“The world—and the World Bank—needs Russia as a global development partner. Russia has the history, capacity, and knowledge to play a large and responsible role as a development partner and donor country. Russia’s help is already making a big difference…. With Russia playing its global role, and with other donors playing their roles, we can end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity at a much faster rate than ever before.”

—Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank Group
Speech Delivered at the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, February 14, 2013
MESSAGE FROM READ COUNCIL

For both the Russian Federation and the World Bank, the partnership through the READ Program has been groundbreaking. As a result of this program, many developing countries have received targeted support in the area of student assessment, many Russians have strengthened their expertise in assessment, and several highly useful knowledge tools have been created.

At the global level, the READ Trust Fund has contributed to the development of an impressive body of knowledge products on student assessment systems. As a result, there is now a much greater understanding of what it takes to develop an effective assessment system. At the country level, many of the countries receiving support under the READ Trust Fund began with assessment systems that were “latent” or “emerging” in nature. All READ Trust Fund-supported countries now have institutions clearly tasked with carrying out assessment activities. Pilot assessments like the Provinha in Mozambique, an Early Grade Reading Assessment in Angola, and a new Unified University Entrance Examination in Tajikistan have taken place, and plans are underway to take these activities to scale at a national level. With READ support, each country will be able to develop parts of their assessment system in significant ways and lay a strong foundation for future work in this area.

Through the joint efforts of Russia and the World Bank, the READ program continues to make significant contributions to the Learning for All agenda and to increase global attention on the importance of education quality and learning outcomes. We are pleased to receive the READ Trust Fund Annual Report for 2012, which clearly tracks the progress and impact of the program thus far.

Andrei Bokarev
Head of the Department for International Financial Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Russian Federation

Vladimir Mau
Rector, Academy of National Economy under the Government of the Russian Federation

Andrei Volkov
Dean, Moscow School of Management (SKOLKOVO)

Luis Benveniste
Education Sector Manager for East Asia and the Pacific, World Bank

Alberto Rodriguez
Education Sector Manager for Europe and Central Asia, World Bank
2012 marked the READ Trust Fund’s fourth complete year of program implementation. The work carried out under the fund over the past several years has made a significant contribution to our collective understanding of what it takes to establish an effective assessment system that measures and supports student learning in addition to overall education quality.

My work with READ began as a member of the READ Technical Group, then as leader of the team creating the global knowledge products under SABER-Student Assessment and SABER-Learning Standards, and now as the READ Trust Fund Program Manager. It has been exciting and gratifying to watch the program evolve over time, and to see participating countries make visible strides in further developing their assessment systems.

Over time, through an increased understanding of what it takes to develop an effective assessment system, the READ team has been able to more fully and systematically monitor progress and outcomes in countries receiving support under the program. In 2012, we harnessed this knowledge in the form of key results indicators. In the pages of this report, you will see concrete evidence of the progress made by countries over the past four years in relation to these indicators.

The year 2012 also was a time when the READ Trust Fund program had the opportunity to influence the global agenda and debates on student learning in a far-reaching way. As a participant in the Learning Metrics Task Force, convened by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the Center for Universal Education at Brookings, I had the chance to contribute to conversations about a possible learning goal for the post-2015 global development agenda. Whether or not such a goal makes it onto the post-2015 agenda, there was consensus that developing countries will need support in building capacity to measure and support learning at every level of their systems. The READ Trust Fund program offers a powerful example of what is possible in this regard.

As we enter the final two years of the program, we will keep a laser-like focus on leveraging the funds generously provided by the Russian Government under READ, in combination with other funds and work being carried out by the World Bank, our Russian partners, and the country teams, to attract greater attention and support for the importance of measuring student learning. I am excited to be the READ Program Manager for the final years of implementation and to continue our collective collaboration and partnership on learning.

Marguerite Clarke
READ Trust Fund Program Manager
BACKGROUND

Established in October 2008, the Russia Education Aid for Development (READ) program is a collaboration of the Government of the Russian Federation and the World Bank that focuses on improving education quality in low-income countries. The READ Trust Fund is a part of this program, with an amount of US$32 million to be executed over a six-year period, 2008 to 2014.

BETTER ASSESSMENT FOR BETTER LEARNING

The World Bank’s Education Sector Strategy 2020 highlights the importance of “Learning for All.” The proven economic gains and poverty reduction tied to education are only obtainable when children actually learn. Simply attending school is not enough. All actors in an education system need to know whether or not learning is taking place so that they can use this information to improve education quality.

Given the critical importance of learning, the READ Trust Fund’s main purpose is to help low-income countries improve their student learning outcomes through the design, implementation, and use of robust systems for student assessment. The READ Trust Fund supports analytical work and technical assistance to help countries (i) establish systems or institutions—or strengthen existing ones—that formulate learning goals and carry out assessments of student learning; (ii) improve existing or develop new instruments to measure student learning outcomes; and (iii) strengthen existing or develop new mechanisms (policies) to use learning outcomes data to improve teaching and learning.

READ TRUST FUND ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The READ Trust Fund provides support at both the global and country levels. At the global level, the focus is on generating and sharing knowledge and good practices in the form of instruments, tools, analytical reports, and case studies. At the country level, World Bank teams and country stakeholders work together to develop and implement a set of READ Trust Fund–supported activities that address gaps in the country's

Figure 1. Roles and Responsibilities of Key Actors under the READ Trust Fund Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council (Russia, World Bank)</th>
<th>Management (World Bank)</th>
<th>Global Team (World Bank)</th>
<th>Country Teams (World Bank)</th>
<th>Technical Group (International Assessment Experts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guidance on overall strategic direction, priorities, and roles of engagement for the READ Trust Fund, and monitoring of program performance</td>
<td>Program management and administration, i.e., strategic planning, allocation of funds, program coordination, quality assurance, and monitoring</td>
<td>Development of the conceptual framework for work on assessment systems and learning standards, benchmarking tools, and other global knowledge products</td>
<td>Focal point for all READ Trust Fund assistance in target countries, working closely with country governments and other stakeholders to design and implement READ Trust Fund–supported activities</td>
<td>Support for development of global knowledge products, program quality assurance, and direct technical assistance at the country level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: READ Trust Fund
current learning assessment system. For both the global- and country-level work, a group of international assessment experts provides advice and support for product development, program design, and program implementation (see Figure 1).

TARGETED COUNTRY SUPPORT
At the country level, READ Trust Fund–supported programs are underway in eight countries—Angola, Armenia, Ethiopia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mozambique, Tajikistan, Vietnam, and Zambia. In each country, World Bank teams are working closely with government counterparts to thoroughly review the existing assessment system, decide on activities to address any gaps, and implement and evaluate the effectiveness of those activities. Some countries, like Ethiopia and Zambia, have opted to address gaps in multiple areas, while others, like Tajikistan, have chosen to concentrate their efforts on a specific issue. All country programs include a large portion of capacity-building activities to strengthen in-country skills in assessment.

EXPECTED OUTCOME: IMPROVED LEARNING ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS
It is expected that the main outcome of work under the READ Trust Fund will be increased institutional capacity of countries to develop, carry out, and effectively use data from student assessments to improve education quality and student learning. Additionally, countries will be able to use the conceptual framework and tools developed under the program to measure the strengths and limitations of their existing assessment activities and identify areas for improvement. Armed with enhanced information on how well students are performing, teachers, policy makers, and international donors alike will be better able to determine where to focus their energy and resources for the greatest improvement in learning outcomes.
2012 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The first year of the READ Trust Fund was focused on establishing the program at the global and country levels. The trust fund structure and technical group were established, and a program of activities was initiated in seven target countries. The first of the country-level activities was a self-diagnosis exercise that was carried out by teams in each of the seven target countries in order to identify gaps and begin to create action plans for READ Trust Fund assistance.

During the second and third years of the program, work at the global level centered on the design and validation of a conceptual framework and evidence base for analyzing and strengthening assessment systems. At the country level, this framework helped to deepen government officials and other stakeholders’ understanding of their learning assessment systems and improved their capacity to identify the actions necessary to strengthen them. Action plans for Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tajikistan, Vietnam, and Zambia were approved, and the first set of strengthening activities began to be implemented. In 2011, Armenia was invited to participate in the program and become the eighth READ Trust Fund recipient country.

The READ Trust Fund is now set up to support activities in 12 main areas (see Figure 2). In 2012, which is the fourth year of the program, rigorous efforts were made at the global level to finalize and widely disseminate several key knowledge products and resources. A working paper series on learning assessments was launched and seven working papers were published; materials from earlier trainings on the SABER-Student Assessment framework and tools were transformed into a formal training module; and two regional workshops were held to share this and other knowledge on effective assessment practices with READ Trust Fund–supported country teams. At the country level, action plans were approved for the final two countries—Armenia and the Kyrgyz Republic. Program implementation at the country level accelerated and the program began to see concrete, measurable results according to the key indicators being tracked under the READ Trust Fund Results Framework. By the end of 2012, several countries had significantly increased their capacity to develop, carry out, and use data from student assessments.

Figure 2. READ Trust Fund Structure and Main Areas of Program Activity

Source: READ Trust Fund.
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2012

Global-level

- Conceptual framework, five case studies, and 15 country reports finalized under SABER-Student Assessment
- Draft conceptual framework, benchmarking tools, six case studies, and six country reports produced under SABER-Learning Standards
- READ Working Paper Series established and seven papers published on key topics in student assessment (including the SABER-Student Assessment conceptual framework, five country case studies, and a review of World Bank support for student assessment activities)
- Volume 3 of the National Assessments of Educational Achievement series translated into Portuguese
- More than 2,275 print copies of the READ Working Papers and nearly 1,000 print copies of books in the National Assessments of Educational Achievement series disseminated
- Eighty World Bank staff and representatives from other development agencies trained on key topics in student assessment and on the use of the SABER-Student Assessment tools
- Collaboration with Russia’s Center for International Cooperation in Education Development (CICED) and co-sponsorship of the International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA) Conference in Astana (including delivery of five panel sessions on various READ program activities to an overall audience of nearly 320 participants from 40 different countries)
- Two READ Trust Fund Regional Workshops (70 participants in total)—one in Kazakhstan and one in Mozambique—conducted to specifically address challenges faced by the eight country teams involved in implementing READ Trust Fund–supported activities
- READ Trust Fund Comprehensive Report, including a forecasting exercise and system to track progress at the country level, prepared and delivered to the Russian Federation’s Ministry of Finance
New grants approved for Angola, Armenia, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan, totaling US$4.2 million

Data from the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA), which took place in 144 schools throughout Angola’s 18 provinces, cleaned, analyzed, and pulled together in a final technical report and shared with around 100 provincial education staff for discussion and to identify actions for moving forward

Intensive National Large-Scale Assessment (NLSA) training program developed, and preparations made to pilot the CICED-sponsored Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Literacy Test in Armenia

A new assessment institution, the National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency (NEAEA), established in Ethiopia, in addition to a new Directorate for School Inspection

In-depth training in topics such as item writing, item bank construction, and test administration delivered to 59 technical staff in Ethiopia

School administrators, teachers, and students from 68 primary schools in Mozambique participated in two pilot exercises to implement the newly developed classroom assessment tool, Provinha

Ten Ministry of Education staff in Mozambique participated in face-to-face and distance learning courses to earn a Master’s degree in Education Management and Evaluation

Four regional offices for the National Testing Center (NTC) secured, and 53 staff hired to work on Tajikistan’s new Unified University Entrance Examination (UEE)

More than 5,000 students from 64 different schools participated in mini-pilots of the new UEE

Two workshops held to train over 190 item writers from secondary schools, universities, and the Ministry of Education in how to write test questions for the university entrance examination in Vietnam

Nearly 200 representatives from universities, departments within the Ministry of Education and Training, education research institutions, and local education departments in Vietnam participated in workshops to review and endorse an assessment competency framework and training plan for education managers, pre- and in-service teachers, and assessment specialists

In addition to 1,061 examination setters and markers trained in late 2011, another 100 examination setters trained in test item writing for Zambian languages
2012 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The READ Trust Fund was designed to support activities at both the global and country levels. Initially, the fund was set up to be executed only by World Bank staff. However, in 2010, the Russian donors decided to make it possible in select, justifiable cases for some of the funds to be executed and implemented by recipient country governments. (To date, Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic are the only two countries with recipient-executed programs.)

At the direction of the READ Council, the US$32 million allocated to the READ Trust Fund has been distributed so that 35 percent of the funds have been set aside for global-level activities and 60 percent for country-specific work programs (see Figure 3). Program expenditures during the first two years were greatest at the global level to enable the creation of an overarching framework and indicators for student assessment systems and related benchmarking tools. These knowledge products and tools have contributed significantly to the framing of the work that is now being carried out in READ Trust Fund–supported countries.

In 2012, new funding requests were approved for Angola (US$900,000), Armenia (US$1,000,000), the Kyrgyz Republic (US$2,000,000), and Tajikistan (US$300,000). All funds for country-level activities have now been allocated and earmarked for specific programs of activities. Expenditures at the country level are continuing to increase as countries implement the activities in their approved action plans. The funds at the country level have been slightly over-programmed to ensure that all funds will be spent by the end of the READ Trust Fund program in 2014.

![Figure 3. READ Trust Fund Allocations](source: READ Trust Fund.)
Table 1. READ Trust Fund Financial Summary as of 12/31/12 (in U.S. dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Allocated</th>
<th>Disbursements</th>
<th>Commitments</th>
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<tr>
<td>WB TF Management Fee</td>
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<td>SUBTOTAL</td>
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<td>1,600,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>GLOBAL PROGRAM</td>
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<td>194,276</td>
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<td>COUNTRY PROGRAMS</td>
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<td>READ Angola</td>
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<td>READ Mozambique</td>
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<td>906,720</td>
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<td>READ Tajikistan</td>
<td>4,100,000</td>
<td>1,212,907</td>
<td>2,582,182</td>
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<td>READ Vietnam</td>
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<td>865,231</td>
<td>122,917</td>
<td>2,823,746</td>
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<td>READ Zambia</td>
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<td>1,527,981</td>
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<td>763,755</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUBTOTAL</td>
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<td>6,994,356</td>
<td>5,384,473</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL OVERALL</td>
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<td>$15,380,800</td>
<td>$5,579,790</td>
<td>$11,042,034</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: READ Trust Fund.
GLOBAL-LEVEL WORK

READ Trust Fund activities at the global level are divided into four main categories—SABER-Student Assessment, SABER-Learning Standards, Global Knowledge Sharing, and Program Coordination. Global-level activities are centered on: (i) developing knowledge products to expand the current understanding of what makes for an effective student assessment system; (ii) partnering and knowledge sharing with other donors and education development practitioners; and (iii) providing opportunities to share lessons across READ Trust Fund–supported countries and best practices from other countries’ experiences in the field of student assessment.

The work being funded by the READ Trust Fund in the areas of SABER-Student Assessment and SABER-Learning Standards is part of a larger World Bank initiative called Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) (see Box 1). A greater understanding of effective policies and practices in both areas is essential to the READ Trust Fund’s goal of strengthening countries’ systems and institutions that formulate learning goals and carry out assessments.

Box 1. Systems Approach for Better Education Results

The Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) is an initiative to produce comparable data and knowledge on education policies and institutions, with the aim of helping countries systematically strengthen their education systems. SABER evaluates the quality of education policies against evidence-based global standards, using new diagnostic tools and detailed policy data collected for the initiative. The SABER country reports give all parties with a stake in education results—from administrators, teachers, and parents to policy makers and business people—an accessible, objective snapshot showing how well their country’s education system policies are oriented toward promoting Learning for All.

In SABER, the data gathering and analysis are organized by “domains” or areas of education policy making within an education system. These include cycles of the system (such as Early Childhood Development), types of quality resources and supports (such as Student Assessment), areas of governance and finance (such as Education Management Information Systems), and cross-cutting areas (such as Equity and Inclusion).

In each domain, SABER collects and analyzes policy data using an approach aimed at ensuring rigor and cross-country comparability. The foundation for data collection is the “What Matters” paper—a thorough review of the global evidence that identifies the policies and institutional arrangements that matter most for promoting Learning for All. Based on this analytical framework, each domain team creates a rubric for assessing progress toward the key policy goals identified by the “What Matters” paper and a questionnaire for collecting policy data. Data are collected in-country by local experts and verified through discussions with government counterparts before they are used for country reports and made available publicly.

SABER-STUDENT ASSESSMENT

SABER-Student Assessment makes available information and tools based on the latest evidence for what matters most in creating effective assessment systems. It (i) classifies and analyzes student assessment systems around the world according to key criteria to which all systems should aspire; (ii) collects information on these key criteria by administering a set of questionnaires to key informants and gathering both qualitative and quantitative data, validated by legal documents; and (iii) provides country reports and other knowledge products to promote improved student assessment systems.

The SABER-Student Assessment conceptual framework underpins all of the work being carried out under the READ Trust Fund. The framework is structured around two main dimensions of assessment systems: the types/purposes of assessment activities, and the quality of those activities.

Assessment Types and Purposes

- **Classroom assessment** provides real-time information to support ongoing teaching and learning in individual classrooms. Classroom assessments use a variety of formats—including observation, questioning, and paper-and-pencil tests—to evaluate and support student learning, generally on a daily basis.

- **Examinations** provide a basis for selecting or certifying students as they move from one level of the education system to the next (or into the workforce). All eligible students are tested on an annual basis (or more often if the system allows for repeat testing). Examinations cover the main subject areas in the curriculum and usually involve essays and multiple-choice questions.

- **Large-scale, system-level assessments** provide feedback on the overall performance of the education system at particular grades or age levels. These assessments typically cover a few subjects on a regular basis (such as every three to five years), are often sample-based, and use multiple-choice and short-answer formats. They may be national or international in scope.

Quality Drivers

- **Enabling context** refers to the broader context in which the assessment activity takes place and the extent to which that context is conducive to, or supportive of, the assessment. It covers such issues as the legislative or policy framework for assessment activities, institutional and organizational structures, the availability of sufficient and stable sources of funding, and the presence of trained assessment staff.

- **System alignment** refers to the extent to which the assessment is aligned with the rest of the education system. This includes the degree of congruence between assessment activities and system learning goals, standards, curriculum, and pre- and in-service teacher training.

- **Assessment quality** refers to the psychometric quality of the instruments, processes, and procedures for the assessment activity. It covers such issues as design and implementation of assessment activities, analysis and interpretation of student responses to those activities, and the appropriateness of how assessment results are reported and used.

Crossing the quality drivers with the different assessment types/purposes provides the framework and broad indicator areas shown in Figure 4. These same indicator areas were used to develop the READ Trust Fund Results Framework, which is being used to track each READ Trust Fund–supported country’s progress in strengthening its overall assessment system.
Conceptual Framework and Diagnostic Tools

With READ Trust Fund support, the work to develop the SABER-Student Assessment knowledge products and tools began in 2010. At the outset, the focus was on piloting and validating the conceptual framework and corresponding questionnaires and rubrics. Early versions of the tools were piloted in Chile, New Zealand, and Uganda. Based on input from various assessment professionals, and lessons drawn during implementation, the tools have continued to undergo minor revisions and fine tuning. In addition to the finalized conceptual framework and “What Matters Most for Student Assessment Systems” paper, questionnaires and rubrics have been developed for each of the assessment types—Classroom Assessment, Examinations, and National and International Large-Scale Assessments. (The characteristics and criteria identified in the questionnaires and rubrics serve as the basis for the key indicators outlined in the READ Trust Fund Results Framework—see page 21.)
In 2011, the validated benchmarking tools were applied retroactively to READ Trust Fund–supported countries (using data from their 2009 self-diagnoses) to establish baselines against which to measure progress. A standardized report with ratings and a description of the strengths and weaknesses of that country’s assessment system was produced for each country.

Throughout 2012, there was considerable demand from countries worldwide to use the SABER-Student Assessment tools to benchmark their assessment systems. By the end of 2012, in addition to the eight READ Trust Fund–supported countries, the team had collected data and prepared full country reports for seven additional countries, including Bangladesh, Kuwait, Macedonia, Nepal, Pakistan (Punjab and Sindh Provinces), Serbia, and Sri Lanka. The team also had performed benchmarking exercises, using a shorter, consolidated version of the questionnaires, in a group of countries in the East Asia and Middle East and North Africa regions of the World Bank and produced two comparative summary reports.

To build the evidence base on best practices in reforming and strengthening assessment systems, READ Trust Fund support has been used to commission a series of case studies that outline what various countries around the world have done to develop their assessment systems. Each of the commissioned case studies focuses on one of the three quality drivers identified in the conceptual framework—that is, enabling context, system alignment, or assessment quality. All 12 of the case studies commissioned to date have been presented at one of the READ Global Conferences, and some of them are being further developed so that they can be published under the newly created READ Working Paper series, which was launched in 2012.
completing a rigorous quality review, five case studies were published in 2012, including two on Chile and one each on Brazil, New Zealand, and Queensland, Australia.

Reviews and Research on Key Assessment Topics
A portion of the work under the global program consists of (i) reviews of the latest, high-quality research on key topics and issues in the area of student assessment, and (ii) collection and analysis of data on student assessment topics. As part of this workstream, the Education Note, “Measuring Learning—How Effective Student Assessment Systems Can Help Achieve Learning for All,” and the working paper, “Review of World Bank Support for Student Assessment Activities in Client Countries, 1998–2009,” were both published in 2012.

Training Sessions and Events
Since 2010, the SABER-Student Assessment team has participated in more than 20 events aimed at soliciting feedback from and training other donors, partners, and development practitioners on the tools and products developed through READ Trust Fund support. These events have provided a platform for further validation of the SABER-Student Assessment tools as well as greater visibility for the overall goals and work of the READ Trust Fund program on the international stage.

In collaboration with READ Fee-Based Services, a series of workshops and talks on student assessment and the SABER tools were delivered at the Moscow Higher School of Economics on March 5–7, 2012. Around 100 participants—including students, researchers, and faculty—were involved in these knowledge exchanges. Also in 2012, the READ Trust Fund Global Team presented a panel session on the SABER-Student Assessment tools and READ Trust Fund country activities at the annual conference of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), which took place on April 22–27 in San Juan, Puerto Rico.
Apart from these events, most training-related activity in 2012 was concentrated around the formalizing of materials from earlier READ Trust Fund–supported trainings as part of the World Bank’s newly established Education Staff Development Program (ESDP). In line with the World Bank’s education strategy of Learning for All, and related work on strengthening education systems, ESDP aims to enhance the knowledge of World Bank staff, other donors, and education practitioners on key topics in education, including how to effectively use the SABER tools. Student assessment was one of two topics chosen for the ESDP pilot. The first pilot took place in Washington, DC on May 7–8 and included a group of 28 World Bank education staff. A second pilot took place in Brisbane, Australia on July 11–12. This pilot had 52 participants, including World Bank staff, representatives from other development agencies, and teams from countries in the Pacific Region.

**SABER-LEARNING STANDARDS**

In 2011, background work for a potential SABER domain on learning standards was initiated with READ Trust Fund support. The background work for SABER-Learning Standards was outsourced to the American Institutes for Research (AIR) via a competitive bidding process. Similar to the work being carried out on SABER-Student Assessment, the focus was on developing an evidence-based methodology to benchmark learning standards policies and systems in countries around the world, with the goal of promoting stronger standards that would contribute to improved education quality and learning for all.

**Conceptual Framework and Diagnostic Tools**

In 2011, the AIR team completed a report on key characteristics of effective learning standards based on their review of the existing global evidence base and best practices. Subsequently, a set of questionnaires and rubrics were developed that could be used to collect and evaluate data on these aspects of a country’s learning standards. The tools allow for the collection of data on content, process, and performance standards in the areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. In 2012, the diagnostic tools were piloted, reviewed, and revised. A user’s guide was created to guide the data collection process. These products are undergoing further World Bank review and validation before becoming publically available as finalized SABER tools.

**Country Reports**

The piloting of the tools involved the collection of data and production of country reports for six pilot countries: Armenia, Jordan, Mozambique, Nepal, Peru, and Vietnam. The country reports summarize key findings and recommendations derived from application of the diagnostic tools. Ultimately, these country reports will be finalized using the formal template and procedures applied to all official SABER domains, including student assessment.

**Case Studies**

To build the evidence base in this topic area, and to capture lessons learned, a series of case studies that describe what various countries have done to develop and implement effective learning standards were commissioned. The six case study countries include Chile, India, Jordan, Namibia, New Zealand, and Singapore. These case studies were completed in 2012. After undergoing further World Bank review, they will be published as part of the READ Working Paper series.
GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE SHARING

At the global level, the program works to identify opportunities to share lessons and best practices in the field of learning assessment with READ Trust Fund–supported and other developing countries. These activities are meant to enhance the program’s work at the country level and increase overall awareness of best practices in assessment.

READ Trust Fund Sponsored Events

In 2012, the READ Trust Fund was a co-sponsor of the 38th IAEA Conference. This conference, which took place from September 17–21 in Astana, Kazakhstan, drew more than 320 participants from 40 different countries. The majority of the participants were practitioners and researchers involved in various assessment projects. The READ Trust Fund and CICED—through the assistance of READ Fee-Based Services—organized several panel sessions on such topics as: (i) assessment-related tools being developed with READ support, (ii) activities being implemented by READ Trust Fund–supported countries, and (iii) the creation of a new assessment association, the Eurasian Association for Educational Assessment (EAOKO) (see page 18). The event provided an excellent opportunity to share the work being carried out under the READ program, and to connect with leaders in the global assessment community.

As agreed by the READ Council, in lieu of a READ Global Conference, two READ Trust Fund Regional Workshops were held in 2012—one in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region (Astana, Kazakhstan, September 19) and one in the Africa region (Maputo, Mozambique, December 3–5). The target audiences for each workshop were delegations and World Bank Task Teams from the eight countries receiving targeted support at the country level under the READ Trust Fund. The first workshop in Astana brought together teams from Armenia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Vietnam; the second workshop in Maputo brought together teams from Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Zambia (see Appendix 2).

Knowledge Dissemination

The READ Trust Fund has engaged in a wide range of activities to disseminate the key messages of the program, highlight the role of Russia as a donor, capture READ Trust Fund–supported country achievements, and share the knowledge products developed at the global level. This has been done through various channels—producing a video, which highlights the importance of assessment and education quality, creating a website dedicated to READ Trust Fund program activities (www.worldbank.org/readtf), disseminating stories on READ Trust Fund activities through internal/external World Bank websites, establishing a working paper series on topics related to student assessment, and disseminating READ Trust Fund–supported publications at international events. During 2012, more than 2,275 print copies of READ Working Papers were disseminated, in addition to almost 1,000 copies of volumes in the National Assessments of Educational Achievement series.

To facilitate the use of global products by countries receiving READ Trust Fund support, as well as by the Russian donor, considerable effort has been made to translate a significant amount of material (including a video, conference materials, and publications) into both Russian and Portuguese. In 2012, the “What Matters Most for Student Assessment Systems” Framework Paper was translated, as were several working
papers. These translations have been widely disseminated through key partners such as CICED, the Russian Training Center in Moscow, and the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences.

National Assessments of Educational Achievement Series
The READ Trust Fund has been supporting the publication of a five-volume series on key concepts in national assessments of student achievement levels. These concepts include policy issues to address when designing and carrying out assessments, test development, sampling, data cleaning, statistics, report writing, and the use of results to improve educational quality. Volumes 3 (published in 2012) and 4 (forthcoming) in English are being finalized with READ Trust Fund support, and the series is being translated into Portuguese and Russian to facilitate its use in READ Trust Fund–supported countries. (CICED is overseeing the Russian translations.) By the end of 2012, Volumes 1, 2, 3, and 5 had all been translated into Portuguese.

Other Collaboration
Through the READ Trust Fund, the World Bank and the Governing Board of OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) have been working together to find ways to adapt the PISA tests so that low-income countries can more readily benefit from them. With READ Trust Fund support, the testing company, ETS, has developed a new reading component skills assessment (covering vocabulary, sentence processing, and passage comprehension) that was made available as an international option for the PISA 2012 survey. It is expected that this tool will help to improve the information value of PISA at the lower end of the achievement scale.

Another means of collaboration has been through participation in the Learning Metrics Task Force. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and the Center for Universal Education at Brookings have joined efforts to convene a task force that is investigating the feasibility of identifying global learning competencies and measures at the early childhood, primary, and post-primary levels. The first of these meetings took place in New York in September 2012. The READ Trust Fund Program Manager is participating in the meetings and the work of the task force, including sharing knowledge, tools, and experiences accumulated under the READ Trust Fund program.

PROGRAM COORDINATION
In order to coordinate the large work program under the READ Trust Fund, the team organizes occasional retreats and holds regular meetings to monitor program implementation and ensure that the global- and country-level work inform each other and are well aligned. The READ Council, comprised of Russian authorities and World Bank education leaders, meets annually to provide guidance on the strategic direction of the overall READ Program, including the READ Trust Fund. Additionally, the READ Trust Fund team has organized occasional partnership meetings with the Russian authorities, READ Fee-Based Services, and CICED to identify program synergies and areas for cross collaboration.
In 2012, two READ Council meetings took place. The first meeting was held in January in Hanoi, Vietnam, with the aim of giving READ Council members the opportunity to see READ Trust Fund-supported country activities on the ground. As a follow-up to discussions begun in Hanoi, a second meeting took place in Moscow in November. These opportunities for information sharing across programs resulted in several collaborative efforts, such as organizing a study tour to Vietnam for Russian experts; co-sponsoring the 38th IAEA Conference and preparing READ-related panel sessions; encouraging broad participation in the EAOKO launch event; and identifying ways to disseminate READ Trust Fund knowledge products and incorporate them into READ Fee-Based Services capacity-building activities in Russia. The READ Trust Fund, READ Fee-Based Services, and CICED teams communicate regularly and are continually looking for value-added ways to work together.

**Box 2. Eurasian Association for Educational Assessment (EAOKO)**

The READ Program consists of two main components: the READ Trust Fund and READ Fee-Based Services. The primary objective of READ Fee-Based Services is to develop the capacity of Russians, and CICED in particular, to engage in international development. Since its inception in 2008, CICED has served as a network organization to bring together Russian expertise in assessment and quality management in education. In 2012, CICED initiated the creation of a new association to unite expertise in Russia and countries throughout Eurasia.

The Eurasian Association for Educational Assessment (EAOKO) was founded to consolidate, expand, and promote the capacity of Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States in the area of education quality assessment. EAOKO aims to serve as a platform for creating, discussing, and disseminating best practices in education quality assessment. The association intends to bring together a community of researchers, education professionals, and policy makers to participate in conferences/workshops/roundtables, produce a peer-reviewed journal entitled “Education Quality in Eurasia,” and conduct cross-country research and monitoring in education quality. The launch event, which took place in November 2012, attracted more than 50 education officials, assessment practitioners, and academics from throughout Russia and several countries in Eurasia.

COUNTRY-LEVEL WORK

READ Trust Fund-supported programs are underway in eight countries—Angola, Armenia, Ethiopia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mozambique, Tajikistan, Vietnam, and Zambia. World Bank Task Team Leaders and Country Teams are working closely with their respective government counterparts to implement a set of agreed-upon activities to further develop and strengthen the existing assessment systems in these countries.

MONITORING AND TRACKING PROGRESS

Establishing a sound assessment system is not easily accomplished within a few years. Even the best-performing countries have taken decades to firmly establish their student assessment systems and effectively use results in ways that improve overall education quality. The benchmarking tools developed as part of the SABER-Student Assessment program have contributed greatly to an understanding of what it takes to improve a country’s assessment system. These tools make it possible to break down the various components into manageable steps by identifying key indicators, defining levels of development on each indicator, and describing what it takes to reach each level.

In order for the READ Trust Fund program to be able to demonstrate clear, measureable results, a decision was made to create a results framework and identify key indicators against which to measure progress. The
READ Trust Fund Results Framework draws heavily on the benchmarking tools created under SABER-Student Assessment and summarizes key indicators common across all four assessment types (see Table 2).

In 2011, once the SABER-Student Assessment tools were fully developed, the READ Trust Fund program team applied them to data collected from the country self-diagnosis exercises conducted in 2009 to establish baselines in all eight READ Trust Fund-supported countries. Then, in 2012, to create a clear idea of the progress and results one would expect by the end of the READ Trust Fund program, the team conducted a forecasting exercise. The same tools used to create the baseline were applied to the activities outlined in each country’s action plan. As a result, the program team was able to establish the expected level of progress and impact in each assessment area if all activities in each country’s action plan were fully implemented.

Many of the READ Trust Fund-supported countries began with very latent assessment systems or systems that were just emerging. The forecasting exercise demonstrated that, with READ support, all of these countries will be able to develop parts of their assessment systems in significant ways and lay a strong foundation for future work. Using the benchmarking tools and READ Trust Fund Results Framework, it will be possible to clearly demonstrate the level of progress achieved by each country against their baseline by the end of the program.

The following section includes two-page summaries of the cumulative progress achieved by December, 2012 for each READ Trust Fund-supported country. For each country, a table shows their baseline results, progress to date, and the expected level of development for each assessment type by the end of the program. Figure 6 describes the key elements included in these country tables.
Table 2. READ Trust Fund Results Framework and Key Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enabling Context (EC)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EC1—Setting clear policies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is a formal document that provides guidelines about assessment activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There is a formal document that is available to key stakeholders and the public.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EC2—Having strong leadership</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Key stakeholders support the assessment activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There is key stakeholder support for continuous improvement of assessment activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EC3—Having regular budget/funds for assessment activities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is a line item in the government education budget for assessment activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There is a line item in the government education budget that provides adequate funding in major areas, including design, administration, data processing, and reporting.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EC4—Having strong organizational structures</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is an agency, institution, or unit with the mandate to carry out assessment activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The assessment agency, institution, or unit is accountable to a clearly recognizable body.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EC5—Having effective human resources</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is a team of people with the requisite skills/capacity to carry out assessment activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There are opportunities available to build assessment capacity—for example, courses/training on test development, sampling, and so forth.</td>
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<tr>
<th>System Alignment (SA)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SA1—Aligning the assessment with learning goals</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is a clear, common understanding among key stakeholders of what the assessment activities measure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment activities are aligned with an official curriculum/learning standards that outlines what students are expected to learn.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SA2—Providing opportunities to learn about assessment activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are training sessions/courses for teachers to learn about the assessment activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers are involved in some aspect(s) of assessment-related activities.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Assessment Quality (AQ)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AQ1—Ensuring quality</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is formal documentation about the technical aspects of the assessment activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment results are deemed valid and reliable by key stakeholders.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AQ2—Ensuring effective use of assessment results</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment results are disseminated in meaningful ways to key stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment results are used to promote and inform students’ learning.</td>
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</table>

Source: READ Trust Fund.
BACKGROUND

The development objective of the READ Trust Fund program in Angola is “to improve the institutional and technical capacity of Angola’s Ministry of Education in the field of assessment of student learning outcomes, while developing a culture of use of assessment results to inform interventions aimed at improving the quality of education.” The baseline diagnostic showed that Angola’s assessment system was at a very latent stage of development. With READ Trust Fund support, Angola initially chose to focus on the weakest area, NLSA. Based on the success of the first two phases of the program, Angola decided to continue the work on NLSA, but also add activities aimed at strengthening Classroom Assessment. It is expected that, by the end of READ, Angola will have made significant progress in laying a strong foundation for NLSA and Classroom Assessment activities.

PROGRESS BY KEY INDICATORS

Angola began the READ program with a weak assessment culture, no full-time staff trained in assessment, and a very small assessment unit within the Ministry of Education. Hence, the key focus of READ Trust Fund support has been to build a new Assessment Unit within the Ministry of Education capable of carrying out NLSA activities. By 2012, the team had successfully implemented their first large-scale EGRA and developed concrete plans to use the results to design various interventions to improve learning outcomes in reading. Table 3 indicates overall progress to date based on achievements in the key indicator areas being tracked under the READ Trust Fund. A detailed breakdown of this progress, by indicator area, is provided in the below narrative.

Strong Leadership

High-level education officials, including several Vice Ministers of Education, have consistently provided strong support for the assessment activities being implemented with READ Trust Fund support. In 2010, a workshop led by three Vice Ministers of Education was held to discuss the findings of the country’s self-diagnosis and validate the action plan. The Vice Minister responsible for overseeing assessment activities regularly meets with the Assessment Group and has led all of the Angolan delegations participating in the READ Global Conferences and the study visit to Brazil.

Regular Budget

In 2010, a line item for assessment activities was created in the education budget. Since then, a regular annual budget of around US$1 million has been allocated to support the development of Angola’s assessment system.

Strong Organizational Structures

In 2010, the Ministry of Education mandated the creation of a new Assessment Unit with a dedicated team of 14 staff. The Assessment Unit has been allocated space within the Ministry, and government funds have been used to equip the team with laptops, software, and a car.

Effective Human Resources

Thus far, capacity-building activities have primarily focused on training Assessment Unit staff in the skills necessary to implement EGRA. In 2010, staff participated in three different workshops—on sampling, data
entry, and data cleaning and analysis—to prepare for the pilot exercise. After the pilot, the team participated in another three workshops to prepare for the full-scale EGRA. During these additional workshops, the staff reviewed the EGRA instruments, created the final sample design, and received additional training on data collection and software. A total of 75 teachers and teacher trainees also were trained in how to administer the assessment.

Education officials and Assessment Unit staff also have attended international conferences, participated in a study tour, and held a national workshop on National Examinations. Each year, a delegation of five to six education officials has participated in the READ Global Conferences. In early 2011, 21 Ministry of Education staff took part in a study visit to Brazil to learn from the country’s assessment systems and quality improvement efforts. In order to share these lessons with all key stakeholders, a three-day conference on NLSA and National Examinations was held at the end of 2011. The conference included more than 150 participants from the Ministry of Education, 18 provincial governments, and teacher training institutes. Most recently, in 2012, six Ministry of Education representatives participated in the READ Regional Workshop in Maputo and delivered a presentation on how to effectively communicate results from NLSA activities.

**Assessment Quality**

As part of their capacity-building exercises, the Assessment Unit team was responsible for implementing EGRA on a national scale. In 2011, the team adapted the tools, created the sample, recruited and trained teacher trainees to implement the test, and oversaw the administration of EGRA in 144 schools throughout Angola’s 18 provinces. To create the sample, it was necessary to first develop a new database for collecting education statistics in Angola. In 2012, the team worked on data cleaning, analyzed the data, and prepared a report with the final results. This report establishes the first baseline data on learning outcomes in Angola. A workshop was held with 100 provincial education staff members to share and discuss the preliminary results and identify actions for moving forward.

**PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

The READ Trust Fund program in Angola is being implemented in phases. The activities for the third phase will take place over the course of the final two years of the program. These activities will include (i) further analysis of the EGRA results; (ii) development of pre- and in-service teacher training modules on Classroom Assessment; (iii) additional training on item writing and test development for the Assessment Unit; and (iv) production of materials (such as a video, brochures, and teacher training materials) to promote reading and address areas identified as weak as a result of the EGRA exercise.
BACKGROUND

The development objective of the READ Trust Fund program in Armenia is “to enhance [the country’s] capacity to design, implement and use robust national and international assessment and examination systems, strengthen classroom assessment practices, and provide channels for feedback, policy analysis, and recommendations for actions to improve student learning outcomes.” The baseline diagnostic showed that while many of the necessary policies are in place for the various assessment types, there is a need to focus on capacity building and improving implementation. With READ Trust Fund support, Armenia has chosen to build capacity across all four assessment types—Classroom Assessment, Examinations, NLSA, and ILSA. It is expected that, by the end of the program, Armenia will have made significant progress in the area of NLSA and improvements in Classroom Assessment, Examinations, and ILSA as well.

PROGRESS BY KEY INDICATORS

Armenia was invited to become a READ Trust Fund-recipient country in 2011. Since then, Armenia has conducted a review of its assessment system, developed an action plan, and started implementing its first set of activities. Table 4 indicates overall progress to date based on achievements in the key indicator areas being tracked by the READ Trust Fund program. A detailed breakdown of this progress, by indicator area, is provided in the below narrative.

Effective Human Resources

In Armenia, the READ Trust Fund program is supporting a number of capacity-building activities. One of these is the development of a training course/module on Classroom Assessment and Examinations for pre- and in-service teachers. In 2012, two reports were produced on this topic. The first report identifies and evaluates current opportunities for pre- and in-service teacher training on Classroom Assessment in Armenia. The second report outlines different options for revising/designing pre- and in-service teacher training on Classroom Assessment in Armenia that address the country’s needs and incorporate international best practices. In the area of NLSA, an intensive training program for the Assessment Testing Center (ATC) staff, university academics, and graduate-level students is being developed. The first training module “National Assessment for Educational Policymakers” will take place in early 2013.

Delegations of representatives from Armenia’s Ministry of Education and other key agencies have participated in a number of international events on assessment. Shortly after joining the READ Trust Fund program, a delegation of five education officials represented Armenia at the 2011 READ Global Conference. In 2012, four Armenian education specialists attended the IAEA Conference and READ Regional Workshop in Kazakhstan, where they delivered presentations on the READ Trust Fund program in Armenia and Armenia’s experience in teacher training on Classroom Assessment. In 2012, the Acting Director of the ATC also participated in the launch of EAOKO in Moscow. Also in 2012, the Head of the Trainings Department of the ATC attended courses as part of the Master’s program in Educational Evaluation and Assessment at the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences in Russia. Additionally, READ funds were used to support the participation of one education official at a seminar on “Contemporary issues in planning and formation of rankings in education.” All of these events have enhanced Armenia’s understanding of key issues in assessment and further developed its capacity to carry out assessment activities.
Table 4: Armenia’s Assessment System: Baseline Results (2011), Expected Level of Development (2014), and Progress to Date (2012)

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<th>Latent</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Assessment</td>
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<td>ILSA</td>
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Note: Armenia joined the program in 2011 so the timeline for program implementation is 2011–14, rather than 2009–14.

Alignment with Learning Goals

The READ Trust Fund is supporting the application of the CICED-sponsored ICT Literacy Test to grade 9 students in Armenia to assess their competencies in using modern information and computer technologies. In 2012, a plan for the pilot was developed and specialists were hired to oversee and implement this activity.

Opportunities to Learn about Assessment Activities

Initially, Armenia had planned to participate in PISA 2015. With READ Trust Fund support, a National Project Manager attended the first PISA 2015 meeting. However, the government subsequently decided not to participate in PISA 2015, and instead to focus on other ongoing assessment activities.

Quality Assurance

In 2012, with the help of an international consultant, two reports were prepared as part of a feasibility study on introducing computer adaptive testing (CAT) for the Unified Examination in Armenia. One report outlines the definition, use, and implementation of CAT while the other specifies the Armenian government’s priorities and goals in introducing CAT for the Unified Examination.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

With READ Trust Fund support, Armenia will continue to build on the momentum generated during its first year and implement the range of activities outlined in its action plan. In 2013 and 2014, it is expected that major activities will include: (i) development and implementation of a course on Classroom Assessment and Examinations for pre- and in-service teachers; (ii) development and implementation of a training program on Large-Scale Assessments for ATC staff, policy makers, and academics; (iii) development of a Master’s program on educational measurement and assessment in Armenia; (iv) piloting and full-scale implementation of the CICED-sponsored ICT Literacy Test; and (v) analysis of TIMSS 2011 results and preparations for TIMSS 2015.
BACKGROUND
The development objective of the READ Trust Fund program in Ethiopia is “to help strengthen existing or develop new institutions and systems for measuring and assessing student achievement, with a view to improving education quality and student learning outcomes.” The 2009 baseline diagnostic indicated that both Classroom Assessment and ILSA activities were at a latent stage of development, while NLSA was emerging, and Examinations were established. Coordinating with other donors working on the ground, it was determined that READ Trust Fund–supported activities would focus primarily on NLSA, Examinations, and School Inspection. (School Inspection contributes directly to education quality, but is not one of the cross-cutting areas being tracked under the READ Results Framework.) It is expected that by the end of READ, Ethiopia will have made significant progress in establishing a system for NLSA and School Inspection activities and will have substantially improved its already-established system for Examinations.

PROGRESS BY KEY INDICATORS
The baseline data revealed consistent weaknesses in Ethiopia’s assessment system in such areas as policy frameworks, institutional arrangements, and capacity to carry out assessment activities. Hence, the key focus of READ Trust Fund support has been to develop formal policy frameworks, establish clear institutional arrangements, and conduct rigorous capacity-building exercises. Table 5 indicates overall progress to date based on achievements in these and other key indicator areas being tracked by the READ Trust Fund. A detailed breakdown of this progress, by indicator area, is provided in the below narrative.

Clear Policies
By 2012, detailed diagnostic exercises had been completed in all three target areas—NLSA, Examinations, and School Inspection. Based on the findings and recommendations in these reports, a draft policy and procedural framework for NLSA, a draft policy framework for National Examinations, and a draft framework and guidelines for national School Inspection had been created. Activities are underway to formalize these policy documents.

Strong Leadership
In 2010 and 2011, workshops were held to discuss the baseline diagnostic reports for NLSA and School Inspection. The workshop on NLSA included 50–60 Ministry of Education leaders at both the central and regional levels as well as donor representatives. The workshop on School Inspection included the Education Minister, donor representatives, and School Inspection staff. During the workshops, the diagnostic reports were validated and plans for action endorsed. In 2012, another workshop on School Inspection was held, this time with around 20 Ministry of Education leaders at both the central and regional levels. The workshop was held to review the School Inspection framework and guidelines, and to provide initial training on how to implement them.

Regular Budget
In the past, funding for NLSA activities was somewhat irregular. With the establishment of the National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency (NEAEA) in 2011, a dedicated line item was created for the NLSA program. As of 2012, NLSA activities receive a regular annual budget.
Strong Organizational Structures

In 2012, a new agency (NEAEA), with responsibility for both NLSA and National Examinations, was created. The agency is autonomous and led by a board. Eight NEAEA staff members are fully dedicated to NLSA. Also in 2012, a national Directorate for School Inspection was established in the Ministry of Education. The directorate has 10 staff fully dedicated to School Inspection. These institutional arrangements are creating a stronger enabling context in which to carry out further institutional-strengthening activities.

Effective Human Resources

To date, capacity-building activities have included attendance at international conferences, study visits, and specialized training exercises. Delegations of five to six staff working on NLSA, National Examinations, and School Inspection have participated in the READ Global Conferences, a Uses of Assessment Information Workshop in South Africa, and the 2012 READ Regional Workshop for Africa. These events have enhanced participants’ understanding of key issues in assessment and the importance of education quality. In 2011, a study tour to Ghana provided three Ministry of Education staff with an opportunity to learn how another country conducts School Inspections. In early 2012, five NEAEA staff participated in a study tour to South Africa to learn about the country’s assessment practices, and to identify lessons for Ethiopia. In the last half of 2012, 59 NEAEA technical staff received in-depth technical training in the areas of assessment frameworks, item writing and item bank construction, sampling, test administration, data analysis, and reporting assessment results. This included long-distance training and a short stay for key staff at ETS in Princeton, New Jersey.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

In order to reach the expected level of development of Ethiopia’s assessment system by the end of READ, there are several activities that still need to take place. In 2013, activities will focus on: (i) finalizing the policy frameworks and guidelines that were developed for NLSA, Examinations, and School Inspection; (ii) piloting the School Inspection framework and guidelines; (iii) development of an item bank for National Examinations and NLSA; (iv) organizing study visits for NLSA, Examinations, and School Inspection staff; and (v) providing additional training for NLSA staff on sampling, data analysis, and reporting NLSA results.

Table 5: Ethiopia’s Assessment System: Baseline Results (2009), Expected Level of Development (2014), and Progress to Date (2012)

<table>
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<th>Established</th>
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<tr>
<td>ILSA</td>
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Note: Classroom Assessment and ILSA are not areas of funded activity under the current READ Trust Fund program in Ethiopia.
BACKGROUND

The key objective of the READ Trust Fund program in the Kyrgyz Republic is “to help strengthen the capacity of institutions that are responsible for measuring student learning outcomes and using information from those assessments to improve teaching and learning.” The 2009 baseline diagnostic showed that Examinations, NLSA, and ILSA were all emerging, while the weakest area was Classroom Assessment. With READ Trust Fund support, the Kyrgyz Republic has chosen to focus primarily on Classroom Assessment, while also making concerted efforts to continue to strengthen the other assessment types as well. It is expected that by the end of READ, the Kyrgyz Republic will have made significant progress in developing Classroom Assessment practices and minor improvements in Examinations, NLSA, and ILSA.

PROGRESS BY KEY INDICATORS

Implementation of the READ Trust Fund program was seriously delayed due to the April 7 revolution in 2010. However, in April 2011, the program began to get back on track and steps were taken to complete the activities previously begun under READ-Phase I. The first grant was fully disbursed and then closed in June 2012. To take forward the Action Plan developed under Phase I, two additional grants (one Bank-Executed for grant supervision and one Recipient-Executed to fund key activities) were prepared in 2012. The Recipient-Executed grant is currently undergoing the government’s extensive process of review and ratification. It is expected to become effective in early 2013. Table 6 indicates overall progress to date according to the key indicator areas being tracked under the READ Trust Fund. A detailed breakdown of this progress, by indicator area, is provided in the below narrative.

Clear Policies

In June 2011, more than 40 representatives from all major stakeholder groups, including the Ministry of Education and Science, the Kyrgyz Academy of Education, the Educational Committee of the Kyrgyz Parliament, the Educational Assessment Unit, education NGOs, as well as development partners and OICED experts, participated in two workshops. During the workshops, discussions took place to validate the findings of the self-diagnosis, seek guidance on the proposed vision and objectives moving forward, and develop broad stakeholder support for the action plan.

Strong Organizational Structures

In 2009, international experts conducted a detailed analysis of the two institutions formally charged with the responsibility of carrying out assessment activities—the National Testing Center and the Kyrgyz Academy of Education’s Education Assessment Unit. The analysis assessed the strengths and weaknesses of these two institutions and provided recommendations for further strengthening and alignment. This report was a key input into the development of the final action plan.

Effective Human Resources

For the Kyrgyz Republic, capacity-building activities have included attendance at international conferences, study visits, and specific training courses in assessment. Delegations of five to seven Ministry of Education
and Parliamentary officials have participated in the three READ Global Conferences and, most recently, the 2012 IAEA Conference and READ Regional Workshop in Astana, Kazakhstan. At the latter event, the Kyrgyz delegation delivered a presentation on the strategies that they are using to improve Classroom Assessment practices. In April 2011, a group of seven key education leaders went on a study visit to the Central Institute for Test Development (CITO) in the Netherlands where they learned how to use large-scale assessments to improve learning, and how to conduct independent, summative Classroom Assessments. From 2009–2012, seven assessment specialists from the Kyrgyz Academy of Education and the Ministry of Education and Science participated in a series of trainings offered by the Russian Academy of Education’s Training Center in Moscow. The participants in these trainings have gained a better understanding of how to design an effective assessment system at both the national and subnational levels. In November 2012, a small delegation also participated in the launch of EAOKO in Moscow.

Effective Use of Results

In 2011, two international assessment specialists conducted an in-depth secondary analysis of the Kyrgyz Republic’s results from PISA 2006 and 2009 and the country’s 2007 and 2009 National Sample-Based Assessment exercises. This study aimed to identify the main factors and determinants underpinning the scores in reading, math, and science, and to provide recommendations for policy action.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

As soon as the program receives the required parliamentary ratification (expected in early 2013), the program will begin implementing three major activities. These activities include: (i) building capacity for Classroom Assessment and training more than 5,500 teachers in summative and formative assessment practices; (ii) administering a NLSA in grade 4; and (iii) implementing a new and improved school leaving Examination at grade 11.
MOZAMBIQUE

BACKGROUND

The development objective of the READ Trust Fund program in Mozambique is “to improve the institutional and technical capacity of Mozambique’s Ministry of Education in the field of assessment of student learning outcomes. This includes improving the quality of assessment work, the use of the results, the alignment of assessment-related activities, and helping to create an assessment culture where student learning information is valued by Ministry of Education personnel and policymakers at all levels.” The 2009 baseline diagnostic showed that Classroom Assessment, Examinations, and ILSA were all emerging, while the least-developed area was NLSA. With READ Trust Fund support, Mozambique is focusing on building capacity within the Ministry of Education for work in all assessment areas (apart from ILSA) and, in particular, strengthening the areas of Classroom Assessment and Examinations. Other donors are also funding work in the area of NLSA. It is expected that by the end of the program, Mozambique will have made the most progress in Classroom Assessment while significantly improving Examinations and NLSA as well.

PROGRESS BY KEY INDICATORS

In Mozambique, READ Trust Fund–supported activities have focused on addressing gaps in the Ministry of Education’s institutional and technical capacity to carry out NLSA and Classroom Assessments, and on improving system alignment by establishing education system quality indicators. Thus far, the key indicator areas being tracked by the READ Trust Fund program that show the most improvement are effective human resources, alignment with learning goals, and assessment quality. Table 7 overall progress to date based on achievements in these areas. A detailed breakdown of this progress, by indicator area, is provided in the below narrative.

Strong Leadership/Strong Organizational Structures

In 2009, the self-diagnosis report and action plan were endorsed during a workshop with key Ministry of Education officials and international partners. In 2010, another national workshop, which included 50 key officials from the Ministry of Education, highlighted the need to establish a national assessment system with clear linkages to the work of several units in the Ministry, including those responsible for planning, curriculum development, and examinations. As a result, a decision was made to include a specific line item for assessment in the annual education budget and to reorganize the National Institute of Education (INDE) to have a separate unit exclusively dedicated to assessment.

Effective Human Resources

To date, capacity-building activities have included short courses on assessment topics for 10–15 education leaders, a Master’s degree in Assessment for nine staff from the Ministry of Education, study visits, and attendance at international events on assessment.

- The short courses on assessment have taken place in three phases. In 2011, a team of 10–15 staff from INDE, the Examinations Council of Mozambique (CNECE), and universities traveled twice to Brazil to participate in short courses on topics such as test design, item analysis, statistical analysis, and proficiency scale development. In August 2012, the final course took place in Maputo and covered the topics of contextual data analysis, report writing, and dissemination strategies.

- The Master’s degree program in educational management and evaluation is a program through the Centro de Politicas Publicas e Avaliacao da Educacao in Brazil. The two-year program, which started in 2011, includes both on-line distance learning and face-to-face learning during which the participants travel to Brazil. When staff members complete this program in September 2013, it is expected that they will become key leaders on policy making and assessment design within the Ministry of Education.

- In 2010, 12 specialists from INDE and CNECE participated in a study visit to Brazil to learn about the country’s assessment agencies.
With READ Trust Fund support, delegations of five to six government officials have participated in several international assessment events. These events include the 2010 “Users and Uses of National Assessment Results Workshop” in South Africa; the 2011 Association for Educational Assessment (AEAA) Conference in Kenya; the READ Global Conferences in 2009, 2010, and 2011; and the 2012 impact evaluation workshop “Evaluating the Impact of Development Programs: Turning Promises into Evidence” in Ethiopia. Additionally, in December 2012, the READ Regional Workshop for Africa was held in Maputo and the Mozambique team had the chance to directly share their activities and experience with other African countries. These events have enhanced the understanding of key issues in assessment and how to use assessment results to improve education quality.

Alignment with Learning Goals

In 2011, the government created and field tested 70 draft education quality indicators with directors, teachers, and partners in six provinces. In 2012, the Ministry was in the process of finalizing these indicators and creating documents that summarize their use for a range of users. Additionally, in 2011, a team worked to create an assessment blueprint for writing test items for different topics in the national curriculum. A large bank of more than 600 test items is now available to draw from for various assessments.

Assessment Quality

Building on the expertise being developed through the various training activities, INDE has led the implementation of a grade 3 reading assessment exercise called “Provinha.” After the pre-pilot in 2011, INDE developed a complete test kit, including administration and interpretation manuals, a test booklet, and communication materials and worked with 68 schools in the Maputo Province to conduct a full pilot in both March and October 2012. The assessment is administered and scored by teachers and the results are intended to be used at the school level to improve teaching practices and student learning outcomes in reading. Based on the success of the 2012 pilot, the Ministry of Education has decided to scale up Provinha and related activities to two new districts in 2013. Additionally, an impact evaluation to determine the usefulness of Provinha and related in-service training activities will be conducted in 2013. Building on the impact evaluation workshop held in Ethiopia, a training program for 25 Ministry of Education staff directly involved with Provinha was held in Maputo in October 2012.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

In 2013 and 2014, READ Trust Fund–supported activities in Mozambique will be concentrated on scaling up the Provinha pilot, conducting an impact evaluation to assess the effects of Provinha when coupled with various types of early literacy interventions, and completion of the two-year Master’s degree in learning assessment.
BACKGROUND

The development objective of the READ Trust Fund program in Tajikistan is “to increase the capacity of the National Testing Center (NTC) to enable the sustainable introduction of Unified University Entrance Examinations (UEE) and national grade-level assessments with a long-term view to meeting international standards.” The 2009 baseline showed that Tajikistan’s overall assessment system was at a latent stage of development. Given the strong interest of the government in the area of UEE, a separate diagnostic was conducted to evaluate the current Examinations system in this area. The diagnostic found the existing system for UEE to be very weak. Hence, a decision was made to support the establishment of a new NTC in Tajikistan that would be responsible for developing and introducing a new system for UEE and, eventually, for carrying out NLSA activities as well.

PROGRESS BY KEY INDICATORS

Tajikistan’s new NTC is being supported through various funding streams, including the government’s own budget, the Open Society Institute, a World Bank education project, and the READ Trust Fund. READ Trust Fund support has been targeted to activities that involve reviewing the previous system; developing, piloting, and introducing the new UEE system; building the capacity of NTC staff and national assessment experts; and providing the necessary equipment. Thus far, key achievements have been made in strengthening the enabling context, such as developing clear policies, securing the requisite fiscal and human resources, and building local capacity. Table 8 indicates overall progress to date based on achievements in the key indicator areas being tracked under the READ Trust Fund. A detailed breakdown of this progress, by indicator area, is provided in the below narrative.

Clear Policies

At the beginning of the READ Trust Fund program, a NTC Master Plan of Action and UEE Operations Manual were drafted to ensure the appropriate regulatory and legal frameworks were in place. The NTC charter was revised and adopted by the government. In 2011, the NTC Master Plan was updated and information was collected from various universities to develop the UEE model. In 2012, when the government proposed the inclusion of an essay in the state language, a new financial plan was prepared and discussed.

Strong Leadership

The NTC and the new UEE system are fully supported by the government. In 2011, the UEE program was officially launched during a workshop with representatives from several key stakeholder groups, including the government, universities, civil society, and development partners’ representatives.

Regular Budget

In addition to various donor funds, the government has committed to allocate a certain amount of state funds for the NTC on an annual basis. In both 2011 and 2012, the NTC received US$200,000 of state funds for the rehabilitation of four regional offices, the provision of temporary office space, and cofinancing of NTC operational expenses and technical assistance hired under the READ Trust Fund.

Strong Organizational Structures

At the beginning of the READ program, the NTC had limited staff and no office space. By the end of 2012, temporary space for the NTC and four regional offices had been secured, and the NTC had recruited all 53 staff as outlined in the Master Plan. (The new NTC building will be constructed and partially equipped in 2013 with funds from a World Bank project.)
Effective Human Resources

NTC staff and Ministry of Education officials have participated in a variety of activities aimed at building capacity to carry out assessment activities and developing the new UEE system. With the support of other donor funds, staff members have participated in: (i) study trips to National Testing Centers in Azerbaijan, Russia, Ukraine, and Turkey; (ii) a series of trainings on assessment topics by the Russian Testing Center; and (iii) specific training in test development and data analysis. READ Trust Fund support has been used to facilitate the participation of four- to five-member delegations of key education officials at the READ Global Conferences, and, most recently, the 2012 IAEA and READ Regional Workshop in Kazakhstan. Also in 2012, two prospective NTC staff traveled to the Kyrgyz Republic to receive procurement training.

Alignment with Learning Goals

To ensure that the new UEE aligns well with established university admission requirements, the NTC developed a database with information from 29 universities (covering 340 specialties) about entrance rules, procedures, requirements, and admission plans. In 2012, these data were analyzed and used to design the UEE pilot.

Opportunities to Learn about Assessment Activities

A public relations and communications strategy to introduce the new UEE was developed with READ Trust Fund support. By the end of 2012, 35 articles had been published in local newspapers and posted on local and international websites.

Quality Assurance

In 2012, the NTC designed a pilot version of the new UEE and conducted a series of mini-pilots. The first of these took place from May 10–19 when pilot tests were given to 4,369 students from 64 different schools who were participating in training courses at various universities. Based on the government’s recent proposal to also include an essay portion, NTC later designed an essay section that was piloted in late October. Then, in December, 800 students in grade 11 participated in another mini-pilot to test other aspects of the Examination, such as registration and administration. NTC staff members are incorporating various lessons learned from these mini-pilots in preparation for a full-scale pilot in 2013.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

For the next two years, READ Trust Fund–supported activities in Tajikistan will be focused on carrying out a full-scale pilot of the UEE that incorporates all aspects of the process from beginning to end. Support also will be given to ensuring that equipment and IT systems are in place to ensure reliable administration and test security. Based on the outcome of the pilot, the NTC will finalize an overall framework and procedures for UEE implementation for the government to approve and to be used for implementation at the national level in 2014.

Table 8: Tajikistan’s Assessment System: Baseline Results (2009), Expected Level of Development (2014), and Progress to Date (2012)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Latent</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Established</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Assessment</td>
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<td>Examinations</td>
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<td>NLSA</td>
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<td>ILSA</td>
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Note: Classroom Assessment, NLSA, and ILSA are not areas of activity under the current READ Trust Fund program in Tajikistan. It is expected that eventually the NTC will also focus on NLSA.
BACKGROUND
The development objective of the READ Trust Fund program in Vietnam is “to strengthen and improve the effectiveness of its assessment system. The program supports Vietnam to enhance its capacity to conduct systemic assessments of learning outcomes and provide channels of feedback, policy analysis, and recommendations for actions to improve student learning outcomes.” The 2009 baseline showed that Vietnam’s most developed area was Classroom Assessment, even though this was only emerging. It was decided that, with READ Trust Fund support, Vietnam would focus its efforts on building capacity among a wide range of stakeholders (including teachers, school leaders, provincial departments, Ministry of Education and Science staff, and so forth) across all assessment types. Additionally, Vietnam is working to build assessment practices into their new curriculum for 2015 and strengthen their current system for Examinations. It is expected that by the end of READ, Vietnam will have made significant progress across all assessment types and will have built a strong foundation for future activities.

PROGRESS BY KEY INDICATORS
Vietnam has been focusing its efforts on ensuring that it has a system in place in which each stakeholder has the requisite knowledge to perform their expected role in assessment activities. Table 9 indicates overall progress to date in developing Vietnam's assessment system based on the key indicator areas being tracked by the READ Trust Fund program. A detailed breakdown of this progress, by indicator area, is provided in the below narrative.

Clear Policies
In order to accurately assess student learning outcomes, and assist teachers with their grading, the Department of Education Testing and Accreditation has been working together with the Primary Education Department, primary schools, and assessment experts to develop test matrices that are aligned with the curriculum, and to create first semester and end-of-year tests. Test matrices have been developed for Vietnamese and Math in grades 1–5, and Science and History/Geography in grades 4–5. Accompanying the matrices and tests are clear guidelines on their usage and a policy and regulatory framework that support these new procedures for evaluating student performance.

Effective Human Resources
With READ Trust Fund support, Vietnam has begun to develop an extensive capacity-building program in assessment. In 2012, a general competence framework for educational assessment was developed. This framework outlines the expected skills and knowledge in assessment for each key stakeholder. Based on this general framework, various training programs for education managers, pre- and in-service teachers, and assessment specialists within the testing and assessment units of the Ministry and Provincial Departments are being developed.

Each year, a delegation of five to six education officials has participated in the READ Global Conferences. Following these conferences, Vietnam has organized its own Annual READ Vietnam Conference to share lessons with all key stakeholders, discuss the overall work program, and share the findings of any recent activities. In 2012, a delegation of six education officials participated in the IAEA Conference and READ Regional Workshop in Kazakhstan. After these events, four different conferences, each with around 50 participants from universities, colleges, research and management institutes, local education departments, and different departments of the Ministry of Education and Training, were held throughout Vietnam to share the lessons learned in Kazakhstan and to discuss the proposed general competence framework. Ultimately, the proposed framework was endorsed and a plan was created to begin developing the various training programs.
With support from the READ Trust Fund, Vietnam registered to participate in its very first ILSA, PISA 2012. A team of Vietnamese officials participated in an introductory course in 2009, and then a second training in 2010 in Hong Kong SAR, China. (Funding to cover the costs of PISA implementation was provided by the Asian Development Bank.)

In 2012, two workshops were organized with the intended purposes of increasing capacity to develop test items and improving the quality of university entrance Examinations.

- On May 3–5, the Department of Testing and Accreditation hosted a workshop for 140 participants from high schools and universities across the country. The purpose of the workshop was to (i) train participants in how to write and analyze test items, and (ii) review the current test matrices and validate proposed multiple-choice items. As a result, item writers are better equipped to write test questions that align with the intended purpose of the Examination.

- The second workshop to discuss issues related to the reliability and validity of the results of university and college entrance tests was held on May 25–27. Over 50 participants were in attendance, including representatives from various departments within the Ministry of Education and Training, universities, and high schools. The purpose of this workshop was (i) to enhance participants’ understanding of testing theories, use of test matrices, item writing, and item analysis skills; and (ii) identify ways to improve the current process for developing university and college entrance tests.

Assessment Quality

Work is being done in two areas: (i) a mapping of current trends in assessment practices across the country, and (ii) piloting of new instruments that will provide better information on students at different levels in the system. In regards to (i), in 2011, a report on fiscal and human resources available for assessment activities, and another report on the utilization of assessment data, were completed. In regards to (ii), in 2012, an Early Development Index survey was conducted to measure the school readiness of preschool children in Vietnam. Ten early childhood education experts and education officials were trained in how to adapt the tool for Vietnam and how to conduct trainings for the provincial and district officers, who then trained preschool teachers to complete the questionnaires. After a pilot exercise, the instrument was rolled out in April to a population of 8,400 five-year-old children in 400 preschools in 54 of the 63 provinces in Vietnam.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

In 2013 and 2014, program activities in Vietnam will focus on: (i) developing training programs in educational assessment for different stakeholders; (ii) improving the quality of high school graduation and university entrance Examinations; (iii) creating a test item bank; and (iv) designing the new curriculum and textbooks to incorporate a competence-based assessment approach.
BACKGROUND

The development objective of the READ Trust Fund program in Zambia is “to help strengthen the capacity of its institutions responsible for measuring student learning outcomes and to ensure that findings from assessments are used to improve teaching and learning.” The 2009 baseline showed Zambia’s assessment system to be at an emerging level of development for all four assessment types. With READ Trust Fund support, Zambia opted to target specific activities within each assessment type that would allow its current system to evolve from emerging to established. This included activities such as quality reviews of current activities, further capacity building, and better use of assessment results to improve overall education quality. It is expected that by the end of READ, Zambia will have made sufficient progress to become nearly established in three different areas—Classroom Assessment, Examinations, and NLSA.

PROGRESS BY KEY INDICATORS

For Zambia, READ Trust Fund activities have been primarily focused on supporting the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) to strengthen its current assessment practices. Most of the activities thus far have been concentrated on strengthening human resources and building greater capacity to carry out Examinations and NLSA exercises. Table 10 indicates overall progress to date based on achievements in these and other key indicator areas being tracked by the READ Trust Fund. A detailed breakdown of this progress, by indicator area, is provided in the below narrative.

Strong Organizational Structures

The lack of an adequate information technology (IT) system has hampered ECZ’s ability to effectively store and retrieve data from previous assessments and to conduct further analyses. In 2012, an audit of ECZ’s IT systems was carried out to identify specific actions that ECZ can take to improve existing IT policies, practices, hardware, and software.

Effective Human Resources

With READ Trust Fund support, more than 1,000 teachers, ECZ staff, and representatives from the Ministry of Education have participated in events aimed at enhancing local capacity to effectively carry out assessment activities. These capacity-building activities have included participation in university courses, study tours, international conferences on assessment topics, and trainings on setting and marking examinations.

- In 2011, two ECZ staff responsible for carrying out NLSA activities attended a statistics course at the University of Michigan. This course covered the topics of sampling, basic and advanced statistical analysis, and report writing. Prior to the course, ECZ lacked the capacity to conduct its own sampling. As a result of the training, ECZ is less reliant on other government departments and can carry out their work more efficiently.

- To learn from the Caribbean Examinations Board, a team of ECZ staff traveled to Barbados in 2011. During this study visit, the team gained a greater understanding of how to use ICT in assessment, create item banks, improve candidate registration procedures, and use social media to distribute study materials and mitigate Examinations malpractice.

- READ has supported the participation of 13 ECZ and Ministry of Education staff in various international conferences on assessment topics. A delegation of five to six government representatives has participated in each of the READ Global Conferences. Delegations of key education officials also attended other international conferences, including the 2011 AEAA Conference in Kenya, the 2011 IAEA...
Conference in the Philippines, and the 2012 IAEA Conference in Kazakhstan. As a result, the participants have a greater awareness of best practices in using assessment results, regional integration, and how to address common assessment challenges. In 2012, a delegation of six ECZ staff attended the READ Regional Workshop in Mozambique, where they shared experiences with the other READ Trust Fund–supported countries in Africa and delivered a presentation on what Zambia is doing to ensure the quality of their Examinations system.

Over the past several years, Zambia’s education system has expanded dramatically. As a result, there has been a growing need to train many additional question setters and markers to assist with the Examinations in grades 7, 9, and 12. In 2011, a series of trainings were conducted. A total of 161 question setters received training in test design, construction, and item writing. Then, another training session on how to mark Examinations and detect and report cheating was delivered to more than 900 markers. After the completion of the Examinations cycle in early 2012, it was evident that the quality of the Examinations was much improved as a result of having many more trained staff. In 2012, an additional training took place to train more than 100 question setters in test item writing for Zambian languages.

Assessment Quality
To improve the quality of the NLSA in grade 5, an in-depth technical review is being conducted by an international assessment expert. This review will be used to make improvements to the current NLSA in grade 5, identify areas where ECZ staff is in need of additional training, and possibly to design future NLSA exercises in other grades. In 2012, all data necessary for the review and analysis was collected and delivered to the consultant. The completed review is expected in early 2013.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES
The READ Trust Fund–supported program in Zambia will continue until September 30, 2013. During 2013, efforts will be made to implement all of the remaining activities, including: (i) training for all 360 Standards Officers on the basic principles of assessment; (ii) training in the use of SPSS software to analyze assessment results; (iii) completion of the technical review of the grade 5 NLSA and training conducted in weak areas; (iv) communication activities to share the 2012 NLSA results; (v) development of a revised Examination syllabus for one subject area; and (vi) development of a module on Classroom Assessment to be used at Teacher Training Institutions.
LOOKING AHEAD

Considerable efforts will be made during the final two years of the program to formalize and widely disseminate the training materials and global knowledge products developed so far. Through the support of the READ Trust Fund, a considerable body of knowledge on how to build an effective assessment system has been generated. The benchmarking tools have proven effective in helping countries determine the current level of development of their assessment systems, and identify specific activities to help strengthen those systems. Formal training modules, which incorporate both e-learning and face-to-face training, will be developed to encourage the use of these tools, and to share the knowledge generated with an even wider audience.

Progress at the country level will continue to be tracked according to the key indicators outlined in the READ Results Framework and the SABER-Student Assessment diagnostic tools. While it takes considerable time and resources for an assessment system to reach an established level of development, monitoring country progress according to the key indicator areas allows one to break this progress down into measureable areas. Doing so, by the end of the program, it will be possible to determine the level of progress and impact of the READ Trust Fund in each assessment area.

Program activity at the country level will continue to accelerate. Drawing on several newly created assessment institutions, newly trained staff with greater capacity and expertise in assessment, and recently developed assessment tools, a number of pilot assessment exercises will be implemented in READ Trust Fund–supported countries during the coming year. In countries like Armenia and Vietnam, extensive training programs will continue to be developed and implemented on a national scale. Countries which recently completed assessment exercises, like Angola and Zambia, will roll out large communications campaigns to disseminate the results of these assessment exercises and find ways to energize education leaders, teachers, and parents to work together to improve education quality.
# LIST OF ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEAA</td>
<td>Association for Educational Assessment in Africa</td>
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<td>AIR</td>
<td>American Institutes for Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATC</td>
<td>Assessment Testing Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>Computer Adaptive Testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>CICED</td>
<td>Center for International Cooperation in Education Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>CITO</td>
<td>Central Institute for Test Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNECE</td>
<td>Examinations Council of Mozambique</td>
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<td>EAOKO</td>
<td>Eurasian Association for Educational Assessment</td>
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<td>ECA</td>
<td>Europe and Central Asia Region</td>
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<td>ECZ</td>
<td>Examinations Council of Zambia</td>
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<td>EGRA</td>
<td>Early Grade Reading Assessment</td>
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<td>ESDP</td>
<td>Education Staff Development Program</td>
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<td>IAEA</td>
<td>International Association for Educational Assessment</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communications Technology</td>
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<td>ILSA</td>
<td>International Large-Scale Assessment</td>
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<td>INDE</td>
<td>National Institute of Education in Mozambique</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>LMTF</td>
<td>Learning Metrics Task Force</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEAEA</td>
<td>National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLSA</td>
<td>National Large-Scale Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTC</td>
<td>National Testing Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>PISA</td>
<td>Programme for International Student Assessment</td>
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<td>READ</td>
<td>Russia Education Aid for Development</td>
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<td>SABER</td>
<td>Systems Approach for Better Education Results</td>
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<td>TIMSS</td>
<td>Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study</td>
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<td>UEE</td>
<td>Unified University Entrance Examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>UIS</td>
<td>UNESCO Institute for Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization</td>
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APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY OF ASSESSMENT TERMS

**Classroom Assessment:** A variety of tools and procedures employed by teachers and students in the course of daily classroom activity to collect and interpret written, oral, and other forms of evidence on student learning or achievement (for example, oral questioning and feedback, homework assignments, student presentations, diagnostic tests, and end-of-unit quizzes). Provides “real time” information to support the teaching-learning process.

**Educational Assessment System:** A group of interconnected policies, structures, and practices for the generation and use of information on student learning or achievement.

**Formative Assessment:** Ongoing assessments, reviews, and observations in a classroom as part of the instructional process. Used to modify and validate instruction.

**National/International Assessments:** Also referred to as “large-scale assessments” or “large-scale surveys.” Designed to provide data on the achievements of students in a curriculum area, aggregated to provide an estimate of achievement levels in the education system as a whole at a particular age or grade level. Involves the administration of achievement tests either to a sample or a population of students. Teachers and others may be asked to provide background information which, when related to student achievement, can provide insights on how achievement is related to factors such as household characteristics and levels of teacher training.

**“Public” or “External” Examinations:** Tests that measure individual student achievement in relation to an official curriculum or other formal body of knowledge and skills. Results are used, alone or in combination with other information, to make highly consequential decisions about individual examinees, such as promotion to the next grade or admission to higher education. Also referred to as “high-stakes” tests.

**Standards:** Content standards are broadly stated expectations of what students should know or be able to do in particular subjects and grade levels. Performance standards are explicit descriptions of what students must know or be able do in order to demonstrate a particular level of proficiency on the content standards.

**Student Assessment:** The process of gathering and appraising information on what students know, understand, and can do in order to make an informed decision about what to do next in the educational process. Also referred to as “learning assessment,” “educational assessment,” or simply “assessment.”

**Summative Assessment:** Typically used to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs and services at the end of an academic year or other predetermined time, or to make a judgment of student competency after an instructional phase is complete.
APPENDIX 2: READ REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

38TH IAEA CONFERENCE AND READ REGIONAL WORKSHOP IN KAZAKHSTAN

38th IAEA Conference

READ Trust Fund–sponsored country delegations from Armenia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Vietnam traveled to Astana, Kazakhstan to participate in the 38th IAEA Conference and the READ Trust Fund Regional Workshop. Both of these events took place during the week of September 17–21, 2012. The IAEA conference drew more than 320 assessment practitioners and researchers from 40 different countries. As such, the event provided an excellent venue to discuss the READ program with a wider audience, and to connect with leaders in the global assessment community. The READ Trust Fund team worked closely with CICED to be cosponsors of this event and together they prepared two full days of plenary sessions on READ-funded activities.

On Monday, two 1.5 hour sessions were dedicated to CICED. These presentations captured the renewed energy of the organization over the past year; highlighted further developments of two new assessment tools (Student Achievement Monitoring [SAM] and ICT Literacy), and showcased the success of their capacity-building efforts to date in creating a new cadre of assessment professionals in Russia. The final session included the announcement of a brand new assessment association for Eurasia—EAOKO.

Then, on Tuesday, three 1.5 hour sessions were dedicated to the READ Trust Fund program. During the first session, Robin Horn spoke about the World Bank’s Education Strategy and the emphasis placed on measuring learning outcomes; Elena Ilina, from the Russian Ministry of Finance, stressed that international work in education, and assessment in particular, continues to be a high priority for Russia. The second session focused on the World Bank’s SABER program, providing an overview of this initiative, a description of the instruments
and tools that have been created in the area of student assessment, and a demonstration of how these tools have enabled the READ Trust Fund global team to identify key indicators for tracking progress during program implementation. In the final session, each READ country team in attendance was given the opportunity to articulate their action plans and share how READ Trust Fund support is helping their country improve education quality.

All of these sessions were well-attended—the audiences were fully engaged and expressed genuine interest in learning more about the various READ-funded activities.

**READ Regional Workshop for ECA and Vietnam**

The READ Regional Workshop was a one-day side event during the IAEA Conference. The READ Trust Fund global team invited assessment practitioners and others implementing READ-supported activities in four of the eight READ countries to participate in the workshop. The 34 participants at the September 19 workshop included delegations from Armenia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Vietnam, in addition to World Bank staff and representatives from CICED.

The primary aim of the workshop was to create an interactive environment that allowed the country teams to engage in South-South knowledge sharing. The specific objectives of the workshop were to i) support the four participating READ country teams in moving forward with the activities outlined in their READ action plans; ii) provide participating READ country teams with the opportunity to discuss and resolve key challenges in relation to those plans; and iii) provide an opportunity for the sharing of lessons learned and expertise across the four READ country teams. To encourage active participation, each team came prepared to discuss their experiences in a variety of assessment areas. Topics discussed included:

- **Large-Scale Assessment**, with a dual focus on (i) successful participation in international large-scale assessment exercises and (ii) reporting and using assessment information from large-scale assessments
- **Classroom Assessment**, with a focus on teacher training models
- **Examinations**, with a focus on ensuring quality and combating malpractice
- **Higher-Order Thinking Skills**, with a focus on approaches to assessing these skills

The country teams were eager to discuss and share experiences with each other. For example, based on their own prior experiences, Armenia and the Kyrgyz Republic were able to provide key advice to the
Vietnamese team, who were participating in their very first PISA exercise. It was encouraging to see the countries build off each other’s experiences and share lessons learned.

At the end of the workshop, each participant filled out an evaluation form. Participant evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. All IAEA READ session presentations and READ workshop materials have been posted on the READ Trust Fund website (www.worldbank.org/readtf).

**READ REGIONAL WORKSHOP IN MOZAMBIQUE**

The READ Trust Fund hosted a three-day READ Regional Workshop for African countries in Maputo, Mozambique from December 3–5. The workshop focused on supporting four country teams—Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Zambia—in moving forward with activities being funded under the READ Trust Fund program, providing them with the opportunity to discuss and resolve key challenges/issues in relation to those plans as well as share lessons learned and expertise. The 37 participants included country teams of 5–10 assessment practitioners implementing READ activities, World Bank staff, and representatives from the Russian embassy.

**Agenda**

The workshop was designed for country delegates to take on a very active role, driven by their specific assessment interests and needs as they pertain to READ. The workshop sessions included the following focal areas:

- Examinations, with a focus on ensuring quality and combating malpractice (e.g., What are some sources of malpractice? What measures can you take to prevent malpractice?)
Day 1
The first day of the workshop began with opening remarks by the World Bank, the Director of INDE from Mozambique’s Ministry of Education, and the Russian ambassador to Mozambique. Ambassador Kemarsky noted the importance of the READ program to Russia’s international development agenda and the strong focus of the Russian government on countries’ abilities to produce concrete, measurable results under the program. He was followed by the opening speaker for the workshop, Professor Anil Kanjee of Tshwane University of Technology in South Africa, who delivered an excellent presentation on “Assessment and Education Quality in Africa: Challenges and Prospects.”

To encourage knowledge sharing across countries, each delegation was asked to select one of the topics to be discussed during the workshop and prepare a presentation, which highlighted their experiences, lessons learned, and challenges in this area. The two sessions on Day 1 of the workshop covered the topics of ensuring quality and addressing inappropriate behavior in examination programs. Both Ethiopia and Zambia shared presentations on some of their recent strategies and innovations, such as the conveyor belt marking system and electronic candidate registration, to help ensure the quality of their examination systems.

Day 2
The sessions on Day 2 focused on (i) various ways to effectively communicate assessment information, and (ii) specifically how to reach teachers in the classroom. Mozambique started the day by sharing with the group their recent experience in developing and piloting Provinha - a written, early-grade reading assessment that was designed by the local assessment team as part of the program of READ Trust Fund–supported activities in Mozambique. The assessment team has been working with teachers and school administrators to train them to be able to implement this group-administered assessment. In the afternoon, workshop participants had the opportunity to visit schools in Maputo that had participated in the pilot and discuss with teachers their views and experiences with Provinha thus far. The country delegates from Mozambique participating in the workshop led each visit and facilitated the discussion. The chance to learn directly from Mozambique’s experience in designing and implementing a new assessment tool provided a valuable opportunity to share lessons across countries.
Day 3

Workshop participants started out Day 3 by applying the general principles they had learned for effective communication of assessment information to the creation of a communications blueprint for parents. Country teams worked together to develop communications plans and brainstorm possible communications tools, such as written materials, websites, and short videos. Angola shared with the group their recent experience preparing a technical report on the results from the EGRA exercise, and key issues to keep in mind when interpreting student assessment results. The final session of the workshop stressed the need for countries to actively implement the activities outlined in their action plans in order for them to reach the expected level of progress by the end of the READ Trust Fund program.

Outcome

The workshop met its objective of providing an opportunity for countries to present their work, solicit feedback, and share lessons on some of their ongoing work supported by the READ Trust Fund. At the end of the workshop, each participant received a certificate of completion and filled out an evaluation form. Participant evaluations were very positive. All materials from the workshop are available on the READ Trust Fund website (www.worldbank.org/readtf).
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