education programming primarily interprets inclusion as the positive representation of disabilities within TLM</p>

images and text versus seeking to adapt TLMs to be inclusive of the educational needs of learners with disabilities or seeking to intentionally include disability-inclusive pedagogy modules within teacher training programs. A notable exception to this is the Learn Together Activity (LTA) in Tajikistan. With its heavy focus on operationalizing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) across activity interventions (which was included in LTA’s solicitation), there will likely be useful lessons learned as the activity continues implementation.

Research Question 3: What type of disability-specific education programming—supported by USAID—is taking place in the region?

Desk Review Findings

As expected, disability-specific activities can do a greater depth of disability-inclusive programming than broader education activities as evidenced particularly in their work on needs assessments and policy support. Similar to broader education activities, disability-specific activities tend to focus more on learners with sensory disabilities, including those who are blind or have low vision and those who are deaf or hard of hearing. This was particularly evident through TLM adaptations (e.g., braille and sign language) and assessment adaptations. Unlike broader education activities, disability-specific activities are more involved in screening and adapted assessment interventions. Both, however, are still emerging practices with several challenges to overcome.

Case Study Findings

Only two case study countries currently implement disability-specific basic education programming, and each took a different approach. In Bangladesh, disability-specific programming was not limited to a specific subset of disabilities, whereas programming in the Philippines was focused on learners who are deaf, blind, and deafblind (with activities largely centered on screening and adapted TLMs). Other disability-specific activities examined in the desk review (including Nepal and Cambodia) tended to be more similar to the case in the Philippines, with a focus on specific disability categories. This presents an opportunity to evaluate the comparative advantages and disadvantages (e.g., impact on learning outcomes, reach, etc.) of funding programs that are targeted to specific types of disabilities versus programs that work with all types of disabilities.

Research Question 4: How inclusive was USAID’s COVID-19 pandemic response within education programming for learners with disabilities within the region?

Desk Review Findings

Many activities—both broader and disability-specific—had to adapt interventions during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The most common adaptation was the development of TLMs and programming for distance learning while schools were closed. Several activities incorporated accessibility features into their distance learning TLM package, including sign language videos, closed captioning, and audio descriptions within digital content. Disability-specific activities also built upon their existing family interventions to provide support to families of learners with disabilities during school closures.

Case Study Findings

Across the three countries, programmatic responses to COVID-19 tended to focus on the production of digital lessons, online videos, television and radio programming; however, not all these responses were targeted for learners with disabilities. Even still, while digital, television, and radio content may not be accessible for every learner, key informant interviews (KIIs) in each country revealed that it is a step in the right direction. Furthermore, the use of digital content and television and radio programming helped implementing partners identify accessibility features they could begin to integrate into future content and materials. This is similar to the findings from the desk review, and with countries generally continuing to advance COVID-19-adapted programming moving forward (e.g., more use of blended learning), there is an opportunity to consider how these interventions can be inclusive of and accessible for learners with disabilities.

Research Question 5: How has USAID addressed the education of learners with disabilities within crisis and conflict affected settings within the region?

Desk Review Findings	Case Study Findings
<p>The sample of activities included in the desk review did not operate in conflict affected zones and made no reference to a conflict environment. While there were selected examples of activities operating in crises affected environments, activities made no reference to how they address the education of learners with disabilities in those environments.</p>	<p>Within the case study sample, two countries—the Philippines and Bangladesh—had some programming for learners in crisis-affected settings. Interventions mainly focused on resiliency planning for unexpected school closures (e.g., due to natural disasters or pandemics), including strategies to support learning outside of the classroom. At the time of the study, only Gabay (disability-specific activity) targeted learners with disabilities in its disaster planning interventions. Case study findings are similar to findings from the larger desk review across 11 countries in Asia, which indicated limited examples of disability-inclusive interventions in crisis-affected settings and no interventions in conflict affected settings. There is an opportunity to learn from current work in the Philippines and Bangladesh to explore how to strengthen disability-inclusive interventions in crisis-affected settings. For example, this will be important given USAID’s increased focus on tackling climate change in its programming across technical sectors.</p>

Research Question 6: How does education programming within the Asia region address the intersectionality³ of disability and other marginalizing factors such as sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, linguistic minorities, and displaced persons?

Desk Review Findings	Case Study Findings
<p>Available activity documentation provides little information on how education programming within the Asia region addresses the intersectionality of disability with other marginalizing factors. Within activity reports, the most referenced intersections occurred between disability and sex⁴ and disability and linguistic minorities, primarily sign languages; however, these discussions were limited. Additionally, while there were some promising practices around integrating intersectionality in gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) analyses, there was limited evidence of activities having a continued focus on intersectionality in interventions and within available monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) data.</p>	<p>As they did in the desk review, the three case study countries provided limited evidence of activities (broader and disability-specific) taking an intersectional approach to programming. The lack of intentionality around intersecting identities was even more pronounced when basic education activities did not have a specific disability inclusion mandate. When case study activities did address intersectionality, it was primarily focused on their own staffing and creating a gender balanced team.</p>

³ Intersectionality captures the unique way that different characteristics—including, but not limited to, disability, sex, gender, ethnicity—interact with each other and come together to shape an individual’s lived experience.

⁴ For this research question, sex is a biologically defined characteristic, whereas *gender and gender identity* is a social construct.

Research Question 7: What emerging practices related to disability-inclusive education are taking place within the region?

Desk Review Findings

Emerging practices are presented for each of the case study countries.

Case Study Findings

Each case study country has its own unique context, and with varying constraints around available resources, capacity, and needs, each is on a different journey toward progressive realization of disability inclusion. Emerging practices in case study countries highlight approaches that are not commonly referenced in other USAID basic education activities in Asia. These could be practices that other countries in the Asia region may wish to consider and adapt. In Tajikistan, USAID programming is beginning to operationalize UDL and take UDL from theory to implementation. In the Philippines, the disability-specific activity is leveraging a multidisciplinary approach to interventions by supporting collaboration between a number of different stakeholders including DPOs, community health workers, specialized health professionals, and local government officials beyond those who strictly work on education. Finally, since USAID/Bangladesh's basic education programming is in the early stages of supporting disability inclusion (too early to identify an emerging practice), its activities have an opportunity to drive increased coordination, strengthen the local evidence base, and reduce inefficiencies.

Research Question 8: How does USAID and/or its implementing partners measure the progress and impact of inclusive education programming within the Asia region?

Desk Review Findings

When broader education activities included disability-inclusive MEL indicators (22% or five activities), they generally tended to focus on output indicators (e.g., number of teachers trained on inclusive education or number of TLMs provided that are inclusively representative). Furthermore, broader education activities often reported doing more disability-inclusive education interventions that are not captured by their MEL indicators. There was also no evidence of broader education activities that disaggregated MEL indicators by disability status or type. While disability-specific activities generally included a balance between output and outcome indicators, some of these relied on screening data, which, as highlighted in Research Question 3, screening can be a complex process.

Case Study Findings

Across the three case study countries, Gabay (disability-specific) was the only basic education activity that had multiple disability-inclusive MEL indicators that measure progress on interventions such as screening, use of assistive devices, and reading scores for learners with disabilities. Broader education activities in Bangladesh, Tajikistan, and the Philippines did not present disability-disaggregated MEL data and did not include any custom disability-inclusive MEL indicators. The only inclusive MEL indicator that they reported against is a standard output indicator that measures the percent or number of "learners targeted for USG assistance who have the appropriate variety of reading materials in the language of instruction with inclusive representation of diverse populations." This is similar to the finding from the larger desk review of 23 broader education activities. A potential exception to this is LTA in Tajikistan, which proposed a set of disability-inclusive MEL indicators (both output and outcome) for Year 3. The proposed indicators were unique and, if approved, would likely provide valuable lessons learned for other broader and disability-

specific education activities on innovative ways to measure disability inclusion and may serve as a model for future USAID MEL guidance.

Exhibit 2 presents selected recommendations, for both USAID and implementing partners, against the main phases of USAID’s program cycle. A full set of recommendations can be found in Exhibit 57.

Exhibit 2. Selected Recommendations

USAID Recommendations	
Country/Regional Strategic Planning and Activity Design	
1.	Develop a USAID-specific disability-inclusive education strategy that outlines USAID’s vision for disability inclusion in basic education programming over the short, medium, and long term. Ideally, the strategy would outline a shared conceptual understanding of disability-inclusive education, present a phased approach for the progressive realization of disability inclusion within both broader and disability-specific education activities (including strategies for how Missions can approach disability-inclusive education in countries that are at different stages of inclusion in both policies and practice), and serve as a roadmap for Missions during Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) planning and individual activity design. The strategy would also (1) provide an opportunity to succinctly present findings from disability-inclusive education research that USAID has commissioned over the past several years, and (2) serve as a much-needed education-specific update to USAID’s 1997 Disability Policy.
2.	Continue to build upon emerging practices and integrate strong disability inclusion language, including specific references to the intersectionality of disability and other marginalizing factors, throughout solicitations. Disability-inclusive and intersectionality language should not only be included in the scope of work but also be part of technical evaluation criteria when reviewing solicitation responses.
3.	Utilize evaluation (midterm and formative) opportunities to promote the inclusion of learners with disabilities in activity interventions.
4.	Continue to build upon the twin-track approach to disability throughout all phases of the program cycle, where broader education activities are inclusive of disability as a starting point and disability-specific activities provide the extra supports/targeted interventions (and potentially proof of concept for innovative approaches) necessary to ensure learners with disabilities have opportunities to participate in USAID-funded programming.
Activity Implementation	
1.	Consider providing newly awarded activities with an inception period to allow time for robust situational analyses and needs assessments that consider learners with disabilities and how disability inclusion can be integrated across activity interventions. Support activities to integrate findings into interventions and MEL indicators to track progress.
2.	Continue to engage technical experts to conduct research and provide oversight of the emerging practice of screening and identification to determine validity and reliability of tools and practices. Update the existing “Collecting Data on Disability Prevalence in Education Programs: How-to Note” ⁵ and develop other guidance based on continued research.
3.	Consider establishing formal partnerships between education, child protection, and health sector activities or inter-governmental committees that include representatives from ministries for health, education, and social welfare or social service offices to support capacity-building of local systems to conduct screening activities and strengthen referral pathways that are often lacking.
4.	Build upon the existing 2018 USAID UDL Toolkit to collect, and then disseminate, examples of how basic education activities have operationalized UDL, with a focus on materials and instructional techniques.

⁵ U.S. Agency for International Development. (2020). Collecting data on disability prevalence in education programs. Available at https://www.edulinks.org/sites/default/files/media/file/HowToNote_DisabilityData_Nov20.pdf

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Request implementing partners to report on the number of staff they hire with self-disclosed disability status, which is a common practice for programs that receive federal funds.
2. Collaborate with stakeholders in the field to continue to develop guidance on good practices for measuring disability inclusion and, specifically, measuring inclusivity within interventions that goes beyond the current practices of measuring awareness-raising and disability representation within materials (e.g., measuring inclusive pedagogy in practice).

Implementing Partner Recommendations

Country/Regional Strategic Planning and Activity Design

1. Formalize arrangements with local disabled person's organization (DPO) partners (either through grants or subcontracts) and allocate sufficient time and financial resources to strengthen the capacity of DPOs.
2. For broader education activities specifically, set aside a portion of the activity's budget for disability inclusion. Broader activities should recruit specific expertise in the area of disability inclusion (specifically if the existing GESI staff position is more focused on gender) and revisit the availability of funds during annual work planning sessions to appropriately plan for disability-inclusive interventions.

Activity Implementation

1. Partner with DPOs in the design, validation, implementation, and monitoring of all areas of intervention. DPO partners should be utilized in activity design phases, needs assessments/situational studies, materials development, training delivery, and monitoring and evaluation activities to strengthen the inclusion of learners with disabilities and to strengthen DPOs' capacity to conduct similar work in the future.
2. Support teachers to conduct regular formative assessments grounded in principles of Universal Design for Assessment (UDA) to ensure assessments are not intentionally excluding learners with disabilities and instead are accurately capturing learning while also ensuring learners with disabilities have access to reasonable accommodations and adaptations. Activities should establish a regular cycle of reflection on formative assessment results and the adaptation of instructional techniques.
3. When designing and conducting training, consider opportunities to bring together a diverse group of participants (e.g., teachers, parents, local government officials, DPOs) to discuss disability inclusion as a way to foster relationships, support buy-in, and recognize that disability-inclusive education requires multidisciplinary collaboration.

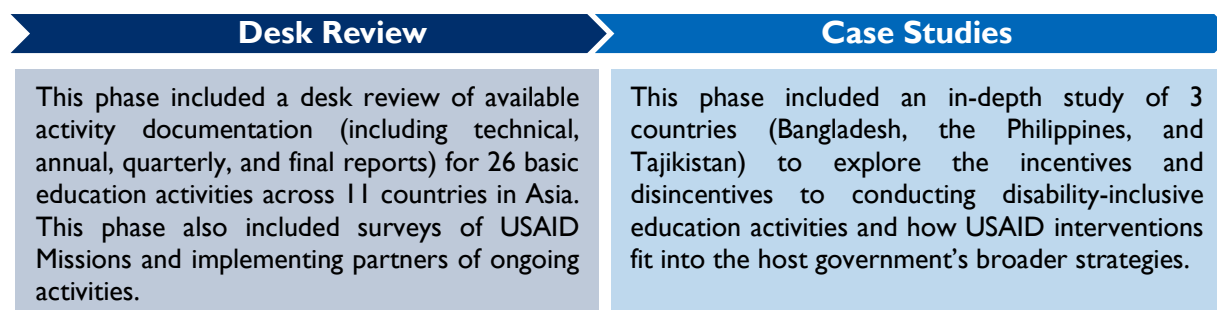
Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Develop and report on MEL indicators that go beyond training and adapted TLMs to measure inclusivity of environments and processes, such as education practices demonstrated by teachers, the community, and families in supporting learning or supporting local and national inclusive education policies, as another way to measure disability inclusion within interventions.
2. Use MEL indicators to collect data on the intersectionality of beneficiaries, including disability status.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Asia All Children Reading (ACR) Inclusive Education Review is to examine disability-inclusive early grade education programming, specifically focused on early grade reading, implemented and coordinated by USAID Missions in the Asia region, to identify any gaps or potential incentives to improve the education sector’s response to disability inclusion. Specifically, this review looks at USAID Asia early grade education activities that are either ongoing or recently completed (since 2015). Using the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and General Comment No. 4 as a normative framework, the overall review, conducted by Inclusive Development Partners (IDP) along with RTI International (RTI), includes reviewing how USAID programs address disability-inclusive education as a targeted and standalone activity as well as a component within the broader early grade education programming in various countries in the region. The review takes a program-cycle approach (aligned with USAID’s Program Cycle Operational Policy, Automated Directives System [ADS] 201) to assess how USAID education activities integrate learners with disabilities throughout the activity-cycle phases of funded activities (e.g., activity design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation). Exhibit 3 highlights the two main phases of the review.

Exhibit 3. Overview of the Review Phases



Structure of the Report. This report first presents findings from the desk review and then presents findings from the case study countries,⁶ along with a comparative analysis. The report concludes with recommendations for both USAID and implementing partners, presented against the main phases of USAID’s program cycle.

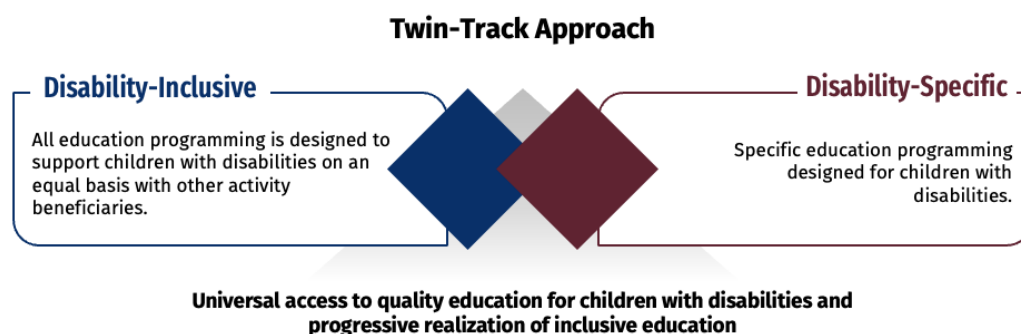
⁶ The case study countries include reference to other USAID-funded activities that were not included in the desk review. This was due to availability of documentation at the time of the desk review.

FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Using the CRPD and General Comment No. 4⁷ as a normative framework, the ACR Disability-Inclusive Education Review examines how USAID programs address disability-inclusive education as a targeted and standalone activity as well as a component within the broader early grade education programming in various countries in the region.

Importantly, the review recognizes USAID’s twin-track approach to disability programming that supports a progressive transformation of education systems. The twin-track approach, as shown in Exhibit 4, supports mainstreaming disability-inclusive activities throughout education programming as well as conducting disability-specific programming when additional support is needed.

Exhibit 4. Twin-Track Approach to Education Programming



As such, this review looks at two types of basic education programming, including disability-specific and broader early grade reading programming, to understand the range and type of inclusive education interventions supported by each. These are further explained below.

1. **Disability-specific:** Targeted activities designed to support early grade reading for learners with disabilities.
2. **Broader education:** Early grade education activities that may, or may not, have some education interventions to support early grade learners with disabilities.

The ACR Disability-Inclusive Education Review seeks to answer eight research questions.

⁷ United Nations. (2016). General comment No. 4 on Article 24—The right to inclusive education. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-comment-no-4-article-24-right-inclusive>

Exhibit 5. Research Questions

Research Question (RQ)
RQ 1: Within the Asia region, what are the incentives and barriers to conducting disability-inclusive education programming throughout the USAID program cycle?
RQ 2: How does USAID's broader education programming address the education of learners with disabilities within the Asia region?
RQ 3: What type of disability-specific education programming —supported by USAID—is taking place in the region?
RQ 4: How inclusive was USAID's coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic response within education programming for learners with disabilities within the region?
RQ 5: How has USAID addressed the education of learners with disabilities within crisis and conflict affected settings within the region?
RQ 6: How does education programming within the Asia region address the intersectionality of disability and other marginalizing factors such as sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, linguistic minorities, and displaced persons within the region?
RQ 7: What emerging practices related to disability-inclusive education are taking place within the region?
RQ 8: How does USAID and/or its implementing partners measure the progress and impact of inclusive education programming within the Asia region?

The eight RQs fit within USAID's program cycle, as shown in Exhibit 6. In addressing RQs 2 and 3, which focus on activity implementation, researchers looked at specific elements of service delivery at the community and school/classroom level and also explored how other elements can provide an enabling environment for specific interventions.

Exhibit 6. Disability-Inclusive Education Review Framework

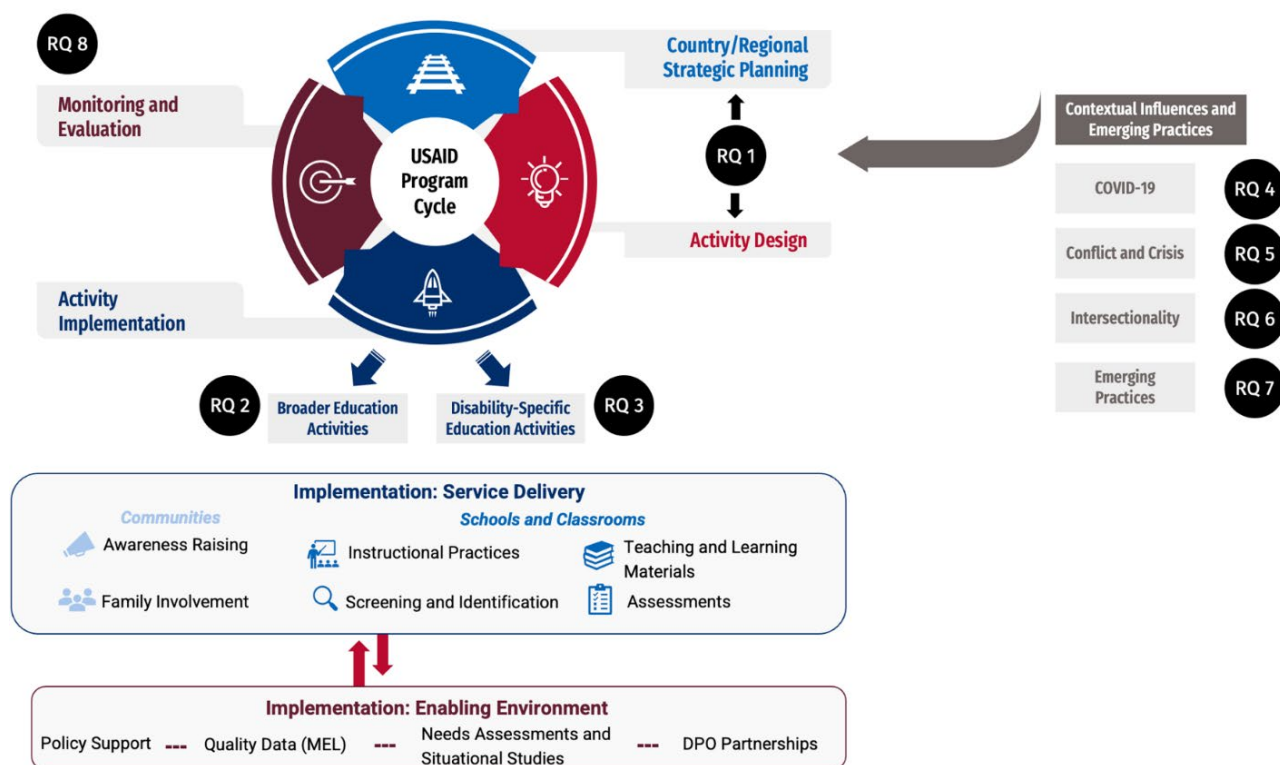


Exhibit 7 briefly explains the different elements at the implementation level (including service delivery and enabling environment). Findings from these elements are discussed in RQs. 2 and 3.

Exhibit 7. Overview of Implementation Elements

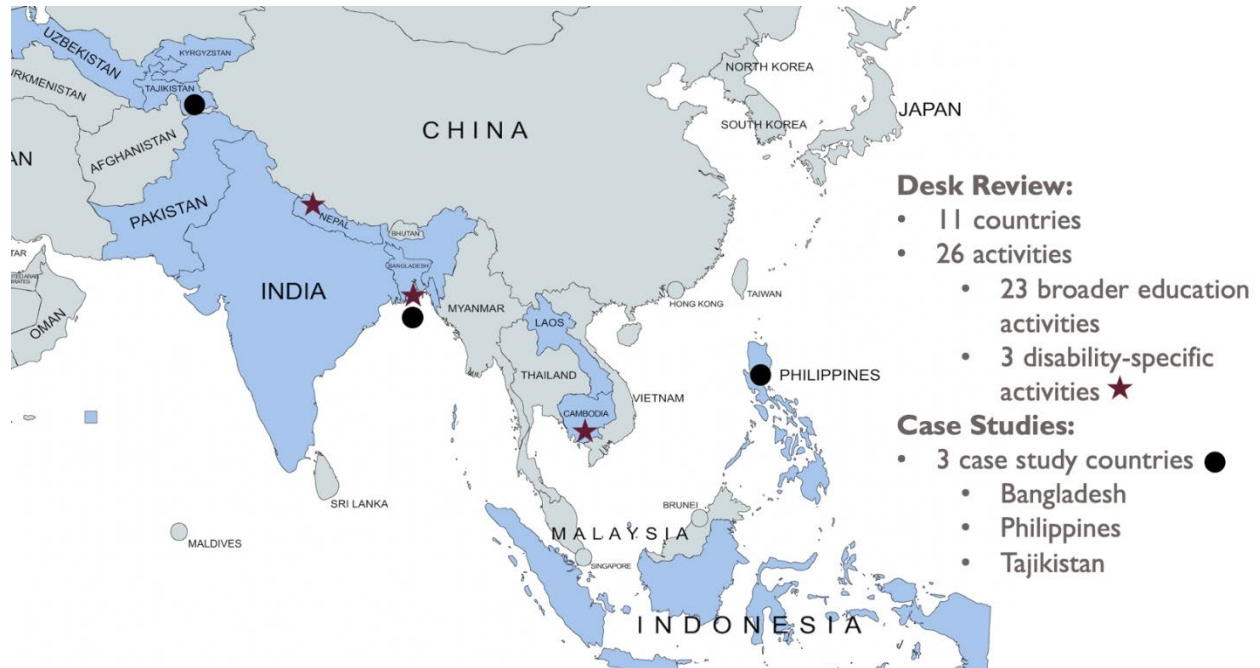
Implementation Elements	Overview
Implementation: Enabling Environment	
Needs Assessments and Situational Studies	A common starting point for USAID-funded activities is a needs assessment or situational study. As it relates to disability inclusion, needs assessments and situational studies can provide useful information for activities on the status of learners with disabilities and current inclusive education practices. This, in turn, can support activities to develop disability-inclusive education interventions.
Policy Support	Understanding and responding to host governments' visions and collaborating with host governments on interventions are key approaches that activities use to ensure buy-in and promote sustainability.
Implementation: Service Delivery	
Materials (TLMs)	Ensuring each learner has access to and uses quality teaching and learning materials (TLMs), including textbooks and supplementary reading materials written in a language they use and understand and at a level of difficulty that supports their learning, is a core element of USAID's Reading MATTERS (Mentors, Administrators, Teachers, Texts, Extra Practice, Regular Assessment, Standards) conceptual framework. ⁸
Screening and Identification	Screening early grade learners can be a way to detect potential barriers to learning and development. Screening, however, does not <i>identify</i> which learners face delays; rather, screening provides information on whether further assessments by specialized professionals might be needed. Screening is part of a holistic set of services for learners, which also includes referrals and education supports.
Instructional Practices	Supporting teachers to use effective instructional practices in the classroom is a critical component of all basic education activities. Emphasized in USAID's Reading MATTERS framework, teachers should implement evidence-based instructional techniques that maximize time for learner practice and incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles.
Assessments	When teachers and education officials can track learner progress through assessments toward grade-appropriate standards, they are in a better position to identify and then support those who do not meet academic milestones. The importance of both formative and summative assessments is reflected in USAID's Reading MATTERS framework. Within USAID-funded basic education activities, summative assessments typically refer to Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRAs) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessments (EGMAs).
Awareness-Raising	Awareness-raising is a critical component of disability inclusion interventions. Awareness-raising plays a role in overcoming negative attitudes and stigmas that often exist within schools and communities and is sometimes seen as the first important step when conducting disability-inclusive education interventions.
Family Involvement	Families play important roles in their children's learning journey. For learners with disabilities in particular, families play instrumental roles in sending their children to school and fostering a supportive learning environment at home.

⁸ U.S. Agency for International Development. (2019). Office of Education Brief: USAID Reading MATTERS Conceptual Framework. Available at https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/sites/default/files/media/file/Reading%20MATTERS%20Conceptual%20Framework_v7_October%2026%20%281%29_final.pdf

METHODOLOGY

This section presents the methodology for both the desk review and the case studies. Below, Exhibit 8 provides a high-level overview of the Disability-Inclusive Education Review sample for both the desk review and case study.

Exhibit 8. Disability-Inclusive Education Review Sample (Desk Review and Case Studies)



DESK REVIEW

The desk review consisted of three main activities, as detailed in Exhibit 9 and explained further in this section.

Exhibit 9. Desk Review Activities

Desk Review Activities	Details
Desk Review of Activity Documents	An in-depth review of publicly available activity documentation to understand the nature of different disability-inclusive education interventions.
Surveys to USAID Missions and Implementing Partners	<p>USAID Mission Survey: Sent to 10 USAID Missions in Asia, this survey focused on gathering information about how Missions think about disability-inclusive education when designing and monitoring basic education programming and how Missions engage with government and disabled persons' organization (DPO) counterparts. Response rate was 100%.</p> <p>Implementing Partner Survey (for ongoing USAID basic education activities): Sent to implementing partners of 10 ongoing USAID-funded basic education activities in Asia, this survey asked respondents to share the incentives and disincentives for implementing disability-inclusive education interventions and how their activities engage with USAID, governments, DPOs, and local stakeholders. Response rate was 90%.</p> <p>Implementing Partner Survey (for completed USAID basic education activities): Released via the Global Reading Network, this survey was an open call to implementing partners of completed USAID-funded basic education activities in Asia. The survey had similar goals to the ongoing Implementing Partner Survey; however, only one response was provided. As a result, responses were included as part of the survey for ongoing activities.</p>
Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with Two USAID/ Washington Staff	The purpose of these KIIs was to understand more about how USAID/Washington and/or broader external influences (such as congressional funds) have helped support the development of disability-inclusive education programming, specifically within the Asia Bureau. An additional purpose was to reflect on the interaction between USAID/Washington and Mission staff to help uncover key leverage points that promote disability inclusion in basic education programming.

Researchers conducted a desk review⁹ of 416 publicly available documents across 26 USAID-funded basic education activities in 11 countries in Asia (see Annex A). Documents included any Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS); solicitations; and annual, quarterly, final, and technical reports, which were retrieved from USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC), USAID Missions, and/or implementing partners. Annex B provides a list of these documents. In some instances, activities did not provide the requested documents, or documents were otherwise unavailable to researchers. Additionally, some activities presented significantly more project documentation than others.

⁹ The desk review was conducted according to the framework in Exhibit 6.

CASE STUDIES

In collaboration with USAID, researchers selected the three case study countries using the following criteria: countries must (1) have at least one ongoing USAID-funded basic education activity, (2) contribute to diverse geographic representation across the Asia region, and (3) include diverse representation of implementing partners. Researchers also considered the type of basic education programming occurring in the country (broader versus disability-specific), where activities were within the USAID program cycle, and the interest of USAID Missions in participating in the study. Exhibit 10 presents an overview of the case study countries selected. Brief activity descriptions are provided in the country-specific sections of this report.

Exhibit 10. Overview of Ongoing USAID Activities in Case Study Countries

Country	Activity Name	Activity Type	Activity Dates	Implementing Partner
Tajikistan	Learn Together Activity (LTA)	Broader education	October 2020–September 2025	Chemonics International
Philippines	Advancing Basic Education in the Philippines (ABC+)	Broader education	July 2019–July 2024	RTI International
	Gabay (Guide): Strengthening Inclusive Education for Blind, Deaf, and Deafblind Children	Disability-specific	September 2019–June 2023	Resources for the Blind, Inc.
Bangladesh	Esho Shikhi	Broader education	November 2021–November 2026	Winrock International
	Promoting Education for Early Learners	Broader education	September 2021–September 2024	Sesame Workshop
	Shobai Miley Shikhi	Disability-specific	June 2022–June 2027	RTI International

Researchers collected case study data through semi-structured KIs, focus group discussions (FGDs), and visits to project sites. Researchers developed interview questions based on the review’s eight research questions and then tailored the interview questions to specific meetings based on the findings from the larger desk review and survey results. Exhibit 11 provides an overview of the number and types of stakeholders interviewed during the case studies. Annex C provides a full list of stakeholders.

Exhibit II. Overview of Case Study Stakeholders Interviewed

Stakeholder Group	Number of Stakeholders Interviewed		
	Tajikistan	Philippines	Bangladesh
USAID Mission	1	1	1
USAID Implementing Partners	1	2	3
Government Officials	2	3	2
DPOs	1	4	1
Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), International Nongovernmental Organizations, Higher Education Institutions	5	3	8
Education Stakeholder FGD	0	1	0

LIMITATIONS

The desk review was limited by the availability of activity documents, including quarterly; annual; final; technical; and monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) reports. Researchers utilized USAID’s DEC to obtain all publicly available documentation for each activity. Researchers also worked with USAID staff to obtain some documents not available on DEC. Despite this, documentation is likely missing from this review. Additionally, the desk review was limited to English-language documents only. While major program documents, such as annual and quarterly reports, are available in English, researchers acknowledge that other technical documents (e.g., training modules) are available on DEC but sometimes published in other languages. Given the limitations around document availability, there may be some disability-inclusive aspects of activities that are not reported in this review.

It is important to note that both the desk review and the case studies were not formal program evaluations of USAID programming or specific disability-inclusive education interventions. The desk review presents trends based on what activities report in annual, quarterly, and technical reports. The case studies present findings and trends based on information collected from stakeholders and were not intended to be country-wide landscape analyses of disability-inclusive education. Case study findings focus on contextual information that is directly relevant to USAID basic education programming in the three countries. To accomplish this, researchers specifically sought out interviews with stakeholders who have (or previously had) collaborated with a USAID basic education activity. Given the purposeful selection of stakeholders, researchers recognize that many other examples of bright spots and challenges exist within each country that are not reflected in this report.

DESK REVIEW: RESEARCH QUESTION I FINDINGS

RQ I: Within the Asia region, what are the incentives and barriers to conducting disability-inclusive education programming throughout the USAID program cycle?

Contractual obligations, Mission priorities, technical training, access to qualified staff, and funding were all cited as programming elements that could serve either as an incentive to promoting disability-inclusive education or a barrier depending on the context. For example, contractual language (either beginning in solicitations or appearing in final activity descriptions) was cited as the key driving force for implementing partners to choose to design disability-inclusive education interventions. Conversely, when there was not strong disability inclusion language in solicitations or activity descriptions, it served as a barrier to initiating interventions. Similarly, USAID Missions prioritizing disability-inclusive education, as perceived by implementing partners, were reported as the second most important factor in an activity's decision to design disability-inclusive interventions. Funding for disability-inclusive education interventions as well as funding for trained staff were also reported as important factors: acting as incentives when there was available funding and sufficiently trained staff and barriers when there was not.

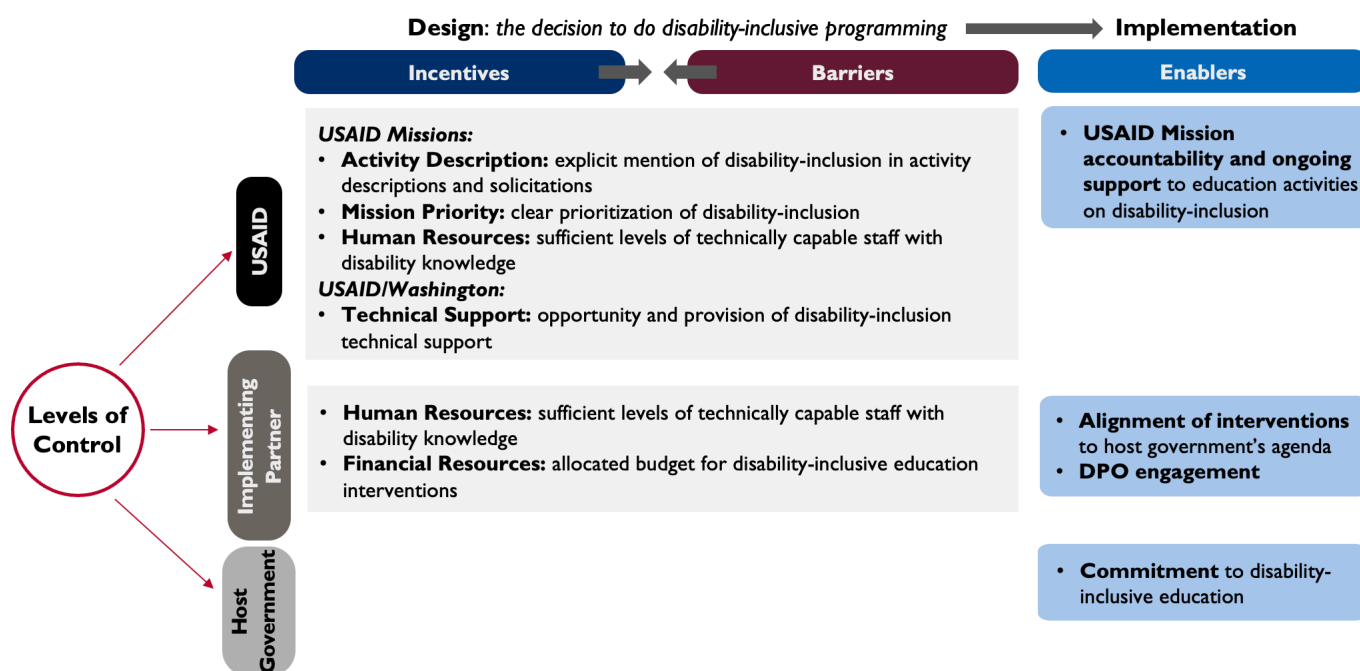
Once USAID and activities make the decision to conduct disability-inclusive education programming, there are a number of enabling factors that support the implementation of those interventions. Two important enabling factors include an implementing partner's alignment of disability-inclusive interventions with the host government's vision and agenda for inclusive education as well as the host government's demonstrated support to disability inclusion.

Incentives and barriers to **designing** disability-inclusive education interventions exist at both the USAID (USAID Missions and USAID/Washington) and implementing partner levels. Both USAID and implementing partners have certain choices they make when designing these types of interventions, and once they have made the choice to design the interventions, there are enabling factors at the USAID, implementing partner, and host government levels that support **implementation**.¹⁰ Exhibit I2 provides a summary of key findings, with additional details provided below.¹¹

¹⁰ Researchers understand host governments face incentives and barriers to designing their own disability-inclusive interventions and acknowledge that governments are often involved in initial activity design with USAID Missions, either through co-creation or similar mechanisms.

¹¹ Note that further discussions of enablers and barriers to implementation of certain interventions in broader and disability-specific activities can be found under RQs 2, 3, and 8.

Exhibit 12. Summary of Key Incentives, Barriers, and Enablers to Doing Disability-Inclusive Education within [REDACTED] Basic Education Activities



RQ 1: INCENTIVES AND BARRIERS TO DESIGN

USAID and activities (through implementing partners) face a number of incentives and barriers when making the decision to *design* disability-inclusive education interventions. The factors presented below can act as either incentives or barriers depending on the context and the choices made by USAID and implementing partners.

USAID LEVEL

Within USAID's sphere of control, three incentives and barriers emerge at the USAID Mission level, and one emerges at the USAID/Washington level related to the design of disability-inclusive education programming.

Incentives and barriers at the **USAID Mission** level include the following.

- Activity Description:** Integrating disability inclusion into final activity descriptions (e.g., contractual obligations) was reported as the most important factor in an implementing partner's decision to design disability-inclusive education interventions according to a survey of ongoing USAID-funded basic education activities in the Asia region. This represents a clear incentive to design disability-inclusive education programming that is within the control of USAID Missions.¹² Perhaps the most direct way to ensure that disability inclusion is integrated throughout final activity descriptions is through the language in solicitations.

¹² Researchers recognize that some education activities are designed and managed by USAID/Washington.

When stronger disability inclusion language exists in a solicitation, there are more examples of disability-inclusive education interventions within broader education activities. Exhibit 11 presents selected examples to highlight this point.

Note that RQ 2 provides more information on the different types of interventions that broader education activities conducted. Exhibit 13 and emerging findings presented at the implementing partner level (later in this section) highlight the fact that USAID holds the opportunity to set the agenda for disability-inclusive education (partially through robust language in solicitations) and implementing partners respond to that opportunity.

Exhibit 13. Solicitation Language and Resulting Interventions in Broader Education Activities (Selected Examples)

Broader Education Activity	Inclusion Language within Solicitation	Selected Examples of Interventions
Learn to Read (Laos)	<p>Substantial Inclusion Language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Included learners with disabilities¹³ in the theory of change and in a specific outcome area Frequent reference to marginalized learners, including those with disabilities defined as part of that population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed a Gender and Inclusive Development Action Plan (GIDAP) following a gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) analysis, both of which were required by USAID/Laos Identified pedagogical approaches to address the needs of learners with mild disabilities Piloted a standalone inclusive education teacher training and integrated inclusive education topics into existing teacher training Collaborated with DPOs to inform material design and data collection Piloted screening tools
Read with Me (Tajikistan)	<p>Limited Inclusion Language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive education referenced as a cross-cutting component, with a few references to disability inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided books in braille and large print and hosted a workshop on how to adapt materials in braille Supported the development of a National Concept Note on Inclusive Education (with Ministry counterparts) which was then continued by LTA Produced children’s television shows, including some that focused on disability awareness-raising
Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development (READ) (Bangladesh)	<p>Very Limited/No Inclusion Language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main reference to inclusion was the following: “Issues related to disability and ethnicity and how these barriers to basic education can be overcome should be factored into any 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized a Bangladesh Library Vision Forum and included a session where participants were asked to think about how library services would best meet the needs of different users, including those with disabilities; however, it was not apparent in available reports what was

¹³ Within the Laos Learn to Read activity description, disability was identified as mild disabilities, including vision, hearing, language delays, or specific learning challenges.

Broader Education Activity	Inclusion Language within Solicitation	Selected Examples of Interventions
	<i>proposed READ sustainability approach”</i>	discussed or whether READ took any recommendations forward ¹⁴
Sindh Reading Program (Pakistan)	No Inclusion Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No references to disability-inclusive education interventions

There does not seem to be a relationship between the level of disability inclusion language in solicitations of broader education activities [REDACTED]. In the desk review sample of broader education activities, [REDACTED]. Generally, broader education activities that had significant disability inclusion language in solicitations and then implemented several disability-inclusive interventions (see RQ 2), did not necessarily have the highest contract or agreement values. For example, the Laos Learn to Read solicitation has substantial disability inclusion language and the activity implemented a number of disability-inclusive interventions. [REDACTED], the Pakistan Sindh Reading Program and the Pakistan Reading Project had the highest contract values out of all broader education activities in the desk review sample [REDACTED] however, the Sindh Reading Program solicitation had no disability inclusion language and the Pakistan Reading Project solicitation had very limited disability inclusion language.

2. Mission Priority: In a survey of education officers at USAID Missions throughout the Asia region, 75% (six out of eight Missions) either agreed or strongly agreed that integrating disability-inclusive education into basic education programming is currently a high priority for their Mission. Additionally, three Missions (out of eight) reported that Mission priorities around disability inclusion was either the most important, or second most important, factor in the decisions to integrate disability-inclusive components into basic education activities.

USAID Missions can express their priorities in both informal and formal ways. Informal examples could include a Contracting/Agreement Officer’s Representative (COR/AOR) suggesting to an implementing partner that the activity considers pedagogies for learners with disabilities in an upcoming teacher training or the USAID Mission hosting a panel discussion on disability with representatives from DPOs. However, perhaps the most formal way that USAID Missions articulate their priorities is through Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCSs), often developed in 5-year iterations. Exhibit 14 presents a selection of current CDCSs and their references to disability inclusion, particularly through education-related development objectives (DOs).

¹⁴ Only other reference was regarding the activity’s Community Reading Camps, which used games and engaged children outside of school through audio, tactile, written, and visual materials. While this may have supported those with disabilities, there was no explicit reference to children with disabilities.

Exhibit 14. Examples of CDCS Language

USAID Mission (Current CDCS Dates)	Inclusion Language within CDCS
Bangladesh (2020–2025)	Substantial Inclusion Language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> References to disability throughout and within the education-related DO
India (2020–2024)	Limited Inclusion Language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> References disability as a component of the Mission’s overall approach to inclusive development Disability is not referenced in the education-related DO
Indonesia (2020–2025)	No Inclusion Language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability mentioned once (appearing in the country context section)

As shown in Exhibit 14, disability-inclusive language varies across CDCSs. As noted in the earlier scoping report, there does not seem to be a clear relationship between the disability-inclusive language in a CDCS and language in the resulting solicitation (even after reviewing older CDCSs and solicitations); however, the idea of Missions’ prioritizing disability inclusion is still important. After activity descriptions, USAID Missions clearly prioritizing disability-inclusive language was the second most important factor in an implementing partner’s decision to design disability-inclusive interventions.¹⁵ Implementing partners’ perceptions of USAID Mission priorities can act as an incentive to designing disability-inclusive education interventions throughout the activity lifecycle.

- Human Resources:** In a survey of education officers at USAID Missions in the Asia region, 63% of respondents (five out of eight Missions) stated that having technical staff capacity within the education team was either the most important, or second most important, factor in choosing to integrate disability inclusion within basic education activities. Furthermore, 88% of respondents (seven out of eight Missions) noted that they would feel confident or very confident in their ability to help write and evaluate a request for proposals (RFP) or request for applications (RFA) for disability-inclusive basic education programming.¹⁶ This may act as an incentive to include disability-inclusive language in solicitations and activity descriptions. Still, 75% of USAID Mission respondents noted that they would benefit from additional training on integrating disability inclusion into basic education program design, including topics such as UDL and screening/identification. Further discussion on training topics indicated by USAID Missions can be found in the following section on incentives and barriers at the USAID/Washington level.

¹⁶ It is important to note that these responses were from current USAID education officers; researchers did not have the ability to survey education officers from previous years who may have changed posts and who may have been involved in the design of older, and now completed, activities.

Finally, at the USAID Mission level, it is worth noting one additional element that could act as an incentive to supporting implementing partners in designing disability-inclusive education interventions. However, it is not presented as a formal finding as only one example of this was available in the desk review documentation:

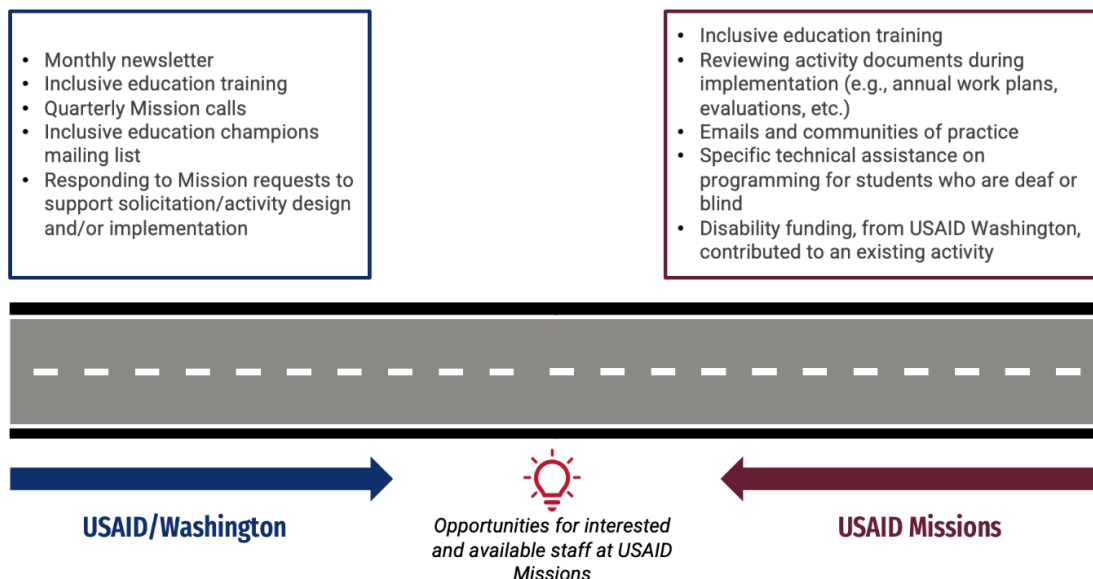
- **Midterm Evaluation Recommendations Increased Focus on Inclusive Education:** In 2015, the Indonesia Prioritizing Reform, Innovation, and Opportunities for Reaching Indonesia’s Teachers, Administrators, and Students (PRIORITAS) activity underwent a midterm evaluation. Among the eight major recommendations from the midterm evaluation, there was one focused on inclusive education, which recommended that PRIORITAS “develop a unit on instructional techniques for teachers, principals, and parents that will assist special needs children already mainstreamed in local schools.”¹⁷ While the activity’s written response to the comment in their 2015 annual report was that inclusive education was a “relatively small focus of the project compared to other issues of general teaching methodologies and school management and governance,” it is important to note that subsequent reports document action taken. For example, in 2016 and 2017, the activity reported it developed and tested tools to identify learners with special needs; conducted awareness-raising talk shows; supported partner schools to act as “inclusive education providers” and work with special schools; and supported 20 districts to include, and budget for, inclusive education within district strategic plans. After the midterm evaluation, PRIORITAS reported on significantly more disability-inclusive interventions than it did prior to the evaluation, which could indicate that midterm evaluations (if required to include a focus on disability inclusion) may act as an incentive to designing these types of interventions.

Incentives and barriers at the **USAID/Washington** level include the following.

- I. **Technical Support:** USAID/Washington is in the position to provide technical support and capacity strengthening on disability-inclusive education to education teams within USAID Missions which, in turn, can influence activity design and solicitation language. KIIs with two USAID/Washington staff focused on disability-inclusive education referenced significant efforts in recent years to reach out to USAID Missions in the Asia region to highlight the importance of disability inclusion. This was reflected by USAID Missions themselves, which, through the survey, noted that USAID/Washington has been particularly helpful in “providing inclusive education training,” “reviewing the disability-inclusive parts of program descriptions,” “providing technical guidance on the design of sign language programs,” and “explaining USAID’s strategy on disability-inclusive education.” Exhibit 15 presents an overview of support provided by USAID/Washington (as reported through two KIIs with USAID/Washington staff) and support that USAID Missions noted has been most helpful to their work (as reported through the survey of USAID Missions staff). What these findings highlight, as supported by KIIs with USAID/Washington staff, is that technical support is partly a “two-way street.” USAID/Washington provides opportunities for technical support, but USAID Missions must be interested and available to proactively reach out for targeted support.

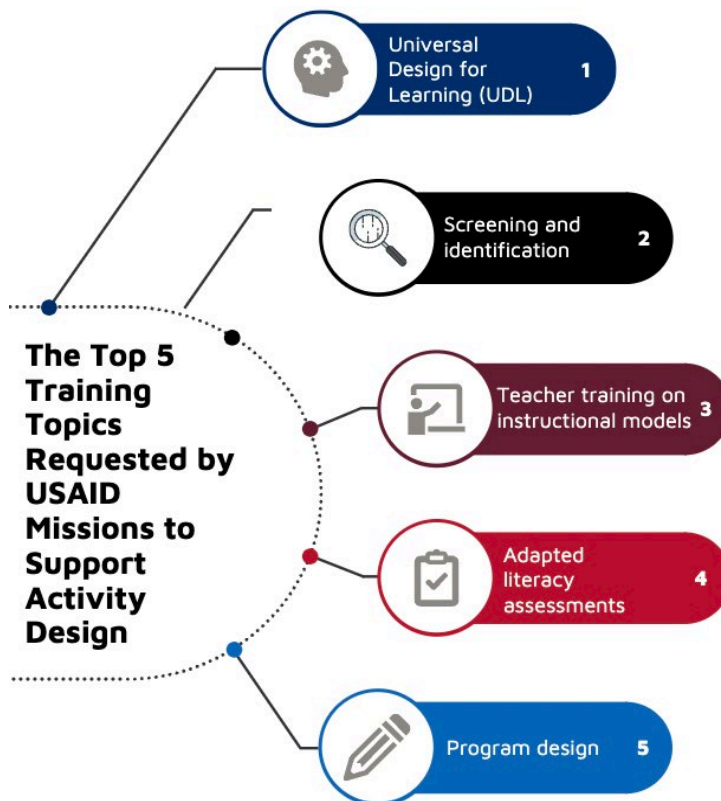
¹⁷ RTI International. (2015). *USAID PRIORITAS Annual Progress Report: October 2014-September 2015*. U.S. Agency for International Development, p. 165.

Exhibit 15. Technical Collaboration Between USAID/Washington and USAID Missions on Disability-Inclusive Education



USAID Missions did note that they would benefit from additional areas of training as they design future basic education programming. Exhibit 16 presents the top five requested training topics.

Exhibit 16. Top Five Requested Training Topics from USAID Missions



Of particular note in Exhibit 16 are training topics numbers 1 and 2. The first topic, UDL, is timely as USAID announced at the February 2022 Global Disability Summit¹⁸ that it would incorporate UDL principles into all new education programs and provide staff and partners with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to effectively implement UDL and disability-inclusive education. Clearly, USAID Mission staff recognize that this is an area of continued growth. The second topic is screening and identification, which is also consistently noted as a challenging area for implementing partners (see RQs 2 and 3 for additional detail). For example, until USAID Missions are confident in the best implementation practices around screening and identification, this area may act as a barrier to the quality design and integration of these interventions within overall education programming design. This may also be an area for USAID/Washington to provide continued guidance around integrating screening and identification into basic education activities.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER LEVEL

Within an implementing partner’s sphere of control, two primary incentives and barriers emerge.

Human Resources: In this context, the term “human resources” refers to both the number of staff and their technical capacity within the field of disability-inclusive education. Within all education activities, staffing composition and structure are driven by implementing partners, with varying levels of approval required from USAID. While disability-specific activities are more focused on recruiting multiple staff members with disability inclusion technical expertise (further discussed below), this is not always the case with broader education activities. In a survey of implementing partners of ongoing [REDACTED] basic education activities, all broader education activity respondents fell under two types of staffing structures for inclusion-related positions. The first structure was at least one staff member responsible for disability inclusion activities. The second structure was no specific members responsible for disability inclusion as disability inclusion is considered a part of the activity’s core program and, therefore, every member of the technical team is responsible. As an example, two ongoing broader education activities (33%) indicated they had particular staff responsible for disability inclusion, as highlighted in Exhibit 17.

Exhibit 17. Staff Responsible for Disability inclusion within Broader Education Activities

Activity	Staff
Laos Learn to Read	Senior GESI Specialist (1) GESI Specialist (1)
Tajikistan LTA	Intervention Specialist (1)

While both Laos Learn to Read and the Tajikistan LTA had conducted or planned to conduct a number of disability-inclusive education interventions, the appointment of one or two technical GESI staff member for oversight does not guarantee that the desired level of disability-inclusive programming (deemed as such by the implementing partner) will be provided or achieved. It is also unclear to the extent to which GESI staff have specific disability knowledge. The following quote from Indonesia PRIORITAS highlights some of these challenges:

¹⁸ U.S. Agency for International Development. (2022). New USAID Commitments to Disability Inclusive Education at the 2022 Global Disability Summit. Available at <https://www.edu-links.org/learning/new-usaid-commitments-disability-inclusive-education-2022-global-disability-summit>

Project staffing to support the development of gender and inclusive education was limited to one person. Thus, particularly in the specific area of inclusive education for students with special needs, the project was limited in their assistance to giving technical advice and support to provinces, districts, and schools that requested it.¹⁹

The remaining activities (67%) reported that disability inclusion was a core part of programming and considered everyone’s responsibility; however, one broader education activity noted that one of the most important reasons why the activity decided not to design future disability-inclusive education interventions was that “staff were too busy” with other interventions.

Beyond the number of staff, the types of disability-inclusive education technical expertise that staff have is also important. Trained staff, who are knowledgeable in the field of disability-inclusive education, can act as key drivers in an activity’s decision to design related interventions. However, it can be difficult to recruit for this skill set, and this is particularly evident within disability-specific activities that are primarily focused (more so than broader education activities) on recruiting staff with technical expertise in disability and inclusive education. Exhibit 18 presents examples from two disability-specific activities that faced challenges in recruiting staff with the requisite experience.²⁰

Exhibit 18. Staffing Challenges in Disability-Specific Activities

Activity	Recruitment of Staff with Disability Inclusion Technical Expertise
ACR (Cambodia)	Initially, the activity experienced hiring challenges due to what they described as a limited pool of qualified candidates in Cambodia who had experience in inclusive education (particularly supporting the needs of <i>all</i> learners). While the activity had to supplement with some international staff and consultants, hiring challenges did impact the activity’s implementation timeline for some interventions, such as piloting screening tools and adapted assessments.
Reading for All (Nepal)	The activity made intentional efforts to hire staff with disabilities and staff with close personal connections to persons with disabilities. While these staff had lived experience with disability, which allowed them to provide valuable inputs on ensuring, in general, that interventions were inclusive, they had limited technical experience in disability-inclusive education and designing literacy interventions for learners with disabilities. In the early stages of the activity, the team had to supplement with external consultants.

After hiring staff, many activities do provide on-the-job professional development in disability inclusion. For example, in the survey of implementing partners of ongoing education activities, 89% of activities reported providing some level of disability inclusion training²¹ to their technical staff. The three most common training topics were (1) disability awareness and advocacy, (2) disability/disability-inclusive education laws and policies, and (3) disability-inclusive TLM development. Two of those topics—disability awareness/advocacy and disability-inclusive TLM development—were among the most frequently reported interventions of ongoing broader education activities.²² On the other hand, training on early grade assessment adaptation for learners with disabilities was one of the least frequently reported trainings

¹⁹ RTI International. (2017). *Final Project Report, Volume 1: Main Report*. U.S. Agency for International Development, p. 83.

²⁰ These findings are from USAID’s Multi-Country Study on Inclusive Education, which IDP leads in partnership with local organizations.

²¹ Most commonly, the training provided to staff was between 2 to 3 days.

²² RQ 2 provides additional information.

for activity staff and also one of the least frequently reported interventions for ongoing broader education activities (only the Tajikistan Learn Together Activity reported an intervention on adapted early grade assessments).²³ This suggests a possible relationship between the professional development training that staff receive (particularly the topic and content of the training) and the activity's decision to design certain disability-inclusive interventions.

Conversely, conversations around designing disability-inclusive education interventions can struggle to take off if there is a reported lack of staff with the requisite technical expertise available to lead those conversations and advocate for disability inclusion. Despite the positive relationship between staff training and the implementation of selected interventions, implementing partners of ongoing basic education activities most frequently pointed to the issue of human resources (e.g., trained staff) as a barrier. For example, 44% of ongoing activities reported not having sufficient human resources to design and conduct disability-inclusive education interventions. Furthermore, two ongoing activities noted that they did not plan to conduct future disability-inclusive education interventions, citing “lack of trained staff” as an important factor²⁴ in their decisions to cease future programming in this area.²⁵

Financial Resources: All activity interventions have budget implications, whether those be staff time, grants, or subcontracts to support interventions or procurement costs. If particular interventions are not budgeted at the proposal stage or during annual work planning sessions, [REDACTED]. This is particularly relevant for broader education activities that must allocate their financial resources to a variety of interventions (including disability-inclusive education interventions, if they choose). In the survey of implementing partners of ongoing activities, 57% of broader education activities reported not having sufficient budget allocated for disability-inclusive education interventions. Representing more than half of the ongoing broader education activities, financial resources act as a barrier to the depth and breadth of disability-inclusive interventions that activities choose to design. Costing and budgeting for education activities is an area of focus for USAID, and it will be important to understand ways that implementing partners can effectively budget for disability-inclusive interventions. However, this was beyond the scope of this review as researchers did not have access to individual activity budgets.

While human resources and financial resources emerge as both incentives and barriers to designing disability-inclusive education interventions at the implementing partner level, there is one additional factor worth noting:

- **Implementing Partner Priority:** In the survey of ongoing education activities, 71% of respondents noted that having disability inclusion as a priority within the implementing partner's organization was not an important factor in their decision to design disability-inclusive education activities.²⁶ This reinforces the finding that implementing partners rarely set the disability inclusion agenda; rather, they respond to opportunities (through, for example, solicitations) that Missions set through USAID's larger agenda.

²³ RQ 2 provides additional information.

²⁴ Other important factors included [REDACTED] “project staff too busy,” [REDACTED] discussed in this section.

²⁵ The case studies provide further details on how implementing partners approach training and staffing for disability inclusion.

²⁶ More important factors included having disability inclusion as part of the final activity description and as a clear USAID Mission priority. Both of these factors are discussed under the USAID-level section.

RQ 1: ENABLERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

Once an activity has made the decision to conduct disability-inclusive education interventions, there are enabling factors at the USAID, implementing partner, and host country government levels that support those interventions.

USAID LEVEL

Ongoing Support to Disability-Inclusive Interventions: At the USAID level, the key enabling factor that emerges during implementation is ongoing support to activities' disability-inclusive education interventions. In the survey of implementing partners of ongoing basic education activities, this was the second most important enabling factor.²⁷

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER LEVEL

Alignment of an Implementing Partner's Disability-Inclusive Education Interventions with the Host Government's Vision and Agenda for Inclusive Education: At the implementing partner level, ongoing activities note that the most important enabling factor during implementation is the alignment of their disability-inclusive education interventions with the host government's vision and agenda for inclusive education. It is important to make the distinction here between design and implementation. Interestingly, survey respondents stated that host government priorities for inclusive education were the least important factor in their decision to design disability-inclusive education interventions. As stated previously, language in the activity description and USAID Mission priority were the most important factors. However, after implementing partners make the decision to implement disability-inclusive interventions, alignment with host government priorities becomes much more important. This is likely because activities want to ensure that interventions are sustainable [REDACTED]. Further information can be found in the case study section.

Engagement with DPOs: Additionally, engagement with DPOs is an important enabling factor when implementing disability-inclusive education interventions. Seven out of nine ongoing basic education activities (78%) reported engaging local DPOs, primarily during the work planning and implementation stages of the activity lifecycle. Note that, of this group, only disability-specific education solicitations referenced working with DPOs. Broader education solicitations within this group did not recommend or require successful offerors to work with DPOs. As reported through the survey, ongoing activities noted the following benefits of working with DPOs:²⁸

“By working with DPOs, [activity] staff developed a more open attitude and understanding of what persons with disabilities can do, how they can be supported, and why they must be included in communities and in education. Ultimately, this improved understanding and appreciation for inclusion will guide activity staff in encouraging their communities to be more inclusive, and hopefully, this will lead to all children, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or disability, to be meaningfully included in their communities and education.”
– Laos Learn to Read, Annual Report, 2021

- DPOs support mobilization of local governments and local stakeholders
- DPOs have the most knowledge of the target population (persons with disabilities)

²⁷ The most important enabling factor was alignment of interventions to the host government's mission and vision for inclusive education. This is discussed in the activity-level section.

²⁸ Benefits listed are not direct quotes from survey respondents; responses are paraphrased.

- Engagement with DPOs supports more sector-wide approaches rather than siloed approaches
- Engagement with DPOs allows other stakeholders to see the value that DPOs bring to project activities

Despite the agreement among implementing partners that engaging DPOs is an important enabling factor, it should be noted that, from the survey, only one of the ongoing education activities reported engaging local DPOs through a formal grant or subcontract. Others did not have a contractual arrangement despite reporting to work closely with DPOs. Some challenges related to this, reported by implementing partners, include constraints around compliance with [REDACTED] grants and subcontracts, as well as administrative and management capacity. With USAID's commitment to localization, future collaboration with DPOs will have to consider how USAID and implementing partners can support formal and contractual partnerships to recognize DPOs for the value-add they provide to [REDACTED] activities. The case studies provide further information on this relationship.

HOST GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Demonstrated Commitment to Disability-Inclusive Education: Finally, host governments (particularly key government counterparts like ministries of education) also play a role in enabling disability-inclusive education interventions. As previously discussed, activities note that aligning their interventions with the host government's vision or agenda for inclusive education is the most important enabling factor for them during implementation. In the survey of USAID Missions, 75% of respondents (six out of eight Missions) stated that they believed disability inclusion was a priority for the host government, and 63% (five out of eight Missions) stated that they believed the host government and the Mission shared a similar understanding of disability inclusion. When host governments have a demonstrated commitment to disability-inclusive education, it acts as an enabling factor during implementation. The case studies provide further information on this factor.

DESK REVIEW RESEARCH QUESTION 2 FINDINGS²⁹

RQ 2: How does USAID's broader education programming address the education of learners with disabilities in the Asia region?

USAID's broader education programming addresses the education of learners with disabilities in different ways and with varying levels of targeted support. At a high level, broader education activities tend to take a more expansive view of inclusion, focusing on gender and learners who may be struggling to attain literacy and numeracy skills rather than specifically learners with disabilities. When broader education activities do focus on specific disabilities, they focus largely on sensory disabilities (learners who are blind or have low vision or learners who are deaf or hard of hearing). This is also a finding that is common with disability-specific activities (see RQ 3).

The most common disability-inclusive support that broader education activities provide is through TLMs and, specifically, through the use of inclusion checklists (some self-developed and some adapted from existing USAID checklists) to ensure that persons with disabilities are portrayed in a positive light in illustrations and stories. After inclusion checklists, activities tend to focus on the development of TLMs in braille, sign language, and digital/audio formats to support learners with disabilities, although examples of these are quite limited. The least common disability-inclusive interventions for broader education activities are screening and assessment adaptation. Three activities (13%) reported conducting screening, with a focus on vision and hearing screening. When screening is coupled with appropriate follow-up support (e.g., referral pathways or the provision of eyeglasses/hearing aids), it may support learners' literacy and numeracy development, as evidenced by one activity. Furthermore, with a shared understanding of the purpose of screening between activities, USAID, and governments, there is an opportunity to strengthen the screening and identification cycle. Assessment adaptation for learners with disabilities is also an emerging practice within broader education activities, with two activities (9%) reporting on adaptations, and presents an area of opportunity for further work.

RQ 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENTS AND SITUATIONAL STUDIES

Slightly more than one-third of broader education activities reported conducting a needs assessment/situational study, with a disability inclusion component, at the beginning of implementation. While GESI analyses are regularly required as part of an activity's contract or agreement, activities can also choose to conduct similar types of exercises (such as needs assessments and situational studies) to support designing interventions. Activities determine the extent to which they incorporate disability into these assessments and studies. Of the broader education activities, approximately 35% (8 out of 23) reported planning for and/or conducting a GESI-type assessment that had a disability inclusion component. Note that there is no USAID-provided standard format for these types of assessments/situational studies that incorporate disability inclusion.³⁰

²⁹ Findings in this section are presented against the framework from Exhibit 6.

³⁰ USAID's ADS Chapter 205 provides high-level guidance for conducting gender assessments, and there is a 2010 guide on integrating disability into gender assessments (https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/Guide_How_Integrate_Disability_Gender_Assessments_2010.pdf). Additionally, USAID's disability inclusive education toolkit on EducationLinks provides an example disability inclusion analysis within a basic education activity but also notes that it does not have a standard approach to this analysis (<https://www.edu-links.org/resources/disability-inclusive-education-toolkit>).

Of the needs assessments/situational studies, just over half (63%) had a comprehensive scope that led to actionable recommendations for activity interventions, while others had a more limited scope that did not appear to result in recommendations focused on disability inclusion. Disability-inclusive needs assessments/situational studies varied in both their objectives and scope. Of the eight activities that reported conducting a needs assessment/situational study, 63% (five activities³¹) had a comprehensive scope with a focus on disability inclusion. Exhibit 19 outlines examples of both comprehensive and limited needs assessments/situational studies within broader education activities.

Exhibit 19. Examples of Disability-Inclusive Needs Assessments/Situational Studies

Activity	Examples of Disability-Inclusive Needs Assessments/Situational Studies	
	Comprehensive	Limited
Basa Pilipinas (Philippines)	GESI analysis led to the creation of a Disability Plan, which was a requirement of Basa Pilipinas' contract. The Disability Plan outlined very concrete actions for the activity, including establishing a disability focal point, collecting MEL data on disabilities, integrating instructional practice for learners with disabilities into teacher trainings, and submitting an Annual Inclusive Development Report. ³²	
Okuu Keremet! (Kyrgyz Republic)	The Disability Analysis Report and Action Plan in Year I consisted of a desk review and KIIs with parents of learners with disabilities and representatives from government, USAID, and local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The report also included a list of recommendations, including training children's book authors and illustrators on persons with disability, developing a list of basic competencies on disability issues and social inclusion to integrate within subject standards, and preparing a resource guide on education services available to learners with disabilities.	
Quality Reading Project (Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan)		The activity conducted a needs assessment meeting with a school for the blind to identify possible areas of intervention; however, subsequent activity documentation did not report on interventions to support learners who are blind or have low vision.
Pakistan Reading Project (Pakistan)		The activity conducted a national gender study during the second year of implementation. During the planning phases, the activity noted that the study would include insights on inclusive education; however, findings from the study did not make any reference to inclusive education.

³¹ PRIORITAS (Indonesia); Okuu Keremet! (Kyrgyz Republic); Learn to Read (Laos); Basa Pilipinas (Philippines); LTA (Tajikistan)

³² Note that researchers did not have access to the Annual Inclusive Development Reports as they were not available on USAID's DEC.

Comprehensive needs assessments/situational studies produce actionable activity recommendations focused on disability inclusion; however, there does not seem to be a systematic way of reporting on progress against those recommendations. As highlighted in Exhibit 19, many broader education activities have strong examples of assessing the disability inclusion landscape and then developing practical, contextual, and actionable recommendations. It was difficult, however, to track progress against recommendations in subsequent activity reports (particularly quarterly and annual reports) as reports rarely included references to the recommendations. An activity may have several reasons why it did not report against the recommendations from the needs assessment/situational study, including changing activity priorities, dropping a recommendation due to activity constraints, or revising a recommendation to better reflect a changing context. Additionally, an activity may have reported on progress against recommendations but did not make the report publicly available on USAID’s DEC, making it unavailable to researchers.

RQ 2: POLICY SUPPORT

Inclusive education policy support is a less common intervention among broader education activities. When broader education activities do provide policy support, interventions involve participation in working groups and providing feedback to national-level policy documents or strategic plans. Countries in Asia are on individual journeys with inclusive education, and each country’s policies around inclusive education (whether they be standalone or embedded within a larger education policy) are at varying stages of development or implementation. Four broader education activities (17%) reported doing some type of policy support for inclusive education, and of those four, three activities provided inclusive education policy support at the national level as highlighted in Exhibit 20.

Exhibit 20. Examples of Broader Education Activities Providing National-Level Policy Support to Inclusive Education

Activity	National-Level Policy Support to Inclusive Education
Learn to Read (Laos)	The activity and its partners are heavily involved in the Inclusive Education Center, which falls under the Ministry of Education. The activity supported the center, through a working group, to (1) draft responses to a midterm review of the 2016–2020 Education Sector Development Plan, and (2) provide input to the Inclusive Education National Policy for 2021–2025.
Read With Me/LTA (Tajikistan)	Read with Me joined the Local Education Group, which falls under the Development Coordination Council in Tajikistan and is comprised of development partners, education stakeholders, and the Ministry of Education and Science. As part of this group, Read With Me worked with members to develop a National Concept Note on Inclusive Education. This was continued and strengthened by the follow-on LTA, which contributed to multiple drafts of the concept note and is supporting the Ministry of Education and Science to plan for and operationalize inclusive education in Tajikistan.

Beyond national-level support, there are windows of opportunity to support subnational systems (such as provincial or district governments) and strengthen their capacity for inclusive education; however, examples of this within broader education activities are very limited. One broader education activity, Indonesia PRIORITAS, referenced subnational inclusive education policy interventions. PRIORITAS supported 20 districts to include inclusive education in the district-specific strategic plans and budgets. PRIORITAS also supported partners in one province and two districts within another province to develop “declarations on inclusive education.” Local governments provided the cost to develop the declarations and associated plans, with PRIORITAS acting as the facilitator and resource partner.

RQ 2: TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Broader education activities have demonstrated expertise in producing learner-centered and learner-friendly materials to promote literacy development. Many activities supported, or continue to support, host governments to produce textbooks and supplementary readers for early grade learners. As part of their TLM package, activities also create learner-centered materials to support learners to strengthen literacy skills. For example, the Innovation for Improving Early Grade Reading Activity (IIEGRA) in Bangladesh developed materials such as flash cards, letter and number cards, word games, and word walls, while the Pakistan Reading Project developed a set of read-aloud big books, student workbooks, and syllable charts.

While two broader education activities specifically reference incorporating UDL into TLM design, many other TLMs are learner-centered and learner-friendly, which can reflect UDL principles. A core tenet of UDL is providing variability within the classroom and allowing learners to engage with lesson content in a number of different ways. Materials such as the ones listed above (e.g., flash cards and word games) can be used to motivate learners and engage them in different activities to practice key skills. Available documentation did not explicitly reference how these types of materials were used in classrooms. As a result, researchers were unable to determine, in many instances, whether activities designed TLMs with UDL in mind. This is likely because USAID has only recently made a strong commitment to embedding UDL principles within education activities, and many activities in the desk review sample closed before the publication of USAID’s 2018 Universal Design for Learning to Help All Children Read Toolkit.³³ Two activities, however, did reference UDL during TLM development, as shown in Exhibit 21.

³³ U.S. Agency for International Development. (2018). Universal Design for Learning to Help All Children Read. Online toolkit. Available at https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/sites/default/files/media/file/Literacy%20for%20All%20Toolkit_0.pdf

Exhibit 21. Broader Education Activities Referencing UDL During TLM Development

Activity	Examples of Referencing UDL During TLM Development
Learn to Read (Laos)	The activity used USAID’s Universal Design for Learning to Help All Children Read toolkit to develop an activity-specific inclusion checklist during the development of storybooks. ³⁴
LTA (Tajikistan)	The activity integrated principles of UDL during the development of syllabi and supplementary materials for Tajik and Russian languages. For example, the activity developed mathematical cards on measurements and geometric shapes and spelling cards for literacy that incorporated UDL principles. Additionally, the activity facilitated an information session on UDL with the Writers’ Union of Tajikistan during the development of decodable readers.

When broader education activities take a disability-inclusive lens during TLM development, they most commonly do it through the use of inclusion checklists (some self-developed and some adapted from existing USAID checklists) to ensure that persons with disabilities are portrayed in a positive light in illustrations and stories. Eight activities (35%) referenced the use of inclusion checklists when developing TLMs such as textbooks and supplementary readers. Two of those activities, ABC+ and Basa Pilipinas (both in the Philippines) specifically mentioned using USAID’s 2015 Guide for Strengthening Gender Equality and Inclusiveness in TLMs,³⁵ while others created new checklists or adapted existing ones. Most references to inclusion checklists, including those activities that used USAID’s 2015 Guide for Strengthening Gender Equality and Inclusiveness in TLMs, focused on portraying disabilities in a positive light in text and images. There were very limited references to activities using checklists to reflect on things such as large font, layout, color contrast, etc. Exhibit 22 and Exhibit 23 provide further examples of how activities used inclusion checklists.

After inclusion checklists, activities tend to focus on the development of TLMs in braille, sign language, and digital/audio formats to support learners with disabilities. While not overly common in broader education activities, braille, sign language, and digital/audio materials were the only other examples of TLM interventions to support learners with disabilities (after inclusion checklists). Four activities (17%) developed and distributed materials in braille,³⁶ three activities (13%) developed materials in local sign languages,³⁷ and two activities (9%) developed digital and audio materials specifically for learners with disabilities.³⁸ Exhibit 20 and Exhibit 21 provide details on selected interventions.

³⁴ Note that beyond descriptions in project documentation about the checklist, including targets for inclusive illustrations, the available documentation did not provide a thorough outline of the checklist.

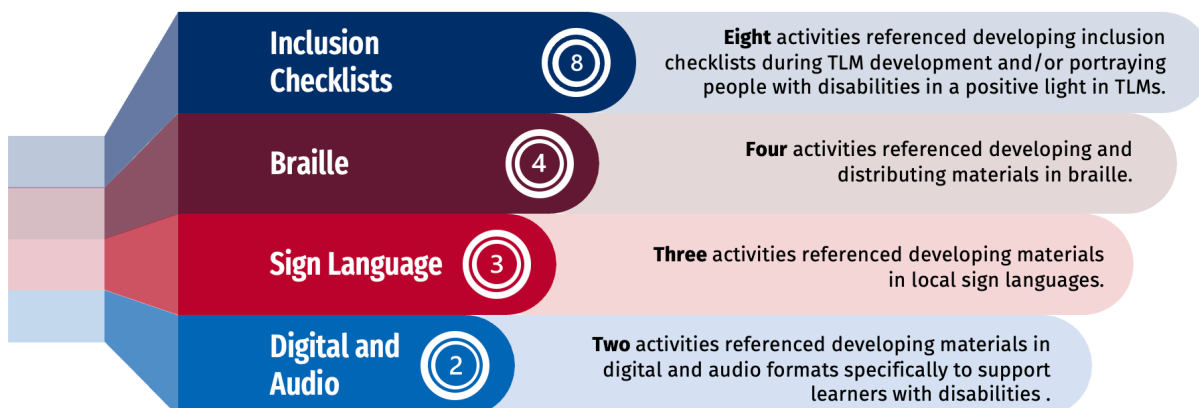
³⁵ U.S. Agency for International Development. (2015). A Guide for Strengthening Gender Equality and Inclusiveness in Teaching and Learning Materials. Available at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00kt5n.pdf

³⁶ Basa Pilipinas (Philippines), Read with Me (Tajikistan), LTA (Tajikistan), Quality Reading Project (Kyrgyz Republic)

³⁷ Early Grade Reading Project I (Nepal), Early Grade Reading Project II (Nepal), LTA (Tajikistan)

³⁸ Early Grade Reading Project I (Nepal), Early Grade Reading Project II (Nepal)

Exhibit 22. Most Common Examples of Disability-Inclusive TLM Development



*Note: total desk review sample = 23 broader education activities.

Exhibit 23. Details of Specific TLM Interventions to Support Learners with Disabilities

TLM Development to Support Learners with Disabilities	Selected Activity Examples
Inclusion Checklists	ABC+ (Philippines): The activity utilized USAID’s Guide for Strengthening Gender Equality and Inclusiveness in Teaching and Learning Materials to review existing TLMs and guide the development of almost 300 new supplementary readers. One criterion during review was that the material needed to have positive images and positive messages related to learners with disabilities.
Braille	Read with Me (Tajikistan): The activity collaborated with two local DPOs to adapt 18 titles to braille (1,560 copies) and distributed them to selected schools and one of the pedagogical universities. Additionally, the activity selected 16 titles and reprinted them in a large print format (5,760 copies) and distributed them to specialized schools for learners who are blind or have low vision, selected NGOs, and inclusive education resource centers established by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).
Sign Language	Early Grade Reading Program (EGRP) I and II (Nepal): The EGRP I collaborated with the Nepal Reading for All activity (disability-specific activity) on an RFP to produce 15 digital lessons in Nepali Sign Language (NSL). The EGRP II is currently continuing that intervention and developing digital lessons in NSL that will be uploaded to the Center for Education and Human Resource Development’s ³⁹ online learning portal.
Digital and Audio	EGRP I and II (Nepal): Started by the EGRP I, the follow-on activity is developing a series of digital lessons (with simplified content) for learners with dyslexia. The activity collaborated with the disability-specific Reading for All activity to source local experts who have knowledge of the Nepali curriculum and dyslexia.

RQ 2: SCREENING AND IDENTIFICATION

Screening interventions are not common within broader education activities; only three activities reported conducting screening with a focus on vision and hearing. Indonesia

³⁹ Under the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology.

PRIORITAS, Laos Learn to Read, and the Pakistan Reading Project were the only broader education activities (13%) that conducted screening interventions. Of these three activities, only the Laos Learn to Read solicitation referenced screening activities.⁴⁰ While little information was reported on Indonesia PRIORITAS’s tools, Laos Learn to Read adapted vision/hearing screening tools, and the Pakistan Reading Project used a variety of vision tools. Exhibit 24 presents a summary of screening efforts within broader education activities.

Exhibit 24. Summary of Screening Interventions within Broader Education Activities

Activity	Summary of Screening Efforts	Tool Used	Successes and Challenges
PRIORITAS (Indonesia)	The activity developed instruments to “help teachers and principals identify special needs students.” ⁴¹ The activity conducted a pilot in five schools, revised the tools, and then tested them in a further eight schools.	Unknown; not reported in activity documentation	The activity noted that “most teachers were able to use the instruments without difficulty.” ⁴² Note that no other information was provided about the instruments or results from the screening.
Learn to Read (Laos)	Through an inclusive education pilot, the activity provided training to teachers on vision and hearing screening and the Washington Group Questions (WGQ). The activity is currently seeking ██████████ to support screening efforts and to provide devices, such as eyeglasses and hearing aids.	Piloted vision screening (using a “broken wheel” chart where learners would identify which cars on the chart had a broken wheel) and hearing screening (where learners would identify the sound of a pen being clicked and the teacher making a soft “pssss” sound). The activity also used the WGQ Child Functioning Module (CFM).	The activity raised questions around whether the vision and hearing screening would have substantial impact on learning outcomes and whether it was appropriate to screen without providing follow-up support, such as eyeglasses or hearing aids. The activity also reported that teachers had significant challenges implementing the WGQ.
Pakistan Reading Project (Pakistan)	The activity supported screening interventions through sub-grants to two local organizations. One provided vision screening to 10,830 learners from 200 schools, a 3-day teacher training on how to conduct vision screening, and	The project provided support to a grantee for a “screening kit” for schools that consisted of a Snellen	An external evaluation ⁴⁷ found that the first grantee’s training was effective in that teachers were able to screen learners, and the provision of glasses supported learners’ literacy development.

⁴⁰ The Laos Learn to Read solicitation states that the successful applicant will produce a GESI Analysis and, following the analysis, will then produce a GIDAP. The solicitation states: “Due to resource constraints and depending on the results of the GESI analysis, one of the approaches to address social exclusion issues for children with mild disabilities could be screening for hearing or vision impairments that could be corrected with eyeglasses or hearing aids” (U.S. Agency for International Development. (2018). *Notice of Funding Opportunity No. 72048618RFA00005: USAID Learn to Read Activity*, p. 35)

⁴¹ RTI International. (2016). *USAID PRIORITAS Annual Report: October 2015-September 2016*. U.S. Agency for International Development.

⁴² RTI International. (2017). *USAID PRIORITAS Annual Report: October 2016-September 2017*. U.S. Agency for International Development.

⁴⁷ International Rescue Committee. (2018). *Evaluation of Complementary Reading Project Grant Initiatives*. U.S. Agency for International Development.

Activity	Summary of Screening Efforts	Tool Used	Successes and Challenges
	finally, provided glasses to 314 learners and supported referrals to ophthalmologists. The second grantee provided screening for vision and dyslexia and identified 173 learners with dyslexia. ⁴³	chart, ⁴⁴ Lea symbols, ⁴⁵ occluder with pinhole, ⁴⁶ magnifying sheets, and measuring tape. The project also provided support to another grantee, but the type of support is unknown.	

One other activity, Philippines Education Governance Effectiveness (EDGE), referenced referring a young learner to a health specialist to address a suspected eye problem. The activity then found a sponsor to cover medical expenses for the learner to receive corrective eye surgery.⁴⁸

When screening is coupled with appropriate follow-up support, including strengthening referral pathways, it may support learners’ literacy development. With a shared understanding of the purpose of screening between activities, USAID, and governments, there is an opportunity to strengthen the screening and identification cycle. Only one activity—the Pakistan Reading Project (see Exhibit 24 above)—directly made the link that screening, with the provision of appropriate follow-up support, led to increased learner outcomes. The activity’s external evaluation stated that this intervention (screening and provision of additional support) strengthened literacy outcomes for those learners; however, the external evaluation did not provide details on the actual learning outcomes. On the other hand, Laos Learn to Read utilized vision and hearing tools, and when piloting these tools, the activity identified one learner in 46 schools with a possible hearing-related disability. The activity questioned whether this type of screening intervention would have any significant impact on learning outcomes. This was supported by teachers, who reported that they would like more support with reading/writing instruction and classroom management. The activity then refined its teacher training program to focus more on “inclusive pedagogies and the use of active learning principles to meet the needs of all students.”⁴⁹ As Laos Learn to Read is currently ongoing, it is unclear whether the activity will conduct future screening interventions.

There are no references to broader education activities collaborating with other host government ministries (such as health or social services) on screening interventions, which may be a critical factor in sustainably scaling up these interventions. The three activities that reported on screening interventions made no mention of a collaboration with another government ministry on screening tool development or intervention implementation. In many countries, screening and referral pathways are an interagency responsibility, requiring, for example, close collaboration with local

⁴³ Activity documentation did not specify other details about Grantee 2’s screening interventions.

⁴⁴ The Snellen chart is a common chart to measure visual acuity. It consists of 11 rows of capital letters. The first line has one very large letter. Each row after has increasing numbers of letters that are smaller in size.

⁴⁵ Lea symbols are often used to measure visual acuity of children or those who cannot read and, therefore, may have difficulties identifying letters on the Snellen chart. Lea symbols consist of a square, circle, house, and apple.

⁴⁶ A pinhole occlude is an opaque disc with one or more small holes, or “pinholes,” in it. It is used to determine whether reduced vision is caused by a refractive error.

⁴⁸ Note that Philippines EDGE did not reference any other screening or identification interventions.

⁴⁹ Save the Children. (2021). *USAID Learn to Read Year 3 Annual Report: October 2020-September 2021*. U.S. Agency for International Development, p. 17. |

health clinics (that would generally be managed by the ministry of health). The Laos Learn to Read activity summarizes this sentiment:

Screening and provision of assistive devices must also be supported by the development and implementation of a referral pathway. The weakness and compartmentalized nature of the current system makes it difficult to develop a credible referral pathway and requires a partnership with the Ministry of Health that the activity currently does not have. Providing initial screening raises the hopes of students and parents [of] the students having difficulties in vision or hearing and sets expectations. If these expectations are not fulfilled, then trust is undermined.⁵⁰

The Cambodia ACR activity also shares this sentiment (see RQ 3), which suggests that, following a screening pilot, more resources must be provided to strengthen the local health system and support local clinics to work with schools to conduct screening.



RQ 2: INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES⁵¹

When broader education activities support teacher training programs, they tend to frame inclusion as providing additional support to struggling learners. Most broader education activities referenced integrating inclusive education into teacher training modules through a focus on struggling learners, including those who learn at different paces. This may not be surprising given that only three broader education activities conducted disability screening interventions. Only three broader education activities provided teacher training on specific disabilities, focused largely on learners who are blind or have low vision and learners who are deaf or hard of hearing. Exhibit 25 highlights general trends within teacher training on inclusion and disability inclusion.

⁵⁰ Save the Children. (2020). *USAID Learn to Read Year 2 Annual Report: October 2019-September 2020*. U.S. Agency for International Development, p. 96.

⁵¹ For this section, it is important to note that only one broader education activity—Indonesia PRIORITAS—had training modules available on USAID’s DEC. Therefore, the findings in this section are largely based on how activities describe teacher training interventions in annual, quarterly, and technical reports. This has limitations and prevented researchers from seeing exactly how activities addressed disability inclusion in training modules.

Exhibit 25. Highlights of Different Ways Broader Education Activities Integrate Disability Inclusion into Teacher Training

	General Focus on Inclusive Education	Specific Focus on Learners with Disabilities
 Pre-Service	<p>Philippines ABC+: Developed pre-service modules that integrated GESI principles; heavier emphasis on gender equality; no explicit focus on learners with disabilities but a focus on “diverse learners”</p>	<p>None reported</p>
 In-Service	<p>India Scaling Up Reading Intervention: Teacher training focused on supporting learners who learn at different paces</p> <p>Indonesia PRIORITAS: Revised teacher training modules to focus more on supporting individual differences in learners</p> <p>Laos Learn to Read: Embedded inclusive education within all teacher training sessions; focused not on labeling learners as having a disability but instead supporting learners who were not participating in the lesson</p> <p>Pakistan Reading Project: Primarily focused on supporting teachers to teach learners of different abilities</p> <p>Tajikistan Learn Together Activity: Incorporated UDL into teacher training modules</p>	<p>India Nurturing Early Literacy: Included a specific session in teacher training on mathematics pedagogy modifications for those with <i>learning disabilities</i></p> <p>Tajikistan Read With Me: Revised teacher training modules to include recommendations for learners with <i>visual or hearing impairments</i></p> <p>Kyrgyz Republic Quality Reading Project: Conducted specialized teacher training for teachers at schools for the <i>blind</i></p>

Note that the Basa Pilipinas (Philippines) activity included in its Year I Disability Plan a number of instructional techniques to support literacy development for learners with the following types of disabilities: dyslexia, dysgraphia, auditory processing, and visual processing. However, it was not clear from reviewing quarterly and annual reports whether these techniques made it into teacher training modules.

USAID has recently committed to include UDL in basic education activities, and while it is possible that many activities are training on UDL techniques without identifying them as such, UDL within [REDACTED] basic education activities in Asia remains an emerging practice. One broader education activity—the Tajikistan LTA—specifically referenced integrating UDL principles into teacher training modules. However, many other activities noted a focus within their teacher training modules on learner-centered approaches and understanding learner needs and strengths. While these approaches are largely reflective of UDL principles, there is an opportunity for broader education activities to re-frame teacher training and ground it in the principles of UDL, which is a practice that will likely increase with current and upcoming basic education activities.

RQ 2: ASSESSMENTS

For the purposes of this report, this section looks at summative assessments only, as available activity documentation did not make any reference to formative assessments for learners with disabilities.

Adapting assessments for early grade learners with disabilities is still an emerging practice in broader education activities; two broader education activities referenced such interventions, and one specifically excluded learners with disabilities in assessment. While many activities conducted assessments, such as EGRAs and EGMA, the Philippines Basa Pilipinas and Tajikistan LTA were the only two broader education activities that referenced adapting early grade assessments for learners with disabilities. However, as highlighted in Exhibit 26, the adaptations were not provided at scale.

Exhibit 26. Early Grade Assessment Adaptations in Broader Education Activities

Activity	Early Grade Assessment Adaptations
Basa Pilipinas (Philippines)	<p>As part of the activity’s Disability Inclusion Plan (produced in Year 1), Basa Pilipinas included some recommendations on how it would build in accommodations to the EGRA to support learners with disabilities. These accommodations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Laminate student tests in clear (and, when possible, in blue or green), and have the student choose which one they want to read from.• Have an index card available for students to follow the text as they read.• Ensure the print is large enough for the student to read and use Comic Sans Bold so the letters are familiar.”⁵² <p>It is unclear whether Basa Pilipinas used these recommendations in the activity’s EGRA; available activity documentation did not report on them.</p>
LTA (Tajikistan)	<p>As part of the activity’s standard EGMA, it also collaborated with the World Bank’s Inclusive Education Initiative to adapt two (out of the standard seven) EGMA sub-tests to reflect principles of Universal Design for Assessments (UDA). Examples of adaptations included providing images along with text, providing options for learners to write, speak, or point to their answer, and supporting learners by clarifying that they understood subtask instructions.</p>

Additionally, one broader education activity—the Scaling Up Reading Intervention in India—noted that it specifically excluded learners with disabilities from baseline, midline, and endline samples. For reasons that were not provided in the endline report, the activity noted the following:

During each data collection period (baseline and midline), 15 children from Grade 1 from each school were randomly selected if they satisfied the following conditions: did not have physical, sensory, and significant cognitive disabilities. (Footnote: We were not able to identify or exclude children with learning and/or reading disabilities as such disabilities are difficult to detect in Grade 1 and 2.)⁵³

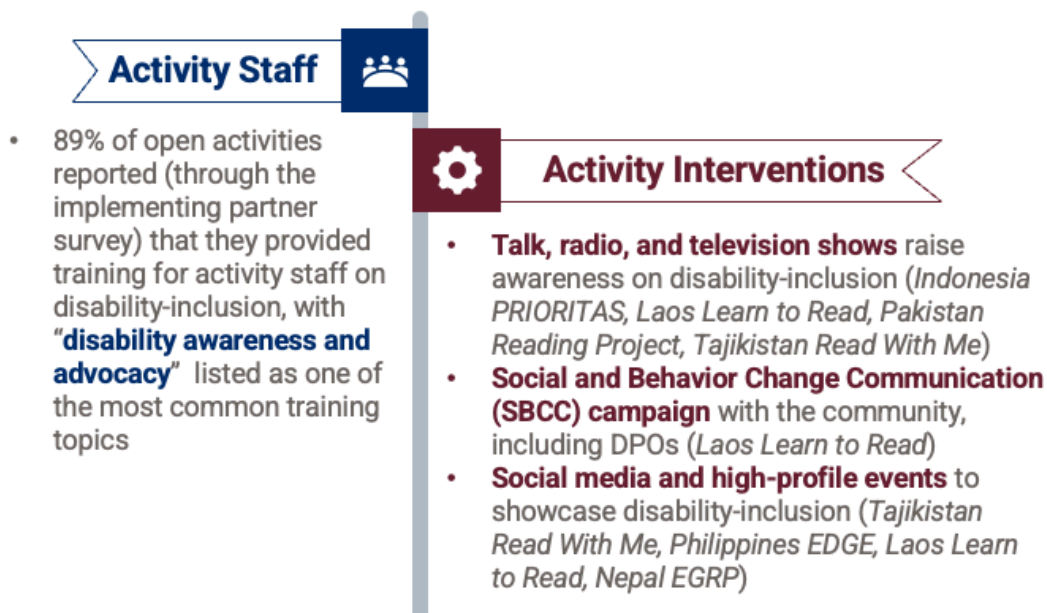
⁵² Education Development Center, Inc. (2013). *USAID Basa Pilipinas Annual Report. January 2013-December 2013*. U.S. Agency for International Development, p. 152.

⁵³ Room to Read. (2017). *USAID Scaling Up Reading Intervention (SERI) 2015 Demonstration School Endline Evaluation Report*. U.S. Agency for International Development, p. 16.

RQ 2: AWARENESS-RAISING

Awareness-raising for disability inclusion within broader education activities happens at two levels: (1) among activity staff, and (2) as part of activity interventions. Almost all open activities reported⁵⁴ providing training to staff on disability inclusion, and one of the most common topics was disability awareness and advocacy. Beyond awareness-raising efforts for activity staff, activities also utilize different channels to promote disability inclusion within schools and communities, such as radio, television, social media, and in-person events. Exhibit 27 presents a summary of awareness-raising interventions.

Exhibit 27. Summary of Awareness-Raising Interventions in Broader Education Activities



It is unclear what impact awareness-raising interventions had on activity beneficiaries (such as families, teachers, and community members), as activities did not report on any measured changes in attitudes or behaviors. Despite a range of awareness-raising interventions, it is difficult to understand their level of impact on community members and other activity beneficiaries. Beyond selected examples of beneficiaries expressing thanks for awareness-raising interventions, activities did not seem to report on whether attitudes or behaviors changed as a result of the interventions. This makes it difficult to know how interventions shifted mindsets and how this information could be used to design future interventions.

⁵⁴ Through the survey of implementing partners of ongoing activities.

RQ 2: FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Within broader education activities, most efforts to engage families of learners with disabilities occur as part of a larger intervention around family involvement; efforts are not necessarily targeted to disabilities. Four activities (17%) reported family (e.g., parent and caregiver) interventions that seemed to take into account marginalized populations, including learners with disabilities. These interventions primarily focus on supporting families to develop their child’s literacy skills outside of school. Exhibit 26 presents a summary of family interventions, with a focus on learners with disabilities. It is important to note that the interventions presented in Exhibit 28 do not capture all family-related interventions; rather, these are focused on interventions that had some connection to disability inclusion.

Exhibit 28. Summary of Selected Family Interventions

Activity	Summary of Family Intervention	Inclusion of Disability
Learn to Read (Laos)	The activity developed a Caregiver Training Manual, which was designed to support parents and caregivers of pre-primary learners. The manual included activities that parents and caregivers could conduct with their learners to develop their language and literacy skills.	While developing the manual, the activity reported that it considered the needs of parents and caregivers of learners with disabilities. ⁵⁵
Quality	In Tajikistan, the activity developed a	Through the guidebook, the activity encouraged parents and caregivers of children with disabilities to read stories to their learners and engage with school librarians and teachers.

One broader education activity implemented an intervention specifically designed for families of learners with disabilities, and this intervention was tied to a screening activity and focused solely on families of learners who are blind or have low vision. The Pakistan Reading Project supported local organizations to conduct vision screenings for learners (see [Screening](#) subsection for further details). As part of the screening, the activity engaged families of learners who are blind or have low vision and conducted sessions with them on how to support their learner’s education. These sessions also encouraged families to regularly engage with School Management Committees to stay up to date on their child’s learning progress.

⁵⁵ Note that activity reports did not provide detail on how the needs of families of learners with disabilities were considered in the manual.

DESK REVIEW RESEARCH QUESTION 3 FINDINGS⁵⁶

RQ 3: What type of disability-specific education programming—supported by USAID—is taking place in the region?

Disability-specific education activities conduct a range of interventions to support learners with disabilities. As expected, disability-specific activities are able to do a greater depth of disability-inclusive programming than broader education activities, as evidenced particularly in their work on needs assessments and policy support. Disability-specific activities conduct disability-focused needs assessments to inform interventions and provide inclusive education policy support at both the national and subnational levels. Similar to broader education activities, disability-specific activities seem to focus more on learners with sensory disabilities, including those who are blind or have low vision and those who are deaf or hard of hearing. This is particularly evident through TLM adaptations (e.g., braille and sign language) and assessment adaptations. Unlike broader education activities, disability-specific activities are more involved in screening and adapted assessment interventions. Both, however, are still emerging practices with several challenges to overcome.

RQ 3: NEEDS ASSESSMENTS AND SITUATIONAL STUDIES

All three disability-specific education activities utilize needs assessments and situational studies with clear recommendations to inform activity interventions. For example, in the situational analysis conducted for Cambodia’s ACR, one recommendation was to adapt EGRAs and school readiness tools for learners who use braille, large print, and Cambodian Sign Language, which the activity did. As expected, all three assessments and studies had a central focus on disability inclusion. Exhibit 29 presents an overview for each of the disability-specific activities.

Exhibit 29. Examples of Needs Assessments/Situational Studies Within Disability-Specific Activities

Activity	Needs Assessment/Situational Study
ACR (Cambodia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational Analysis of Children with Disabilities in Cambodia: The analysis established the status of learners with disabilities and the barriers they faced in accessing meaningful literacy education in Cambodia. The activity validated the analysis through a workshop with government officials, DPOs, other NGOs, and local organizations. • Inclusive Education Mobilization Strategy: The strategy established current work in disability screening and how inclusive education within the country has been mobilized thus far and identified the next steps to move forward.
Reading for All (Nepal)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rapid Situational Analysis: The analysis assessed the working mechanisms of provincial-level structures to help build relationships with key stakeholders. 2. Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practice Study: The study assessed the perception of reading skills for learners with disabilities among key national, subnational, and local stakeholders. 3. Government Capacity Self-Assessment: The activity developed a tool to be used by national, subnational, and local stakeholders working in education, disability, and inclusive education.
Gabay (Philippines)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Needs Assessment in Pilot Schools: The assessment included baseline testing of the deaf and hard of hearing EGRA. The assessment supported the implementation of the technology-assisted Filipino Sign Language (FSL) intervention and served as a baseline for the interventions.

⁵⁶ Findings in this section are presented against the framework from Exhibit 6.

RQ 3: POLICY SUPPORT

Disability-specific education activities provide initial support to government counterparts through disability sensitization awareness-raising trainings with government counterparts.

Disability-specific activities, more so than broader education activities, note government officials' understanding and attitudes toward disability and inclusive education principles as a critical factor in actualizing inclusive education and disability-related policies. Two disability-specific activities, Cambodia's ACR and the Gabay activity in the Philippines, indicated that they hosted disability sensitization workshops with government officials. For example, Gabay conducted two sessions of its Disability Sensitivity Awareness orientation for focal key persons, which included officials from the Department of Education and local government units (LGUs). The three-day training reportedly had high participation rates from the Department of Education and LGUs for both sessions.⁵⁷

Two disability-specific education activities work closely with subnational government and school stakeholders to integrate inclusive education into local education plans and policies.

Nepal's Reading for All worked with subnational government counterparts, in addition to having staff embedded within the Center for Education and Human Resource Development, to ensure that learners with disabilities and inclusive education principles were integrated into the School Sector Development Plan and School Improvement Plans at the district level. Additionally, the Gabay activity in the Philippines worked with LGUs to develop inclusive education policies for their area. Gabay also worked with school principals and teachers to establish quality indicators for monitoring inclusive education of learners with sensory disabilities; indicators were presented to the Department of Education for endorsement. The indicators were used to inform the development of 15 School Action Plans developed by principals and teachers to help identify and prioritize areas of need and develop interventions to address those areas that can be carried out in at least one school year and show improvement.

RQ 3: TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

All three disability-inclusive activities focus primarily on TLM adaptations for learners with sensory disabilities. All three disability-specific education activities produced TLMs for learners who are blind, have low vision, are deaf, or are hard of hearing. In addition, all three disability-specific activities collaborated with DPOs to produce these adapted TLMs. Exhibit 30 highlights examples of specific adaptations that activities made.

⁵⁷ Resources for the Blind, Inc. (2020). *USAID Gabay (Guide): Strengthening Inclusive Education for Blind, Deaf, and Deafblind Children; Year 1 Annual Report: July 2019-June 2020*. U.S. Agency for International Development; p. 69; Resources for the Blind, Inc. (2021). *USAID Gabay (Guide): Strengthening Inclusive Education for Blind, Deaf, and Deafblind Children; Year 2 Annual Report: July 2020-June 2021*. U.S. Agency for International Development; p. 63.

Exhibit 30. Examples of TLM Adaptations for Learners with Sensory Disabilities

Activity	Learners Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision	Learners Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
ACR (Cambodia)	Produced braille books for learners and braille teacher guides and easy-to-read versions of books.	Produced scripted videos of pattern and storybooks with Cambodian Sign Language and closed captions.
Reading for All (Nepal)	Developed supplementary reading materials and student workbooks in large print and braille.	Supported a local DPO to develop a NSL mobile application that includes words, mantras, and stories.
Gabay (Philippines)	Provided equipment to Inclusive Education Community Resource Centers to support learners who are blind or have low vision, including: braille translation software, JAWS screen reader software ⁵⁸ , braille embosser, portable electronic magnifiers, brailler, talking calculators, and braille papers.	Produced FSL videos, provided FSL dictionaries, and developed lesson plans and worksheets based on the FSL curriculum.

There are fewer examples of disability-specific activities adapting TLMs for other types of disabilities, such as intellectual or learning; reference to this work is limited. Nepal’s Reading for All activity reports on producing materials for learners with learning difficulties, but it is unclear exactly what these materials are. Examples of adapted TLMs produced by the activity that are not specific to a disability type include letter and number dice, picture and word cards, comprehension cubes, and sponge letters. Additionally, Cambodia’s ACR references that the activity’s adapted TLMs can also support learners who are struggling for unidentified reasons, such as intellectual or learning disabilities. The activity produced easy-to-read materials and materials that used additional text with pictures to aid these learners’ comprehension. However, information on how these types of adapted materials were distributed to or used by learners with non-sensory disabilities is limited. While host government education and disability policies⁵⁹ from Cambodia, Nepal, and the Philippines reference multiple disability types, when discussing adapted materials for learners, the policies most frequently referenced braille and sign language materials. This may partly explain why [REDACTED] disability-specific activities focus more on TLM adaptations for learners with sensory disabilities.

There is one example—in Nepal—where a disability-specific activity collaborated with a broader education activity to review and adapt TLMs. The disability-specific Reading for All activity was awarded when Nepal EGRP I and the follow-on activity, Nepal EGRP II, were already underway. As Reading for All initiated its start-up phase, it collaborated with EGRP I and II to ensure the development of digital lessons and TLMs (under EGRP I and II) accounted for the needs of learners with disabilities, specifically for learners using NSL or learners with dyslexia. Reading for All provided consultation on the use of NSL in materials and in the mitigation of dyslexia; the activity also recommended vendors to use

⁵⁸ JAWS is a computer screen reader program for Microsoft Windows that allows individuals who are blind or have low vision to read the screen.

⁵⁹ Cambodia Law on the Protection and the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2009); Nepal Persons with Disabilities Act (2017); Philippines Act No. 7277: Magna Carta for Disabled Persons (March 1992); Philippines Act No. 11650: Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act (March 2022)

to develop the materials. This work was initiated under EGRP I and carried through to EGRP II, where the activity produced 15 NSL TLMs for Grade I and 10 TLMs for learners with dyslexia in Grade I.

RQ 3: SCREENING AND IDENTIFICATION

Within disability-specific education activities, mapping disability services and supports is a key aspect of screening and identification tasks. The mapping of disability services and supports provides activities and stakeholders with information about available referral sources or organizations that can assist learners with disabilities. This is a critical aspect of screening because, without referral systems in place, the full impact of screening is limited. Referral sources and organizations can cover various areas of intervention, including, but not limited to, diagnostic and medical services, assistive technology and devices, government-supported social services, and connections with DPOs. All three disability-specific activities have undertaken, or plan to undertake, a disability services and supports mapping within intervention locations; they will make the information available to activity stakeholders and the community. A selected example of mapping disability services and supports is Cambodia’s ACR mapping. The mapping contributed to an online Disability Service Directory for Cambodia that provides information on local referral sources for further screening and medical services. Another example is Nepal’s Reading for All mapping of health, education, rehabilitation, and social security supports for persons with disabilities in all intervention districts. Reading for All’s mapping was completed by both local DPOs and NGO partners and shared with schools and parents.

Disability-specific education activities utilize screening and identification tools endorsed by the host government. Screening learners for disabilities is an emerging practice within education programming. As such, disability-specific activities utilize screening and identification tools that the host government endorses. Exhibit 31 presents two examples.

Exhibit 31. Examples of Government-Endorsed Screening Tools

Activity	Screening Tool
Reading for All (Nepal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WGQ CFM: The Government of Nepal had previously endorsed this tool, and it had already been used by other development partners in Nepal.
Gabay (Philippines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multi-Factor Assessment Tool (MFAT): MFAT is a tool supported through government policy, and the tool assesses Grade I learners against developmental milestones. The Philippines case study provides further information.

Within disability-specific education activities, teachers play a central role in conducting screening and identification activities before referral for additional services; however, this comes with significant challenges. All three disability-specific activities referenced the use of teachers to conduct screening interventions. The time dedicated to training teachers on using the screening tool varied by activity (ranging from 1 to 5 days). Training covered topics such as screening tool overview, disability characteristics, observation and interview techniques, data collection, referrals, assistive devices, and accommodations for learners with suspected disabilities. All three activities also referenced utilizing disability service mapping to support referral processes. However, documentation does not indicate how or how often teachers made referrals for additional disability supports and services. Additionally, when a referral was made, it is not always clear whether family members were able to act on it to secure additional supports and services. Activity documentation does indicate that the role of teachers in screening and identification interventions needs to be critically examined. Exhibit 32 highlights challenges reported by disability-specific activities.

Exhibit 32. Challenges Presented Regarding the Role of Teachers in Screening Interventions

Activity	Challenges in Using Teachers During Screening
ACR (Cambodia)	<p>The activity cites challenges with the ability of teachers to complete screening interventions, the accuracy of data, and cost-effectiveness, reporting that “[b]ased on the experience this year, the ACR-Cambodia project does not recommend continuing with teacher-led screening.”⁶⁰</p> <p>While the activity’s screening interventions did appear to yield more reliable results when teachers were monitored, monitoring is not always feasible, and the activity recommends future support be given to a sector that is better suited to support screening and identification, such as the health sector, and that resources be redirected to help teachers make instructional modifications for all learners.</p>
Reading for All (Nepal)	<p>The activity conducted a technical verification of the data collected through a screening intervention (largely led by teachers) and found that only 27.1% of learners were correctly flagged as having a functional limitation within the WGQ CMF domains and that a large percentage of learners with functional limitations were not flagged, raising concerns related to reliability and validity of the data collected.</p>

RQ 3: INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

All three disability-specific activities reference UDL or its principles within instructional training, but the extent to which it is explicitly trained on varies. Similar to broader education activities (see RQ 2), disability-specific activities are beginning to integrate UDL and its principles into their interventions but do not always explicitly state they are providing instructional training on UDL. Exhibit 33 highlights examples of how disability-specific education activities report on UDL in teacher training.

Exhibit 33. Disability-Specific Activities and References to UDL in Teacher Training

Activity	References to UDL in Teacher Training
ACR (Cambodia)	<p>Integrated UDL strategies into a 90-minute inclusive education session that was part of the activity’s larger teacher training package, which provided inclusion tips within training manuals and lessons to support learners with disabilities and struggling learners, such as how to engage learners through multiple means of representation.</p>
Reading for All (Nepal)	<p>Reported that training materials were developed based on adult-learning techniques and the USAID Universal Design for Learning to Help All Children Read Toolkit, focusing on learning styles and the importance of using differentiating instructional approaches to meet learners’ varied needs.</p>
Gabay (Philippines)	<p>Reported applying UDL principles when developing materials, tools, and interventions to address the accommodation needs of target beneficiaries; however, it is unclear exactly what this looked like.</p>

Disability-specific activities provide instructional training on general inclusive education principles and specific disability instructional practice; however, instructional interventions to support learners who are deaf or hard of hearing seem to receive more attention.

⁶⁰ RTI International. (2019). *USAID/Cambodia – All Children Learning: Hearing and Vision Disability Screening Report*. U.S. Agency for International Development, p. 12.

Disability-specific activities take a twin-track approach to address instructional practices by providing (1) general inclusive education support, and (2) disability-specific education support. Two activities, Cambodia’s ACR and Nepal’s Reading for All, indicated a focus on both general inclusive education and disability-specific instructional practices within training interventions. However, reporting from all three disability-specific activities suggested greater attention was given to instructional interventions, including training, for learners who are deaf or hard of hearing. It is not explicitly clear in project documentation why this is. Exhibit 34 highlights interventions across all three activities for learners who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Exhibit 34. Selected Disability-Specific Instructional Interventions for Learners Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Activity	Examples of Selected Interventions for Learners Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
ACR (Cambodia)	Developed the specialized Bridge Program ⁶¹ to address the needs of learners who are deaf or hard of hearing. This intervention supported selected activity beneficiaries, included targeted coaching support to learners and their families through volunteer teachers, and provided lessons on basic Cambodian Sign Language to families.
Reading for All (Nepal)	Developed a 10-day training on NSL for resource centers; developed an NSL mobile app; and conducted advocacy work with teachers to use the NSL dictionary to help with reading acquisition.
Gabay (Philippines)⁶²	Modified the existing curriculum for learners who are deaf in Grades 1–3 and conducted trainings with educators for learners who are deaf that centered on the modified curriculum; also developed and conducted an introductory FSL training and a follow-up training on reading development for learners who are deaf.

⁶¹ Cambodia’s ACR Bridge Program was a targeted intervention to address the specific needs of learners who are deaf or hard of hearing who had never before accessed school; it was not part of the initial program design, but a response to a need identified in the field. The Bridge Program focused on helping learners develop Cambodian Sign Language communication skills and pre-school academic skills. The Bridge Program served 13 learners who are deaf or hard of hearing.

⁶² Note that Gabay focused its first and second year of implementation on interventions to support learners who are deaf and, in the second year, began introducing interventions to support learners who are blind.

RQ 3: ASSESSMENTS

When adapting EGRAs, disability-specific activities primarily adapt and implement assessments for learners who are blind or have low vision and learners who are deaf or hard of hearing. All three disability-specific education activities adapted and conducted EGRAs for learners who are blind or have low vision and learners who are deaf or hard of hearing. While assessment adaptation is still an emerging practice, Exhibit 35 presents the adaptations reported by Nepal Reading for All and ACR-Cambodia.⁶³ Exhibit 35 highlights that both the Reading for All and ACR-Cambodia adapted EGRAs provided more time than a standard EGRA allows for learners to respond to subtask items. This included both the overall time of subtasks (e.g., 3 or 5 minutes instead of 1 minute) as well as the amount of time allowed to respond to each item (e.g., 5 seconds instead of 3 seconds). For the deaf and hard of hearing EGRA, ACR-Cambodia used tablets to show a video of a person signing the comprehension story as well as the Cambodian Sign Language vocabulary subtask. Additionally, letter identification and word reading subtasks within ACR-Cambodia's braille EGRA presented content in a list format instead of a typical grid format. It is unclear whether Nepal Reading for All's braille EGRA did the same.

⁶³ Researchers did not have access to Gabay's adapted EGRA. Additionally, information about the Nepal Reading for All adapted EGRA is based on reporting and instruments from a pretest conducted in 2019.

Exhibit 35. Assessment Adaptations Within Nepal Reading for All and ACR-Cambodia

Subtask	Blind/Low Vision				Deaf/Hard of Hearing			
	Reading for All Nepal		ACR-Cambodia		Reading for All Nepal		ACR-Cambodia	
	Item detail	Timing	Item detail	Timing	Item detail	Timing	Item detail	Timing
Expressive vocabulary			Learner asked to say as many names of foods and animals as possible, up to 20 each	Untimed			Learner asked to sign as many names of foods and animals as possible, up to 20 each	Untimed
Listening/sign comprehension	20-word passage read aloud by assessor, 3 factual questions	Untimed	Short passage read aloud by assessor, 5 questions (3 factual, 2 inferential)	Untimed	20-word passage, 3 factual questions	Untimed	Passage and 5 comprehension questions (3 factual, 2 inferential) in Cambodian Sign Language shown on tablet video	Untimed
Letter sound/name/sign identification	Give <u>sound</u> of 36 consonants and 13 vowels	3 minutes total Item skip: 5 seconds	Give <u>name</u> of 33 consonants and 23 vowels / mix of 100 letters	3 minutes for each set of letters Item skip: 5 seconds	Give <u>sign</u> of 36 consonants and 13 vowels	3 minutes Item skip: 5 seconds	Give <u>sign</u> of 33 consonants and 23 vowels / mix of 100 letters	3 minutes for each set of letters Item skip: 5 seconds
Letters with matras (letter diacritics) sound/sign	Give <u>sound</u> of 36 letters	3 minutes Item skip: 5 seconds			Give <u>sign</u> of 36 letters	3 minutes Item skip: 5 seconds		
Cambodian Sign Language Vocabulary							20 signed words shown on tablet video, learners asked to match with picture	Untimed

Subtask	Blind/Low Vision				Deaf/Hard of Hearing			
	Reading for All Nepal		ACR-Cambodia		Reading for All Nepal		ACR-Cambodia	
	Item detail	Timing	Item detail	Timing	Item detail	Timing	Item detail	Timing
Familiar word reading/signing	36 words	3 minutes Item skip: 5 seconds	50 words	3 minutes Item skip: 5 seconds	36 words	3 minutes Item skip: 5 seconds	20 words	3 minutes Item skip: 5 seconds
Reading/signing passage	Passage of 30 words	5 minutes Item skip: 5 seconds	Passage of 6 l words	5 minutes Item skip: 5 seconds	Passage of 30 words	5 minutes Item skip: 5 seconds		
Reading comprehension	5 questions (4 factual and 1 inferential)	Untimed	5 questions (4 factual and 1 inferential)	Untimed	5 questions (4 factual and 1 inferential)	Untimed		

Adapting EGRAs for learners with disabilities is a highly collaborative process that includes diverse stakeholders, including persons or organizations of persons with disabilities and disability practitioners. As standards do not yet exist on adapting assessments for learners who are blind or have low vision and learners who are deaf or hard of hearing, activities take a highly collaborative approach to develop appropriate adaptations. Activities leverage the lived experience of DPOs and knowledge from disability practitioners to help identify adaptations that will create a more accessible assessment based on learner needs because of their disability. For example, the Gabay activity facilitated an adaptation workshop for the deaf and hard of hearing EGRA. Gabay’s adaptation workshop included 13 consultants who are deaf, DPOs, and Department of Education and Special Education representatives.

RQ 3: AWARENESS-RAISING

Disability-specific activities address awareness-raising through training opportunities and field visits with key stakeholders. Disability-specific education activities leverage opportunities to integrate disability sensitization along with success stories of learners with disabilities and inclusive education to shift perception. Disability sensitization within training activities typically focuses on disability, disability rights, laws and policies, barriers faced by learners with disabilities, and the development of action plans or ways to support the inclusion of learners with disabilities within schools. For example, Gabay conducted a 3-day orientation with project staff and partners and a 2-day workshop for key focal personnel, including officials from the Department of Education, LGUs, parents, DPOs, and local CSOs.

Disability-specific activities highlight learners with disabilities, in TLMs, public service announcements and campaigns, and social media posts. All three disability-specific education activities indicated using positive imagery of learners with disabilities in materials and social media to promote representation and highlight learners with disabilities. For example, Gabay’s “I AM ABLE” advocacy campaign developed flyers and brochures aligned with its Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training Module. The materials were developed with and validated by multiple stakeholders, including government officials and DPOs. Gabay’s reports indicate that the project plans to distribute over 3,000 copies of the “I AM ABLE” materials to project sites to be used to raise awareness of learners with sensory disabilities.

RQ 3: FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Within disability-specific education activities, family interventions seem to serve a dual purpose: to inform activity interventions and build awareness. Families participate in workshops and trainings to (1) inform specific activity interventions, and (2) learn about disability awareness and how they can support their child’s literacy development. An example of the former is Gabay’s close collaboration with family members to develop training, participate in training, and form parent-teacher associations. Gabay reported soliciting individual family involvement and a parent-led DPO in designing and providing feedback on the activity’s training materials. Families are also consistently listed as training participants in the documentation for most training activities. An example of the latter is Nepal’s Reading for All’s various interventions with parent-teacher associations. One intervention was a half-day orientation on Nepal’s education acts (including inclusive education acts), policies on services for persons with disabilities, and the role and responsibilities of parent-teacher associations and school management committees.

Disability-specific education activities support families of learners with disabilities by encouraging enrollment in and attendance at school. Disability-specific activities take both a

general and targeted approach to addressing the enrollment and attendance of learners with disabilities. As a general approach, disability-specific education activities have produced materials such as social media posts, flyers, and brochures that are shared with the general community during events or directly with families of learners with disabilities to encourage the enrollment of learners with disabilities. As an example of a targeted approach, Nepal’s Reading for All held enrollment campaigns in two districts, providing counseling support and facilitating enrollment into schools. The activity’s partners also encouraged families to send their learners to school after enrollment.

Disability-specific activities utilize coaching models to support families of learners with disabilities to connect with teachers.⁶⁴ Disability-specific education activities coach and mentor families of learners with disabilities to encourage literacy skill development. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, activities were implementing strategies to support families to read to their learners at home. For example, Cambodia’s ACR used social mobilizers to call and check in with families. Another example is Nepal’s Reading for All activity, which also used social mobilizers to coordinate a meeting once a month for all families of learners with disabilities and a once-per-term meeting for all families of learners with and without disabilities, as a way for family members to connect with teachers and each other.

DESK REVIEW: RESEARCH QUESTION 4 FINDINGS

RQ 4: How inclusive was USAID’s COVID-19 pandemic response within education programming for learners with disabilities within the region?

Many activities—both broader and disability-specific—had to adapt interventions during the COVID-19 pandemic. The most common adaptation was the development of programming and TLMs for distance learning while schools were closed. Several activities incorporated accessibility features into their distance learning packages, including sign language videos, closed captioning, and audio descriptions within digital content. Disability-specific activities also built upon their existing family interventions to provide support to families of learners with disabilities during school closures.

In March 2020, the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic caused development activities to pivot certain interventions to stop the spread of the virus and ensure the safety of beneficiaries, staff, and communities. During this time, 12 activities⁶⁵ reviewed in this study were either in work planning or implementation phases, three of which were disability-inclusive education projects. Documentation reviewed provided insight on how activities adapted throughout the evolving COVID-19 situation, and two activities⁶⁶ provided specific COVID-19 reports for review.

Activities integrated accessibility features into TLMs to be used by learners for at-home and distance learning. For example, to support learners at home, activities expanded or integrated activities such as television and radio programming, digital and social media lessons, and provision of at-home supplementary reading materials to project beneficiaries. Examples of this can be seen in both broader education and disability-specific activities, as highlighted in Exhibit 36.

⁶⁴ Note that coaching and mentoring supports provided to families during the COVID-19 pandemic is addressed in RQ 4.

⁶⁵ Activities include ABC+, ACR-Cambodia, EGRP, EGRP II, Education for Excellence, Gabay, India Partnership for Early Learning, LTA, Learn to Read, Okuu Keremet!, Read with Me, Reading for All, and Time to Read

⁶⁶ ACR-Cambodia and Reading for All Nepal

Exhibit 36. Highlights of Accessibility Features During COVID-19

Activity Type	Activity	Accessibility Features of Distance Learning Interventions during COVID-19
Broader Education Programs	EGRP I and II (Nepal)	Both activities embedded closed captioning, NSL videos, and audio descriptions into digital content.
	ABC+ (Philippines)	The activity integrated imagery of persons with disabilities into distance learning materials and content and invited guests with disabilities to partake in radio and television programming to ensure representation.
Disability-Specific	ACR (Cambodia)	The activity shared and posted digital lessons that provided inclusion tips on how to support learners with disabilities or struggling learners. In addition, the activity supported caregivers to access digital lessons via Facebook or Facebook Messenger Groups, through a call line, or with the support of a literacy coach or teacher.
	Reading for All (Nepal)	The activity produced at-home learning packages to be used by learners and families; hard copies of at-home learning packages were delivered to learners, and digital copies were accessible via the Center for Education and Human Resource Development. The activity also developed digital learning content that was uploaded to Android tablets and distributed to resource classrooms and learning facilitators to support learners and mitigate learning loss.

Disability-specific education activities built upon existing family engagement interventions to provide direct support for at-home and distance learning. Engagement with families is a central component of all three disability-specific education activities (see RQ 3). The Gabay activity in the Philippines continued to work closely with family members, stating they “are Gabay’s crucial partner in empowering children with sensorial disabilities.”⁶⁷ An example of Gabay’s close work with families was providing three tablets to parents of blind learners to support their learning during school closures. Nepal’s Reading for All activity also provided families public service announcements on preventative and safety measures for COVID-19 and provided direct counseling to 30 families of learners with disabilities.

Activities shifted to virtual or blended training modalities to adhere to health and safety guidelines, but it is unclear how adapted trainings addressed the needs of learners with disabilities. Given the nature of the COVID-19 virus, activities needed to employ health and safety measures when conducting training activities to slow the virus’s spread. Activities reported that the most common shift was to virtual and blended training modalities; however, activities did not report whether the shift to virtual and blended training modalities specifically addressed the needs of learners with disabilities. Additional information is provided in the case studies.

⁶⁷ Resources for the Blind, Inc. (2021). *USAID Gabay (Guide): Strengthening inclusive education for blind, deaf, and deafblind children Year 2 Annual Report: July 2020-June 2021*. U.S. Agency for International Development. t

DESK REVIEW: RESEARCH QUESTION 5 FINDINGS

RQ 5: How has USAID addressed the education of learners with disabilities within crisis and conflict affected settings within the region?

The sample of activities included in the desk review do not operate in conflict affected zones and make no reference to a conflict environment. While there are selected examples of activities operating in crises affected environments, activities make no reference as to how they address the education of learners with disabilities in those environments. The case studies provide further information.

For the purposes of this report, researchers define⁶⁸ “crisis affected” as areas experiencing natural disasters, climate vulnerabilities, and crime. Note that the COVID-19 pandemic is considered a crisis but is reported on in RQ 4. Researchers also define “conflict affected” as areas experiencing armed conflict.

Documented examples of broader education and disability-specific activities’ approaches to disability inclusion within crisis and conflict affected settings in Asia are extremely limited.

Available activity documentation and survey results did not reference how USAID and implementing partners address the education of learners with disabilities within crisis and conflict affected settings in the region. While the COVID-19 pandemic is a global crisis that has impacted activities and beneficiaries, for this review, the pandemic was not classified as a crisis as it has a dedicated research question (see RQ 4). Gabay, the disability-specific activity in the Philippines, indicated that it suspended and then subsequently delayed activity implementation for two activity sites due to the eruption of a volcano in the area, although it did not explicitly call the volcanic eruption a crisis. Furthermore, the activity did not report on the perceived or known impact of the volcanic eruption on activity beneficiaries who were learners with disabilities. Additionally, Basa Pilipinas reported that USAID Philippines allocated special assistance to the activity to provide education recovery assistance to 17 school districts following Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) in 2013. The activity provided furniture (e.g., desks, chairs, blackboards) and TLMs as well as school safety and first aid training to education officials and teachers. However, reports did not indicate how, or if, these efforts specifically addressed the needs of learners with disabilities.

⁶⁸ U.S. Agency for International Development. (2017). *Essentials for Education in Crisis and Conflict*. Online manual: <https://www.eccnetwork.net/sites/default/files/media/file/ParticipantManualLAC-Apr-25.pdf>

DESK REVIEW: RESEARCH QUESTION 6 FINDINGS

RQ 6: How does education programming within the Asia region address the intersectionality of disability and other marginalizing factors such as sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, linguistic minorities, and displaced persons within the region?

Available activity documentation provides little information on how education programming within the Asia region addresses the intersectionality of disability with other marginalizing factors, such as sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, linguistic minorities, and displaced persons, for activity beneficiaries.⁶⁹ Within activity reports, the most referenced intersections occur between disability and sex and disability and linguistic minorities, primarily sign-based languages; however, these discussions are limited. Overall, and as shown through other sections of this report, activities have, in recent years, considered disability identities within activity design, implementation, and monitoring. However, this shift is still in its infancy and largely does not consider intersectionality of disability with other marginalizing factors. The case studies provide additional information.

Disability often falls under the social inclusion aspect of gender and social inclusion plans for activities, yet it is still largely discussed in isolation and not in relation to other intersecting identities. While some activities do integrate disability within GESI-type analyses (see RQs 2 and 3), there was little evidence to suggest that these analyses discussed disability and other intersecting identities. It still appears that marginalizing identities (e.g., disability, gender, linguistic minorities, etc.) are discussed in isolation within these analyses.

Activities typically do not address the intersectional identities of learners with disabilities within interventions. Within activity reports, the most referenced intersections occur between disability and sex and disability and linguistic minorities, primarily sign languages. When referencing sex and disability, activities commonly reference support for girls with disabilities when designing, implementing, and monitoring interventions. When referencing disability and linguistic minorities, both broader and disability-specific activities reference the use of country-specific signed-based languages to support learners who are deaf or hard of hearing. As a selected example, Nepal's EGRP I and II decided to develop 15 digital NSL lessons available for learners and teachers via the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology's Center for Education and Human Resource Development webpage.

Activity documentation does reference marginalizing factors, including sex, linguistic and religious minorities, nomadic communities, and castes; however, when referenced, these marginalizing factors largely remain separate from disability identities. Finally, it is worth noting that the review of available activity documentation did not find any references to the marginalizing factors of gender identity, sexual orientation, or displaced persons.

DESK REVIEW: RESEARCH QUESTION 7 FINDINGS

See the case study section of this report for emerging practices identified in Tajikistan, the Philippines, and Bangladesh.

⁶⁹ For this research question, sex is a biologically defined characteristic, whereas *gender identity* is a social construct.

DESK REVIEW: RESEARCH QUESTION 8 FINDINGS

RQ 8: How does USAID and/or its implementing partners measure the progress and impact of inclusive education programming within the region?

Assessing how activities measure disability-inclusive education is challenging as most MEL plans were unavailable and some activities did not provide a full update on MEL indicators in annual and quarterly reports. However, the available information indicates that when broader education activities include disability-inclusive MEL indicators (22% or five activities) they generally tend to focus on output indicators (e.g., number of teachers trained on inclusive education or number of TLMs provided that are inclusively representative). Furthermore, broader education activities often report doing more disability-inclusive education interventions that are not captured by their MEL indicators. Finally, there is no evidence of broader education activities disaggregating MEL indicators by disability, with the most obvious ramification being the inability for broader education activities to measure learning outcomes (and progress) of learners with disabilities. While disability-specific activities generally include a balance between output and outcome indicators, some of these do rely on screening data; as highlighted in RQ 3, screening can be a complex process.

While some broader education activities include both output and outcome indicators related to disability inclusion, they are more likely to report on outputs. Additionally, some output indicators measure inclusive representation but not inclusion. Five broader education activities (22%) include some specific MEL indicators related to disability and disability inclusion. It is important to note that for some activities MEL plans were unavailable, and some activities did not provide a full update on MEL indicators in annual and quarterly reports. As a result, this section is based on information available in annual and quarterly reports.

Exhibit 37 presents a summary of available MEL indicators across broader education activities that included reference to disability and disability inclusion. As shown in Exhibit 37, outcome and output indicators generally referred to the following:

- **Outcome** measures the participation of learners with disabilities in schools.
- **Output** measures the development and use of TLMs that inclusively represent diverse populations, distribution of primary education packages to schools, and provision of training (administrators and/or teachers).

Exhibit 37. Summary of Broader Education MEL Indicators Referencing Disability and Disability inclusion

Activity	Type	Indicator
PRIORITAS (Indonesia)	Outcome	Number of districts that demonstrate an increase in participation rates of students with special educational needs in mainstream schools
	Outcome, <i>Custom</i> (appears to be dropped after Year 3)	Number of opportunities for vulnerable children and special needs children in U.S. Government (USG)–supported primary and secondary schools (learners with special needs reached by the project)
Okuu Keremet! (Kyrgyz Republic)	Outcome ⁷⁰	Percentage of primary grade learners targeted for USG assistance who have the appropriate variety of decodable, leveled, and supplementary readers in the language of instruction with inclusive representation of diverse populations
	Output	Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other TLMs that are inclusively representative provided with USG assistance
Learn to Read (Laos)	Output	Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other TLMs that are inclusively representative provided with USG assistance.
	Output, <i>Custom</i>	Number of schools that received newly developed primary package for non-Lao speakers and students with mild disabilities
Basa Pilipinas (Philippines)	Output, <i>Custom</i>	Number of teachers who teach students with disabilities trained
LTA⁷¹ (Tajikistan)	Output	Percentage of primary grade learners targeted for USG assistance who have the appropriate variety of reading materials in the language of instruction with inclusive representation of diverse populations

Three output indicators (see above) measure the number of TLMs that are “inclusively representative.” As highlighted in RQ 2, many broader education activities report using an inclusive lens while developing TLMs to ensure that persons with disabilities (and other marginalized groups) are displayed positively in both text and illustrations. It is important to note, though, that these indicators largely measure inclusive representation in texts and images in TLMs, and it is not clear whether they measure other aspects including accessibility features (such as font size/style, color contrast, image descriptions) or UDL principles.

⁷⁰ Note that the activity presents this indicator as an outcome indicator; however, it appears to be an output indicator.

⁷¹ Note that the LTA in Tajikistan is planning to include disability-inclusive MEL indicators in 2022; however, these indicators were unavailable on USAID’s DEC at the time of reporting. Further information on the LTA’s plans for disability-inclusive MEL indicators can be found in the case study section.

There is no evidence of broader education activities disaggregating any MEL indicators by disability, despite some activities reporting plans to do so. As such, this means that broader education activities are not measuring learning outcomes for learners with disabilities.

USAID's reporting guidance⁷² states that basic education activities should disaggregate person-level indicators by disability if learners with disabilities are targeted as beneficiaries or sub-beneficiaries.⁷³ No broader education activities disaggregated MEL indicators by disability; however, some did specifically note they intended to disaggregate. For example:

- **Okuu Keremet! (Kyrgyz Republic):** States that indicator 19 ES.1-45 will be disaggregated by disability. This indicator is the percentage of primary grade learners targeted for USAID assistance who have the appropriate variety of decodable, leveled, and supplementary readers in the language of instruction with inclusive representation of diverse populations. Although the activity reported numbers of learners and percentage of learners who received TLMs, these were not disaggregated by disability.
- **Sindh Reading Project (Pakistan):** States in its MEL plan⁷⁴ that the activity will disaggregate multiple indicators by disability; however, there was no evidence of such disaggregation in subsequent reports.
- **Basa Pilipinas (Philippines):** States that it will disaggregate by disability where possible; however, there was no evidence of such disaggregation in reports.

Current MEL indicators do not always capture the extent of disability-inclusive interventions that broader education activities implement. As highlighted in RQ 2, many broader education activities implemented a range of disability-inclusive interventions; however, only four (22%) had MEL indicators that reference disability inclusion. The LTA in Tajikistan represents just one example of a missed opportunity to report on inclusion. The activity supported over 800 summer reading camps for more than 30,000 learners, and in the narrative of its 2021 annual report, it noted that 439 of those participants were learners with disabilities. However, this does not seem to be reported in official MEL indicators. Similarly, other broader education activities provided significant policy support on inclusive education, conducted disability awareness-raising activities, and provided training on inclusive education; however, these efforts were not captured in official MEL data.

Disability-specific activities use both output and outcome indicators to measure disability inclusion. Two disability-specific activities—Reading for All and Gabay—use a mix of both output and outcome indicators, while ACR primarily uses output indicators. Exhibit 38 presents selected examples. The challenge with primarily using output indicators is that there are fewer opportunities to measure the learning progress of learners with disabilities. An additional challenge, as referenced in the paragraph below, is that often MEL indicators within disability-specific activities rely heavily on screening data for reporting. The complexity of implementing screening interventions (see RQ 3) can, therefore, make it challenging to report on certain MEL indicators.

⁷² U.S. Agency for International Development. (2020). How-To Note: Collecting data on disability prevalence in education programs. Online resource: <https://www.edu-links.org/index.php/resources/how-note-collecting-data-disability-education> ; U.S. Agency for International Development. (2021). Education Reporting Guidance – Fiscal Year 2022. Online resource: https://www.edu-links.org/sites/default/files/media/file/FY22_Guidance_Document_111021_-508_0.pdf

⁷³ Note that earlier guidance (pre-2020) does not seem to place a heavy emphasis on disaggregation by disability.

⁷⁴ Pakistan Sindh Reading Project, MEL Plan, 2014

Exhibit 38. Selected Examples of MEL Indicators in Disability-Specific Activities

Activity	Type	Indicator
ACR (Cambodia)	Output, <i>Custom</i>	Number of students with disabilities assessed using adapted assessment methods (including from partner organizations and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport [MoEYS])
	Output, <i>Custom</i>	Number of MoEYS and partner organization staff trained on harmonized EGRA and/or adapted assessment for students with disabilities
Reading for All (Nepal)	Outcome, <i>Custom</i>	Number of educators trained on NSL skills who demonstrate increased NSL skills
	Output, <i>Custom</i>	Number of Government of Nepal officials trained in inclusive education
Gabay (Philippines)	Outcome, <i>Custom</i>	Number of teachers practicing new teaching modules/methods
	Output, <i>Custom</i>	Number of learners using assistive learning devices

Disability-specific activities take different approaches to measuring disability-related MEL indicators and disaggregating by disability, including relying on screening data and using country prevalence estimates. Both approaches come with challenges, which may provide some insight as to why disability measurement is not as common in broader education activities. Two disability-specific activities—Cambodia’s ACR and Nepal’s Reading for All—use different approaches when measuring MEL indicators and disaggregating by disability. For example, ACR uses a prevalence estimate of 10%, as the activity notes that the screening intervention identified low numbers of learners and the activity holds the assumption that learners with disabilities are in every classroom. On the other hand, Reading for All uses screening results; however, challenges with screening and the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the activity’s ability to report on many disability-specific MEL indicators.

Three broader education activities (13%) reported conducting screening interventions (see RQ 2 for more detail). Among these three activities, Laos Learn to Read has the most in-depth screening intervention—including using the WGQ as well as conducting hearing and vision screenings. The activity faced challenges with both screening approaches (which were administered by teachers) and reported that they identified low numbers of learners during that process. Additionally, during the initial GESI analysis, the activity reported difficulties in finding existing prevalence data, stating, “There was not enough data available on children with disabilities or student ethnicity from the district education office as well as from the sample schools, which meant that this group of vulnerable children was underrepresented in the overall GESI analysis.”⁷⁵ This example may partly explain why disability-inclusive MEL indicators are not as common in broader education activities.

⁷⁵ Save the Children. (2021). *USAID Learn to Read Year 3 Annual Report: October 2020-September 2021*. U.S. Agency for International Development, p. 52. 2

CASE STUDY: TAJIKISTAN



This case study presents a deeper dive into disability-inclusive education in Tajikistan, primarily from the context of USAID/Tajikistan’s basic education programming. Exhibit 39 provides an overview of USAID/Tajikistan’s ongoing basic education activity based on the activity’s intermediate results.

Exhibit 39. USAID’s Ongoing Basic Education Activity in Tajikistan

USAID Ongoing Activity	Activity Dates	Overview
LTA ⁷⁶	October 2020–September 2025	<p>Broader education activity that aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve instruction and availability of supplemental materials related to reading subjects • Improve instruction and availability of supplemental math materials • Increase government capacity to develop and implement cohesive primary education policies and programs

SUMMARY

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan is committed to disability-inclusive education and finding ways to ensure that all learners with disabilities, regardless of type or perceived level, have access to education. This commitment is reflected in the country’s evolving policies, plans, and discussions with key stakeholders. Over the past several years, USAID/Tajikistan has been working to support the government in achieving its vision for inclusive education by integrating more disability inclusion elements within its broader basic education portfolio. The Mission has followed, and supported, the government’s approach to progressive realization of disability inclusion. Initially, USAID/Tajikistan’s support focused on rehabilitation (through prosthetics and orthotics) and then almost entirely on learners who are blind or have low vision. However, recent [redacted] shift [redacted] toward supporting the education of learners with diverse types of disabilities in inclusive settings within general education schools. Currently, the USAID LTA integrates UDL and social-emotional learning (SEL) to support inclusion as well as develops inclusive television programming and designs inclusive TLMs that go beyond inclusive representation of learners with disabilities, in images and text. Additionally, LTA engages in policy discussions to support the government to progressively realize disability-inclusive education.

Progressive Realization (in inclusive education): Described in the CRPD, progressive realization recognizes that it takes time for education systems to shift to realize inclusion for learners with disabilities and supports a phased approach.

USAID’s basic education programming in Tajikistan is an example of [redacted] support the host government’s progressively evolving vision of disability inclusion and to implement practical and phased interventions.

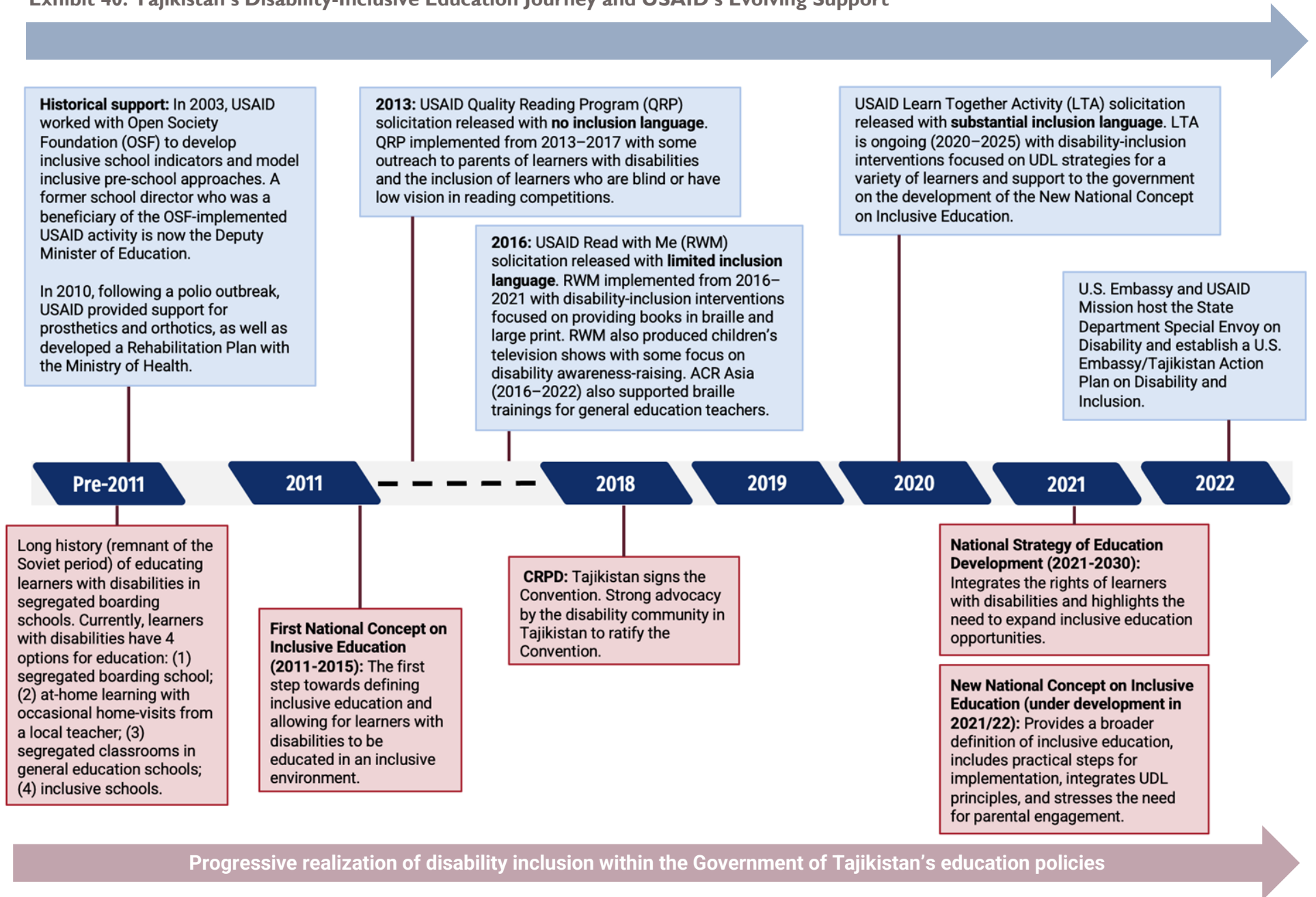
⁷⁶ IDP, which produced the case studies and conducted the ACR Disability-Inclusive Education Review, is a member of the LTA implementing consortium and specifically provides support on disability-inclusive interventions.

CONTEXT: OVERVIEW

In the past, Tajikistan educated learners with disabilities solely in segregated boarding schools, a remnant policy from the Soviet education system. However, over the past several years, the Government of Tajikistan has moved toward a vision for inclusive education that more closely aligns with the United Nations CRPD and General Comment No. 4 on Inclusive Education. This shift is largely supported by families and civil society groups, who increasingly express a desire to keep learners with disabilities in general education schools within their home communities. Today, learners with previously identified disabilities (such as learners who are deaf or blind or have low vision or intellectual disability) have four options for education: (1) one of the 11 segregated boarding schools; (2) at-home learning, which includes occasional visits from a local teacher; (3) segregated classrooms in general education schools; and (4) inclusive settings in general education schools. However, in the inclusive settings, teachers have limited training if any and do not have access to adaptive materials or resources.

Exhibit 40 provides an overview of Tajikistan’s journey toward disability-inclusive education and how USAID/Tajikistan’s support has evolved to respond to the government’s priorities.

Exhibit 40. Tajikistan’s Disability-Inclusive Education Journey and USAID’s Evolving Support



According to the Education Management Information System (EMIS),⁷⁷ 2,162 learners with disabilities were enrolled in 11 segregated boarding schools⁷⁸ and 7,362 in general education schools in the 2020–2021 academic year. Exhibit 41 summarizes the number of learners with disabilities enrolled in each type of school, using terminology provided by the government. According to KIs, a definition of disability has not yet been agreed upon by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Exhibit 41. Enrollment in State Boarding Educational Institutions in the Republic of Tajikistan

Enrollment in State Boarding Schools	2014–2015	2015–2016	2017–2018	2018–2019	2020–2021
Boarding school for deaf children	584	599	606	613	646
Boarding school for hard of hearing children	218	205	214	218	224
Boarding school for children with visual disabilities	367	383	353	383	384
Boarding school for children with polio	313	313	366	312	312
Boarding school for children with intellectual disabilities	564	587	587	614	596
General education schools (both segregated and inclusive classrooms)	N/A	4,168	7,515	7,338	7,362

Source: EMIS 2020–2021

According to government figures, the number of learners with disabilities in segregated boarding schools remained stable over the several years before this study, while the number of learners with disabilities in general education schools grew extensively. This trend reflects the government’s policy changes, particularly with the National Strategy of Education Development and the development of the New National Concept on Inclusive Education (highlighted in Exhibit 40). Although the EMIS has formal statistics on learners with disabilities (as shown in Exhibit 41), non-government stakeholders expressed concerns (through case study KIs) regarding the reliability of these data. If the data did not include all learners with disabilities, it presents challenges in planning and providing quality education to these learners. Currently, screening in Tajikistan takes place within the medical system (e.g., at a clinic or hospital) or within the few assessment centers throughout the country.

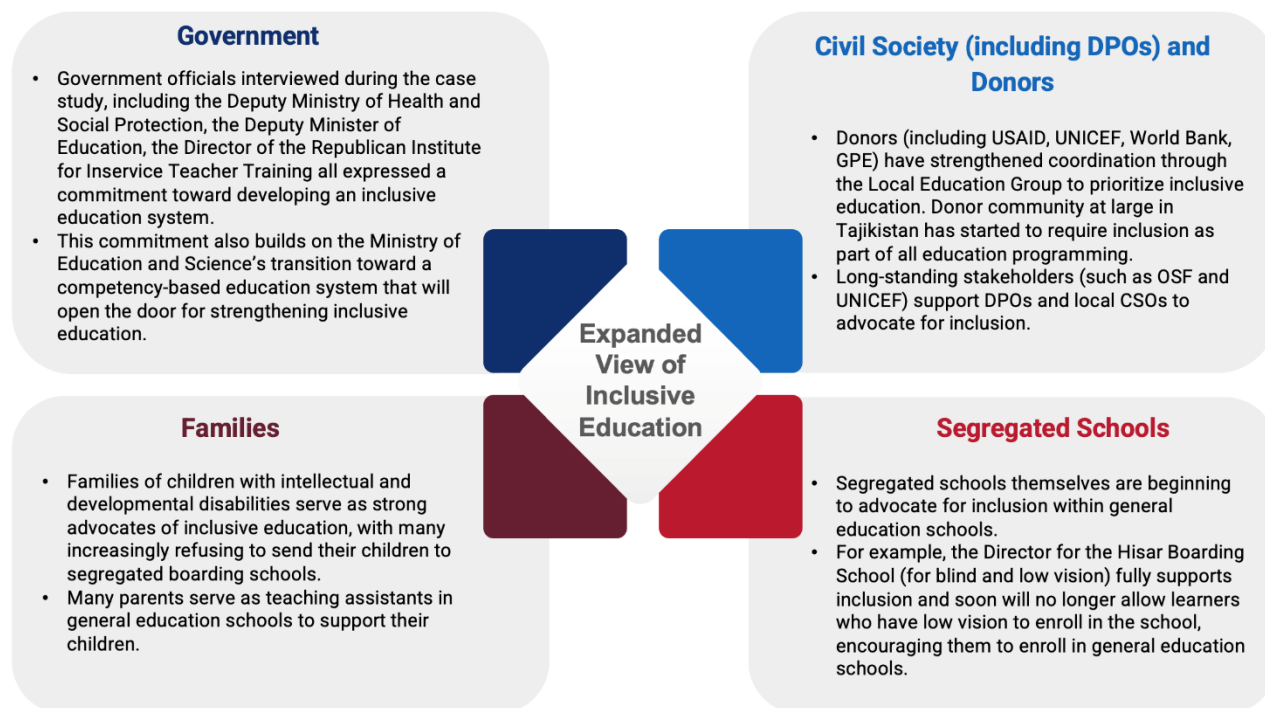
CONTEXT: UNDERSTANDING THE SHIFT TOWARD INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND AWAY FROM SEGREGATED EDUCATION

The shift in Tajikistan toward an expanded view of inclusive education has not happened in isolation or solely within the Ministry of Education and Science. KIs and FGDs revealed that multiple stakeholders have supported, and continue to support, the shift from segregation to inclusion. Exhibit 42 provides an overview of the key players involved in this shift, as expressed during case study interviews.

⁷⁷ EMIS (2020–2021) data provided in a key informant interview.

⁷⁸ In Tajikistan, segregated boarding schools are organized by disability type.

Exhibit 42. Commitment to Inclusive Education Across Stakeholder Groups (Expressed During Case Study Interviews)⁷⁹



GPE=Global Partnership for Education; OSF=Open Society Foundation

INCENTIVES AND BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTING DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN TAJIKISTAN

KIIs with the government, USAID/Tajikistan, and the ongoing USAID LTA revealed some incentives and barriers to implementing disability-inclusive education that are similar to findings from the wider desk review of USAID basic education activities in Asia. While Exhibit 43 presents a full overview, some trends are described below. Note that the information presented in this section represents the commonly referenced incentives and barriers, as they relate to USAID basic education programming, from case study stakeholders.

Across all three levels—the government, USAID/Tajikistan, and the current USAID implementing partner—the foundations for disability-inclusive education exist. The strong commitment across stakeholders at different levels acts as a significant incentive and enabler to the implementation of disability-inclusive education. For example:

- The **Ministry of Education and Science** has a strong policy framework for disability-inclusive education that is aligned with the CRPD, and teachers in the focus group express a willingness to continue moving toward a fully inclusive education system recognizing the mandate within laws.

⁷⁹ Researchers were unable to meet with the schools for the deaf during the case study; however, civil society organizations stated that they envision a system where learners who are deaf or hard of hearing are educated in deaf classrooms in general education schools, allowing them to remain at home with their families and communities.

- **USAID/Tajikistan** has made disability inclusion a clear priority at the Mission level (most recently through the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan’s 2022 Action Plan on Disability and Inclusion), and its education team has demonstrated its commitment to disability-inclusive education through progressively stronger inclusion language in recent basic education solicitations. [REDACTED]
- The **USAID implementing partner** has committed to integrating disability inclusion throughout activity interventions by creating a dedicated staff position as well as engaging a consortium partner to provide ongoing technical support.

Similarly, the lack of a strong local evidence base on what works in Tajikistan emerged as a common barrier to conducting disability-inclusive education across all three levels. For example:

- The **Ministry of Education and Science** oversees the Academy of Education Development, which conducts education research in the country. As Tajikistan continues to shift toward a more inclusive education system, this entity specifically stated that additional research on the UDL practices taking place at the classroom level and the subsequent gaps in practice would be helpful moving forward. Specifically, since UDL features in Tajikistan’s new National Concept Note on Inclusive Education, government representatives expressed a desire for more support on operationalizing UDL practices in teacher instruction and throughout the curriculum. They also stated that the lack of reliable data on learners with disabilities (including prevalence data and learning outcomes) is challenging.
- **USAID/Tajikistan** operates in a context where there is a lack of reliable data on learners with disabilities (including prevalence data and learning outcomes) as well as a local evidence base. This makes it challenging to identify the more realistic and impactful entry points for programming.
- The **USAID implementing partner**, despite having a full-time staff member dedicated to GESI issues, expressed challenges in identifying local experts with skills in early grade education for learners with disabilities. This, combined with a limited local evidence base on what works, makes it challenging to implement contextualized disability-inclusive education interventions.

Exhibit 43. Incentives and Barriers to Implementing Disability-Inclusive Education at the Government, Mission, and Implementing Partner Levels

	Incentives	Barriers
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Framework: Strong policy framework (through the National Concept on Inclusive Education) that is aligned with the CRPD and supports progressive realization. • Strong Foundation: Strong commitment from schools and teachers with an opportunity to strengthen the system from the ground-up, despite Soviet legacy of segregation and a relatively nascent inclusive education system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Plan: Lack of strategic implementation plan to operationalize the New National Concept on Inclusive Education. • Evidence Base: Lack of strong evidence base on what works in disability-inclusive basic education in Tajikistan.
USAID/Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources: Ongoing commitment and support from the Mission’s Education and Management Specialist (FSN) who promotes disability-inclusive education at the policy level and supports increased inclusion language in solicitations. USAID/Washington reinforces this support through technical assistance. • Mission Priority: Clear priority for the Mission, as evidenced through the Embassy’s new Action Plan on Disability and Inclusion (2022). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data and Situational Analysis: Lack of reliable data on learners with disability and a detailed situational analysis in Tajikistan, making it challenging to identify realistic and practical entry points for funding disability-inclusive education. • Evidence Base: Lack of strong evidence base on what works in disability-inclusive basic education in Tajikistan.
USAID LTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractual Language: Strong disability-inclusion language in LTA’s solicitation and final activity description. • Inclusion-Focused Consortium Partner: Engagement with an international organization focused on disability-inclusion to strengthen capacity of staff and build in-country expertise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPO and Disability-Focused CSO Engagement: Lack of formal engagement with relevant DPOs (e.g., for policy and advocacy) and disability-focused CSOs (e.g., for inclusive literacy interventions). • Evidence Base: Lack of strong evidence base on what works in disability-inclusive basic education in Tajikistan.

PROGRESSIVELY REALIZING DISABILITY INCLUSION WITHIN USAID/TAJIKISTAN’S BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

USAID/Tajikistan’s work to educate learners with disabilities provides a practical example of progressively realizing inclusive education. The concept of progressive realization is a core element of the CRPD, which promotes continuously moving toward a more inclusive system and does not reinforce the segregation of learners with disabilities. USAID/Tajikistan historically has focused programming on supporting learners who are blind or deaf in segregated settings and, more recently, has transitioned toward supporting the government’s goal of educating all children in an inclusive education system. This section highlights how USAID/Tajikistan has taken steps to progressively realize disability-inclusive education.

USAID/Tajikistan increased requirements for disability inclusion within basic education solicitations. USAID/Tajikistan’s solicitations have moved from only addressing the education needs of one type of disability in segregated settings toward looking to support all learners with disabilities through inclusion. For example, the initial Read with Me (RWM) solicitation, released in 2016, only required a cross-cutting element of inclusion throughout all program activities. RWM activities primarily focused on supporting braille and large print materials for learners who are blind. In contrast, the LTA solicitation, released in 2020, had significantly more language mandating disability inclusion, including requiring a GESI

assessment and subsequent inclusion plan. The solicitation also encouraged using UDL to create a more inclusive learning environment. The LTA implementing partner stated that this strong mandate of inclusion within the solicitation provided them with the opportunity to do more in this area. They noted that the activity would have faced difficulties implementing disability-inclusive education had the solicitation not included this mandate. In response to inclusion language in the solicitation and final activity description, LTA hired an Inclusion Specialist to ensure that all activity interventions and materials have an inclusive component and integrate UDL and SEL. The activity also engaged an organization with an extensive background in inclusive education and UDL to train LTA staff on UDL and support various aspects of inclusive education.

Spotlight: The earlier desk review of 26 activities across 11 countries in Asia revealed that disability-inclusive language in solicitations and activity descriptions was the most important factor in an implementing partner’s decision to design disability-inclusive interventions, above USAID Mission and host government priorities. USAID LTA is an example of how important it is to include robust contractual language on disability inclusion and an example of how USAID/Tajikistan basic education solicitations (and resulting interventions) have evolved over the past several years.

Both the Mission and USAID LTA have supported the development of the government’s New National Concept on Inclusive Education, which represents a significant step forward in the shift from segregated to inclusive education.

The government and civil society appreciated LTA’s involvement in developing the New National Concept on Inclusive Education and appreciated USAID/Tajikistan’s leadership throughout that process. In particular, several interviewees stated that the USAID Education and Management Specialist provided important technical inputs. USAID LTA provided comments on the concept, including incorporating and promoting UDL in general education classrooms to support inclusion.

Spotlight: USAID/Tajikistan and USAID LTA’s support of the New National Concept on Inclusive Education, and the concept’s inclusion of frameworks such as UDL, highlights the strong alignment between the Mission and the government. Only 17 percent of broader education activities examined in this review reported providing policy support for inclusive education (LTA included) and LTA’s policy work helps to create a stronger foundation for [REDACTED] sustainability of its interventions.

USAID/Tajikistan’s education activities have supported the development of TLMs for the past 10 years. However, in recent years, USAID activities have supported a shift from inclusive representation in TLMs to TLMs that aim to be accessible for learners with disabilities through UDL.

TLMs are an example of how inclusion has been progressively realized within USAID programming in Tajikistan. RWM made a substantial effort to work with artists and publishers to ensure that persons with disabilities were represented through text and illustrations in textbooks and supplemental reading materials. LTA has since broadened this approach to ensure that materials go beyond inclusive representation and follow the principles of UDL and, thus, are more accessible to a broader population. To support this, LTA developed a checklist for inclusion based upon the draft USAID Promoting Equity and Inclusion Checklist but modified it to integrate more components of UDL and to be consistent with the Tajikistan context. The LTA Inclusion Specialist now uses this checklist to review all materials to ensure the inclusion of gender, disability, UDL, SEL, and minorities. Exhibit 20 on “operationalizing UDL in Tajikistan” provides specific examples of how LTA integrated UDL principles

into TLM development and review. Interviews with LTA senior staff revealed that materials are not approved for distribution until they have been reviewed against this inclusion checklist. Additionally, beyond core textbooks and supplementary readers, LTA embeds UDL principles into teacher training content and supports teachers to embed UDL strategies

into their lesson plans. One example of how LTA supports teachers to integrate UDL is through a classroom observation form that, in addition to assessing the extent to which teachers demonstrate evidence-based literacy and numeracy instructional strategies, also assesses how UDL is being implemented by teachers. Specifically, the classroom observation form allows LTA to capture the different ways teachers provide learners with multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression.

Spotlight: USAID LTA's approach to developing inclusive TLMs goes further than many other broader education activities' TLMs that researchers examined as part of this review. Many activities focus largely on inclusive representation through language and images. LTA goes a step further to embed principles of UDL in TLMs.

CASE STUDY: PHILIPPINES



PHILIPPINES

This case study presents a deeper dive into disability-inclusive education in the Philippines, primarily from the context of USAID/Philippines’ basic education programming. Exhibit 44 provides an overview of USAID’s ongoing basic education activities based on each activity’s set of intermediate results.

Exhibit 44. USAID’s Ongoing Basic Education Activities in the Philippines

USAID Ongoing Activity	Activity Dates	Overview
ABC+	July 2019–July 2024	<p>Broader education activity that aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve early grade instruction and delivery systems, focusing on research-based teacher professional development ● Increase access to quality, leveled, locally developed supplementary reading materials to support early literacy ● Improve the education system’s capacity and commitment to manage and implement interventions supporting effective early grade instruction
Gabay (Guide): Strengthening Inclusive Education for Blind, Deaf, and Deafblind Children	September 2019–June 2023	<p>Disability-specific education activity that aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve enrollment of children who are blind, deaf, and deafblind ● Improve reading performance among learners who are blind and deaf ● Improve local government support to the needs of children with sensorial⁸⁰ disabilities

SUMMARY

The Republic of the Philippines has a long history of supporting learners with disabilities, and stakeholders believe that the recently passed Inclusive Education Act (March 2022) is a progressive shift toward a more fully inclusive education system. USAID/Philippines also has worked for many years to support basic education and currently implements two basic education activities: ABC+ (a broader education activity) and Gabay (a disability-specific education activity focused on learners who are deaf, blind, or deafblind). While ABC+ does not have a specific disability inclusion mandate, the activity has reviewed TLMs to ensure that persons with disabilities are depicted positively in images and text and adapted a limited number of supplementary reading materials into large print and braille. Specifically focused on disability inclusion, Gabay’s interventions—including its work on adapted TLMs (including but not limited to braille, audio, FSL, and tactile materials), vision and hearing screening, integrating UDL principles into TLMs and training modules, and supporting LGUs to take ownership of disability-inclusive education—provide useful information on emerging inclusive education practices in the Philippines. As such, Gabay’s interventions are helpful for informing the implementation of the new Inclusive Education Act; the act is ambitious and

⁸⁰ Gabay’s language

has high expectations for inclusive education without clarity around rollout, as confirmed by case study stakeholders. USAID’s basic education programming in the Philippines is an example of how strong alignment and linkages between activity interventions and government policies to support learners with disabilities can further the operationalization of those policies.

CONTEXT: OVERVIEW AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Republic of the Philippines has a long-standing commitment to the education of learners with disabilities, with the first special education institution established in 1907 for learners who were deaf and those who were blind. Throughout the 20th century, the government established various types of specialized segregated schools for learners with different disabilities,⁸¹ and in the late 1950s, universities began providing teachers with formal training on how to support learners with disabilities.⁸² Over time, the Philippines has progressed from specialized segregated schools to special education centers within general education schools where learners are educated in separate classrooms. Currently, the country is embarking on a gradual and phased shift to not only support learners with disabilities in receiving an education in a general education classroom but also, more importantly, to provide appropriate supports, modifications, and individualization to those learners as they receive instruction alongside their peers without disabilities. This shift, further described below, is supported by the current policy framework and commitments of the Government of the Philippines.

The current special education system in the Philippines includes learners with disabilities, along with learners who are labeled as gifted and talented. Under the Philippines special education (SPED) system, learners with disabilities primarily access educational services through a SPED center (self-contained classrooms) or through full or partial inclusion within the general education setting. The purpose of the SPED center, as described in the Special Education Act of 2019, is to provide appropriate education services to learners based on their individual needs, which includes identifying the best learning environment (e.g., SPED classroom or inclusion within a general education classroom). Additionally, KIs with Gabay project staff, partners, teachers, and representatives from the Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office of Batangas revealed that SPED center teachers provide support to general education teachers on instructional practices and material adaptations so they may better help learners with disabilities in general education classes (see Exhibit 45 for an example in practice). Finally, learners with complex medical or behavior needs, or those living in very rural locations and unable to access schools, may receive hospital-based instruction, home-based instruction, or community-based instructional support. Hospital-based instruction may include bedside tutoring and group instruction from a special education teacher; home-based instruction may include support from parents to learn reading, writing, and mathematics; and community-based instructional support is supported by teachers, para-teachers, or volunteers who support students in learning reading, writing, mathematics, and self-help activities.⁸³

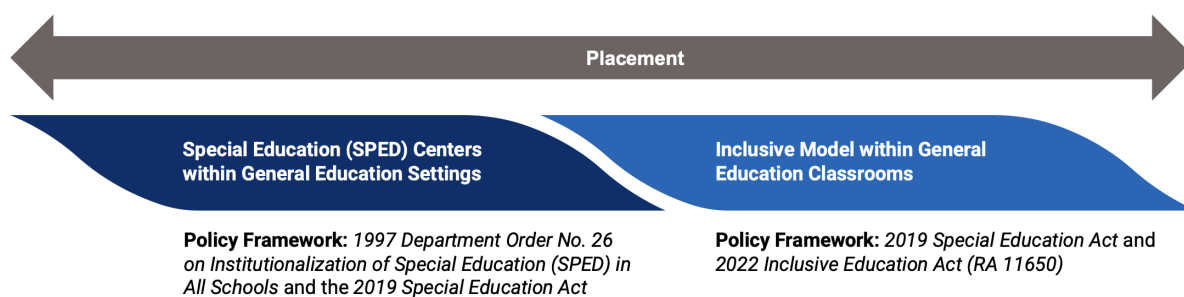
Exhibit 45 highlights the two most common models currently implemented in the Philippines, along with a description of how each works in practice as observed during a case study field visit to a school supported by the Gabay activity.

⁸¹ Segregated schools in the Philippines are generally based on disability type.

⁸² Inciong, T. G. (2005). *The development of welfare and education for children with mental retardation towards inclusion: The Philippine experience*. Japan League on Developmental Disabilities. http://www.jlidd.jp/gtid/acmr_17/pdf/3-Inclusion.pdf

⁸³ Inciong 2005

Exhibit 45. SPED Center Model and Inclusive Education Model in Practice



Both Models in Practice: Experience from Batangas City East Elementary School

Batangas City East Elementary School has a SPED center comprised of multiple segregated classrooms (organized by grade level) that cater to learners with different disabilities (e.g., a classroom for learners who are blind or have low vision, a classroom for learners with intellectual disability, etc.). Lessons are aligned with the national curriculum and offer additional life skill modules (e.g., making the bed or washing the dishes). Each classroom is staffed by a SPED teacher.

In addition, SPED teachers work closely with general education teachers at the school to transition learners from SPED classrooms into general education classrooms. This often begins with learners attending one or two lessons in a general education class and then fully transitioning out of the SPED classroom for full-time inclusive education. SPED teachers provide support to non-SPED teachers on pedagogy and positive behavior supports for learners with disabilities to ensure success.

In March 2022, the government passed the Republic Act (RA) 11650, commonly known as the Inclusive Education Act. Stakeholders interviewed as part of the case study—including DPO representatives, parent advocates, teachers, and local CSOs—all remarked that the new act represents a significant step forward in the Philippines’ progressive realization of disability-inclusive education. Exhibit 46 presents highlights of the new Inclusive Education Act.

Exhibit 46. Highlights of the New Inclusive Education Act

RA 11650: Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act (known informally as the Inclusive Education Act)

To ensure equitable access, teachers are directed to use **UDL** as an instructional pedagogy. While the use of UDL pedagogy will create more equitable access for all learners, the Inclusive Education Act also recognizes that learners with disabilities may still have individualized needs to access educational services and requires all public and private schools to provide learners with disabilities additional services and reasonable accommodations based on their **individualized education plans (IEPs)**.

Furthermore, the Inclusive Education Act calls for the creation of **Inclusive Learner Resource Centers (ILRCs)** to replace SPED centers:

- The ILRCs will be established by converting existing SPED centers into these new sites. Each LGU will be responsible for identifying the needs of their community, which will inform the design and services available at the ILRC.
- LGUs are expected to outline these services in their school improvement plans and to establish whether the ILRC will be a physical or virtual site.
- The ILRCs are expected to oversee the Child Find System, which will be used to locate, identify, and evaluate learners not receiving early and basic education systems and enroll them in school.
- The ILRCs are expected to have a multidisciplinary team able to conduct educational and diagnostic assessments to help inform learners' IEPs, provide therapeutic services as needed, adapt TLMs, and provide technology and assistive devices to support learners in accessing educational services.
- The ILRCs will continue to support learners being placed in the least restrictive environment with the supports outlined in their IEPs, which may include separate classrooms, pull-out services, partial inclusion, or full inclusion.
- Finally, the ILRCs are also expected to serve as a space for technical assistance, counseling, and training for educators, non-teaching personnel, caregivers, and other community workers.

Additionally, the Inclusive Education Act mandates the development of an advisory **Committee for the Education of Learners with Disabilities**, comprised of disability stakeholders, that focuses on policy, research, and monitoring the delivery of services.

While the 2022 Inclusive Education Act is the most recent and holistic disability-inclusive education policy to come out of the Philippines, the country has also established disability-specific policies such as the 2018 RA 11106,⁸⁴ commonly referred to as the Filipino Sign Language Act, which outlines specific supports for learners who are deaf or hard of hearing. Specific to education, the Filipino Sign Language Act establishes FSL as the national sign language in the country and calls for various government departments, including DepEd, the Commission on Higher Education, and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, to collaborate with each other on using FSL as the medium of instruction for deaf education. The law establishes that, along with learning to read and write Filipino and other local languages, FSL should be taught as a separate subject for deaf learners and that print and video instructional materials be provided in FSL for all public schools. Furthermore, the Filipino Sign Language Act emphasizes the licensing and hiring of deaf teachers, FSL pre-service training in teacher training programs, and regular pre-service

⁸⁴ RA No. 11106, An Act Declaring the Filipino Sign Language as the Nation Sign Language of the Filipino Deaf and the Official Sign Language of Government in All Transactions Involving the Deaf and Mandating its Use in Schools, Broadcast Media and Workplaces. https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2018/ra_11106_2018.html

and in-service training facilitated by persons of the deaf community for entities working in the education sector.

Together, these acts build upon each other and establish a policy framework focused on ensuring equitable access for learners with various types of disabilities.

INCENTIVES AND BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTING DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

KIIs with the DepEd, USAID/Philippines, and the two ongoing USAID activities (ABC+ and Gabay) revealed some incentives, enablers, and barriers to implementing disability-inclusive education. While Exhibit 47 presents a full overview, some trends are described below. Note that the information presented in this section represents the commonly referenced incentives and barriers, as they relate to USAID basic education programming, from case study stakeholders.

Across all three levels—the government, USAID/Philippines, and USAID implementing partners—buy-in from the right stakeholders acts as a significant incentive and enabler to implementing disability-inclusive education. For example:

- **DepEd** officials noted their commitment to implementing the new Inclusive Education Act as well as working with the Philippines’ robust network of DPOs and CSOs (which Gabay has leveraged in advocating its efforts to the government).
- **USAID/Philippines** is strengthening the capacity of its own staff around disability-inclusive education and tapping into USAID/Washington resources (such as the USAID/Washington Foreign Service Nationals Fellowship) to provide technical leadership opportunities and strengthen technical knowledge. USAID/Philippines also bought into the USAID ACR/Asia mechanism to support selected basic education interventions, including a pilot to conduct EGRAs with deaf learners remotely. With these selected examples, USAID/Philippines has and continues to demonstrate commitment to advancing disability-inclusive education and contributing to the wider evidence base around what works in this sector.
- **USAID implementing partners,** [REDACTED].

Similarly, a lack of resources (technical and financial) emerged as a common barrier to conducting disability-inclusive education across all three levels. For example:

- **Dep Ed** officials stated that a lack of in-country technical expertise as well as the availability of and capacity to produce in-country goods (e.g., accessible devices) create challenges in implementing the new Inclusive Education Act. Despite DepEd’s noting this as a barrier, the next section of this report highlights how USAID/Philippines’ programming is, in fact, challenging this notion.
- **USAID/Philippines** [REDACTED].
- **USAID implementing partners,** in both broader (ABC+) and disability-specific (Gabay) activities, have limited resources to implement disability-targeted interventions within their programming,

evident in the contractual language of both Gabay and ABC+. Gabay has resources only for learners with sensory disabilities (deaf, blind, or deafblind) as dictated [REDACTED] in their scope. ABC+, a broader education activity (with a budget approximately 27 times greater than Gabay’s budget), does not have any specific contractual language around disability inclusion, and the activity notes that these types of interventions are outside of its mandate. As a result, ABC+ does not implement disability-targeted interventions.

Exhibit 47. Incentives and Barriers to Implementing Disability-Inclusive Education at the Government, Mission, and Implementing Partner Levels

	Incentives	Barriers
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Framework: Strong policy framework that is aligned with the CRPD and supports progressive realization • CSO/DPO Network: Robust network of local organizations that successfully advocates for disability-inclusion at the national and sub-national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Plan: Delayed development of the new law’s Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) and consensus among stakeholders about a lack of direction on how to operationalize the new law • Resources In Country: DepEd notes a lack of technical expertise within DepEd and a “failure of procurement” for many resources required to operationalize IE Community Resource Centers
USAID/Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources: Ongoing commitment and support from the Mission’s education team; USAID/Washington reinforces support through technical assistance • Mission Alignment with DepEd: Mission support of a strategic and phased approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited funding for disability-targeted education programming efforts: Limited funding that results in challenges to implementing comprehensive disability-inclusive education programming (including funding for only specific types of disabilities)
USAID IPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources: Specialized knowledge of Resources for the Blind (Gabay) and other Gabay staff • DepEd and LGU buy-in: Gabay acts as a “proof of concept” for the centers detailed in the new law; adoption of interventions under LGU ordinances; Gabay COP a known and respected individual within DepEd 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractual Language: Lack of disability-inclusive language in ABC+ contract that makes it difficult for the activity to implement disability-inclusive interventions; Disability-inclusive language does not always make it into final activity designing and contracting • Collaboration: Activities somewhat segmented at the design and implementation level, as well as with DepEd

IE=inclusive education

SUPPORTING THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE NEW INCLUSIVE EDUCATION ACT (RA 11650): USING USAID/PHILIPPINES’ BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMING TO ACT AS A PROOF OF CONCEPT FOR KEY OBJECTIVES OF RA 11650

The Philippines is at a unique point in its journey toward disability-inclusive education. The policy framework and political will exist, [REDACTED] and a strong network of DPOs/CSOs that continue to support DepEd to strengthen opportunities for learners with disabilities. While multiple stakeholders stated that the lack of an implementation plan for the Inclusive Education Act, known in this context as Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), is a significant barrier, USAID/Philippines’ basic education programming acts as a proof of concept for the key objectives of the

act. This section highlights how USAID/Philippines is supporting interventions that can further the implementation of the new Inclusive Education Act.

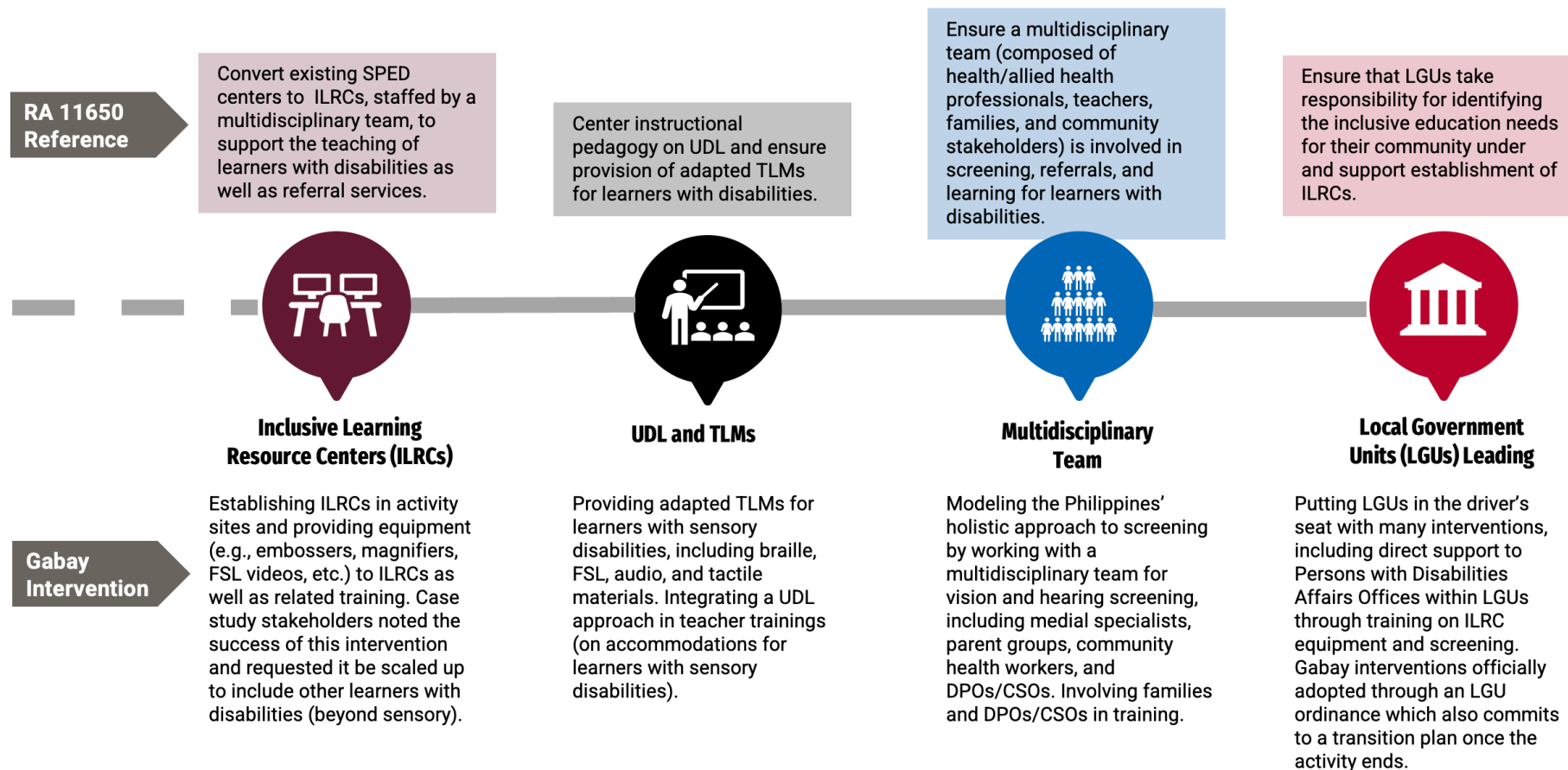
Even though the new Inclusive Education Act (RA 11650) was only passed in May 2022, it clearly aligns with several Gabay interventions and provides an opportunity to take lessons learned and the Gabay evidence base to support the development and operationalization of the act's accompanying implementation plan. While

Gabay started 2 years before the Inclusive

Education Act was passed, multiple aspects of Gabay's intervention model align with the overarching goals of the new act, as highlighted in Exhibit 48. Through its interventions, Gabay has provided, and continues to provide, an evidence base (including lessons learned) for many of the act's goals. This includes piloting ILRCs, adapting TLMs for learners with sensory disabilities, working with a multidisciplinary team in screening and training, and strengthening the capacity of LGUs. In a context where DepEd has noted (through a KII) its desire for more in-country inclusion experts, Gabay's alignment with the new Inclusive Education Act should not be overlooked. Even though Gabay is focused on a specific subset of learners with disabilities, its interventions (as reported by case study KIIs and FGDs) are strengthening the capacity of teachers, families, community health workers, and government officials to deliver disability-inclusive education to learners who are deaf, blind, or deafblind. Gabay is building up an evidence base of promising practices in mobilizing stakeholders to meet the needs of learners with specific types of disabilities, which can support the development of the new Inclusive Education Act's implementation and operationalization plan. DepEd officials also recognize the evidence produced from Gabay's interventions.

Spotlight: USAID's disability-specific basic education activities in Asia tend to conduct sensitization and awareness-raising training with *national-level* government staff and support policy implementation at the *sub-national* level. Gabay is in a unique position to directly inform the implementation strategy of RA 11650 at the national level and go beyond awareness-raising.

Exhibit 48. Gabay’s Alignment with RA 11650 (Inclusive Education Act) and Emerging Evidence Base for the Act’s Implementation



Despite the inherent complexity of screening in basic education programs, Gabay has modeled the Philippines’ holistic approach to vision and hearing screening through strengthening the capacity of a multidisciplinary screening and referral team. Screening is a core part of Gabay’s scope of work, and the activity has involved a range of stakeholders, including community health workers

Spotlight: Only six USAID basic education activities in Asia, out of 26 reviewed (including both broader and disability-specific), reported conducting screening interventions for learners with disabilities. Only Gabay has made use of a multidisciplinary team and did this in conjunction with strengthening the referral pathway in the Philippines.

(including midwives and nutrition specialists), DPOs, CSOs, DepEd nurses, doctors, ophthalmologists, optometrists, audiologists, and para-audiologists in vision and hearing screenings of early grade learners. In Year 2 of implementation, Gabay screened 1,412 learners, surpassing their goal by more than 17%. According to KIs with Gabay staff, screening and identification activities also assisted in identifying out-of-school learners with disabilities to be referred for school enrollment. Additionally, Gabay has worked with families, parent groups, and schools to support the referral of learners, as needed, to additional eye and ear specialists. Gabay also worked with DepEd to modify the MFAT. The MFAT is a Philippines-designed tool developed by DepEd’s Bureau of Learning Delivery–Student Inclusion Division and was introduced in 2018 under the Policy on the Implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool.⁸⁵ It is a classroom-based assessment that helps to flag any Grade 1 learners in general education classrooms who may exhibit developmental delays or learning difficulties. Gabay and partners—including teachers of learners who are deaf or hard of hearing and who are blind or have low vision—modified the tool specifically for use if a teacher suspects that a learner may have sensory difficulties. Screening and referrals play a large role in the new Inclusive Education Act, and ILRCs, along with a multidisciplinary team from the community, will be responsible for ensuring that learners with disabilities are provided appropriate support. Case study stakeholders emphasized the lack of trained professionals across the Philippines (specifically audiologists, ophthalmologists) but that Gabay’s multidisciplinary approach, while not at a national scale, may serve as a model for other regions.

⁸⁵ Department of Education. (2018). *Dep Ed Order No. 29: Policy on the Implementation of Multi-factored Assessment Tool*, Department of Education, 2018. Retrieved online: <https://www.deped.gov.ph/2018/07/10/do-29-s-2018-policy-on-the-implementation-of-multi-factored-assessment-tool/>

There is an opportunity for enhanced collaboration and coordination among Gabay and ABC+ to further the implementation of the new Inclusive Education Act.

Gabay and ABC+ have different scopes, with the former focused on a specific group of learners with disabilities and the latter focused on all learners (without a specific mandate for disability inclusion). However, they have one thing in common: both activities are designed to improve the reading performance of early grade learners. KIs with both activities as well as with DepEd officials revealed that there is a lack of formal and consistent collaboration between Gabay and ABC+. With the system's larger

transition from SPED centers to ILRCs and one area of geographic overlap between the two activities, there may be a window to strengthen the operationalization of the new Inclusive Education Act and support more formal collaboration between the two activities on interventions, such as UDL and inclusive pedagogy, TLM adaptation, and policy support.

Spotlight: It is relatively rare that a USAID Mission has the opportunity to implement two basic education activities (one broader and one disability-specific) at the same time. Only one other country in the larger review (Nepal) was in a similar situation with the EGRP I/II and Reading for All activities; however, collaboration was not frequent and was limited to TLM adaptations. Note that Bangladesh also currently has one broader and one disability-specific activity (Esho Shikhi and Shobai Miley Shikhi) operating at the same time; however, as both activities are in the early stages of implementation, there is currently no evidence of collaboration. As the Philippines education system moves toward inclusion, Gabay and ABC+ are in a position to leverage each other's strengths across not only TLM interventions but also classroom instruction, training, and policy support.

CASE STUDY: BANGLADESH



BANGLADESH

This case study presents a deeper dive into disability-inclusive education in Bangladesh, primarily from the context of USAID/Bangladesh’s basic education programming. Exhibit 49 provides an overview of USAID’s ongoing basic education activities.

Exhibit 49. USAID’s Ongoing Basic Education Activities in Bangladesh

USAID Ongoing Activity	Activity Dates	Overview
Shobai Miley Shikhi	June 2022–June 2027	Disability-specific education activity that aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the inclusive school environment and effective classroom instruction for learners with disabilities • Increase communities’ and parents’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes to support disability-inclusive education • Strengthen government capacity to plan, deliver, and manage quality disability-inclusive education
Esho Shikhi	November 2021–November 2026	Broader education activity that aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase learning opportunities for primary-aged children • Improve quality of education in selected subjects • Increase capacity of districts, <i>upazilas</i>, and communities to plan, manage, and oversee quality education • Increase the ability of school communities to mitigate and manage the effects of shocks and stressors on education access and quality
Promoting Education for Early Learners	September 2021–September 2024	Broader education activity that aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce and deliver video and print materials through mass media broadcast and direct services in schools (largely through the existing Sisimpur/Sesame Street programming) • Improve teachers’ use of video and print materials in classroom settings • Increase caregivers’ and communities’ awareness about and support to education of learners

SUMMARY

The Government of Bangladesh has supported quality education for learners with disabilities for many years and has a strong policy framework that prioritizes the education of all learners. Likewise, USAID/Bangladesh continues to build upon its strong basic education portfolio. In recent years, USAID/Bangladesh has supported early grade reading activities that did not have an explicit disability inclusion mandate; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Mission’s commitment to disability inclusion also extends to its current broader education activities, with interventions such as television programming to support disability awareness and the production of braille books. Somewhat unique to Bangladesh, compared to other case study countries and other [REDACTED] basic education

activities examined under this review, is Shobai Miley Shikhi’s approach to formally partnering with a local DPO and local disability-focused organizations to advance disability-inclusive education. In particular, the DPO is a consortium partner with a 5-year [REDACTED] work plan. This is unique among other activities, which usually engage DPOs for very discrete short-term activities (if they engage them at all). While Shobai Miley Shikhi is in the beginning stages of implementation, it will serve as an interesting follow-up case to identify key factors that contribute to a successful formal DPO partnership.

CONTEXT: OVERVIEW

Statistics and Data. The Bangladeshi primary education system has over 17 million learners enrolled, with 78% enrolled in government primary schools.⁸⁶ As shown in Exhibit 50 below, the reported number of learners with disabilities enrolled in government primary schools, as of 2018, is 45,977. While this represents only 0.2% of the total primary learner population, this figure varies widely depending on the agency collecting disability data and how the data were collected, and does not include learners with disabilities enrolled in non-government schools.⁸⁷ For example, a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey conducted by UNICEF and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics found that the disability prevalence of learners 2–17 years of age was closer to 8%.⁸⁸ Neither of these statistics capture the total number of learners with disabilities in Bangladesh as, according to multiple case study KIs, many of them remain out of school, exit primary school early, are enrolled in non-government schools, or are otherwise uncounted because of the lack of a consistent screening and identification mechanism.

Exhibit 50. Learners with Disabilities Enrolled in Bangladesh Government Primary Schools (2018)

Type of Disability ⁸⁹	Boy	Girl	Total
Physical Handicap	8,940	6,614	15,554
Poor Eyesight	3,351	2,809	6,160
Short of Hearing	703	700	1,403
Problem in Speech	4,291	3,940	8,231
Intellectual/Mental	6,640	5,787	12,427
Autistic	742	511	1,253
Others	508	441	949
Total	25,175	20,802	45,977

Note: “Type of Disability” language is directly quoted from the statistics given by the Ministry of Education.

Policy. Education has been compulsory in Bangladesh since the 1990 Bangladeshi Primary Education Act and is specified in the national constitution. Specific to learners with disabilities, Bangladesh ratified the CRPD in 2007—one of the first countries to do so—and, in 2013, enacted and passed the Bangladesh

⁸⁶ Ministry of Education. (2020). *Education sector plan for Bangladesh*. <https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/en/2020/education-sector-plan-esp-bangladesh-fiscal-years-202021-202425-7052>

⁸⁷ UNICEF. (2019). *Disability-inclusive education practices in Bangladesh*. <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/16986/file/Country%20Profile%20-%20Bangladesh.pdf>

⁸⁸ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF. (2019). *Bangladesh Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019, survey findings report*. https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/media/3281/file/Bangladesh%202019%20MICS%20Report_English.pdf

⁸⁹ Ministry of Education 2020

Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act. While the 2013 Act was broad in scope, it did include language supporting the right to a quality education for all learners with disabilities.

The National Education Policy of Bangladesh from 2010 seeks to promote equitable quality educational experiences for learners with disabilities, including advocacy for inclusive education. However, the policy stops short in advancing full inclusion for “acutely handicapped children who cannot fulfill the demands of daily life due to their physical or mental disabilities. These children are incapable of studying in the usual schooling system.”⁹⁰

The most recent education policy plan in Bangladesh is the 2018 Fourth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP4). The PEDP4 is implemented by the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and is supported by development partners. PEDP4 has several areas of relevance for learners with disabilities in Bangladesh. Specifically, it does the following:

- Reinforces the right of learners with disabilities to education in general education primary schools
- Mandates the revision of curriculum, textbooks, and TLMs; the provision of assistive devices; and flexibility in assessment and examination systems
- Supports awareness-raising and sensitization programs

It is important to note that “children with special educational needs and disabilities” are not specifically defined in PEDP4, nor is “inclusion” given much detail. What PEDP4 does explicitly state is, “Children with special educational needs and disability receive primary education at mainstream primary schools.” In practice, and confirmed through KIIs, this means that general education primary schools will accept learners with perceived “mild and moderate”⁹¹ disabilities, while learners with perceived “severe”⁹² disabilities are segregated into special schools under the purview of the Department of Social Services (DSS) (within the Ministry of Social Welfare).

While PEDP4 has a specific sub-component known as Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) [REDACTED] to “increase the enrollment of children with special education needs and disabilities in primary schools,” MoPME has also developed a draft SEND Framework (2022) to address specific issues related to the education of these learners. This framework is designed to support the overall goals of PEDP4. Within the draft SEND framework, and specific to disabilities, there is an emphasis on inclusive pedagogy, accessible TLMs, accessible school infrastructure, and strengthened linkages between identification, referral, and services. KIIs with both government officials and representatives from local organizations stressed that MoPME takes an intersectional approach to inclusive education in that it is concerned with

SEND Framework’s Scope: Beyond Disabilities

The SEND Framework does not have a singular focus on learners with disabilities. It defines special education needs as “conditions or factors that hinder normal learning and development of individuals. The hindrance is a life-long condition that does not allow proper progress of an individual because of factors like disabilities, social, emotional, economic, health, and other conditions. These conditions are also referred to as barriers to learning and development.”

⁹⁰ Ministry of Education. (2010). *National Education Policy 2010*, p. 51. <https://moedu.gov.bd/site/page/318a22d2-b400-48a7-8222-303ab11cc205/National-Education-Policy-2010->

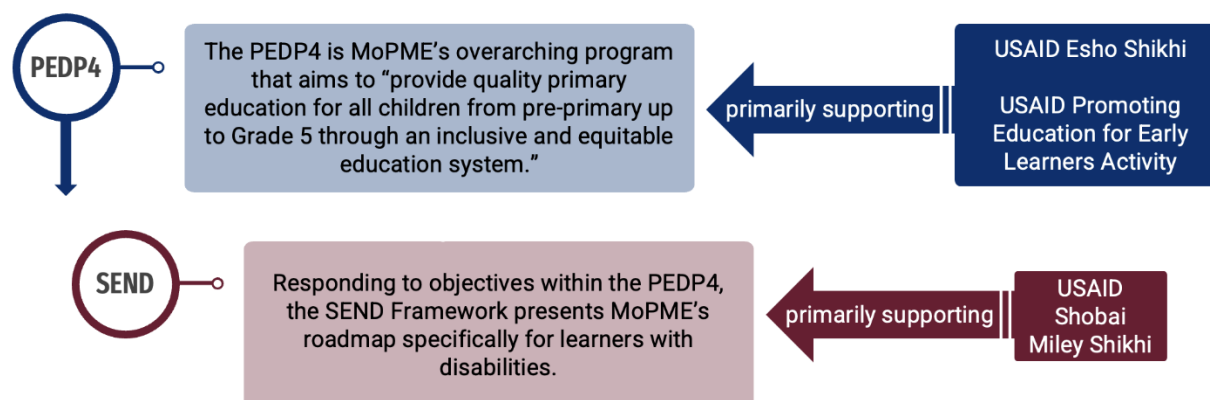
⁹¹ A term the Government of Bangladesh uses.

⁹² A Term the Government of Bangladesh uses.

learners' socio-economic status, ethnicity, mother tongue, disability status, and gender and how these identities interact with each other.

All USAID/Bangladesh's current basic education activities support MoPME and Exhibit 51 links the three ongoing activities to both PEDP4 and the SEND Framework.

Exhibit 51. USAID/Bangladesh's Basic Education Programming within the Policy Context



Inclusive Education in Practice in Bangladesh. Legal and policy frameworks are an important first step in realizing the right to an inclusive education for learners with disabilities. However, putting these policies into full practice is a long-standing challenge around the world. In Bangladesh, the challenges to disability-inclusive education implementation are similar to those in other countries in the region and globally. Case study KIIs with practitioners from local DPOs and CSOs highlighted the following challenges, which mirror those reported in recent studies of inclusive education in Bangladesh:⁹³

- Lack of adequate teacher training in inclusive pedagogy
- Lack of TLMs that are accessible and adaptable
- High learner-to-teacher ratios
- Rigid curriculum and assessment structures
- Poor and inaccessible infrastructure
- Unequal distribution of resources from urban to rural (and more remote) areas

Despite these challenges, there is great potential to develop and foster local innovation in Bangladesh around disability-inclusive education.

INCENTIVES AND BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTING DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

KIIs with DPE, USAID/Bangladesh, the three ongoing USAID activities, and local education stakeholders revealed some incentives, enablers, and barriers to implementing disability-inclusive education. While

⁹³ Ahsan, M. T., Hasnat, M. S. A., Sharmin, S. A., Khan, R. S., & Zerin, N. (2015). *Situational analysis of education of children with disabilities in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: Sightsavers.

Exhibit 52 presents a full overview, some trends are described below. Note that the information presented in this section represents the commonly referenced incentives and barriers as they relate to USAID basic education programming, from case study stakeholders.

Across all three levels—the government, USAID/Bangladesh, and USAID implementing partners—it is evident that the commitment to strengthen disability-inclusive education exists. For example:

- **DPE and National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB)** officials frequently cited their support of inclusive education and their commitment to ensuring quality education for learners with disabilities. This commitment is evident in the recently developed SEND Framework.
- **USAID/Bangladesh** has increased its focus on disability-inclusive education, which is particularly evident through the Shobai Miley Shikhi Activity. Shobai Miley Shikhi represents USAID’s largest (by value) disability-specific basic education activity.
- **USAID implementing partners** also demonstrate commitment to disability inclusion, particularly through Shobai Miley Shikhi (disability-specific) and the Promoting Education for Early Learners activity (broader education), which has used its Sisimpur/Sesame Street programming to introduce a character with a disability to strengthen disability awareness.

Similarly, with an entrenched ecosystem of DPOs and CSOs working on disability-inclusive education in Bangladesh, coordinating and leveraging the right resources emerged as a common barrier to conducting disability inclusion across all three levels. For example:

- **DPE** is not the only agency that supports disability-inclusive education in Bangladesh. For example, NCTB oversees the curriculum, and the DSS oversees special schools for learners with “severe”⁹⁴ disabilities. This, combined with other [REDACTED] DPOs, and CSOs working on disability-inclusive education, makes it challenging to coordinate interventions.
- **USAID/Bangladesh** is one of many [REDACTED] that supports disability inclusion in Bangladesh. Despite the many interventions within this space, KIs with different stakeholders revealed that there is surprisingly not a large evidence base for what works (and does not work) in disability-inclusive education in Bangladesh. This, combined with DPE’s aversion to small-scale piloting (and instead preferring interventions that can impact the entire school system), makes it challenging to design targeted and phased interventions.
- **USAID implementing partners** frequently collaborate with local DPOs but as reported through KIs, often do not have a systematic and continuous process to engage local DPOs throughout the lifecycle of the activity.

⁹⁴ A term the Government of Bangladesh uses

Exhibit 52. Incentives and Barriers to Implementing Disability-Inclusive Education at the Government, Mission, and Implementing Partner Levels

	Incentives	Barriers
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Framework: Bangladesh has foundational policy on disability-inclusion, particularly at the primary level with the PEDP4 and SEND Framework. Mainstream inclusion is specified for most children with disabilities, although not for all. • Inclusive Ethos: Local-level upazilas can be effective to oversee community and school inclusion, and there is a commitment and desire from teachers to be more inclusive in their practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple Actors: Ministries, agencies, and development coordination overlap: NCTB oversees curriculum, and DPE oversees teachers and schools. DPE oversees inclusion in general education schools, but DSS oversees special schools. Multiple agencies and agendas make coordination an issue. • Data: The data that is being collected on children with disabilities in schools is inconsistent and left to local interpretation. Teachers and schools are often tasked with self-reporting how many of their students have “disabilities” without much guidance or screening and identification tools.
USAID/Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission Priority: Disability-inclusion is now a specific focus for the USAID/Bangladesh Mission, with activities such as Shobai Miley Shikhi and the support for Promoting Education for Early Learners Activity to expand their focus on diversity, equity, and disability-inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally Driven Evidence Base: Lack of identification of successful local approaches to disability-inclusive education. • Broader USAID Disability-Inclusive Education Strategy: There is a lack of a broader USAID disability-inclusive education strategy with a long-term vision for individual Missions, with appropriate localization to meet contextual needs and support progressive realization.
USAID IPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractual Language: Shobai Miley Shikhi has strong disability-inclusion language in its final activity description and represents the largest disability-specific basic education activity that USAID has funded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with DPOs: Many KIIs indicated that USAID activities could do more to engage with DPOs and learn from their experience in the disability-inclusion space. Inclusive development must go beyond just inviting DPOs to planning meetings.

ENGAGING DPOs TO FURTHER DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

USAID/Bangladesh has supported basic education for many years. Beginning in 2013, the Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development (READ) activity worked to improve early grade reading outcomes both inside and outside the classroom. Then, in 2015, the Innovation for Improving Early Grade Reading Activity (IIEGRA) continued supporting literacy in low-performing areas in Bangladesh. While neither READ nor IIEGRA interventions were specific to learners with disabilities, they included components that addressed issues of gender, out-of-school learners, and strengthening the quality of education overall.

Currently, USAID/Bangladesh implements three basic education activities, one of which—Shobai Miley Shikhi—is a disability-specific education activity. While Shobai Miley Shikhi is in the beginning stages of implementation, this section highlights its unique approach (compared to other [REDACTED] basic education activities in the region) to formally partnering with a local DPO and local disability-focused organizations to advance disability-inclusive education.

A local DPO is a core member of Shobai Miley Shikhi’s formal implementation consortium, providing lived experience and nuanced technical expertise and convening power in the disability inclusion space in Bangladesh.

The National Grassroots Disability Organization (NGDO) is the umbrella organization for more than 100 grassroots-level DPOs across each district in Bangladesh. NGDO has been in operation since 2014 and works across multiple sectors, including education, health, employment, and policy. The organization is a consortium partner for Shobai Miley Shikhi, participated in the activity’s co-creation phase, and currently has a scope and budget for the full 5 years of the activity’s implementation. Despite Shobai Miley Shikhi being in the early stages of implementation, the activity has systematically involved NGDO in interventions, including work planning, UDL training, and data collecting for an initial situational analysis. With the situational analysis data collection, Shobai Miley Shikhi benefitted from NGDO’s extensive network of DPOs across the country in arranging focus groups on disability inclusion, and NGDO provided a nuanced analysis of findings and recommendations. Its future support to Shobai Miley Shikhi will also extend to disability advocacy and outreach at the national and subnational levels.

Shobai Miley Shikhi has been intentional in its approach to formally engaging other local disability-focused organizations (non-DPOs) to work alongside NGDO and augment the activity’s disability-inclusive education interventions. Shobai Miley Shikhi is focused on improving learning outcomes for learners with disabilities, primarily in literacy and numeracy. Its interventions include strengthening advocacy and awareness, improving inclusive classroom instruction, working with communities and families, and providing support to the government on the SEND Framework. Implementing these interventions successfully requires a range of technical skills. Shobai Miley Shikhi has two local disability-focused organizations as part of its consortium—the Center for Disability in Development and the Shuchona Foundation (a resource organization).⁹⁵ These organizations employ persons with disabilities or disability experts and bring specific expertise in inclusive pedagogy, inclusive TLMs, and system strengthening, supplementing NGDO’s expertise around advocacy, awareness, and resource mobilization. These organizations, and other local stakeholders, will work together as Shobai Miley Shikhi’s interventions get underway. These partnerships will provide an opportunity to learn about the successes and challenges of leveraging disability-inclusive education expertise from a combination of local DPOs and disability-focused organizations.


Spotlight: From the desk review of 26 USAID basic education activities across 11 countries, there was limited evidence of activities entering into formal agreements (e.g., through a grant or subcontract) with DPOs. Despite 78% of ongoing basic education activities reporting the benefits of working with DPOs (in the survey of ongoing activities), only one reported having a formal agreement with a DPO, and no activities (neither broader nor disability-specific) listed a local DPO as a core consortium member. Note that Shobai Miley Shikhi did not participate in the survey as the activity had not yet begun implementation. Common challenges cited by activities include constraints around compliance with [REDACTED] grants and subcontracts as well as administrative/management capacity. Shobai Miley Shikhi is a unique case and its experience should be followed to identify key factors that contribute to a successful and formal DPO partnership.

⁹⁵ [REDACTED] he activity can also request Shuchona Foundation’s participation in selected interventions.

CASE STUDIES: EMERGING PRACTICES (RESEARCH QUESTION 7)

While the case studies were not evaluations of USAID programming or specific activity interventions, they did provide an opportunity to identify emerging practices within the field of disability-inclusive education. These identified practices may also serve as areas for follow-up and future research. Exhibit 53 and Exhibit 54 present these emerging practices for both Tajikistan and the Philippines. As USAID/Bangladesh’s focus on disability-inclusive education is only just beginning (with its ongoing basic education activities in the early stages of implementation), Exhibit 55 offers an opportunity for USAID/Bangladesh to consider as programming continues.

Exhibit 53. Emerging Practice in Tajikistan: Operationalizing UDL



In 2018, USAID published its “Universal Design for Learning to Help All Children Read” toolkit. Then, in February 2022, as part of the Global Disability Summit, USAID Administrator Samantha Power committed to incorporating UDL principles into all new USAID education programming as well as increasing initiatives for learners with disabilities in education programming. While USAID has recently strengthened its commitment to and investment in UDL, the evidence base for how UDL is operationalized within basic education programming in Asia is still limited (see RQ 2).

In Tajikistan, LTA’s use of UDL across activity interventions represents an emerging practice for how broader education activities can take UDL from theory to implementation. Key features of what this looks like within LTA are presented below.

- **Solicitation language:** The LTA solicitation, released in May 2020, asked the contractor to “consider the use and application of Universal Design for Learning framework in learning instruction, even if the creation of a fully inclusive classroom is not possible.” This language appeared as both part of the solicitation’s “guiding principles” and within each of the activity’s three components. When compared to 14 other broader education activity solicitations⁹⁶ examined as part of this review, the LTA solicitation was the only broader education solicitation that referenced UDL.
- **Implementing partner commitment through staff training and resourcing:** At the beginning of LTA, a consortium partner (IDP) provided an 8-hour training to key technical staff on UDL and how to integrate it throughout activity interventions. Training topics included (1) an introduction to inclusive education policies in Tajikistan; (2) an overview of UDL principles and their application in curriculum design; (3) how to apply UDL in material development and teacher training; and (4) broader aspects of inclusive program management, including DPO engagement and accommodations for persons with disabilities. Participants subsequently trained the rest of the LTA technical staff.
- **Across activity interventions:**
 - **Policy support and advocacy:** LTA continues to support the Government of Tajikistan to incorporate UDL into the new Inclusive Education Concept Note and during the development

⁹⁶ Researchers acknowledge that, due to the timing of USAID’s investment in UDL, solicitations before 2018 are unlikely to include explicit references to UDL.

of national competency-based standards for primary education. LTA also delivered a presentation on how to integrate UDL into pedagogy at an international conference held in Tajikistan with governmental and nongovernmental participants from Russia, Uzbekistan, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

- **TLM development and review:** Typically, as found during the larger review of broader and disability-specific education activities across Asia, activities integrate inclusion within TLMs primarily through including positive depictions of persons with disabilities in images and text. LTA adapted the draft USAID Promoting Equity and Inclusion Checklist to prompt the inclusion of key UDL features when developing and reviewing TLMs and training modules. For example, some UDL-specific elements within the checklist include:
 - *Learning goals are reiterated and shared in different ways*
 - *Every image, picture, or graph has a short image description*
 - *There are hints, tips, or simple explanations of the concepts that do not require a lot of assumed knowledge*
 - *Spoken content is broken up by moments for reflection, responding, and self-problem solving (e.g., it is suggested that for every 3 minutes of dialogue there is an interactive opportunity to think, speak, or act).*
- **Classroom practice:** Beyond materials development, LTA developed a classroom observation form that, in addition to assessing the extent to which teachers demonstrate evidence-based literacy and numeracy instructional strategies, also assesses how UDL is being implemented by teachers. Specifically, the classroom observation form allows LTA to capture the different ways teachers provide learners with multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression.

Exhibit 54. Emerging Practice in the Philippines: Multidisciplinary Approach to Disability-Inclusive Education

Philippines

Multidisciplinary and Systems Approach to Disability-Inclusive Education

As a disability-specific activity, Gabay has a mandate to (1) increase enrollment of learners with disabilities; (2) improve reading performance of learners with disabilities; and (3) improve local government skill to support learners with disabilities. In Gabay's case, its scope is restricted to learners with sensory disabilities (e.g., deaf, blind, or deafblind). Gabay is unique among the other basic education activities examined under this review (including both broader and disability-specific) as the activity takes a multidisciplinary approach to interventions. While most basic education activities focus on learners, teachers, and parents, Gabay involves a larger group of stakeholders in almost every intervention. These additional stakeholders include DPOs, community health workers, specialized health professionals (including therapists, nurses, audiologists, etc.), and local government officials beyond those who work on education (including social welfare officers, health officers, and disability officers).

Supporting learners with disabilities often requires thinking beyond the classroom and school and involving the wider community ecosystem. Gabay's approach represents an emerging practice within basic education activities of leveraging a multidisciplinary team to support interventions. Key features of this approach are presented below.

- **Training and advocacy:** Gabay provides a range of training, including on topics such as instructional approaches for learners with disabilities, disability awareness and sensitivity, assistive devices, family support for education, and screening (see below). Instead of targeting only the core beneficiaries in each training (e.g., only parents in the training on supporting learning at home), Gabay aims to foster collaboration between different groups. For example, Gabay brings together teachers, LGU representatives, families, and disability advocates to take part in training together. As reported in KIs, a key focus of Gabay's training is to strengthen working relationships between different stakeholders and support stakeholders to co-develop action plans for sustaining early grade learning for learners with disabilities.
- **Screening and referral:** Screenings (vision and hearing) and referrals are a key component of Gabay. Gabay involves a range of stakeholders, including community health workers (including midwives and nutrition specialists), DPOs, CSOs, DepEd nurses, doctors, ophthalmologists, optometrists, audiologists, and para-audiologists in the screening of early grade learners. Additionally, Gabay works with families, parent groups, and schools to support the referral of learners, as needed, to additional eye and ear specialists.

Exhibit 55. Opportunity in Bangladesh: Leveraging a Coordinated Approach

Bangladesh | Opportunity: Coordinated Approach

Bangladesh has the legislative and policy framework to support primary-level inclusive education for learners with disabilities. This is in line with the CRPD and the Sustainable Development Goals. The next steps for Bangladesh are to fully realize these policy ambitions through a systematic approach that builds upon existing practices and ensures the implementation of activities at a national scale. Many effective agencies and organizations working in Bangladesh are committed to a systems-approach to disability inclusion and report working closely with government ministries to provide technical assistance, policy support, training, and other resources. However, KIIs with key stakeholders revealed that presently multiple co-occurring systems address educational services for learners with disabilities, and these systems lack integration between them. For example, government officials collaborate with [REDACTED] entities on implementing inclusive education activities, while also working with local organizations on activities such as policy development, training manuals, and disability data collection. However, each of these interventions is often being addressed within the parameters of its specific context. Multiple stakeholders commented on the value of these individual activities but also referenced occasions where the individual focus can unintentionally create a silo effect, leading to a duplication of efforts, confusion among stakeholders, and challenges around replication and scalability.

USAID/Bangladesh's current basic education portfolio is at a unique stage. With three activities (broader and disability-specific) in the early stages of implementation and operating in a context with multiple actors and ongoing disability-inclusive interventions, the Mission's basic education portfolio has an opportunity to help drive increased coordination, strengthen the local evidence base, and reduce wider inefficiencies.

- **At the activity level:** Each of USAID/Bangladesh's basic education activities have common elements despite their distinct scopes. For example, Shobai Miley Shikhi (disability-specific activity) is working with DPE on integrating a UDL framework into teachers' training and instructional practice in general education schools. Similarly, Esho Shikhi (broader education activity), through a case study KII, expressed interest in leveraging a UDL approach with teachers and schools. Even though both activities have different geographic scopes, both activities have the opportunity to co-develop that approach (and related materials and training modules) with DPE. This is particularly important in a context like Bangladesh where all interventions must go through DPE (as in, interventions are supported by the activity but implemented by DPE). Another example is the Promoting Education for Early Learners activity (broader education) that has a mandate to develop and increase the use of video and print materials (which will use inclusive pedagogies) in schools. To support the government's focus on national-scale interventions, this activity has an opportunity to tap into Shobai Miley Shikhi's network of schools to further its reach and impact.
- **At the national level:** Further coordination is needed to link disability-inclusive initiatives and practices across ministries, departments, agencies, DPOs, NGOs, *upazilas*, and schools. There are several national-level coordination efforts already underway, such as the National Disability Forum and an interagency disability coordinating group, but these groups do not always reach stakeholders at each level of the system. As USAID/Bangladesh's basic education programming continues, there is an opportunity for its activities to take part in existing forums and present a coordinated approach to inclusion.

CASE STUDIES: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

This section presents findings from the case study countries by research question. This section also provides a brief comparative analysis that links case study findings to the larger desk review of 26 basic education activities across 11 countries in Asia.

Exhibit 56. Comparative Analysis of Case Study Findings by Research Question

RQ 1: Within the Asia region, what are the incentives and barriers to conducting disability-inclusive education programming throughout the USAID program cycle?			
Tajikistan	Philippines	Bangladesh	Case Study Comparative Analysis
See Exhibit 43	See Exhibit 47	See Exhibit 52	Similar to findings from the desk review, stakeholders at all levels (government, USAID Mission, and USAID implementing partner) expressed a strong commitment to strengthening disability-inclusive education, which acts as an incentive and enabler. A barrier that emerged during the case studies, which was not immediately apparent in the desk review, was the difficulty in generating a local evidence base for what works in improving learning outcomes for learners with disabilities. This becomes more complex in contexts where multiple actors (e.g. ██████████ CSOs, DPOs) work on often overlapping disability-inclusive education interventions with limited coordination and knowledge-sharing.
RQ 2: How does USAID's broader education programming address the education of learners with disabilities within the Asia region?			
Tajikistan	Philippines	Bangladesh	Case Study Comparative Analysis
USAID/Tajikistan's basic education programming has progressed from supporting braille, large print books, and the distribution of braille printers to schools for the blind (Quality Reading Project and RWM) toward programming that aims to support a variety of learners with disabilities (LTA). Current support under LTA includes providing input to the	USAID/Philippines' current broader basic education portfolio (ABC+) does not have a specific mandate to support learners with disabilities. ABC+ did review TLMs to ensure that persons with disabilities were depicted positively in images and text and adapted a limited number of materials into large print and braille. Beyond that, the activity does not intentionally target learners with	USAID/Bangladesh's earlier broader education activities, including READ and IIEGRA, did not have specific interventions to support learners with disabilities. Interventions were also not required in either of their solicitations. Currently, USAID/Bangladesh's Promoting Education for Early Learners activity incorporates disability awareness and sensitization into its Sisimpur/Sesame	Disability inclusion varies widely within broader education activities across the three case study countries and is typically implemented as a one-off intervention rather than integrating disability inclusion across all activity interventions. For example, where activity descriptions do not have explicit language around disability inclusion (e.g., READ and IIEGRA in Bangladesh and ABC+ in the Philippines), there are limited examples of disability-

<p>government’s Inclusive Education Concept Note to integrate UDL into teacher training and syllabi. LTA also develops TLMs that reflect UDL principles.</p>	<p>disabilities or track their participation in activity interventions.</p>	<p>Street programming. It also plans to develop some braille books for special schools. The Esho Shikhi activity considers inclusion in general (e.g., it will produce materials in large print) but largely does not have interventions targeted to learners with disabilities.</p>	<p>inclusive interventions. This reinforces the finding under RQ 1 on the importance of including robust disability inclusion language in basic education solicitations and final activity descriptions. Among the broader education activities that had some disability inclusion interventions in case study countries, the findings were similar to the larger desk review. Specifically, broader education programming primarily interprets inclusion as the positive representation of disabilities within TLM images and text versus seeking to adapt TLMs to be inclusive of learners with disabilities or seeking to intentionally include disability-inclusive pedagogy modules within teacher training programs. A notable exception to this is LTA in Tajikistan. With its heavy focus on operationalizing UDL across activity interventions, there will likely be useful lessons learned as the activity continues implementation.</p>
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RQ 3: What type of disability-specific education programming—supported by USAID—is taking place in the region?


Tajikistan	Philippines	Bangladesh	Case Study Comparative Analysis
<p>USAID/Tajikistan has not yet implemented disability-specific basic education programming but did release a Request for Information on deaf education in February 2022.</p>	<p>USAID/Philippines has one disability-specific activity (Gabay) that focuses on learners with sensory disabilities, including learners who are deaf, blind, or deafblind. Gabay’s activities largely center on vision and hearing screening, production of adapted TLMs (audio and tactile), development of a sign language curriculum, and distribution of assistive devices to schools (e.g., embossers, brailers, etc.).</p>	<p>USAID/Bangladesh has one disability-specific activity (Shobai Miley Shikhi) that will focus on learners with disabilities in general education schools. While this activity is currently collaborating with the government on its first-year work plan (and so final interventions have not yet been approved), it expects to have a heavy focus on UDL in both classroom instruction and TLM development/review.</p>	<p>Only two case study countries currently implement disability-specific basic education programming, and each takes a different approach. In Bangladesh, disability-specific programming is not limited to a specific subset of disabilities, whereas programming in the Philippines is focused on learners who are deaf, blind, or deafblind (with activities largely centered on screening and adapted TLMs). Other disability-specific activities examined in the desk review (including Nepal and Cambodia) tend to be more similar to the case in the Philippines, with a focus on specific disability categories. This presents an opportunity to evaluate the comparative advantages and disadvantages (e.g., impact on learning</p>

outcomes, reach, etc.) [REDACTED] programs that are targeted to specific types of disabilities versus programs that work with all types of disabilities.

RQ 4: How inclusive was USAID COVID-19 pandemic response education programming for learners with disabilities within the region?

Tajikistan	Philippines	Bangladesh	Case Study Comparative Analysis
<p>RWM produced television programming during COVID-19 school closures that included accessibility features, such as sign language videos as well as closed captioning.</p>	<p>During COVID-19 school closures, Gabay produced and distributed activity sheets (in both print and digital formats) for families to support the continued literacy education of learners with disabilities at home. For deaf and hard of hearing learners, Gabay formatted activity sheets with pictures, images, and sign language videos (digital content only). For blind and low vision learners, Gabay provided activity sheets in braille and large print.</p> <p>ABC+ pivoted interventions and produced radio and television programming during COVID-19; however, these were not focused on learners with disabilities and did not include accessibility features, such as closed captioning or sign language videos.</p>	<p>USAID/Bangladesh only had one basic education activity operating during the height of COVID-19, but the Promoting Education for Early Learners activity did not have specific COVID-19 interventions for learners with disabilities. The activity did state that COVID-19 highlighted that video content could be more accessible (e.g., the activity stated a need for closed captioning and for more printed materials in large print and braille). However, at the time of this case study, video content accessibility features had not been incorporated, and the activity was in the early stages of producing more accessible printed materials.</p>	<p>Across the three countries, programmatic responses to COVID-19 tended to focus on the production of digital lessons, online videos, and television and radio programming; however, not all these responses were targeted for learners with disabilities. Even still, while digital, television, and radio content may not be accessible for every learner, KIs in each country revealed that it is a step in the right direction. Furthermore, the use of digital content, television, and radio programming helped implementing partners identify accessibility features they could begin to integrate into future content and materials. This is similar to the findings from the desk review, and with countries generally continuing to advance COVID-adapted programming moving forward (e.g., more use of blended learning), there is an opportunity to consider how these interventions can be inclusive for learners with disabilities.</p>

RQ 5: How has USAID addressed the education of learners with disabilities within crisis and conflict affected settings within the region?

Tajikistan	Philippines	Bangladesh	Case Study Comparative Analysis
<p>USAID/Tajikistan’s basic education programming does not address learners within crisis and conflict affected settings.</p>	<p>As the Philippines is prone to natural disasters (e.g., typhoons and volcanic eruptions), Gabay’s training on disability advocacy for parents, teachers, and community health workers includes a session on climate change and natural disasters. This session lasts for half a day and provides tips for how to support learners with disabilities during natural disasters (e.g., including during evacuations). Gabay produced materials for this training session that Disaster Reduction and Risk Management Officers within LGUs reviewed and approved.</p> 	<p>In Bangladesh, Esho Shikhi (broader education activity) is working with schools to create resiliency and contingency plans in the event of unexpected school closures (e.g., due to natural disasters, pandemics, etc.). Esho Shikhi intends to support schools to integrate these plans, which will focus on best practices to promote sustained engagement between schools/teachers and communities/families, into their existing school improvement plans. Given the early stages of this intervention, it is unclear whether it will specifically target learners with disabilities. Additionally, while Esho Shiki is working in Cox’s Bazar, which hosts a large number of Rohingya refugees, the activity is working with government primary schools and not with the refugee population.</p>	<p>Within the case study sample, two countries—the Philippines and Bangladesh—had some programming for learners in crisis-affected settings. Interventions mainly focus on resiliency planning for unexpected school closures (e.g., due to natural disasters or pandemics), including strategies to support learning outside of the classroom. At the time of the study, only Gabay (disability-specific activity) targeted learners with disabilities in its disaster planning interventions. Case study findings are similar to findings from the larger desk review across 11 countries in Asia, which indicated limited examples of disability-inclusive interventions in crisis-affected settings and no interventions in conflict affected settings. There is an opportunity to learn from current work in the Philippines and Bangladesh to explore how to strengthen disability-inclusive interventions in crisis-affected settings. For example, this will be important given USAID’s increased focus on tackling climate change in its programming across technical sectors.</p>

RQ 6: How does education programming within the Asia region address the intersectionality of disability and other marginalizing factors such as sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, linguistic minorities, and displaced persons within the region?

<i>Tajikistan</i>	<i>Philippines</i>	<i>Bangladesh</i>	<i>Case Study Comparative Analysis</i>
<p>LTA’s GESI analysis examined the intersectionality of learners with disabilities, focusing on issues such as gender, language minorities, and refugees, and made recommendations for activity programming; however, it is not clear the extent to which those recommendations have been implemented.</p>	<p>Gabay largely addresses disability and gender together with some targeted efforts to increase the enrollment of girls with disabilities in primary schools. Given its focus on learners who are deaf, Gabay’s intersectional interventions extend to linguistic minorities (learners who use FSL).</p> <p>ABC+’s interventions do not address the intersectionality of disability and other marginalizing factors.</p>	<p>USAID/Bangladesh’s current basic education activities are largely in the early stages of implementation. While the Government of Bangladesh places a strong emphasis on intersectionality and the design of USAID’s current activities supports an intersectional approach, it is unclear at this time what specific interventions to address intersectionality will look like.</p>	<p>There is limited evidence of basic education activities (broader and disability-specific) taking an intersectional approach to programming. The lack of intentionality around intersecting identities is even more pronounced when basic education activities do not have a specific disability inclusion mandate. This is evident across case study countries and is reflective of the findings from the desk review. Additionally, while there are some promising practices around integrating intersectionality in GESI analyses, there is limited evidence of activities having a continued focus on intersectionality in interventions and within available MEL data. Finally, across the case study countries, activities generally did not address intersectionality within their own staffing, with most focused primarily on creating a gender balanced team.</p>

RQ 7: What emerging practices related to disability-inclusive education are taking place within the region?

<i>Tajikistan</i>	<i>Philippines</i>	<i>Bangladesh</i>	<i>Case Study Comparative Analysis</i>
<p>Operationalizing UDL (see Exhibit 53)</p>	<p>Multidisciplinary and systems-approach to disability-inclusive education (see Exhibit 54)</p>	<p>Leveraging a coordinated approach (see Exhibit 55)</p>	<p>Each case study country has its own unique context, and with varying constraints around available resources, capacity, and needs, each is on a different journey toward progressive realization of disability inclusion. The emerging practices listed in the previous section show different approaches and considerations other countries in the Asia region may wish to consider and adapt.</p>

RQ 8: How does USAID and/or its implementing partners measure the progress and impact of inclusive education programming within the Asia region?

Tajikistan	Philippines	Bangladesh	Case Study Comparative Analysis
<p>At the time of this case study, LTA’s Year 3 MEL plan was still under review by USAID; however, in the plan, the activity included a range of proposed inclusive indicators to better measure the impact of its interventions. Some of these proposed indicators include “number of hours of teacher professional development training sessions that include explicit content related to inclusion,” “percent of educators with increased knowledge of the principles of UDL,” and “number of braille or large print materials disseminated and used.”</p>	<p>Gabay, as a disability-specific education activity, has MEL indicators focused on measuring disability inclusion, including number screened, enrollment of learners with sensory disabilities, learners using assistive devices, and reading scores for learners with disabilities. In reporting, Gabay does not disaggregate MEL data by disability type.</p> <p>ABC+ does not disaggregate MEL data by disability as the activity states that this is not a contractual requirement.</p>	<p>Shobai Miley Shikhi, a disability-specific education activity, is in the very early stages of implementation and does not yet have an approved MEL plan for Year 1. The activity does not plan to engage in screening and identification activities, which may impact its ability to disaggregate data by disability.</p> <p>Esho Shikhi, a broader education activity, does not have inclusive MEL indicators and does not disaggregate data by disability.</p> <p>Promoting Education for Early Learners, a broader education activity, does not plan to disaggregate MEL indicators by disability. The activity’s MEL plan was not available, so it is unclear how the activity will measure the progress and impact of its disability-inclusive interventions.</p>	<p>Across the three case study countries, Gabay (disability-specific) was the only basic education activity that had disability-inclusive MEL indicators that measure progress on interventions such as screening, use of assistive devices, and reading scores for learners with disabilities. Broader education activities in Bangladesh, Tajikistan, and the Philippines did not present disability-disaggregated MEL data and did not include any custom disability-inclusive MEL indicators. The only inclusive MEL indicator that they reported against was a standard output indicator that measures the percentage or number of “learners targeted for USG assistance who have the appropriate variety of reading materials in the language of instruction with inclusive representation of diverse populations.” This is similar to the finding from the larger desk review of 23 broader education activities. A potential exception to this is LTA in Tajikistan, which proposed a set of disability-inclusive MEL indicators (both output and outcome) for Year 3. The proposed indicators are unique and, if approved, would likely provide valuable lessons learned for other broader and disability-specific education activities on innovative ways to measure disability inclusion and may serve as a model for future USAID MEL guidance.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents recommendations for both USAID and implementing partners (Exhibit 57). Recommendations are derived from the desk review and case studies. Findings are presented against three main phases of USAID’s program cycle: (1) country/regional strategic planning and activity design, (2) activity implementation, and (3) monitoring and evaluation.

Exhibit 57. Recommendations for USAID and Implementing Partners

USAID Recommendations

Country/Regional Strategic Planning and Activity Design

1. Develop a USAID-specific disability-inclusive education strategy that outlines USAID’s vision for disability inclusion in basic education programming over the short, medium, and long term. Ideally, the strategy would outline a shared conceptual understanding of disability-inclusive education, present a phased approach for the progressive realization of disability inclusion within both broader and disability-specific education activities (including strategies for how Missions can approach disability-inclusive education in countries that are at different stages of inclusion in both policies and practice), and serve as a roadmap for Missions during CDCS planning and individual activity design. The strategy would also (1) provide an opportunity to succinctly present findings from disability-inclusive education research that USAID has commissioned over the past several years, and (2) serve as a much-needed education-specific update to USAID’s 1997 Disability Policy.
2. Continue to build upon emerging practices and integrate strong disability inclusion language, including specific references to the intersectionality of disability and other marginalizing factors, throughout solicitations. Disability-inclusive and intersectionality language should not only be included in the scope of work but also be part of technical evaluation criteria when reviewing solicitation responses.
3. Provide and prioritize opportunities to train USAID Mission staff on disability-inclusive education topics and the USAID’s Promoting Equity and Inclusion in Educational Materials Checklist⁹⁷ when made publicly available.
4. Utilize evaluation (midterm and formative) opportunities to promote the inclusion of learners with disabilities in activity interventions.
5. Continue to build upon the twin-track approach to disability throughout all phases of the program cycle, where broader education activities are inclusive of disability as a starting point and disability-specific activities provide the extra supports/targeted interventions (and potentially proof of concept for innovative approaches) necessary to ensure learners with disabilities have opportunities to participate in [REDACTED] programming.
6. Where a Mission may have both a broader and disability-specific education activity operating at the same time, consider establishing a formalized process, at the design stage, for those activities to work together and share resources to ensure the complementarity of interventions and increase the impact of interventions for learners with disabilities.
7. Consider conducting a formal evaluation of the comparative advantages and disadvantages (e.g., impact on learning outcomes, reach, etc.) of [REDACTED] programs that are targeted to specific types of disabilities versus programs that work with all types of disabilities.

⁹⁷ USAID is in the process of finalizing a checklist for promoting equity and inclusion of diverse groups in educational materials.

Activity Implementation

1. Consider providing newly awarded activities with an inception period to allow time for robust situational analyses and needs assessments that consider learners with disabilities and how disability inclusion can be integrated across activity interventions. Support activities to integrate findings into interventions and MEL indicators to track progress.
2. Develop guidance on specifically integrating disability and intersectional identities into GESI analyses for basic education activities and promote the practice of having GESI recommendations referenced and reported against in quarterly and annual reports.
3. Develop guidance to strengthen existing TLM inclusion checklists that go beyond ensuring that disabilities are portrayed in a positive light in text and images to including explicit recommendations on accessibility measures, such as font size and type, layout, color contrast, braille, and the embedding of closed captioning and sign language, to make materials accessible for learners with disabilities. Furthermore, guidance can provide “examples in action” with images or hyperlinks to digital content that highlight examples of inclusive and accessible TLMs from other [REDACTED] education activities.
4. Continue to engage technical experts to conduct research and provide oversight of the emerging practice of screening and identification to determine validity and reliability of tools and practices. Update the existing “Collecting Data on Disability Prevalence in Education Programs: How-to Note”⁹⁸ and develop other guidance based on continued research.
5. Consider establishing formal partnerships between education and health sector activities or inter-governmental committees that include representatives from ministries for health, education, and social welfare or social service offices to support capacity-building of local systems to conduct screening activities and strengthen referral pathways that are often lacking.
6. Invest in further research and support pilots of formative and summative early grade assessments that reflect principles of UDA and their impact on learning outcomes for learners with disabilities. Provide specific guidance on adaptations of learning assessments, such as the EGRA and EGMA, to reflect the principles of UDA as well as specific adaptations of summative assessments for learners who are blind or deaf.
7. Build upon the existing 2018 USAID UDL Toolkit and collect, and then disseminate, examples of how basic education activities have operationalized UDL, with a focus on materials and instructional techniques.
8. Conduct a study of the impact of varying family support methods (coaching, teacher outreach, social media content, parent groups) for families of learners with disabilities.
9. In coordination with implementing partners of basic education activities, attend key national-level working groups on disability inclusion (in general and those focused on education) and support coordination of interventions across [REDACTED] activities [REDACTED].

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Request implementing partners to report on the number of staff they hire with self-disclosed disability status, [REDACTED].
2. Collaborate with stakeholders in the field to continue to develop guidance on good practices for measuring disability inclusion and, specifically, measuring inclusivity within interventions that goes beyond the current practices of measuring awareness-raising and disability representation within materials (e.g., measuring inclusive pedagogy in practice).
3. Continue [REDACTED] research and provide training opportunities to USAID Missions and implementing partners to strengthen the evidence base and build capacity for measuring disability inclusion within interventions.

⁹⁸ U.S. Agency for International Development. (2020). Collecting data on disability prevalence in education programs. Online guidance: https://www.edulinks.org/sites/default/files/media/file/HowToNote_DisabilityData_Nov20.pdf

Implementing Partner Recommendations

Activity Design

1. Build in time at the beginning of implementation to provide all technical staff with training and professional development on disability-inclusive education, intersectionality, and UDL.
2. Formalize arrangements with local DPO partners (either through grants or subcontracts) and allocate sufficient time and financial resources to strengthen the capacity of DPOs.
3. For broader education activities specifically, set aside a portion of the activity's budget for disability inclusion. Broader activities should recruit specific expertise in the area of disability inclusion (specifically if the existing GESI staff position is more focused on gender) [REDACTED].
4. During start-up and annual work planning sessions, identify key national-level working groups on disability inclusion (in general and those focused on education), and designate a staff member to participate and support the coordination of interventions.

Activity Implementation

1. Partner with DPOs in the design, validation, implementation, and monitoring of all areas of intervention. DPO partners should be utilized in activity design phases, needs assessments/situational studies, materials development, training delivery, and monitoring and evaluation activities to strengthen the inclusion of learners with disabilities and to strengthen DPOs' capacity to conduct similar work in the future.
2. Upload activity GESI analyses and plans on USAID's DEC to strengthen the knowledge base. Include sections in the analyses and plans specific to disability inclusion as well as the intersectionality of beneficiary identities. Report against any recommendations from GESI analyses in quarterly and annual reports.
3. When made publicly available, utilize USAID's Promoting Equity and Inclusion in Education Materials Checklist that is currently being drafted to inform interventions, from design to distribution of materials, to confirm the inclusion of disability and other marginalized factors and to ensure materials go beyond representation and include UDL principles and specific adaptations to support access for learners with disabilities.
4. Design screening and identification activities that allow for adequate time, financial resources, tool validation, and collaboration with key stakeholders, such as persons with disabilities, allied health professionals, and government officials. As part of the design and development of activities, implementing partners should establish privacy and confidentiality safeguards for learner data related to disability to ensure activities will not lead to further segregation or marginalization within education settings for learners who have or may potentially have a disability.
5. Develop local learning communities of practice with education stakeholders, including teachers and head teachers, that emphasize inclusive education and disability inclusion to allow for the sharing of success stories and challenges, mentoring, and coaching within local communities.
6. Support teachers to conduct regular formative assessments grounded in principles of UDA to ensure assessments are not intentionally excluding learners with disabilities and instead are accurately capturing learning while also ensuring learners with disability-specific needs have access to reasonable accommodations and adaptations. Activities should establish a regular cycle of reflection on formative assessment results and the adaptation of instructional techniques.
7. When designing and conducting training, consider opportunities to bring together a diverse group of participants (e.g., teachers, parents, local government officials, DPOs) to discuss disability inclusion as a way to foster relationships, support buy-in, and recognize that disability-inclusive education requires multidisciplinary collaboration.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Develop and report on MEL indicators that go beyond training and adapted TLMs to measure inclusivity of environments and processes, such as education practices demonstrated by teachers, the community, and families in supporting learning or supporting local and national inclusive education policies, as another way to measure disability inclusion within interventions.
2. Use MEL indicators to collect data on the intersectionality of beneficiaries, including disability status.
3. Report on the number of accessible TLMs developed and distributed, and disaggregate by type of accessibility feature (i.e., braille, large print, embedded sign language, closed captioning, color differentiation, etc.).
4. Report on the number and type of awareness-raising activities on disability and inclusive education, and disaggregate by type, duration, and target group.
5. Ensure that the education progress and outcomes of learners with disabilities are reported on alongside those of their peers without disabilities. Progress and outcome measures can utilize UDL and UDA approaches and disaggregate by disability to further support the twin-track approach to disability inclusion within activities.

ANNEX A. ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE DESK REVIEW REVIEW

	Country	Activity	Activity Category	Ongoing/ Completed	Number of Documents Reviewed
1	Bangladesh	Innovation for Improving Early Grade Reading Activity	Broader education	Completed	13
2	Bangladesh	Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development (READ)	Broader education	Completed	17
3	Cambodia	All Children Reading – Cambodia	Disability-specific	Completed	26
4	India	Nurturing Early Literacy	Broader education	Completed	18
5	India	Partnership for Early Learning	Broader education	Ongoing	1
6	India	Read Alliance	Broader education	Completed	25
7	India	Scaling Up Reading Intervention	Broader education	Completed	16
8	India	School Excellence Program	Broader education	Completed	12
9	India	Start Early	Broader education	Completed	6
10	Indonesia	Prioritizing Reform, Innovation, and Opportunities for Reaching Indonesia’s Teachers, Administrators, and Students (PRIORITAS)	Broader education	Completed	30
11	Kyrgyz Republic	Time to Read	Broader education	Completed	8
12	Kyrgyz Republic	Okuu Keremet! (Learning is Awesome!)	Broader education	Ongoing	8
13	Kyrgyz Republic/ Tajikistan	Quality Reading Project – Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan	Broader education	Completed	11
14	Laos	Learn to Read	Broader education	Ongoing	13
15	Nepal	Reading for All	Disability-specific	Ongoing	19
16	Nepal	Early Grade Reading Program	Broader education	Completed	32
17	Nepal	Early Grade Reading Program II	Broader education	Ongoing	5
18	Pakistan	Sindh Reading Program	Broader education	Completed	18
19	Pakistan	Pakistan Reading Project	Broader education	Completed	66
20	Philippines	Advancing Basic Education in the Philippines	Broader education	Ongoing	5
21	Philippines	Basa Pilipinas (Read Philippines)	Broader education	Completed	27
22	Philippines	Gabay (Strengthening Inclusive Education for Blind/Deaf Children)	Disability-specific	Ongoing	2
23	Philippines	Education Governance Effectiveness	Broader education	Completed	19
24	Tajikistan	Learn Together Activity	Broader education	Ongoing	5
25	Tajikistan	Read With Me	Broader education	Completed	7
26	Uzbekistan	Education for Excellence	Broader education	Ongoing	7

ANNEX B. DESK REVIEW REFERENCE LIST

1. Bangladesh Innovation for Improving Early Grade Reading Activity, Broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. Bangladesh IIEGRA 2016 Annual Report
2. Bangladesh IIEGRA 2017 Annual Report
3. Bangladesh IIEGRA 2018 Annual Report
4. Bangladesh IIEGRA Jun 2015 to Feb 2016 Report

Quarterly Reports

5. Bangladesh IIEGRA 2017 Q1 Report
6. Bangladesh IIEGRA 2017 Q2 Report
7. Bangladesh IIEGRA 2017 Q3 Report
8. Bangladesh IIEGRA 2018 Q1 Report
9. Bangladesh IIEGRA 2018 Q2 Report
10. Bangladesh IIEGRA 2018 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

11. Bangladesh IIEGRA Final Report
12. Bangladesh IIEGRA Process Documentation & Research
13. Bangladesh IIEGRA Endline Report

2. Bangladesh READ, Broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. Bangladesh READ 2014 Annual Report
2. Bangladesh READ 2015 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

3. Bangladesh READ 2014 Q1 and Q2 Report
4. Bangladesh READ 2014 Q3 Report
5. Bangladesh READ 2015 Q1 Report
6. Bangladesh READ 2015 Q2 Report
7. Bangladesh READ 2015 Q3 Report
8. Bangladesh READ 2016 Q1 Report
9. Bangladesh READ 2017 Q2 Report
10. Bangladesh READ 2017 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

11. Bangladesh READ Resource Book Digital Books
12. Bangladesh READ 2014 Baseline Report
13. Bangladesh READ 2015 Baseline Report
14. Bangladesh READ Midline Report
15. Bangladesh READ Evaluation Report
16. Bangladesh READ Final Report
17. Bangladesh READ External Evaluation Midline

3. Cambodia All Children Reading, disability-specific activity

Annual Reports

1. Cambodia ACR 2018 Annual Report
2. Cambodia ACR 2019 Annual Report
3. Cambodia ACR 2020 Annual Report
4. Cambodia ACR 2021 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

5. Cambodia ACR 2017 Q3 Report
6. Cambodia ACR 2017 Q4 Report
7. Cambodia ACR 2018 Q1 Report
8. Cambodia ACR 2018 Q2 Report
9. Cambodia ACR 2018 Q3 Report

10. Cambodia ACR 2019 Q1 Report
11. Cambodia ACR 2019 Q2 Report
12. Cambodia ACR 2019 Q3 Report
13. Cambodia ACR 2020 Q1 Report
14. Cambodia ACR 2020 Q2 Report
15. Cambodia ACR 2020 Q3 Report
16. Cambodia ACR 2021 Q1 Report
17. Cambodia ACR 2021 Q2 Report
18. Cambodia ACR 2021 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

19. Cambodia ACR MEL Plan 2019
20. Cambodia ACR Year 1 Work Plan
21. Cambodia ACR Year 1 Work Plan Addendum
22. Cambodia ACR Year 2 Work Plan
23. Cambodia ACR Year 3 Work Plan
24. Cambodia ACR Technical Report Cambodia Situational Analysis of the Education of Children with Disabilities in Cambodia Report 2018
25. Cambodia ACR Technical Report Hearing and Vision Screening Report 2019
26. Cambodia ACR COVID Project Updates for USAID and Partners 2020

4. India Nurturing Early Literacy, broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. India NEL 2016 Annual Report
2. India NEL 2017 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

3. India NEL 2016 Q1 Report
4. India NEL 2016 Q2 Report
5. India NEL 2016 Q4 Report
6. India NEL 2017 Q1 Report
7. India NEL 2017 Q2 Report

8. India NEL 2017 Q3 Report
9. India NEL 2017 Q4 Report
10. India NEL 2018 Q1 Report
11. India NEL 2018 Q2 Report
12. India NEL 2018 Q3 Report
13. India NEL 2019 Q1 Report
14. India NEL 2019 Q4 Report
15. India NEL 2020 Q1 Report
16. India NEL 2020 Q2 Report

Technical Reports

17. India NEL MEL PPR Oct to Dec 2017
18. India NEL MEL PPR July to Sept 2019

5. India Partnership for Early Learning, broader education activity

Annual Reports

N/A

Quarterly Reports

1. India IPEL 2021 Q1 Report

Technical Reports

N/A

6. India Read Alliance, broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. India Read Alliance 2014 Annual Report
2. India Read Alliance 2015 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

3. India Read Alliance 2014 Q1 Report
4. India Read Alliance 2014 Q2 Report
5. India Read Alliance 2014 Q3 Report
6. India Read Alliance 2014 Q4 Report
7. India Read Alliance 2015 Q1 Report

8. India Read Alliance 2015 Q2 Report
9. India Read Alliance 2015 Q3 Report
10. India Read Alliance 2015 Q4 Report
11. India Read Alliance 2016 Q1 Report
12. India Read Alliance 2016 Q2 Report
13. India Read Alliance 2016 Q3 Report
14. India Read Alliance 2016 Q4 Report
15. India Read Alliance 2017 Q1 Report
16. India Read Alliance 2017 Q2 Report
17. India Read Alliance 2017 Q4 Report
18. India Read Alliance 2018 Q2 Report
19. India Read Alliance 2018 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

20. India Read Alliance MEL 2015
21. India Read Alliance MEL 2016
22. India Read Alliance MEL 2017 Q1
23. India Read Alliance MEL 2017 Q2
24. India Read Alliance MEL 2017
25. India Read Alliance MEL 2018

7. India Scaling Up Reading Intervention (SERI), broader education activity

Annual Reports

N/A

Quarterly Reports

1. India SERI 2016 Q1 Report
2. India SERI 2016 Q2 Report
3. India SERI 2016 Q3 Report
4. India SERI 2016 Q4 Report
5. India SERI 2017 Q2 Report
6. India SERI 2017 Q3 Report
7. India SERI 2017 Q4 Report
8. India SERI 2018 Q1 Report
9. India SERI 2018 Q2 Report

10. India SERI 2018 Q3 Report
11. India SERI 2018 Q4 Report
12. India SERI 2019 Q1 Report
13. India SERI 2019 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

14. India SERI MEL 2016
15. India SERI MEL 2017
16. India SERI Technical Report Endline

8. India School Excellence Program, broader education activity

Annual Reports

N/A

Quarterly Reports

1. India SEP 2014 Quarterly Reports
2. India SEP 2015 Q4 Report
3. India SEP 2016 Q1 Report
4. India SEP 2016 Q2 Report
5. India SEP 2016 Q4 Report
6. India SEP 2017 Q1 Report
7. India SEP 2017 Q2 Report
8. India SEP 2017 Q3 Report
9. India SEP 2017 Q4 Report
10. India SEP 2018 Q1 Report
11. India SEP 2018 Q2 Report
12. India SEP 2018 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

N/A

9. India Start Early broader education activity

Annual Reports

N/A

Quarterly Reports

N/A

Technical Reports

1. India Start Early Technical Report Stories of Change 2018
2. India Start Early Technical Report A Study of Reading Pedagogy in Early Grades in Odisha and Uttar Pradesh 2014
3. India Start Early Technical Report Assessment of Reading Competencies of Students, School and Classroom Environment in Intervention Schools of Uttar Pradesh and Odisha (2014-2018) 2018
4. India Start Early Technical Report Early Language and Literacy in India 2016
5. India Start Early External Evaluation Baseline
6. India Start Early External Evaluation Endline

10. Indonesia PRIORITAS, broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. Indonesia PRIORITAS 2012 Annual Report
2. Indonesia PRIORITAS 2013 Annual Report
3. Indonesia PRIORITAS 2014 Annual Report
4. Indonesia PRIORITAS 2015 Annual Report
5. Indonesia PRIORITAS 2016 Annual Report
6. Indonesia PRIORITAS 2017 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

N/A

Technical Reports

7. Indonesia PRIORITAS Final Report Volume 1
8. Indonesia PRIORITAS Final Report Volume 2
9. Indonesia PRIORITAS Endline Monitoring Report Vol 2 Assessing Impact of PRIORITAS on Student

Performance in Bahasa Indonesia Mathematics and Science

10. Indonesia PRIORITAS Endline Monitoring Report Vol 3 Assessment Early Grade Reading How Well Children Reading in PRIORITAS Districts Cohort 1 2 3 2017
11. Indonesia PRIORITAS Endline Monitoring Report Volume 1 Assessing Impact of PRIORITAS on Schools 50 Partner Districts 2017
12. Indonesia PRIORITAS Midline Monitoring Report Vol 1 Assessing Impact PRIORITAS on Schools Cohort 2 Districts 2016
13. Indonesia PRIORITAS Midline Monitoring Report Vol 2 Assessing Impact PRIORITAS in Bahasa Math and Science Cohort 2 Districts 2016
14. Indonesia PRIORITAS Midline Monitoring Report Vol 3 Early Grade Reading in Cohort 2 Districts 2016
15. Indonesia PRIORITAS Midline Monitoring Report Vol 3 Assessment Early Grade Reading Cohort 1 Districts 2015
16. Indonesia PRIORITAS Midline Monitoring Report Vol 2 Assessing Impact on Math and Science in Cohort 1 Partner Districts 2015
17. Indonesia PRIORITAS Midline Monitoring Report Vol 1 Assessing Impact on School in Cohort 1 Partner Districts 2015
18. Indonesia PRIORITAS EGRA Endline Grade 1
19. Indonesia PRIORITAS Technical Report Collaborative Governance and Management Needs Assessment 2012
20. Indonesia PRIORITAS Technical Report Inclusive Education Policy Study 2013
21. Indonesia PRIORITAS TTI Program A Review 2017
22. Indonesia PRIORITAS Investigation Teacher Deployment and Continuing Professional Dev Prgms 2016

23. Indonesia PRIORITAS Good Practice 1st Edition
Reading Culture in Primary and Jr Secondary School
2015
24. Indonesia PRIORITAS Collaborative Governance and
Management Needs Assessment Cohort 3 Districts
2015
25. Indonesia PRIORITAS Dissemination and
Sustainability of DBE and USAID PRIORITAS
Programs 2014
26. Indonesia PRIORITAS Report on Gender Situation
Analysis Related to Student Learning and Achievement
2013
27. Indonesia PRIORITAS Rapid Assessment of DBE
Modules and Training Delivery Systems 2012
28. Indonesia PRIORITAS Collaborative Analysis and
Identification of Laboratory and Good Practice Schools
- A Strategy Paper 2012
29. Indonesia PRIORITAS Baseline Monitoring Report Vol
2 Assessing Impact on Student Performance Math and
Science 2013
30. Indonesia PRIORITAS External Evaluation Endline

11. Kyrgyz Republic Okuu Keremet, broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. Kyrgyz Republic Okuu Keremet 2020 Annual Report
2. Kyrgyz Republic Okuu Keremet 2021 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

3. Kyrgyz Republic Okuu Keremet 2020 Q1 Report
4. Kyrgyz Republic Okuu Keremet 2020 Q2 Report
5. Kyrgyz Republic Okuu Keremet 2020 Q3 Report
6. Kyrgyz Republic Okuu Keremet 2021 Q1 Report
7. Kyrgyz Republic Okuu Keremet 2021 Q2 Report
8. Kyrgyz Republic Okuu Keremet 2021 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

N/A

12. Kyrgyz Republic Time to Read, broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. Kyrgyz Republic TTR 2017 Annual Report
2. Kyrgyz Republic TTR 2018 Annual Report
3. Kyrgyz Republic TTR 2019 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

4. Kyrgyz Republic TTR 2017 Q1 Report
5. Kyrgyz Republic TTR 2017 Q2 Report
6. Kyrgyz Republic TTR 2018 Q1 Report
7. Kyrgyz Republic TTR 2019 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

8. Kyrgyz Republic TTR Final Report

13. Laos Learn to Read, broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. Laos Learn to Read 2019 Annual Report
2. Laos Learn to Read 2020 Annual Report
3. Laos Learn to Read 2021 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

4. Laos Learn to Read 2019 Q1 Report
5. Laos Learn to Read 2019 Q3 Report
6. Laos Learn to Read 2020 Q1 Report
7. Laos Learn to Read 2020 Q2 Report
8. Laos Learn to Read 2020 Q3 Report
9. Laos Learn to Read 2021 Q1 Report
10. Laos Learn to Read 2021 Q2 Report

Technical Reports

11. Laos Learn to Read Year 1 Work Plan

12. Laos Learn to Read Year 2 Work Plan
13. Laos Learn to Read Year 3 Work Plan

14. Nepal Early Grade Reading Project (EGRP I), broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. Nepal EGRP 2016 Annual Report
2. Nepal EGRP 2017 Annual Report
3. Nepal EGRP 2018 Annual Report plus 2018 Q3 Report
4. Nepal EGRP 2019 Annual Report plus 2019 Q3 Report
5. Nepal EGRP 2020 Annual Report plus 2020 Q3 Report

Quarterly Reports

6. Nepal EGRP 2015 Q4 Report
7. Nepal EGRP 2015 Q3 Report
8. Nepal EGRP 2016 Q1 Report
9. Nepal EGRP 2016 Q3 Report
10. Nepal EGRP 2016 Q4 Report
11. Nepal EGRP 2017 Q1 Report
12. Nepal EGRP 2017 Q2 Report
13. Nepal EGRP 2017 Q4 Report
14. Nepal EGRP 2018 Q1 Report
15. Nepal EGRP 2018 Q4 Report
16. Nepal EGRP 2019 Q1 Report
17. Nepal EGRP 2019 Q2 Report
18. Nepal EGRP 2019 Q4 Report
19. Nepal EGRP 2020 Q1 Report
20. Nepal EGRP 2020 Q2 Report
21. Nepal EGRP 2020 Q4 Report

Technical Reports

22. Nepal EGRP Technical Report Early Grade Reading Public Awareness 2018
23. Nepal EGRP Technical Report Public Awareness of Early Grade Reading in Cohort 2 Districts 2020

24. Nepal EGRP Technical Report Study on Teacher Motivation in the Early Grades 2020
25. Nepal EGRP Technical Report Study on the Effectiveness of the Teacher Professional Support System in the Early Grades 2020
26. Nepal EGRP Technical Report Grants Management and Administration Manual 2015
27. Nepal EGRP MEL Plan 2017
28. Nepal EGRP External Evaluation Endline
29. Nepal EGRP External Evaluation Design
30. Nepal EGRP External Evaluation Midline
31. Nepal EGRP Final Report Volume 1
32. Nepal EGRP Final Report Volume 2

15. Nepal Early Grade Reading Project (EGRP II), broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. Nepal EGRPII 2021 Annual Report plus 2021 Q3 Report

Quarterly Reports

2. Nepal EGRPII 2020 Q4 Report
3. Nepal EGRPII 2021 Q1 Report
4. Nepal EGRPII 2021 Q2 Report
5. Nepal EGRPII 2021 Q4 Report

Technical Reports

N/A

16. Nepal Reading for All, disability-specific education activity

Annual Reports

1. Nepal R4A 2018 Annual Report
2. Nepal R4A 2019 Annual Report
3. Nepal R4A 2020 Annual Report
4. Nepal R4A 2021 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

5. Nepal R4A 2019 Q1 Report
6. Nepal R4A 2019 Q2 Report
7. Nepal R4A 2019 Q3 Report
8. Nepal R4A 2020 Q1 Report
9. Nepal R4A 2020 Q2 Report
10. Nepal R4A 2020 Q3 Report
11. Nepal R4A 2021 Q1 Report
12. Nepal R4A 2021 Q2 Report
13. Nepal R4A 2021 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

14. Nepal R4A MEL Report
15. Nepal R4A MEL Plan (2020)
16. Nepal R4A Program Description
17. Nepal R4A Program Description Amendment 02
18. Nepal R4A Program Description Amendment 03
19. Nepal R4A COVID Nepal COVID-19 Rapid Need Assessment Report 2020

17. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project, broader education activity

Annual Reports

1. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2015 Annual Report
2. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2016 Annual Report
3. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2017 Annual Report
4. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2018 Annual Report
5. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2019 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

6. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2019 Q1 Report

7. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2020 Q1 Report
8. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2020 Q2 Report
9. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2019 Q4 Report
10. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2019 Q2 Report
11. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2018 Q3 Report
12. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2018 Q4 Report
13. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2018 Q2 Report
14. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2018 Q1 Report
15. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2017 Q4 Report
16. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2017 Q2 Report
17. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2017 Q1 Report
18. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2016 Q4 Report
19. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2016 Q3 Report
20. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2015 Q4 Report
21. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2013 Q4 Report
22. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2014 Q1 Report
23. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2014 Q2 Report
24. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2014 Q3 Report
25. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2014 Q4 Report
26. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2015 Q1 Report
27. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2015 Q2 Report
28. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2015 Q3 Report
29. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project 2016 Q2 Report

Technical Reports

30. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Variation Study Midline Report.pdf
31. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Variation Study Endline Report.pdf
32. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Variation Study Baseline Report.pdf
33. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Urdu Endline Report
34. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Tracking Student Achievement.pdf

35. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Technical Report 2015 Tracer Study of PRP Scholarship Graduates
 36. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Teachers' Beliefs about teaching reading and Pedagogic realities in Pakistani Classrooms
 37. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Survey to access participation and benefits of PRP Covid-19 awareness
 38. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Student Performance Tracking Report (Urdu)
 39. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Student Performance Tracking Report (Sindhi)
 40. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Student Enrollment Survey Report in Cohort 1 and 2
 41. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Sindhi Endline Report
 42. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Midline Report
 43. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Reading Loss-Gain during the Summer Vacation
 44. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Pashto Pilot Midline
 45. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Pashto Pilot Endline
 46. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Impact Assessment Report Radio Campaign
 47. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Pashto Pilot Baseline
 48. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Implementation Research on Cohort 1 and 2 Assessment
 49. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Fata Baseline Report
 50. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical report Endline Report 2020
 51. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Baseline Report 2016
 52. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Batch 2 Impact Evaluation Study 2020
 53. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report Analytical Perspective on the Use of Mother Tongue
 54. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report 2020 Student Enrollment Survey Report
 55. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report 2019 Tracer Study of PRP Scholarship Graduates
 56. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report 2019 Student Enrollment Survey Report
 57. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report 2019 Out of School Children Survey Report
 58. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report 2018 Tracer Study of PRP Scholarship Graduates
 59. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report 2018 Student Enrollment Survey Report
 60. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report 2018 Out of School Children Survey Report
 61. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report 2017 Tracer Study of PRP Scholarship Graduates
 62. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report 2017 Student Enrollment Survey Report
 63. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project Technical Report 2017 Out of School Children Survey Report
 64. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project External Report Baseline Report
 65. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project External Report Endline Report
 66. Pakistan, Pakistan Reading Project External Report Evaluation of Complementary Reading Program Grants Initiatives
- 18. Pakistan Sindh Reading Project, boarder education activity**

Annual Reports

1. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program 2014 Annual Report
2. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program 2016 Annual Report
3. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program 2018 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

N/A

Technical Reports

4. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Final Report
5. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program External Report Final Report
6. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Consultative Workshop on Library Development 2015
7. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Formative Assessment Results Report
8. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Non-Formal Education Curriculum Review Workshop
9. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Supplementary Teaching and Learning Materials Gap Study 2014
10. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Technical Report 2015 Baseline Report
11. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Technical Report 2015 Baseline Report Larkana District
12. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Technical Report 2015 Baseline Report Sukkur District
13. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Technical Report 2015 Baseline Report Kambar Shahdadkot District
14. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Technical report 2015 Baseline Report Karachi City
15. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Technical Report 2015 Baseline Report Kashmore District
16. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Technical Report 2016 Baseline Report

17. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program Technical Report Draft Cluster Based On-the-job Teacher's Coaching Model
18. Pakistan Sindh Reading Program MEL Plan

19. Philippines ABC+, boarder education activity

Annual Reports

1. Philippines ABC+ 2020 Annual Report
2. Philippines ABC+ 2021 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

N/A

Technical Reports

3. Philippines ABC+ Technical Report Political Economy of Basic Education Provisioning in Region 6 (Western Visayas) 2020
4. Philippines ABC+ Technical Report Political Economy Analysis of the Bicol Region 2020
5. Philippines ABC+ Baseline Evaluation

20. Philippines Basa Pilipinas, boarder education activity

Annual Reports

1. Philippines Basa Pilipinas 2013 Annual Report
2. Philippines Basa Pilipinas 2014 Annual Report
3. Philippines Basa Pilipinas 2015 Annual Report
4. Philippines Basa Pilipinas 2016 Annual Report
5. Philippines Basa Pilipinas 2017 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

N/A

Technical Reports

6. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Final Report
7. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Final Report Annex

8. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Reading Assessment Evaluation Report 2017 2017
 9. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Understanding Kindergarten Teaching and Learning (UKTL) - Courseware Package 2017
 10. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Early Grade Reading Assessment Final Evaluation Report 2018 2018
 11. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Enabling Effective Literacy Instruction- Training for School Heads Part 1 - Courseware Package 2017
 12. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Enabling Effective Literacy Instruction- Training for School Heads Part 2 - Courseware Package 2017
 13. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Evaluation Report for School Years 2013~14 and 2014~2015 2015
 14. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Final Outcome Evaluation Report 2013 - 2016 2016
 15. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Learning Action Cells (LAC) Refresher Training - Courseware Package 2015
 16. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education in the Philippines- A Study of Literacy Trajectories - USAID~Philippines Basa Pilipinas Program 2017
 17. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report October 2015 Training on Effective Literacy Instruction for Grades 1 and 2 Teachers - Courseware Package 2015
 18. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Reading is for Girls- A Study of the Role of Gender in Literacy Achievement in USAID Basa Pilipinas 2018
 19. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Reading Remediation Support Pilot- Supporting Teachers in Assisting Readers Training (S.T.A.R.T) - Courseware Package 2017
 20. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Reading Remediation Support Pilot- Supporting Teachers in Levelling up Assistance to Readers (STELLAR) Training - Courseware Package 2017
 21. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Strengthening Kindergarten Teaching and Learning (SKTL) - Courseware Package 2017
 22. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Strengthening School-Based Learning Action Cells (LAC) in Literacy Training - Courseware Package 2015
 23. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Summer 2015 Training on Effective Literacy Instruction for Grades 1 and 2 Teachers - Courseware Package 2015
 24. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Training on Effective Literacy Instruction for Grade 3 Teachers - Courseware Package 2016
 25. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Training on Reinforcing Effective Literacy Instruction in Grade 1 Classrooms - Courseware Package 2016
 26. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Training on Reinforcing Effective Literacy Instruction in Grade 2 Classrooms - Courseware Package 2016
 27. Philippines Basa Pilipinas Technical Report Training on Reinforcing Effective Literacy Instruction in Grade 3 Classrooms - Courseware Package 2016
- 21. Philippines EDGE, boarder education activity**
- Annual Reports
1. Philippines EDGE 2014 Annual Report
 2. Philippines EDGE 2015 Annual Report
 3. Philippines EDGE 2016 Annual Report
 4. Philippines EDGE 2017 Annual Report
 5. Philippines EDGE 2018 Annual Report
- Quarterly Reports
6. Philippines EDGE 2015 Q1 Report

7. Philippines EDGE 2015 Q2 Report
8. Philippines EDGE 2015 Q3 Report
9. Philippines EDGE 2016 Q1 Report
10. Philippines EDGE 2016 Q2 Report
11. Philippines EDGE 2016 Q3 Report
12. Philippines EDGE 2017 Q2 Report
13. Philippines EDGE 2017 Q3 Report
14. Philippines EDGE 2018 Q1 Report
15. Philippines EDGE 2018 Q2 Report

Technical Reports

16. Philippines EDGE MEL Plan 2016
17. Philippines EDGE Technical Report Monitoring and Evaluation Guide 2016
18. Philippines EDGE Technical Report School Governing Councils (SGCs) 2016
19. Philippines EDGE Technical Report Finance of Education by Local Government 2016

22. Philippines Gabay, disability-specific education activity

Annual Reports

1. Philippines Gabay 2020 Annual Report
2. Philippines Gabay 2021 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

N/A

Technical Reports

N/A

23. Tajikistan Learn Together Activity (LTA), boarder education activity

Annual Reports

1. Tajikistan Learn Together Activity 2021 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

2. Tajikistan Learn Together Activity 2020 Q1 Report
3. Tajikistan Learn Together Activity 2021 Q2 Report
4. Tajikistan Learn Together Activity 2021 Q3 Report
5. Tajikistan Learn Together Activity 2022 Q1 Report

Technical Reports

N/A

24. Tajikistan Read with Me (RWM), boarder education activity

Annual Reports

N/A

Quarterly Reports

1. Tajikistan Read with Me 2020 Q1 Report
2. Tajikistan Read with Me 2021 Q3 Report
3. Tajikistan Read with Me 2021 Q4 Report

Technical Reports

4. Tajikistan Read with Me Final Report
5. Tajikistan Read with Me Endline Report
6. Tajikistan Read with Me Midline Report
7. Tajikistan Read with Me Baseline Report

25. Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan Quality Reading Program (QRP), boarder education activity

Annual Reports

1. Tajikistan and Kyrgyz QRP 2014 Annual Report
2. Kyrgyz Republic QRP 2016 Annual Report
3. Tajikistan QRP 2017 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

4. Tajikistan and Kyrgyz QRP 2013 Q1 Report
5. Tajikistan and Kyrgyz QRP 2013 Q4 Report
6. Tajikistan and Kyrgyz QRP 2014 Q2 Report

7. Tajikistan QRP 2017 Q1 Report
8. Tajikistan QRP 2017 Q2 Report
9. Tajikistan QRP 2017 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

10. Kyrgyz Republic QRP Final Report
11. Tajikistan QRP Final Report

26. Uzbekistan, Education for Excellence, boarder education activity

Annual Reports

- I. Uzbekistan Education for Excellence 2020 Annual Report

2. Uzbekistan Education for Excellence 2021 Annual Report

Quarterly Reports

3. Uzbekistan Education for Excellence 2020 Q1 and Q2
4. Uzbekistan Education for Excellence 2020 Q3 Report
5. Uzbekistan Education for Excellence 2021 Q1 Report
6. Uzbekistan Education for Excellence 2021 Q2 Report
7. Uzbekistan Education for Excellence 2021 Q3 Report

Technical Reports

N/A

ANNEX C. CASE STUDY STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

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