Results Agreement with UNESCO on Assessment systems and Learning Outcomes under the Global and Regional Activities (GRA) program

12 February, 2014

1. Thematic Area[1]	Learning outcomes
2. Subtheme	Learner Assessment for institutional progress (mainly)
3.Managing Entity Contact Information (Program manager)	UNESCO Bangkok, Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education 920 Sukhumvit Road, Prakanong, Klongtoey Bangkok 10110, Thailand Focal Point: Ms Ramya Vivekanandan (Email: r.vivekanandan@unesco.org) Alternate: Mr Gwang-Chol Chang (Email: gc.chang@unesco.org) Phone no: +66-2-3910577 Fax no: +66-2-3910866
4. Amount out of GPE Fund	US$ 944,061 (including an agency fee of US$ 61,761)
5. Proposed Start Date/End Dates	Start: April 2014 End: March 2016
6. Reporting on Implementation	Monitoring reports due June 30 and December 31; completion report due within 3 months after end date of implementation
7. Regional Focus/Beneficiary Countries	All countries of the Asia-Pacific region, with focus on 5-7 of the GPE Partner Countries in the region (Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam). Of these, priority will be given to Afghanistan, Nepal and Timor-Leste as fragile states. The focus countries will be confirmed upon receipt of written commitment from the respective Ministries of Education.
8. Knowledge/Capacity Gap to be Addressed (in very brief form)	• Knowledge gap about experience, lessons learned and best practices of monitoring of literacy, numeracy and other foundational skills • Knowledge gap about impediments to and solutions for the monitoring of literacy, numeracy and other foundational skills • Lack of a regional platform for knowledge creation and

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[1] The information under 1 – 9 should be taken from Form A of the final GRA program proposal and be updated where necessary

sharing on the issues of improving learning
- Lack of use of assessment results for policy and learning improvement
- Lack of credible national systems and capacity to monitor basic literacy and numeracy skills

9. Results Expected (in very brief form; see also detailed Table below
- Improved national capacities to improve learning through information sharing and South-South cooperation among countries in the region, particularly GPE partner countries
- Enhanced knowledge and policies for improving learning, particularly in GPE partner countries
- Strengthened and credible national systems to monitor student learning

10. Readjustment and Mid-term Review

If the Managing Entity sees a need for a change amounting to more than 20 % of the grant allocation, a request can be sent to the Secretariat for consideration. Based on the monitoring results of the implementation the Secretariat can propose changes too.

The Secretariat will conduct a mid-term review in February 2015 which aims at ensuring that the activity stays on track and relevant to GPE strategic objectives. This may lead to adjustments in the activity.

Detailed Expected Results, Outcomes and Outputs (Please see the Instructions in the Annex):

Overall Goal to which program will contribute:
Improving the quality of assessment systems and learning outcomes in the Asia-Pacific Indicator 1: Number of countries that strengthened their learning assessment system Indicator 2: Number of countries where student learning achievement in national assessment has improved

Expected Outcomes (What will be delivered?)	**Indicators, timescales, milestones and targets for expected Outcomes**	**Program Outputs (Program Deliverables) with indicators and targets**	**Activities (planned to obtain or to contribute to achieving stated outcomes)**
Outcome 1: Learning assessment systems reviewed and strengthened, especially in GPE partner countries	**Indicator 1:** Number of countries which review and strengthen their national learning assessment systems **Timescale:** by the end of 2015 **Milestone:** 3 countries (of which 2 are GPE countries) by end of 2014 **Target:** 8 countries of which 5 are GPE partner countries **Source of verification:** National policies, plans as well as bylaws of national organizations/ institutions charged with assessment activities, staff trained for assessment, national budgets for assessment	**Output 1:** Regional mapping study on policies and practices for monitoring learning outcomes in the region, with recommendations, completed **Indicator:** Number of countries participating in the regional mapping study **Target:** 10 countries **Sources of verification:** country reports, regional synthesis report _____ **Output 2:** Four capacity building workshops on monitoring student learning **Indicator:** Number of countries and participants in capacity building workshops **Target:** at least 6 countries and 150 participants **Sources of verification:** workshop reports, feedback from the workshop participants (one immediately after the workshop and another in 6 months after the workshop)	1.1. Communication with countries to ascertain interest in and commitment to this activity of the project 1.2. Selection of national consultants or institutions in countries participating in the study; 1.3. Organization of national case studies and in-country survey from assessment stakeholders 1.4. Publication and dissemination of the regional mapping study and recommendations _____ 2.1. Communication with countries to ascertain interest in and commitment to the activity 2.2. One regional training workshop on assessment literacy 2.3. One regional training workshop on international assessments 2.4. Two country-specific training workshops in GPE countries most in need (for 2 countries to select from Afghanistan, Cambodia, Timor Leste and Uzbekistan), with focus on building solid assessment systems 2.5. Wide dissemination of training modules used in the workshops online and print

	activities related to improve learning assessment systems will be analyzed and reported.		
Outcome 2: Governments improved alignment between policy, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment systems in the Asia-Pacific region, including GPE partner countries	**Indicator 1:** Number of countries which reviewed national education policy and curriculum frameworks in view of improved teaching and learning reflecting findings and policy recommendations from regional research studies

Timescale: By the end of 2015

Milestone: 5 countries by the end of 2014

Target: 10 countries (of which 8 are GPE countries)
Sources of verification: country reports, national policies and plans

Indicator 2: Number of countries that introduced school-based assessment in their teacher education | **Output 1:** Regional comparative research studies on the use of assessment results for improving policy and learning completed

Indicator: Number of countries involved in the regional comparative studies

Target: 6 countries

Sources of verification: country reports, regional synthesis report

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Output 2: Government staff trained to design aligned curriculum, teacher education and assessment frameworks in the region, particularly in GPE partner countries

Indicator: Number of countries and staff participating in capacity building workshops

Target: 6 countries and 25 participants

Sources of verification: workshop reports, mission reports, feedback from the workshop participants (one immediately after the workshop and another in 6 months after the workshop)
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Output 3: Knowledge and support | 1.1. Communication with countries to ascertain interest in and commitment to the activity as well as in reviewing national relevant policy
1.2. Selection of countries and consultants to conduct country case studies according to the regional research framework
1.3. Conducting comparative research on use of the results of learning assessment in policy and practice
1.4. Dissemination of the results in regional and international events, including those related to the post-2015 education agenda
1.5. Organizing two NEQMAP meetings to disseminate the findings of the studies and to discuss strategies to integrate them in national policy and practice
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2.1. Communication with countries to ascertain interest in and commitment to the activity as well as in reviewing relevant national policy

2.2. One regional training workshop on articulation of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment (4 participants per country, each specialized in the above three areas, plus a high-level MOE official), making use of findings of regional comparative research studies
2.3. Technical assistance for support in aligning curriculum and assessment, making use of regional comparative research studies
2.4. Design of online learning portal on issues of articulation between curriculum, pedagogy and assessment at regional level with categorization by country (this activity also links to |

Timescale: by the end of 2015 **Milestone:** 3 countries (of which 1 are GPE countries) by end of 2014 **Target:** 5 countries of which 3 GPE partner countries **Sources of verification:** country reports, surveys from MOEs and TEIs	portal on teacher and learning, and assessment established, as part of the web-based NESPAP Platform **Indicator 1:** Number of times the website accessed by each country **Target:** All countries in the Asia-Pacific **Indicator 2:** Number of e-discussions organized on NESPAP on improving assessment and learning outcomes; 20 participants at least by country **Target:** 4 online discussions with at least 20 countries represented per discussion **Sources of verification:** NESPAP activity logs	output 3) _____ 3.1. Communication with countries to ascertain interest in and commitment to the activity 3.2. Establishing a regional knowledge portal on student learning assessment as a component of NESPAP (UNESCO-housed portal on National Education Systems and Policies in the Asia-Pacific) 3.3. Organizing NEQMAP annual meetings: networking, knowledge-sharing and partnership building to improve learning and learning outcomes in the region.

Annex: Information and Instructions for the detailed table on outputs, outcomes/results:
1. **Definitions:**

● **Overall program goal** (mauve shaded row): Higher level goal (impact) to which the program will contribute.

● **Outcomes:** Expected demand-side behavioral responses by the direct beneficiaries outside the control of the managing/implementing partner that demonstrate uptake, adoption and use of the project outputs, Example: New practices adopted, children in school, reduction in absenteeism, students show improved reading performance, Governments use new databases. The **focus should be on outcome(s) that the program is reasonably expected to lead to but are not directly within its control**.

● **Indicators:** Indicators are statements of measure: E.g. Number or Percentage of something which improve / increase / decrease. They are meant to verify an expected result is achieved, but they do not themselves express the result. E.g. "Annual training takes place on how to run parenting groups" is the result and not an indicator, while number or percentage of parenting groups trained per year could be the indicator. The indicators should be **SMART: S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttributable, **R**ealistic and relevant, **T**ime-bound, meaning they can be measured, and have baselines, milestones and targets. Example: in follow up survey, X% staff use concepts/skills from learning activity, stakeholder consultations held, feedback reflected in revision of education sector policy, network of official formed after participation in program/workshop, meet regularly etc.

The indicators for the **overall goal** (in the mauve shaded row) should be publicly measurable and tracked. When formulating the **indicators for the outcomes** please ensure they can be measured

by someone involved in the project including how the information will be gathered, processed and reported. Preferably the outcome indicators should not be all end of project indicators, sequencing is recommended.

● **Outputs:** Program deliverables (on the supply side) within the control of the managing/ implanting partner; tangible products of services that can be counted. Examples: Training plan completed, local staff trained, report completed, new curriculum materials developed, school built, etc. For the outputs indicators and targets should be provided as well including planned dates for completion (e.g. indicate how many staff will be trained and by when).

● **Activities:** Action taken or work performed by which inputs are converted into specific outputs to achieve or to contribute to the achievement of the expected outcomes listed under the first column Training, study, workshop etc.).

2. **Guidance:**

● Start with providing a clear statement what is **the program's overall goal** (changes in **institutional** performance or behavior / practices of target groups) along with **1 - 3 key indicators** to measure this goal. These indicators should be publicly measurable and tracked. They should be at a higher level and relate to the MDGs and/or the GPE strategic goals and objectives the program will contribute to.

● Then list the **major expected program outcomes** in the rose colored column 1. Please make sure to clearly define what is intended to be achieved as a result of the interventions (activities) and avoid stating deliverables (which are outputs) under outcomes. Example: "Teachers trained" is an output. The respective outcome could be "students show improved reading performance". The higher level goal (overall program goal) in this example would be "literacy rates increase". There should be **not more than 3 major outcomes** for the whole program. **Please make sure that you keep this limit** unless the complexity of the program absolutely requires an exception.

● The number of key indicators per outcome should also be limited to a **maximum of 3** per outcome so that the monitoring and reporting efforts don't become too complicated. The same applies for the indicators per output. In many cases just one indicator might be sufficient. **Please also inform on the data resources** which will be used to help insure that the indicators are measurable.