



USAID | MOZAMBIQUE

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Issue Date: August 27, 2021
Deadline for Questions: September 15, 2021, at 05:00 pm (Maputo Time)
Closing Date & Time: October 12, 2021, at 05:00 pm (Maputo Time)

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Request for Application (RFA) Number: 72065621RFA00012

Program Title: Improved Learning Outcomes in Primary Education (SABER) activity

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 98.001 Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a Cooperative Agreement from qualified entities to implement the Improved Learning Outcomes in Primary Education (SABER) activity. Eligibility for this award is not restricted.

USAID intends to make an award to the applicant(s) who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this NOFO subject to a risk assessment. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this NOFO thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection process.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this RFA and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this RFA. This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov, and may be amended. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the RFA has been received from the internet in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on www.grants.gov or accessing the RFA, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at suport@grants.gov for technical assistance.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section D.6.f. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Please also send any questions to the points of contact identified in Section D. The deadline for questions is shown above. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be

furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

Issuance of this notice of funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Jean-Jacques Badiane Digitally signed by Jean-Jacques Badiane
Date: 2021.08.27 11:07:25
+02'00'

Jean-Jacques Badiane
Agreement Officer

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SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This is a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funding opportunity authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID’s supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Section F.

I. SUMMARY

The objective of this activity is to improve reading, math instruction and learning outcomes using bilingual methodology in primary grades 4, 5, and 6 in the provinces of Nampula and Zambezia, following the Ministério da Educação e Desenvolvimento Humano (MINEDH) strategy. This NOFO will also deliver remedial math and reading instruction to students in grades 1 to 3 and consolidate prior results achieved with USAID technical-professional and material assistance. The activity will use existing USAID-supported Early Grade Reading (EGR) materials to assist MINEDH in providing reading and math instruction services to targeted districts¹ where children speak the same first language (L1).

This activity’s implementation will focus primarily on interactive interventions that maximize opportunities for children to learn from interaction with one another and with the teaching and learning material, reducing teacher-centered instructional approaches that emphasize rote learning, information processing, and group repetitions following the teacher. Working with sector stakeholders and the other USAID programs, this activity will enhance the early grade reading and math instruction and learning environment in target schools.

Technical services will address the following three results under the Improved Learning Outcomes in Primary Education (SABER) activity: 1) quality remedial reading and math instruction in grades 1-3 delivered; 2) quality reading instruction in grades 4-6 in the child’s first language improved and readiness for transition to L2 strengthened; and 3) prescribed amount of time dedicated to reading instruction in the target schools delivered.

These results are aligned with the USAID/Mozambique Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for 2020-2025, specifically Development Objective (DO) 1 which posits a five-year goal in achieving a “Healthier and Better Educated Mozambicans, Especially the

¹ The total number of schools, ZIPs, districts and provinces that ultimately will be selected to be served by this activity will be determined in consultations with MINEDH and USAID and it will be partly informed by the existing *Vamos Ler!* language mapping study and the list of *Vamos Ler!* served schools and districts. USAID does not rule out the possibility of saturating selected target areas where Echuwabo, Elomwe, and/or Emakhuwa languages are the child's first language in consultations with USAID and MINEDH.

Young and Vulnerable” through “Quality Health Education Services Improved.” The above results correspond to the Government of the Republic of Mozambique’s (GRM) policies such as: (1) the new 10-year Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP); (2) the GRM’s in-service teacher training strategy; and (3) MINEDH’s Bilingual Education strategy. SABER builds on evidence generated by previous USAID EGR activities including *Aprender a Ler* and *Vamos Ler* and expands student access to quality EGRA instruction to all bilingual schools in the provinces of Nampula and Zambezia.

USAID anticipates that the activity resulting from this NOFO will be funded for a maximum of \$60 million dollars and will have a maximum five-year period of performance (2022-2026). USAID/Mozambique intends to make one (1) award in response to this NOFO contingent upon available funding and high probability of achieving the above results and desired education outcomes.

II. CONTEXT

Since 2016, USAID has been assisting MINEDH with its primary education-focused bilingual education program through the USAID funded *Vamos Ler* activity. In an effort to address persistent poor reading outcomes exacerbated by COVID-19-related school closures causing lost instruction time, the Improving Learning Outcomes in Primary Education (SABER) activity will provide remedial reading and math instruction to students in grades 1-3. Additionally, in an effort to increase the likelihood that students successfully complete primary education, SABER will help MINEDH extend bilingual instruction to students in primary grades 4, 5 and 6 in selected schools in the two northern provinces of Nampula and Zambezia. This will be done using the child’s first language and supporting student transition to Portuguese as described in MINEDH’s bilingual education strategy².

SABER will work collaboratively with relevant MINEDH institutions, particularly (1) the Institute for the Development of Education (INDE); (2) the MINEDH Primary Education Department (DINEP); (3) the Teacher Training Department (DNFP); (4) the Department for Managing and Ensuring Quality (DGGQ); (6) the Planning and Cooperation Department (DIPLAC) at the national level; (7) Teacher Training Colleges (IFPs), (8) the Provincial Directorates of Education (DPEDH); and (9) school clusters (Zonas de Influencia Pedagógica ZIPs). SABER will also work with provincial and district directorates of education to improve EGR skills of students in primary education by developing teacher competencies to deliver quality remediation and bilingual instruction, including supporting student transition to Portuguese instruction. The activity will build the capacity of the above institutions on specific Early Grade Reading (EGR) and math skill areas by building upon the already

² Annex 1 offers a summary of the MINEDH bilingual transitional model which determines that new content will be introduced in L1 of the child and transit to the Portuguese media. SABER will support the transition which is completed in grade 6.

existing close and effective USAID partnerships and will consolidate gains and buy-in of bilingual education interventions at various system levels.

Building on lessons learned from ApaL and the *Vamos Ler*³ activities, SABER will collaborate with the in-country Education Sector Support Fund (Fundo de Apoio ao Sector de Educação, FASE) donors, other USAID funded partners such as ADPP⁴, CESC⁵, Transform Nutrition⁶, LOGOS⁷, local civil society organizations, and Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) to jointly engage in policy dialogue to help MINEDH reinforce effective policy measures and administrative procedures to reduce teacher absenteeism, including, but not limited to combatting teacher absenteeism. Working in collaboration with this network of partners, SABER will focus on a bottom-up approach to generating evidence-based interventions that are proven to be effective in ensuring that teachers are present in target schools and that they deliver the MINEDH-prescribed 190 days of reading and math instruction per year and improve learning outcomes in reading and numeracy.

Incorporating the USAID Reading Matters framework and related evidence, SABER will concentrate on delivering a school-based, cost-effective package of equitable and practical interventions to rapidly increase the number of students that can perform grade level math read grade level text with fluency and comprehension, using the first language of the child.⁸

SABER supports the GRM's efforts to acquire evidence-based technical and material assistance to improve EGR instruction and math skills in primary education in Mozambique. Technical assistance is three-pronged: 1) Delivering quality remedial reading and math instruction for grades 1-3; 2) Improving the quality of reading and math instruction in grades 4-6 using the child's first language and strengthening student readiness for transition to L2; and 3) Enhancing delivery of prescribed amount of time dedicated to reading instruction in the target schools. This assistance aligns with the GRM Education Strategic Plan, its National Reading and Writing Plan, and its Bilingual

³ Vamos Ler! (Let's Read!) supports the GRM's efforts to acquire evidence-based technical and material assistance to improve early grade reading instruction in Mozambique. Technical assistance is three-pronged: (1) improving the quality of reading instruction at the early primary level; (2) improving policy frameworks and delivery systems for early grade reading, and (3) increasing parental and community engagement in early grade reading. These align with the GRM Education Strategic Plan, its National Reading and Writing Plan, its Bilingual Education Policy. Now in its final year of operation, Vamos Ler! serves around 800,000 students in grades 1-3, and trains 3,211 school directors and 6,977 teachers in 1,950 public primary schools in the provinces of Nampula and Zambézia. It operates in 13 of 21 (62%) districts in Nampula in 1,426 of 2,070 (69%) primary schools. In Zambézia it operates in 8 of 17 (47%) districts in 1,400 of 3,070 (45%) primary schools.

⁴ ADPP is a USAID supported activity implementing a community engagement project in Nampula and Zambezia. ADPP also implements the USAID IHO nutrition program in Nampula province.

⁵ CESC is a USAID supported activity implementing a community engagement project in Nampula and Zambezia.

⁶ Transform Nutrition is a USAID funded Health Office program operating in Nampula province and aimed at improving nutritional knowledge and best nutritional practices for children under age two, adolescent girls and pregnant and lactating women, valuing locally grown products.

⁷ LOGOS is a USAID supported Local Governance Strengthening program focusing on improving effectiveness, transparency and accountability of key government institutions including in the education sector

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Education Policy.

III. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Recently, Mozambique has allocated an increasing amount of government resources to education. Available data (UNICEF, 2019)⁹ indicate that Mozambique's spending in education, as a percentage of total government budget, is above the level of its African peers. If current estimates hold, the GRM is planning to slightly increase its education spending to 20% in 2020¹⁰, up from 17.8% in 2019. However, the results of over 30 years of teaching in Portuguese as the language of instruction show that children are not learning to read grade level text with fluency and comprehension. In 2013, only 6% of third graders could read, write or do mathematics at grade-level¹¹. This percentage decreased in 2016 to 4.9% of children reading with fluency and comprehension.¹² A 2015 World Bank study indicated that only a quarter of 4th grade students could read words; only 17% could read sentences, and less than 10% could read a paragraph. In 2018, the primary school completion rate for Mozambique was 49% and this figure is lower than most Low-Income Countries (59% in 2019), and is the lowest figure in the SADC (Southern African Development Community) tables. Despite these low figures, existing assessments of bilingual programs in Mozambique¹³, including the USAID *Vamos Ler* Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) midline show promising results, but continued assistance is needed to help MINEDH produce robust and impactful evidence that can effectively inform sector-wide scale-up efforts in bilingual education.

IV. BACKGROUND

The education sector is one of the five (5) key priority areas in Mozambique's development agenda. Despite the country's significant progress in the last decade in expanding access to education for children, illiteracy and inequity of educational opportunity persist in many rural provinces. Among children who finish primary school, nearly two-thirds leave without basic reading, writing and math skills.¹⁴ Enrollment expanded between 2012 and 2019, and the number of students in lower (EP1) and upper (EP2) primary education increased by 28.7% and 28.4% respectively. From 2012 to 2018, the number of classrooms increased from 58,000 to 66,000. Despite this rapid expansion, improving the quality of education and learning outcomes remains a daunting challenge. Until recently, Portuguese was the only medium of instruction in primary education, and this posed challenges to improving learning outcomes. Data from the 2019 census collected by the National Institute for Statistics

⁹ UNICEF budget briefs 2018 and 2019

¹⁰ Plano Quinquenal do Governo (PQG) 2020-2024

¹¹ MINEDH National Assessment Report, 2013

¹² MINEDH National Assessment Report, 2016

¹³ MINEDH Bilingual Education Strategy, 2018

¹⁴ [USAID Mozambique Education 2018](#)

(INE) reveals that only 17 percent of Mozambicans speak Portuguese as their native language.

In 2004, Mozambique implemented its first bilingual education program in 10 of 11 provinces and in 16 of 43 local languages in 23 primary schools. The program gained enormous support from community members and expanded rapidly, surpassing government expectations and projections. By 2013, bilingual education programming expanded to 370 schools, 54 districts, 10 provinces and 16 Mozambican languages. In 2019 with support from USAID and other partners, MINEDH's bilingual education programming covers 19 local languages and operates nationwide, covering 126 of 129 districts, involving 9,957 teachers and 532,204 students. The current transitional bilingual education model requires students in grades 1-3 to learn writing, reading, and math in their first language (L1) and incorporates the development of oral Portuguese vocabulary (L2) or second language acquisition and prepares students for a gradual transition to Portuguese starting in grade 4. In grades 4-6, students will experience a gradual transition from their L1 to Portuguese. By the end of grade 6, instruction is only in Portuguese and the transition is complete.

The programmatic investment opportunity in the education professional sector is large. Mozambique faces a shortage of qualified teachers able to deliver evidence-based EGR instruction. In 2018, Mozambique registered 136,000 teachers, 62% of whom taught in grades 1-5 and 45% of the primary teaching force was female. Although Nampula and Zambezia provinces have 14,000 and 19,000 teachers respectively, the teaching force does not meet the requisite preparation skills in reading and bilingual pedagogy and teachers have fewer years of secondary education. The MINEDH teacher training department receives 8% of the budget but cannot cover teacher preparation expenses to produce qualified trained teachers. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed teacher training programs as social distancing rules resulted in no in person training. In recent years, MINEDH hired 8,000 teachers annually and this number is expected to increase into the 2022 school year. Of the 38 teacher training colleges for primary schools, five are located in Nampula and 5 in Zambezia.

Despite numerous teacher training interventions, a World Bank 2019 study on Service Delivery Indicators determined that the quality of the teaching force remains poor, and teachers often have not mastered basic content. In short, teachers' knowledge and pedagogical practices need improvement. Teachers rarely plan lessons systematically, or give and mark homework, both of which are important elements of the teaching and learning process. Teacher competencies are limited and only 1% of surveyed teachers mastered 80% of the primary school grade 4 curriculum and 60% mastered how to subtract two-digit numbers.

The GRM and education sector donors have been encouraged by the *Vamos Ler* midline Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) results and requested that USAID expand its support to

upper primary grades 4-6 and obtain robust evidence of children reading with fluency and comprehension. In an effort to assist MINEDH in creating the necessary learning conditions for children to succeed, USAID will join the education sector donor support fund (FASE) and in support of children completing primary education (grades 1-6) and help MINEDH achieve its target in 2024, where at least 20 percent of primary school students will be able to read and comprehend Portuguese at grade level.

Mozambique's public education system suffers from high teacher absenteeism which hurts student achievement. Previous studies from the U.S. National Bureau of Economic Research shows that when teachers are absent for 10 days, there is a significant decrease in student outcomes. Research specific to Mozambique concludes that "children learn little from attending school in Mozambique" and 4 out of 5 students in Mozambique, after more than three years of mandatory language teaching, cannot read a simple word of Portuguese. According to Bold (2017), 45 percent of teachers in Mozambique are absent or spend less than 2 hours teaching, failing to meet the required 4.21 hours a day of classroom instruction. A 2016 MINEDH national assessment showed that only 5 percent of third graders can read with fluency and comprehension and recent data from 2018 reveal that learning outcomes in primary schools remain low. Absenteeism correlates negatively with GDP per capita, making it more likely that schools in poor and rural areas with difficult working conditions face chronic teacher absenteeism.

Although the majority of students have access to school, drop out and repetition rates are high, especially for girls, due to undervaluing their education, as well as poor learning conditions, and low nutrition levels. There is a growing consensus that nutrition affects every aspect of human growth and development and impacts school performance. SABER will work with USAID's Transform Nutrition initiatives and other programs that follow evidence-based nutrition practices and a whole-school approach to regularly increase student knowledge about food and diet, and promote changes in student and caregiver's nutrition behaviors through integration of the caregivers into USAID's Transform Nutrition's Community groups where lessons in nutrition are disseminated. Taking into account MINEDH policy and guidelines pertaining to nutrition, SABER will work collaboratively with in-country stakeholders to build the capacity of teachers, school principals, community leaders and host government representatives to improve the quality of pupils' readiness to learn and that of nutrition services provided in target provinces. Coordination with Transform Nutrition will consist of jointly designing and using Community Radio messaging as the target group of Transform Nutrition includes children under the age of two, adolescent girls, and pregnant and lactating women easily reached by community radios which will broadcast messages in local languages. These SABER interventions will include nutritional education and mentorship of community members and PTAs to improve their nutritional habits and practices.

In March of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the GRM to close all schools, adversely affecting 8.5 million students, of which 6.9 million were in primary education. The pandemic directly affected 15,000 schools and 130,000 teachers. The education sector is the most severely impacted and the learning setback caused by school closures is predicted to have significant negative economic consequences. COVID-19 will exacerbate existing learning gaps and students with poor EGR skills will fall further behind, especially those whose families face poverty. Primary school students lost the whole 2020 school year. The prolonged school closure is estimated to result in a 0.6 loss in years of schooling adjusted to quality of learning, since the average years of schooling children attend is likely to drop from the current 7.9 to 7.3 years. To counter the pandemic and school closings, MINEDH adjusted the school curriculum and calendar, and promoted all students in 2020 to the next grade level. Yet students are unlikely to catch up on lost learning content without targeted and purposeful support. Students in early primary grades (1-3), in particular, where reading skills are already low, will need remedial instruction to catch up for the lost year. In 2021, MINEDH offered catch-up instruction to all grades during the first trimester, but further support particularly in rural settings will be needed to consolidate learning gains.

V. DONOR SECTOR SUPPORT TO EDUCATION (2002-2020)

While some donors support the education priorities through bilateral programs, most donors channel support through the Education Sector Support Fund (FASE). Since 2002, several international donor agencies have contributed to FASE. These contributions directly finance MINEDH priority areas such as ensuring: (1) inclusion and equity in access, participation and retention; (2) quality of learning outcomes; and (3) transparent, participatory, efficient and effective school governance at the national, provincial, district and school levels, as specified in the education sector strategic plan. FASE donors have channeled over \$1.6 billion dollars to fund effective implementation of the country's Education Strategic Plan. One of the purposes of this pooled funding mechanism is to contribute to systems strengthening and capacity building of MINEDH's institutions, including those in the provinces and district levels. Most FASE funds (75% in 2019) are spent at the provincial and district level and contributing agencies include Canada (CIDA), Finland (FINNIDA), Germany (GIZ and KfW), Ireland (Irish Aid), Portugal, The EU, Italy (Italian Cooperation), Portugal (IPAD), UNICEF, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)¹⁵, and the World Bank (IDA)¹⁶. USAID/Mozambique is engaged in FASE policy dialogue and may contribute to the FASE pooled fund mechanism. USAID is active in donor coordination, alignment, and harmonization efforts to ensure integration of its support and participates in relevant sector

¹⁵ GPE is providing a total of \$145 million dollars to support the implementation of the 2020-2029 ESSP, through FASE, including a \$15 million dollars support in response to the MINEDH COVID19 Emergency Plan

¹⁶ The World Bank is one key education supporter channeling its funding through the education sector support fund (FASE). The World Bank is launching the Moz Skills project, estimated at around \$104 million in IDA funding and a \$120 million GPE funding Reach Learning program in support of the MINEDH 2020-2029 strategic plan.

and working group meetings. As a non-FASE contributor, USAID aligned its support with country MINEDH policies and strategies and integrated its contribution into MINEDH's systems where appropriate and works collaboratively with MINEDH institutions nationwide for sustained change and continuity. Other donors provide direct project assistance with the agreement of MINEDH outside of FASE. Bilateral donors whose projects support Mozambican primary education include CIDA, DfID, GIZ and KfW, Irish AID, and JICA. Multilateral donors to Mozambican education include the ADB, the WFP, UNICEF, and UNESCO.

VI. PROGRAM PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The overall purpose of the Improved Learning Outcomes in Primary Education (SABER) program is to improve reading and math skills in target schools, grades, and languages through high-quality instruction and remediation. In order to achieve this objective, the activity will ensure¹⁷:

1. The delivery of quality remedial reading and math instruction in grades 1-3;
2. The improvement of reading and math instruction in grades 4-6 in a child's first language and strengthen student readiness to transition to L2; and
3. The delivery of the prescribed amount of time dedicated to reading and math instruction in the target schools.

VII. RELATIONSHIP TO HOST COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND USAID DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

The SABER program directly aligns with the priorities of the GRM and those of the USAID's education policies as outlined below.

Government of Mozambique Priorities: In its long-term plans for development, specifically the execution of its Strategic Education Plan, the GRM places a high premium on the eradication of illiteracy, the achievement of universal primary education, and ensuring that every child in primary school learns to read at grade level. MINEDH fully supports the Mission's education portfolio and is encouraged by USAID's progress and contributions to date, especially as they relate to improved learning outcomes and school governance. The GRM has specifically requested that USAID scale up EGR activities in Zambezia and Nampula provinces, where 42 percent of the population resides. EGR activities will demonstrate effectiveness and feasibility in a challenging and underserved regions.

¹⁷ Since the MINEDH bilingual education model includes the teaching on math concepts in Portuguese in upper primary grades that SABER will assist, the program will be required to support MINEDH led efforts to improve math literacy as appropriate by ensuring that SABER target schools have the prescribed books for both reading and math remediation and instruction and teachers and school directors are supported accordingly. SABER is required to fully align with MINEDH bilingual strategy.

USAID Education Strategy: The goal of the U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education for Fiscal Years 2019 - 2023, released on September 14, 2018, is to achieve a world where education systems in partner countries enable all individuals to acquire the education and skills needed to be productive members of society by 1) improving learning outcomes and 2) expanding access to quality basic education for all, particularly marginalized and vulnerable populations. The policy priorities are: (1) children and youth, particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable, have increased access to quality education; (2) children and youth gain literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills that are critical to future learning; and (3) youth gain the skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment, and positively contribute to society.

USAID/Mozambique Mission priorities: The U.S. Mission to Mozambique recognizes the objectives and activities of SABER are intended to ensure that all citizens served receive the literacy and reading instruction they need to succeed in contributing to Mozambique’s development. Results from SABER will contribute primarily toward the achievement of the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) development objective (DO) 1: “Healthier and better educated Mozambicans, especially the young and vulnerable.” Basic skills need to be delivered effectively and efficiently to the general population through the public-school system to create the opportunity for broad based development and will serve as the foundation for further national development. Broad-based and sustainable national development across all sectors requires sufficiently educated workers, and an informed and intellectually capable citizenry. Economic growth and social progress begin with mastery of the basic skill areas (primary school), and then extends upward into the higher skills and knowledge areas (secondary, technical/vocational, and university).

VIII. GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

This activity will take place in the provinces of Nampula and Zambezia , the current focus of past and present USAID activities in education. SABER will be based in Nampula and Zambezia provinces and implement interventions in the same provinces where the current *Vamos Ler* activity is being implemented to ensure effective consolidation of education impact. SABER will collaborate with MINEDH and the other donors to ensure that program results and best practices are widely shared with stakeholders at various levels, including at central MINEDH level institutions through participation in virtual or in-person meetings, as feasible. In consultations with MINEDH, SABER will adopt a participatory approach to developing Annual Work Plans which will reflect jointly identified MINEDH needs such as supporting sector events that promote greater visibility of USG support to the education sector, or related results of other projects. SABER Annual Work Plans will include joint MINEDH coordination in raising the profile and importance of bilingual education,

availability of teaching and learning material, and first language usage in primary education. SABER will utilize the increasing availability of virtual platforms in response to the COVID19 pandemic and produce school-based, context appropriate, and cost effective assessment tools for MINEDH to sustain and continue. All planning and interventions will be done in consultation with central MINEDH and relevant institution.

SABER will offer services covering all schools previously supported by the *Vamos Ler* activity and to the extent possible extend interventions to benefit all districts and bilingual schools in Nampula and Zambezia. The goal is to offer services to all bilingual education schools in target districts that have bilingual students in grades 4- 6, and reach districts supporting students to rapidly learn to read with fluency and comprehension. The table below provides the number of districts and schools in both target provinces where USIAD operates and will expand to new schools as resources permit.

Province	# of Districts	# of Primary Schools	# <i>Vamos Ler</i> Districts	# <i>Vamos Ler</i> Schools
Nampula¹⁸	23	2,070	13	975
Zambezia¹⁹	22	3,070	8	975
Total	45	5,140	21	1,950

Each applicant should propose an evidence-based roll-out and scale-up plan most effective in achieving results in Nampula and Zambezia. All approaches and interventions that are scaled up after the first phase of program implementation will demonstrate measurable results in achieving the program objective and results. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation that measure progress toward the desired program results must be included throughout program implementation.

IX. PROBLEM STATEMENT, DEVELOPMENT HYPOTHESIS, RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The overall project objective is to improve EGR and math skills of Mozambican children in target schools in Nampula and Zambezia provinces, using a bilingual modality and conforms with the MINEDH education policy for bilingual education. SABER will generate a cost-efficient, context-appropriate, and effective model for reading and math interventions that, at scale, will improve reading and math outcomes in Mozambique.

¹⁸ Nampula districts: Erati, Ilha de Mozambique, Lalaua , Malema , Mecuburi , Momba, Mogovolas Moma, Monapo, Mossuril, Murrupula, Rapale, and Ribauca

¹⁹ Zambezia Districts: Alto Molocue, Gile, Gurue, Lugela, Mocuba, Mulevala, and Namacurra.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Children in target districts of are illiterate or semi-literate because of the following:

- Widespread lack of understanding of early grade reading, math learning outcomes, academic standards, and school management.
- Programming to address illiteracy is not sufficiently data-driven at the town, district, or province level; and local government institutions do not create or leverage service provider networks or partnerships to work towards the eradication of illiteracy in all areas of the country.
- Children in monolingual programs where Portuguese is the language of instruction are not learning to read and do math at grade level because they had no previous exposure to Portuguese and their mother tongue is non-Portuguese.
- Teacher absenteeism and tardiness significantly reduces the quantity of learning time available for engaging children in any meaningful instruction.
- Parental and caregiver relative poverty drives them to prioritize concerns other than education or literacy. Thus, their involvement in student progress in literacy is low.
- Community awareness of the importance of education and literacy remains low. Local civil society organization lack the knowledge, skills, and experience to teach communities (school councils, parents, caregivers) to be more proactive in helping children learn to read.
- Long term school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Development Hypothesis

The development hypothesis is that, **if** USAID improves the quality of teacher performance in L1 teaching; provides the necessary remedial instruction; incentivizes communities and parents to support children’s learning at home; increase the availability of bilingual teaching and learning materials for increased reading practice and math learning, **then** more children will read with fluency and comprehension at grade level, learn math and succeed in school. This will contribute to the child’s’s self-reliance and prosperity.

This assumes that the GRM will continue its current commitment to curriculum reform in the 10-year Education Sector Strategic Plan (2020-2029) and focus on literacy instruction in local languages in the early grades of primary school. It also assumes that the GRM will maintain the current levels of funding in education, as a key sector for attainment of sustainable

development goals. Lastly, the political will and resources exist to maintain and expand bilingual education. The development hypothesis informs the SABER Program Results Framework below.

Results Framework

Program Goal: Improved reading and math skills in target schools, grades and languages through high-quality instruction, transition to L2 and remediation with USG support.

- Percent of learners who demonstrate improvement in grade-specific reading skills as per the Global Proficiency Framework or Reading and Mathematics in Emakhuwa, Echuwabo and Elomwe languages as well as in Portuguese.

Result One: Quality remedial reading and math instruction in grades 1-3 delivered.

- Grade level appropriate teaching, learning and supplementary materials for remedial instruction, in learners L1, developed and available to target schools.
- Teachers receive training on the methodologies (for example: Teaching at the Right Level (TARL) for diversified instruction for grades 1-3.
- Teachers receive program coaching and supervision on methodologies (for example: TARL) for diversified instruction for grades 1-3.
- Teachers deliver quality remedial instruction to target students in their L1.
- User-friendly formative assessments developed and used consistently to target students' instructional needs.

Result Two: Quality of reading and math instruction in grades 4-6 in child's L1 improved and readiness for transition to L2 strengthened

- Grade level appropriate teaching, learning and supplementary material for reading and math instruction, in learners L1, developed and available to target schools.
- Teacher's guides and supplementary readers for primary school reading and math instruction in grades 4-6 in L1 and to support transition to L2 of students developed.
- Teachers in grades 4-6 receive training on best practices in quality reading and math instruction and transition to L2 approaches for upper-primary grades with teacher and student materials provided .
- Teachers in grades 4-6 receive coaching and supervision on best practices in quality reading and math instruction and effective transition to L2 techniques for upper-primary grades.
- User-friendly formative assessments developed and used consistently to target students' instructional needs.

Result Three: Delivered prescribed amount of time dedicated to reading and math instruction in the target schools.

- Improved streamlined school-level processes for tracking and reporting teacher absenteeism
- Strengthened capacity of district officers to make informed decisions based on streamlined teacher absenteeism tracking systems.

- Delivery of behavior change messages in Portuguese and L1 focusing on the need to reduce teacher absenteeism.
- Developed radio messages/spots to sensitize teachers and communities on the importance of holding teachers accountable to school communities.
- Disseminated radio messages/spots in L1 and L2 to improve community knowledge on nutrition and impart best nutrition practices to parents.

X. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES AND KEY ISSUES TO ADDRESS

This activity provides bilingual education support to MINEDH’s education sector strategic plan priorities and the GRM bilingual education policy of 2015. SABER is successful if it delivers, overall, a 10% increase in children reading with fluency and comprehension in target schools after 3 years of intervention. SABER is also required to support the MINEDH led effort to improve children math skills by being fully responsive to the MINEDH bilingual scheme, including the subjects to be taught in each grade and languages to be utilized and help deliver corresponding teaching and learning material, in collaboration with MINEDH.

The applicant is required to build on the previous USAID funded bilingual program *Vamos Ler* and apply evidence-based context-appropriate approaches that will rapidly result in children reading with fluency and comprehension in target schools. To this end, the applicant should aim at a regular and robust collaboration, learning and adapting approach, considering the objectives outlined, the proposed IRs and the description of results. The applicant must periodically demonstrate planned and scientifically proven design approaches to monitor progress and identify any potential areas of delayed progress, documenting the reasons behind it and adopting corrective measures throughout the implementation process, ensuring continuity and consolidation of USAID results and impact in the education sector.

The applicant will develop, and present indicators and targets derived from the USAID EGR Standard Foreign Assistance or “F” indicators. SABER will use prior *Vamos Ler* studies and research to inform implementation. The applicant will develop a reasonable and cost-effective research agenda not previously covered by *Vamos Ler*. Note that no new SABER specific baseline data collection is required. Instead, the applicant will use the same *Vamos Ler* baseline data to inform this activity’s implementation since target provinces and languages (Emakhuwa, Elomwe, and Echuwabo) are identical.

During the period of implementation, the Applicant will support MINEDH led efforts to elevate the strategic importance of bilingual education and increase public support to it, through the provision of in kind support and facilitation of meetings, conferences, symposiums, workshops, sector studies, publications or regulations and other events and policy formulation efforts that contribute to this end and support USG funded SABER goals.

SABER will align with the following schedule of subjects and languages to be implemented in bilingual education in Mozambique, considering USAID support provided under the Vamos Ler project:

grade	item	subject	Language of instruction
4	1	Portuguese Language	Portuguese **
	2	Mozambican Language (L1)	Emakhuwa, Elomwe, Echuwabo
	3	Math	Portuguese **
	4	Natural Sciences	Emakhuwa, Elomwe, Echuwabo
	5	Ciências Sociais	Emakhuwa, Elomwe, Echuwabo
	6	Physical Education* ²⁰	Portuguese
5	Item	Subject	Language of instruction
	1	Portuguese Language	Portuguese** ²¹
	2	Mozambican Language (L1)	Emakhuwa, Elomwe, Echuwabo
	3	Math	Portuguese**
	4	Natural Sciences	Portuguese**
	5	Ciências Sociais	Emakhuwa, Elomwe, Echuwabo
	6	Arts and Crafts	Emakhuwa, Elomwe, Echuwabo
	7	Physical Education*	Portuguese
6	Item	Subject	Language of instruction
	1	Portuguese Language	Portuguese**
	2	Mozambican Language (L1)	Emakhuwa, Elomwe, Echuwabo
	3	Math	Portuguese**
	4	Natural Sciences	Portuguese**
	5	Ciências Sociais	Portuguese**
	6	Arts and Crafts	Portuguese**
	7	Physical Education*	Portuguese**

The applicant will work with MINEDH and its partners to align the national assessment tool with any SABER assessment tools developed and ensure that students are assessed at the

²⁰ *Not applicable. Temporarily suspended in the context of the Pandemic.

²¹ MINEDH prescribed that these subjects will use MINEDH existing books from the Monolingual Portuguese scheme. The Applicant will work with MINEDH to confirm that is the case and plan implementation/book provision accordingly.

same time with the same MINEDH assessment tools. This will also ensure that SABER student results are at par with MINEDH's program students and assessment cycle. MINEDH conducts formative school based PROVINHA²² assessments in close coordination with MINEDH/Instituto de Desenvolvimento da Educação (INDE) and the Department for Quality Assurance and control (DGGQ) at MINEDH and similar to the *Vamos Ler* developed Local Education Monitoring Approach (LEMA)²³ schools based assessment. This assessment is key and provides shorter-term school-based information that the teachers will need to inform additional interventions or remediation and support to students for improved reading and learning outcomes. MINEDH also conducts a National Assessment every 3 years (until recently to assess students in grade 3) and is considering applying this assessment to grade 4. SABER grade 4 students will be included in this National Assessment which is a school-based formative assessment administered by MINEDH to test primary school first cycle knowledge at grade 3 and is managed by INDE.

The applicant is expected to explore with relevant MINEDH institutions, including INDE, Direção Nacional de Formação de Professores (DNFP) and the Direcção Nacional do Ensino Primário (DNEP) as well as the DGGQ department, the feasibility of supporting the national assessment process with the goal of integrating relevant changes or contribute to its robustness and reliability. MINEDH also assesses grade 6 students every 4 years using regional testing from the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ). A recent SACMEQ V was conducted in 2013²⁴. This activity will be awarded in time for the applicant to explore timeframes for grade 6 assessments nationwide and plan accordingly and in collaboration with MINEDH and sector partners, particularly the World Bank. This opportune timing will allow the applicant to work with MINEDH and explore opportunities for integrating the SABER assessment into MINEDH grade 6 assessments efforts (if planned within the duration of this activity). The grade 6 assessment is a regional exercise and the applicant will explore with MINEDH the best options for SABER to align and coordinate its assessment.

Under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), USAID is seeking applications for programming that will build explicitly upon the lessons learned in Mozambique and around the world to take action to improve reading and math outcomes – at schools, in the home and in the community. Guiding principles for the design and implementation of the program must:

- Consider that this activity benefits children from rural disadvantaged communities who do not speak Portuguese, following the MINEDH bilingual education strategy, which requires

²² This is a school-based formative assessment administered by MINEDH in primary school first cycle grades 1 and 2 under leadership of INDE. PROVINHA has not yet been rolled out nationwide. The assessment assists teachers determine children who require remediation and additional support.

²³USAID supported school-based Learning, Evaluation, Monitoring and Assessment tool

²⁴ This is a donor supported effort which includes a strong capacity building component but has not been implemented consistently

children to learn to write, read and count in their first language and gradually transition to the Portuguese instruction. Transition is completed by grade 6.

- Assist all bilingual schools in all districts in Nampula and Zambezia with bilingual interventions, including transition to Portuguese (L2) in the same USAID supported three local languages except where other partners are already providing similar support.
- Use lessons learned from the *Vamos Ler* to create greater impact in target areas, including the inclusion of a stronger ZIP (Zonas de Influência Pedagógica) based coaching model, relying heavily on local staff from the Teacher Training Institutes (IFP) to align the implementation approach with the MINEDH's in-service teaching strategy.
- Provide a combination of interventions targeting teachers such as simplified instruction techniques and evidence-based curricula; in-service support for teachers, using relevant technology (radio instruction as feasible) to model effective transition to L2 and other skills; providing instructional guidelines; making available reading material and conducting assessment as appropriate.
- Provide opportunities to as many children as possible in the target areas to learn in their first language, considering the well-documented evidence of what works in early grade reading and gradually transition this approach into the Portuguese media.
- Deliver remedial instruction for grade 4 students using textbooks developed under the *Vamos Ler* activity and extend services to all grade 4 students in all schools in Nampula and Zambezia that use the same languages. Most Portuguese transition materials are monolingual and will be made available by MINEDH for the SABER target schools and will serve as their contribution to SABER .
- Align interventions and prevent duplication of efforts with USAID implementing partners and work in close coordination with other USAID funded activities and FASE donors.
- Develop strong partnerships with private sector actors, universities, and donors, to increase investment in improving EGR in the program's selected target areas and to ensure the sustainability of the program after its closure.
- Adapt design and implementation to complex conditions and generate information about how its approach contributes to the results.

- Convey awareness-raising messages, strive to improve community knowledge on nutrition as well as reducing student and teacher absenteeism and strengthen school accountability in education service delivery.
- Effectively use social media and ICT for awareness raising, data gathering, school mapping, instructional delivery, and monitoring and evaluation. As relevant, these new technologies should be used and leveraged to motivate learners and provide opportunities for ongoing practice of reading and writing skills.

USAID seeks applications from international and locally registered organizations that have experience implementing reading interventions. USAID/Mozambique does not have a single, prescribed approach to resolving these issues and encourages respondents to propose the most evidence-based, innovative models for achieving the overall goals and results of the program as described in the results framework.

In addition to seeking initiatives that demonstrate a clear and well-reasoned vision for the program, USAID seeks applications that present logical partnerships wherein the collaborating organizations have rational and achievable plans for pooling their expertise to enhance program effectiveness and efficiency in delivering early grade reading in Mozambique.

XI. ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES BY RESULTS

SABER intends to improve early grade reading and numeracy skills of Mozambican children in target schools in Nampula and Zambezia provinces, focusing on statistically significant improvements in oral fluency and comprehension, as measured by LEMA or similar instrument jointly developed with MINEDH. The applicant will support the GRM's efforts to improve the quality of education by focusing on remedial reading in grades 1-3 bilingual children in their first languages of Echuwabo, Elomwe, Emakhuwa (L1) and transition to L2 (Portuguese). This will consolidate previous USAID work carried out by *Vamos Ler* and support students to strengthen reading skills in grades 1-3 as a result of extended school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the applicant will scale the reading program to grades 4-6 where students begin to transition from L1 to Portuguese. The language of instruction in Portuguese increases and student reading time will also increase in and outside of the school setting.

USAID does not have any particular preference for an approach for achieving the goals of this program. However, to assist respondents in their deliberations about programming elements, below is a list of potential program activities organized by results.

Illustrative activities

Result 1: Quality remedial reading and math instruction in grades 1-3 delivered.

Activities under this result target bilingual schools that will receive remedial reading and math instruction in grades 1-3 that support improved learning outcomes.

- Deliver a remediation approach where students can catch up for loss instruction time including practical and evidence-based supervision support to teachers, using all teaching and learning material developed by the USAID *Vamos Ler* activity.
- Use evidence-based approaches that build in multiple review days into lesson plans, instructional support tailored for individual student needs, or remediation approaches, including identification of gaps and barriers to learning, and support for students who had missed school.
- Integrate an implementation approach that explores ways to work with school councils and district officials and/or school managers to create school development and teacher lesson plans.
- Deliver remote low-cost technology-based support for pupils and teachers (radio instruction, WhatsApp) in target schools.
- In consultations with MINEDH, develop, use or adopt quality gender sensitive teaching and learning materials, including student books in local languages and Portuguese and teacher guides, science and math books and work with MINEDH relevant.
- Provide bilingual instruction to students in grades 4, 5 and 6 and support transition in schools where Echuwabo, Elomwe, Emakhuwa are used in districts of Nampula and Zambezia provinces.
- Collaborate with the USAID supported partners to incorporate community radio programs using L1 and the L2 in target areas to improve community knowledge on nutrition and share nutrition best practices that draw on locally available food habits and traditions.

Result 2: Quality of reading and math instruction in grades 4-6 in child's L1 improved and readiness for transition to L2 strengthened.

The activities under this result will extend bilingual reading and math services to serve all existing bilingual students in grades 4, 5 and 6 in all districts of Nampula and Zambezia

provinces which use Echuwabo, Elomwe, Emakhuwa language of instruction and support transition to Portuguese media. This will help students learn math, read with fluency and comprehension and transition to Portuguese instruction showing positive signs of improvements in reading skills. Activities under this result target the improvement of children's reading and will assist parents and caregivers to engage more effectively and enjoyably in supporting their children's reading and math learning development.

- Work collaboratively with FASE donors and prioritize reducing costs of teacher training by integrating evidence-based USAID supported early grade teaching approaches into the pre-service teacher training courses at the Institutos de Formação de Professores (IFP), by continuously training and utilizing IFP instructors as SABER master trainers.
- Work with MINEDH to integrate printing and/or distribution process into MINEDH plans – Plano de Actividades (PdA) and advocate for FASE funding to sustain the project results.
- Deliver teacher preparation training that demonstrates a “shift in teaching and learning from an approach that works for most learners towards one that involves the development of a rich learning community characterized by learning opportunities that are sufficiently made available for everyone, so that all learners are able to participate in classroom life” (Florian & Black-Hawkins 2011, p 814).
- Provide cost-effective training to school-based coaches and ZIP facilitators that help teachers and school pedagogical staff at school level and prioritize improving children reading, math and learning outcomes, including the promotion of the use of low-cost technologies like the solar radios with classroom centered support and instructions for teachers involving all classroom children in effective learning and increased time on task.
- Apply innovative instructional approaches in grades 4 to 6 including the notion of grouping by ability level - dividing children into different tracks according to their level of abilities and reading levels for improved support and effective learning.
- Enhance “girl-child” learning and provide them with role models and engage non-teacher community young women to support student learning where young women spend 2 hours a day supporting struggling children to catch up in reading and math skills.
- Collaborate with MINEDH institutions as well as the other USAID funded local partners, including Ajuda de Desenvolvimento de Povo para Povo (ADPP), Centro de Aprendizagem e Capacitação da Sociedade Civil (CESC), the USAID LOGOS (Local Governance Strengthening), multilateral and bilateral donors, particularly the World Bank FASE funded

project to improve early grade reading in the Portuguese media, the Save the Children literacy boost, or UNICEF interventions.

- Partner with MINEDH districts and relevant partners to ensure that teacher allocation prerequisites consider teacher's L1 or include teacher's qualifications to teach in a bilingual classroom to align this process with the bilingual strategy and ensure that teachers can deliver quality instruction.

Result 3: Prescribed amount of time dedicated to reading and math instruction in the target schools delivered.

Activities under this result will benefit all SABER target bilingual schools both receiving remedial reading and math instruction in grades 1-3 and those receiving interventions targeting improved learning outcomes. The proposed interventions will increase reading practice time at school level and contribute to improved teacher accountability and attendance as an important element for students to learn to read with fluency and comprehension.

- Introduction of an awareness-based system change approach, involving communities and the other USAID funded activities to reduce absenteeism while ensuring that teachers are motivated to teach.
- Cost-effective interventions aligned with MINEDH practices, as appropriate such as the EGRA oral fluency into the national assessment tool, that are consistent with the Bilingual Education Strategy, the 2020-2029 education sector strategy.
- PTAs and community members implement a coordinated plan to ensure that teachers are in schools and teach, through targeted campaigns on local community radios, including in local languages focusing on the importance of early grade reading and the need for teachers to deliver recommended amounts of instruction in target schools.
- PTAs works collaboratively with district level officers to ensure that appropriate consequences are applied to non-performing teachers to foster improved accountability and commitment to their teaching duties and responsibilities.

XII. COLLABORATION WITH HOST COUNTRY GOVERNMENT

Since 2012 USAID has been working closely with GRM institutions at central, provincial and district levels and building capacity to adopt and lead early grade reading activity management and planning roles of the USAID *Vamos Ler* modeled best practices and evidence-based techniques. The applicant must continue this collaboration and work toward

maximizing results and amplifying EGR impact.

The list below illustrates but does not limit the list of key MINEDH and other institutions with which the applicant will collaborate in implementing SABER. This table does not intend to limit collaboration efforts to these institutions²⁵. USAID recognizes that the context evolves, and new organizations may be established by the agreement award date. Nevertheless, the applicant is expected to align its collaboration efforts within the education context and will apply a holistic approach to collaboration to maximize SABER results and ensure sustained change.

List of Institutions for Collaboration

National Partner	Responsibility
National Directorate for Primary Education (DINEP)	Primary education policy formulation; primary education Annual Plan development; rolling out of bilingual education program; policy dialogue primary education (chairing primary education working group meetings); primary education teaching and learning material; joint supervision of primary education; liaison with provincial and district level regarding primary education; primary education regulations and curriculum; bilingual education strategy; technical bilingual education experts; rolling out of MINEDH bilingual education program in additional 16 languages and monitoring
National Directorate for Planning and Cooperation (DIPLAC)	Strategic Planning and donor coordination; sector pooled fund implementation; sector reporting (annual); sector policy dialogue and reporting coordination (Annual Review meetings); Annual work plan coordination efforts
National Directorate for Quality Management and Assurance (DGGQ)	Standards and benchmarks; supervision including guidelines; monitoring and evaluation coordination; joint monitoring and reporting
National Directorate for Teacher Training (DNFP)	Teacher training coordination; liaison with the teacher training colleges (IFPs); INSET (In-service Training) strategy; teacher motivation
National Institute for Development of Education (INDE)	Curriculum and teaching and learning materials development and approval; sector research; reviewing SABER material
Eduardo Mondlane University	High education; secondary teacher training; research; bilingual education experts and linguists

²⁵ See activities and organizations described from pages 14 to 23 above. Collaboration may include exchange of information and coordinating implementing sites and approaches as well as efforts to reduce duplication of efforts.

Provincial Partners	Responsibility
Provincial Directorate of Education and Culture - Nampula (DPEC) Provincial Directorate of Education and Culture - Zambézia Provincial	Represents MINEDH at provincial level and performs all major functions at provincial
Pedagogical Department - DDP (Nampula and Zambézia)	Pedagogical unit at provincial directorate of education. Liaison with SABER
Teacher Training Institutes (Nampula and Zambézia) (Instituto de Formação de Professores) (IFPs)	teacher training responsibilities
Pedagogical University (UP) Unilurio University (Nampula) Unizambeze University (Zambezia)	Higher education services at provincial level including teacher training for secondary education and research

Provincial local civil society partners	Responsibility
CESC, FACILIDADE; NANA; UATAF, EMADER NAFEZA; APRODER; ADPP; Peace Corps	Implementation of USAID supported community activities in support to early grade reading results. Some of these partners may have completed USAID supported projects by the time these activity is awarded

District partners	Responsibility
District Education Offices (Serviço de Educação, Juventude e Tecnologia) (SDJET)	District education services management and monitoring; worked closely with district officers for the Vamos Ler program responsible for coordinating book delivery, training and logistics for EGRA
School clusters (Zona de Influência Pedagógica) (ZIP) Target Schools	Usually, the best located and relatively well-equipped schools in the district capital that Provide district level coordination; pedagogical support to teachers; training activities

XIII. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The applicant must demonstrate how the proposed activities build upon one another and are logically sequenced in order to achieve the desired outcome based on the proposed approach and methodology. The application must address the gaps in current responses and moments of opportunity, as identified in the education analysis. Activities must reflect an understanding of cultural norms, current educational options, and take steps to assure appropriate participation of target beneficiaries and communities.

The applicant must demonstrate how the implementation plan has built in measures to assess and support sustainability of the overarching program goals and desired outcomes, with a focus on ensuring activities have an impact on educational outcomes. The applicant's illustrative first year activity plan must set out a realistic outline of tasks and deliverables,

anticipated time frames, potential challenges toward implementation, opportunities and due dates, and persons responsible for achieving each task.

The applicant must express how planned and proposed activities are realistic given the cost and budgeting of the program via their cost narrative and proposed budgets. The applicant will be evaluated on the extent to which the proposed activities are realistic, reasonable and appropriate given the budget allocated for each.

The applicant must be based in the targeted provinces and should adopt an implementation and training approach that is provincially focused with minimum central level transport costs, where most coordination at this level can be done through technology-based means. The applicant must demonstrate high level of cost-control in all operations, particularly car rental and exercise high levels of due diligence and integrate robust accountability clauses in the contracts for printing and distribution of books so as to make effective use of available resources.

The applicant must engage in policy dialogue efforts with MINEDH and other partners and stakeholders, and will maximize the use of virtual platforms as appropriate to this effect, involving the provinces and districts, private sector institutions to widely share information and evidence from the activity implementation including in the quarterly briefs with the MINEDH team. The applicant must map out projected costs for various interventions before they are launched and actual costs so Ministry counterparts know what costs will need to be absorbed once the activity ends and assist in coordinating with USAID and other donors to update the budgeting and planning on a regular basis for rolling out the reading components of the bilingual education initiatives.

The applicant must adopt sustainable and scalable per diem rates and costs for teacher training. In addition, the applicant will prioritize the use of mobile payment systems to the greatest extent possible to provide teachers, supervisors, and others with their per diems, transport reimbursements, and lodging advances. Any logistics for the training ought to be purchased from the nearest vendors at the provincial, district or school level to minimize transportation and other costs.

XIV. COLLABORATING, LEARNING AND ADAPTING²⁶

Since 2012, the implementation of USAID supported EGR interventions collaboration, learning and adapting (CLA) has been an important component to maximizing results. SABER will follow USAID policy which places CLA at the center of the program cycle. The

²⁶ Refers to a set of processes and activities that help ensure programming is coordinated, grounded in evidence, and adjusted as necessary to remain effective throughout implementation.

applicant will work in coordination with any Mission evaluation contract and prioritize CLA throughout this activity to attain impactful results for all children reading and integrate evidence on what worked in other reading contexts. The applicant will devise and implement effective CLA²⁷ approaches that measure progress toward children in grades 1-6 reading with fluency and comprehension and that allow for exact instances for activity course correction and remedial action, as early as possible in SABER. The applicant will consider monitoring, pause, reflection and learning approaches that will effectively measure program effectiveness and allow the applicant to establish which interventions are having enough impact on improving children’s reading. A variety of such approaches have been documented²⁸, including approaches for tracking results, monitoring implementation to adapt as needed through cost effective stakeholder before and after consultations or other types of learning mechanisms that shift from whole program evaluation to specific aspects of the activity to inform learning. This will align SABER assessment tools to match Mozambique’s national assessments for integration and continuity of USAID support.



²⁷For more information refer to the CLA Toolkit available here: <https://usaidealarninglab.org/cla-toolkit>

²⁸ Review of Education Programs’ Impact on Access and Learning Outcomes. Snilstveit, B, Stevenson, J., et. al., 2016

The applicant will use the CLA agenda to engage with sector stakeholders and partners to plan learning events and build synergies for effective use of available resources and maximize impact. Potential CLA partners and can be used as appropriate. The applicant will consider existing sources for CLA that will include but not limited to, data from activity assessments, research, sector analysis and data, annual review meetings, and research and studies from fellow donors and will focus primarily on improving activity’s knowledge of bottlenecks for improving reading skills and learning outcomes.

The applicant must aim at regular and robust collaboration, learning and adapting approach, considering the proposed objectives, IRs and the description of results. The applicant must periodically demonstrate planned and scientifically proven design approaches to monitor progress and identify any potential areas of slow progress, documenting the reasons behind it and adopting corrective measures throughout the implementation process, ensuring continuity and consolidation of USAID results and impact in the education sector. The applicant must develop, and present indicators and targets derived from the USAID Early Grade Reading Standard Foreign Assistance or “F” indicators e. SABER will use the *Vamos Ler* activity produced studies and research to inform implementation. The applicant will develop a reasonable and cost-effective research agenda particularly covering those areas that *Vamos Ler* activity may have not developed sufficient knowledge and evidence to manage costs and promote continuity.

XV. SUSTAINABILITY

A primary goal of USAID investment in education is to ensure that USAID contribution results in continued and sustained change through working collaboratively and in coordination with local education institutions to ensure transfer of responsibility and integration of activity interventions in host government systems. Under the SABER activity the applicant will ensure that USAID contributions are continued and sustained in the education sector. To this effect, the applicant will identify appropriate sector entry points from the start of implementation and integrate SABER coordination and planning into MINEDH led structures, including the primary education working group and others as per the MINEDH TORs for dialogue.

To ensure sustainable implementation, the applicant will build an effective and evidence-based mutually beneficial relationship with MINEDH, focusing on opportunities for early joint planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring of activity progress. One lesson that USAID learned from the *Vamos Ler* activity is that buy-in and support from the government and sustained change is effective when MINEDH works with the program in all aspects of any given process in contrast to program staff presenting MINEDH with ready-made solutions for their review and comment. This requires that SABER takes sustainability

as a crosscutting theme in all aspects of implementation and negotiates opportunities for embedding program staff support within MINEDH departments for effective communication, timely integration of SABER approaches and alignment with MINEDH. Such integrative support to MINEDH can help the GRM and other partners inform future budgeting related to taking bilingual education to scale Early Grade Reading programming and related policy fronts such as combating teacher absenteeism or adopting affordable per diem rates and costs for teacher training interventions. This will create the necessary conditions for improved dialogue to realistically meet MINEDH capacity building needs, promote GRM ownership of SABER, and result in the long-term sustainability of program approaches. The applicant will consult with MINEDH and USAID and agree on a sustainable approach to develop and distribute teaching and learning material to target schools in a manner that enhances MINEDH's ability to continue supplying commodities and improving capacity after SABER ends.

The activity will focus from the start on opportunities for embedding program staff support within MINEDH departments for effective communication, timely integration of SABER approaches and alignment with MINEDH. This will also facilitate overall support to MINEDH Early Grade Reading programming and related policy, particularly the reinforcement of existing regulations for effectively fighting teacher absenteeism, including agreeing on a high-level SABER supported action plan for reducing teacher absenteeism involving all stakeholders. The activity will actively work with MINEDH to hold high-level and sector wide discussions with partners for commitments concerning teacher retention in bilingual schools working collaboratively with the FASE donors to avoid the costs of retraining replacement teachers. The activity will support government entities and produce statistically significant results that could inform scale up.

XV. ENVIRONMENT REVIEW

USAID/Mozambique Mission activities under the CDCS are required to comply with 22 CFR 216. Education activities have been guaranteed **A CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION** covering the proposed SABER activity, which focuses on delivering technical and professional evidence-based Early Grade Reading instruction, including support to teachers in classrooms, supply of Early Grade Reading teaching and learning material as well as assessment exercise, working in collaboration and consultation with MINEDH and its partners at various levels. No school construction or school rehabilitation activities are planned.

XVI. CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT (CRM)

USAID supports strengthening development outcomes by integrating climate change into Agency programming, learning, policy dialogues and operations. The Automated Directives System (ADS) 201 requires climate risk assessment and management for all new projects and

activities across sectors to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of project and activity objectives in the face of extreme weather and climate events.

USAID's contribution will support the Government of Mozambique's (GRM) Ministry of Education (MINEDH) plan to expand access to quality education for Mozambican children, by increasing access to bilingual reading instruction in early grades.

The three (3) components of the program that will be supported with USAID funds are:

- 1) Quality remedial reading and math instruction in grades 1-3 delivered.
- 2) Quality of reading and math instruction in grades 4-6 in child's L1 improved and readiness for transition to L2 strengthened.
- 3) Prescribed amount of time dedicated to reading and math instruction in the target schools delivered.

These activities received a "moderate" Climate Risk Rating, based on the experience of the Education Office (EDG) in managing Education service provision activities in regions of Mozambique which are vulnerable to the effects of severe weather.

A typical rainy season in Mozambique will frequently disrupt the normal flow of service provision in the Education sector; extreme events will compound the challenges of maintaining service provision at a large scale. For this reason, it is critical that the national education system is resilient and flexible enough to respond and adapt to these issues, as detailed further in the CRM matrix.

Despite the GRM's and Local Civil Society Organizations limited financial and technical capacity to mitigate the impact of severe weather events, advance collaboration and contingency planning with the government and the Implementing Partners, may be able to alleviate the impact of climate change on the activities funded by this Cooperative Agreement and, therefore, on the beneficiaries receiving support from the Implementing Partners.

Out of necessity, education programming in Mozambique has always had to adapt to external factors (climatic, political, and macro-economic) in order to successfully deliver on program objectives. As an example, due to the very poor road conditions and economic constraints, Mozambique has adapted its emergency transportation system to the environment -- addressing these challenges by developing adaptive systems, such as the use of motorcycles which can navigate degraded roads. This is an example of the adaptive capacity required to ensure the uninterrupted flow of education services.

5. Program technical deliverables and timelines

The applicant must produce and submit to USAID the following deliverables listed by sub-result in the chart below as the required technical deliverables of the contract. The contractor must also reflect the date of delivery to USAID in all annual work plans that will be submitted under the agreement.

The timing of these deliverables is based on the illustrative activities foreseen in the agreement. All the deliverables must be met and assurance must be given that all materials will be available in a timely and appropriate manner.

Result 1: Quality remedial reading and math instruction in grades 1-3 delivered

Result 1 Deliverable	Implementation Year
Evidence-based implementation strategy for reading and math remediation and catch up, for grades 1 to 3 focusing on practical support to teachers and school directors and training on student-centred techniques that reduce route learning, in collaboration with MINEDH institutions ²⁹	One and two
Remedial grades 1, 2 and 3 reading and math Emakhuwa, Elomwe and Echuwabo teacher’s guides, textbooks, decodable books, leveled readers, teaching-learning Aids, supplementary readers and distribution to schools in Nampula and Zambezia provinces target schools	One and two
Evidence-based approaches that build in multiple review days into lesson plans, instructional support tailored for individual student needs for reading and math developed and used in schools	One, two and three
Teachers and school director training on the methodologies (for example: Teaching at the Right Level (TARL) for diversified instruction	One, two, three
Teachers coached to deliver quality remedial math and reading instruction to target students in their L1 and transition to L2	One, two
User-friendly formative assessments developed and used consistently to target students’ instructional needs.	One
Coaching and Supervision protocols and guides package for early grade reading and math instruction supervision	One, two, three
Remediation approaches, including identification of gaps and barriers to learning, and support for students who had missed school focusing on	One, Two, three

²⁹ Some books exist (supported by USAID). The final set of material to be supplied for these grades, including for math remedial instructions in L1 and/or L2 must be determined in consultations with MINEDH

reading and math instruction	
Teacher Training Plans for Grade 4, 5 and 6 used in target schools.	One, Two and three
Primary school students grades 1 to 3 receive quality remedial reading and math instruction that is equitable and student centered maximizing improvement in learning outcomes	One, two and three
Distribution of all existing USAID supported Teaching and Learning material, including for reading and math remediation to all target schools and use	One, two and three

Result 2: Quality of reading and math instruction in grades 4 to 6 in L1 improved and readiness for transition to L2 strengthened

Result 2 Deliverable	Implementation Year
Grade level appropriate teaching, learning and supplementary material for reading instruction and math, in learners L1 and L2, developed and available to target schools as prescribed by MINEDH bilingual strategy	One ³⁰ , two and three
Teacher's guides and supplementary readers for primary school reading instruction and math in grades 4-6 in L1 and/or L2 used in SABER schools, in line with MINEDH strategy	One, two and three ³¹
Grade 5 and 6 science textbooks (student books), teacher's guides, and supplementary teaching-learning aids and transition to L2, and distribution plan	One, two and three
Teachers in grades 4-6 receive training on best practices in quality reading and math instruction, approached for transition to L2 approaches	One, two and three
Grades 4, 5 and 6 textbooks, including teacher's guides and supplementary material for reading and math instruction adopting the bilingual methodology for target schools in Nampula and Zambezia developed, printed and distributed, following MINEDH's strategy ³² .	One, two and three

³⁰ From grade 4 MINEDH prescribes that some subjects will be taught in Portuguese (Including math in grades 4 through 6) while other will be taught in the first language of the child. SABER will be required to consult with MINEDH to learn more about this and plan supply of reading material accordingly. This may mean that in some cases SABER will just distribute existing books, while in other cases books will need to be developed, printed and distributed for use.

³¹ Frequency of training each year to be determined in coordination with MINEDH relevant departments (teacher training, Primary education, INDE and quality Assurance)

³² The applicant will be required to consult with MINEDH relevant departments to determine which remedial and instruction books (L1 and/or L2) including math books the project will have to develop, print and distribute to target schools, as per the MINEDH bilingual strategy

Evidence-based grades 4-6 best practices in reading material and math and to support transition to L2 of students developed and used	One
MINEDH assessment test improved as appropriate and used consistently in SABER schools	Two, four ³³
Materials for teacher and student training in best practices in quality reading instruction, transition and math developed and distributed	One, two and three
Coaching and supervision on the use of best practices in quality reading and math instruction and effective transition to L2 techniques provided	One, two and three
User-friendly formative assessments developed and used consistently to target students' instructional needs	One, two and three
Development of the Annual Research Agenda in collaboration with MINEDH institutions, particularly the teacher training department and INDE	Two, Three, and Four
Bilingual interventions to extend bilingual reading and support math learning services to benefit all existing bilingual students in grades 4, 5 and 6 in all districts of Nampula and Zambezia provinces in Echuwabo, Elomwe, Emakhuwa language of instruction and support transition to Portuguese media.	One, two, three and four
Provide in kind support and facilitation to meetings, conferences, symposiums, workshops, sector studies, publications or regulations and other events and policy formulation efforts that simultaneously contribute and are related to the SABER USG funded goals in consultation with relevant MINEDH departments.	One, two, three and four
Primary school students grades 4 to 6 receive quality reading and math instruction that is equitable and student centered maximizing improvement in learning outcomes	three, four and five
Teachers trained in interactive-student centered reading and math instruction techniques that model learning from teaching aids and from peers and reduce rote learning	Three, four and five
Developed, print re-print and distribute existing and/or newly developed grades 4 to 6 books, including teachers manuals for reading instruction and math	Three, Four and Five

Result 3: Delivered prescribed amount of time dedicated to reading and math instruction in the target schools

³³ SABER is expected to work collaboratively with MINEDH to improve and use existing assessment tool for upper primary students

Result 3 Deliverable	Implementation Year
Develop and implement SABER strategy to reduce teacher absenteeism working with USAID funded Local Governance Strengthening Program (LOGOS) program and the school councils	One, two and three
Produce and broadcast behavior change messages in Portuguese and L1 focusing on the need to reduce teacher absenteeism, working with LOGOS, local community radios and the school councils	One, two, three and four
Improved streamlined school-level processes for tracking and reporting teacher absenteeism developed and used in collaboration with LOGOS and MINEDH	One, Two, three, Four
Implement a Community Mobilization Strategy for Nampula and Zambezia communities, building on Vamos Ler experience	One and three
Produce and broadcast messages in Portuguese and L1 focusing on improving community nutrition knowledge and habits, linked to the impact on student retention, completion and leaning outcomes, working with LOGOS, local community radios and the school councils in Nampula schools	One, Two and three
Developed and broadcast radio messages/spots to sensitize teachers and communities on the importance of holding teachers accountable to school communities.	Two, Three, Four
Produce and broadcast messages in Portuguese and L1 focusing on improving community nutrition knowledge and habits, linked to the impact on student retention, completion and learning outcomes, working with LOGOS, local community radios and the school councils in Zambezia schools	One, Two and Three
Work in collaboration with USAID funded activities, particularly LOGOS and the FASE donors, including remotely, reduce teacher absenteeism in target schools to levels that are below the national average of 35 per cent	One, two, three and Four
Support and facilitate bilingual education and/or local language/book celebration events, workshops, symposiums and conferences, including participation of M INEDH staff in international events as related to improving the knowledge base and elevating the importance and support to bilingual education interventions and programming	One, Two, Three, Four and Five

6. Gender Analysis

USAID/Mozambique's gender analysis examined girls' access to schooling, poverty and family livelihood, socio-cultural barriers, gender-based violence and harassment. The following key gender gaps were identified in the analysis:

- Educational access and attainment are lower for females, leading to higher levels of illiteracy and loss of economic opportunity.
- Women and children are disproportionately affected by poverty.
- Women and girls are more likely to be victims of gender-based violence; and
- Attitudes towards gender roles undermine women's ability to assume positions of leadership.

Interventions should account for future difficulties faced by female or male students and offer safe spaces for girls and boys to enjoy learning. The local partner should promote gender equality and female empowerment at the activity level and through its organizational structures and staffing.

7. Use of Local Systems

USAID is working collaboratively with relevant GRM education institutions in the implementation of its support to the education sector and increasingly integrating USAID projects into GRM systems for sustainability. USAID recognizes the importance of aligning and harmonizing its support in education through joint effort and increased engagement in sector policy dialogue to help MINEDH maintain or increase current levels of GRM funding to education to complement external support and increasingly own priority setting and funding decisions. To this end, USAID is exploring opportunities that support MINEDH goals such as working with the education sector support fund (FASE) which uses Government of Mozambique Public Financial Management systems to leverage funding, build synergies with in-country donors, and amplify impact and contribute to MINEDH self-reliance. A combination of IPs will be engaged, including local organizations, with GRM institutions through FASE and international partners, primarily for technical assistance as appropriate. USAID intends to continue to involve GRM institutions and donors in building strong buy-in and ownership of USAID approaches.

8. Additional Resources

SABER draws upon several recent activities and analyses conducted in Mozambique as well as evidence from other USAID Missions. Additional context information and list of reference documents is available in the annex 1.

[END OF SECTION A]

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID intends to make one cooperative agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide approximately \$60,400,000 (sixty million dollars) in total USAID funding.

2. Expected Performance Indicators, Targets, Baseline Data, and Data Collection

Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Applicants are required to develop a monitoring plan that permits the efficient and timely measurement of progress towards outcome and output indicators for each result and sub-result. Applicants must align indicators with the USAID reading mandatory Department of State “F indicators” listed below. The applicants must provide sex-disaggregated reporting on the following indicators:

- % of learners who demonstrate improved reading skills at grade level text at the end of primary school (or grade 6, whichever comes sooner) with USG assistance; and
- % of primary-grade learners targeted for USG assistance who have the appropriate variety of decodable, leveled, AND supplementary readers in the language of instruction with inclusive representation of diverse populations.

The following are USAID FACTS Info indicators that measure achievement of the Intermediate Results:

- # Of primary school educators who complete professional development activities on implementing evidence-based reading instruction with USG Assistance.
- # of primary or secondary textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with USG assistance;
- # of target schools demonstrating a reduction in the % of teacher absenteeism in target areas;
- # of learners receiving reading instruction at the primary level;
- # of ptas or similar school governance structures supported; and
- # of laws, policies, regulations or guidelines developed or modified to reduce teacher absenteeism.

The following (or adaptations of the following) are additional custom indicators:

- # and % of early grade teachers implementing saber reading interventions successfully and with fidelity;
- Percent of schools with teacher and student attendance at reading lessons of over

80%;

- Number of provincial and district authorities, zip coordinators, principals, and pedagogical directors capable of delivering school-based evidence-based support to teachers;
- Number of central and decentralized level personnel able to administer cost-effective oral reading fluency assessments, aligned with MINEDH tools;
- Percent of parents engaging with students to improve reading mastery; and
- Percent of communities monitoring students' reading outcomes and using them to hold schools accountable for teacher presence and high-quality reading instruction.

The following are custom indicators utilized by the MINEDH and FASE to measure school progress:

- Fifth grade retention (survival) rate (in USAID supported schools); and
- Student/teacher ratio in grade 5 and 6 (in USAID supported schools).

All indicators and training data must be disaggregated by sex, type of training, geographic location and other categories required by USAID. The applicant will, as a routine part of program monitoring, track and report the costs of the various interventions. The applicant's performance monitoring and evaluation plan detailing all indicators tracked under this agreement will be approved by the agreement officer representative (AOR) and reviewed annually as part of reporting and work plan approval processes.

all monitoring activities must be conducted through and in close collaboration with the GRM's supervisory structures at provincial, district, and local levels. the applicants must model evidence-based support to improve national, province, district, and school capability to monitor and evaluate the program and use the outputs of GRM data information systems (particularly education management information system) for reports. this requires geographic information system (GIS) geo-referenced data on location of schools and communities and integration of information with various education sector monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Context-appropriate information technologies (such as hand-held mobile devices) and approaches to reduce monitoring and evaluation costs must be utilized. Lot quality assurance sampling (LQAS) procedures or other cost-effective rapid assessment methodologies, including the by VAMOS LER developed tools (LEMA tool) must be aligned with MINEDH assessment tools and used to streamline program monitoring processes and provide more timely opportunities for cost-effective evidence-based measuring progress on student learning outcomes, teacher and school director performance, and other aspects critical to assessing program effectiveness and applying course correction and remedial action as needed.

The applicant must work with MINEDH and its partners to align the national assessment tool with the saber assessment tool to be utilized in this activity to ensure that, when feasible, students are assessed at the same time and using the same MINEDH assessment tools to ensure that saber students results are on par with MINEDH's program students.

The applicants periodically demonstrate planned and scientifically proven design approaches to monitor progress and identify any potential areas of slow progress, documenting the reasons behind it and adopting corrective measures throughout the implementation process, ensuring continuity and consolidation of USAID results and impact in the education sector. The applicants must develop, and present indicators and targets derived from the USAID early grade reading standard foreign assistance or "f" indicators and use VAMOS LER activity produced studies and research to inform implementation. The applicants must develop a reasonable and cost-effective research agenda particularly covering those areas that VAMOS LER activity may have not developed sufficient knowledge and evidence to manage costs and promote continuity. The applicants must use the VAMOS LER activity baseline data to inform this activity, since this activity is intended to consolidate the VAMOS LER results.

Performance Evaluation

The saber activity will be subject to a performance evaluation, as an integral part of this design and will focus specifically at assessing performance of this activity. To ensure the activity is on track regarding financial controls and accountability, USAID plans to conduct a financial review of the activity 10 months into implementation and as it deems necessary.

3. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The anticipated period of performance is five (5) years. The estimated start date will be upon the signature of the award, on or about, or other effective date determined by the Agreement Officer.

4. Substantial Involvement

a. Approval of the Recipient's Implementation Plans

The Recipient shall obtain the Agreement Officer's written approval for its implementation plan. The implementation plan includes the following: annual work plans, subawards, required reports, MEL plan, and knowledge management plans. Any change to the activity description or the approved budget requires Agreement Officer's approval. If at the time of award, the program description does not establish a timeline in sufficient detail for the planned achievement of milestones or outputs, USAID may delay approval of the recipient's implementation plan for a later date. USAID must not require approval of implementation plans more often

than annually. If the AO has delegated authority to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) to approve implementation plans, the AOR must review the agreement's terms and conditions to ensure that changes to the terms and conditions are not inadvertently approved by the AOR.

b. Approval of Specified Key Personnel

All Key Personnel shall be employees of the prime recipient, not a sub-recipient. Before removing, replacing or diverting responsibilities from any of the listed or specified Key Personnel, the Recipient shall 1) notify the Agreement Officer reasonably in advance and 2) submit justification, including proposed substitutions in sufficient detail to permit evaluation of the individual and the impact on this agreement. Unless specified in writing by the Agreement Officer, no replacement of Key Personnel shall be made by the Recipient without the written approval of the Agreement Officer.

c. Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation

When the recipient's successful accomplishment of program objectives would benefit from USAID's technical knowledge, the AO may authorize the collaboration or joint participation of USAID and the recipient on the program. There should be sufficient reason for Agency involvement and the involvement should be specifically tailored to support identified elements in the program description. When these conditions are met, the AO may include appropriate levels of substantial involvement such as the following:

- (1) Collaborative involvement in selection of advisory committee members, if the program will establish an advisory committee that provides advice to the recipient. USAID may participate as a member of this committee as well. Advisory committees must only deal with programmatic or technical issues and not routine administrative matters.
- (2) Concurrence on the substantive provisions of sub-awards. 2 CFR 200.308 already requires the recipient to obtain the AO's prior approval for the subaward, transfer, or contracting out of any work under an award. This is generally limited to approving work by a third party under the agreement. If USAID wishes to reserve any further approval rights for sub-awards or contracts, it must clearly spell out such Agency involvement in the substantial involvement provision of the agreement.
- (3) Approval of the recipient's monitoring and evaluation plans.
- (4) Monitor to authorize specified kinds of direction or redirection because of interrelationships with other projects. All such activities must be included in the program description, negotiated in the budget, and made a part of the award.

5. Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services under this program is **935** (any area or country including the recipient country but excluding any country that is a prohibited source).

6. Nature of the Relationship between USAID and the Recipient

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the Improved Learning Outcomes in Primary Education (SABER) activity which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

[END OF SECTION B]

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility for this NOFO is not restricted.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

There is no cost sharing requirement for the recipient of the award.

[END OF SECTION C]

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Agency Points of Contact

Judite Caetano
Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
USAID/Mozambique
E-Mail: jcaetano@usaid.gov

2. Questions and Answers

All questions regarding this RFA should be submitted to Judite Caetano, jcaetano@usaid.gov with a cc copy to jbadiane@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. 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 that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicant.

3. Content and Form of Application Submission

Preparation of Applications:

Each Applicant must furnish the information required by this RFA. Applications must be submitted in two separate parts: The Technical Application and the Business (Cost) Application. This subsection addresses general content requirements applying to the Application. Please see subsections 5 and 6, below, for information on the content specific to the Technical and Business (Cost) applications. The Technical application must address technical aspects only while the Business (Cost) Application must present the costs and explain the basis of estimation and other related issues.

Both the Technical and Business (Cost) Applications must include a cover page containing the following information:

- Name of the organization(s) submitting the application
- Identification and signature of the primary contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address) and the identification of the alternate contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address)
- Program name
- Notice of Funding Opportunity number /RFA number
- Name of any proposed sub-recipients or partnerships (identify if any of the organizations are local organizations, per USAID's definition of 'local entity' under ADS 303).

Applications signed by an agent on behalf of the Applicant must be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to USAID/Mozambique.

Applicants may choose to submit a cover letter in addition to the cover pages, but it will serve only as a transmittal letter to the Agreement Officer. The cover letter will not be reviewed as part of the merit review criteria.

Applications must comply with the following:

- USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations
- Written in English
- 12 font size, Times New Roman Font, single spaced, typed in standard 8.5 x 11 paper size with one-inch margins both right and left and each page numbered consecutively, date of submission, and Applicant's name
- 10-point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables, however, must comply with the 12-point Times New Roman requirement
- Submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats, except budget files which must be submitted in Microsoft Excel
- The technical application must be searchable in Word or PDF format as appropriate
- The Cost Schedule must include an Excel spreadsheet with all cells unlocked and no hidden formulas or sheets. A PDF version of the Excel spreadsheet may be submitted in addition to the Excel version at the Applicant's discretion, however, the official cost application submission is the unlocked Excel version.

Applicants must review, understand and comply with all aspects of this RFA. Failure to do so may be considered as being non-responsive and may be evaluated accordingly. Applicants should retain a copy of the application and all enclosures for their records.

4. Application Submission Procedures

Applications in response to this NOFO must be submitted no later than the closing date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Late applications will not be reviewed nor considered. Applicants must retain proof of timely delivery in the form of system generated documentation of delivery receipt date and time/confirmation from the receiving office/certified mail receipt.

Electronic (e-mail) is the media for submitting the application. Please submit application to Judite Caetano at jcaetano@usaid.gov with a cc copy to jbadiane@usaid.gov.

Email submissions must include the RFA number and applicant's name in the subject line heading. In addition, for an application sent by multiple emails, the subject line must also indicate whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of the emails and their attachments (e.g. "No. 1 of 4", etc.). For example, if your cost application is being sent in two emails, the first email should have a subject line that states: "[RFA number], [Applicant Organization Name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2".

USAID's preference is that the technical application and the cost application submitted as single and separate email attachments, e.g. that you consolidate the various parts of a technical application into a single document before sending them and the cost application submitted as a single excel budget with a separate attachment for the budget narrative in MS word or PDF. If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments. USAID will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic applications if no instructions are provided or are unclear. The application, if submitted by the submission deadline, will be reviewed for responsiveness to the RFA and the application format. No additions or modifications will be accepted after the submission date.

After submitting an application electronically, applicants should immediately check their own email to confirm that the attachments were indeed sent. If an applicant discovers an error in transmission, please 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 once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

Applicants are reminded that e-mail is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, applicants are requested to send the application in sufficient time ahead of the deadline. For this RFA, the initial point of entry to the government infrastructure is the USAID mail server.

There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID/Mozambique/OAA cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server. File size must not exceed 8MB per email.

5. Technical Application Format

The Technical Application should be specific, complete, and presented concisely. The Application must demonstrate the Applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. The Application should take into account the requirements of the program and merit review criteria found in this RFA.

The Technical Application narrative section **must not exceed 25 single-spaced typed pages**.

To facilitate the competitive review of the applications, USAID will consider only applications conforming to the prescribed format and page limitations. Any other information submitted will not be provided to the Selection Committee and will not be reviewed. Letters of support are not requested and will not be provided to the Selection Committee.

The following will be counted as part of the 25-page limitation:

- Executive Summary
- Technical Excellence
- Management Approach; and
- Institutional Capacity

The following will NOT be counted as part of the 25-page limitation:

- Title Page (not counted against the page limit);
- Cover Page (not counted against the page limit);
- Table of Contents (not counted against the page limit).
- Annexes (not counted against the page limit)

Annexes: Annexes to the Technical Application should be provided as part of the technical submission. Promotional literature and materials regarding the applicant must not be submitted as part of the annexes. The following items submitted as an annex are not subject to the 25-page limitation and will not be counted.

- Relevant Tables, Charts and Graphs
- Resumes/Curriculum Vitae for Key Personnel and long-term professional staff, proposed position descriptions and signed letters of commitment from Key Personnel, no more than three (3) pages in length
- Partner letters of commitment, maximum 1-2 pages
- Charts providing information on management structure, matrixes demonstrating staff skills, and organizational chart(s)
- First Year draft Work Plan, and
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan.

All other items not listed above and provided as an annex will count towards the page limitation. Please number pages as “Page x of xx Pages” where a page number combined with a letter indicates a page that is exempt from the 25-page limitation.

Annexes can be numbered separately and should be numbered as “Annex 1: 1 of X, Annex 2: 2 of X”, etcetera. Pages should be numbered at the bottom.

The Technical Application should confirm or propose modifications to the objectives, activities and indicators described in the Program Description. It should also contain a description of key strategies, activities and approaches, as well as the synergies among them that the proposed partner will pursue in order to accomplish the desired results described in this Activity Description, as well as the rationale for selecting them. Gender and youth issues should also be addressed. Interested applicants must provide a detailed technical application and demonstrate how it will achieve the overall goal, program objectives and results as previously described.

The Technical Application will be the most important part of consideration in selection for award of the proposed activity. It must take into account and be arranged in the order of the merit review criteria found in Section E—for ease of reviewing by the Selection Committee (SC):

Title Page: The Applicant must include the following basic information in the title page: Proposed project title; NOFO/RFA number; Name of organization(s) submitting the application; Address of organization(s) submitting the application; Point of contact (POC) at organization; and POC's title, telephone number, and email address.

Cover Page: Describe the names of the organizations/institutions involved in the proposed application. In the case of a group, please indicate the lead or primary applicant clearly; followed by any proposed sub-grantees and/or contractors (hereafter referred to as "subs"), including a brief narrative describing the unique capacities/skills being brought to the program by each institution. A summary table should be included that lists the Prime Applicant and all partner organizations as well as the percentage of overall program activities that each partner will contribute. The Cover Page must be signed by the organization's official with authority to negotiate/sign on such an application with USAID.

Table of Contents: The Table of Contents should list all parts of the technical application, with page numbers and attachments.

Executive Summary: A two- page, brief description of proposed activities, goals, and anticipated results (both quantitative and qualitative). Briefly describe technical and managerial resources of your organization. Describe how the overall program will be managed. State the bottom- line funding request from USAID and the bottom- line funding secured from other sources (state sources and amounts) for the proposed Activity. The Executive Summary shall summarize the key elements of the applicant's technical application.

Program Description: The Technical Application Narrative as revised during negotiations will become the Program Description of any resulting Cooperative Agreement. It must include a clear description of the conceptual approach and the general strategy (i.e. methodology and techniques) being proposed. It must outline specific, focused activities; identify how and where (e.g. geographic locations and level: local, district, province, etc.) those activities will be implemented; explain how the approach is expected to achieve the proposed objectives; and describe a plan that will enable the activities to continue after the Activity has been completed.

In developing the application, Applicants are expected to take the RFA Program Description technical guidance into account. Applicants should demonstrate that they have researched other USG, GOM and donor activities in the region on which they are bidding and suggest solutions to ensure continuity of service and meet known gaps. The Applicant must articulate which key public and private sector stakeholders it intends to coordinate and engage with to advance the project's goal and objective, to amplify the funding and/or contributions and to achieve a scale that would not be possible only through USAID funds. The Applicant must also explain why those stakeholders are vital to the approach. The Applicant must identify its existing relationship or work history with those organizations. Applicants must describe how they will coordinate and engage with the stakeholders, especially USG clinical partners and PEPFAR initiatives, to ensure ownership, maximize synergy and resources, minimize overlap, and achieve the project's goal and objective.

6. Technical Application Considerations

Criterion 1: Technical approach

There are three sub-areas under the technical approach which include:

1. Extent to which applicants articulate the key development challenges in the Mozambican education sector with a focus on Early Grade Reading and learning outcomes with a logical strategy to implement the activity. Demonstrates profound knowledge and understanding of the development challenges in the education sector in Mozambique, including as they pertain to the effects of the Global COVID19 pandemic on learning and related primary school teacher abilities, key hindrances for improving reading skills and student learning outcomes, gender disparities, and articulates a clear and detailed statement of logic, assumptions, and causal relationships, with a corresponding detailed strategy to address the development problem and successfully implementation of each results component as identified in the program description.
2. Extent to which the design approach is responsive to the stated objectives and requirements, aligned with effective practices, appropriate for the country and beneficiary context. The extent to which the proposed approach is likely to achieve concrete, affordable and lasting measurable outcomes. Demonstrate strong understanding of relevant evidence in the design of a context-appropriate, realistic, cost-effective, equitable and practice-based technical approach as required in the program description as well as an adequate consideration of relevant in-country lessons learned, the logistical and operational challenges inherent to start up, implementation, and scale up of Early Grade Reading in Mozambican languages.
3. Extent to which Applicants present a feasible and robust approach to working collaboratively with MINEDH institutions, sector FASE partners and other relevant stakeholders to appropriately integrate SABER evidence-based contribution into sector processes, plans, align with sector strategies, including use of local government institutions at decentralized levels and assisting MINEDH own and sustain USAID support. Articulates a clear and detailed plan to cultivate a positive working relationship with key MINEDH and other institutional actors to promote GRM ownership and long-term sustainability, including technical assistance and capacity building as well as the use, to the extent possible, of host government educational institutions, personnel, and materials that include innovative and appropriate technology-based response to COVID-19 pandemic with significant government leadership and involvement.

Criterion 2: Year 1 Implementation Plan

Extent to which the applicant articulates an implementation plan that is consistent with the proposed technical approach; is rooted in strong evidence-base, coherent with the technical approach and critically identifies activities/milestones/deliverables/timeline and complete path for the design and implementation of a successful early grade reading and supporting math instruction program in Mozambican languages. Demonstrates understanding of activity requirements as articulated in the program description. Provides an implementation plan that is consistent with the proposed technical approach, fully addresses program identified intermediated results, articulate context-appropriate interventions and the main interventions are informed by the most recent bilingual instruction evidence-base and best practices, presents

realistic timelines and a robust path for the design and implementation of a successful bilingual early grade reading and support to math instruction program in the identified first languages of the child.

Criterion 3: Organizational Capacity and Staffing

There are three sub-areas under Organizational Capacity and Staffing which include:

1. Extent to which Applicants demonstrate a logical, feasible and clear management and organizational approach and plan with an explanation of its appropriateness to achieving project results. The management and organizational plan clearly demonstrate an efficient, feasible and cost-effective approach for implementing the activities and achieving the results identified in the program description. The components are appropriately and adequately staffed and reporting lines are clear. Sub-awardees and local partners are complementary, technically capable, and with clearly defined responsibilities. The plan demonstrates the ability to mobilize for implementation during the first months of the award.
2. Extent to which Applicants demonstrate the capacity and qualifications in terms of management, leadership, interpersonal skills, and technical knowledge of key personnel. The technical qualification of key personnel, including professional experience, academic qualifications, past performance and experience in similar activities in a developing country context, meet or exceed the minimum qualifications.
3. Extent to which Applicants demonstrate and illustrate the capacity and qualifications of the professional personnel which meet the requirements for the activity implementation. All other (i.e., non-key) professional personnel positions are appropriate and logically connected to the technical approach and activity requirements, and to the extent to which the proposal effectively integrates and uses well-qualified professional and administrative Mozambican staff.

Criteria 4: MEL Plan

Extent to which Applicants present a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) plan that is designed to measure the direct and near-term results of program activities with a goal to inform ongoing management and implementation approaches. Presents a evidence-based plan for managing and evaluating performance and monitoring and reporting on results, adjusting direction in light of results, and responding changing circumstances on the ground, including with regards to bilingual policy or MINEDH implementation strategy, and utilizing collaborative and scientific methods of gathering, analyzing, and reporting on data pertaining to Early Grade Reading and teacher absenteeism in target primary schools, involving relevant MINEDH institutions and personnel.

NOTE: At a minimum, Applications should demonstrate considerations for disability, gender, and crisis or conflict-sensitivity.

Personnel Requirements

The Applicant must propose to recruit and maintain a team of technical experts and supporting staff to implement the Program described in this program description and manage its range of activities and services. This may include staffing arrangements that are necessary to achieve the desired results. USAID considers collaboration with the recipient crucial for the successful implementation of the Program. Applicants should propose technical personnel and other personnel, as deemed appropriate, to implement the activities above. The Key Personnel listed below are considered essential to the work being performed due to their skills and position within the SABER project implementation team.

The Applicant must propose key personnel, a staffing structure, and management plan to oversee, coordinate, and report on intermediate results and crosscutting elements that will lead to a successful implementation of this activity.

To achieve the results described in the Program Description of this Request for Application (RFA), the applicant should consider a technical assistance team with a variety of specialties and skills. The team can be composed of both long-term and short-term staff, including consultants, who will provide substantial expertise to support all components of the Activity.

The following key staff positions are recommended for implementation of activities and achievement of results under this Cooperative Agreement. Additionally, the Recipient shall present a proposal with its full project team in the staffing structure and management plan.

The suggested key personnel positions include³⁴:

Position	Required Qualifications	Roles and Responsibilities
Program Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● University Degree in social sciences or equivalent required. ● Master’s degree in education, social sciences or equivalent preferred. ● At least 10 years of consecutive proven work experience in international education programs with donor funded projects or other donor supported initiatives in social areas, including in management positions. ● Strategic planning experience and financial management oversight critical. ● Solid knowledge of education system in Mozambique, particularly issues affecting the quality of education and learning outcomes. 	LOE 100%. The Program Director is responsible for the overall planning, implementation, monitoring, and management of the performance of the award and for the vision, strategic direction, and management of the project to achieve the objectives and expected outcomes of the project.

³⁴ All key personnel will be approved by USAID. USAID reserves the right to determine the relevance of education and technical experience proposed.

<p>Program Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● University Degree in education, social sciences or equivalent required. ● At least 7 years of consecutive proven work experience in education including with donor education projects or similar initiatives in the Northern part of Mozambique, especially Nampula and Zambezia. ● Experience managing projects with focus on Early Grade Reading or similar area an advantage ● Proven track record managing donor supported education projects, involving community engagement through support to school councils or similar education structures at school level. ● Strong knowledge and experience working in collaboration with government education authorities and structures at district and local level. 	<p>LOE 100% - The Program Manager oversees all the programmatic and technical aspects of the project. Coordinates the teams at the province and district level and monitors progress against the targets set. Also assess needs and gaps in the project and proposes in conjunction with project staff a plan to overcome them.</p>
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M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advanced degree in Education, ICT Management, statistics, epidemiology, or related field ● Ability to utilize a wide range of software applications, including database applications. ● Minimum of 8 years of experience designing and implementing MEL programs. ● Significant expertise providing technical assistance to project/host country government staff working on MEL activities. ● Prior experience in the Mozambican Education sector is desirable but not required, preferably including experience with national and sub-national level coordination. ● Strong oral and written communications skills in Portuguese and English 	<p>LOE 100% - M&E Officer's primary responsibilities are to providing oversight for a program's planning, evaluation, knowledge management and monitoring. The M&E support officer is responsible for the operation of the project M&E system at central level. Reviews and consolidates data from all the sites where program is being implemented; elaborate reports to the donor; develop and harmonize systems and data tools.</p>
Senior Education Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advanced degree in education or similar area. ● 8 years of experience in education programming with an emphasis in primary reading projects preferable in Mozambique. ● Significant technical expertise and experience working in collaboration 	<p>LOE 100% - Senior Education Specialist primary responsibilities are to provide oversight to all education interventions and collaborate with all relevant education departments national and locally at the Providential and District levels.</p>

	<p>with government education authorities and structures at district and local level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong oral and written communications skills in Portuguese and English 	
Financial Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bachelor's degree in Accounting or Business Administration ● Completion of second level of a recognized accounting program combined with related financial experience will be considered. ● Prefer experience working with large international projects. 	LOE 100% - Responsible for preparing financial statements, maintaining cash controls, preparing the payroll and personnel administration, purchasing, maintaining accounts payable and managing office operations.

Other Staff

In addition to the Key Personnel, the applicant must design a staffing pattern to include core team members and individuals available for short-, medium-, and long-term technical assistance assignments. These individuals should bring technical expertise, innovation, and the capacity to build and maintain successful partnerships. Staff should have extensive experience in the areas of education, policy development, training, partnership development, capacity building, implementation research, and other related areas. The team proposed, overall, must demonstrate a strong understanding of, and experience in, the Mozambican context.

Applicants should explain how the key personnel positions, as well as other proposed positions, provide the complete set of skills listed above. The staffing level and pattern may be increased or modified over time if needed to provide effective support to field programs as they evolve, rather than from the onset. In an annex to the technical application, Applicants must provide resumes and proposed position descriptions for the candidates proposed for all key personnel and long-term professional positions. The resumes should indicate the names of the proposed personnel, and demonstrate that the proposed key personnel and long-term professional staff possess the skills and knowledge to effectively carry out their proposed responsibilities.

Resumes must be no more than three (3) pages in length for each proposed individual and must be presented in chronological order starting with the most recent experience. For Key Personnel, 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 days after award; (b) intention to serve for a stated term of the service; and (c) agreement to the compensation levels which correspond to the levels set forth in the cost application. References may be checked for all proposed key personnel and long-term personnel. Applicants must provide current contact

information, phone and email address for at least three (3) references for each proposed Key Personnel.

NOTE: USAID reserves the right to determine relevance of education and experience proposed.

Applicants should explain how the key personnel positions, as well as other proposed positions, provide the complete set of skills listed above. The staffing level and pattern may be increased or modified over time if needed to provide effective support to field programs as they evolve, rather than from the onset.

In an annex to the technical application, Applicants must provide resumes and proposed position descriptions for the candidates proposed for all key personnel and long-term professional positions. The resumes should indicate the names of the proposed personnel and demonstrate that the proposed key personnel and long-term professional staff possess the skills and knowledge to effectively carry out their proposed responsibilities.

Resumes must be no more than three (3) pages in length for each proposed individual and must be presented in chronological order starting with the most recent experience. For Key Personnel, 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 days after award; (b) intention to serve for a stated term of the service; and (c) agreement to the compensation levels which correspond to the levels set forth in the cost application. References may be checked for all proposed key personnel and long-term personnel. Applicants must provide current contact information, phone and email address for at least three (3) references for each proposed Key Personnel.

Other Required Project Personnel

Applicants have the discretion to determine the proper number and mix of additional personnel including other long-term permanent staff, consultants, personnel from local organizations, short-term technical staff, and others to meet project requirements, and to describe them in the technical Application. If Applicants propose technical leads for particular areas, USAID/Mozambique strongly encourages that they consider locally (non-Overseas)-hired technical leads for most positions. All personnel must demonstrate exceptional written and oral communication skills in English and Portuguese and have an excellent command of the technical area. Familiarity with the political, social, economic and cultural context of working in Mozambique is also necessary.

Past Performance

(1) Past Performance information will only be requested from the apparently successful applicant(s). It will be used for both risk assessment and greatest value decision by USAID. Also note that USAID may use past performance information obtained from other than the sources identified by the Applicant

7. Business (Cost) Application Format

The Business (Cost) Application must be submitted separately from the Technical Application. While no page limit exists for the full cost application, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details. The business (cost) application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A.

Prior to award, applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to assess the applicant's risk in accordance with 2 CFR 200.206. Applicants should not submit any additional information with their initial application.

The Cost Application must contain the following sections (which are further elaborated below this listing with the letters for each requirement):

a) **Cover Page** (See Section D.3 above for requirements)

b) **SF 424 Form(s)**

The applicant must sign and submit the cost application using the SF-424 series. Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at www.grants.gov or using the following links:

Instructions for SF-424	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424A	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html
Budget Information (SF-424A)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424B	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html
Assurances (SF-424B)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html

Failure to accurately complete these forms could result in the rejection of the application.

c) **Required Certifications and Assurances**

The applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy with their application:

- (1) "Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient" ADS 303mav document found at <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf>
- (2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)

- (3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

d) Budget and Budget Narrative

The Budget must be submitted as one unprotected Excel file (MS Office 2000 or later versions) with visible formulas and references and must be broken out by project year, including itemization of the federal and non-federal (cost share) amount. Files must not contain any hidden or otherwise inaccessible cells. Budgets with hidden cells lengthen the cost analysis time required to make award, and may result in a rejection of the cost application. The Budget Narrative must contain sufficient detail to allow USAID to understand the proposed costs. The applicant must ensure the budgeted costs address any additional requirements identified in Section F, such as Branding and Marking. The Budget Narrative must be thorough, including sources for costs to support USAID's determination that the proposed costs are fair and reasonable.

The Budget must include the following worksheets or tabs, and contents, at a minimum:

- Summary Budget, inclusive of all program costs (federal and non-federal), broken out by major budget category and by year for activities implemented by the applicant and any potential sub-applicants for the entire period of the program. See Section H, Annex 1 for Summary Budget Template
- Detailed Budget, including a breakdown by year, sufficient to allow the Agency to determine that the costs represent a realistic and efficient use of funding to implement the applicant's program and are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
- Detailed Budgets for each sub-recipient, for all federal funding and cost share, broken out by budget category and by year, for the entire implementation period of the project.

The Detailed Budget must contain the following budget categories and information, at a minimum:

- 1) Salaries and Allowances – Must be proposed consistent with 2 CFR 200.430 Compensation - Personal Services. The applicant's budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors for each position. Allowances, when proposed, must be broken down by specific type and by position. Applicants must explain all assumptions in the Budget Narrative. The Budget Narrative must demonstrate that the proposed compensation is reasonable for the services rendered and consistent with what is paid for similar work in other activities of the applicant. Applicants must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the applicant's written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the Budget Narrative must describe the rationale used and supporting market research.
- 2) Fringe Benefits – (if applicable) If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its

approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the applicant must propose a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate. In this case, the Budget Narrative must include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., superannuation, gratuity, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

- 3) Travel and Transportation – Provide details to explain the purpose of the trips, the number of trips, the origin and destination, the number of individuals traveling, and the duration of the trips. Per Diem and associated travel costs must be based on the applicant’s normal travel policies. When appropriate please provide supporting documentation as an attachment, such as company travel policy, and explain assumptions in the Budget Narrative.
- 4) Procurement or Rental of Goods (Equipment & Supplies), Services, and Real Property – Must include information on estimated types of equipment, models, supplies and the cost per unit and quantity. The Budget Narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates. The Budget Narrative must support the necessity of any rental costs and reasonableness in light of such factors as: rental costs of comparable property, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property leased.
- 5) Subawards – Specify the budget for the portion of the program to be passed through to any subrecipients. See 2 CFR 200 for assistance in determining whether the sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor. The subrecipient budgets must align with the same requirements as the applicant’s budget, including those related to fringe and indirect costs.
- 6) Construction – If applicable
- 7) Other Direct Costs – This may include other costs not elsewhere specified, such as report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, as well as any other miscellaneous costs which directly benefit the program proposed by the applicant. The applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of any proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs. Otherwise, the narrative should be minimal.
- 8) Indirect Costs – Applicants must indicate whether they are proposing indirect costs or will charge all costs directly. In order to better understand indirect costs please see Subpart E of 2 CFR 200. The application must identify which approach they are requesting and provide the applicable supporting information. Below are the most commonly used Indirect Cost Rate methods:

Method 1 - Direct Charge Only

Eligibility: Any applicant

Initial Application Requirements: See above on direct costs

Method 2 - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)

Eligibility: Any applicant with a NICRA issued by a USG Agency must use that NICRA

Initial Application Requirements: If the applicant has a current NICRA, submit your approved NICRA and the associated disclosed practices. If your NICRA was issued by an Agency other than USAID, provide the contact information for the approving Agency. Additionally, at the Agency's discretion, a provisional rate may be set forth in the award subject to audit and finalization. See [USAID's Indirect Cost Rate Guide for Non Profit Organizations](#) for further guidance.

Method 3 - De minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC)

Eligibility: Any applicant that does not have a current NICRA

Initial Application Requirements: Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate an indirect rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The applicant must describe which cost elements it charges indirectly vs. directly. See 2 CFR 200 for further information.

Method 4 - Indirect Costs Charged As A Fixed Amount

Eligibility: Non U.S. non-profit organizations without a NICRA may request, but approval is at the discretion of the AO

Initial Application Requirements: Provide the proposed fixed amount and a worksheet that includes the following:

- Total costs incurred by the organization for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year. *Guidance to AO: If the indirect costs are expected to be minimal or easily attributed to performance of a USAID agreement, the AO should delete this first bullet.*
- Indirect costs (common costs that benefit the day-to-day operations of the organization, including categories such as salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting, or that benefit and are identifiable to more than one program or activity, such as depreciation, rental costs, operations and maintenance of facilities, and telephone expenses) for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year
- Proposed method for prorating the indirect costs equitably and consistently across all programs and activities of using a base that measures the benefits of that particular cost to each program or activity to which the cost applies.

If the applicant does not have an approved NICRA and does not elect to utilize the 10% de minimis rate, the Agreement Officer will provide further instructions and may request additional supporting information, including financial statements and audits, should the application still be under consideration after the merit review. USAID is under no obligation to approve the applicant's requested method.

If Cost Sharing is required below is sample language:

9) Cost Sharing – Cost sharing is not required.

e) Prior Approvals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407

Inclusion of an item of cost in the detailed application budget does not satisfy any requirements for prior approval by the Agency. If the applicant would like the award to reflect approval of any cost elements for which prior written approval is specifically required for allowability, the applicant must specify and justify that cost. See 2 CFR 200.407 for information regarding which cost elements require prior written approval.

e) Approval of Subawards

The applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. For each proposed subaward the applicant must provide the following:

- Name of organization
- DUNS Number
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM)
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not suspended or debarred
- Confirmation that the applicant has completed a risk assessment of the subrecipient, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.332(b)
- Any negative findings as a result of the risk assessment and the applicant's plan for mitigation.

f) Dun and Bradstreet and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (DUNS number) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempted from requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

1. Provide a valid DUNS number for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients;
2. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient (www.beta.sam.gov).
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin the process early. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that

the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

DUNS number: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

SAM registration: <http://www.beta.sam.gov>

Non-U.S. applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on www.beta.sam.gov, navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

g) History of Performance

[Guidance: Determine whether performance history will be required from all applicants or only the apparently successful applicant. If only the apparently successful applicant must provide this, state that applicants should not provide the information unless requested by the AO]

The applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed 5 years or 5 awards, as follows:

- Name of the Awarding Organization;
- Award Number;
- Activity Title;
- A brief description of the activity;
- Period of Performance;
- Award Amount;
- Reports and findings from any audits performed in the last 3 years; and
- Name of at least two (2) updated professional contacts who most directly observed the work at the organization for which the service was performed with complete current contact information including telephone number, and e-mail address for each proposed individual.

If the applicant encountered problems on any of the referenced Awards, it may provide a short explanation and the corrective action taken. The applicant should not provide general information on its performance. USAID reserves the right to obtain relevant information concerning an applicant's history of performance from any sources and may consider such information in its review of the applicant's risk. The Agency may request additional information and conduct a pre-award survey if it determines that it is necessary to inform the risk assessment.

h) Branding Strategy & Marking Plan

The apparently successful applicant will be asked to provide a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to be evaluated and approved by the Agreement Officer and incorporated into any resulting award

1. Branding Strategy – Assistance (June 2012)

- a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Branding Strategy," describing how the program, project, or activity is named and

positioned, and how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and host country citizens.

- b. The request for a Branding Strategy, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.
- c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.
- d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.
- e. The Branding Strategy must include, at a minimum, all of the following:
 - (1) All estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth.
 - (2) The intended name of the program, project, or activity.
 - (i) USAID requires the applicant to use the “USAID Identity,” comprised of the USAID logo and landmark, with the tagline “from the American people” as found on the USAID Web site at <http://www.usaid.gov/branding>, unless Section VI of the RFA or APS states that the USAID Administrator has approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.
 - (ii) USAID prefers local language translations of the phrase “made possible by (or with) the generous support of the American People” next to the USAID Identity when acknowledging contributions.
 - (iii) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.
 - (iv) If branding in the above manner is inappropriate or not possible, the applicant must explain how USAID's involvement will be showcased during publicity for the program or project.
 - (v) USAID prefers to fund projects that do not have a separate logo or identity that competes with the USAID Identity. If there is a plan to develop a separate logo to consistently identify this program, the applicant must attach a copy of the proposed logos. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an

additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

- (3) The intended primary and secondary audiences for this project or program, including direct beneficiaries and any special target segments.
 - (4) Planned communication or program materials used to explain or market the program to beneficiaries.
 - (i) Describe the main program message.
 - (ii) Provide plans for training materials, posters, pamphlets, public service announcement, billboards, Web sites, and so forth, as appropriate.
 - (iii) Provide any plans to announce and promote publicly this program or project to host country citizens, such as media releases, press conferences, public events, and so forth. Applicant must incorporate the USAID Identity and the message, "USAID is from the American People."
 - (iv) Provide any additional ideas to increase awareness that the American people support this project or program.
 - (5) Information on any direct involvement from host-country government or ministry, including any planned acknowledgement of the host-country government.
 - (6) Any other groups whose logo or identity the applicant will use on program materials and related materials. Indicate if they are a donor or why they will be visibly acknowledged, and if they will receive the same prominence as USAID.
- e. The Agreement Officer will review the Branding Strategy to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.
- f. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Branding Strategy will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement

(END OF PRE-AWARD TERM)

2. Marking Plan – Assistance (June 2012)

- a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Marking Plan," detailing the public communications, commodities, and program materials, and other items that will visibly bear the "USAID Identity," which comprises of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline "from the American

people.” The USAID Identity is the official marking for the Agency and is found on the USAID Web site at <http://www.usaid.gov/branding>. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

- b. The request for a Marking Plan, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.
- c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Marking Plan within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.
- d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.
- e. The Marking Plan must include all of the following:
 - (1) A description of the public communications, commodities, and program materials that the applicant plans to produce and which will bear the USAID Identity as part of the award, including:
 - (i) Program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects or other sites physical in nature;
 - (ii) Technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audio-visual productions, public service announcements, Web sites/Internet activities, promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID;
 - (iii) Commodities, equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs; and
 - (iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.
 - (v) Events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences and other public activities. If the USAID Identity cannot be displayed, the recipient is encouraged to otherwise acknowledge USAID and the support of the American people.
 - (2) A table on the program deliverables with the following details:

- (i) The program deliverables that the applicant plans to mark with the USAID Identity;
 - (ii) The type of marking and what materials the applicant will use to mark the program deliverables;
 - (iii) When in the performance period the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking;
 - (iv) What program deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the USAID Identity , and
 - (v) The rationale for not marking program deliverables.
- (3) Any requests for an exemption from USAID marking requirements, and an explanation of why the exemption would apply. The applicant may request an exemption if USAID marking requirements would:
- (i) Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. The applicant must identify the USAID Development Objective, Interim Result, or program goal furthered by an appearance of neutrality, or state why an aspect of the award is presumptively neutral. Identify by category or deliverable item, examples of material for which an exemption is sought.
 - (ii) Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent. The applicant must explain why each particular deliverable must be seen as credible.
 - (iii) Undercut host-country government “ownership” of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications. The applicant must explain why each particular item or product is better positioned as host-country government item or product.
 - (iv) Impair the functionality of an item. The applicant must explain how marking the item or commodity would impair its functionality.
 - (v) Incur substantial costs or be impractical. The applicant must explain why marking would not be cost beneficial or practical.
 - (vi) Offend local cultural or social norms or be considered inappropriate. The applicant must identify the relevant norm and why marking

would violate that norm or otherwise be inappropriate.

- (vii) Conflict with international law. The applicant must identify the applicable international law violated by the marking.
- f. The Agreement Officer will consider the Marking Plan's adequacy and reasonableness and will approve or disapprove any exemption requests. The Marking Plan will be reviewed to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.
- g. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Marking Plan, including any approved exemptions, will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement, and will apply for the term of the award unless provided otherwise.

(END OF PRE-AWARD TERM)

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST PRE-AWARD TERM (August 2018)

a. Personal Conflict of Interest

1. An actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists when an applicant organization or an employee of the organization has a relationship with an Agency official involved in the competitive award decision-making process that could affect that Agency official's impartiality. The term "conflict of interest" includes situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the obligations and duties of a USAID employee or recipient employee.
2. The applicant must provide conflict of interest disclosures when it submits an SF-424. Should the applicant discover a previously undisclosed conflict of interest after submitting the application, the applicant must disclose the conflict of interest to the AO no later than ten (10) calendar days following discovery.

3. Organizational Conflict of Interest

b. Organization Conflict of Interest

The applicant must notify USAID of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with unfair competitive advantage in competing for this financial assistance award. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an applicant or the applicant's employee gained access to non-public information regarding a federal assistance funding opportunity, or an applicant or applicant's employee was

substantially involved in the preparation of a federal assistance funding opportunity. USAID will promptly take appropriate action upon receiving any such notification from the applicant.

(END OF PRE-AWARD TERM)

i) Funding Restrictions

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.331 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction will not be authorized under this award.

USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer.

Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed by USAID under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.4 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

[END OF SECTION D]

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular NOFO. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which the applicants should address in their applications, and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

Technical and other factors will be evaluated relative to each other, as described here and prescribed by the Technical Application Format. The Technical Application will be scored by a Selection Committee (SC) using the criteria described in this section.

2. Review and Selection Process

USAID will conduct a merit review of all applications received that comply with the instructions in this NOFO. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria shown below:

a) Ratings

Adjective	Definition
Exceptional	An Exceptional application has the following characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A comprehensive and thorough application of exceptional merit. ● Application meets and fully exceeds the Government expectations or exceeds NFO objectives and presents very low risk or no overall degree of risk of unsuccessful performance. ● Strengths significantly outweigh any weaknesses that may exist.
Very Good	A Very Good application has the following characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An application demonstrating a strong grasp of the objectives. ● Application meets NFO objectives and presents a low overall degree of risk of unsuccessful project performance. ● Strengths significantly outweigh any weaknesses that exist.
Satisfactory	A Satisfactory application has the following characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An application demonstrating a reasonably sound response and a good grasp of the objectives. ● Application meets NFO objectives and presents a moderate overall degree of risk of unsuccessful project performance. ● Strengths outweigh weaknesses.
Marginal	A Marginal application has the following characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The application shows a limited understanding of the objectives. ● Application meets some or most of the NFO objectives, but presents a significant overall degree of risk of unsuccessful project performance. ● Weaknesses equal or outweigh any strength that exists.
Unsatisfactory	An Unsatisfactory application has the following characteristics:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Application does not meet the NFO objectives or requires a major rewrite of the application. • Presents an unacceptable degree of risk of unsuccessful project performance. • Weaknesses demonstrate a lack of understanding of the Government’s needs. • Weaknesses significantly outweigh any strength that exists.
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b) Merit Review Criteria

The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular Request for Applications.

Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which the Applicants should address in their applications, and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

Evaluation factors are weighted according to the order listed below: Technical Approach, year 1 implementation plan, organizational capacity and staffing and MEL plan. These factors are in a descending order of importance.

CRITERION	CRITERION NAME	IMPORTANCE or WEIGHT:
Criterion 1	Technical approach	Most Important
Criterion 2	Year 1 Implementation Plan	Less important than criteria 1 but more important than criteria 3
Criterion 3	Organizational Capacity and Staffing	Less important than criteria 2 but more important than criteria 4
Criterion 4	MEL Plan	Less important than criteria 3

Criterion 1: Technical approach

There are three sub-areas under the technical approach which include:

4. Extent to which applicants articulate the key development challenges in the Mozambican education sector with a focus on early grade reading and learning outcomes with a logical strategy to implement the activity. Demonstrates profound knowledge and understanding of the development challenges in the education sector in Mozambique, including as they pertain to the effects of the Global COVID19 pandemic on learning and related primary school teacher abilities, key hindrances for improving reading skills and student learning outcomes, gender disparities, and articulates a clear and detailed statement of logic, assumptions, and causal relationships, with a corresponding detailed strategy to address the development problem and successful implementation of each results component as identified in the program description.
5. Extent to which the design approach is responsive to the stated objectives and requirements, aligned with effective practices, appropriate for the country and beneficiary context. The extent to which the proposed approach is likely to achieve concrete, affordable and lasting measurable outcomes. Demonstrate strong understanding of

relevant evidence in the design of a context-appropriate, realistic, cost-effective, equitable and practice-based technical approach as required in the program description as well as an adequate consideration of relevant in-country lessons learned, the logistical and operational challenges inherent to start up, implementation, and scale up of early grade reading in Mozambican languages.

6. Extend to which Applicants presents a feasible and robust approach to working collaboratively with MINEDH institutions, sector FASE partners and other relevant stakeholders to appropriately integrate SABER evidence-based contribution into sector processes, plans, align with sector strategies, including use of local government institutions at decentralized levels and assisting MINEDH sustain own and sustain USAID support. Articulates a clear and detailed plan to cultivate a positive working relationship with key MINEDH and other institutional actors to promote GRM ownership and long-term sustainability, including technical assistance and capacity building as well as the use, to the extent possible, of host government educational institutions, personnel, and materials that include innovative response to COVID-19 pandemic with significant government leadership and involvement.

Criterion 2: Year 1 Implementation Plan

Extent to which the applicant articulates an implementation plan that is consistent with the proposed technical approach; is rooted in strong evidence-base, coherent with the technical approach and critically identifies activities/milestones/deliverables/timeline and complete path for the design and implementation of a successful early grade reading program in Mozambican languages. Demonstrates understanding of activity requirements as articulated in the program description. Provides an implementation plan that is consistent with the proposed technical approach, fully addresses program identified intermediated results, articulate context-appropriate interventions and the main interventions are informed by the most recent bilingual instruction evidence-base and best practices, presents realistic timelines and a robust path for the design and implementation of a successful bilingual early grade reading program in the identified first languages of the child.

Criterion 3: Organizational Capacity and Staffing

There are three sub-areas under Organizational Capacity and Staffing which include:

4. Extent to which Applicants demonstrate a logical, feasible and clear management and organizational approach and plan with an explanation of its appropriateness to achieving project results. The management and organizational plan clearly demonstrate an efficient, feasible and effective approach for implementing the activities and achieving the results identified in the program description. The components are appropriately and adequately staffed and reporting lines are clear. Sub-awardees and local partners are complementary, technically capable, and with clearly defined responsibilities. The plan demonstrates the ability to mobilize for implementation during the first months of the award.
5. Extent to which Applicants demonstrate the capacity and qualifications in terms of management, leadership, interpersonal skills, and technical knowledge of key personnel. The technical qualification of key personnel, including professional experience, academic qualifications, past performance and experience in similar activities in a developing country context, meet or exceed the minimum qualifications.

6. Extent to which Applicants demonstrate and illustrate the capacity and qualifications of the professional personnel which meet the requirements for the activity implementation. All other (i.e., non-key) professional personnel positions are appropriate and logically connected to the technical approach and activity requirements, and to the extent to which the proposal effectively integrates and uses well-qualified professional and administrative Mozambican staff.

Criteria 4: MEL Plan

Extend to which Applicants present a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) plan that is designed to measure the direct and near-term results of program activities with a goal to inform ongoing management and implementation approaches. Presents a evidence-based plan for managing and evaluating performance and monitoring and reporting on results, adjusting direction in light of results, and responding changing circumstances on the ground, including with regards to bilingual policy or MINEDH implementation strategy, and utilizing collaborative and scientific methods of gathering, analyzing, and reporting on data pertaining to early grade reading and teacher absenteeism in target primary schools, involving relevant MINEDH institutions and personnel.

NOTE: At a minimum, Applications should demonstrate considerations for inclusive education, disability, gender, and crisis or conflict-sensitivity.

c) Business Review

The Agency will evaluate the cost application of the applicant(s) under consideration for an award as a result of the merit criteria review to determine whether the costs are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.

The Agency will also consider (1) the extent of the applicant's understanding of the financial aspects of the program and the applicant's ability to perform the activities within the amount requested; (2) whether the applicant's plans will achieve the program objectives with reasonable economy and efficiency; and (3) whether any special conditions relating to costs should be included in the award.

Proposed cost share, if provided, will be reviewed for compliance with the standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.306, 2 CFR 700.10, and the Standard Provision "Cost Sharing (Matching)" for U.S. entities, or the Standard Provision "Cost Share" for non-U.S. entities.

The AO will perform a risk assessment (2 CFR 200.206). The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required to inform the risk assessment in determining whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organizational, experience, accounting and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, the AO will decide to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.208).

[END OF SECTION E]

SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award.

2. Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The resulting award from this NOFO will be administered in accordance with the following policies and regulations. Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations.

See Annex 2, for a list of the Standard Provisions that will be applicable to any awards resulting from this NOFO.

3. Reporting and Plans Requirements

All reports listed below shall be submitted by the specified due dates for approval by the USAID AOR unless otherwise agreed upon with the AOR. Recipients will consult the AOR on the format and expected content of reports prior to submission. The Recipient should always be ready for revision in program indicators and reporting requirements.

Reports/Deliverables	Due date	Person Responsible to Approve
Annual Work Plan	As outlined in section XIX, 1. (i)	AOR
Mobilization Plan	Within 45 days of award signature	AOR
Quarterly Progress Reports	Within 30 days after the end of each fiscal quarter	AOR
Final Report	As discussed in Section XIX, 1. (iv)	AOR
Close Out and Disposition Plan	6 months before the Agreement completion date	AO
Sector strategic reporting and updates	Quarterly and as feasible	AOR
Quarterly project updates	Quarterly	AOR
Weekly updates	Weekly	AOR
Annual Reports	As discussed in Section XIX, 1. (ix)	AOR
Quarterly Financial Report	Quarterly	AOR
Other Quarterly Financial Reports	Quarterly	AOR

Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MEL Plan)	As discussed in Section XIX, 3. (ii)		AOR
Branding and Marking Plan	1 st Draft	45 calendar days after award date	AO & AOR
	Final Branding & Marking Plan	60 days after submission of first draft	AO & AOR
Gender Analysis and Action Plan		180 calendar days after award date	AOR

1. Program Reporting

(i) Annual Work Plan: Based on this Activity Description, the Applicant must prepare and submit a detailed annual work plan to guide the implementation process with a breakdown of activities and timelines and anticipated progress in the achievement of the activity results (consistent with the Activity MEL Plan), as well as the associated costs. The Applicant must ensure a collaborative process in work plan development, consulting beneficiaries, partners, USAID and other relevant stakeholders in preparing the annual work plan to ensure complementarity and shared ownership. Applicant shall submit a draft annual work plan for year 1 within 60 days of the award date, and a final work plan within 90 days. Subsequent years work plan must be submitted 30 days prior to the start of the subsequent year of implementation and based on guidance provided USAID. The plan described above must be submitted electronically to the AO and the AOR.

(ii) Mobilization Plan: The Applicant is required to submit to USAID/Mozambique, as a deliverable within 45 days of award signature, a succinct Mobilization Plan that will extend from the date of the award to not more than 6 (six) months. The mobilization plan must describe all resources (staff recruitment and on-boarding, office space, equipment, etc.) and activities necessary for the effective launch, rapid and efficient start-up of the activity and full preparation for the first implementation year, including all necessary and relevant negotiations with local education institutions and other relevant stakeholders for successful implementation, focusing on aligning and agreeing of effective and participatory implementation strategy for the program. The Applicant will be required to negotiate and agree with MINEDH on all relevant elements for joint book development, training, integrated book distribution, joint supervision and all key decisions that will ensure lasting MINEDH support and buy-in to program interventions. The mobilization plan described above must be submitted electronically to the AO and the AOR.

(iii) Quarterly Progress Reports: The Applicant shall submit quarterly reports that include narratives of quarterly achievements, progress against the work plan, and agreed upon performance indicators. A format for the quarterly report shall be approved by the USAID. The quarterly report shall describe and assess the overall progress to date based upon agreed performance indicators. The reports shall also describe the accomplishments of the Applicant and the progress made during the past quarter; include information on key activities, both ongoing and completed during the quarter. The quarterly reports should provide information on the extent to which gaps between males and females were closed; what new opportunities for men and women were created; what differential negative impacts on males/females were addressed or avoided; and what needs and gender inequalities emerged or remained. The quarterly report provides the opportunity to discuss the impact of learning on the program, updates in key assumptions and the underlying development hypotheses. Quarterly progress reports are to be submitted electronically to the AOR, within 30 days after the end of each fiscal quarter.

(iv) Final Report: A draft final report must be submitted to the USAID no later than 60 calendar days after the completion of the activity, with the final report due 90 calendar days after the end of the award. The report shall summarize the accomplishments of the agreement, methods of work used, and recommendations regarding unfinished work and/or program continuation, as well as key learnings from the total implementation experience. In addition, the report should specifically address how the activity addressed gaps between males and females were closed; what new opportunities for men and women were created; what differential negative impacts on males/females were addressed or avoided; and what needs and gender inequalities emerged or remained. 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, any particularly notable impact stories (or challenges), and detailed financial information. It should be grounded in evidence and data. The final report shall also contain an index of all reports and information products produced under the award. The report must be submitted electronically to the AOR and the AO.

(v) Close Out and Disposition Plan: The awardee must submit a Closeout Plan to USAID AO and AOR for approval 6 months before the Agreement completion date. The plan must include, but not be limited to: a property disposition plan; a plan for the phase-out; and a delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the Agreement.

(vi) Sector strategic reporting and updates: The Applicant must produce and submit to USAID AO and AOR quarterly and on as feasible basis, sector updates and analysis on sector developments and changes as well as trends in education focusing on curriculum, MINEDH strategic planning, laws and specific sub-sectors strategies that will help provide additional

context knowledge that will further support informed implementation and decision-making. These updates will also be shared with other donors, MINEDH and sector stakeholders, as appropriate.

(vii) : Quarterly project updates: Applicant will prepare and submit to USAID AOR and MINEDH, including through presentations, as appropriate, quarterly project updates aimed at keeping government partners informed of progress the project is making on a quarterly basis, align implementation approach and raise the profile of project interventions for increased support.

(viii) Weekly updates: The Applicant develop and submitted to the AOR a summary weekly project update for the USAID internal audience, including Washington DC, focusing on project achievements and events each week that highlight the extent to which project interventions contribute to main project results with particular focus on impact on beneficiaries, including children, the teachers, school directors and communities.

(ix) Annual Reports: The Applicant must prepare and submit to USAID AOR and AO the project annual reports. These reports will consist of an extended and detailed fourth quarterly report, containing more information than an ordinary quarterly performance and financial report. Annual Reports will reflect and be aligned with the approved annual work plan. It should be noted that for the purpose of this award “Annual” is defined according to the U.S. Government’s fiscal year: October 1st to September 30th. The Annual Report must be submitted to the USAID by October 31 of each year. In addition to the requirements of the Quarterly progress Report, the Annual Report will also describe overall performance against agreed targets and goals during the fiscal year, and why targets and goals were not achieved or why they were exceeded. Discuss problems and challenges, how they were resolved and how they may affect out- year planning. The report will clearly indicate agreed upon indicators and targets including the indicator values for the year, along with prior year values and future year targets, as articulated in the approved MEL plan. The report will demonstrate the extent to which project goals are or are not being achieved, provide relevant explanation, and planned remedial actions, as appropriate. It should also include explanations for any indicator values falling above or below target.

(x) Gender Analysis Report: Gender analysis is a tool for examining the differences between the roles that women and men play in communities and societies, the different levels of power they hold, their differing needs, constraints and opportunities, and the impact of these differences on their lives.

The awarded partner should give consideration to gender disparities in all interventions. The recipient should plan to conduct a gender analysis that identifies root causes of existing gender inequalities or obstacles to female empowerment in the context of the activity, so that the recipient can seek out opportunities to promote women’s leadership and participation. Interventions should also

account for future difficulties faced by female or male students and offer safe spaces for girls and boys to enjoy learning. The gender analysis should also identify potential adverse impacts and/or risks of gender-based exclusion that could result from planned activities, including:

- (a) Displacing women from access to resources or assets;
- (b) Increasing the unpaid work or caregiver burden of females relative to males;
- (c) Conditions that restrict the participation of women or men in project activities and benefits based on pregnancy, maternity/paternity leave, or marital status;
- d) Increasing the risk of Gender Based Violence, including sexual exploitation or human trafficking, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS; and
- (d) Marginalizing or excluding women in political and governance processes.

The local partner should promote gender equality and female empowerment at the activity level and through its organizational structures and staffing. The gender analysis must be submitted to USAID AOR 180 calendar days after award date.

2. Financial Reporting

(i) Quarterly Financial Report: In accordance with 22 CFR 226.52 the Federal Financial Reporting Form (FFR) will be required on a quarterly basis. FFR 425 must be submitted to USAID AOR within 30 days after the end of each reporting period. They shall be disaggregated by cost elements defined in the cooperative agreement and will contain, at a minimum:

- i. Total funds received to date from USAID;
- ii. Total funds previously reported as expended by Applicant by main line items by USAID funding stream;
- iii. Total funds expended in the current quarter by the Applicant by main line items by USAID funding stream;
- iv. Total unliquidated obligations by main line items by USAID funding stream; and
- v. Unobligated balance of USAID funds by USAID funding stream.

(ii) Other Quarterly Financial Reports: The purpose of this clause is to enable USAID to implement the tax provisions of USAID bilateral agreement with the GRM. To comply with this clause, the Applicant shall maintain records of all taxes paid to GRM with U.S. government funds as well as other financial information as may be required by USAID. The Applicant shall furnish this information to USAID in accordance with guidance circulated by the Agreement Officer, as amended from time to time.

3. Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MEL Plan)

Monitoring and evaluation and learning Plan (MELP) plans should be designed to measure the direct and near-term results of program activities with a goal to inform ongoing management and

implementation approaches. The performance monitoring and evaluation plan should include the following components:

- A list of the types of baseline data that must be collected to demonstrate impact or progress of the program;
- Performance targets and milestones;
- The process by which the indicators will be developed and how monitoring processes and results will be used to inform project management decisions; and
- The measurement and data management methods used to collect and analyze indicator data (data sources, frequency of data collection, and methods for collecting and reporting data).

Results must be clearly articulated and directly correspond to the stated goals and objectives outlined in the technical application and directly correlated to the theory of change. Monitoring and evaluation methods must be specific, measurable, realistic and applicable to the program's goals and objectives. Plans must also include gender-sensitive indicators and sex as well as include other appropriate disaggregation.

Proposed indicators should move beyond collecting data on inputs and outputs for their program and propose relevant outcome and impact indicators (or proxies) to measure and track the effectiveness of the program in reaching the stated theory of change.

a. Branding & Marketing Plan

The apparently successful applicant will be asked to provide a Branding Strategy and Marketing Plan to be evaluated and approved by the Agreement Officer and incorporated into any resulting award. Applicants are not required to submit a Branding Strategy and Marketing Plan with their application.

[END OF SECTION F]

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

1. NOFO Points of Contact

Judite Caetano
Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
USAID/Mozambique
E-mail: jcaetano@usaid.gov with cc copy to jbadiane@usaid.gov

2. Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman

The A&A Ombudsman helps ensure equitable treatment of all parties who participate in USAID's acquisition and assistance process. The A&A Ombudsman serves as a resource for all organizations who are doing or wish to do business with USAID. Please visit this page for additional information: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/acquisition-assistance-ombudsman>

[The A&A Ombudsman may be contacted via: Ombudsman@usaid.gov](mailto:Ombudsman@usaid.gov)

[END OF SECTION G]

SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to Agency programming.

Applications with Proprietary Data

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purpose, should mark the cover page with the following:

“This application includes data that must not be disclosed duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, an award is made as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government will have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting award. 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 sheets {insert sheet numbers}.”

Additionally, the Applicant must mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following:

“Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application.”

[END OF SECTION H]

ANNEX 1 - SUMMARY BUDGET TEMPLATE

Item Description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Salaries						
Fringe Benefits						
Allowances						
Travel and Transportation						
Equipment						
Supplies						
Other Direct Costs						
Sub Total						
Indirect Costs						
Total						

Applicants are required to submit budget information along with AO must require the submission of the SF-424A.

[END OF ANNEX 1]

ANNEX 2 - STANDARD PROVISIONS

(Note: the full text of these provisions may be found at:
<https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303maa> and
<https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab>).

The actual Standard Provisions included in the award will be dependent on the organization that is selected. The award will include the latest Mandatory Provisions for either U.S. or non-U.S. Nongovernmental organizations. The award will also contain the following “required as applicable” Standard Provisions:

Please note that the resulting award will include all standard provisions (both mandatory and required as applicable) in full text.

REQUIRED AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS FOR NON-U.S. NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Required	Not Required	Standard Provision
TBD		RAA1. ADVANCE PAYMENT AND REFUNDS (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA2. REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENT AND REFUNDS (DECEMBER 2014)
TBD		RAA3. INDIRECT COSTS – NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT (NICRA) (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA4. INDIRECT COSTS – CHARGED AS A FIXED AMOUNT (NONPROFIT) (JUNE 2012)
		RAA5. INDIRECT COSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA6. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM OF AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA7. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA8. SUBAWARDS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA9. TRAVEL AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORTATION (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA10. OCEAN SHIPMENT OF GOODS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA11. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA12. PATENT RIGHTS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA13. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
		RAA14. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)

		RAA 15. COST SHARE (JUNE 2012)
		RAA16. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
		RAA17. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA18. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
		RAA19. PROTECTION OF HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECTS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
		RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
		RAA23. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
		RAA24. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
		RAA25. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA26. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING(ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA27. LIMITATION ON SUBAWARDS TO NON-LOCAL ENTITIES (JULY 2014)
		RAA28. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA29. CONTRACT AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
		RAA30. RESERVED
		RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

[END OF ANNEX 2]

ANNEX 3 – ADDITIONAL CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

1. SABER alignment with USAID policies

The USAID’S GLOBAL EDUCATION STRATEGY

The Improving Learning Outcomes in primary education activity (SABER) is aligned with the USAID Education Policy **2018_Education_Policy_FINAL_WEB.pdf** which considers reading a foundational skill necessary for all other academic progress[1]. USAID Global Policy encourages programming interventions that enable all children and youth to acquire the skills needed to be productive members of society. The policy advocates for programming in education to prioritize country-focus and ownership, the focus on measurably and sustainably improving outcomes, strengthen systems and develop capacity in local institutions, work in partnership and leverage resources, drive decision-making and investments using evidence and data and promote equity and inclusion. The policy also expects USG support to ensure that children[2] and youth gain literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills that are foundational to future learning and success. Effective approaches for improving reading and literacy outcomes include promoting quality teacher instruction and ensuring sufficient instructional time; producing and distributing high-quality textbooks and supplementary materials; employing a language of instruction that students and their families use and understand, including local languages, based on evidence-based best practices; differentiating instruction to reach children at different levels; and using assessments to support instruction[3]. The policy sustains that local champions among parents and caregivers, and community and school leaders are necessary to build the capacity for scaling and sustaining successful literacy programs. Reading activities are encouraged to incorporate relevant information and technologies as these can enhance support interventions for teachers and instructors, enable teachers and instructors to be more effective as well as facilitate access to quality instructional materials in local languages.

THE USAID Reading MATTERS framework

The evidence-based USAID reading MATTERS framework shows how improving reading outcomes takes a robust approach which considers the well-being of the child. The USAID reading MATTERS framework encourages programs to consider a variety of elements, including the availability of Mentors, Administrators, Teachers, Text, Extra Support Practice, Regular Assessment and Standards as part of a, interlinked system that needs to function well. When designing reading programs, it is critical to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the above against the ideal scenario, assess needs in each context and find USAID’s niche in the system. This framework reinforces the need for collaboration with other offices and partners to fully consider the framework, responding to context needs and designing programs that support children that struggle the most to learn to read. This USAID framework is aligned with the new

MINEDH 2020-2029 education strategy which promote a wholistic and integrated vision of the development of education system that does not end with the promotion of basic skills, but integrates the perspective of life-long learning, taking into account the economic, social and cultural dimensions[4]. A recent UNICEF study, on attendance in Mozambique revealed that children who are more deprived are more likely to never attend school or attend less frequently[5], which impacts on their ability to learn. The design of the SABER activity includes interventions to ensure delivery of prescribed instruction time and is informed by the reading MATTERS framework.

The J2SR Policy

USAID Education Policy states that *“Self-reliance” entails a capacity to plan, finance, and implement solutions to local development challenges, and a commitment to see these through effectively, inclusively, and with accountability. If we are to end the need for foreign assistance, USAID must understand how self-reliant each of its partner countries are overall, where a country’s strengths and challenges lie, and reorient partnerships accordingly. Ultimately, the programs we implement must support each country’s journey to self-reliance (p 12).* According to the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report (2017), 387 million children of primary age globally do not reach minimum reading proficiency. Ensuring that every child learns to read is at the heart of catalyzing the journey to self-reliance. Learning to read before the age of 9 with enough fluency to understand and interpret text increases an individual’s average life expectancy, likelihood of graduating high school, employability, earning power, and self-sufficiency. Helping countries become self-reliant *is an approach that is good for our partner countries worldwide, U.S. national security, and the American taxpayer, as it may contribute to rapidly achieving the* primary goal of development assistance: to end the need for its existence. USAID has extensive experience working with ministries, including in Mozambique and several private sector institutions which resulted in important partnerships, like the Global Development Alliances (GDAs). Achieving self-reliance in education will require sustained, collective efforts of the whole education system^[6]—including governments, schools, academia, teachers, parents and caregivers, youth, the private sector, community organizations, and donors—to address weaknesses and leverage the strengths of a country’s education system over time strategically and deliberately. The SABER activity embraces some of these efforts by targeting teachers, schools, pupils, parents and caregivers as well as community organizations to address programmatic issues, while collaborating and leveraging sector wider investments (through the pooled fund -FASE) to strategically and deliberately address systemic learning challenges for sustained change.

Youth Positive development policy

USAID recently approved the Positive Youth Development Policy, the first of its kind, which *outlines a conceptual approach to youth in development and provides guiding principles and operational practices in support of USAID's efforts to mainstream youth in development, carry out more effective programs, and elevate youth participation*[7]. The policy opens programming opportunities that address the real needs of young people, including interventions which will prevent youth from engaging in violent activities. According to this policy, it is critical that development assistance programs seek to provide adequate responses to the needs and aspirations of young people. As articulated in the Youth policy, more than half of the world's population today is under the age of 30, with the vast majority living in the developing world which implies an extra effort to respond to the expectations of this population. For a country with over 46% of its population in the range of 0 to 14 years of age, Mozambique's population is young. Overtime, the percentage of young population seems to be increasing (45,6% in 2007). In addition, Mozambique population grows rapidly at 2.8% a year. This reality puts pressure on social sectors like education, to cater for youth and raises the importance of development assistance programs to effectively respond to the real needs and expectations of young people.

2. SABER alignment with Mozambique country context

THE NEW 10-YEAR EDUCATION SECTOR STRATEGIC PLAN (ESSP)[8]

The MINEDH 2020-2029 Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) provides a 10 year strategic framework which focuses on three priority objectives: a) Ensure inclusion and equity in access, participation and retention, b) Ensure Quality of Learning Outcomes and c) Ensure transparent, participatory, efficient and effective school governance. To achieve these goals, the strategy emphasizes teaching basic skills, including reading, writing, and math as well as the use of the first language of the child. The development of this plan was a result of extensive consultations with the participation of the civil society organizations and informed by the evaluation of the previous 2012-2016/19 education strategic plan. The education strategy is the policy framework that governs investment in education and it sets six main programming areas, including Pre-school education; Primary education; Secondary education; Adult Education; Education and Teacher Training; and Administrative and Institutional Development. Valuing the various contributions from donor partners group, the strategy considers teacher absenteeism one key area of focus both from the retention and access as well as from the school governance perspectives. The strategy also recognises that reducing teacher absenteeism and improving school governance are opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of government and partner's investment in education sector. The strategy has elected some cross-cutting themes, including gender, nutrition and responses to emergencies in education, as important themes to consider. Unlike the previous education strategies, represents a shift into placing emphases promoting

quality of learning outcomes. This strategy will be a key document for MINEDH to access the forthcoming Global Partnership for Education (GPE) funding for education.

THE NEW EDUCATION LAW 18/2018 OF DECEMBER 28th

The previous Education Law 6/92 of May 6th maintained a primary education system comprised of two main levels: the EP1 (lower primary), encompassing grades 1 to 5, with only one teacher assigned per grade and the EP2 (Upper primary), comprised of grades 6 and 7, where various teachers were required to teach in the same grade making expansion of upper primary services extremely slow and costly due to the number of teachers needed. MINEDH was establishing EPC schools expected to offer the full Primary Education cycle (grades 1 to 7) as closest as possible to the communities. After so many years, it was realized that expanding these types of schools was very slow and costly process. EPC schools represent a tiny minority of schools still concentrated in the district capitals. Yet the 6/92 Law prescribes compulsory primary education cycle of 7 years and set entry level to teacher training colleges at grade 7 at the time when most candidates are grade 12 graduates. In addition, MINEDH has just re-introduced Pre-Primary education as part of the formal education system and introduced bilingual education all of which need to be reflected in the education Law. In 2018, the Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH) introduced the Law 18/2018 of December 28th which accommodates the above developments and introduces 9 years of compulsory Basic Education, instead of 7 years. In addition, The New Education Law[9] also introduces a shorter primary education cycle (composed of grades 1 through 6 not 7 as was the case until this new Law was introduced). The new Law will fully come into effect in 2023, when MINEDH will have created the necessary conditions. Primary education will comprise 2 (first cycle: Grades 1 to 3 and 2nd cycle: Grades 4 to 6) not 3 cycles. The current primary grade 7 will be incorporated into the first cycle of secondary education, to be comprised of grades 7 to 9. As a cross-cutting theme, the new education law will accommodate the introduction of inclusive education sub-system which foresees the integration of children, adults and youth with special education needs in “ordinary” classrooms. The changes in the way teachers are being allocated in primary education will likely facilitate the expansion of quality primary education services, particularly to remote areas.

The MINEDH transitional bilingual model

The MINEDH transitional bilingual education model prescribes[10] that children develop oral Portuguese language skills in first and second grade, and begin to acquire reading and writing skills in Portuguese in the third and fourth grade. While oral Portuguese skills are developed in grades 1 and 2 (here Portuguese is taught as a subject), children use their L1 in these same grades for pre-reading and writing skills (the L1 is used here as a medium of instruction). In fourth grade sciences content is introduced in the first language of the child. Numeracy is taught in Portuguese from grades 4 through 6, while sciences transition to Portuguese from grade 5 to 6. The ministry’s strategy is to transition to Portuguese language gradually, under the principle that no content that the child did not first learn in their first language should be taught in Portuguese. So, the language of instruction transition from the Mozambican first

language[11] of the child to Portuguese starts in fourth grade with numeracy and is consolidated in sixth grade. The partner implementing this COAG must ensure that USAID-funded activities are consistent with the MINEDH Bilingual Education Strategy (developed with USAID support, under the Vamos Ler activity) and the New Education Law as well as the 10-year Education Sector Strategy to successfully achieve the goals proposed under this award.

THE NACIONAL READING AND WRITING ACTION PLAN (PNALE)

In 2015, with support from USAID, MINEDH developed a National Reading and Writing Action Plan[12] that focuses on ways to improve literacy learning. Inspired by similar plans in the region, it aims to improve in-service and pre-service teacher training programs, to strengthen classroom instruction and materials, and to create sustainable and effective support for teachers in implementing new pedagogical methods. The plan also proposes to increase the school time dedicated to reading and writing and to teach reading in the local languages in the early grades. To create a culture of reading, the strategy includes building new libraries and strengthening existing ones. The SABER activity will focus on interventions that will contribute to some of the PNALE goals as it pertains to improving reading practice in schools.

MINEDH COVID-19 EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Around the Globe, 194 countries closed schools, affecting over 90% of the World's school population, particularly during the peak phase of the Pandemic. Since March 23rd, 2020, Mozambique was hit by the Global COVID-19 Global Pandemic which caused the Government of Mozambique to declare a State of Emergency resulting in all schools being closed, affecting 8,5 million students, 6.9 million of whom in primary education. This emergency had a severe impact on the education system. The COVID-19 pandemic directly affected over 15,000 schools and more than 130,000 teachers. While other sub-sectors are reopening gradually (teacher training, adult literacy and secondary schools), early primary grades students (grades 1 to 6) are the most severely affected with classes interrupted from March 2020 to February 2021. Learning outcomes in Mozambique are already poor (only 4.9% of all third graders can read at grade level). The prolonged primary school closure is estimated to result in 0.6 years of schooling adjusted to quality of learning, which will further deteriorate learning outcomes, since the average years of schooling children attend is likely to drop from the current 7.9 to 7.3 years[13]. While MINEDH and its partners have been making extra efforts to provide continued education opportunities to children under the Pandemic, these efforts have been challenged by the limited access to radio (39.5% of the population, against only 32.8% in rural areas), television (50.7% of the population, against only 7.8% for rural families) and internet network (5,5% in urban and only 0.6% for rural settings). The Pandemic will further impact student dropout rates and inequalities in education, particularly for girls who are less likely to return to school after schools reopen. Most children dropout of school before grade 3 and nearly half do so before completing primary education. It is expected that the pandemic will result in higher wastage in education and will negatively affect disadvantaged students most of whom receive government support through school-based

initiatives, like the school feeding program which has been unable to provide support to 235,000 children. Given the fact that children will lose more than one school year, the primary school curriculum was adjusted for when school reopen in 2021, but children will receive less than the originally planned instruction time. To help the sector fast track the readiness to resume classes safely, MINEDH and donors are working together and rapidly developed an emergency action plan in response to the Pandemic which merited dedicated funding. Through the World Bank, the GPE made available \$15 million dollars in funding to help the country address COVID-19 needs in education. To date, all schools have reopened to face-to-face instruction with some adjustments respecting the Health authorities sanitary protocol for safe return to school. [14]

THE POOR QUALITY OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

Mozambique made tremendous effort bringing over 80% of school aged children to school, but completion rate in Mozambique (49% in 2018) is lower than in most LICs, where it is situated at 59% and the lowest in the SADC, according to MINEDH 2019. In addition, children are not learning to read, write or do mathematics at grade-level proficiency. According to a 2013 Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH) National Assessment[15], 6% of all third graders were able to read grade level text with fluency and comprehension. Furthermore, reading scores have been declining. In a similar test conducted in 2016[16], this percentage dropped to only 4.9 percent of third graders able to read and comprehend a grade-level text. Prior assessments conducted by MINEDH partners revealed a similar trend: SAQMEC II of 2007 showed that grade 6 pupils were not acquiring basic reading competencies and a USAID baseline assessment in 2013[17] also found that 64% of third graders and 84% of second graders tested in the provinces of Nampula and Zambezia were unable to recognize even one letter correctly in the letter recognition sub-task of the EGRA. A 2015 World bank study indicate that only a quarter of 4th grade students could read words; 17% could read sentences and less than 10% could read a paragraph. A 2016 JICA[18] study conducted on teacher competences revealed that teacher competences are correlated with the quality of instruction children receive. MINEDH data show that teacher competencies are limited overall: only 1% of surveyed teachers master 80% of primary grade 4 curriculum content, while only 60% master two digits subtraction (ASE 2019).[19]

Providing children with quality education opportunities is key. Available research (2019) shows that, globally, 387 million children are failing to read in primary education. In addition, the lowest percent of children scoring above minimum proficiency levels on learning assessment are in Sub-Saharan Africa. Over 64 million children are out of primary school. Available 2018 data show that reading challenge is twice as big than Math in Sub-Saharan Africa. This indicates continuous effort to improve reading skills for children and improving learning outcomes. The earlier children learn to read with fluency and comprehension the better, as they stand better chances of progressing and being successful in all other areas of learning. Mozambique is setting ambitious reading, writing and math targets for the coming years (20% in 2024 and 30%, in 2029), but these may not

be achieved unless children learn to read with fluency and comprehension in early grades. Children succeed when exposed to effective learning opportunities and they acquire grade level competencies to perform well in subsequent grades.

LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING

The 2018 Global Education Monitoring Report indicates that many countries face a growing learning crisis and places teachers at the core of the solution to this challenge. According to the Ministry of education academic calendar, the school year starts in January through October. The academic year is comprised of a total of 168 teaching days which teachers are required to deliver to students each year. All children are required to enroll in primary school grade 1 by June 30th in the year they complete 6 years of age. Each year, the MINEDH pays salaries to approximately 135,000 primary school teachers. However, teachers are not always in classrooms and teaching which reduces the amount of time children are exposed to effective learning and compromises achievements. A 2013 Aprender a Ler (ApaL) baseline study found that due to teacher tardiness, classes frequently started late: 54% of the teachers of the 360 second and third grade classes observed arrived between 10 and 40 minutes late. Considering that the first class of the day is frequently Portuguese, where reading occurs, it is easy to see how reading-specific instructional time is reduced by teacher absenteeism and tardiness. According to Bold (2017) 45% of teachers in Mozambique are absent or spend less than 2 hours teaching instead of the required 4.21 hours. MINEDH (2019), estimates that primary school pupils have only 74 effective school days, 29% of the 190 planned days. A study conducted by the World Bank in 2015[20] estimated absenteeism at national level to be 44% of heads, 45% of teachers and 56% of pupils. USAID independent evaluation study determined that teacher absenteeism in education is a major obstacle for improving reading outcomes. Experience in Mozambique show that when teachers are not present students also tend not to come to school. Similarly, absenteeism of the school director is correlated with that of the teachers. Mozambique's teacher absentee rate is among the highest in the region, significantly reducing available instruction time and hindering effective learning. The number of pupils per classroom is growing lately, from 51,6 in 2016 to 64,2 in 2018 making the role of the teacher harder and requiring that teachers are well prepared to handle large class sizes.

MOZAMBIQUE GIRLS AMONG THE MOST DISADVANTAGED

The bulk of Mozambique's population is female, representing 52% of the total population estimated at 28 million inhabitants, as per the 2017 general population census. Although life expectancy in Mozambique is still low (53.7 years), women tend to live longer (56.5 years) than men (51 years). A recent longitudinal study on attendance in Mozambique, conducted by UNICEF, show that girls are more likely to be “on track”, but are underrepresented in primary school.[21] According to the same study more girls start falling behind at the end of primary education, but not as far behind as boys. Yet, Mozambican women tend to be the least educated Illiteracy rate

among inhabitants of 15 years and above is still high, estimated at 39%. Illiteracy rate is higher amongst women at 49.4%, against only 27.2% for men, (2017, census)[22], which calls for deliberate efforts to provide education opportunities for girls and women. Learning opportunities for girls tend to be scarce as one progresses to the northern regions of Mozambique. Absentee rates are higher in the center and north where student absenteeism can reach 65% compared to only 25% in the south, putting girls at higher risk of not getting proper education. Women levels of education and poverty are interlinked and have significant impact on the education of younger children. Traditionally, women are responsible for educating children at home. In this context, educating women is likely to have a tripling effect on the education levels of children. Educated women are more likely to educate their children and cater for their health. However, girls tend to be found in fewer numbers as one progresses in the education system. For instance, in 2018, 48% of Lower Primary EP1 students (grades 1 to 5) were girls, against 46.8% in upper primary level EP2, grades 6 and 7[23]. The 2011 Demographic and Health survey revealed 43% of moderate chronic malnutrition rate in children aged 5 years and 20% of acute malnutrition in children of the same age (INE 2013).

3. In-country education partners' activities

The World Bank Reach learning program

The World Bank is providing an investment of around USD 120 million dollars to support the implementation of the 2020-2029 Education Sector Strategic Plan, focusing on reducing learning poverty in basic education and improve transition of girls to secondary education in Mozambique. According to the Education Sector Program Implementation Guide (ESPIG), this project will use GPE (Global Partnership for Education) financing and will continue to focus on basic education, defined as pre-primary, primary, lower secondary education and second- chance learning. The funds will be channeled through the education sector pooled fund (FASE) and funded through the pledged GPE money for the strategic plan. This project is intended to respond to the three key education sector strategic plan objectives, 1. ensure the inclusion and equity in access, participation and retention, 2. Ensure quality of learning and 3. Ensure a transparent, participative, efficient and effective governance. The activity will be comprised on 3 main components, but two of them may complement directly the work that USAID was been doing in education sector, namely, component 1. Improving learning of girls and boys in primary education will focus specifically on interventions centered on improving reading skills in Portuguese for children in the first three grades of primary education, while component 3 of the program will contribute to strengthening governance to improve efficiency and monitoring of education outcome progress[24]. Interventions will also aim at improving system efficiency and strengthening governance and management. This program provides important areas for synergies with the USAID support both in the area of improving reading outcomes and to support MINEDH in the area of effective governance and accountability. These will offer interesting opportunities for collaboration among SABER, the World Bank and MINEDH. SABER will

integrate in its implementation approach concrete actions for collaboration with these partners including the World Bank led initiatives below:

World Bank ‘Accelerator Program’[25] to improve global foundational learning: This initiative is to help address the World’s hardest education crisis being faced in a century. As the COVID-19 pandemic has closed schools and record numbers of children fall behind in learning, the World bank in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, U.K.’s Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), UNICEF, and USAID, launched the new ‘Accelerator Program’. The World Bank and its partners will align resources and expertise to help countries strengthen their implementation capacity to achieve their targets. Mozambique will be one beneficiary country.

UNICEF: In the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic UNICEF is implementing the education sector response to this pandemic with funds for the GPE mainly to help MINEDH create the conditions for safe return and preventions when schools reopen, SABER will be expected to coordinate with UNICEF in this domain to ensure that SABER schools have met all the necessary conditions for reopening and the safe return to school, before engaging with each one of the target schools in the districts.

Literacy Boost: Save the Children Literacy Boost[26] in Nacala district in Nampula province. Literacy Boost is a community-based reading intervention aimed at emergent literacy in Portuguese that includes teacher trainings, assessment, and community action. Save the Children also pursues girls’ education programming with funding from the United Kingdom (DfID) in Gaza, Manica, and Tete provinces. It’s also launching early childhood education in 140 centers in Gaza and Nampula provinces with funding from the World Bank.

4. USAID contribution to education sector

The rational for investing in education

The current deficits in education quality, as indicated by extremely low learning outcomes in reading, threaten Mozambique’s ability to build a productive workforce and create a sustainable economic growth for decades to come. Education is the key to a productive, competitive workforce and the establishment of a stable middle class. Without this, growing national income disparity and high unemployment rates will continue to undermine rule of law and socio-political stability. USAID works in more than 50 developing countries to ensure that children and youth have access to equitable, quality education leading to the acquisition of the skills needed to be productive members of society. USAID invests in education because the positive effects of education are far-reaching - it serves as a driver for all other development and for the reduction of poverty: “For individuals, it promotes employment, earnings, health, and poverty reduction. For societies, it spurs innovation, strengthens institutions, and fosters social cohesion. Data^[27] show

that 617 million children and adolescents of primary and lower secondary school age worldwide—58 percent of that age group—are not achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics, a situation which the 2018 World Development Report describes as a “learning crisis”. Children who are living in the most fragile environments make up about 20 percent of the world’s primary school-age population, yet they represent about 50 percent of those not in school^[28]. In higher education, gross enrollment rates in low-income countries are only 10 percent, far below the nearly 70 percent gross enrollment rates in high-income countries^[29]. More than 75 million children and youth live in crisis or conflict-affected countries. For these individuals, access to education is an immense challenge: schools and universities are destroyed; armed groups attack or recruit students, teachers, and faculty; and families are forced to flee violence, ethnic cleansing, poverty, and famine.

USAID Aprender a Ler program (June 30, 2012, to December 31, 2016)

In response to the MINEDH Education Sector Strategy priorities, USAID, working in collaboration with the government of Mozambique (MINEDH) implemented this first generation of early grade reading activity, Aprender a Ler. This activity was implemented in the two Northern provinces of Nampula and Zambezia. The main goal of the activity was “Improved reading outcomes for students in primary grades 2-3, supporting two Intermediate Results: IR1 – Improved quality of reading instruction in grades 2-3 in target schools; and IR2 – Increased quantity of reading instruction in grades 2-3 in target schools. Aprender a Ler was implemented concurrently with an integral external and independent impact evaluation (IE) of reading outcomes and school management, through a randomized control trial (RCT) approach. As indicated earlier, the June 2013 IE Baseline report concluded that that the majority of second and third graders in Nampula and Zambezia were unable to recognize even one letter correctly in the letter recognition sub-task of the EGRA. After a full year of implementation in 2014, the results showed that from the baseline results of 5.3 CWPM the students of full treatment schools had an improvement to 14.6 CWPM in midline 2, compared to 5.2 CWPM from their counterparts in control group. Although the program made significant improvement, USAID felt the impact was not statistically significant enough, particularly in terms of producing more children reading with comprehension to provide robust evidence for scale. It was felt that the impact may have been negatively influenced by the missing “T” for Tongue, since the program used the Portuguese medium of instruction. This program represented an approximately \$ 25 million dollar support to the education sector

USAID Bilingual Education Program (Vamos Ler – August 2017 to July 2021)

In response to MINEDH policy passed in 2015, introducing the use of the first language of the children in all primary schools and building from the ApaL experience, USAID designed the bilingual Vamos Ler activity. The main goal USAID *Vamos Ler!*/(*Let's Read!*) program is to provide evidence-based technical and material assistance to improve early grade literacy instruction in three local languages, Emakhuwa, Elomwe, and Echuwabo, along with second language acquisition and literacy support to prepare children for transition to Portuguese in Grade 4. The Vamos Ler activity is being implemented in the same Northern provinces of Nampula and Zambezia, where the previous activity was implemented benefiting a total of 21 districts in the two provinces. The activity covers a total of 1,950 schools in Nampula and Zambézia provinces. The assessment also found that improvements were most visible in letter name and sound identification. The program significantly improved the availability of quality, gender sensitive and grade appropriate bilingual teaching and learning materials for grades 1 and 2 in three first languages of target students as well as in Portuguese to facilitate transition to this medium of instruction in grade 4. Although the program is being implemented in a language that children understand well, most do not read in local languages until they get to school, which limits their ability to learn. Most children are unable to read in their first language (over 80%), according to Vamos Ler base line results. The Vamos Ler activity, however, has making an encouraging contribution. After 1 and half years of implementation Vamos Ler midline[30] assessment 1 indicated that the number of children who can read letters more than doubled (40%). The program is still under implementation, and it is hoped that by the end line the number of readers will increase. However, evidence shows that teaching children to read is a lengthy process. More time may be needed for Vamos Ler to achieve set targets. The recent outbreak of the COVID19 pandemic which resulted in schools being closed and most Vamos Ler activities being suspended following declaration of State of Emergency, will further affect project results. All face-to-face reading activities have been suspended. The project made an important contribution to more children reading in Mozambique, but children will need to be exposed to more instruction time to become fluent readers. SABER will build from the Vamos Ler work including the use of the Vamos Ler produced grade 4 books.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION (07.14.2020 – 07.13.2023)

The “Community Engagement in Bilingual Education Program” is a \$2.6 million three year USAID/Mozambique funded initiative to raise parent and community awareness of the importance of bilingual education and to strengthen school council’s role in holding teachers and school managers accountable for improved reading outcomes. The USAID supported Community Engagement project benefits remote rural children most of whom do not hear a word of Portuguese until they enter school in 6 districts of Alto-Molocué, Gilé, Namacurra, Namarrói, Lugela and Mocuba in Zambezia province. The activity is expected to benefit 4,000 children and

community members in 760 schools in selected target districts. The initiative will be implemented by the Centro de Aprendizagem e Capacitacao da Sociedade Civil (CESC), a local civil society organization, based in Maputo province.

USAID/Apoiar a Ler! (July 14, 2020 – July 13, 2023)

This a USAID funded initiative to improve the quality of teaching and educational outcomes for children through the mobilization of parents and guardians in twelve districts of Nampula province (Moma , Mogovolas, Malema, Lalaua, Ribaué, Mecuburi, Rapale, Monapo, Mussoril, Eráti, Memba and Murrupula) and a total of 750 primary schools, and expects to reach 350,000 children and engagement of 700,000 family members of the beneficiary children, 7,500 community leaders, 12,000 teachers and 3750 volunteers in the community designated “Passionate about Learning”. The project will last for three years and will be implemented by the consortium led by ADPP and composed by the Association for the Promotion of Rural Development (APRODER), h2n and the Rovuma University (UniRovuma), in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH). The total budget is US \$ 2,684,980.45.

THE USAID FUNDED LOGOS PROGRAM

One key priority for the MINEDH 2020 – 2029 Education Sector Strategic Plan is the improvement of school governance to enhance learning. The forthcoming education strategy gives priority to the consolidation of school Governance interventions nationwide. Building from USAID support, MINEDH strategic plan specifically commits to the sector to strengthen the role of school councils so that they perform their responsibilities effectively and proactively, in collaboration with school directors apply existing measures to ensure that teachers are in classrooms. The Local Governance Strengthening Program (LOGOS) will, among other aspects, contribute to the achievement of Development Objective (DO1) pertaining to “Democratic Governance of Mozambican Institutions Strengthened” articulated in USAID Mission CDCS and will be supported through contributions to Intermediate Result (IR) 1.2: Improved Effectiveness, Transparency, and Accountability of Key Government Institutions. The prevailing levels of teacher absenteeism in education reflect poor school governance and accountability at school level. The sector has relevant regulations which are often not applied and that encourages poor performance. Both administrative as well as cultural and traditional values are cited that prevent school directors to effectively do their job, with regards to fighting teacher absenteeism. During the implementation of the USAID Aprender a Ler project, it was proven that, if school directors are present on time and existing measures are applied, teachers tend to come to school and teach. Under the new education program, USAID will work in collaboration with the USAID supported DG LOGOS program, jointly with MINEDH inspectorate department and district directorates to ensure that existing sanctions foreseen in the Regulamento do Ensino Basico, are effectively applied empowering the district offices to track teacher absenteeism and apply appropriate actions to discourage teacher absenteeism in schools.

A combination of radio and television spots as well as charts will be utilized to sensitize teachers to be in classrooms and teach. The SABER activity will collaborate with LOGOS under SABER IR 3 interventions.

Integrated WASH, USDA/ADPP-School Feeding and Nutrition for improved learning outcomes: The provinces of Nampula and Zambezia are amongst the ones with high levels of malnutrition rates including chronic malnutrition. The program will explore synergies with other offices and USG programs (USDA McGovern Dole, IHO – Nutrition; WASH) to successfully offer interventions to target schools which will improve children’s wellbeing and increase the prospects of them attending school frequently and learning. Interventions will include making available water for children at school level, including water storage facilities and support rehabilitation of target schools to improve learning conditions particularly for girls. USAID education office intends to partner with IPs like ADPP and private sector organizations like Total or Sasol to implement these proposed interventions in Nampula and Zambezia provinces in the same schools the reading program will take place. A simplified before and after evaluation will be conducted to assess the effects of combining reading with WASH and school feeding interventions, compared to schools where this is not the case. The results will be shared with MINEDH to inform their plans and decisions to expand the PRONAE (Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar/School Feeding Program Nationwide), with FASE support.

ADPP FOOD FOR KNOWLEDGE PROGRAM

With USDA support, ADPP is implementing the school feeding program known as food for Knowledge in 4 districts of the Maputo province, serving 105 carefully selected schools. Since 2016, the program benefits grades 1, 2 and 3 primary school children with the aim of improving reading, writing and math skills. Among the main interventions of the program is the training of teachers and the production of bilingual early grade reading teaching and learning material. At baseline, conducted in 2017, ADPP found that children were reading only 0.04 Correct Words per Minute (CWPM) against a benchmark of 30 CWPM. After one year of intervention, in September 2018, ADPP midline assessment found that 45% of the children were reading 1-10 CWPM and 22% between 15 and 24 CWPM fluently. Around 20% of the tested primary school children could read between 11 and 19 CWPM with comprehension. The Food for knowledge program produced encouraging results in terms of more children reading. In addition, the program provided a cost-effective program which produced positive results using local talent.

The USDA McGovern-Dole school feeding program

MINEDH launched the school feeding program to reduce school dropout, increase retention, help widen access particularly in primary education, improve student learning and primary school completion rates. However, the MINEDH was only able to access resources to provide school meals to around 230,000 children in 2019, covering 150 schools from a total of 13,000

existing primary schools with children suffering from malnutrition. MINEDH has been working with several partners including USDA, WPF, Canada and others to develop a national school feeding program. MINEDH has plans to work with partners to develop school feeding law in 2020 which will elevate the importance of school feeding interventions and create a stronger framework for investment in this area, possibly involving FASE donors soon. If approved the law will also create conditions for sustained investment by allowing space for the government to allocate own funds to roll out plans like PRONAE at scale. Mozambique is increasingly prioritizing the purchase of locally grown food like dry beans, groundnuts and other products in the context of supporting local producers but also increase chances of sustaining these interventions. School feeding is important partly because Mozambique is still facing food insecurity and children with empty stomachs cannot learn. Through USDA, the USG has since 2007, supported school feeding interventions in Mozambique. This support has been estimated at over \$152 million through the McGovern-Dole and Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement Program (LRP). Presently, USDA is funding two active McGovern-Dole projects in Mozambique, one in Nampula Province and the other in Maputo Province. Together both projects are currently valued at \$60.8 million dollars and benefit over 157,000 poor Mozambican school children and communities. USAID intends to continue to collaborate with the USDA program and explore possibilities to co-intervene in the same primary schools for stronger reading impact, as part of the reading MATTERS approach.

The MINEDH transitional bilingual model

The MINEDH transitional bilingual education model prescribes that children develop oral Portuguese language skills in first and second grade, and begin to acquire reading and writing skills in Portuguese in the third and fourth grade. While oral Portuguese skills are developed in grades 1 and 2 (here Portuguese is taught as a subject), children use their L1 in these same grades for pre-reading and writing skills (the L1 is used here as a medium of instruction). In fourth grade sciences content is introduced in the first language of the child. Numeracy is taught in Portuguese from grades 4 through 6, while sciences transition to Portuguese from grade 5 to 6. The ministry's strategy is to transition to Portuguese language gradually, under the principle that no content that the child did not first learn in their first language should be taught in Portuguese. So, the language of instruction transition from the Mozambican first language[31] of the child to Portuguese starts in fourth grade with numeracy and is consolidated in sixth grade. The partner implementing this COAG must ensure that USAID-funded activities are consistent with the MINEDH Bilingual Education Strategy (developed with USAID support, under the Vamos Ler activity) and the New Education Law as well as the 10-year Education Sector Strategy to successfully achieve the goals proposed under this award.

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 - i) <http://ghdx.healthdata.org/organizations/national-institute-statistics-ine-mozambique>
 - j) <https://mept.org.mz/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/5.2.1Calendario-Escolar-2020-e-2021.pdf>
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[1] USAID Education Policy: USAID. "USAID Education Policy." United States. Washington, D.C. November, 2018

[2] The policy defines **children** as "A person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger".

[3] How Effective Are Early Grade Reading Interventions? A Review of the Evidence. Stern and Piper 2019

[4] 2020-2029 MINEDH education Sector Strategic Plan, 2019

^[6] USAID defines an education system as consisting of the people, public and private institutions, resources, and activities whose primary purpose is to improve, expand, and sustain learning and educational outcomes (USAID Education Policy, p. 20).

[7] <https://www.usaid.gov/policy/youth>

[8] <https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/document/file/2020-22-Mozambique-ESP.pdf>

[9] https://mept.org.mz/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Lei-n%C2%BA-18-2018-28-Dezembro_-SNE.pdf

[10] Bilingual Education Strategy 2020-2029

<http://www.mined.gov.mz/DN/DINEP/Documents/Estrat%C3%A9gia%20de%20Expans%C3%A3o%20do%20Ensino%20Bilingue.pdf>

[11] Mozambican first language of the child refers to the local language children speak at home in Mozambique. Among the 16 such languages that will be the focus of the “criteria-based, gradual and sustainable” bilingual education expansion include Emakhuwa, Elomwe and Echuwabo which are languages widely spoken in the provinces of Nampula and Zambezia of northern Mozambique where the SABER activity will be implemented. Bilingual education refers to the teaching and learning of local Mozambican languages and Portuguese as subject areas within the primary curriculum and the transitional utilization of these languages as the language of instruction in the classroom, as the MINEDH bilingual education model suggests.

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[23] Education Sector Strategic plan, 2020-2029

[24] <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/global-partnership-education-program-implementation-grant-guidelines>

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[26] <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/6864/pdf/6864.pdf>

[27] [More Than One-Half of Children and Adolescents Are Not Learning Worldwide. UNESCO. 2017.](#)

[28] [Education Cannot Wait: Proposing a fund for education in emergencies](#)

[29] [Is equal access to higher education in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa achievable by 2030?; Supporting tertiary education, enhancing economic development: Strategies for effective higher education funding in Sub-Saharan Africa.](#)

[30] To be attached to this NOFO

[31] Mozambican first language of the child refers to the local language children speak at home in Mozambique. Among the 16 such languages that will be the focus of the “criteria-based, gradual and sustainable” bilingual education expansion include Emakhuwa, Elomwe and Echuwabo which are languages widely spoken in the provinces of Nampula and Zambezia of northern Mozambique where the SABER activity will be implemented. Bilingual education refers to the teaching and learning of local Mozambican languages and Portuguese as subject areas within the

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[END OF ANNEX 3]

[END OF NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY 72065621RFA00012]