



FUNDING OPPORTUNITY COVER PAGE

RFA Issuance Date: May 21, 2014
RFA Clarification Questions Due: June 02, 2014
Closing Date and Time: July 09, 2014 - 11:00 a.m. Accra Time

SUBJECT: Request for Applications # RFA-641-14-000004 for USAID Partnership for Education: Learning

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pursuant to the authority granted with the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, the United States Government (USG), as represented by the United States Agency for International Development, (USAID), is seeking applications from eligible institutions to implement a five year program entitled “**USAID Partnership for Education: Learning**”.

The overall goal of the project is to provide technical assistance and capacity building to the Ministry of Education and its Agencies, such as Ghana Education Service and other related entities, as well as selected NGOs, to support pedagogical excellence in early grade reading and for education systems support directly linked to improving, expanding and sustaining reading outcomes. The recipient will be responsible for ensuring achievement of the program objectives. Please refer to the Program Description for a complete statement of goals and expected results.

Subject to availability of funds, USAID intends to award one Cooperative Agreement for approximately \$71.8 million in total USAID funding to be allocated over the 5 year period. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Award will be made to the responsible applicant whose application offers the greatest value to the U.S. Government

Pursuant to 22 CFR 226.81, it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the cooperative agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (22 CFR 226, OMB Circular A-122 for non-profit organizations, OMB Circular A-21 for universities, and Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for-profit organizations,) may be paid under the cooperative agreement. For U.S organizations, 22 CFR 226, OMB Circulars, and the Standard Provisions for U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients will be applicable. For Non-U.S. organizations, the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients will apply. Copies of these documents can be accessed via the USAID website: <http://www.usaid.gov>.

For the purposes of this program, this RFA is being issued and consists of this cover letter and the following:

Section A – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION;
Section B – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION;
Section C – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION;
Section D – AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION.

The preferred method of distribution of USAID assistance information is via the Internet. This RFA and any future amendments can be downloaded from the www.grants.gov web site. All interested parties are highly encouraged to register on www.grants.gov to receive automatic notification of amendments issued to this RFA. It is the responsibility of the recipient of the application document to ensure that it has been received from the internet in its entirety, and USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Applications must be received by the closing date and time indicated at the top of this cover letter. Late applications will not be considered for award. Applications must be directly responsive to the terms and conditions of this RFA. Telegraphic or fax applications are not authorized for this RFA and will not be accepted.

Award will be made to the responsible Applicant whose application best meets the objectives of this RFA and the selection criteria contained herein. Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. In addition, final award of any resultant cooperative agreement depends on funds availability. Further, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant; should circumstances prevent award of a Cooperative Agreement, all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Any questions concerning this RFA should be submitted to accracontract@usaid.gov by the RFA Clarification Questions Due date specified on top of this cover page. If there are problems downloading the RFA from www.grants.gov, please email the website's support team at support@grants.gov. Applicants are encouraged to retain for their records, one copy of each enclosure that accompanies their application.

Thank you for your consideration of this USAID program. We look forward to your participation.

Sincerely,



Yves Kore
Supervisory Regional Agreement Officer

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ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
AMEP	Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CRDD	Curriculum Research Development Division
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTP	Community Teachers Program
DA	District Assembly
DBE	Diploma in Basic Education
DDE	District Directorate of Education
DEO	District Education Office
DFID	Department for International Development
DO	Development Objective
DP	Development Partner
DRG	District Reading Grant
EFA	Education for All
EGMA	Early Grade Math Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EQUALL	Education Quality for All
ESP	Education Sector Plan
GEDP	Ghana Education Decentralization Project
GES	Ghana Education Service
GEU	Girls Education Unit
GOG	Government of Ghana
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
IEU	Islamic Education Unit
IL	Implementation Letter
INSET	In-Service Training
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
KG1	Kindergarten 1
KG2	Kindergarten 2
Learning	USAID Partnership for Education: Learning
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOE	Ministry of Education
NALAP	National Literacy Acceleration Program
NCCA	National Council on Curriculum and Assessment
NEA	National Educational Assessment
NEAU	National Education Assessment Unit
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIB	National Inspectorate Board
NTC	National Teaching Council
P2	Primary Grade 2
P3	Primary Grade 3

P4	Primary Grade 4
P6	Primary Grade 6
PAGE	Partnership for Accountable Governance in Education
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
QUIPs	Quality Improvement in Primary Schools
REO	Regional Education Office
RFA	Request for Applications
SEA	School Education Assessment
SMC	School Management Committee
SPAM	School Performance Appraisal Meeting
SpEd	Special Education Unit
SPIP	School Performance Improvement Plan
SRC	School Report Card
TAP	Transition and Persistence Program
TED	Teacher Education Division
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

SECTION A: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Purpose

With the drive towards established middle income status Ghana at full momentum, USAID and other development partners have a tremendous opportunity today to support positive changes in the education sector, in particular in the area of improving primary school reading. USAID/Ghana is seeking assistance to implement the five-year USAID Partnership for Education: Learning (*Learning*) activity to improve the reading performance of approximately 2.8 million children from Kindergarten 1 (KG1) through grade 3 (P3) out of approximately 4.3 million primary school children.

Efforts under *Learning* will directly support Ministry of Education (MOE) and Ghana Education Service (GES) to improve learning outcomes, especially in the area of early grade reading. This will include support to components of the draft Ghana Reading Action Plan, including improving curriculum, equipping early grade teachers with appropriate training and tools, increasing teaching and learning reading materials, facilitating community engagement in early grade reading, and strengthening related key areas/structures of the basic education management system.

This Request for Applications (RFA) solicits applications from organizations or consortia of organizations with the qualifications and experience to partner with USAID, Ghanaian counterparts and other development partners to implement the *Learning* activity. Technical and financial assistance, coupled with capacity building and development efforts will directly support, and be undertaken in collaboration with, the MOE and key partner agencies under the MOE, including primarily GES and others as defined in this RFA.

USAID expects the Recipient to build effective synergies with USAID supported companion activities and related efforts in Ghana. USAID expects to award a five-year cooperative agreement to the Recipient submitting the highest quality, best value application, based upon the availability of funds. An estimated \$71.8 million in life-of-project funding over five years is anticipated for the activities described below, subject to the availability of funds.

B. Project Description

B.1. Ghana Education Context

Ghana has made great strides in increasing access to education in the past decade. Over the last 20 years, like in many other countries seeking to achieve Education for All (EFA) by 2015, efforts to increase access to education have been more successful than efforts to improve the quality of education. There has also been encouraging progress on gender equity in education in Ghana, particularly at the lower levels of basic education. The current gross enrollment rate is 105 percent at primary level and gender parity index is 0.99. Inefficiencies in the system are evident. As a result, gains in learning achievement have not been commensurate with gains in access and the most recent Education Management Information System (EMIS) data shows that the gender inequalities are on the rise again, particularly starting at the junior high school level. Despite the impressive progress to ensure more children are going to school, data points to the fact that the gender Millennium

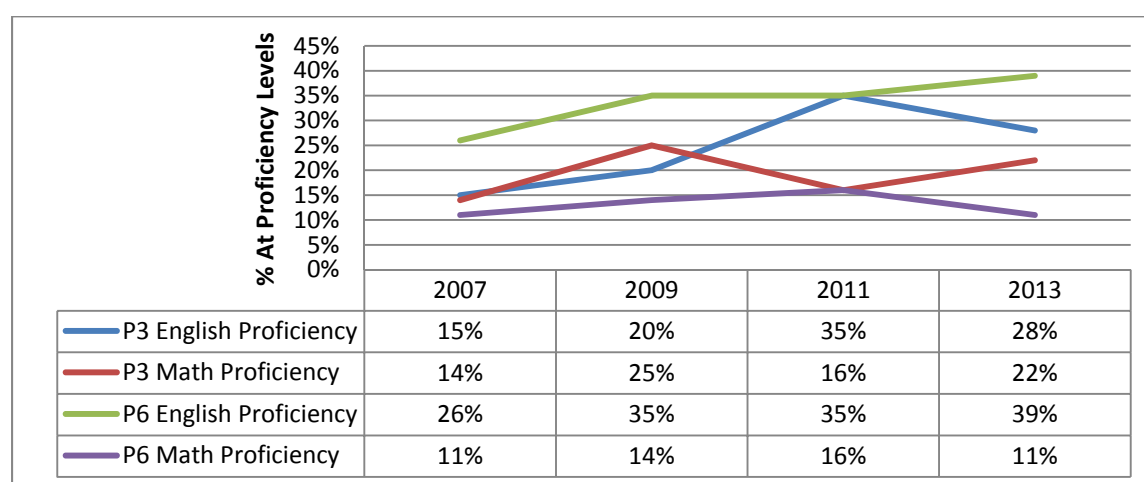
Development Goal (MDG) is likely to be missed in Ghana. Without commensurate measures to ensure quality, this situation risks undermining EFA and in the long-term could reverse initial gains made in expanding access.

B.2. Problem Statement

Ghanaian children's potential for success in primary school and beyond is significantly compromised by the capacity and management environment in which teaching and learning currently takes place. Ghana has a cutting edge language policy that includes 11 Ghanaian languages and a proven approach for mother tongue instruction in the early grades of primary school (the National Literacy Acceleration Program, NALAP, now referred to simply as "child literacy") before a transition to English as the medium of instruction in the latter grades of primary school. The policy on the use of Ghanaian languages as the preferred language of instruction was articulated in the White Paper on the Report of the Education Reform Committee Ministry of Education Youth and Sports in October 2004. However, implementation challenges abound. Recent assessment and evaluation results suggest that focused interventions, resources, and accountability mechanisms will be needed to reach the Government of Ghana's (GOG) goal.

In addition to interventions to address teacher professional development (pre-service and in-service), teacher support and supervision, availability of textbooks and other reading materials, teacher management issues such as teacher absenteeism, teacher time on task and teacher deployment, as well as the data, management and oversight systems to ensure efficient operations relative to teachers need to be addressed, as teachers and teacher presence are critical to the success of classroom reading improvements. With increasing apathy to education and schooling as a result of waning learning outcomes at primary levels, school and community engagement is essential in an increasing decentralized environment.

The Ghana National Educational Assessment (NEA) has shown low and steady English reading and Math proficiency levels in P3 children and children leaving primary grade 6 (P6) as follows:



Further, USAID has supported the National Education Assessment Unit (NEAU), formerly the Assessment Services Unit, to conduct the first Early Grade Reading and Math Assessments (EGRA

and EGMA) in Ghana in 2013. Preliminary results from the EGRA showed that children's reading skills in grade 2 (P2) in English and local language were very poor with 51 percent of the children unable to read a single word in English or from a local language passage and only two percent read fluently and understood what they read. The EGRA results also showed that many pupils lack basic reading skills - while some pupils have the ability to recognize a few words, most cannot yet understand what they read. In addition, most children do not know how to identify the sounds of individual letters and cannot combine letter sounds to read words. This information will lay the foundations for reading interventions.

Overall EGMA performance was equally poor. Preliminary results from the EGMA showed that 72 percent of children could identify numbers; 63 percent know basic addition facts; and 49 percent know basic subtraction facts. On the items that required pupils to apply their knowledge only 21 percent could apply addition facts; and 12 percent could apply subtraction facts. The overriding trend across the EGMA results is that pupils do better on the more procedural items and less well on items that require them to understand and apply their knowledge.

According to the World Bank, pupils' ability to read is a key indicator of school quality. Reading is the gateway to the lifelong learning that is required for success in today's world. Children who do not learn to read in the first few grades of school will struggle to keep up with classroom assignments in later grades and have difficulty becoming self-guided learners as they become mature adults. Globally, studies have shown that learning outcomes have a direct correlation to a country's economic growth. Key to learning is the ability to read. A ten percent increase in the number of pupils achieving basic literacy translates into a 0.3 percentage point increase in the annual growth rate for that country. Other research has shown that early grade reading competencies are critical for continued retention and success in future grades.

B.3. GOG Response

No doubt invigorated by attaining lower middle income status and a renewed resolve to produce a citizenry that is literate and numerate, MOE and the GES have begun to take critical steps to improve the quality of education and especially reading. Under the objective to improve the quality of education, the GOG aims for at least 60 percent of P6 pupils reading with proficiency by 2012 in its 2010-2020 Education Sector Plan (ESP). To attain its reading goals, significant resources – technical and financial - are needed to improve the reading skills of early primary school pupils and to strengthen the systems that can sustain anticipated gains, critical priorities for USAID/Ghana and the GOG.

The GOG now has a draft Ghana Reading Action Plan. Developed at the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) All Children Reading Workshop in 2012 with support from GPE and USAID, the draft Ghana Reading Action Plan comprises critical elements of Ghana's approach to tackle low child literacy and numeracy. The plan has served to guide USAID's programmatic design to support critical, priority areas as described in this RFA. The draft Ghana Reading Action Plan proposes adjustment of the reading target to "increase the percentage of early grade readers (KG1-P3) from 20.4 percent to 80 percent by 2017" to be validated. The sections of the draft plan are:

- Social Marketing and Communication
- Language Transition

- Curriculum and Lesson Plans
- Teacher Training and Support
- Mother Tongue Instruction
- Reading Materials
- Assessment Tools
- Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Importantly, in addition to developing a Kindergarten Scale-up Plan and a National Education Gender Strategy with support from the Department for International Development (DFID) and USAID, the MOE launched its Teacher Professional Development Policy in 2013 with support from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency. Primary Teacher In-Service Training (INSET) now includes a module on child literacy. At central, district and school-level, the GES has undertaken a variety of actions that comprise key GOG inputs to changing the situation of child literacy. The GES is seeking information and analysis around the appropriate year of exit of the use of mother tongue as language of instruction and has directed districts and schools to include 45 minutes of reading instruction as part of its 90 minutes of language and literacy in their school timetable.

B.4. USAID Response

Creating sustainable gains in child literacy and numeracy nationwide requires improved instruction and strengthened education management to support and sustain it. Ghana needs support to produce sufficient quality learning materials and skilled teachers as well as support to strengthen management of the education system from the school level to the district, regional and central levels. Without effective oversight and accountability in the education system, the ability to expand and sustain gains over time will be compromised. The only way to create lasting change is to build sustainable systems.

To directly support GOG in its reading and literacy improvement efforts, USAID/Ghana has designed the USAID Partnership for Education Project, a suite of discreet, independent and yet inter-linked financial and technical support. Overall, the major areas of work are as follows:

1. USAID Partnership for Education: Learning will provide technical assistance and capacity building to MOE and GES (central and local levels) as well as selected non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to support pedagogical excellence in early grade reading, exploratory work on early grade numeracy, and for education systems support linked to improving, expanding and sustaining reading outcomes;
2. USAID Partnership for Education: Testing, awarded in December 2013 to RTI International, is providing technical assistance and capacity building in the area of pupil assessment to MOE and GES. An EGRA and EGMA in P2 were conducted in 2013, with a follow up scheduled for 2015. An NEA in P3 and P6 was conducted in 2013, with another NEA in P4 and P6 set to be conducted in 2016.
3. USAID Partnership for Education: Funding will undertake capacity and financial risk assessments, tracking, validation and audits on the disbursement of funds to MOE, GES, National Inspectorate Board (NIB), National Teaching Council (NTC), National Council on Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and local entities in the education sector;
4. USAID Partnership for Education: Evaluating Systems will help establish and improve the education M&E framework and system of MOE and GES;

5. USAID Partnership for Education: Monitoring and Evaluating Support will provide technical and financial support to MOE, GES and local organizations to assist with implementation of core M&E functions and frameworks, and provide technical assistance to strengthen the monitoring, evaluation and reporting functions of USAID's Education Office;
6. USAID Partnership for Education: Innovating will support Ghana's primary school reading efforts and plans through the promotion of new, private sector and local partnerships;
7. USAID Partnership for Education: G2G and Local Organization Grant Mechanisms, both through project (sub grants through *Learning*) and direct agreements (pending USAID assessments), will fund activities in support of pedagogical excellence in early grade reading and for education systems support linked to improving, expanding and sustaining reading outcomes.

The *USAID Partnership for Education Project* will build on successes and learning of school, community and NGO efforts under previous USAID-supported activities such as Quality Improvement in Primary Schools (QUIPs), Education Quality for All (EQUALL), Partnership for Accountable Governance in Education (PAGE), Ghana Education Decentralization Project (GEDP) and Transition and Persistence (TAP), as well as relevant and promising efforts by government, other Development Partners (DPs) and organizations. Best practice in the area of language and literacy as it applies to primary school reading will include USAID's approach to improving reading and literacy, which revolves around five goals, also known as the five "T's":

- More **time** devoted to teaching reading
- Better **techniques** for teaching reading
- More **texts** in the hands of children
- Teaching children in the mother **tongue** (a language they speak and understand)
- **Testing** children's' reading progress

The USAID Partnership for Education: *Learning* activity will strengthen and support Ghana education sector human and institutional capacities to provide pedagogical excellence in early grade reading and basic education systems support linked to improving, expanding and sustaining reading outcomes. Activities will be planned and implemented within the Ghanaian context, promoting and supporting genuine ownership and leadership by Ghanaian stakeholders. A small but related component of this activity will identify approaches to improve early grade math skills on an exploratory basis.

B.5. Alignment with USG and GOG Strategies

By combining a focus on improving literacy at primary school levels with the use of partner government systems to implement education activities, the USAID/Ghana approach through the *USAID Partnership for Education Project* aligns with the USAID Education Strategy, *USAID Forward* principles - including Local Solutions and Evaluation Policy - as well as international commitments on aid effectiveness such as the Paris Declaration, Accra Agenda for Action and Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

The *USAID Partnership for Education Project* support to improving child literacy and numeracy, as well as basic education systems, contributes directly to Ghana's 2010-2020 ESP and its implementation, with an emphasis on the objectives related to quality of education and education management.

Learning aligns with and helps to meet Ghana basic education sector priorities, contributes to USAID's Education strategy Goal One: "improved reading skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015", and contributes to the GPE reading-related goals to see a dramatic increase in the number of children learning and demonstrating mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills by grade 3; and halve the number of non-reading children in early grades in at least 20 of our developing country partners.

B.6. USAID Partnership for Education: Learning

The *Learning* activity is part of a comprehensive and integrated project designed to support literacy improvement activities implemented by the MOE and the GES. *Learning* seeks to strengthen and support Ghana education sector human and institutional capacities, specifically in the areas of 1) pedagogical excellence in early grade reading, 2) education systems support linked to improving, expanding and sustaining reading outcomes, and 3) parent, school and local government engagement to promote reading. This work is to be conducted with and through the MOE, GES, NIB, NTC, NCCA, local public and private NGOs and other local entities, in collaboration with USAID/Ghana and other education sector partners, building on the promising and proven approaches and successes achieved under previous USAID and other sector support in Ghana and elsewhere.

In order for the overall efforts of the project to be successful, the *Learning* Recipient must work highly collaboratively and synergistically with the implementers of the other USAID Partnership for Education activities to ensure increased results and impact. The *Learning* Recipient will have the lead technical assistance role among the various activities. As such, the *Learning* Recipient will coordinate with other *USAID Partnership for Education* project efforts, build synergies with other donor-funded efforts in the education sector, monitor to prevent the duplication of efforts, leverage impact from past and current educational activities to enhance project performance, and ensure regular implementation progress with MOE, GES and USAID.

A Steering Committee is expected to provide implementation oversight to all *USAID Partnership for Education Project* mechanisms. Committee membership, responsibilities and functions will be confirmed upon award, but it is expected that this Steering Committee will be chaired by the MOE/GES and composed of the *Learning, Testing, Funding, Innovating, Evaluating Systems, and Monitoring and Evaluating Support* Chiefs of Party, or their delegates, as well as other relevant persons or institutions, potentially including representatives from USAID/Ghana, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. The primary responsibilities of the Steering Committee are anticipated to be to provide policy direction, discuss overall policy issues affecting project implementation, review project progress and discuss and resolve implementation challenges. Performance and Impact Evaluations will be conducted externally by USAID/Ghana or an independent third party.

C. Geographic Focus

Building on previous pilot activities, such as EQUALL and the direct agreement with MOE/GES to implement a national scale orientation to the NALAP/mother tongue instruction approach, interventions under *Learning* will be predominantly national in scope and will be implemented through a collaborative approach with the MOE/GES, District Directorates of Education (DDE) and/or District Assemblies (DAs). In the schools and classrooms, the focus of activities will be on grades KG1-P3.

National scope activities include teacher training and teacher support, support to teaching and learning materials, School Report Cards (SRC) and national entity-level capacity building efforts. For activities where national coverage is not feasible, a strategy must be articulated by the Recipient in collaboration with MOE/GES and USAID to ensure adequate and sufficient coverage to achieve the results and meet the objectives articulated in this RFA. In developing this strategy, the Recipient should take into account regions where learning and reading outcomes are the weakest, such as, but not limited to, the Northern Region. In the 2012 Basic Education Certificate Examination only 11 percent of pupils in the Northern Region received a mark of “above average” in English, compared to the national average of 23 percent. The 2013 EGRA assessment also showed marked low results in this and other regions.

Pending the results of GES Financial Management Risk and Programmatic Capacity Assessment, it is anticipated that USAID/Ghana will engage directly with selected DDEs by Year 1 of the life of *Learning*, with an emphasis on ‘performing’ districts. For Districts not yet eligible for direct funding but with potential to transition to ‘performing’ district status, also referred to as ‘transitioning’ districts, the Learning Recipient will provide technical assistance for the achievement of the *USAID Partnership for Education Project* objectives while building the capacity of the DDE/DA, including through sub-grants to local organizations.

Given the coverage of 57 ‘deprived’ districts through other development partners such as GPE, *Learning* will concentrate its support on the approximately 159 remaining ‘performing’ and ‘transitioning’ districts throughout the country, though some overlap is expected. An analysis of administrative and education data as well as the fiduciary and organizational capacity assessments, in consultation with MOE/GES and other relevant Ghanaian institutions, will determine the final districts that will be targeted. To facilitate capacity building and systems strengthening, the Recipient is encouraged to propose a decentralized technical assistance and support structure to the Regional level. Where possible, existing management, process structures and infrastructures should be used.

D. Scope of Work

D.1. Project Goal

The overarching goal of *Learning* is to improve primary school reading performance in Ghana, which will be achieved through three sub-goals:

1. Enhanced early grade reading and math teaching and learning;
2. Improved basic education policy and management systems for sustained learning outcomes,

especially in reading; and

3. Strengthened parent, school and local government capacity and engagement to promote and support reading.

The development hypothesis underpinning the *Learning* activity is that if early grade reading and math instruction is improved, with strengthened basic education management systems, including district and community level support to accompany, promote and sustain it, then children's learning outcomes, specifically children's reading performance in primary schools and ability to read at grade level, will improve.

D.2. Expected Results and Outcomes

USAID/Ghana and Recipient efforts must contribute to the Agency Education Strategy Goal One: improved reading skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015. All activities are expected to produce increased reading skills among approximately 2.8 million primary school (KG1-P3) pupils, including vulnerable and/or at-risk populations (e.g. girls and children with disabilities/special needs).

The *Learning* activity components and expected outcomes, including their alignment with the USAID/Ghana Cooperation and Development Strategy (CDCS) Development Objective (DO) 4 and related Intermediate Results (IRs), are outlined below.

DO 4: Improved reading performance in primary school		
IRs	Project Component	Expected Outcome
IR 4.1: Enhanced reading and math instruction	1. Teaching and learning	Enhanced early grade reading and math teaching and learning
	1.1. In-service teacher training	In-service training for reading instruction strengthened for at least 51,000 KG1-P3 teachers using Ghana's current bilingual child literacy curriculum and approach.
	1.2. Pre-service teacher preparation	Pre-service training for reading instruction improved.
	1.3. Instructional materials	Improved use of quality teaching and learning materials.
	1.4. Early grade math pilot	Strategies piloted for improving math instruction.
IR 4.2: Strengthened basic education management systems	2. Systems	Improved basic education policy and management systems for sustained learning outcomes, especially in reading
	2.1. Policy and guidelines	Implementation of MOE language policy strengthened.
	2.2. Oversight and management capacity	MOE, GES, NIB, NTC and NCCA technical and financial management systems improved.
	2.3. Teacher support,	Strategies piloted for improving teacher

DO 4: Improved reading performance in primary school		
	supervision and monitoring	attendance and time on task.
IR 4.3: Increased government accountability and transparency	3. Communities and Accountability	Strengthened parent, school and local government capacity and engagement to promote and support reading.
	3.1. Community engagement in decision-making	School management and decision-making structures for community engagement supported.
	3.2. District Reading Grants	District Reading Grants (DRG) effectively used by ‘performing’ districts to help promote reading and improve the related basic education management practices at district level.
	3.3. School Report Cards	GES School Report Card program improved and expanded.

Learning will use USAID standard indicators as well as custom indicators agreed upon with USAID/Ghana to track and measure progress. Applicants must make sure that they incorporate the appropriate standard indicators and reflect the accurate intention of those indicators (as measured by the definition, known data limitations, and data sources). The following Foreign Assistance and Education Strategy Goal 1 Standard Indicators are important indicators related to *Learning* and will be used to report performance annually:

- Proportion of students who by the end of two grades of primary schooling demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text
- Number of learners enrolled in primary schools and/or equivalent non-school based settings with USG support
- Number of learners receiving reading interventions at the primary level
- Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support
- Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who successfully completed in-service training or received intensive coaching or mentoring with USG support
- Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who successfully completed pre-service training with USG support
- Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided with USG assistance
- Number of laws, policies, regulations, or guidelines developed or modified to improve primary grade reading programs or increase equitable access
- Number of sub-national entities receiving USG assistance that improve their performance
- Number of PTAs or similar ‘school’ governance structures supported

Custom indicators that must be taken into consideration are outlined below; however, final indicators will be agreed between USAID/Ghana and Recipient upon award.

- Percentage of Primary 2 students who receive higher than a zero score in the Early Grade Reading Assessment

- Percentage of targeted teachers incorporating phonemic and related reading methodologies in the classroom
- Percentage of targeted teachers applying concept and application teaching methodologies in mathematics in the classroom
- Percentage of targeted teachers using updated teaching and learning materials in the classroom
- Percentage of targeted education management systems that meet or exceed minimum management requirements
- Percentage of schools taking steps to address challenges and issues related to reading, as identified in school management discussions or documents
- Percentage of parents and family members who actively engage with their children's school on reading and learning outcomes
- Percentage of districts receiving USAID-funded District Reading Grants that spend monies in accordance with USG regulations

D.3. Components

Learning is divided into three major components, each with sub-components as listed below. All results and outcomes under *Learning* are intended to support USAID/Ghana's Education DO. Each component and its sub-components correspond and contribute to USAID/Ghana DO 4 and IRs.

Component 1: Teaching and Learning

- Sub-component 1.1: In-service teacher training
- Sub-component 1.2: Pre-service teacher preparation
- Sub-component 1.3: Instructional materials
- Sub-component 1.4: Early grade math pilot

Component 2: Systems

- Sub-component 2.1: Policy and guidelines
- Sub-component 2.2: Oversight and management capacity
- Sub-component 2.3: Teacher support, supervision and monitoring

Component 3: Communities and Accountability

- Sub-component 3.1: Community engagement in decision-making
- Sub-component 3.2: District Reading Grants
- Sub-component 3.3: School Report Cards

Applicants are encouraged to propose additional, pertinent activities in addition to the required activities to meet the proposed outcomes.

D.3.1. Component 1: Teaching and Learning

Expected Outcomes: Enhanced early grade reading and math teaching and learning. The related outcomes under this component are:

- In-service training for reading instruction enhanced for at least 51,000 KG1-P3 teachers using

Ghana's current bilingual child literacy curriculum and approach.

- Pre-service training for reading instruction improved.
- Improved use of quality teaching and learning materials
- Strategies piloted for improving math instruction.

Over the years, a wealth of good practice has emerged out of interventions introducing cutting edge and best practices for improved learning outcomes. However, in many cases, there is inconsistency in how teachers and other education personnel understand these practices, and more importantly, how they apply them. The work under this component will assist GES to review and take into account recent and relevant research efforts and findings, such as those in the areas of KG, Girls' Education and Activity-Based Learning in Ghana that point to a need for greater cohesion and better articulation of teaching and learning methodologies, techniques and approaches that impact learning, with an emphasis on those that will have the greatest effect on improving reading. Efforts will also be guided by the 2011 USAID Education Strategy Implementation Guidance within the Ghanaian context as well as other emerging evidence.

Recipient efforts will build the capacity of the MOE/GES to improve the quality of reading instruction at the in-service and pre-service level for KG1-P3 teachers in Ghana. The major focus will be strengthening the instructional approach for the teaching of reading, via an improved implementation of Ghana's current bilingual child literacy approach and curriculum (formerly referred to as NALAP). This could include the establishment of national targets for early grade reading acquisition, language-specific scope and sequences, language-specific lesson plans for every day of instruction in grades 1-3, teacher's guides containing those lesson plans, and corresponding pupil books.

Activities should include strengthening and focusing teacher preparation and professional development and classroom-level support from coaches for reading and reading skill improvement. The Recipient will also assist MOE/GES to develop or enhance and secure quality reading materials, both core and supplementary. Work in this area will explore the use of: language-specific teacher's guides with scripted lesson plans, textbooks, decodable readers and leveled readers and devise and/or implement innovative literacy support strategies focused on improving reading instruction, increasing motivation and increasing opportunities for reading practice.

Many of the activities for this component are included in the draft Ghana Reading Action Plan, which should be used to guide development and implementation, but which should also be informed by interactions and technical assistance between GES and the Recipient. Activities will seek to strengthen GES' skills and processes associated with improved and successful delivery of the reading-related curriculum with consistent monitoring and measurement of pupil, class and school performance.

All activities must be designed and conducted with and through MOE/GES. Recipients are encouraged to propose additional innovative activities in addition to the required activities to meet the proposed outcomes. In addition, Recipients are expected to develop participatory mechanisms to gather inputs from various stakeholders, including community members in the development and finalization of key outputs, including, but not limited to supplemental reading material.

Sub-component 1.1: In-Service Teacher Training

Expected Outcome: Strengthened early grade reading instruction of at least 51,000 KG1-P3 teachers using Ghana's current bilingual child literacy curriculum and approach.

The Recipient will build on MOE and GES efforts to establish a solid approach for reading instruction in grades KG1-P3. This approach begins with the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the early grades, with a gradual introduction of English as the medium of instruction from P4. It is anticipated that GES will develop benchmarks for early grade reading as part of the EGRA dissemination activity by 2014 under the *Testing* activity.

The Recipient will work with MOE/GES and relevant education institutions and personnel to strengthen and reinforce training and coaching of teachers in early grade reading using a variety of tools and skills, such as continuous pupil learning assessment specific to reading. Efforts in this area should uphold and support the implementation of the new Teacher Professional Development Policy, whose objectives include to: "Intensify INSET on pedagogy in literacy and numeracy for teachers in deprived areas; set reading standards to inform assessments (NIB) and train teachers based on standards (e.g. grade 1 and 2 teachers for reading); and organize reading clinics for circuits in deprived areas annually".

Building on the EGRA model, learning assessment procedures and practical learning assessment aids should include step-by-step instructions a typical teacher will use for assessing pupil learning during classroom activities. The model will build capacity of teachers to assess and analyze individual pupil reading levels.

Expected outputs:

- a. NALAP/child literacy curriculum for early grades reviewed, taking into account key recommendations from the NALAP Formative Evaluation and other relevant, existing efforts, approaches and results.
- b. Recommendations made to MOE/GES on potential improvements to tracking, monitoring and coordination of INSET offered in reading instruction.
- c. Continuous teacher training in reading instruction for KG1-P3 teachers developed and implemented.
- d. Promising reading instructional strategies identified and used in the classroom, including instructional approach, teacher support, materials, continuous assessment and a language use framework as per Ghanaian language policy.
- e. Plan for classroom-level teacher supported assessments developed.

Illustrative Activities:

- Review, build on and support MOE/GES efforts to improve the child literacy (formerly NALAP) curriculum and other relevant, existing efforts, approaches and results, including, but not limited to key recommendations from the NALAP Formative Evaluation.
- Assist GES to develop and implement effective tracking, monitoring and coordination of INSET offered in the area of reading/reading instruction.

- Develop and implement continuous teacher training in reading/reading instruction for KG1-P3 teachers.
- Develop language-specific interventions so that teachers can then expand, integrate, and institutionalize the child literacy methodology in INSET, as well as a system of classroom-level support (including, but not limited to exploring the use of phonics, guides or scripted lesson plans for every instructional day of grades KG1-P3, with clear instructional routines and classroom-level teacher support).
- Develop a plan for classroom-level teacher supported assessments.
- Review and as necessary update Ghana national reading standards.
- Develop and implement continuous teacher training in reading for KG1-P3 teachers.
- Assist GES to review and revise, if necessary, the framework for the production of curriculum materials.

Sub-component 1.2: Pre-Service Teacher Training

Expected Outcome: Improved pre-service teacher professional development in the area of reading.

The thirty-eight (38) Colleges of Education offer an opportunity to integrate and institutionalize the teaching of reading through the bilingual child literacy methodology in pre-service teacher training as both a precursor and complement to INSET training efforts. Along with efforts to facilitate policy dialogue and institutional leadership to improve coordination and ensure the teaching of reading is central to pre-service teacher training, the Recipient will introduce, integrate and institutionalize the teaching of reading through the bilingual child literacy approach and methodology in pre-service teacher training.

The Recipient is expected to work with MOE/GES and the Institute of Education (which oversees all Colleges of Education) to develop, manage and facilitate a process to support pre-service teacher professional development institutions to improve early grade reading, in close coordination with MOE/GES, adhering to partner government systems policies and procedures in the first two years of the activity. The Recipient will develop steps to address technical, financial or management issues determined in the USAID financial management risk and programmatic capacity assessments conducted for institutions not yet meeting the necessary standards to be able to meet the standards and become eligible to receive funding either through *Learning* in Year 1 or directly from USAID/Ghana in subsequent years.

Expected outputs:

- a. Guidelines related to child literacy at pre-service levels for managers, lecturers and other implementers as determined by MOE, GES and the Institute of Education.
- b. Reading instruction integrated as a subject in the pre-service curriculum at the Colleges of Education and other major institutions that prepare teachers to teach in the early grades.
- c. Language-specific interventions developed and submitted to MOE/GES for approval.
- d. Technical and financial support plan developed and submitted to MOE/GES for approval.
- e. Recommendations developed and submitted to MOE/GES to address technical, financial or management issues determined in the USAID financial management risk and programmatic capacity assessments.

- f. Plan developed to monitor implementation and effectiveness of pre-service teacher professional development institutions for KG1 – P3 reading.

Illustrative activities:

- Facilitate policy dialogue for the development of guidelines related to child literacy at pre-service levels for managers and implementers as determined by MOE, GES and the Institute of Education.
- Develop a strategy to support the integration of reading instruction as a subject in the pre-service curriculum at the 38 Colleges of Education and other major institutions that prepare teachers to teach in the early grades.
- Develop language-specific interventions so that teachers can then expand, integrate, and institutionalize the child literacy methodology in pre-service training.
- Develop a strategy, plan and/or process, in coordination with MOE, GES and the Institute of Education, to provide technical and financial support to the Institute of Education and pre-service teacher professional development institutions taking into account USAID financial management risk and programmatic capacity assessments.
- Develop steps to address technical, financial or management issues determined in the USAID financial management risk and programmatic capacity assessments conducted for institutions not yet meeting the necessary standards to be able to meet the standards and become eligible for funding either through *Learning* in Year 1 or directly from USAID/Ghana in subsequent years.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of activities implemented by pre-service teacher professional development institutions for KG1 – P3 reading.
- Develop funding criteria, based on financial and institutional compliance with USAID standards (as per ADS 220), for Colleges of Education or related pre-service teacher preparation institutions through *Learning* or directly through USAID.

Sub-Component 1.3: Instructional Materials

Expected Outcome: Increased availability and use of core and supplementary reading materials for teachers and primary school pupils.

Appropriate learning materials are critical to effective improvement of reading instruction. Structured, systematic and sustained support is necessary for development of reading skills and the intellectual growth of children as they move through the primary cycle.

Given that NALAP/child literacy teaching and learning materials have been produced and disseminated in the eleven languages and English, GES will identify a time within the duration of this activity to review the materials and propose any critical, necessary changes. The *Learning* Recipient will assist GES to make this determination and provide relevant support. Efforts should take into account relevant materials that have been developed in addition to or linked to NALAP, to include but not be limited to the NALAP Formative Evaluation, the Textbooks and Learning Materials Program, and the Teacher Community Assistant Initiative. The Recipient will work with the MOE/GES to ensure that materials developed are relevant to the Ghanaian context and the efforts to establish the bilingual child literacy approach to date. The Recipient will ensure that all materials are

independently reviewed so they promote gender equality and inclusiveness of children from vulnerable populations.

Due to the challenges associated with the lack of a literate environment, especially in rural areas, particular attention must be paid to the inclusion of supplementary or complementary reading materials for children in and/or out of school. Promoting the creation and use of classroom libraries and other related strategies is strongly encouraged, as are strategies to promote school and community member participation in these activities.

Activities must promote clarity and cohesiveness of the availability and use of teaching and learning materials and maximize consistency of approach to promote strong reading teaching, learning and practice on the part of teachers and pupils. The Recipient is highly encouraged to use participatory mechanisms to gather inputs from relevant stakeholders, including community members in the development and finalization of supplemental reading material.

Expected outputs:

- a. Supplementary reading materials strategy co-produced with GES.
- b. Teacher training guidelines to accompany KG1-P3 reading materials reviewed and updated.
- c. GES capacity to promote gender equality and inclusiveness of children from vulnerable populations increased.
- d. Printing and distribution financing plan for reading materials developed.
- e. Strategy to obtain and/or produce supplementary or complementary reading materials co-produced with GES.

Illustrative Activities:

- Support GES to develop a strategy to produce or obtain appropriate supplementary reading teaching and learning materials.
- Review, update and/or develop teacher training to accompany the reading materials for grades KG1-P3.
- Build on or develop GES practices for independent review of materials so they promote gender equality and inclusiveness of children from vulnerable populations.
- Develop a printing and distribution financing plan for reading materials during and beyond the life of *Learning*, in conjunction with MOE/GES and other DPs.
- Support GES to develop a strategy to obtain and/or produce supplementary or complementary reading materials for children in the classroom and out of school.
- Support the printing and distribution of teaching and learning materials.
- Assess existing child literacy materials for possible use as supplementary materials.

Sub-component 1.4: Early Grade Math Pilot

Expected Outcome: Strategies for improving early grade numeracy teaching and learning piloted.

For math, other than the NEA in P3 and most recently the EGMA in 2013, there have been few nationwide, standardized assessments or analyses of performance or teaching and learning in the early

grades. It is not fully understood what the key barriers to improved children's performance in early grade math are or what strategies can be successful in the Ghanaian context.

The Recipient will develop and implement pilot activities aimed at improving the teaching and learning of math in the early grades. These inventions will be evaluated through *USAID Partnership for Education: Evaluating Systems*, which will design and implement a rigorous impact evaluation to learn about effective approaches to improve early math learner performance. Activities in this area will test strategies that could be adopted on a wider scale to improve early grade math performance. Funds to be allocated for the implementation of the pilot activities will not exceed \$250,000 per year. The GOG considers numeracy skills and the effective teaching and learning of math essential. Activities will respond to MOE/GES interest in expanding the scope of child literacy to child numeracy.

Expected Outputs:

- a. Pilot activities to improve the teaching and learning of early grade math implemented.
- b. Recommendations for math materials development co-produced with GES.
- c. Advice provided on the design of the impact evaluation for the *Learning* math pilot activities.

Illustrative activities:

- Develop and implement pilot activities aimed at improving the teaching and learning of math in primary school.
- Co-produce recommendations for MOE/GES math materials development in grades KG1 - P3 to include proven strategies, methodology, approaches or techniques.
- Contribute to the design of a rigorous impact evaluation to learn about potential approaches to improve early math learner performance, in conjunction with *USAID Partnership for Education: Evaluating Systems*.
- Analyze NEA and EGMA and other existing data in or related to Ghana to assess the major challenges of children's performance in early grade math.

D.3.2. Component 2: Systems

Expected Outcomes: Improved basic education policy and management systems for sustained learning outcomes, especially in reading. The related outcomes under this component are:

- Implementation of MOE language policy strengthened.
- MOE and GES technical and financial management systems improved.
- Strategies piloted for improving teacher attendance and time on task.

Activities under this component will strengthen education management systems, increasing the capacity of the GES to provide effective oversight and create accountable systems at the central, regional, district and school levels, linked to the improvement, expansion and sustainability of learning and, specifically, reading outcomes.

Working with and through the MOE/GES, the Recipient will support the MOE/GES to enhance and update the policy on the use of Ghanaian languages as the preferred language of instruction from the central to the school level, including the articulation and dissemination of a solid, operational definition and necessary guidance on its bilingual child literacy approach and methodology. Policy dialogue will take place to ensure proper policy development relative to the approach, methodology and implementation guidance at central, regional and school level. For example, such dialogue has already resulted in GES now communicating that the school timetable must allocate at least 50 percent of the 90 minutes of the language and literacy timetable to teaching reading per day, with additional opportunities for reading practice. Activities will emphasize early grade reading in Ghanaian and English language, given the evidence on the importance of strong reading skills in the early grades and the introduction and scale-up of the mother tongue instruction approach.

The Ghana Reading Action Plan, initially drafted at the GPE All Children Reading Workshop in Kigali in March 2012 and currently under the leadership of CRDD, is not yet finalized. USAID/Ghana plans to support the finalization of the plan by continuing to participate in fora associated with the plan and provide technical assistance via activities under *Learning*. Once finalized the plan will need to be operationalized and harmonized with existing MOE/GES efforts and related support by other DPs.

The Recipient must also improve communications and information sharing processes within the GES. This will form part of the activities to strengthen the use of and timeliness of the financial management and reporting systems and build capacity of DDE offices to implement effective plans for strong delivery and sustainability of reading and math strategies and, ultimately, gains, in their schools and their pupils' performance. Activities will review and strengthen the role of the Regional Education Offices (REO), NIB, NCCA and NTC in their oversight and management functions.

Activities under this component will build on current USAID/Ghana funded activities including Data Management and Communication Strengthening, an Implementation Letter (IL) to GES supporting network connectivity, staff training, development of manuals for financial management and human resources, development of a geographic information system, and creation of a GES website; and GEPD that provided support to the MOE/GES on the development of a decentralized framework, implementation of an information technology communications strategy for the central and regional levels, and a pilot intranet for 15 districts in the Central region. The Recipient approach to technical assistance and capacity will include training on financial reporting, progress reporting and regulations, as well as provision of equipment, software and related training and other capacity building necessary for activity implementation.

Sub-component 2.1: Policy and Guidelines

Expected Outcome: Implementation of MOE language policy strengthened.

During the 2013 National Education Sector Review, much attention and importance was given to the issue of language of instruction and the implementation of the current language policy. Recipient efforts will support the MOE/GES to review, clarify and, where necessary, update the policies, mandates and guidelines related to the language policy and use of mother tongue instruction.

Related to the Ghana Reading Action Plan, finalization of the plan or an update may be necessary. In order to ensure longevity of Ghana Reading Action Plan interventions and related support via *Learning*, the participation and engagement of key stakeholders is imperative including key MOE institutions, such as GES and the Institute of Education, but also Civil Society Organizations (CSO), NGOs, communities and parents.

In order to support MOE/GES efforts, the Recipient will identify areas of support for MOE/GES language and related policy coordination and leadership roles to improve reading. Recipient efforts will also assist GES to finalize and/or update the Ghana Reading Action Plan. This will include assisting the GES and CRDD in its coordination and leadership role, ensuring a finalized Ghana Reading Action Plan for approval that captures and synchronizes these efforts for improved coordination and supporting Ghana Reading Action Plan Working Group management, coordinating its role with that of the USAID Partnership for Education Project Steering Committee. The Recipient will help develop an operational or implementation plan for Ghana's reading efforts, drawing on and harmonizing pertinent existing activities in the relevant departments and divisions plans and proposing any activities that are missing and add value. With GES, the Recipient will examine the role of other relevant MOE/GES divisions or departments in the plan and propose roles, responsibilities and actions for and/or with them.

Under the USAID Forward Reform Agenda, there is emphasis on supporting and working through partner country systems to address sustainability. USAID/Ghana is interested in reflecting on its experiences with education investments as they compare to those of other donors - to compare costs across different types of investments and to develop a guide and tool to help inform decisions and planning around future programming, especially in the area of reading and improved learning outcomes.

Expected Outputs:

- a. Review of language policy and policy implications of Ghana Reading Action Plan supported.
- b. Recommendations based on the review of the language policy documented and disseminated.
- c. Policy dialogue on language policy recommendations facilitated.
- d. Child literacy approach, methodology and guidance clearly articulated by GES/MOE.
- e. Cost analysis and recommendations for implementation of Ghana's Reading Action Plan completed.
- f. Ghana Reading Action Plan co-produced with GES/MOE.
- g. Reading implementation plan produced with clear roles and responsibilities, milestones and targets.

Illustrative Activities:

- Support MOE/GES review of the language policy and the policy implications of the Ghana Reading Action Plan.
- Document and disseminate recommendations based on the review of the language policy.
- Support policy dialogue around the recommendations developed.
- Assist MOE/GES to clearly articulate its child literacy approach, methodology and guidance for target audiences (e.g. teachers, head teachers, school, district and regional administrators) with

relevant stakeholders.

- Conduct cost analysis for the implementation of Ghana's Reading Action Plan during the *Learning* activity and the life of the plan. The analysis should take into consideration current budget investments of the GOG and other donors/development partners. Realistic recommendations must be provided on financing options, including varied sources for financing, reading efforts in basic education, with an emphasis on KG-P3, in the short, medium and long-term. Short term forecasts will help inform USAID/Ghana plans for direct funding of reading-related support under the Ghana Reading Action Plan.
- Assist GES-CRDD with finalization of the Ghana Reading Action Plan.
- Develop a comprehensive reading implementation plan with clear roles and responsibilities, milestones and targets.
- Provide analysis to determine the appropriate transition and exit strategy from Ghanaian language to English.
- Participate in and provide assistance to Ghana Reading Action Plan Working Group.
- Review recent research and findings from Ghana, and propose ways to capture and articulate teaching and learning methodologies, techniques and approaches that impact learning, with an emphasis on reading, as well as define and determine the place of continuous and other classroom-based assessments within the Ghana Reading Action Plan.

Sub-component 2.2: Oversight and Management Capacity

Expected Outcome: MOE, GES, NIB, NTC and NCCA technical and financial management systems improved.

Through *Learning* USAID/Ghana intends to utilize existing MOE/GES systems with targeted technical assistance along with local NGOs to implement programming in areas in which MOE/GES (and its relevant decentralized institutions, such as DDEs) lack capacity. Since direct agreements with the MOE/GES and its institutions are anticipated as an accompanying mode of support to the Ghana Reading Action Plan and related ESP efforts to improve learning outcomes, it is anticipated that via USAID/Ghana direct financial risk and programmatic capacity assessments, areas will be identified for strengthening.

Once performing and transitioning districts are identified, technical support and capacity building in those areas deemed to require strengthening for the successful implementation of the Ghana Reading Action Plan as supported via the *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* activity and through direct funds by USAID/Ghana during the life of the activity, is anticipated to begin. USAID/Ghana anticipates financial and programmatic risks and capacity gaps, as well as strengths and progress, to be present in areas designated for direct funding of GES and related MOE entities under the *USAID Partnership for Education Project*. The Recipient will determine exact needs at the time of award, as per the findings and results of the risk and capacity assessments conducted directly via USAID/Ghana by that time or during Year 1 of the *Learning* activity, which may also include support to GES in the development of terms of reference for direct-funded activities.

Through the USAID-funded GEDP, the NIB, NTC and NCCA were established in 2012 and are currently in the process of becoming fully operational. The Recipient must develop a strategy to support these autonomous bodies to become operational. Recipient efforts will strengthen the

technical and management/oversight capacity of MOE, GES, NIB, NTC and NCCA, particularly related to financial and human resource management. Similar support should be provided to offices dealing with special populations.

GES Headquarter Units responsible for vulnerable and at-risk populations receive limited technical and financial support to carry out their mandate, specifically, Girls Education Unit (GEU), the Islamic Education Unit (IEU), and the Special Education Unit (SpEd). To ensure that populations they serve will be included in the support through the *Learning* activity, they will need support to evolve with modern institutional structures and effectively devolve authority, upgrades of systems, processes and technologies, in line with key findings from the GES Public Financial Management and Programmatic Capacity Assessment. All activities should promote donor coordination and harmonization.

During Year One of the *Partnership for Education: Learning*, the Recipient will have resources to support GEU, IEU and SpEd at the central level. These resources should be used to implement reading efforts. The Recipient will incorporate efforts to support readiness of the units to directly engage with USAID/Ghana and become more effective in carrying out their mandates with specific support to strategies and activities to improve reading for KG1-P3.

The Recipient will provide targeted technical assistance and capacity building to GES, NIB, NTC, NCCA, selected DEOs, NGOs and local organizations to meet gaps identified by the USAID/Ghana assessments towards the goal of improved learning outcomes. The Recipient will integrate technical assistance, technology infrastructure and training into a capacity development plan on key information management and technology tools.

The Recipient will also help GES develop user-friendly tools to capture the capacity building efforts, as well as measuring changes in capacity, will be critical to tracking the level of effort needed and its effectiveness over time. These tools and/or instruments will be developed by *Learning*, with input from and coordination with *Funding, Testing and Evaluating Systems* and the relevant entities involved, and must draw on best practices in the use of similar tools and instruments in the education or other sectors, for similar purposes.

Expected outputs:

- a. Central MOE/GES Units assisted in the development of terms-of-reference and other necessary documentation to receive direct awards from USAID/Ghana.
- b. Needs assessment on project and technical support for activity implementation conducted and incorporated into a capacity development and technical assistance plan.
- c. Technical assistance to implement activities funded through direct awards by USAID/Ghana provided.
- d. Template to define terms for technical assistance developed or refined.
- e. Modern forms of information and communication technologies integrated into existing communication systems.
- f. Strategy and process for phasing out older systems implemented for activities that fall within the duration of this activity.

- g. Systems and process reforms designed and implemented in the areas of: financial management, human resources, communication infrastructure, training and capacity building and any additional assessments by the Recipient.

Illustrative Activities:

- Provide technical assistance and capacity building to GES, NIB, NTC and NCCA to implement activities funded through direct awards by USAID/Ghana, with an emphasis on reading improvement.
- Develop a template, or if already existing, refine it and use to define terms for technical assistance and capacity building.
- Ensure that GES, NIB, NTC, NCCA, selected DEOs, NGOs and local organizations' project designs and plans are reflected in technical assistance.
- Expand EDUNet website to additional districts.
- Design and implement a process for phasing out older systems, including in the areas of, but not limited to: financial management, human resources, communication infrastructure, training and capacity building and any additional assessments by the Recipient.
- Develop and implement a strategy for improved management information systems for better quality human and financial management processes.
- Develop or adapt tools and metrics to track, measure, and evaluate capacity development of GES, NIB, NTC, NCCA, selected DDEs, NGOs and local organizations, including for self-evaluation and tracking.
- Assist relevant Units to develop terms of reference for USAID direct awards to GES.
- Using the results of capacity assessments to central level GES Units, provide technical support for activity implementation and address critical gaps in the Ghana Reading Action Plan.

Sub-component 2.3: Teacher Support, Supervision and Monitoring

Expected Outcome: Strategies piloted for improving teacher attendance and time on task.

Current research demonstrates that unless teachers are present, teaching effectively and on task, pupils are unlikely to learn. Reducing teacher absenteeism and increasing time on task, therefore, is central to teaching and learning and ultimately children's learning outcomes. Activities to address these issues will examine and build on USAID/Ghana-funded and other efforts to address teacher performance, support, supervision and monitoring and devise evidence-based strategies for improvement.

One of the numerous issues the GOG faces that can negatively impact the success of any reading program is teacher retention and deployment. Though a number of strategies exist to enhance the motivation of teachers, the reluctance on the part of teachers to accept and undertake postings to rural areas still remains a major challenge. There is growing anxiety that current incentives to motivate teachers to take rural postings are inadequate and the situation in underserved areas is likely to deteriorate even further in the coming years. The cumulative impact of these challenges is low pupil achievement and poor school performance.

The GES, through the Teacher Education Division (TED), has a strong infrastructure established to provide the needed support, supervision and monitoring for teaching and learning. The Recipient will provide support to render this structure more vibrant and more supportive to teachers.

Support for teachers to improve reading outcomes will include focused, evidence-based professional development and classroom level support. As strategies to help retain teachers posted to rural communities are still being explored, *Learning*, working with *Evaluating Systems*, will propose, examine, and test strategies or approaches, potentially to include social support systems for teachers posted to rural communities that will help to improve, expand and sustain teacher professional development. This could include on-line continuing education opportunities (either with local or international institutions), enhanced social support structures and social on-line networks reducing isolation, family support mechanisms, and increased support of teachers by DAs.

Unlike the national sample-based assessments, the School Education Assessment (SEA) is a paper and pencil test that was designed to be administered biennially in all schools nationwide. As such, it is part of the teacher's and head teacher's quality management toolkit. Despite the challenges in implementing the SEA, it is a potentially powerful formative evaluation tool to improve education results at the school and district level. The Recipient may help determine whether and to what extent teaching and reading outcomes improve via the SEA and that teachers are trained on how to best use the results.

Expected Outputs:

- a. New strategies to reduce teacher attrition, absenteeism and increase teacher time on task, especially in rural and underserved areas, developed and piloted.
- b. Advice provided on the design of the impact evaluation for the *Learning* teacher attrition pilot activities.

Illustrative Activities:

- Develop and pilot strategies to reduce teacher attrition, absenteeism and increase teacher time on task, especially in rural and underserved areas. This can build on, but is not limited to: enhancing teacher professional development, enhancing motivation and incentive systems, support to develop and implement SMS-based or on-line continuing education, social support systems for teachers posted to rural communities, enhancing social support structures and social on-line networks reducing isolation, developing family support mechanisms, and increased support of teachers by DAs.
- Contribute to the design of a rigorous impact evaluation, to learn from proposed approaches to improve teacher retention, reduce teacher absenteeism and increase time on task, in conjunction with *USAID Partnership for Education: Evaluating Systems*.
- Support select supplementary and complementary teacher preparation activities or approaches, specifically:
 - Identify ways to support or include community teachers who were a part of the USAID-funded Community Teachers Program (CTP) into reading efforts under the Ghana Reading Action Plan.

- Determine with GES how CTP teachers can obtain a Diploma of Basic Education qualification to facilitate their absorption into the professional GES teaching cadre.
 - Examine the potential scale-up or adaptation of promising, relevant approaches, such as, but not limited, to Community and/or Assistant Teacher activities.
- Support effective SEA administration, analysis, reporting and use, including its relevance and supporting role to reading improvement efforts.

D.3.3. Component 3: Communities and Accountability

Expected Outcomes: Strengthened parent, school and local government capacity and engagement to promote and support reading. The related outcomes under this component are:

- School management and decision-making structures for community engagement supported.
- District Reading Grants effectively used by ‘performing’ districts to help promote reading and improve the related basic education management practices at district level.
- GES School Report Card program improved and expanded.

This component focuses on improving accountability and transparency between parents, schools and local government and strengthening the use of existing systems to improve reading. This will be achieved through capacity building within the GES, REO and DDE offices, which will be preceded by public financial management risk and capacity assessments to be conducted by the *USAID Partnership for Education: Funding* activity. The conduct of these assessments will ensure compliance with ADS 220 and related guidance on the use and strengthening of partner country systems.

The Recipient will also support existing structures for school improvement, with an emphasis on promoting quality and improved learning outcomes in reading. This support will specifically center on helping to better institutionalize the use of SRCs as a management and communications tool for evidence-based decision-making within the structure of School Performance Appraisal Meetings (SPAM) and toward reviewing, monitoring and developing School Performance Improvement Plans (SPIPs). The MOE/GES has highlighted SRCs as an important activity that will require strengthened communication and management systems within GES and additional training for DEO and school officials on how to use and publicize the SRC results. The use of SRCs has shown significant promise in engaging and informing parents and communities about the performance of their school so that school improvements are supported and schools are held accountable for results. The SRC design will need to be reviewed to ensure that key information is communicated effectively to parents. This will include strong gender emphasis and the integration of information to impact reading achievement. Finally, a system must be put in place to properly measure the impact and results of the SRC program.

The Recipient should consider including a social advocacy strategy will help to promote the sustainability of the Ghana’s reading efforts through formal structures. The goal of such a strategy should be to strengthen and expand the capacity of government and school community institutions, e.g. DDEs, DAs, School Management Committee (SMC) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA), to effectively identify, analyze, develop alternative solutions to, and advocate for priority issues, when making decisions and monitoring the use of planned resources for quality improvements, especially

for improving reading skills among children and community demand for quality education. Attention to these issues by DEOs and other key actors would improve education quality and enhance accountability in the education system. Through a separate but complementary activity, *Innovating*, USAID/Ghana anticipates promoting social advocacy and marketing that will more prominently feature the role of CSOs, including NGOs and the broader public.

Learning social advocacy activities must not create new or parallel institutions, or separate activities to conduct advocacy events, but rather focus on the strengthening of school and community level institutions to carry this out as part of: a) the Capitation Grant SPIP activities; b) SPAM; and c) the SRC process. These offer an opportunity to use already existing structures for the conduct of such activities and thus would not require the huge financial capital that the creation of new organizations would require. The Recipient will work with these and other relevant institutions to promote advocacy for education development at the district and school community levels, and take specific steps to integrate SMC/PTA actions into a comprehensive advocacy agenda. Ideally *Learning* will facilitate community understanding and ability to monitor the implementation of education activities, enabling the community to become effective advocates for their schools and contribute meaningfully to quality education outcomes of and for their children.

Activities will also include work with communities to increase their involvement with schools and education administration at all levels (local, district, regional, and national). As a complement to the top-down education and management issues and needs, *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* will work with the relevant institutions to promote advocacy for education development at the district and school community levels to develop specific steps to integrate SMC and PTA actions into a comprehensive advocacy agenda. The Recipient will work in collaboration with the *USAID Partnership for Education: Innovating* on all advocacy work.

As a complement to the above activities, USAID/Ghana plans to add focused support through District Reading Grants (DRG) starting in Year 2 of the *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* activity. Currently underway in the deprived districts under the GPE Grant, the emphasis for *Learning* will be on ‘performing and transitioning’ districts. At the time of this RFA, the target entity at District level is the DDE. However, it is possible that during the life of the activity, the target district-level entity may become the DA. USAID/Ghana is already targeting DAs under current and planned activities in other sectors (health, economic growth and democracy rights and governance). The Recipient will work with MOE/GES and USAID/Ghana to determine which districts fall in the ‘performing and transitioning’ categories. Those districts deemed ‘performing’ will be eligible for DRGs; those deemed ‘transitioning’ will benefit from support through local NGOs, funded through a sub grant, to strengthen their capacity and help them transition to the ‘performing’ district category. The programmatic focus of these grants will be improving quality of education and learning outcomes, particularly in the area of reading, at the district and school level. The Recipient will provide technical support to Districts in the implementation of DRGs at the district and school level.

Sub-component 3.1: Community Engagement in Decision-Making

Expected outcome: School management and decision-making structures for community engagement supported.

The Recipient is expected to implement activities to support the role of local government and communities to ensure that the link between public spending on education and service delivery is understood by citizens, particularly parents and the school community, in order to improve accountability in the use of public funds and the achievement of sector goals. Along with GOG, USAID/Ghana, DFID and the GPE also intend to provide funds to districts. Enhancing the transparency and accountability of the use of these resources will be helpful to all stakeholders.

Expected Outputs:

- a. District-specific interventions and activities undertaken to support improved learning outcomes, with an emphasis on primary school reading and math.
- b. Annual district plans incorporate in and/or out of school reading and math support activities and use a participatory planning process with districts, schools, school communities, parents/caregivers and CSOs.
- c. District support and capacity strengthening plan developed and implemented to help execute and monitor progress against key activities in the annual district plans, with an emphasis on activities that promote quality of learning, learning outcomes and reading and math.

Illustrative activities:

- Provide technical assistance to Districts to develop and implement district-specific interventions and activities using DRG funds to support improved learning outcomes, with an emphasis on primary school reading and math, based on local needs and involving appropriate staff from government, development, and other local or international NGOs and CSOs. Such activities could include in and out of school reading activities.
- Develop annual district plans to incorporate in and/or out of school reading and math support activities, promote and using a participatory planning process with districts, schools, school communities, parents/caregivers and CSOs.
- Develop and implement a district support and capacity strengthening plan to help execute and monitor progress against key activities in the annual district plans, with an emphasis on activities that promote quality of learning, learning outcomes and reading and, to a lesser extent, math.

Sub-component 3.2: District Reading Grants

Expected Outcome: District Reading Grants effectively used by ‘performing’ districts to help promote reading and improve the related basic education management practices at district level.

To date performance-based grants are proving to be effective interventions in Ghana. In the health sector, such grants provide incentives to regional leaders and district teams to effectively support strong service delivery by the facilities and communities in their respective areas. Performance-based grants can be used to improve results not only to increase access to high priority services, but also to improve quality of care, increase use of these services by facilitating community engagement and mobilization, and create linkages and advocacy for health services and healthy behaviors in other sectors and among elected officials and community leaders. In education, grants have been used mainly in ‘deprived’ districts. USAID’s prior experiences with grants in both the health and education sectors inform the use under the *Learning* activity of DRGs.

DRGs are expected to begin, via direct USAID funding, starting in Year 2 of the *Learning* activity. In Year 1 the Recipient will work with MOE and GES to identify “performing” and “transitioning” districts. Performing districts will be eligible for DRGs. For these performing districts, the Recipient will primarily serve as a coach and technical support for District (DDEs/DAs) stakeholders to design proposals for direct USAID funding and to provide technical assistance as necessary during implementation of the funded activities. Those districts deemed to be ‘transitioning’ will be supported through local civil society organization/NGOs. For these transitioning districts, the Recipient will manage the selection and work of NGOs to support the districts to reach performing status and therefore be eligible for the DRGs.

The Recipient will work closely with MOE and GES to monitor the implementation of the DRGs and the achievement of planned results. External monitoring and/or performance evaluations will also be used to independently verify the results achieved through the grants.

The Recipient will focus on DDEs as the target entity. The Recipient’s approach will include contingency plans to shift the focus on DAs should decentralization processes dictate this shift.

Expected Outputs:

- a. Performing and transitioning districts identified.
- b. Capacity of DDEs to responsibly accept, manage and account for direct USAID funding built.
- c. A fund application process defined for DDEs, GES units and NGOs, consistent with or adhering to partner country systems policies and procedures.
- d. Process developed consistent with partner government systems for applying for and awarding funds to DDEs, GES units and NGOs.
- e. Performing districts supported to prepare proposals and plans for the use of District Reading Grants.
- f. Results monitoring tool created to facilitate tracking of progress and effectiveness of *Learning* activities implemented by DDEs, GES units and NGOs.
- g. Benchmarks and criteria to receive direct USAID funding developed in collaboration with GES. Transitioning districts supported towards graduating to performing district status.

Illustrative Activities:

- Support MOE/GES to identify ‘performing’ and ‘transitioning’ districts
- Build capacity of DDEs to responsibly accept, manage and account for funds to prepare them for direct USAID funding starting in Years 2 and Year 3 of the *Learning* activity.
- Develop a process for prioritizing local activities, by designing a fund application process for DDEs, GES units and NGOs, consistent with or adhering to partner country systems policies and procedures.
- Support DDEs and GES units to complete applications as necessary.
- Support GES to develop benchmarks and criteria which successful DDEs will meet or exceed by Years 2 and 3 in order to receive USG funds directly.
- Support DDE and GES units to prepare and complete direct grant applications and documentation.
- Develop a complete results monitoring tool to facilitate tracking of progress and effectiveness of

Learning activities implemented by DDEs, GES units and NGOs.

- Support transitioning districts towards graduating to performing district status.
- Design a competitive process for awarding funds to DDEs, GES units and NGOs that have passed a public financial management risk and capacity assessment conducted by USAID/Ghana.
- Provide grants management services for funds provided to local government and local NGOs for the implementation of activities to improve literacy instruction and strengthen the education management system.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of *Learning* activities implemented by DDEs, GES units and NGOs.

Sub-component 3.3: School Report Cards

Expected outcome: GES School Report Card program improved and expanded.

The Recipient will look critically at the effectiveness of SRCs in the school management processes, including in relation to the SPAMs and the SPIPs. The Recipient will assess key challenges related both to the use and utility of the tool and implement actions developed with GES to correct and explore more effective ways to expand, improve and ensure the continued use of this tool within the school management process. *Learning* will promote advocacy for stakeholder reviews of funding flows from donor as well as government sources. Stakeholders can track expenditures and identify successful practices as well as leakages and bottlenecks in the flow of financial and other resources in the target districts.

Expected outputs:

- a. Action plan developed and integrated in all DDE and school process on using and publicizing SRC results.
- b. At least one strategy implemented to ensure DEOs are supported in strengthened program management including the equipment, resources and directives necessary to implement the SRC program effectively.
- c. Development of social advocacy for DEOs and GES Units supported.
- d. Plan, strategy or process developed to ensure SMC and PTA training.

Illustrative Activities:

- Develop action plan that is integrated into all DDEs and school processes and plans on how to use and publicize the SRC results.
- Implement at least one strategy to ensure DEOs are supported in strengthened program management including the equipment, resources and directives necessary to implement the SRC program effectively.
- Use SPAM and SPIP process as a venue for social advocacy for the SRC and improved reading outcomes.
- Assist in the development of social advocacy for DEOs and GES Units, including vulnerable groups or populations
- Develop a plan/strategy/process to ensure SMCs and PTAs training by GES Subject Matter Experts and others actively involved in teaching and learning

- Review the SRC design, document findings and draft an improved design that incorporates gender and, if possible, reading.
- Develop and establish a system to properly measure the impact and results of the SRCs.
- Develop a plan/strategy/process to ensure SMCs and PTAs are trained by GES Subject Matter Experts and actively involved in teaching and learning

D.4. Key Considerations and Approach

The overall emphasis of *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* is to strengthen and support Ghana education sector human and institutional capacities, specifically in the areas of 1) pedagogical excellence in early grade reading, 2) education systems support linked to improving, expanding and sustaining reading outcomes, and 3) parent, school and local government engagement to promote reading.

The Recipient is not expected to introduce or develop new structures for early grade reading and math improvement or systems strengthening. Rather, the Recipient will provide technical assistance services to enhance and strengthen existing pedagogical and education capacity and systems, as well as the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of results within existing structures, systems, protocols and personnel already established and available in Ghana. The areas of support under *Learning* are intended to respond to Ghana's plans to improve reading, including the draft Ghana Reading Action Plan and related GOG requests for support in the following:

- Pre- and In-Service Early Grade Reading Support for KG1 – P3 Teachers
- Core and Supplementary Early Grade Primary Teaching and Learning Materials
- Central and District Data and Management Support, including District Connectivity
- Support to GEU, IEU, SpEd, NIB, NTC and NCCA
- School Education Assessment
- School Report Cards

All activities must be designed and conducted in conjunction with MOE/GES. Interventions will contribute to the draft Ghana Reading Action Plan, with support to and assistance with related aspects under the Kindergarten Operational Plan and the National Gender Education Action Plan. Further, all work must be designed and planned to complement or supplement the work of other DPs active in Ghana.

The Recipient must consider and incorporate three major principles into the technical approach for all work to be conducted under this Cooperative Agreement: supporting and using partner government systems, building and strengthening capacity, and mainstreaming cross-cutting areas.

D.4.1. Supporting and Using Partner Government Systems

The USAID *Forward* reform agenda has three focus areas, including USAID's effort to promote sustainable development through high-impact partnerships. This objective of the USAID *Forward* initiative is harmonizing donor support in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action commitments. In the 2011 Busan meetings, this commitment also emphasized the use of partner country monitoring and evaluations systems. USAID *Forward* also

reflects the spirit of ongoing initiatives by USAID/Ghana to strengthen and use country systems in the delivery of international aid in the education sector.

USAID/Ghana sees the use of country systems as the best way to achieve lasting impacts on learning outcomes. Implementing education activities through country systems is a more cost-effective approach than traditional aid modalities and it increases sustainability of programs by building partner government capacity to develop, budget, implement and monitor its own programs. Toward the objective of strengthening country systems, USAID/Ghana has issued ILs to the GES ranging from approximately \$250,000 to \$7,000,000 and \$23 million in Fixed Amount Reimbursable Agreements to the MOE and metropolitan level local government.

Given the importance of providing direct funding to government and other entities, USAID/Ghana is concerned about weaknesses in the fiduciary, regulatory, oversight and compliance systems of partner government institutions that could undermine the expansion and continued reliance on country systems. Recent policy, specifically ADS 220, lays out steps to be taken to help mitigate this risk.

The *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* activity must:

- a. Promote principles of accountability, transparency, partnership and responsiveness in the way services are designed and delivered.
- b. Foster partner government ownership and use and strengthening of the processes and systems developed, facilitating partnerships where needed.
- c. Build sustainable local capacity, using techniques and approaches that build on existing strengths, address limiting gaps and are co-defined with and, where possible, led by Ghanaian counterparts and institutions.
- d. Promote appropriate participation in decision making. Participation may range from information sharing, including debate on issues, to more expansive types, including joint decision making.

D.4.2. Building and Strengthening Capacity

A key driver to sustainability is ownership, with which funded and unfunded practices have a greater probability of continuing after donor support ends. USAID/Ghana is committed to the objectives of *USAID Forward*, the Accra Agenda for Action and Busan Forum on Aid Effectiveness.

Implementing successful, sustainable programs with national impact will require the use of Partner Government Systems and local NGOs. The *USAID Partnership for Education Project* will utilize and support existing MOE/GES systems from central to district levels - such as GES, NIB and DEOs - as the preferred approach, supported by technical assistance as needed along with selective use of local NGOs to implement programming in areas in which MOE/GES systems lack capacity.

USAID/Ghana's experience indicates that many DDEs will need substantive technical assistance and resources to effectively implement activities. The capacity of all government and local entities will be assessed to identify technical and organizational development, including financial management and risk assessment, directly by USAID or through *USAID Partnership for Education: Funding*, as well as any additional capacity assessments or analyses needed by each of the other *USAID Partnership for Education Project* activities.

Efforts under the *USAID Partnership for Education Project* must implement and provide support to activities in ways that promote and facilitate a transition to full control and management by MOE/GES institutions. *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* will have the lead technical assistance role for the MOE/GES and manage disbursement of funds to MOE, GES, NIB, NTC, NCCA and other local education organizations. The Recipient will design and implement activities with this optic.

Building on the findings of the financial management and risk assessment conducted by the *USAID Partnership for Education: Funding*, and any additional assessments or analysis, the Recipient will collaboratively develop and implement a capacity building and strengthening strategy with MOE/GES and related MOE and local institutions to prepare personnel for complete technical and managerial handover of activities described in this RFA. The ultimate goal will be for the Recipient to serve in an advisory role, providing capacity building and related support during the final year of activity implementation. Resources for technical assistance and implementation will be included in the resource allocation to Recipient for Year 1 activities, with implementation resources for the majority of areas supported through the *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* going directly to MOE/GES starting in Year 2. The aim is that the Recipient role will be in as exclusively as possible an advisory role during the final year of the activity. Through this approach, it is anticipated that Ghana's national, regional and local education system strengthening process will result in greater GOG capacity to develop and maintain the skills and knowledge that will permit ongoing education activities beyond significant support.

To that end, the Recipient's role is critical in working collaboratively with and preparing the CRDD, TED, Universities and Colleges of Education and other related MOE/GES personnel in relevant MOE/GES structures for complete technical and managerial handover of reading and *Learning*-related activities. The Recipient will use a "learning-by-doing" approach to implement activities that work with and support MOE/GES and local organizations, providing technical assistance that gradually facilitates the full and effective control and management of activities to the MOE/GES. Such focused action will begin the process of steadily and incrementally building and strengthening capacity and skills necessary to deliver these activities successfully.

While Applicants are strongly encouraged to propose a capacity building approach of their own, an illustrative flow and timeline for the transition of activities and capacity building technical assistance, support and management for the *USAID Partnership for Education Project* is described in the table below. Recipient efforts will help to position MOE/GES to assume partial to full ownership and management of the reading activities that *Learning* will support. The role of the implementing partner will evolve from full management of activities in Year 1 to an advisory capacity to the MOE/GES by Year 5. This means that the government, through direct agreement with USAID, will assume ownership of activities increasingly over Years 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Year	Activity
Year 1: Demonstration & Systems	Steering Committee, chaired by the MOE/GES, for the <i>USAID Partnership for Education Project</i> is established to guide implementation and technical assistance decision points and general direction for all activities supported by <i>Learning, Testing, Funding, Evaluating</i> and <i>Innovating</i> .
	Determination made on possible level and extent of integration of Steering Committee

Year	Activity
	into existing MOE/GES management structures (e.g. Technical Working Groups under the Sector Working Groups).
	GES and other MOE and local organization structures, Year 1 Work plan activities implemented.
	Recipient and GES collaborate to design capacity building strategy and plan for each of the major program areas.
	Recipient and GES implement capacity building strategy and plan for each of the major program areas as part of activity implementation.
	Recipient and GES designate personnel to participate in capacity development and management activities; designated personnel receive technical and management training or other capacity building inputs.
Year 2: Systems Strengthening & Transition to Handover	MOE/GES-led Steering Committee or integrated management structures providing implementation and technical assistance guidance on decision points and general direction for all activities supported by <i>Learning, Testing, Funding, Evaluating</i> and <i>Innovating</i> .
	GES and other MOE and local organization structures, Year 2 Work plan activities implemented.
	MOE/GES and District-level personnel continue to practice and effectively apply skills to organize, plan, and manage major activities – national and district-level.
	Recipient and GES implement capacity building strategy and plan for each of the major program areas as part of activity implementation
	MOE/GES and related institutions receive direct funding for selected activities and assume increasing financial management responsibilities with technical assistance from the <i>USAID Partnership for Education Project</i> Recipients/Contractors.
Year 3: Transition to Full Handover of Implementation of Activities to GES with TA from Recipients/ Contractors	MOE/GES-led Steering Committee or integrated management structures providing implementation and technical assistance guidance on decision points and general direction for all activities supported by <i>Learning, Testing, Funding, Evaluating</i> and <i>Innovating</i> .
	MOE/GES and related institutions receive direct funding from USAID to manage activities with technical assistance from the Recipients/Contractors.
	GES and other MOE and local organization structures, Year 3 Work plan activities implemented.
	Recipient and GES implement capacity building strategy and plan for each of the major project areas as part of activity implementation.
	After Action Review/Mid-Term Evaluation conducted on major activities; recommendations for the remainder of Year 3 and Years 4, 5 and beyond developed and distributed.
	MOE/GES fully leads the implementation of major and minor activities.
	Recipient in technical support, advisory and mentoring role, conducting minimal fiscal and managerial oversight.
Year 4: Full handover of	MOE/GES-led Steering Committee or integrated management structures providing implementation and technical assistance guidance on decision points and general direction for all activities supported by <i>Learning, Testing, Funding, Evaluating</i> and <i>Innovating</i> .
	MOE/GES and related institutions receive direct funding from USAID to manage

Year	Activity
	activities with technical assistance from the Recipients/Contractors.
	GES and other MOE and local organization structures, Year 4 Work plan activities implemented.
	Recipient in technical support, advisory and mentoring role, conducting minimal fiscal and managerial oversight.
Year 5: MOE/GES Implementation of Activities; Contractor Mentoring & Advisory Roles	MOE/GES-led Steering Committee or integrated management structures providing implementation and technical assistance guidance on decision points and general direction for all activities supported by <i>Learning, Testing, Funding, Evaluating</i> and <i>Innovating</i> .
	MOE/GES and related institutions receive direct funding from USAID to manage activities with technical assistance from the Recipients/Contractors.
	GES and other MOE and local organization structures, Year 4 Work plan activities implemented.
	Recipient in advisory and mentoring role, conducting minimal fiscal and managerial oversight.
	Final Evaluation conducted on all activities; recommendations for continued MOE/GES implementation developed and distributed.

D.4.3. Mainstreaming Cross-Cutting Areas

In order to realize the MOE policy on compulsory basic education for every Ghanaian child, and ensure they are capable of achieving acceptable learning outcomes, activities under the *USAID Partnership for Education Project* will stress attention on sectors of the population who may face special difficulties. GES established the GEU, IEU and SpEd to focus on these vulnerable and at risk children. Focusing attention and interventions on these targeted populations of children will also help Ghana achieve EFA and the MDGs.

For all three GES units, USAID/Ghana anticipates continuing support building on previous USAID support. For instance, to build on achievements of the PEP under the IEU, it is anticipated that similar activities will be replicated and expanded to other predominantly Muslim communities located all over the country, under major activities to improve reading.

It is estimated that 15 percent of children in Ghana have some form of disability, which may be physical or cognitive. The majority of those 15 percent are currently not receiving an education. The USAID Disability Policy of 1997 affirms the Agency's commitment to the full inclusion of people with disabilities in programs and states that people with disabilities should be incorporated in design and implementation of programs. In working with the SpEd Unit, support will complement efforts under other USAID initiatives as well as GES/MOE efforts under the ESP.

D.5. Other Considerations

D.5.1. Documentation of Best Practices

The Recipient will document best practices based on the experience gained during project implementation, capturing evidence-based practices to sustain and advance the positive outcomes

created by the *Learning* activity, given the Recipient's anticipated use of different media and communication strategies to reach and involve a broad stakeholder audience – government, DPs, international and local organizations NGOs, universities and other research institutions, and civil society. This is intended to promote the learning agenda and contribute to the Education Office's Knowledge Management Strategy by facilitating the exchange of information and ideas.

D.5.2. Gender

Gender differences and discrimination play a significant role in determining the education status of women and girls in Ghana. The most recent EMIS data shows that the gender inequalities are on the rise again. Data points to the disappointing fact that the gender MDG is highly likely to be missed in Ghana, despite the impressive progress in increasing access. The Recipient must demonstrate in its proposal, significant and appropriate consideration, strategies and activities that impact gender and ensure that equity concerns will be an integral element of all project activities. Appropriate internal and external management structures and personnel processes are required to demonstrate that issues of gender are incorporated into all project interventions. All person-level data is required to be segregated by sex. The Recipient is encouraged to be familiar with USAID's ADS 205, as well as the Agency's gender strategy. Activity-wide guidelines for gender impact are as follows:

- The Recipient must demonstrate a commitment to gender equity among its staff in Ghana, including long- and short-term, expatriate and Ghanaian staff members.
- Component and Sub-components: The Recipient must reflect a commitment to achieving gender equity in its project activities. Performance monitoring approaches and systems must demonstrate a clear ability to track, document and report progress in this area.
- The Recipient must demonstrate a commitment to the effective and consistent programming of the total activity budget in support of promoting and achieving gender equity.
- Budget planning and management systems must demonstrate a clear ability to track, document and report progress in this area.
- Teaching and learning materials developed must demonstrate a clear departure from gender stereotyping and promote gender inclusivity.

D.5.3. Sustainability

The Recipient will provide plans to sustain the gains achieved during the life of the activity. Sustainability includes the development of technical competence, human capacity, management systems, relationships with government programs and financial independence. In the absence of donor assistance, the MOE/GES institutions are able to identify key barriers, draft and implement a set of coherent and financially viable education policies that allow sustainable management of the education sector; and implement strategies facilitating partnership for school management and organization. The Recipient will propose indicators to measure performance of systems and institutional strengthening activities in the short-, medium-, and long- terms.

D.5.4. Public-Private Partnerships

The Recipient is encouraged to include Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to support one or more discreet components of the Program Description. PPPs can be important elements to ensuring the sustainability of the Learning activity, its results, outcomes or outputs. As such, the Recipient will strive to find suitable ways to use PPPs to increase effectiveness of activities.

E. Monitoring, Evaluation and Research

The USAID Partnership for Education: Learning's monitoring and evaluation activities will be a critical component in the measurement of progress toward USAID/Ghana's education objectives. As such, it is anticipated that there will be a number of monitoring and evaluation activities related to the Learning activity. They include baseline, midline and endline data collection; rigorous monitoring of project implementation and outcomes; a best practices guide based on project implementation experiences and outcomes; impact evaluation of key interventions, and an independent performance evaluation of project outcomes.

The Recipient must propose an Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (AMEP) with a detailed strategy for collecting, validating and analyzing data to achieve the *Learning* objectives and results. The AMEP will help clarify and focus activity objectives; serve as an early warning system, forecasting and reporting tool; promote on-going discussions pertaining to activity scope and direction; and assist in decision making. The AMEP must be aligned with the USAID/Ghana 2013-2017 CDCS Results Framework and Performance Management Plan (PMP), and follow the template and guidelines outlined in Annex 6.

Applicants must collect, analyze and submit to USAID sex-disaggregated data and propose actions that will address any identified gender-related issues. Note that the successful Applicant is responsible for designing and administering a tool that measures students' reading gains with appropriate disaggregation. USAID envisions that indicators of student results will be part of the AMEP.

The Recipient will be expected to collaborate with the *Evaluating Systems* implementing partner who will collect and analyze baseline, midline and endline data, and conduct performance evaluations of *Learning*. Collaboration will include facilitating interviews and other data collection efforts, and sharing internal monitoring data beyond that collected by *Evaluating Systems*. Given the size and scope of *Learning*, it may be necessary to conduct a range of performance evaluations across different elements of the activity.

The *Evaluating Systems* implementing partner will design and conduct three independent impact evaluations during the life of the *Learning* activity. Two impact evaluation topics have already been defined: identifying factors contributing to teacher retention, and improving early grade math skills. The third topic will emerge based on demand as the *Learning* activity is implemented. Preliminary ideas for the third impact evaluation are:

- Increase in student learning outcomes associated with teachers using practices introduced by the project;
- Increase in student learning outcomes associated with the increased use of teaching learning materials;

- Relative improvements in reading outcomes for girls, special needs children and other vulnerable and at risk students;
- Impact of community involvement in promoting early grade reading in target schools; and
- Impact of support (technical and financial) to Ghanaian quality education delivery structures and personnel, in improving student performance in reading.

USAID/Ghana expects that the Recipient will work in full cooperation to facilitate the work of the *Evaluating Systems* implementing partner, and incorporate this collaboration into their AMEP and work plans.

Prior to the beginning of project implementation activities, Recipient is expected to work with the *Evaluating Systems* implementing partner to conduct an assessment of teachers ability to teach reading in the districts where the project will be implemented. It is anticipated that this assessment will serve as a baseline for the independent evaluation of project outcomes. The Recipient will provide the list of schools to the independent firm within 60 days of the signing of the agreement. The baseline data will be made available to the Recipient within three months of the date the Recipient provide the list of schools.

Because of the importance of datasets produced under the Agency Education Strategy and USAID's commitment to sharing evidence, all data must be made available upon AOR request to USAID/Ghana or organizations and individuals acting on behalf of the Agency. USAID/Ghana anticipates sharing these datasets with both regional bureaus and education sector colleagues. These datasets will facilitate up-to-date reporting against the USAID Global Education Strategy. USAID/Ghana will also use findings from the assessment(s), coupled with USAID-led performance monitoring, to validate the agreement's PMP results. Data on performance results reported by *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* will be aggregated with data from other sources to meet annual Agency reporting purposes.

I. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding and Awards

The anticipated total federal funding amount is approximately \$71.8 million.

The Government anticipates award of one (1) cooperative agreement to the responsible applicant whose application conforming to this RFA are the most responsive to the objectives set forth in this RFA. The Government may (a) reject any or all applications, or (b) accept other than the lowest cost.

B. Authority

The authority for the RFA is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

The award is subject to 22 CFR 226, Administration of Assistance Awards for U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations.

C. Program eligibility requirements

The Government may make award on the basis of initial applications received, without discussions or negotiations. Therefore, each initial application should contain the applicant's best terms from a cost/business and technical standpoint. The Government reserves the right (but is not under obligation to do so), however, to enter into discussions with one or more applicants in order to obtain clarifications, additional detail, or to suggest refinements in the program description, budget, or other aspects of an application. Oral discussions may be conducted.

To be considered for award of a cooperative agreement, in addition to other conditions of this RFA, organizations must have a politically neutral humanitarian mandate, a commitment to non-discrimination with respect to beneficiaries and adherence to equal opportunity employment practices. Non-discrimination includes equal treatment without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, and political affiliation.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all required information in its application, including the requirements found in any attachments to the <http://www.grants.gov> opportunity. Final award of any resultant cooperative agreement(s) cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant; shall circumstances prevent award of a cooperative agreement, all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Neither financial data submitted with an application nor representations concerning facilities or financing, will form a part of the resulting agreement(s).

D. Award administration

For U.S. organizations, 22 CFR 226, OMB Circulars, and the Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients will be applicable for the administration of award.

For non-U.S. organizations, the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients will apply. While 22 CFR 226 does not directly apply to non-U.S. applicants, the Agreement Officer will use the standards of 22 CFR 226 in the administration of the award.

For Public International Organizations (PIOs), the Standard Provisions for Grants to Public International Organizations, along selected provisions from the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients and other negotiated provisions, will be used. All provisions of 22 CFR 226 and all Standard Provisions are applicable to the recipient and to sub-recipients which meet the definition of “Recipient” in Part 226.

For any sub-award made with Non-US Sub-recipients the Recipient shall include the applicable “Standard Provisions for Non-US Nongovernmental”

Standard Provisions for US Non-governmental Recipients are found at <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303maa.pdf>

Standard Provisions for Non-US Non-governmental Recipients are found at <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303mab.pdf>

22 CFR 226 can be found at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title22-vol1/xml/CFR-2011-title22-vol1-part226.xml>

OMB Circular can be found at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_default

E. Period of Performance

With a five-year period of performance, this Cooperative Agreement is expected to begin on or about November 2014 and end on or about November, 2019.

F. Type of Award

The successful applicant under this FRA should anticipate a cooperative agreement award involving substantial involvement on the part of USAID in the following ways:

In accordance with ADS 303.3.11 and under the overall guidance of the USAID/Ghana Education Office Director, the AOR for this project will be substantially involved in the cooperative agreement award in the following ways:

- Approval of annual work plans and modifications that describe the specific activities to be carried out under the Agreement;
- Approval of and any changes to specified key personnel;
- Approval of sub-grants and sub-grantees;
- Approval of USAID-specific plans e.g. Performance Management, Branding and Marking, Environmental Assessment.

II. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- A. Eligible Applicants: All qualified U.S and Non-U.S. organizations may apply
- B. USAID encourages applications from potential new partners
- C. There is no requirement for prior USAID experience under this RFA

III. COST SHARING OR MATCHING

USAID encourages that the Applicant and its partners provide a cost share of ten percent (10%) of the total USAID Contribution. Leveraged non-USAID resources from private firms and institutions (such as equipment, training, level of effort and any in-kin contributions) may be considered part of cost share. Cost sharing may be also demonstrated either through direct funding, beneficiary contributions, in kind assistance, or a combination thereof. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements, please see 22 CFR 226.23 at <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov> and search under Title 22 Foreign Relations.

USAID shall make the final determination and assess whether or not the Applicant's cost share contributions (e.g. categories or items) meet the standards set in 22 CFR 226.23.

[END OF SECTION A]

SECTION B – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

I. Preparation Guidelines

1. All applications received by the deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in these guidelines and the application format. Section C addresses the technical evaluation procedures for the applications. Applications shall be submitted in two separate parts: (1) technical and (2) cost or business application. Applications must be submitted in English.
2. The application shall be prepared according to the structural format set forth below. Applications must be submitted no later than the date and time indicated on the cover page of this RFA, via email to accracontract@usaid.gov as described in the cover letter of this RFA. Applications that are received late or incomplete may not be considered in the review process. Late applications will only be considered for award if the Agreement Officer determines it is in the U.S. Government's interest.
3. Technical applications should be specific, complete and presented concisely. A lengthy application may not in and of itself constitute a well thought-out application. Applications shall demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. The applications should take into account the technical evaluation criteria found in Section C.
4. Page Limitation and Unnecessarily Elaborate Applications: Technical applications must be limited to 40 pages and unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective application in response to this RFA are not desired and may be construed as a lack of cost consciousness. Elaborate art work, expensive paper and bindings, and expensive visual and other presentational aids are neither necessary nor desired.
5. Explanations to Prospective Applicants: Any prospective applicant who would like an explanation or interpretation of this RFA must request it from the Agreement Officer in writing to the accracontract@usaid.gov. Oral explanations or instructions given before award of a Cooperative Agreement will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this RFA will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this RFA if the information is necessary for the submission of applications or if the lack of that information would prejudice other prospective applicants.
6. Applicants are expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this RFA and to the extent possible with ADS Chapter 303 - Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations. Failure to do so will be at the applicant's risk.
7. Applicants which include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purposes should:

- a) Mark the title page with the following legend: "This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed - in whole or in part - for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a Cooperative Agreement is awarded to this applicant as a result of - or in connection with - the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting Cooperative Agreement. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government's right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in pages____."; and
 - b) Mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following legend: "Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application."
8. Applicants should retain for their records a copy of the application and all enclosures which accompany their application.

II. Preparation of Applications

A. Technical application

The Technical application in response to this solicitation will address how the Applicant intends to carry out the Program Description contained in Section B of this RFA. The technical application must be specific, complete, neat, presented concisely, grammatically correct, error free, and responsive to the instructions contained herein. It must clearly demonstrate how the proposed approach will meet the goals and objectives of the program, and fulfill the applicant's program implementation responsibilities. It should take into account the "instructions" (set forth below) and the technical evaluation criteria specified in Section C.

The technical application may contain the following sections:

1. Cover Page: This section of the application should provide the program name [**USAID/Ghana Partnership for Education: Learning**], the names of the organizations/institutions involved in the application, with the lead or primary Applicant clearly identified; and the proposed sub-applicant(s) listed separately. In addition, the Cover Page should include information about a contact person for the prime Applicant, including this individual's name, title or position with the organization/institution, address and telephone and email address. Also state whether the contact person is the person with the authority to bind the organization, and if not, that person should also be listed.
2. Table of Contents

3. Executive Summary: Briefly describe the proposed activities, goals, purposes, and anticipated results, and describe how the overall project will be managed. The executive summary must **not exceed two (02) pages** in length and will be evaluated.
4. Technical Approach
5. Key Personnel and Proposed Staffing Plan
6. Institutional and Management Capacity
7. Annexes

The written Technical Application **is limited to 40 pages in length**. Applicants must use 12 point Times New Roman font with margins no less than one inch on each border. Each page must be numbered consecutively. Applicants are to bare the following in mind:

- The page limitation is inclusive of the narratives written for the executive summary. Any page in the technical application that contains a table, chart, graph, etc., not otherwise specifically excluded below, is included within the above page limitation for the technical application. All critical information from annexes must be identified and summarized in the Technical Application.
- The Annexes, cover page, table of contents and dividers do not count towards the page limit. No material may be incorporated in the application by reference, attachment, appendix, etc. to circumvent the page limitation. Those pages that exceed the page limitation will not be evaluated.
- Failure to include all information, or to organize the application in the manner prescribed immediately below, may result in rejection of the application as being unacceptable and elimination from further consideration. Applications that simply repeat the language of the RFA will not be considered for inclusion within the competitive range.

Applicants must organize the technical application to follow the information and instructions set forth below:

Technical Understanding and Approach

The application must describe the proposed approach and methodology for sustainably achieving results expected from work under each component and output through the Applicant's primary role as a technical assistance provider, with a particular focus on the following areas:

- 1) Technical Vision and Understanding: The Applicant will articulate the overarching vision and conceptual understanding of the work in this RFA. The Applicant must demonstrate how the *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* and the Applicant's performance will contribute to USAID/Ghana's Education Development Objective and Intermediate Results and the Government of Ghana's objectives and priorities. The Applicant must

provide a clearly articulated, concise description of the context, major issues not already described in the RFA or Annexes, as well as anticipated problems and possible solutions related to the context, major components, and objectives of this RFA.

- 2) Implementation Strategy: The Applicant must include a clear and thorough description of the proposed approach and methodology for feasibly, coherently and sustainably achieving the expected results and intermediate results, including the incorporation of the project principles, considerations and parameters as outlined in Section A. The Applicant's technical approach and design will be neatly presented, methodologically sound, clearly developed and consistent with the prescribed required results, following key principles, considerations and other program parameters as described in the Program Description. Appropriateness of financial management and cost control systems (other than performance information systems) will also be considered.

Applicants must discuss the rationale for proposed activities explaining how project activities and methodologies will effectively and efficiently achieve the expected results and lead to sustainable results. The Applicant may include any complementary results, indicators or activities which the Applicant believes are critical or add value to the *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* project but are not included in this Program Description. The Applicant will clearly link these to a proposed critical path of inputs, outputs, and outcomes leading to the sustainability of the *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* efforts. Where innovations or otherwise new approaches are piloted or introduced, Applicants must describe a strategy to ensure outcomes and results can also be sustainable and be taken to scale.

The Applicant will delineate a strategy for the implementation and use of the sub-grants mechanism to enhance district-level support and capacity, including measures to ensure that entities funded through it will be capable of planning, implementing, overseeing, coordinating, monitoring, and reporting on community and school level interventions. This includes ensuring that both programmatic and financial aspects meet USAID requirements.

Applicants must submit a Draft Mobilization Plan for the first 90 days as an Annex that demonstrates their ability to rapidly and effectively mobilize staff and resources to commence work. Applicants will also submit a Draft Work Plan as an Annex with proposed year one activities detailed by month. Years two to five must be shown by quarter. The implementation plan will specify a timetable for the implementation of all planned activities, reflecting major tasks, milestones, deliverables, and institutional responsibilities.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning: The application must present a credible and comprehensive M&E approach for on-going monitoring of *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* performance with participation of all relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to the MOE (including the three autonomous bodies), GES, District Directorates of Education (and potentially District Assemblies), appropriate line ministry staff, schools and communities.

Applicants must submit a draft Activity M&E Plan (AMEP) as an Annex. The draft AMEP must adhere to the template and guidelines outlined in Annex 6, and take in account the standard and outcome results indicators outlined in Section I. The draft AMEP must also propose other indicators and targets that are suitable for tracking, documenting, monitoring, and reporting both quantitatively and qualitatively performance for component activities. Proposed indicators will meet USAID data quality standards for validity, integrity, precision, reliability and timeliness described in ADS 203.3.5.1.

- 3) Vulnerable Populations: The proposed approach must describe how the Applicant will take into account and incorporate or adapt to differing needs and issues of vulnerable populations, including gender and disability issues, using available structures, platforms and resources at the school, community and district levels. The Applicant must identify key gender issues that may influence the attainment of learning outcomes, specifically in reading and math, and describe an approach that delineates realistic and feasible ways to address these issues, including areas where interventions will be differentiated and the rationale for this differentiation. Where the approach may be affected by other socio-demographic issues, these issues must be identified and the response delineated.

Key Personnel and Staffing Plan

The Applicant must describe their proposed Key Personnel and the Staffing Plan that will support the work of Key Personnel, with a particular focus on the following areas:

- 1) Key Personnel: The application must include candidates for the following Key Personnel positions: Chief of Party, Deputy Chief of Party, Senior Reading Specialist, and Senior Capacity Building Advisor. The Applicant may propose to designate up to one additional Key Personnel, but must justify why the positions would be designated as such.

The Applicant must delineate roles and responsibilities for each Key Personnel proposed.

The Applicant must include in the Annexes a resume, not to exceed three pages, for each proposed Key Personnel. Resumes should demonstrate that the proposed key and/or long-term personnel possess the skills and knowledge to function as proposed on the project team. Each resume must be accompanied by a signed letter of commitment from each candidate indicating his/her: (a) availability to serve in the stated position, in terms of months after award; and (b) intention to serve for the stated term of the service. The Applicant must also submit a minimum of three (3) references of professional contacts within the last three (3) years. Applicants must provide current phone and email address for each reference contact.

The Applicant must propose Key Personnel with qualifications and skills commensurate with the expectations, results and objectives of this RFA. Illustrative or minimum qualifications and skills are provided below. All Key Personnel are required to demonstrate strong skills in communication, team leadership and management, building

collaborative working relationships with counterparts, and strong analytical writing, with superior spoken and written English skills.

Minimum required skills and qualifications for specific Key Personnel are:

Chief of Party

- Postgraduate degree in education or a sector or skill area directly related to this RFA.
- Fifteen years' experience in management of complex education programs, including leading large projects of similar size and complexity, leading policy-level dialogue and action and managing a diverse range of expatriate and local staff, with at least ten years in African countries.
- Ten years in supervisory/senior management roles.
- Seven years' technical expertise in education reform, teacher professional development and/or early grade reading.
- Demonstrated ability and experience to effectively coordinate, collaborate and partner with government, donors, civil society and private business to leverage resources and manage for results.

Deputy Chief of Party

- Graduate degree in education or a sector directly related to this RFA.
- Ten years' experience with increasing responsibilities in management of complex education programs in African countries, including leading large projects of similar size and complexity, guiding policy-level dialogue and/or action and managing a diverse range of expatriate and local staff.
- Five years' technical expertise in education reform, teacher professional development and/or early grade reading.
- Strong ability and experience to effectively coordinate, collaborate and partner with government, donors, civil society and private business to leverage resources.

Senior Reading Specialist

- Advanced degree in education with a concentration in early grade reading, literacy, language acquisition or related field.
- Ten years' experience in education reform with a focus on primary education sector work in language acquisition and/or child literacy or reading, with at least five in developing countries
- Demonstrated ability to work with host government and other relevant partners in central and/or local government settings.
- Proven expertise in mother tongue (L1), early grade reading instruction or assessment and reading material development, including in development country languages, preferably in Ghana or other African countries
- Significant experience in developing, producing and/or guiding specialists in the development of instructional materials to improve reading or child literacy, including

but not limited to: effective teacher training modules, assessment and/or supplementary materials.

Senior Capacity Building Advisor

- Advanced degree in education, human or institutional capacity development, adult learning, development or related field.
- Ten years' experience in designing and/or implementing capacity building activities in developing countries in or related to improving educational outcomes.
- Demonstrated knowledge or understanding of central and local policy and institutional context, especially as it related to education management and/or service delivery
- Extensive experience in assessing capacity needs and measuring progress in building institutional and human capacity over time.

2) Staffing Plan: Applicants must list all the proposed Key Personnel in a Staffing Plan that also includes all other specific titled technical or professional position titles, at a minimum. One of the key inputs to the successful operation and sustainability of this activity is the recruitment and retention of Ghanaian professionals into leadership and technical positions. USAID encourages the employment of local staff that can bring their technical expertise, language and cultural experience to this RFA. USAID encourages achieving appropriate gender balance of proposed professional personnel through a commitment to maintaining approximately 50 percent women throughout the period of performance.

The application must include a full staffing plan and organizational chart for the project, with a description of the primary responsibilities of each staff person that will play a major role in the project. It must present a team structure that supports achievement of the RFA's objectives and of all contractual requirements and demonstrate that the team has the capacity to deliver technical assistance and conduct donor coordination in appropriate languages and service to USAID in English. The applicant must also provide a short summary of the relevant skills and qualifications of staff identified in the staffing plan.

The staffing plan must relate directly to the strategies, activities and approaches described in the technical application, and will include long-term personnel, short-term advisors, and administrative and support staff for the main/headquarters office in Ghana office, any satellite field offices envisioned, and US headquarters office (if any). The Applicant should propose a mix of international (including Regional) and local, national staff. The proposed technical team and management and support staff must be adequate in number and have the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve results fully with a high level of quality within the time requirements.

To the extent that the Applicant intends to use sub applicants, both a description of their overall capabilities and a summary of the anticipated Program Description of the sub-applicants/partners should be included. The organizational chart must clearly define the roles and relationships of any sub applicants, including local partners.

Institutional and Management Capacity

The Applicant must outline their approach to management, capacity building and sustainability, with a particular focus on:

1) Management Plan: The Applicant must describe the overall management approach for the execution of the program description and achievement of expected results. This will include an overview of the Applicant's management approach and systems that will be put in place to assure effective implementation of activities and achievement of results and responsiveness to USAID technical directions, the systems or approaches that will ensure adaptation and adjustment of activities based on experience and project learning, and inputs and feedback from internal and external researchers and evaluators and other assessments, the process for selecting and supporting partners that will assist in implementing *Learning* activities.

The Applicant will describe a division of labor that makes use of partnerships, sub-contracting and/or grants, as necessary, to result in the most efficient and effective implementation of activities to achieve results. Describe the strengths that the prime and each sub-applicant bring. The Applicant will present a clear, complete and effective proposed organizational structure with related staffing plans and clear lines of authority. Illustrate how this approach is responsive to multiple stakeholder needs and a changing environment, if necessary. The Applicant will also provide a summary of proposed staffing resources and the planned levels of long-term and short-term technical assistance (international, regional and local), including judicious use of home office support.

The Applicant will explain the approach for building partnerships with governmental entities, organizational sub-partners, private sector, civil society, community/faith-based groups, and other stakeholders to stimulate reading in learners. The partnership description must include a discussion on the main roles and responsibilities, including the technical approaches/activities, which partners/stakeholders will undertake.

The Applicant must describe its proposed in-country financial and procurement management systems. The Applicant's will describe its capability to provide managerial and technical backstopping for a Cooperative Agreement of this size and complexity. The Applicant should include a discussion of its ability to manage grants and sub-grants with local organizations and local government entities. The Applicant must describe the Applicant's experience in preparing host government and local, non-government entities for direct USAID assistance and partnering with local NGOs, particularly in the education sector.

Applicants must submit a one-page letter of commitment from each of its proposed sub applicants as an Annex. USAID encourages local organizations to consider collaborating with multiple Applicants and encourages the prime applicant to sub grant for technical expertise, especially with local organizations. USAID requests that prime Applicants not bind local partners to exclusive partnering agreements. Exclusive partnering significantly decreases local implementers' chances of participating in *Learning* and as a result can negatively impact local government and USAID's ability to reach its goals. Exclusive

partnering agreements can inhibit efforts to build local capacity, negating one of the long-term goals of USAID Forward. Given the concentrated focus of USAID's Global Education Strategy, USAID believes that proprietary information need not be shared with sub-applicants or sub-grantees in order to develop a strong response to this RFA.

2) Capacity Building and Sustainability: Given the importance of capacity building and strengthening partner country systems, as well as the targeted support to performing and transitioning districts, the Applicant must include a clear strategy and plan to build, strengthen or transfer knowledge and skills and otherwise build or transfer capacity of local partners (public and private) and partner country counterparts as a strategy for sustainability. This includes an approach and methodology for including local partners in implementation in general, but particularly for district-level efforts of improving reading and basic education systems. It will be important to clearly articulate strategies, timing and sequence of critical activities to ensure appropriate mobilization as well as the methodologies and approaches for ensuring Ghanaian ownership, participation and sustainability.

The Applicant must clearly describe how technical assistance and support will be initiated at central and de-central levels, with a particular view towards “performing” and “transitioning” districts, as well as other entities (pre-service teacher preparation institutions, autonomous bodies) anticipated to receive direct USAID funds. This description will include a discussion of the Applicant's approach to district capacity building assessment, capacity building and technical assistance. This includes how the Applicant will use financial risk and capacity assessments conducted by USAID directly or through *USAID Partnership for Education: Funding* and what additional measures will be taken, if any. The Applicant will describe the technical approach and implementing strategy for capacity building efforts throughout the life of the project, with a particular focus on efforts for district use of District Reading Grants to be issued by USAID starting o/a Year 2 to support. The approach will describe anticipated outputs and outcomes from the first 3-6 months of collaboration and describe in detail the proposed approach and activities to achieving those results and initiating *Learning* interventions at the school/community level. Should the Applicant plan to use a decentralized technical assistance and support structure, the approach must describe how existing management, process structures and infrastructures will be used.

Past Performance

This section offers general evidence of the applicant's ability to successfully implement contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements. This is different than providing evidence, such as requested in the portions of the technical application described above, of relevant institutional or management capacity.

Past performance references must be submitted in an annex for the applicant and any proposed major sub-applicant(s), covering the last five years prior to this application. A major subapplicant is defined as a subapplicant named in the application whose total cost exceeds 20% of the offer's bottom line total cost

Applicants must include a list of five (5) U.S. Government, other donor, and/or privately funded contracts, grants of cooperative agreements received by the organization, and for each 'major subapplicant' for work of similar size and scope to the work covered by the Program Description.

Please include the following:

- Name and address of the organization or company for which the work was performed;
- Location of program implementation;
- Contract/Grant/Cooperative Agreement Number;
- Contract/Grant/Cooperative Agreement Amount;
- Term of the award (beginning and end dates of services/program);
- Accurate and up-to-date contact information, including the name, current telephone number and current email address of a responsible technical representative of that organization, agency, or company for which the work was performed;
- Brief description of the project/program.

USAID will consider the information provided by the Applicant, as well as information obtained from other sources, when evaluating the Applicant's past performance and will determine the relevance of similar past performance information. The U.S. Government reserves the right to obtain other information and use the past performance data in the evaluation of the Applicant's, including major applicants, past performance. The U.S. Government reserves the right to contact references and to obtain information for use in the evaluation of past performance from any and all sources inside or outside the U.S. Government.

Applicants are to send the Past Performance Questionnaire (See Annex 3) to their references and instruct the references to return the questionnaire directly to accracontract@usaid.gov by the application submission deadline.

Annexes: The following documents must be annexed and labeled as instructed below:

- **Annex A** – Draft Mobilization Plan
- **Annex B** – Draft Work Plan
- **Annex C** – Draft Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- **Annex D** – Resumes/Curriculum Vitae of Key Personnel
- **Annex E** – Past Performance References (List)
- **Annex F** – Letters of Commitment from proposed Key Personnel
- **Annex G** – Letters of Commitment from proposed sub-applicant(s), if any

B. Cost/Business Application

The Cost or Business Application is to be submitted as separate document/package from the technical application. Certain documents are required to be submitted by an applicant in order for an Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. However, it is USAID policy not to burden applicants with undue reporting requirements if that information is readily available through other sources.

While there is no page limit for this portion, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible, but still provide the necessary detail to address the following:

1. A copy of the applicant's business/cost application formatted in Excel. For the purpose of accurately tracking amount of resources allocated for this project, applicants are requested to prepare their budget by showing breakdown per program component. USAID anticipates that at least half of the planned resources for the *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* will be allocated over the first and second year for activities to be implemented, based on the availability of funds. A uniform template for the presentation of the budget is provided in Annex 3 of this solicitation.
2. Present the summary budget by year for proposed activity including uses of USAID funds and any other cost share. Clearly indicate the applicant's commitment to match funds separate from other donor support. The portion of this matching fund which will qualify as cost-share under 22 CFR 226 shall be clearly identified.
3. Include a budget, in US Dollars, with an accompanying budget narrative in MS Word to facilitate USAID's determination that costs are allowable, allocable, and reasonable. A detailed budget notes and supporting justification of all proposed budget line items which provide in detail the total costs for implementation of the program your organization is proposing should be included as a separate written document, with section titles mirroring the "Object Class Categories" listed on the SF-424A (personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, etc.). In addition, a summary of the budget must be submitted using Standard Form 424 and 424A which can be downloaded from the web site:
http://www.grants.gov/agencies/approved_standard_forms.jsp

The budget shall include:

- The breakdown of all costs associated with the program according to costs of, if applicable, headquarters, regional and/or country offices;
- The breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization or subapplicant or sub-grantee involved in the program;
- The costs associated with external, expatriate technical assistance and those associated with local in-country technical assistance;
- The breakdown of the financial and in-kind contributions of all organizations involved in implementing this Cooperative Agreement;
- Potential contributions of non-USAID or private commercial donors to this Cooperative Agreement;

Applicants must also provide the following cost element details:

- a) Salary and Wages – applicants must propose direct salaries and wages in accordance with their personnel policies.
- b) Fringe Benefits – these benefits are non-wage compensation that an organization can provide to its employees in addition to their salaries. If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant should use such rate and

provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the application should propose a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate; in this case, the narrative should include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g. unemployment insurance, workers compensation, health and life insurance, retirement, FICA, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

- c) Travel and Transportation – the applicant should indicate the number of trips, domestic and international, estimated as to carry out the proposed program description, and their estimated costs. Applicants must specify the origin and destination for each proposed trip, the duration of travel and number of individuals who would be travelling. If applicable, applicants should base per diem rates for localities concerned. Applicants may not use program funding to travel to conferences and international meetings unless expressly approved by the USAID AOTR.
 - d) Other direct costs – applicants should detail any other direct costs, including the costs of the communication, report preparation, passport insurance, visas, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than insurance included in the applicant’s fringe benefits), equipment office rent, etc.
 - e) Indirect costs – applicants should support the proposed indirect cost rate with a letter from a cognizant, U.S. Government audit agency, a Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement (NICRA), or with sufficient information to determine the reasonableness of the rates. (For example a breakdown of labor bases and overhead pools, the method of determining the rate, etc.)
 - f) Cost sharing – details concerning the level of cost share the applicant’s organizations is proposing for this activity. USAID encourages applicants to contribute to cost sharing. Cost sharing may be proposed from any available and interested local and international funding sources, including but not limited to, government and public institutions, individuals, corporations, NGOs and foundation.
4. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement : Include the applicant’s most recent Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) from the cognizant Government Audit Agency stating the latest audited indirect cost rates, the base to which such rates are applied and the method of application.

Applicants who do not currently have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) from their cognizant agency shall also submit the following information:

- (1) copies of the applicant's financial reports for the previous three-year period, which have been audited by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID;
- (2) projected budget, cash flow and organizational chart; and

- (3) a copy of the ‘prime’ organization's accounting manual.

Please Note: Applicants that have never received a grant, Cooperative Agreement or contract from the U.S. Government are required to submit a copy of their accounting manual. If a copy has already been submitted to the U.S. Government, the applicant should advise which Federal Office has a copy.

5. Completed and signed “**Certifications, Assurances, and other Statements of Recipient**” in Section D.
6. Evidence of Responsibility

USAID reserves the right to seek additional evidence of responsibility deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. The information submitted should substantiate that the applicant:

- a) Has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award.
- b) Has the ability to comply with the award conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, nongovernmental and governmental.
- c) Has a satisfactory record of performance. Past relevant unsatisfactory performance is ordinarily sufficient to justify a finding of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance.
- d) Has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics; and
Is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a grant under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity).

III. Branding Implementation Strategy and Marking Plan

The Apparently Successful Applicant, upon request of the Agreement Officer, will submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. The Branding Strategy and Marking Plan will be included in and made a part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement. The Branding Strategy and Marking Plan will be negotiated within the time that the Agreement Officer specifies. Failure to submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy and marking plan will make the applicant ineligible for award of a grant or cooperative agreement. The Apparently Successful Applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events and materials, and the like.

The Agreement Officer will review the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan for adequacy and reasonableness, ensuring that it contains sufficient detail and information concerning public communications, commodities, and program materials that will visibly bear the USAID Identity. The Agreement Officer will evaluate the plan to ensure that it is consistent with the stated objectives of the award; with the applicant’s cost data submissions; with the applicant’s actual project, activity, or program performance plan; and with the regulatory requirements of 22 C.F.R. 226.91. The Agreement Officer will approve or disapprove any requested Presumptive Exceptions on the basis of adequacy and reasonableness. The Agreement Officer may obtain advice and recommendations from technical experts while performing the evaluation.

IV. Pre-Award Costs

The USAID Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

V. Submission Requirements

Electronic Applications are due to USAID by the closing date and time specified on the cover letter of this RFA. Applications which are submitted late or are incomplete run the risk of not being considered in the review process. "Late applications will not be considered for award" or "Late applications will be considered for award if the Agreement Officer determines it is in the Government's interest."

The applicant must submit applications in electronic format as described below.

Applications shall be submitted in two separate volumes:

- (a) Technical application; and
- (b) Cost or business application.

The applicant must sign the application and print or type its name on the Cover Page of the technical and cost applications. Erasures or other changes must be initialed by the person signing the application.

Send Application by email in pdf format and ready printable Excel for budget to accracontract@usaid.gov and request for acknowledgement without application to Fatoumata Camara at fcamara@usaid.gov

1. Before sending your documents to USAID as email attachments, convert them into Microsoft Word (for narrative text), Excel (for tables) version 2010, or PDF format. Documents requiring signature may be sent as scanned documents. The file size should be limited to 5MB per e-mail. Because of our system restrictions, please do not send zipped files. Applications and modifications thereof must be submitted with the name and address of the applicant and the RFA number (referenced above) inscribed thereon, via email, to accracontract@usaid.gov

Technical application should be combined in one file (inclusive of annex) if does not exceed 5MB. Otherwise, please put the program description in one file and all annexes in one file.

2. Once sent, check your own emails to confirm that your attachments were indeed sent. If you discover an error in your transmission, re-send the material again and **note in the subject line of the email that it is a "corrected" submission**. Do not send the same email more than one time unless there has been a change, and if so, note that it is a corrected email. Do not wait for USAID to advise you that certain documents intended to be sent were not sent, or that certain documents contained errors in formatting, missing sections, etc. Each applicant is responsible for its submissions.

To avoid confusion, duplication, and congestion problems with our email system, only one authorized person from your organization should send in the email submissions.

3. If you send your application by multiple emails, indicate **in the subject line of the email**

whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of multiple emails (if more than one is sent) and sequence of attachments (e.g. Organization X, Cost Application, Part 1 of 4, etc.). However, you are requested to consolidate, as much as possible, the various parts of your technical application into one technical application document and the various parts of your cost application into one cost application document.

[END OF SECTION B]

SECTION C –APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

I. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

A. Overview & Scoring Methodology

USAID plans to award one Cooperative Agreement to the applicant that best meets all technical evaluation criteria and cost considerations, with emphasis on the applicant's technical application. Shortly after the submission deadline, USAID will review the applications according to the evaluation criteria set forth below. While applicants should be certain to address the evaluation criteria to receive the highest possible score, they should also be sure to provide the detailed information requested in the "Instructions" found in Section A, the "Cooperative Agreement Application Format."

(a) The technical application will be evaluated by a technical evaluation committee using the criteria shown in this Section. The following sections of the technical application will be evaluated:

- 1) Technical understanding and approach;
- 2) Key personnel and staffing plan;
- 3) Institutional and management capacity;
- 4) Past performance.

(b) The following adjectival scoring system will be used by the technical evaluation committee to assess each of the technical criteria and the technical application as a whole:

- 1) Outstanding: Very significantly exceeds most or all solicitation requirements. Response exceeds a "Better" rating. The Applicant has clearly demonstrated an understanding of all aspects of the requirements to the extent that timely and highest quality performance is anticipated.
- 2) Better: Fully meets all solicitation requirements and significantly exceeds many of the solicitation requirements. Response exceeds an "Acceptable" rating. The areas in which the Applicant exceeds the requirements are anticipated to result in a high level of efficiency or productivity or quality.
- 3) Acceptable: Meets all solicitation requirements. Complete, comprehensive, and exemplifies an understanding of the scope and depth of the task requirements as well as the Applicant's understanding of the Government's requirements.
- 4) Marginal: Less than "Acceptable." There are some deficiencies in the technical proposal. However, given the opportunity for discussions, the technical proposal has a reasonable chance of becoming at least "Acceptable." (Areas of a technical proposal which remain to be "Marginal" after "Final Proposal Revision" offers shall not be subject to further discussion or revision.) If award is made on the initial offers, there will not be an opportunity for discussions nor a chance to become at least "Acceptable."
- 5) Unacceptable: Technical proposal has many deficiencies and/or gross omissions: Failure to understand much of the scope of work necessary to perform the required tasks; failure to provide a reasonable, logical approach to fulfilling much of the Government's requirements; failure to meet many personnel requirements of the solicitation. (When applying this adjective to the technical proposal as a whole, the technical proposal must be

so unacceptable in one or more areas that it would have to be significantly revised to attempt to make it other than acceptable.)

The criteria below are presented by major category, with relative order of importance, so that Applicants will know which areas require emphasis in the preparation of applications. Applicants should note that these criteria serve as the standard against which all applications will be evaluated, and serve to identify the significant matters which Applicants should address in their applications.

B. Criterion 1: Technical Understanding and Approach

- a) Technical Vision and Understanding: Extent to which the Applicant reflects a thorough understanding of the overall program description, its purpose, components, objectives and expected results. This includes clearly and neatly articulating an approach that takes into account the educational, political and socio-demographical context in Ghana, builds on national and international lessons learned, and provides evidence of proactive partnership building with the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service and associated government and local entities.
- b) Implementation Strategy: Extent to which the Applicant's approach and plans are comprehensive, clear, logical, well-conceived, technically sound, neatly presented, and appropriate in ensuring the achievement of project results in a manner that is sustainable and lasting. This includes submitting a Draft Mobilization Plan and Draft Work Plan that demonstrate the Applicant's ability to successfully initiate a rapid launch of the project and articulates plans to produce and manage for results.
- c) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning: Extent to which the Applicant presents a quality, credible and comprehensive monitoring, evaluation and learning approach that engages key stakeholders at central and local levels, incorporates the impact evaluations in the areas planned, contributes to good knowledge management practices and supports adaptation based upon continuous learning.
- d) Inclusion of Vulnerable Populations: Extent to which the Applicant will take into account and incorporate or adapt to differing needs and issues of vulnerable populations, including gender and disability issues, using available structures, platforms and resources at the school, community and district levels.

C. Criterion 2: Key Personnel and Staffing Plan

- a) Key Personnel: Extent to which proposed Key Personnel demonstrate the skills, technical expertise and qualifications outlined in Section II of this RFA. Extent to which the Applicant articulates clear, logical, organizationally sound roles and responsibilities of Key Personnel.
- b) Staffing Plan: Extent to which the Applicant presents an appropriate, well-justified and complete staffing plan and organizational chart, which clearly shows lines of authority; outlines roles and responsibilities; demonstrates a commitment to building the capacity of

project staff throughout all levels of the organization; proposes a well-balanced mixture of expatriate and local staff with appropriate expertise; and promotes gender balance.

D. Criterion 3: Management and Institutional Capacity

- a) Management Plan: Extent to which the Applicant presents a clear and appropriate management plan that streamlines activity implementation and procurement sub-grants; and justifies home office support, consortium arrangements, and other local and international partnerships.
- b) Capacity Building & Sustainability: Extent to which the Applicant demonstrates commitment to the principles and considerations of the program description in this area, and presents a feasible and effective strategy to transfer knowledge and build capacity of local partners and host country counterparts as a strategy for sustainability. This includes outlining a sound approach for engaging and getting buy-in from government and other local instructions and clearly delineating a flow and timeline for the transition of activities and capacity building technical assistance, support and management.

E. Criterion 4: Past Performance

The Applicant performance information determined to be relevant will be evaluated in accordance with the elements below:

- Quality of product or service, including consistency in meeting goals and targets, and cooperation and effectiveness of the Prime in fixing problems.
- Cost control, including forecasting costs as well as accuracy in financial reporting.
- Timeliness of performance, including adherence to contract schedules and other time-sensitive project conditions, and effectiveness of home and field office management to make prompt decisions and ensure efficient operation of tasks.
- Customer satisfaction, including satisfactory business relationship to clients, initiation and management of several complex activities simultaneously, coordination among subcontractors and developing country partners, prompt and satisfactory correction of problems, and cooperative attitude in fixing problems.
- Effectiveness of key personnel including effectiveness and appropriateness of personnel for the job, and prompt and satisfactory changes in personnel when problems with clients were identified.

II. COST EVALUATION CRITERIA

Cost has not been assigned a score but will be reviewed for cost reasonableness, allocability, allowability, cost effectiveness and realism, adequacy of budget detail and financial feasibility. In its analysis, USAID will be considering the following:

1. Are the identified costs fair and reasonable for the proposed effort?
2. Do the proposed costs demonstrate the applicant understands the RFA requirements?
3. Are the identified costs consistent with the applicant's technical application?

- Technical versus Cost Considerations

For evaluation purposes, more weight shall be given to the evaluation of the technical application than cost/business application. The technical application and cost/business proposal will be evaluated separately.

Only applications that receive a competitive score from the Technical Evaluation Committee and have a reasonable chance of being awarded a cooperative agreement based on their technical application shall have their cost/business proposals evaluated.

III.APPLICATION REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

A technical evaluation committee will evaluate applications based on the evaluation criteria provided in this RFA.

The criteria have been tailored to the requirements and expected results of this particular RFA. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which applicants should address in their applications and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

The technical applications will be evaluated in accordance with the Technical Evaluation Criteria. Thereafter, the cost application of all applicants submitting a technically acceptable application will be opened and costs will be evaluated for general reasonableness, allowability, and allocability to the extent that they are necessary. A Cooperative Agreement may be awarded to the responsible applicant or applicants whose applications offer the greatest value, cost reasonableness, and other factors.

Awards will be made based on the ranking of applications according to the selection criteria identified in this RFA. To make an objective evaluation possible, applications must clearly demonstrate how the organization and the application meet these criteria.

[END OF SECTION C]

SECTION D- AWARD & ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

I. Award Notices

Following selection of an awardee, USAID will inform the successful applicant concerning the award. A notice of award signed by the Agreement Officer is the official authorizing document, which USAID will provide either electronically or in hard copy to the successful applicant's main point of contact. USAID also will notify unsuccessful applicants concerning their status after selection has been made.

II. Reporting

The Recipient shall submit an electronic copy of the following reports in English to the USAID/Ghana AOR for review and approval:

1. Planning

Activity Mobilization Plan

The Recipient will develop a detailed draft Activity Mobilization Plan for the first 90 calendar days of activity implementation, beginning on the effective date of award. This one-time plan must include a Gantt chart or similar tool and concise narrative that describes the Recipient's plan to rapidly and effectively mobilize staff and resources to commence activities. This Activity Mobilization Plan is **due no later than 3 business days after the effective date of award**. The AOR will review the draft Mobilization Plan and provide comments within 2 business days of receipt. The Recipient should consider incorporating these comments as appropriate and provide a final Activity Mobilization Plan by 2 business days of receiving USAID's comments. A final Activity Mobilization Plan should be in place within 14 calendar days of the beginning of the activity.

Annual Work Plans

a) Initial Work Plan

The Recipient should consult with partners, stakeholders and any other relevant audiences to develop a detailed draft Work Plan for Year 1. The initial Work Plan shall cover the period from the effective date of award through end of September 2015 and is **due no later than 60 days after the effective date of award**. The AOR will review the draft Work Plan and provide comments within 10 business days of receipt. The Recipient should consider incorporating these comments as appropriate and provide a final Annual Work Plan within 10 business days of receiving USAID's comments. A final First Year Annual Work Plan should be in place within 90 calendar days of the beginning of the activity.

The Work Plan should include major activities that will be undertaken, the rationale behind these activities, anticipated results of these efforts and how they will be measured, long and/or short

term technical assistance required to complete the activity, pertinent roles and responsibilities and activity start and end timeframes. The planned activities must be arranged by the overall Program Description components and be broken down by sub-activities.

The Recipient will include a section in the Annual Work Plan to document best practices based on the experience gained during project implementation. The section is intended to promote the learning agenda and contribute to the Education Office's Knowledge Management Strategy by facilitating the exchange of information and ideas. It will outline evidence-based practices to sustain and advance the positive outcomes created by the *Learning* activity.

b) Subsequent Annual Work Plans

Subsequent Annual Work Plans are **due no later than September 1 of the subsequent years** and shall contain the same information as described above covering the future program implementation year.

c) Financial Plans

A Financial Plan that outlines planned activity expenditure will be submitted and is **due along with the Annual Work Plan**. The plan will include projected expenditures for the year.

2. Performance Reporting

a) Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (AMEP)

The draft AMEP submitted as a part of the proposal will be finalized in conjunction with the AOR within 90 days of activity start-up and updated as required. The AMEP should track standard indicators in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Framework and proposed additional indicators in the Program Description Application that measure program outputs and outcomes, ideally with input from MOE/GES. The AOR will review the detailed draft AMEP and provide comments within 10 calendar days of receipt. The Recipient should incorporate these comments as appropriate and provide a final plan within 10 calendar days of receiving USAID's comments and no later than 90 days after award. The AMEP requires AOR approval.

The AMEP shall cover the entire period of performance of this Award and may be adjusted based on changes in planned activities. For each indicator proposed in the AMEP, a brief narrative will include the following:

- Data collection method
- Data reliability and timeliness
- Indicator validity
- Clear stipulation of how and when baselines will be established
- Relevant indicators to measure performance annually and at the end of the program, with baselines and targets for each indicator.

b) Quarterly Performance Reports

The Recipient must submit a concise quarterly performance report on activity implementation. The report shall be no longer than 20 pages and **submitted within one month following the end of each quarter of the Fiscal Year (FY):** December 31, March 31, and June 30 following the

issuance of the award. Quarterly Performance reports will summarize the country situation program highlights, progress against agreed indicators, progress of major activities, problems encountered and proposed remedial actions, summary of implementation and appraisal, outcomes of any high-level meetings held and field visits, lessons learned, and projected activities for next quarter. The Recipient will include up to four one-page success stories beginning in year one. Success stories will be summary accounts of notable Recipient, sub-applicant or sub-grantee activities. The Recipient is required to report on sub-applicant and sub-grantee progress as appropriate. Quarterly Reports will annex studies, trip reports and technical reports of all short-term consultants funded under the agreement. The Annual Report will be the quarterly report for the fourth quarter. USAID will develop a reporting schedule with the Recipient during the start-up phase of the activity to provide final guidance on submission dates.

c) Annual Performance Reports

The Annual Performance Report will be the quarterly report for the fourth quarter of the FY. The report shall be no longer than 30 pages and **submitted within one month following the end of the FY** (September 30). The report will summarize fourth quarter activities and will include a descriptive analysis of activities conducted during the previous four quarters and a quantitative and/or qualitative description of actual achievements versus planned activities for the year, in both narrative and in data performance table formats. The data performance table should include accomplishments for the year against that year's targets. The report will also include problems encountered and proposed remedial actions, outcomes of any high-level meetings held and field visits, lessons learned, and projected activities for next quarter. The Recipient is required to report on sub-applicant and sub-grantee progress as appropriate. Annual Performance Reports will annex studies, trip reports and technical reports of all short-term consultants funded under the agreement. USAID will develop a reporting schedule with the Recipient during the start-up phase of the activity to provide final guidance on submission dates.

d) Financial Reports

- Quarterly Financial Reports: The Recipient must submit Quarterly Financial Reports by 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter along with the Quarterly Performance Report. The report shall include actual and accrued expenditures for the concluding period and projected expenditures and accruals two quarters in advance.
- Annual Financial Reports: The Recipient must submit an annual financial status report to USAID/Ghana on activity implementation, including actual and accrued expenditures for the concluding period and planned expenditures for the subsequent quarter.

e) Quarterly Meetings

The Recipient will participate in quarterly performance and financial meetings with the AOR to review quarterly performance and financial reports and proposed activities for next quarter. USAID will develop a meeting schedule with the Recipient during the start-up phase of the activity to provide final guidance on meeting dates.

f) Ad Hoc Reports and Communications

- **Weekly Bullets:** The Recipient will provide brief weekly bullets on project activities that provide highlights of major events. The update will identify, but not be limited to, current and up-coming consultations/visitors, key activities and events of the previous week, and upcoming activities and events.
- **Communications:** As requested, the Recipient will create activity presentations and assist USAID/Ghana in preparing for high-level visitors, including the preparation of briefing materials, strategic planning of site visits, and media participation.
- **Miscellaneous:** Upon request by the AOR, the recipient will submit any cost data, work plans, schedules, success stories, summary accounts of notable activities, and progress or results reports requested which are relevant to approval, design, implementation, and monitoring of results to satisfy Agency reporting requirements.

g) Final Performance Report

A draft Final Performance Report shall be submitted 60 days after the award end date, and a final copy **90 days after the end date**. The final report shall meet the requirements set forth in 22 CFR 226. It shall cover the entire period of the award and include the cumulative results achieved, an assessment of the impact of the program, lessons learned and recommendations, notable impacts, success stories and detailed financial information. It should be grounded in evidence and data. A copy of the final results shall be filed with the Development Experience Clearinghouse at: <http://dec.usaid.gov> or <http://www.DocSubmit@usaid.gov>.

III.Environmental Compliance

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ADS/200/>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities. Respondents' environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs.

In addition, the recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

No activity funded under this Cooperative Agreement will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment (EA) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). (Hereinafter, such documents are described as "approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.").

The IEE [<http://gemini.info.usaid.gov/egat/envcomp/>] has been approved by the Africa Bureau Environmental Officer on October 24, 2013 for the USAID/Ghana's Partnership for Education Program funding this Cooperative Agreement. The IEE covers activities expected to be implemented under this Cooperative Agreement.

USAID has determined that project activities, the development, promotion and integration of primary education curricula (e.g., reading, math, writing) and grants for technical assistance qualify for a **Categorical Exclusion** under 22 CFR Part 216.2(c)(2). This indicates that implementation of these activities carries not risk of adverse environmental impact (direct or indirect).

A provision for sub-grants is included under this project. Therefore the successful applicant must include environmental compliance language in grants solicitations and awards. It must also use impact assessment tools to screen grant proposal to ensure that funded proposals/applications will result in no adverse environmental impact, to develop mitigation measures, as necessary, and to specify monitoring and reporting. The grantee is responsible for ensuring that mitigation measures specified by the Recipient are implemented. Similar requirements apply to subawards.

Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

As part of its initial Work Plan and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the successful applicant, in collaboration with the AOR and the Mission Environmental Officer (MEO), shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this award to determine if they are within the scope of the approved IEE. If the successful applicant plans any new activities outside the scope of these documents, it shall assist the AOR to prepare an IEE amendment for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

The Recipient will be responsible for periodic reporting to the USAID Cognizant Technical Officer, as specified in the Schedule/Program Description of this solicitation/award.

IV. Agency Contact

The Agreement Officer of this Solicitation is

Mr. Yves B. Kore, Supervisory Agreement Officer, USAID/West Africa

E-mail: YKore@usaid.gov

Tel: (233) (302) 741-434

The Negotiator of this solicitation is

Ms. Fatoumata Camara, Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist

E-mail: fcamara@usaid.gov

Tel: (233) (302) 741-812

V. Other Information

(1) Aidtracker Plus

As USAID/Ghana migrates its existing performance monitoring data to AidTracker Plus, implementing partners will be expected to utilize the reporting tool to upload relevant data, including but not limited to monitoring data, data quality assessments, geographic coordinates, and evaluation reports. In addition, USAID/Ghana will train implementing partners' Monitoring and Evaluation staff on the AidTracker Plus Partner Portal that will eventually streamline M&E reporting. Once the data has been fully uploaded into the system, with proper maintenance and usage, AidTracker Plus will allow USAID to more precisely and efficiently track performance results. It should also result in less USAID and partners' staff time spent in aggregating data and generating reports. The implementing partner will be required to appoint an AidTracker Plus Point-of-Contact - typically, the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist- to aid in communication and implementation.

(2) E-Payments

USAID encourages the Contractor to consider alternative methods of payment, especially electronic forms of payment, in place of cash payments when appropriate. Electronic payment systems include, but are not limited to, electronic fund transfers using bank accounts, prepaid cards (bank issued magnetic or smart cards) using Point of Sale devices, mobile banking, and money transfer and payment systems available through mobile network operators and/or banks. Electronic payments extend affordable and accessible payments to low-income populations, create cost savings, promote economic development, increase transparency, strengthen security, and broaden financial sector inclusion. The contractor should utilize these services to the greatest extent feasible within its company policy to strengthen the efficiency and security of financial transactions at all stages of value chain activities.

(3) USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

(4) List of Annexes:

- Annex 1 – Useful References/Attachments
- Annex 2 - Applicant Past Performance Report (Short Form)
- Annex 3 – Budget Template
- Annex 4 - Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of Applicant/Grantee
- Annex 5 - Draft Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Template

ANNEX 1- USEFUL REFERENCES/ATTACHMENTS

The Program Description refers to a number of plans, strategies and documents. Applicants may use all available resources and information, including but not limited to the following references (internet links provided below) and attachment(s):

References

Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/49650173.pdf>

Ghana Education Management Information System: 2012-2013 Education Statistics

<http://www.moe.gov.gh/site/resources/emis.php>

Ghana Education Service

<http://www.ges.gov.gh/>

Ghana Education Service Girl's Education Unit

<http://www.ges.gov.gh/?q=node/13>

Ghana Ministry of Education

<http://www.moe.gov.gh/>

Government of Ghana Education Sector Plan – Volume 1

<http://www.mofep.gov.gh/sites/default/files/pbb/ESP%20Vol%201.pdf>

Government of Ghana Education Sector Plan – Volume 2

<http://www.mofep.gov.gh/sites/default/files/pbb/ESP%20Vol%202.%20doc.pdf>

National Accelerated Literacy Program Formative Evaluation

<http://www.eddataglobal.org/documents/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubDetail&ID=317>

Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/parisdeclarationandaccraagendaforaction.htm>

Programme to Scale-Up Quality Kindergarten Education in Ghana: Narrative Report to Support the Operational Plan to Scale up Quality KG Education in Ghana

<http://www.ges.gov.gh/DVD%20Copy%20of%20KG%20OP/10%2012%2012%20Final%20Version%20of%20Narrative%20OP.pdf>

Scaling Up National Quality Kindergarten Education in Ghana

<http://www.ges.gov.gh/DVD%20Copy%20of%20KG%20OP/Situational%20Report%20210212.pdf>

USAID Education Strategy

http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACQ946.pdf

USAID Education Strategy Implementation Guidance

http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACT461.pdf

USAID Education Strategy Technical Notes: Goal 1 Standard Indicators (Table 6, page 20)

http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACT681.pdf

USAID Evaluation Policy

<http://www.usaid.gov/evaluation/policy>

USAID Forward

<http://www.usaid.gov/usaiddforward>

USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy

<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/GenderEqualityPolicy.pdf>

USAID/Ghana Country Development and Cooperation Strategy

http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/Ghana_CDSCS_fy2013-17.pdf

USAID Master Indicator List of Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators

<http://f.state.sbu/Pages/Indicators.aspx>

USAID Performance Management Plan Toolkit: A Guide for Missions

<http://usaidlearninglab.org/library/performance-management-plan-toolkit-guide-missions>

World Bank Group. (2011). Learning for All: Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development.

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/ESSU/Education_Strategy_4_12_2011.pdf

Attachment(s)-

-Ministry of Education (MOE) – Language Policy

(See enclosed as a separate file)

ANNEX 2. APPLICANT PAST PERFORMANCE REPORT SHORT FORM

PERFORMANCE REPORT - SHORT FORM
PART I: Award Information (to be completed by Prime)
1. Name of Awarding Entity:
2. Award Number:
3. Award Type:
4. Award Value (TEC): (if sub-agreement, sub-agreement value)
5. Problems: (if problems encountered on this award, explain corrective action taken)
6. Contacts: (Name, Telephone Number and E-mail address)
6.a. Agreement Officer:
6.b. Contracting Officer Representative (COR):
6.c. Other:
7. Recipient:
8. Title/Brief Description of Product/Service Provided:
9. Information Provided in Response to RFP No. :
PART II: Performance Assessment (to be completed by Agency)
1. Quality of product or service, including consistency in meeting goals and targets, and cooperation and effectiveness of the Prime in fixing problems. Comment:
2. Cost control, including forecasting costs as well as accuracy in financial reporting. Comment:
3. Timeliness of performance, including adherence to contract schedules and other time-sensitive project conditions, and effectiveness of home and field office management to make prompt decisions and ensure efficient operation of tasks. Comment:
4. Customer satisfaction, including satisfactory business relationship to clients, initiation and management of several complex activities simultaneously, coordination among subcontractors and developing country partners, prompt and satisfactory correction of problems, and cooperative attitude in fixing problems. Comment:
5. Effectiveness of key personnel including: effectiveness and appropriateness of personnel for the job; and prompt and satisfactory changes in personnel when problems with clients were identified. Comment:

ANNEX 3- BUDGET TEMPLATE

(See enclosed as a separate file)

ANNEX 4- REQUIRED CERTIFICATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES, AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF THE RECIPIENT (JUNE 2012)

I. Certifications and Assurances

1. Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Non-Discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs

Note: This certification applies to Non-U.S. organizations if any part of the program will be undertaken in the United States.

- (a) The recipient hereby assures that no person in the United States will, on the bases set forth below, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving financial assistance from USAID, and that with respect to the Cooperative Agreement for which application is being made, it will comply with the requirements of:
- (1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub. L. 88-352, 42 U.S.C. 2000-d), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
 - (2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
 - (3) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (Pub. L. 95-478), which prohibits discrimination based on age in the delivery of services and benefits supported with Federal funds;
 - (4) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681, et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance (whether or not the programs or activities are offered or sponsored by an educational institution); and
 - (5) USAID regulations implementing the above nondiscrimination laws, set forth in Chapter II of Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations.
- (a) If the recipient is an institution of higher education, the Assurances given herein extend to admission practices and to all other practices relating to the treatment of students or clients of the institution, or relating to the opportunity to participate in the provision of services or other benefits to such individuals, and must be applicable to the entire institution unless the recipient establishes to the satisfaction of the USAID Administrator that the institution's practices in designated parts or programs of the institution will in no way affect its practices in the program of

the institution for which financial assistance is sought, or the beneficiaries of, or participants in, such programs.

2. Certification Regarding Lobbying

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal Cooperative Agreement, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned must complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.
- (3) The undersigned must require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients must certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, United States Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification will be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

"The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned must complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement will be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure."

3. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206)

USAID reserves the right to terminate this Agreement, to demand a refund or take other appropriate measures if the Grantee is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140. The undersigned must review USAID ADS 206 to determine if any certifications are required for Key Individuals or Covered Participants.

If there are COVERED PARTICIPANTS: USAID reserves the right to terminate assistance to or take other appropriate measures with respect to, any participant approved by USAID who is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140.

4. Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing, Implementing Executive Order 13224

By signing and submitting this application, the prospective recipient provides the certification set out below:

1. The Recipient, to the best of its current knowledge, did not provide, within the previous ten years, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it does not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated, or participated in terrorist acts, as that term is defined in paragraph 3.
2. The following steps may enable the Recipient to comply with its obligations under paragraph 1:
 - a. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient will verify that the individual or entity does not (i) appear on the master list of [Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons](#), which is maintained by the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), or (ii) is not included in any supplementary information concerning prohibited individuals or entities that may be provided by USAID to the Recipient.
 - b. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient also will verify that the individual or entity has not been designated by the United Nations Security (UNSC) sanctions committee established under UNSC Resolution 1267 (1999) (the "1267 Committee") [individuals and entities linked to the Taliban, Usama bin Laden, or the Al-Qaida Organization]. To determine whether there has been a published designation of an individual or entity by the 1267 Committee, the Recipient should refer to the consolidated list available online at the Committee's Web site: <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/1267ListEng.htm>.
 - c. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient will consider all information about that individual or entity of which it is aware and all public information that is reasonably available to it or of which it should be aware.
 - d. The Recipient also will implement reasonable monitoring and oversight procedures to safeguard against assistance being diverted to support terrorist activity.
3. For purposes of this Certification -
 - a. "Material support and resources" means currency or monetary instruments or financial securities, financial services, lodging, training, expert advice or assistance, safe houses, false documentation

- or identification, communications equipment, facilities, weapons, lethal substances, explosives, personnel, transportation, and other physical assets, except medicine or religious materials.”
- b. “Terrorist act” means -
 - (i) an act prohibited pursuant to one of the 12 United Nations Conventions and Protocols related to terrorism (see UN terrorism conventions Internet site: <http://untreaty.un.org/English/Terrorism.asp>); or
 - (ii) an act of premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents; or
 - (iii) any other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.
 - c. “Entity” means a partnership, association, corporation, or other organization, group or subgroup.
 - d. References in this Certification to the provision of material support and resources must not be deemed to include the furnishing of USAID funds or USAID-financed commodities to the ultimate beneficiaries of USAID assistance, such as recipients of food, medical care, micro-enterprise loans, shelter, etc., unless the Recipient has reason to believe that one or more of these beneficiaries commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated or participated in terrorist acts.
 - e. The Recipient’s obligations under paragraph 1 are not applicable to the procurement of goods and/or services by the Recipient that are acquired in the ordinary course of business through contract or purchase, e.g., utilities, rents, office supplies, gasoline, etc., unless the Recipient has reason to believe that a vendor or supplier of such goods and services commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated or participated in terrorist acts.

This Certification is an express term and condition of any agreement issued as a result of this application, and any violation of it will be grounds for unilateral termination of the agreement by USAID prior to the end of its term.

5. Certification of Recipient

By signing below the recipient provides certifications and assurances for (1) the Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Non-Discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs, (2) the Certification Regarding Lobbying, (3) the Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206), and (4) the Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing Executive Order 13224 above.

These certifications and assurances are given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all Federal grants, loans, contracts, property, discounts, or other Federal financial assistance extended after the date hereof to the recipient by the Agency, including installment payments after such date on account of applications for Federal financial assistance which was approved before such date. The recipient recognizes and agrees that such Federal financial assistance will be extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in these assurances, and that the United States will have the right to seek judicial enforcement of these assurances. These assurances are binding on

the recipient, its successors, transferees, and assignees, and the person or persons whose signatures appear below are authorized to sign these assurances on behalf of the recipient.

Request for Application or
Annual Program Statement No.: _____

Application No.: _____

Date of Application _____

Name of Recipient _____

Typed Name and Title _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking

I hereby certify that within the last ten years:

1. I have not been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation of the United States or any other country concerning narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances.
2. I am not and have not been an illicit trafficker in any such drug or controlled substance.
3. I am not and have not been a knowing assistor, abettor, conspirator, or colluder with others in the illicit trafficking in any such drug or substance.

Signature _____

Date _____

Name _____

Title/Position _____

Organization _____

Address _____

Date of Birth _____

NOTICE:

1. You are required to sign this Certification under the provisions of 22 CFR Part 140, Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers. These regulations were issued by the Department of State and require that certain key individuals of organizations must sign this Certification.
2. If you make a false Certification you are subject to U.S. criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001.

Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking

1. I hereby certify that within the last ten years:
 - a. I have not been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation of the United States or any other country concerning narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances.
 - b. I am not and have not been an illicit trafficker in any such drug or controlled substance.
 - c. I am not or have not been a knowing assistor, abettor, conspirator, or colluder with others in the illicit trafficking in any such drug or substance.
2. I understand that USAID may terminate my training if it is determined that I engaged in the above conduct during the last ten years or during my USAID training.

Signature

Name

Date

Address

Date of Birth

NOTICE:

1. You are required to sign this Certification under the provisions of 22 CFR Part 140, Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers. These regulations were issued by the Department of State and require that certain participants must sign this Certification.
2. If you make a false Certification you are subject to U.S. criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001.

Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants

[Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants: Go to](http://transition.usaid.gov/forms/surveyeo.doc)
<http://transition.usaid.gov/forms/surveyeo.doc>

Other Statements of Recipient

1. Authorized Individuals

The recipient represents that the following persons are authorized to negotiate on its behalf with the Government and to bind the recipient in connection with this application or grant:

Name	Title	Telephone No.:	Email Address.
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

2. Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)

If the recipient is a U.S. organization, or a foreign organization which has income effectively connected with the conduct of activities in the U.S. or has an office or a place of business or a fiscal paying agent in the U.S., please indicate the recipient's TIN:

TIN: _____

3. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number

- (a) Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation using an applicable exemption, in the space provided at the end of this provision, the recipient should supply the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number applicable to that name and address. Recipients should take care to report the number that identifies the recipient's name and address exactly as stated in the application.
- (b) The DUNS is a 9-digit number assigned by Dun and Bradstreet Information Services. If the recipient does not have a DUNS number, the recipient should call Dun and Bradstreet directly at 1-800-333-0505. A DUNS number will be provided immediately by telephone at no charge to the recipient. The recipient should be prepared to provide the following information:
 - (1) Recipient's name.
 - (2) Recipient's address.
 - (3) Recipient's telephone number.
 - (4) Line of business.
 - (5) Chief executive officer/key manager.
 - (6) Date the organization was started.
 - (7) Number of people employed by the recipient.
 - (8) Company affiliation.

- (c) Recipients located outside the United States may e-mail Dun and Bradstreet at globalinfo@dbisma.com to obtain the location and phone number of the local Dun and Bradstreet Information Services office.

The DUNS system is distinct from the Federal Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) system.

DUNS: _____

4. Letter of Credit (LOC) Number

If the recipient has an existing Letter of Credit (LOC) with USAID, please indicate the LOC number:

LOC: _____

5. Procurement Information

- (a) **Applicability.** This applies to the procurement of goods and services planned by the recipient (i.e., contracts, purchase orders, etc.) from a supplier of goods or services for the direct use or benefit of the recipient in conducting the program supported by the grant, and not to assistance provided by the recipient (i.e., a subgrant or subagreement) to a subgrantee or subrecipient in support of the subgrantee's or subrecipient's program. Provision by the recipient of the requested information does not, in and of itself, constitute USAID approval.
- (b) **Amount of Procurement.** Please indicate the total estimated dollar amount of goods and services which the recipient plans to purchase under the grant:
\$ _____
- (c) **Nonexpendable Property.** If the recipient plans to purchase nonexpendable equipment which would require the approval of the Agreement Officer, indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types, quantities of each, and estimated unit costs. Nonexpendable equipment for which the Agreement Officer's approval to purchase is required is any article of nonexpendable tangible personal property charged directly to the grant, having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION (Generic) _____

QUANTITY _____

ESTIMATED UNIT COST _____

- (b) **Source** If the recipient plans to purchase any goods/commodities which are not in accordance with the Standard Provision "USAID Eligibility Rules for Procurement of Commodities and Services," indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each, estimated unit costs of each, and probable source. "Source" means the country from which a commodity is shipped to the cooperating country or the cooperating country itself if the commodity is located in the cooperating country at the time of purchase. However, where a

commodity is shipped from a free port or bonded warehouse in the form in which received, “source” means the country from which the commodity was shipped to the free port or bonded warehouse. Additionally, “available for purchase” includes “offered for sale at the time of purchase” if the commodity is listed in a vendor’s catalog or other statement of inventory, kept as part of the vendor’s customary business practices and regularly offered for sale, even if the commodities are not physically on the vendors’ shelves or even in the source country at the time of the order. In such cases, the recipient must document that the commodity was listed in the vendor’s catalog or other statement of inventory; that the vendor has a regular and customary business practice of selling the commodity through “just in time” or other similar inventory practices; and the recipient did not engage the vendor to list the commodity in its catalog or other statement of inventory just to fulfill the recipient’s request for the commodity.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION _____

QUANTITY _____

ESTIMATED GOODS _____

PROBABLE GOODS _____

PROBABLE (Generic) _____

UNIT COST _____

SOURCE _____

- (e) Restricted Goods. If the recipient plans to purchase any restricted goods, indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each, estimated unit costs of each, intended use, and probable source. Restricted goods are Agricultural Commodities, Motor Vehicles, Pharmaceuticals, Pesticides, Used Equipment, U.S. Government-Owned Excess Property, and Fertilizer.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION _____

QUANTITY _____

ESTIMATED _____

PROBABLE _____

INTENDED USE (Generic) _____

UNIT COST _____

SOURCE _____

- (f) **Supplier Nationality.** If the recipient plans to purchase any goods or services from suppliers of goods and services whose nationality is not in accordance with the Standard Provision “USAID Eligibility Rules for Procurement of Commodities and Services,” indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each good or service, estimated costs of each, probable nationality of each non-U.S. supplier of each good or service, and the rationale for purchasing from a non-U.S. supplier.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION _____

QUANTITY _____

ESTIMATED _____

PROBABLE SUPPLIER _____

NATIONALITY _____

RATIONALE (Generic) _____

UNIT COST (Non-US Only) _____

FOR NON-US _____

E. Past Performance References

On a continuation page, please provide past performance information requested in the RFA.

F. Type of Organization

The recipient, by checking the applicable box, represents that -

- (a) If the recipient is a U.S. entity, it operates as ☐ a corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of, ☐ an individual, ☐ a partnership, ☐ a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, ☐ a state or local governmental organization, ☐ a private college or university, ☐ a public college or university, ☐ an international organization, or ☐ a joint venture; or
- (b) If the recipient is a non-U.S. entity, it operates as ☐ a corporation organized under the laws of _____ (country), ☐ an individual, ☐ a partnership, ☐ a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, ☐ a nongovernmental educational institution, ☐ a governmental organization, ☐ an international organization, or ☐ a joint venture.

G. Estimated Costs of Communications Products

The following are the estimate(s) of the cost of each separate communications product (i.e., any printed material [other than non-color photocopy material], photographic services, or video production services) which is anticipated under the grant. Each estimate must include all the costs associated with preparation and execution of the product. Use a continuation page as necessary.

ANNEX 5 – DRAFT ACTIVITY MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN TEMPLATE

1. Introduction

Guidance: Provide clear and precise descriptions on the context, development hypothesis, Project's goal, purposes, objectives, geographic focus, as well as where or how this Activity contributes to the USAID Partnership for Education's expected results.

2. Guiding Principle

Guidance: Provide clear and precise descriptions of the guiding principle for this M&E plan, e.g. intent/purpose, economy of effort, participation, transparency, and contribution to the CDCS Results Framework and Performance Management Plan. This section should include the overall proposed approach to monitoring (e.g., continual/formative assessment, snapshot data collection, sampling strategy).

3. Theory of Change and Implementation Logic Model

Guidance: Provide clear and precise description on the theory of change as well as a flow chart/diagram showing linkages within the Activity as well as between the Activity and the Project by demonstrating which key performance indicators contribute to the CDCS Results Framework.

4. Plan for Activity Monitoring and Evaluation

Guidance: Provide an M&E implementation plan indicating the planned tasks, frequency, timeline and responsible persons for performance monitoring. It is expected that monitoring activities will provide continual project quality assurance through the regular collection of data against defined indicators. Additionally, monitoring data will be utilized for the planned independent evaluation activities.

4.1 M&E structures, functions, and capabilities

Guidance: Provide clear and precise descriptions on the AMEP structures, functions, and capabilities, including the roles, responsibilities and competencies of staff in M&E at different implementation levels. This section should include information about how Learning will collaborate with Evaluating Systems to undertake performance and impact evaluations.

4.2 Data quality and flow

Guidance: Provide clear and precise descriptions on types of data sources, flows, storage and management, and verification/quality assurance from the data collection points/units to submission to USAID/Ghana. A visual-aid tool such as a flow chart may be used to accompany the narrative. This should also include plans for monitoring data analysis and its use for timely modification of the Activity as appropriate. If applicable, this section should describe the linkage between this Activity and the host government's M&E system.

4.3 Schedule for performance monitoring tasks

Guidance: Provide a gantt chart indicating the planned tasks, frequency, timeline, and responsible persons for performance monitoring.

4.4 Plan for internal/external studies or evaluations

Guidance: Provide a clear strategy and approach for analytical work to be conducted within the body of the Learning efforts. This will include an illustrative list of evaluations, special research or studies and other feasibility studies that may be conducted to increase knowledge and understanding of the education context in Ghana, the feasibility of and learning around planned interventions and generally on the effectiveness of the design and implementation of the Learning activity as a stand-alone component or as part of the USAID Partnership for Education Project.

4.5 M&E budget

Guidance: Specify the budget allocated to M&E tasks under this Activity by listing the tasks, estimated budget, and proportion of the budget comparing to the overall Activity budget.

5. Learning Approach

Guidance: Provide strategies for how monitoring data and evaluations will be used to inform activity changes and progress over time, and how such learning will be disseminated and used to achieve results. This includes outlining the method by which the Recipient plans to integrate findings from monitoring data into project design and implementation on an on-going basis.

6. Indicators and Targets

Guidance: Provide a matrix (see below) that lists indicators with a brief description/ measurement, data source(s), frequency of data collection, baseline values and their sources, and the annual target estimates throughout the life of the Activity. As part of proposing targets, the Applicant must provide justification for target level and credible methodologies for measuring targets.

Indicator	Description & Unit of Measurement	Reporting Frequency	Data Source & Collection Method	Baseline (& Source)	Year 1 Target	Year 2 Target	Year 3 Target	Target Justification

[End of Solicitation# RFA- 641-14-000004]