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IMPACT OF USAID WITHDRAWAL ON GLOBAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**Official development assistance
analysis in education and skills
development**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The dismantling of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has created an unprecedented crisis in global education and skills development, with far-reaching consequences for access, equity, and the quality of learning worldwide. This report, commissioned by the European Training Foundation (ETF), examines the implications of USAID's funding withdrawal through four key lenses: funding trends and magnitude, geographic and programme impact, consequences for global education, and policy responses. It provides both a summary of USAID's impact and a roadmap for moving forward.

USAID's role in global education

With over \$1 billion in annual allocations for international education, the U.S. is the largest bilateral donor in the sector, with most of its international aid funding managed by USAID. The U.S. is also a major contributor to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) multilateral initiatives. Over the past 15 years, USAID has focused its education funding on the following areas of strategic importance:

- Primary education: Improving foundational skills¹ through teacher training, education system reform, and the production and dissemination of relevant materials in local languages for millions of primary-grade students in partner countries, with a particular focus on disadvantaged students and those in crisis- and conflict-affected settings.
- Vocational training and workforce development: Creating critical pathways to employment at the secondary and post-secondary levels as well as for out-of-school youth.
- Higher education: Strengthening the capacity of higher education institutions

to play a central role in developing local solutions across sectors and empowering young people to become leaders in their communities through scholarships and support networks.

Geographically, USAID concentrated its investments in regions facing acute challenges, as well as in strategically important countries for the U.S. Government. Over the past few years, the majority of USAID education funding was spent in the Middle East, North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa. The top five countries that received education funding over the past three years were Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Malawi. In the Middle East, USAID programmes addressed the dual challenges of strengthening national education systems while serving Syrian refugee populations. In Afghanistan, USAID-funded programmes supported access to education for girls. In Sub-Saharan Africa, USAID investments filled critical funding gaps to enable much-needed education reforms.

Consequences of withdrawal

The abrupt cancellation of 396 education programmes funded by USAID in 58 countries will have immediate and long-term effects. In the short term, vulnerable groups - girls, refugees, and marginalised communities - will bear the brunt of disrupted services. Long-term risks include:

- Reversed progress on the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, with rising dropout rates and widening gender gaps.
- Economic instability, as workforce readiness declines and youth unemployment grows.
- Geopolitical realignments, as other actors like China may expand their influence, though their current aid levels (\$2.85 billion in 2024) are a fraction of USAID's funding levels.

¹ 'Foundational skills' are defined as literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills that are foundational to future learning and success, usually referred to in an EU context as 'core skills and competences'.

Policy responses and opportunities for the EU

The EU now faces both an urgent challenge and a strategic opportunity. Through its Global Gateway Initiative and Team Europe approach, the EU can mobilise resources to mitigate the worst impacts while amplifying its global leadership role in education development. This will require rapid, coordinated action across four fronts: securing alternative funding, strengthening multilateral partnerships, protecting the most vulnerable learners, and maintaining focus on evidence-based interventions. Key strategies include:

- Scaling up funding through the Global Gateway Initiative (€300 billion) to support digital education and infrastructure.
- Strengthening coordination via Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) to align resources with national Education Sector Plans (ESPs) and improve the overall efficiency of aid.
- Mobilising private-sector partnerships for innovative financing models, such as social impact bonds.

Other stakeholders must also adapt. Partner governments should diversify funding and prioritise domestic education budgets, while NGOs and academia can advocate for alternative solutions and document the fallout of funding cuts. Private foundations and philanthropic organisations will need to increase funding for global education and support the improved coordination of investments to mitigate disruptions caused by the USAID withdrawal.

Conclusion

USAID's dismantling jeopardises decades of progress in global education, with the most severe impacts felt in fragile and conflict-affected regions. The coming year represents a critical window for action. The EU's response (through increased funding, coordinated action, and strategic partnerships) will be critical to mitigating this crisis. Without urgent intervention, the loss of USAID's funding and leadership risks exacerbating inequalities, destabilising vulnerable regions, and leaving millions of children and youth without access to quality education.

ACRONYMS

BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EGR	Early Grade Reading
ESP	Education Sector Plan
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PPP	Public-private Partnership
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TEI	Team Europe Initiative
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

INTRODUCTION

Education is fundamental to global peace and economic prosperity and serves as a tool for innovation and social cohesion. It equips individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to participate in economic life, adapt to changing labour market demands, and pursue entrepreneurial opportunities. By strengthening human capital, education contributes to higher productivity, increased competitiveness and poverty reduction². Moreover, education plays a critical role in promoting stability and reducing conflict, as it empowers individuals to participate in democratic processes and resolve disputes peacefully. By investing in education, nations can break the cycle of poverty, reduce inequality, and build more resilient societies capable of addressing global challenges such as climate change and health crises.

Despite the transformative potential of education, many low- and middle-income countries face significant challenges in providing quality education to their populations. Governments in these countries often lack the financial resources needed to build and maintain robust education systems. While low-income countries have increased their spending on education in recent years, the funding gap remains substantial³. Without sufficient resources, these nations struggle to address issues such as teacher shortages, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to learning materials. Development aid plays an important role in bridging this gap, enabling low- and middle-income countries to invest in education systems that can provide equitable and inclusive learning opportunities for all children and youth, particularly those in marginalised communities.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has historically played a significant role in strengthening education

systems in low- and middle-income countries. Over decades, USAID has worked to improve learning outcomes, expand access to quality education, and promote equity and inclusion. Through initiatives such as teacher training, the provision of textbooks, and the development of inclusive education policies, USAID has helped millions of children and youth gain access to education and acquire the skills needed to succeed in life⁴. USAID's efforts have also focused on addressing barriers to education, particularly for girls and other historically marginalised groups, ensuring that education systems are resilient and responsive to the needs of all learners⁵.

The recent (early 2025) efforts of the Trump administration to dissolve USAID are likely to lead to a significant reduction in U.S. funding for education development, which could have severe consequences for education development in many countries. The U.S. Government (USG) is one of the largest donors to global education initiatives, and a reduction in funding could jeopardise the progress made in improving access to education in low- and middle-income countries⁶. The loss of USAID funding would not only undermine efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 — ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all — but also exacerbate existing inequalities, leaving millions of children and youth without the opportunity to learn and thrive. In a world increasingly shaped by knowledge and innovation, the consequences of failing to invest in education could be dire, perpetuating cycles of poverty and instability for generations to come.

Before the Trump Administration decided to dissolve USAID in January 2025, US funding accounted for 30% of \$258.4 billion in global official development assistance (ODA) that

2 Education Overview: Development news, research, data | World Bank

3 Governments in low-income countries are spending more on education, but more funding is needed for children who receive the least

4 US Government Strategy on International Basic Education 2024–2029, Washington, DC, 2024.

5 Ibid.

6 Guterres calls on US to exempt development and humanitarian funds from aid 'pause' | UN News

7 ODA Levels in 2023 – preliminary data: Detailed summary note

developing countries received in 2023⁷, 55% of which was managed by USAID. On the day of taking office, President Trump issued an Executive Order to pause all foreign assistance for 90 days to “reevaluate and realign” U.S. foreign aid with the new Administration’s “America First” priorities⁸. Over the next few weeks, the Administration fired all embedded contractors, issued termination letters to 100% of staff, cancelled 83%⁹ of all USAID programmes, and set an aggressive timeline to close all USAID missions worldwide¹⁰. The move was characterised not as dismantling, which would be illegal since USAID was created by Congress and can only be dismantled by a Congressional directive, but as “restructuring” to align USAID’s function with the three foreign assistance goals of Trump’s Administration (“make America stronger, make America more prosperous, and make America Safer”) and to integrate it with the Department of State under a new name of the US Agency for International Humanitarian Assistance (USIHA). According to the proposed restructuring plan, the Administration has no

intention of retaining any of USAID’s education programming¹¹. At the time of this study, legal proceedings were underway concerning the Administration’s decisions regarding USAID.

This paper examines the implications of USAID’s funding withdrawal from the international education and skills development sector, structured across four key sections. First, it describes funding trends and magnitude, exploring USAID’s share of total funding for education, its yearly allocation, and its proportion of global ODA. Second, it assesses the geographical and programmatic impact, identifying the most affected countries and regions, the main programmes funded by USAID, and USAID’s role in coordination bodies and multilateral initiatives. Third, the paper describes the short- and long-term consequences of funding withdrawal on the sector, including its effects on primary education, vocational training, and higher education. The paper concludes with a section that explores alternative funding sources and discusses policy and strategic implications.

⁸ Reevaluating And Realigning United States Foreign Aid –The White House

⁹ Rubio says Trump administration cancelling 83% of programmes at USAID and intends to move remaining ones to State Department | CNN Politics

¹⁰ There are grounds to believe that additional cuts are in process. On April 8, 2025, media outlets reported that USAID’s new leadership ended funding to UN World Food Programme that provided lifesaving food to millions in Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, and 11 other countries (The U.S. ends lifesaving food aid for millions. The World Food Programme calls it a ‘death sentence.’)

¹¹ US Foreign Aid Freeze & Dissolution of USAID: Timeline of Events | KFF; Trump aides circulate plan for complete revamp of foreign aid programmes - POLITICO; Judge rules DOGE’s USAID dismantling likely violates the Constitution

About the US Agency for International Development

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) is the US government's primary development agency that did programming in 201 developing countries in 2024. USAID's mission is to partner to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies while advancing U.S. security and prosperity.

USAID accelerates human development by:

- Promoting broadly shared economic prosperity,
- Strengthening democracy and good governance and protecting human rights,
- Improving global health,
- Advancing food security and agriculture,
- Improving environmental sustainability,
- Furthering education, and
- Helping societies prevent and recover from conflicts, and providing humanitarian assistance in the wake of natural and man-made disasters.

Established in 1961, USAID is an independent federal government agency that receives overall foreign policy guidance from the Secretary of State. It is headed by an Administrator appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

Source: usaid.gov (no longer available online)

STUDY OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The objective of this study is to assess the implications of the cancellation of USAID funding on education and skills development worldwide. USAID has been a major contributor to education financing in developing and transition economies, supporting a range of programs from primary education to vocational training and workforce development. The sudden withdrawal of its funding is likely to have far-reaching consequences for access, quality, and outcomes of education and training programs.

This study was commissioned by the European Training Foundation (ETF). The ETF is the European Union agency that supports countries outside the EU in improving their human capital development, in the context of European Union (EU) external relations policies. Currently, the ETF cooperates at both country and regional levels with the countries of the EU Neighbourhood and Enlargement regions, and in Central Asia, as well as contributing to EU external policies and programmes at the Pan-African level. The study had the following guiding research questions:

1. What are the funding trends and the magnitude of USAID's funding impact on the international education sector?
2. What is the geographic and programmatic impact of USAID's investments in the international education sector?
3. What are the consequences of the withdrawal of USAID funding on the overall international education development trends, including skills development?
4. What are the policy and strategic implications of withdrawing USAID funding for EU interests and partner countries?

The study was conducted in March 2025 and used desk research and secondary quantitative and qualitative analysis as its methodological approach. Desk research used Internet search as the primary way to locate

information, complemented by the review of documents previously publicly available on USAID websites. Only currently or previously publicly available data sources were used in the analysis, including official U.S. Government publicly available data sources, official data sources published by the EU and other countries, press releases, academic papers, grey literature, and media. Annex A includes the complete list of resources used in the analysis. The author used descriptive statistics to analyse quantitative data on USAID budget and programming, and thematic and comparative analysis of qualitative data.

The main limitation of the study is access to data. Most USAID-specific publicly available data sources have been removed from the Internet by the Trump Administration, including usaid.gov, edu-links.org, usaidlearninglab.org, as well as websites previously hosted by various USAID missions and operating units. The study used the only official data source on USAID operations and funding still publicly available – ForeignAssistance.gov.

Another limitation of the study is limited availability of existing information, either in data or in analytical report form, on the scope and impact of USAID's investments in youth skills development in general, and in technical and vocational training in particular, since USAID did not earmark such investments. Instead, they were included under other earmarks, including basic education, higher education, democracy and governance, global health, biodiversity and climate, and economic growth. As a result, the author had limited ability to report on USAID programmes in this content area. All reporting is therefore limited to data available under the education earmark.

The study's scope, budget, and timeline did not allow for primary data collection to validate information obtained through publicly available data sources. It is possible that some data points may not have been reported accurately. All data sources are listed in the bibliography.

FUNDING TRENDS AND MAGNITUDE

Overview of US ODA

The United States Government (USG) is the largest single donor of aid in the world, disbursing \$80 billion in assistance in 2023 - \$16 billion in military aid and \$64 billion in economic aid - across 208 countries (including regions)¹². This accounted for 30% of global ODA¹³. It is also estimated that the USG provided more than 40% of all humanitarian aid¹⁴. USG ODA is allocated across a wide range of sectors, including health, education, economic growth, humanitarian aid, and climate resilience, with a focus on promoting stability, reducing poverty, and advancing democratic governance. The U.S. has worked both through bilateral and multilateral channels, engaging directly with partner countries as well as with international organisations such as the United Nations and the World Bank. Geopolitical considerations often influence the distribution of ODA, with significant portions directed towards regions of strategic importance, including sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. The U.S. also emphasises transparency and accountability, ensuring that aid is effectively used to achieve measurable outcomes and align with broader foreign policy objectives.

USAID has played a central role in managing and implementing USG ODA. As the primary federal agency responsible for administering civilian foreign aid, USAID has designed and overseen programmes addressing significant development challenges, from disaster response to long-term capacity strengthening. The agency has operated in over 200 countries

(Figure 1), collaborating with local governments, NGOs, and private sector partners to deliver aid efficiently and sustainably. USAID's is shaped by broader USG strategic priorities, such as those expressed in the Global Fragility Act and the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), ensuring that ODA responds to both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development goals. By focusing on innovation, evidence-based programming, and local ownership, USAID aims to increase the impact of its investments and contribute to international stability and prosperity, in line with wider American foreign policy objectives.

The proportion of USG ODA managed by USAID has steadily increased over the past decade, from 37.2% ten years ago, to 55% in 2023, with an expected rise to 65% in 2024 (obligated funds¹⁵). Figure 2 shows the distribution of US ODA by managing agency in 2023, the most recent year for which complete disbursement data is available on the official USG development assistance tracking website¹⁶. Historically, a range of other US federal agencies have also managed USG ODA, including the Department of Defense (DoD), the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of the Interior, the Health and Human Services Department (HHS), the Centres for Disease Control (CDC), the Peace Corps, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). The proportion of funding managed by these federal agencies has varied from year to year, depending on the strategic priorities of the time.

12 ForeignAssistance.gov - Dashboard

13 ODA Levels in 2023 – preliminary data: Detailed summary note

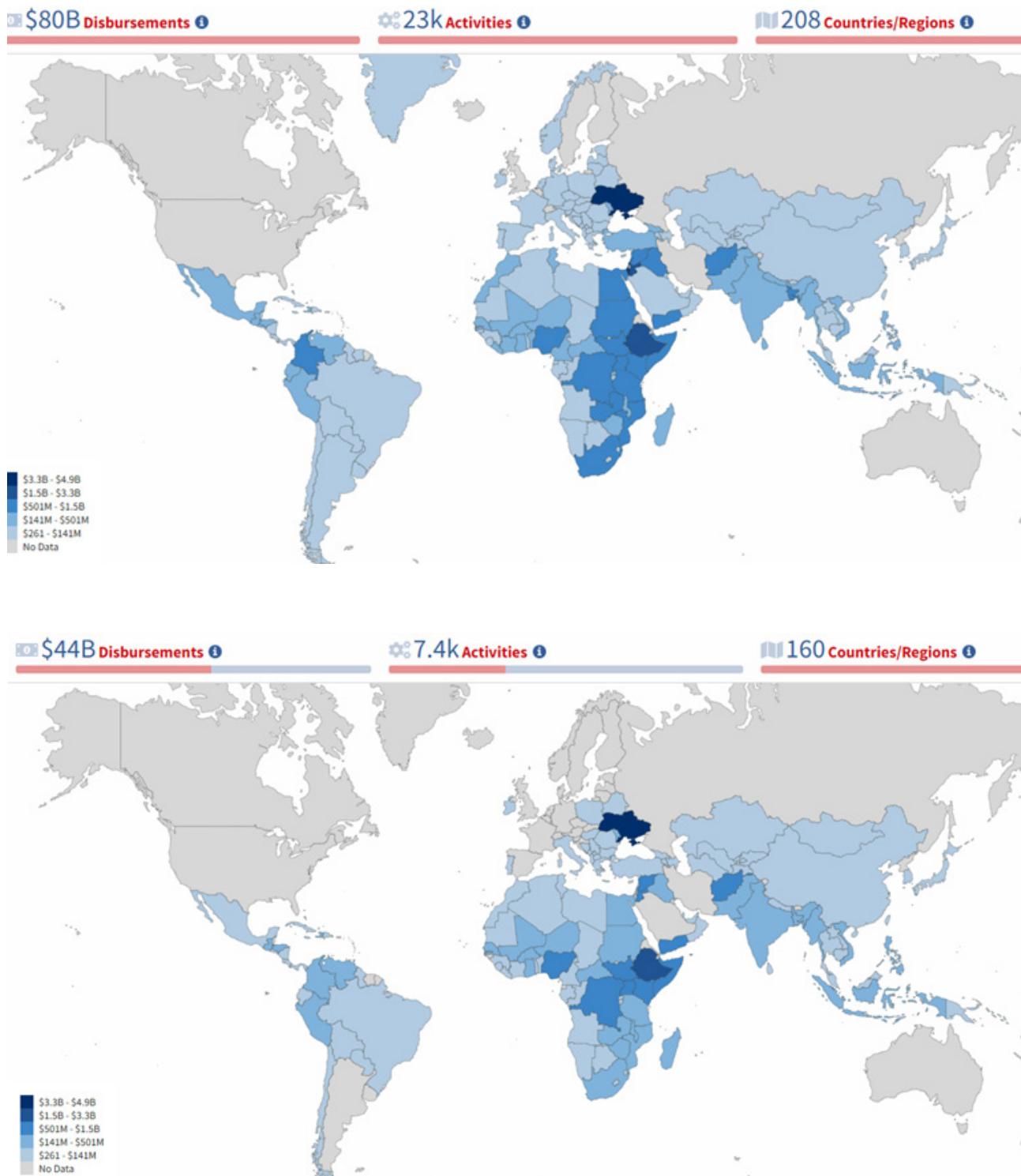
14 Guterres calls on US to exempt development and humanitarian funds from aid 'pause' | UN News

15 Funds are first "obligated" which means Congress approves them for expenditure in a particular sector, country, or for a particular objective. Funds are then disbursed to implementing entities based on their actual expenditure by managing units such as USAID Missions or Washington-based operating units. The amounts are rarely the same since the obligations are based on planned activities while expenditures can deviate either down, if the activities ended up costing less, or up, if there are carryover funds from previous years. This resource explains the full process of executing the U.S. foreign assistance budget: Lessons From USAIDs FY 2019 Budget Process

16 ForeignAssistance.gov - Dashboard

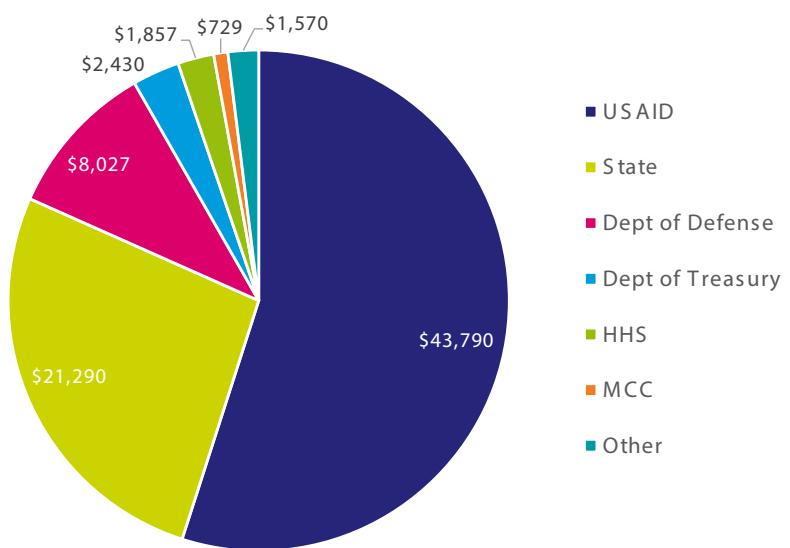
Figure 1. U.S. Total and USAID-managed ODA summary 2023

Countries and levels of USG ODA spent, 2023



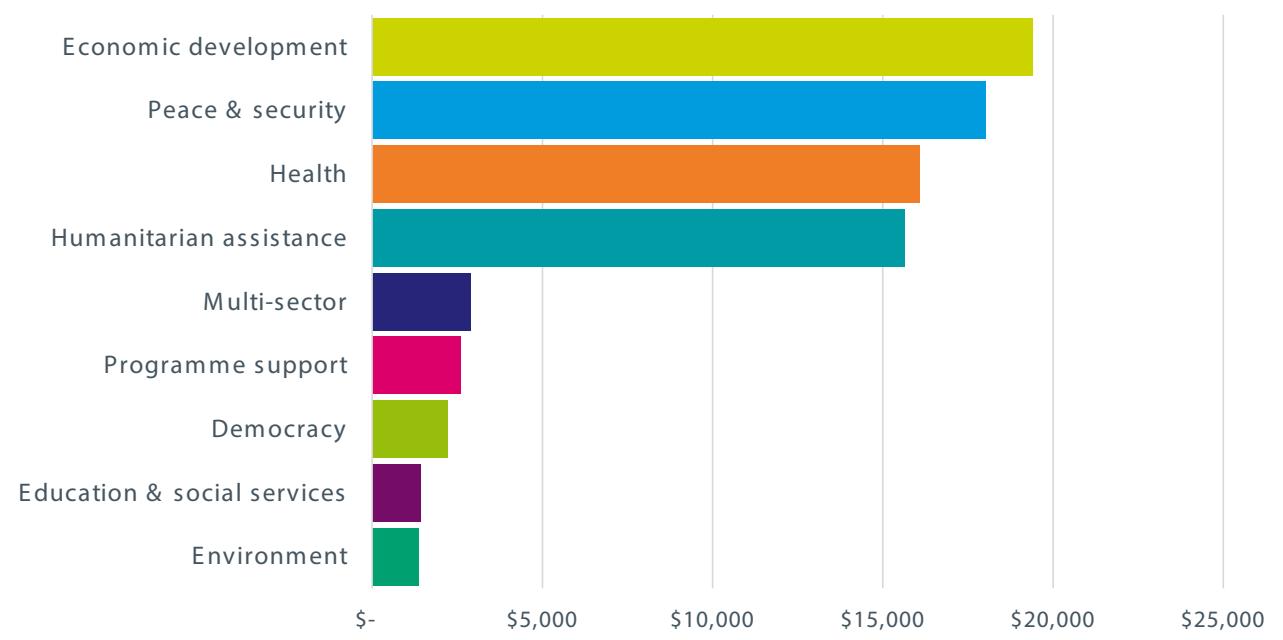
Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov; constant dollars

Figure 2. USG ODA by managing agency, 2023, USD mln



Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov; constant dollars

Figure 3. USG ODA by sector, 2023, USD mln



As shown in Figure 3, the majority (86.4%) of US ODA in 2023 was split among economic growth, peace and security, health, and humanitarian assistance sectors. The education sector received just 1.775% of the \$80 billion disbursed. Of this amount, USAID managed 75.58% (\$1.074 billion; including social services). The remainder was administered

by the Peace Corps, the Department of State, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the Department of the Interior, and two smaller federally funded foundations: the Inter-American Foundation and the African Development Foundation.

Figure 4. USAID education sector disbursement 2010-2024, USD mln

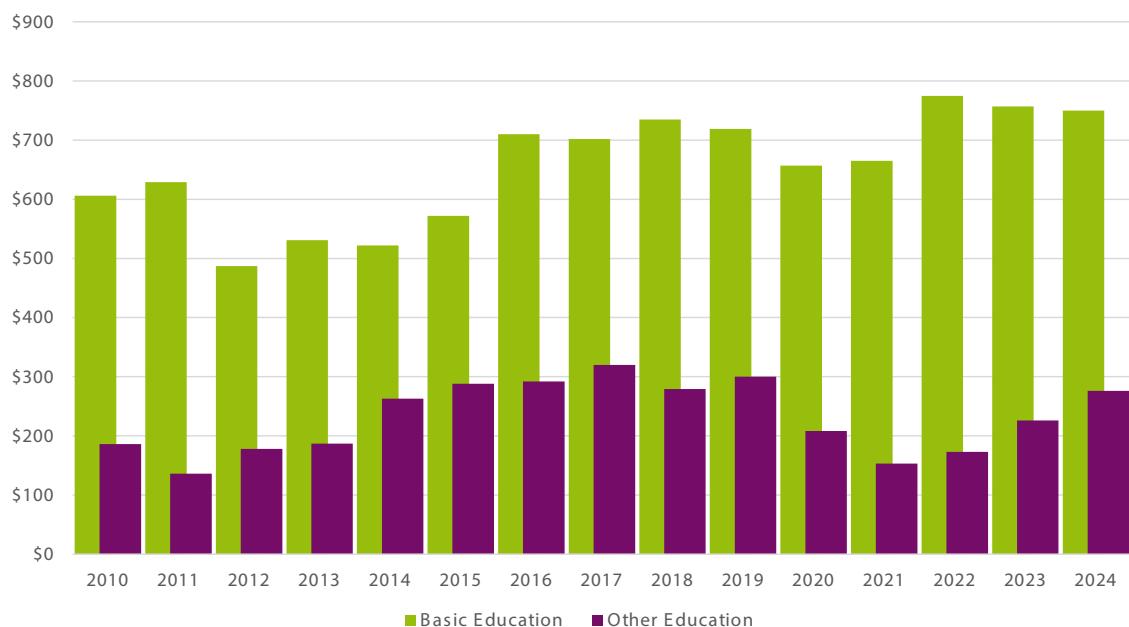
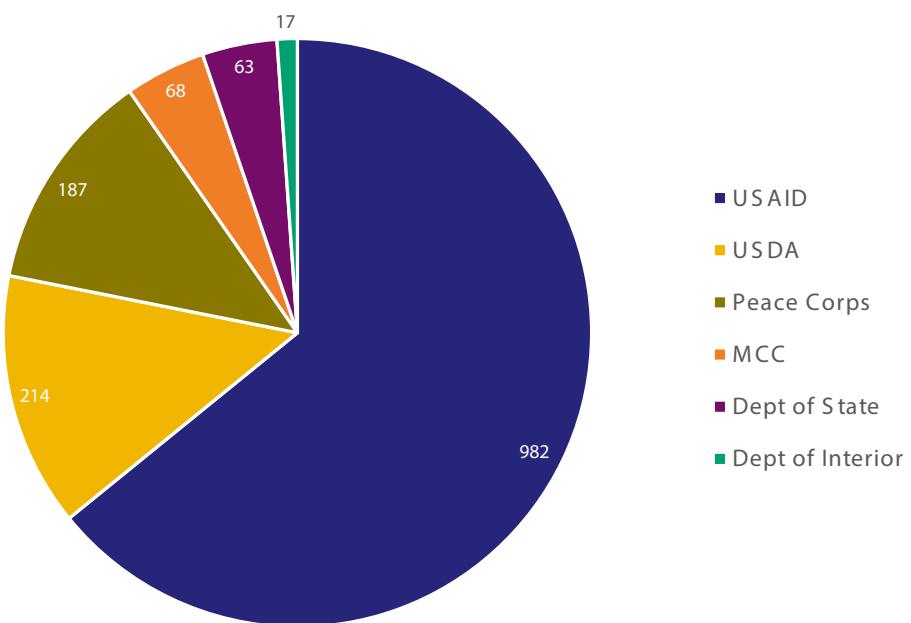


Figure 5. Share of USAID in all USG education assistance, 2023



USG investments in global education and skills development

USG ODA allocations to the international education sector have been authorised by Congress through dedicated legislation and guided by policies and strategies. The main

legislation supporting education-specific ODA appropriations is the Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development Act (READ Act)¹⁷, which aims to promote quality basic education abroad. The READ Act authorises the US government to work with partner countries and other stakeholders to strengthen their

17 The Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development Act

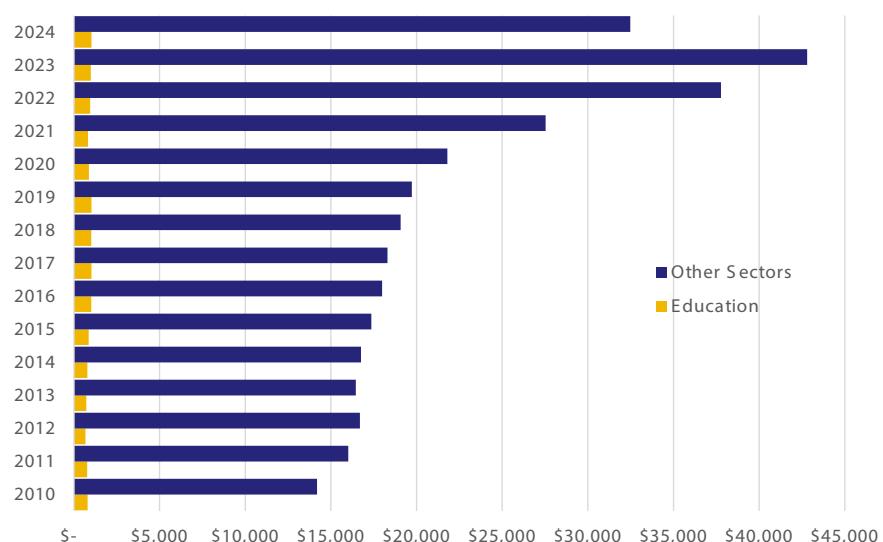
education systems, improve learning outcomes, and reach vulnerable and marginalised populations. The READ Act was initially passed in 2018 and reauthorised in 2023. Spending trends on international education show relatively steady levels (Figure 4) over recent years, ranging from \$900 million to a billion a year. This includes basic education and other education, including vocational and higher education, with about three-quarters allocated for basic education. USAID has managed over half of those funds (Figure 5).

While the general level of funding for international education remained fairly stable over the last 15 years, the proportion of education ODA relative to the total USG ODA

budget declined. In 2010, 2015, 2016, and 2017 education ODA managed by USAID was 5.6% of USAID's budget, while it fell to 2.5% in 2022 and 2.3% in 2023 (Figure 6).

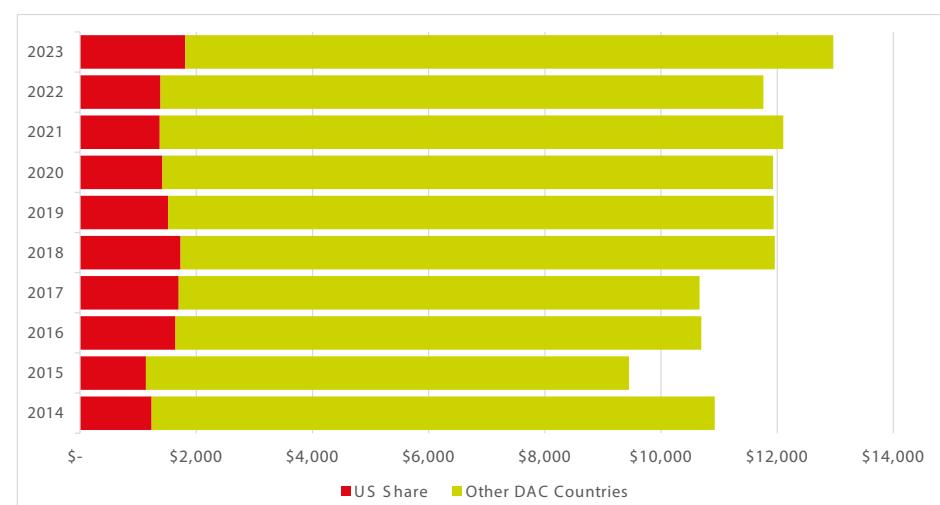
The US has played a significant role in funding international education alongside other Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries, contributing substantial financial resources to support global education initiatives. US contributions ranged between 11 and 16% of total education ODA in the past ten years (Figure 7), complementing the efforts of other DAC nations to address global education challenges and promote access to quality education worldwide.

Figure 6. Share of education spending in USAID overall expenditure, USD mln



Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov; constant dollars

Figure 7. US share in education ODA by DAC countries, USD mln



Data source: data-explorer.oecd.org

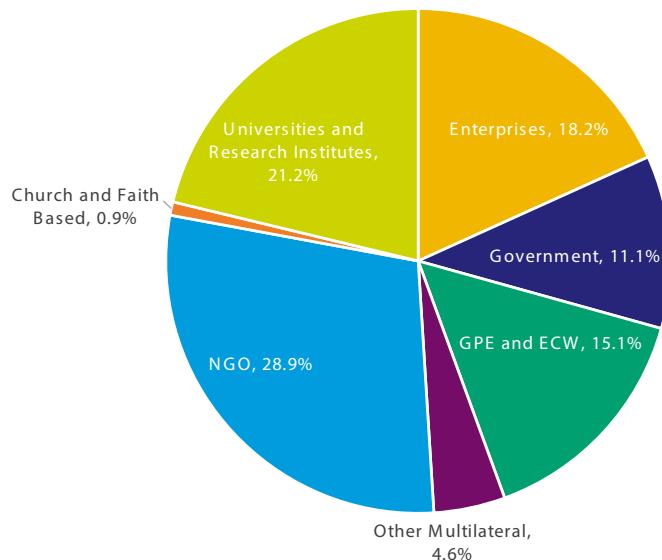
USAID missions and operating units allocated congressionally appropriated funds for education programmes in line with the parameters set out in the 2018 USAID Education Policy and the US Government Strategy on International Basic Education (2018-23; 2023-29). Both the policy and strategy documents emphasise the following key principles of US-funded education programming:

1. Prioritise country ownership and locally led development,
2. Generate and use data and evidence to drive decision-making and investments,
3. Strengthen the capacity and performance of education systems, and
4. Promote equity and inclusion.

While the USAID 2011 Education Strategy focused on primary education with a heavy emphasis on early grade reading, the 2018 USAID Education Policy included secondary and vocational education as well as the explicit recognition of the important role of community and non-state schools and provided guidance for innovative approaches to programming to ensure the sustainability of investments.

Figure 8 shows the distribution of USAID education funding by programme implementer. The majority of the funding went to programmes implemented by local and international NGOs and universities and research institutions.

Figure 8. Distribution of USAID education funding by implementer category, combined 2022-24



Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov; constant dollars

GEOGRAPHIC AND PROGRAMMATIC IMPACT OF USAID'S EDUCATION FUNDING

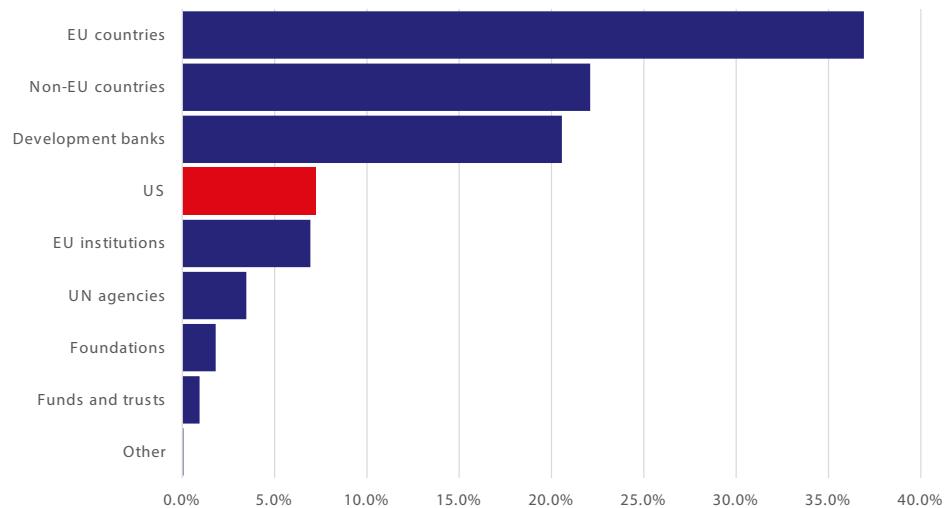
Countries and regions most affected by the dissolution of USAID

US support for SDG 4

The United States has played a significant role in supporting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong

learning opportunities for all. According to data, the US has contributed an average of 7.2% of total funding between 2010 and 2021, making it the largest single-country contributor. By contrast, EU countries combined contributed 36.9%, non-EU countries contributed 22.1%, and development banks contributed 20.6%, on average (Figure 9).

Figure 9. ODA investments to support SDG 4, by donor, cumulative 2010-2021

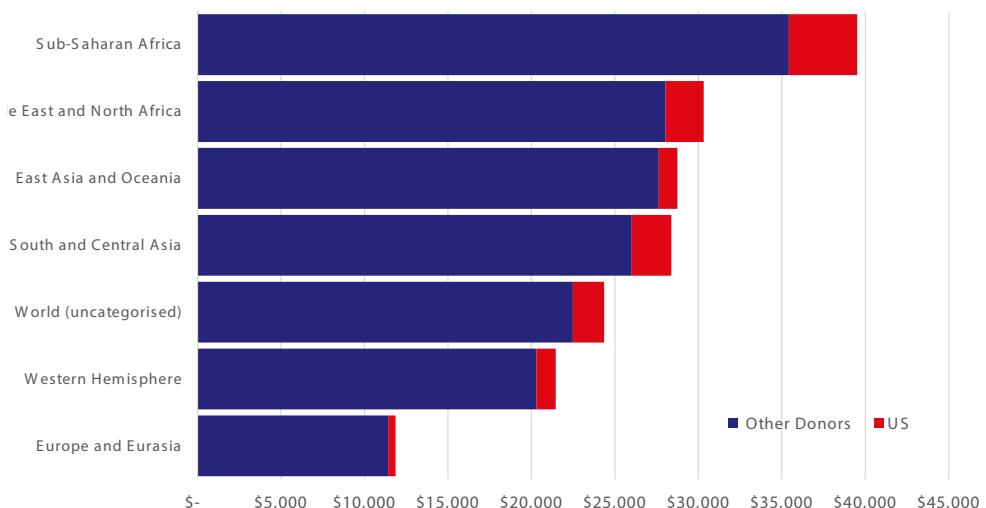


Data source: Burgess, B., Bengtson, A., and B. Lautenslager. (2023). *Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Version 1.0*. Williamsburg, VA. AidData. Accessed at <http://aiddata.org/sdg>

The US Government has been funding education programmes aimed at supporting SDG 4 across several regions in the world, including Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, East Asia and Oceania, South and Central Asia, the Western Hemisphere, and Europe and Eurasia. USAID managed these investments in part, as described above. Historically, the largest recipient of USG's education ODA has been Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and North Africa regions. The data presented in Figure 10 includes

expenditure from between 2010 and 2021, with funding amounts ranging between \$440 million and \$4 billion per region over the course of this time. The average U.S. share in the global ODA investments over this time was 6.7%. While this broad geographic coverage underscores the USG's commitment to enhancing education opportunities worldwide, the regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and North Africa historically benefited the most and may be the most affected by the dismantling of USAID.

Figure 10. ODA investments to support SDG 4, by region and donor, cumulative 2010-21



Data source: Burgess, B., Bengtson, A., and B. Lautenslager. (2023). *Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Version 1.0*. Williamsburg, VA. AidData. Accessed at <http://aiddata.org/sdg>

US foreign assistance funding by country

In January 2025, when the Trump Administration took office, USAID operated in 158 countries. It was managing 396 education-specific programmes in 58 countries - a reduction from the 552 programmes it managed in 2023¹⁸. The total education-specific budget appropriated by Congress to USAID for 2024 budget was \$1.02 billion, up from \$983 million obligated funds in 2023. The largest proportion of USAID investments was directed to the Middle East and North Africa, amounting to almost \$341 million, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa with \$275 million. Despite having lower funding, the Sub-Saharan region had more than twice the number of funded programmes – 153, compared to 72 in North Africa and Middle East.

The third largest category of USAID education investment is the one that benefits the whole world – for example, multilateral funds, research programs that conduct studies across different countries and aim to benefit the entire sectoral portfolio, or training and knowledge management programs aiming to support missions across different geographies

and programmes across different sectors.

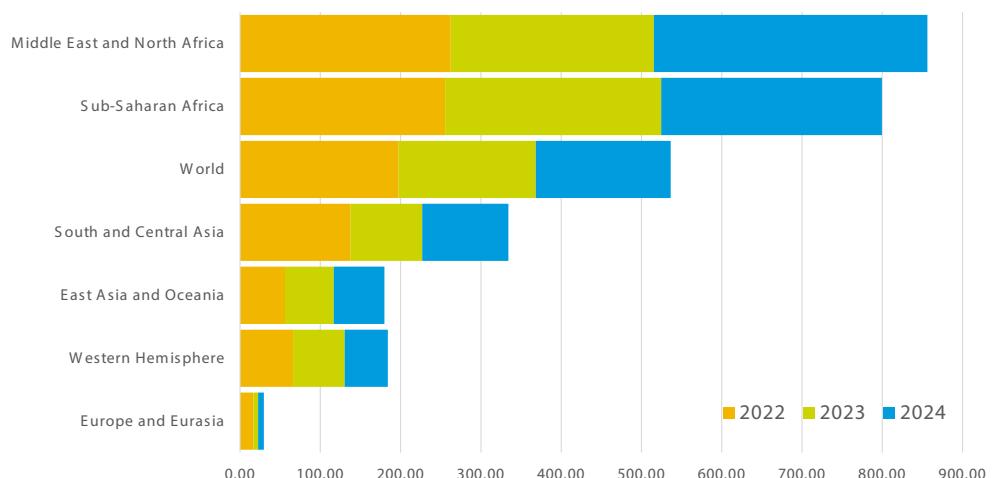
In 2024, the U.S. Congress approved \$168 million in funding for such programs with a global reach. USAID transferred most of these resources – 87.5%, or \$147 million to support the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW). USAID's role in funding these initiatives will be discussed in detail further in the report. Figure 11 shows the distribution of USAID obligations in education programming in 2022, 2023, and 2024¹⁹.

Figure 12 shows 25 countries with the largest cumulative allocations for education programmes over the past three years, from 2022 to 2024. Jordan consistently received the highest amount of education funding over the past three years, with amounts fluctuating between \$122.7 million and \$142.8 million, followed by Egypt and Lebanon. Egypt and Lebanon saw steady increases in education funding, with Egypt rising from \$49.3 million to \$83.8 million and Lebanon from 41.2 million to \$68.8 million. The US Government has significant strategic, security, and economic interests in these three countries, which centre around regional stability, counterterrorism, and the promotion of democratic governance.

18 ForeignAssistance.gov - Dashboard

19 The data presented for 2022 and 2023 are actual recorded expenditures while data for 2024 are obligations since the full disbursement data are not yet available on the ForeignAssistance.gov website. Given the current situation with USAID it may not become available in the future.

Figure 11. USAID education investments by region in 2022-24, USD mln

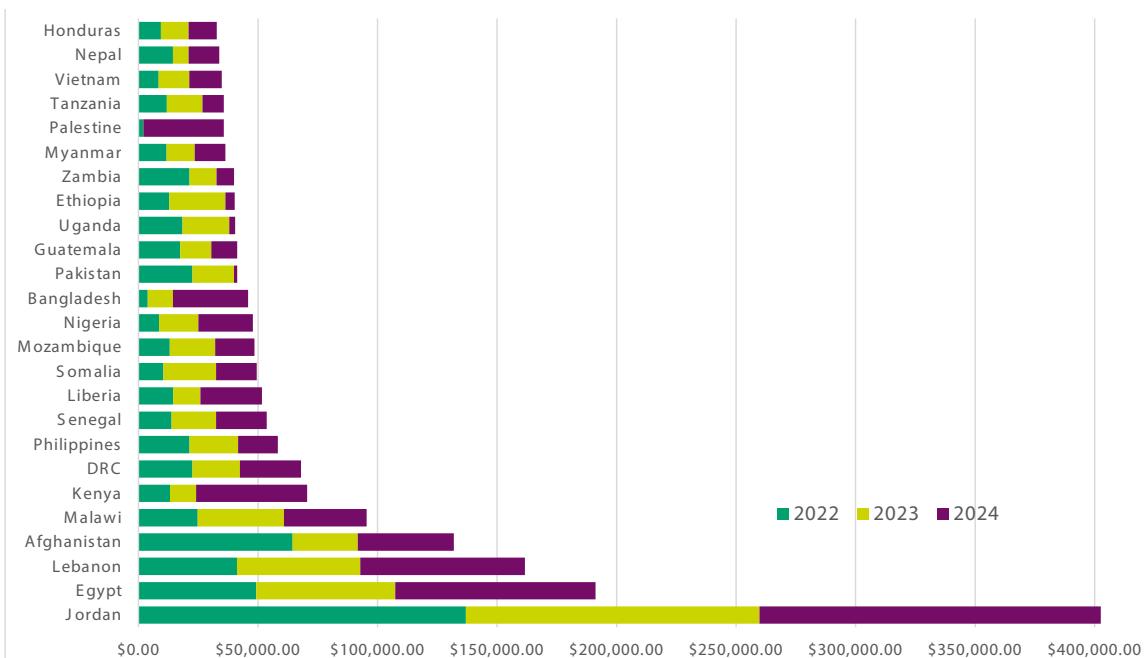


Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov; constant dollars

Afghanistan received sizable education funding in 2022, but the funding levels dropped in 2023 and 2024. Kenya, Bangladesh, and Palestine²⁰ saw notable increases in education funding in 2024, with Bangladesh jumping from \$3.9 million to \$31.4 million and Palestine from near zero to \$33.6 million. The increase in education funding for Palestine was a direct result of the

regional conflict. Conversely, Pakistan, Uganda, and Ethiopia faced sharp declines in education funding in 2024, with Pakistan's funding dropping to \$1.3 million and Uganda's to \$2.4 million. Overall, while funding trends reflect the priorities of the US Government, they also respond to changing contextual conditions.

Figure 12. 25 Countries with highest USAID education funding 2022-24, USD mln



Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov; constant dollars

²⁰This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

As Figure 12 shows, Jordan has received the largest amount of education funding from USAID (\$402.5 million) over the past three years. USAID transferred nearly half of that amount – 43% – to the Government of Jordan, in large part to mitigate the impact of the Syria crisis and the resulting influx of refugees into Jordan. This funding is intended to help the government meet the needs of the people within its borders and provide support to communities as they cope with the crisis. USAID has supported the Government of Jordan through cash transfers since 2011 to help provide the macroeconomic stability necessary to realise its development priorities. Removing these cash transfers from the calculations, leaves the level of funding for Jordan at \$229 million.

USAID funding comprised a sizable percentage of the education budgets in many of its partner countries²¹. Table 1 summarizes information on the budget share of USAID funding based on the publicly available sources. This information needs to be interpreted with caution since the actual disbursements frequently fall short of the publicly reported budget allocations, and the inflation rate in the listed countries, except Jordan, is very high, rendering comparisons difficult. Another limitation is that different countries structure education allocations differently and may not include the same type of expenditures in the education budget as USAID does.

Table 1. Share of USAID funding in the 5 top recipient country education budgets

COUNTRY	EDUCATION BUDGET ²²	SAME YEAR USAID EDUCATION FUNDING	PERCENTAGE OF USAID FUNDING OF THE TOTAL EDUCATION BUDGET
Jordan, 2024	JOD 1,254,000,000 ²³ (USD1,768,688,293)	\$ 142,801,613	8.1%
Egypt 2024	EGP 295,000,000,000 ²⁴ (USD 5,836,741,397)	\$ 83,807,848	1.4%
Lebanon, 2024	No information available in the public domain	\$68,830,140	N/A
Afghanistan, 2022	AFN 35,900,000,000 ²⁵ (USD498,615,100)	\$64,494,561	12.9%
Malawi ²⁶ 2024	K 879,0060,000,000 ²⁷ (USD 505,198,862)	\$34,543,854	6.8%

Data source for the USAID education funding: ForeignAssistance.gov
Currency converter: Exchange.Rates.org

21 A useful background reference is an overview of domestic spending on education in the top aid recipient countries conducted by the Centre for Global Development in 2021 The State of Global Education Finance in Seven Charts: An Update | Centre For Global Development.

22 The data reported here were found via broad internet search and have not been validated with the government authorities. The most recent publicly available data have been included in this table.

23 Lower House Financial Committee discusses Education Ministry, Higher Education Ministry budgets in Jordan

24 Egypt: Declining Funding Undermines Education | Human Rights Watch

25 Afghanistan-Development-Update-20231003-final.pdf

26 UNICEF's Malawi education budget analysis for 2023/2024 found that combined aid accounts for 15% of total education-related expenditure (the remainder is split between the government, 46%, and private households, 39%). USAID's funding accounted for 25% of the combined aid. Source: Education Budget Brief 2023-24.pdf

27 2024-2025 Budget Statement by Minister of Finance - Business Malawi and UNICEF_National_Budget_Brief_2024-25_A4_v2.indd

ETF partner countries most affected by USAID funding withdrawal

A total of 20 out of 28 ETF partner countries received some education funding from USAID over the past few years, ranging from over \$400 million in Jordan to \$167,000 in Türkiye (cumulatively between 2022 and 2024). The three ETF partner countries receiving the most education funding from USAID are Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon (Figure 13). The US Government has significant strategic, security, and economic interests in these three countries, and has contributed substantial resources to them in both economic and military assistance, including education funding. The US values Jordan as a key ally in maintaining regional stability, supporting peace efforts, and combating extremism, while also providing significant economic and military aid. In Egypt, the US prioritises the preservation of the historic Camp David Accords with Israel, counterterrorism cooperation, and ensuring stability in the Suez Canal, a critical global trade route, despite concerns over human rights and governance. In Lebanon, U.S. interests focus on supporting state institutions to counter the influence of Hezbollah, promoting political and economic reforms, and addressing humanitarian crises, while also seeking to prevent the country from becoming a

destabilising force in the region. Overall, US engagement in these countries aims to balance security concerns with efforts to promote stability, economic development, and political reform.

USAID education investments in these three countries also pursue strategic objectives. Both Jordan and Lebanon experienced an influx of refugees from Syria that overwhelmed local education systems. USAID's education funding helped mitigate some of those negative impacts.

USAID funding has also played a significant role in supporting Egypt's vocational and higher education systems by addressing key challenges and promoting development. The USAID-funded education programming in the country focused mostly on strengthening higher education, vocational training, and workforce development to help improve the quality and relevance of those systems and contribute to stability in the region.

Figure 14 shows the cumulative funding levels for education programming over the last three years to 17 ETF partner countries that received USAID funding in addition to Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon.

Figure 13. USAID education funding for Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon, combined 2022-24, USD mln

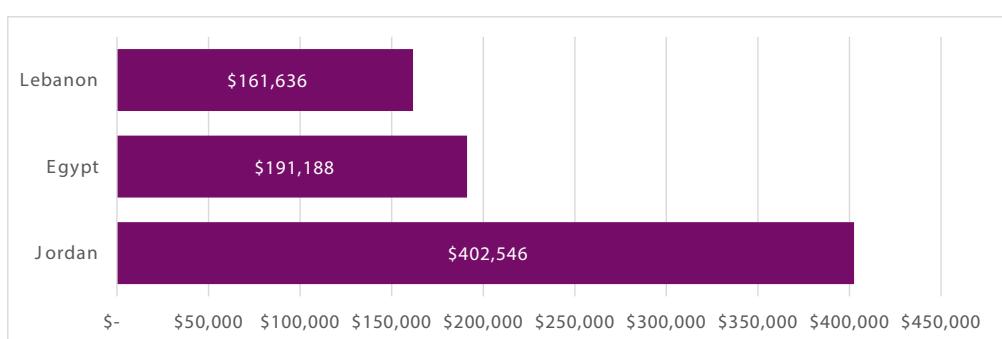
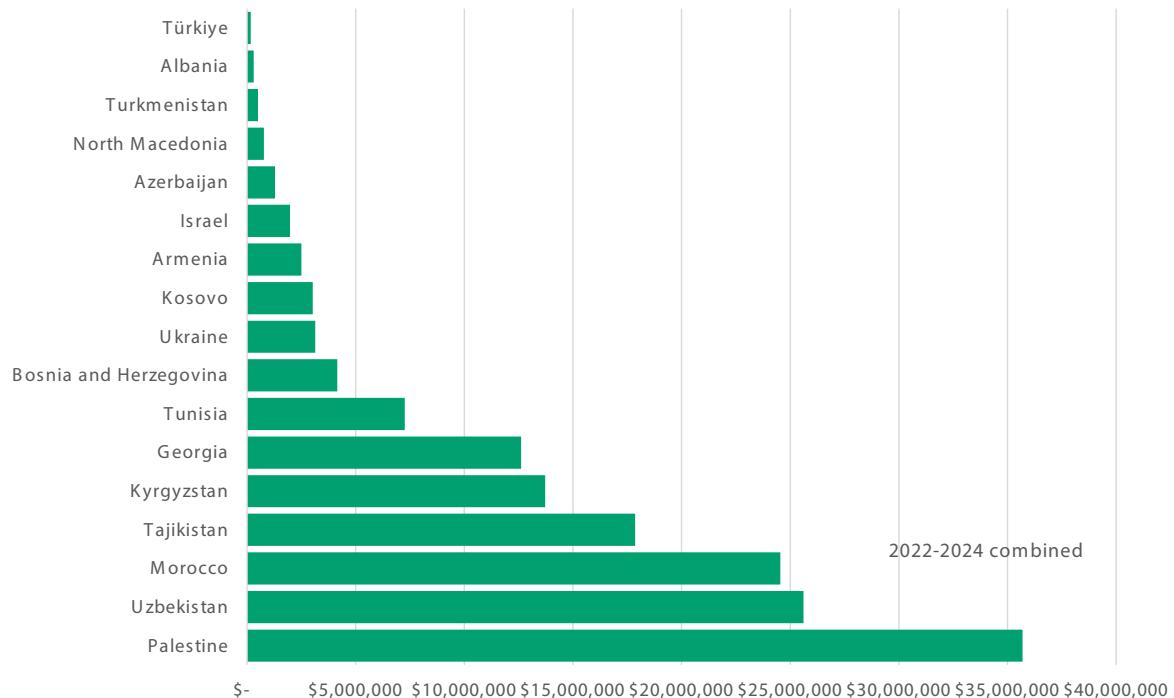


Figure 14. USAID education funding for ETF partner countries 2022-24, USD



Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov; constant dollars

After Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon, the top education aid recipient among ETF partner countries is Palestine (West Bank and Gaza), where, during the recent conflict with Israel, USAID worked to support education for Palestinian children and youth by addressing immediate needs and promoting long-term resilience. This included providing emergency assistance to repair damaged schools, ensuring access to safe learning environments, and distributing educational materials to displaced students. USAID-funded programmes also supported psychosocial services to help children and youth cope with trauma and partnered with local organisations to deliver alternative learning programmes, such as remote education, when schools are inaccessible. These efforts aim to mitigate the disruption of education caused by the conflict and ensure that Palestinian children and youth can continue their learning despite the conflict.

In Uzbekistan, USAID focused on supporting inclusive education in primary grades through

a new All Children Succeeding programme which offered support for three essential areas related to inclusive education: accessible and inclusive teaching and learning materials, teacher practice and school atmosphere, and sustainable policies developed together with key stakeholders, including educators and people with disabilities²⁸. USAID funding was intended to help the Government of Uzbekistan enact existing inclusive education legislation, and the programme was in its early implementation phase when it was cancelled in February 2025.

The third largest recipient of USAID funding in this group of countries is Morocco, where USAID launched its flagship education programme, Bridge to Middle School, designed to support the Ministry of National Education in strengthening the links between upper primary and middle school²⁹. The programme was in the middle of its implementation when it was cancelled in February 2025.

28 All Teachers Teach All Children - USAID All Children Succeeding Launched in Tashkent - U.S. Embassy in Uzbekistan

29 USAID Programme Supports Transitions to Middle School in Morocco and USAID Morocco Bridge to Middle School Activity (Bridge) - FHI 360

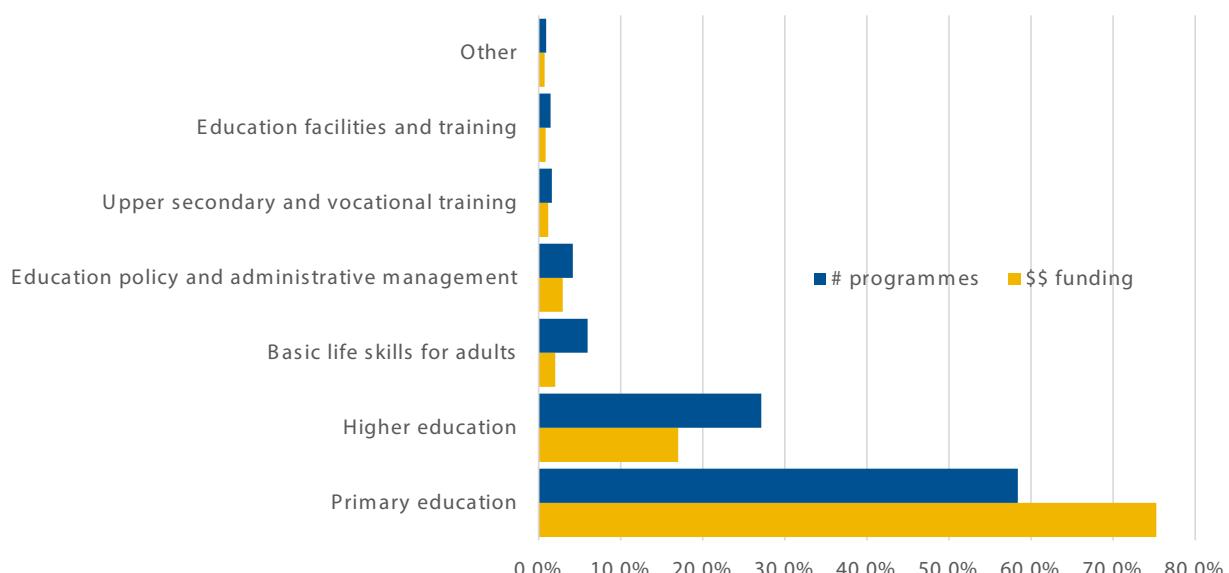
Programmatic footprint of USAID education funding

Since the Education Strategy of 2011, the bulk of USAID education funding has been devoted to improving primary education systems in USAID partner countries. Figure 15 shows the distribution of USAID education funding and the proportion of funded programmes across sub-sectors using the most recent complete disbursement data from 2023. That year, USAID allocated most of its education sector funding to primary education, which received 75% of the total budget funding and accounted for 58% of all USAID-funded education programmes, reflecting a strong focus on foundational learning for children. Higher

education followed at 17% of funding going to 27% of programmes, emphasising support for advanced academic and research initiatives as well as post-secondary workforce development. Basic life skills for adults accounted for 2% of funding and 6% of all programmes, targeting literacy and essential skills development for young adults, including employability skills.

Smaller portions were allocated to education policy and administration (2.9% of funding), upper secondary and vocational training (1.2% of funding), and education facilities and training (0.9%). “Other” areas at 0.7% funding included early childhood development and a few miscellaneous programmes.

Figure 15. USAID education programmes and funding by sub-sector³⁰, 2023



Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov; constant dollars

This distribution of funding highlights USAID’s prioritisation of primary education while also addressing broader education needs across various subsectors. Additionally, it is important to note that many USAID-funded education programmes address multiple objectives and can meet criteria for inclusion under different categories. For example, many youth programmes provide primary

education, basic life skills, and vocational training to their participants, and some primary education programmes include education policy components. However, the overall data pattern indicates that primary education programmes are significantly larger in terms of their funding compared to higher education, basic life skills, and other programmes.

³⁰ ForeignAssistance.gov uses different types of programme categorisation. This chart uses data for all programmes categorised as “education” as their “international category name.”

Figure 15 shows the categorisation of education programmes in 2023 based on their international purpose. Each programme is only included in one category.

USAID's education programmes in different sub-sectors reflect regional needs. For example, primary education programmes are concentrated in Africa and Asia, while higher education and basic skills programming is found in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Latin America. Many USAID education programmes in ETF partner countries supported higher education, research, vocational training, and workforce development.

USAID's role as a convener, coordinator, and funder of multilateral education initiatives

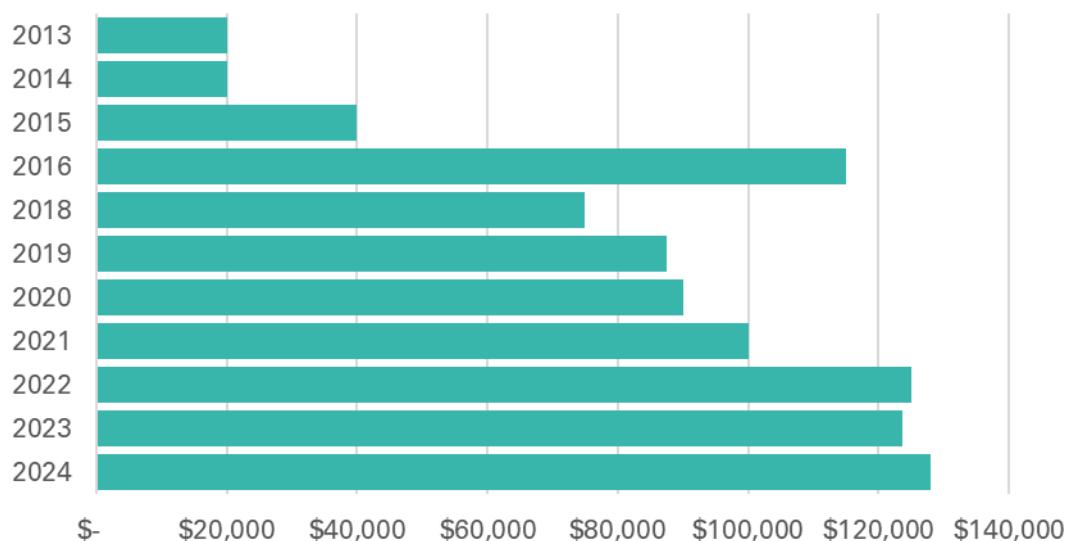
Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

The US Government's support for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)³¹ and the Education Cannot Wait (ECW)³² has played an important role in advancing access to education, particularly in low-income and crisis-affected countries. These initiatives aim

to ensure that children around the world have access to quality education, a key factor in economic development, poverty reduction, and social cohesion. By contributing to GPE and ECW, the US has supported efforts to overcome systemic barriers to education, such as inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, and gender inequality, while also responding to emergencies that disrupt schooling, such as conflicts and natural disasters. This funding aligns with US values of promoting human dignity, equality, and opportunity, while also promoting global stability and prosperity.

Since its inception, the US Government has been a major financial contributor to GPE (Figure 16), consistently meeting its commitments in full³³. Funding for GPE is approved by Congress as part of USAID's annual appropriations. This support has helped GPE mobilise additional resources from other countries and use them to strengthen education systems in developing countries, particularly in regions affected by conflict and poverty. GPE has supported initiatives such as teacher training, curriculum development, and infrastructure improvements, ensuring

Figure 16. USAID funding for GPE 2013-24, USD mln



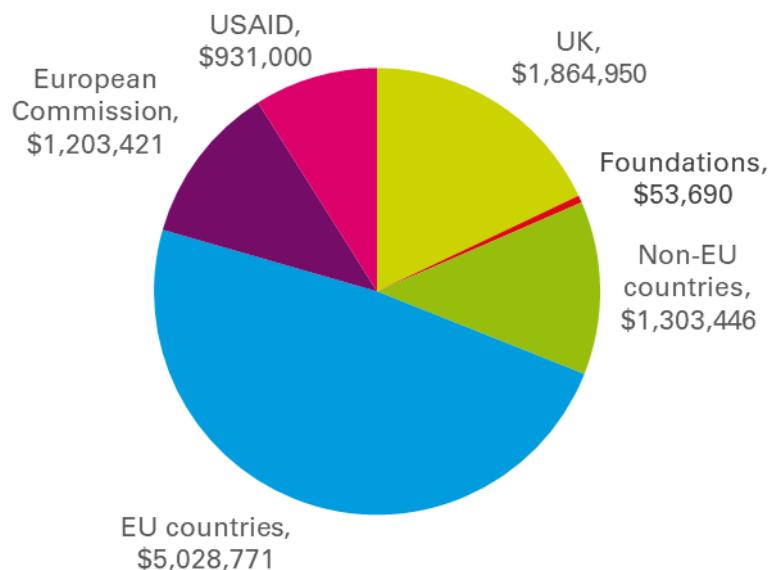
Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov; current dollars, as disbursed

31 Global Partnership for Education

32 Education Cannot Wait | The Global Fund for Education In Emergencies

33 Donor contributions to GPE | Documents | Global Partnership for Education

Figure 17. GPE funding sources (cumulative, to date)



Data source: Donor contributions to GPE | Documents | Global Partnership for Education

that millions of children, especially girls and marginalised groups, have access to quality education. This ongoing financial commitment by the US Government demonstrates its recognition of education as a cornerstone for sustainable development and economic growth.

Although the overall amount of funding from the US is less than 10% of GPE's budget (Figure 17), the consistency of US funding has been important for the GPE Secretariat's ability to plan initiatives and support their implementation. USAID has also been an active member of the Secretariat, supporting coordination and providing technical assistance when needed.

Education Cannot Wait (ECW)

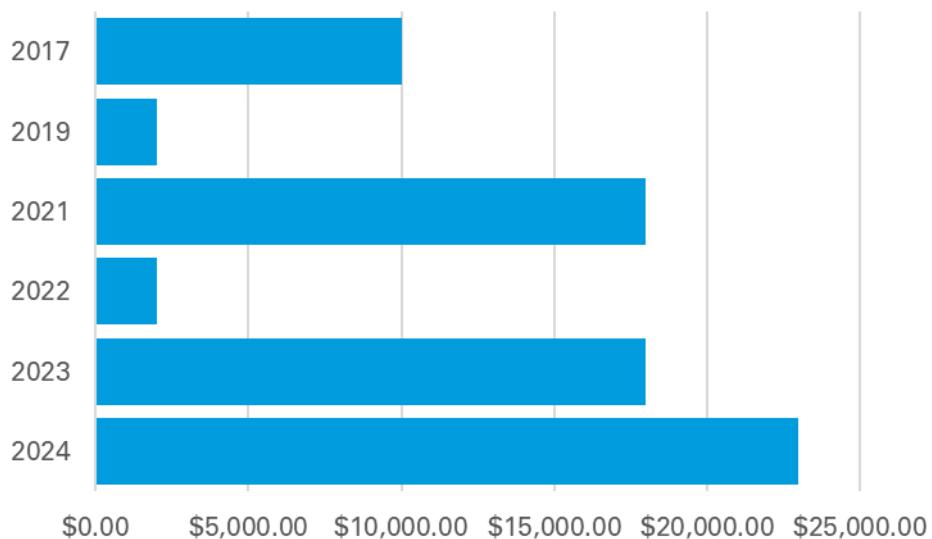
USAID has played a significant historical role in first creating and then supporting the ECW initiative, which aims to provide quality education to children and youth affected by crises, including conflict, natural disasters, and displacement (Figures 18 and 19). As a key donor and partner, USAID has contributed financial resources, technical expertise, and

advocacy to strengthen ECW's efforts in delivering emergency education solutions. By aligning its global education priorities with ECW's mission, USAID has helped bridge the gap between humanitarian and development assistance, ensuring that education remains a priority in crisis response. This collaboration has expanded access to safe, inclusive, and equitable learning opportunities for millions of vulnerable children and youth worldwide, reflecting USAID's commitment to education as a key element of resilience and sustainable development.

USAID has also been providing thought leadership as well as some financial support to the Building Evidence for Education (BE2) donor working group³⁴ since its inception in 2012. The group has been instrumental in helping to establish common education research standards and vocabulary across donors in the international education sector and has provided a platform for encouraging research collaboration and coordination in decision-making. Additionally, in 2022, USAID partnered with the World Bank, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, FCDO, UNICEF, and UNESCO to

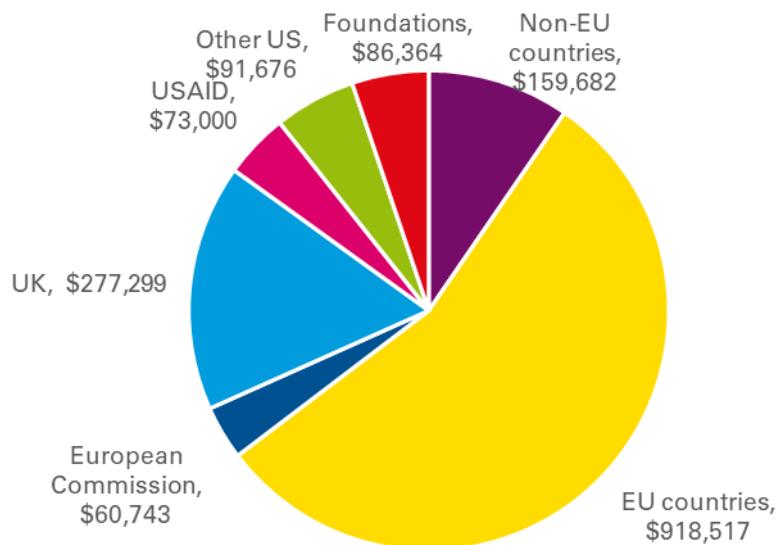
34 Building Evidence in Education

Figure 18 USAID funding for ECW, USD mln



Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov

Figure 19. ECW funding sources, USD mln



Data source: Our Donors | Education Cannot Wait

create the Coalition for Foundational Learning³⁵ that aims to improve national learning outcomes in early grades. USAID was part of the coalition's secretariat.

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35 The Global Coalition for Foundational Learning Narrative 31 03 23 UNESCO.docx

to create the Coalition for Foundational Learning that aims to improve national learning outcomes in early grades. USAID was part of the coalition's secretariat.

Through these investments in multilateral initiatives, the US Government exercised its leadership in the global education sector, amplified its impact, and leveraged its influence to mobilise additional resources from other donor countries, multilateral organisations, and private sector partners. This collaborative approach also ensured that emergency education responses were coordinated effectively. US support for these initiatives demonstrated a commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation, reinforcing its role as a global leader in addressing pressing development and humanitarian challenges. These efforts enhance the US's soft power, building goodwill and partnerships with nations that benefit from improved education outcomes.

The withdrawal of US financial support for GPE and ECW is likely to have severe negative consequences. These initiatives would face significant resource gaps, limiting their ability to reach millions of children and youth in need, particularly in conflict zones and fragile states, leading to increased dropout rates, worsened gender inequalities, and a loss of progress in building resilient education systems. Additionally, US withdrawal could discourage other donors from contributing, further weakening global education efforts, leading to funding shortfalls and jeopardising progress towards international goals such as SDG 4. Ultimately, this would weaken global stability and hinder economic development, as education plays a vital role in supporting long-term peace and prosperity.

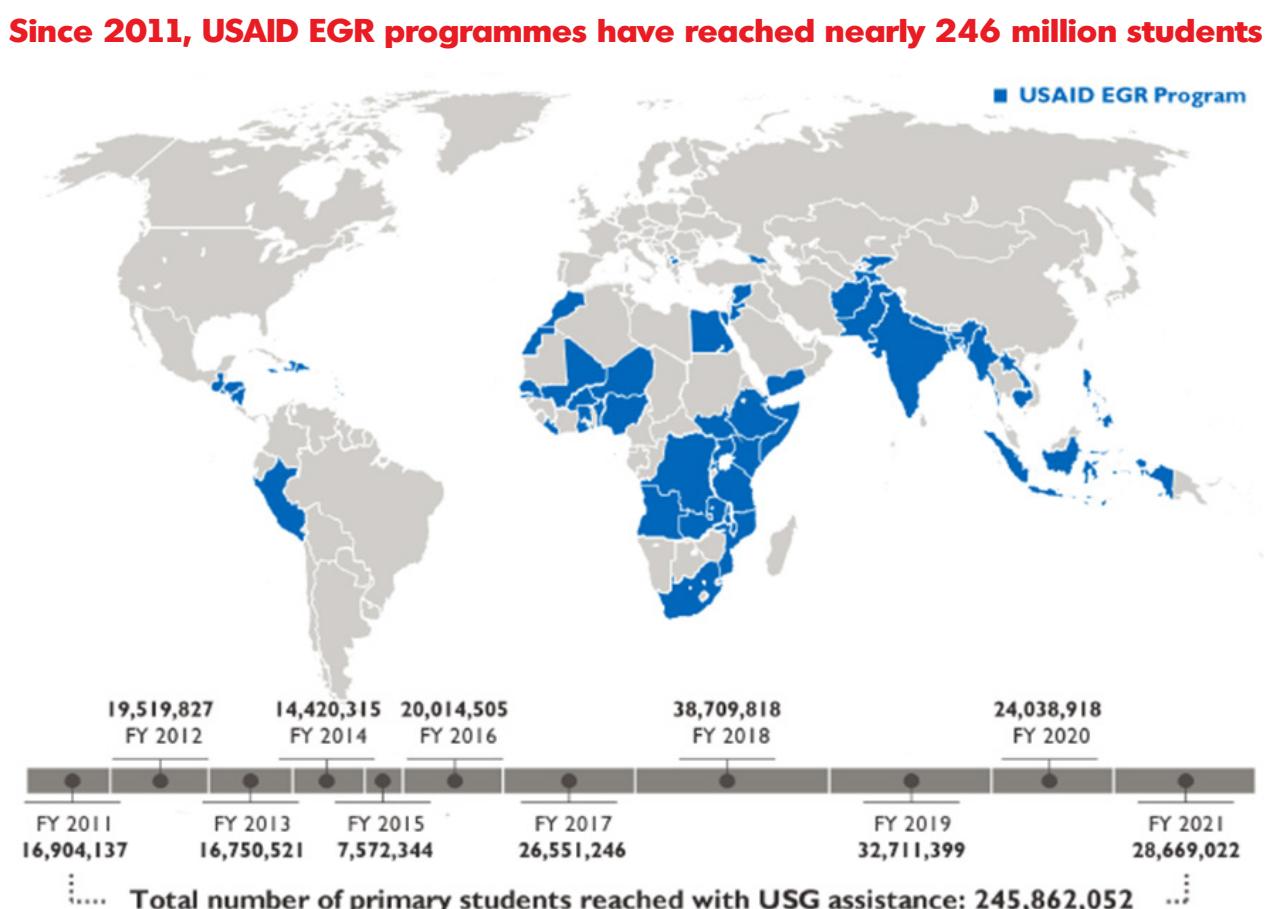
IMPACT OF USAID WITHDRAWAL ON GLOBAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Basic education programmes

USAID has made significant strides in early grade reading (EGR) programming since the launch of USAID's education strategy in 2011, which directed USAID's missions to focus most education investments on EGR. In the 10 years since the release of the strategy, USAID-funded basic education programming benefitted an estimated 246 million students across 53 countries, concentrating efforts on improving the quality of reading instruction (specifically through the introduction of

teaching in local languages), generating data to inform education practices, supporting education reform to emphasise EGR, and promoting equity in learning. Key achievements include the development and distribution of teaching materials in local languages, the promotion of policies supporting instruction in local languages, and partnerships with governments to enhance reading performance and sustainability. Figure 20 shows the map of USAID's investments in EGR programmes between 2011 and 2021³⁶.

Figure 20. USAID basic education programmes: geographies and reach



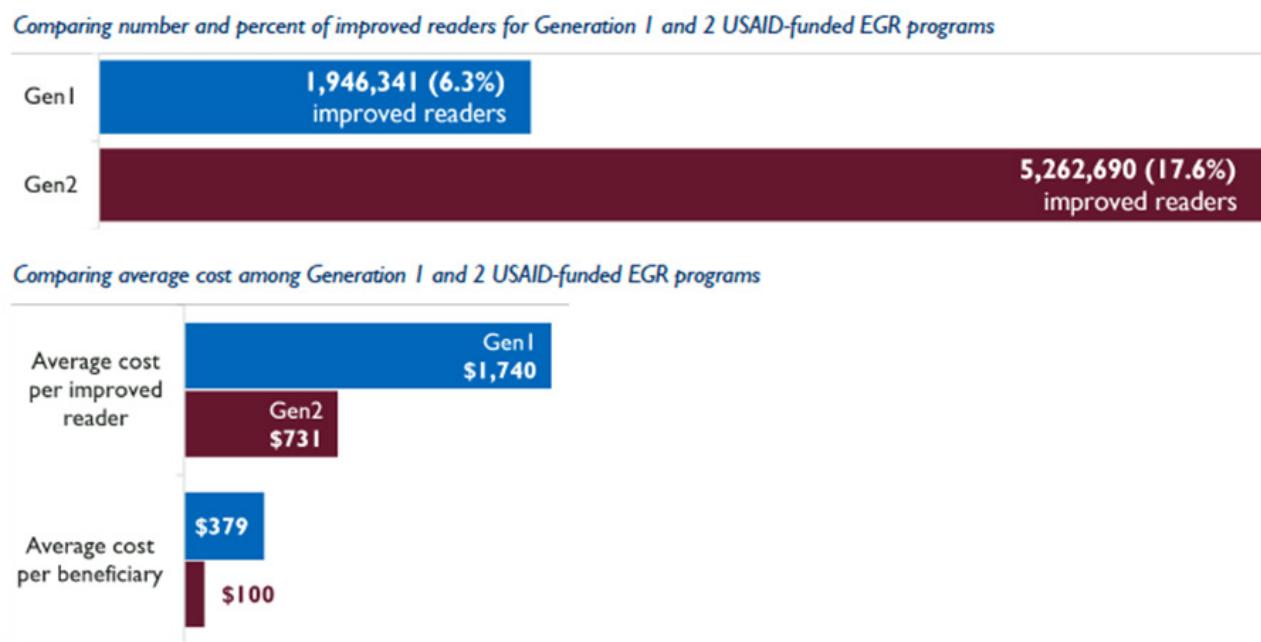
Data source: *Ten years of early grade reading programming: A retrospective (2011-21)*, USAID, Washington DC. 2023

³⁶ Ten years of early grade reading programming: A retrospective (2011-2021), USAID, Washington DC. 2023. edu-links.org/learning/lessons-learned-decade-early-grade-reading-programs.

A USAID-commissioned study of the effectiveness of its EGR programmes demonstrated that over time, EGR programming was becoming more impactful and cost-effective, with second-generation programmes (those procured after 2013) reaching a larger number of students and teachers, improving reading among a larger percentage of students, and having a lower average cost per beneficiary and per improved

reader. These programmes have evolved to include research-based approaches, closer collaboration with governments, and more effective teacher training, contributing to improved learning outcomes even in complex environments³⁷. Figure 21 illustrates the differences in generation 1 programmes (procured before 2013) and generation 2 programmes (procured after 2013).

Figure 21. Impacts of global USAID EGR programmes



Data source: Ten years of early grade reading programming: A retrospective (2011-2021), USAID, Washington DC. 2023

The report highlighted the importance of building relationships with local stakeholders, incorporating deep knowledge of contextual constraints in programme design and experience with rapid adjustments, particularly in conflict-affected areas and fragile countries. The report also offered recommendations for future EGR programming that emphasise the need for extended inception phases, local research-based approaches, sustainable data systems, and equitable programme designs that engage marginalised populations.

In addition to quantitative metrics of results of USAID investments in basic education summarised in the Retrospective and other sources³⁸, there are less tangible but perhaps more lasting impacts of the sustained focus on early grade reading and mathematics:

1. USAID successfully drew global attention to foundational skills, highlighting their role in promoting stability and advancing development outcomes. USAID advocacy was instrumental in adopting SDG 4.1.1

³⁷ Ten Years of Early Grade Reading Programming: A Retrospective (2011-2021), USAID, Washington DC. 2023. edu-links.org/learning/lessons-learned-decade-early-grade-reading-programs

³⁸ Please see Annex B for a snapshot of results of USAID foundational skills programs in 2023. Additional sources of information about results include the following: 2018 USAID Education Strategy Progress Report; Phonics and Foreign Aid: Can America Teach the World to Read? | Center For Global Development; New report takes stock of USAID's basic education work as Congress considers reauthorising global education legislation - RESULTS

indicator and targets and prioritising funding for foundational skills among other bilateral and multilateral donors.

2. USAID programmes, in partnership with national governments, generated comparable data on learning outcomes in reading and mathematics in early grades, the first-ever in many countries. Such data are necessary for budgetary and programmatic decision-making by governments and donors.
3. USAID programmes promoted necessary reforms to facilitate improvements in learning outcomes and supplied millions of teaching and learning materials to facilitate the implementation of the reforms, from books in local languages and teacher instruction packages to education technology, reading glasses for learners with poor vision, furniture in classrooms, and interactive radio instruction programmes for learners without access to schools.
4. USAID investment in research contributed to building the evidence base for effective approaches to literacy acquisition and instruction, especially in multilingual contexts.
5. USAID programmes drew attention to underserved populations such as refugees, learners with disabilities, linguistic, ethnic, and religious minorities, and children living in poverty.

At the policy level, USAID promoted a pivot of national education systems to teaching primary grades in languages that children speak and understand and to routinely measuring learning outcomes in reading and mathematics. In more recent years, USAID also increasingly advocated for policies relating to disability-inclusive education³⁹.

Table 2 summarises the USAID-funded basic education programmes with the highest expenditure over the past three years all of which were cancelled in early 2025.

Table 2. Summary of recent USAID basic education programmes with the highest budgets, 2022-24

COUNTRY	PROGRAMME NAME AND DESCRIPTION
Uganda	<p>Amount disbursed: \$75,694,515.12 (Total planned: \$118,909,862)</p> <p>Name: Integrated Child and Youth Development (ICYD) Activity</p> <p>Timeline: 2020-2025</p> <p>Implementer: Education Development Centre, Inc.</p> <p>Summary: USAID/Uganda's Integrated Child and Youth Development (ICYD) activity partners with the Government of Uganda (GoU) and local stakeholders to strengthen government systems and improve the government's ability to deliver basic education and services to children and youth, including orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), in target districts across Uganda. The ICYD activity will meet its objectives through the following activities: Build on recent Early Grade Reading (EGR) support to the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) and target districts; Address primary school retention and transition through a combination of family, community, and school-based interventions that address known critical drivers of school dropout; Provide critical OVC services for up to two years while building the capacity of local partners to transition to prime awards; Provide technical assistance and coordination to OVC service providers in service delivery districts; Support the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), MOES, and other public/private institutions and organisations to progressively transition OVC service delivery and education improvement from donor support.</p> <p>Website: Implementer's webpage</p>

39 Financing Disability-Inclusive Education: USAID Roadmap

COUNTRY	PROGRAMME NAME AND DESCRIPTION
Lebanon	<p>Amount disbursed: \$92,171,006 (Total planned: \$93,599,994)</p> <p>Name: Quality Instruction Towards Access and Basic Education Improvement (QITABI) 2</p> <p>Implementer: World Learning, Inc.</p> <p>Timeline: 2019-2025</p> <p>Summary: QITABI 2's goal was to improve student learning results in reading and writing, and to help the Government of Lebanon deliver quality national level education. QITABI 2 support for Arabic reading and numeracy studies in all public schools in Lebanon expanded to include improvements in the instruction of other languages. QITABI 2 provided educational materials and equipment to support the programme and develop ways to engage families in their children's learning. The programme also provided technical and administrative support to Lebanon's Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Centre for Educational Research and Development to improve national service delivery and modernise the national curriculum. QITABI 2 continued USAID's close partnership with both institutions to institutionalise and sustain USAID-funded education reforms focused on increased access to education, improved student learning, and strengthened educational management systems.</p> <p>Website: Implementer's webpage</p>
Lebanon	<p>Amount disbursed: \$7,316,107 (Total planned: \$97 mln)</p> <p>Name: Quality Instruction Towards Access and Basic Education Improvement (QITABI) 3</p> <p>Implementer: Research Triangle Institute.</p> <p>Timeline: 2023-2028</p> <p>Summary: QITABI 3 was designed to build on the successes of QITABI and QITABI 2 to ensure that children and youth receive improved instruction resulting in gains in literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills, ensuring that higher proportions of students complete school. The programme supports the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Centre for Educational Research and Development to provide national inclusive education. The programme was designed to provide technical support to education providers to improve education effectiveness and strengthen research and assessment capabilities, and increase the number of children and youth completing school as well as their learning outcomes.</p> <p>Website: Implementer's webpage</p>

COUNTRY	PROGRAMME NAME AND DESCRIPTION
Kenya	<p>Amount disbursed: \$8,518,005 (Total planned \$79,500,000)</p> <p>Name: Kenya Primary Literacy Program (KPLP)</p> <p>Timeline: 2023-2028</p> <p>Implementer: Education Development Centre (EDC)</p> <p>Summary: The Kenya Primary Literacy Programme is designed to improve student learning outcomes in basic education and expand access to high quality basic education for all, particularly for marginalised and vulnerable populations. The programme is intended to conduct national teacher training, coaching, and mentoring to improve the delivery of classroom language and literacy instruction and to continuously assess student learning in all 23,300+ public primary schools across all 47 counties; provide targeted support to grade 3 learners who have not achieved the required levels of literacy; pilot and scale online synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning services, especially to learners in difficult-to-reach locations, such as areas affected by drought, flooding, and conflict; strengthen language and literacy education for learners with disabilities, particularly those who are visually and hearing impaired; expand the Ministry of Education (MOE) dashboard to collect and report relevant data on schools and learners; develop and implement low-cost continuous assessments to track and use student learning data; build the capacity of the MOE, relevant parastatal institutions, and private sector partners to produce and supply high-quality training materials and TLMs; and provide community-based after-school remediation for struggling readers and home-based reading activities.</p> <p>Website: Implementer's webpage</p>
Malawi	<p>Amount disbursed: \$35,780,799 (Total planned \$74,988,869)</p> <p>Name: Next Generation Early Grade Reading (NextGen)</p> <p>Timeline: 2022-2027</p> <p>Implementer: Chemonics Intl.</p> <p>Summary: The USAID/Malawi Next Generation Early Grade Reading Activity (NextGen) will solidify and build on the progress to date of Malawi's National Reading Programme to improve the delivery of high-quality early primary reading instruction in all Malawian primary schools. At the end of NextGen, at least 30% of Malawian second-grade children will demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency in Chichewa as defined by the Global Proficiency Framework. In addition, at least 30% of NextGen's beneficiaries will also demonstrate measurable improvements in English oral expression and in the essential sub-skills of reading in English.</p> <p>Website: Partner's webpage</p>

Data sources: ForeignAssistance.gov for data on programme name and implementer; USASpending.gov for data on budget and expenditure; cited project websites for the summary information.

Examples of other cancelled top-funded USAID basic education programmes include the following, with the total planned funding in parentheses:

- Zambia – Let’s Read Zambia (2019-25; \$48,995,538)
- Afghanistan – Accessible and Quality Basic Education in Afghanistan (AQBE) (2023-28; \$48,969,272)
- Nigeria – Learn to Read (2022-27; \$48,812,640)
- Mozambique - Improved Learning Outcomes in Primary Education (SABER) Activity (2022-27; \$41,121,387)
- Tanzania - Learning for Understanding (2021-25; \$38,599,863)
- Bangladesh - Esho Shikhi Come and Learn (2021-28; \$38,500,000)
- Senegal - Reinforcement de la Littratie au Senegal (RELIS) (2022-26; \$37,674,324)
- Palestine – Basic Education Activity (2023-27; \$37,000,000)

Of 553 programmes that USAID funded in 2023, 360 received funding from the basic education earmark⁴⁰ and 323 (58.8% with 75.3% of the total funding) were categorised as primary education programmes.

This loss of USAID basic education funding will be felt greatly across the global education sector where, despite decades of progress, significant challenges persist. According to a UNESCO report, approximately 251 million children and youth remain out of school, highlighting the ongoing struggle to achieve universal education⁴¹. The report underscores the disparities in access to education, particularly in low-income countries and among marginalised groups. Factors such as poverty, gender inequality, and conflict continue to hinder education opportunities for millions of

children and youth.

Additionally, the quality of education remains a concern, with many students not acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills even when they attend school. These issues were compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted education systems worldwide and exacerbated existing inequalities⁴². Figure 22 shows the learning disparities across the globe using the World Bank’s measure of learning-adjusted years of schooling.

The UNESCO report also emphasises the need for targeted interventions to address the barriers to education. This includes increasing funding for education, improving infrastructure, and implementing policies that promote inclusivity and equity. The report calls for a renewed global commitment to education, particularly in regions affected by conflict and crisis. It highlights the importance of addressing the root causes of educational disparities, such as poverty and gender discrimination, to ensure that all children have access to quality education. The findings of the report underscore the urgent need for coordinated efforts by governments, international organisations, and civil society to overcome the persistent challenges in the global education sector.

The withdrawal of USAID funding from global education initiatives will have significant short- and long-term consequences for access, quality, and equity in education worldwide. In the short term, the immediate reduction in funding disrupts ongoing programmes that rely on USAID support, particularly in low-income and conflict-affected regions. USAID has long been instrumental in providing educational opportunities to marginalised communities, including girls and refugees, who are often excluded from formal education systems. For example, the Accessible and Quality Basic Education in Afghanistan (AQBE) programme enabled access to education for girls who lost educational opportunities under the

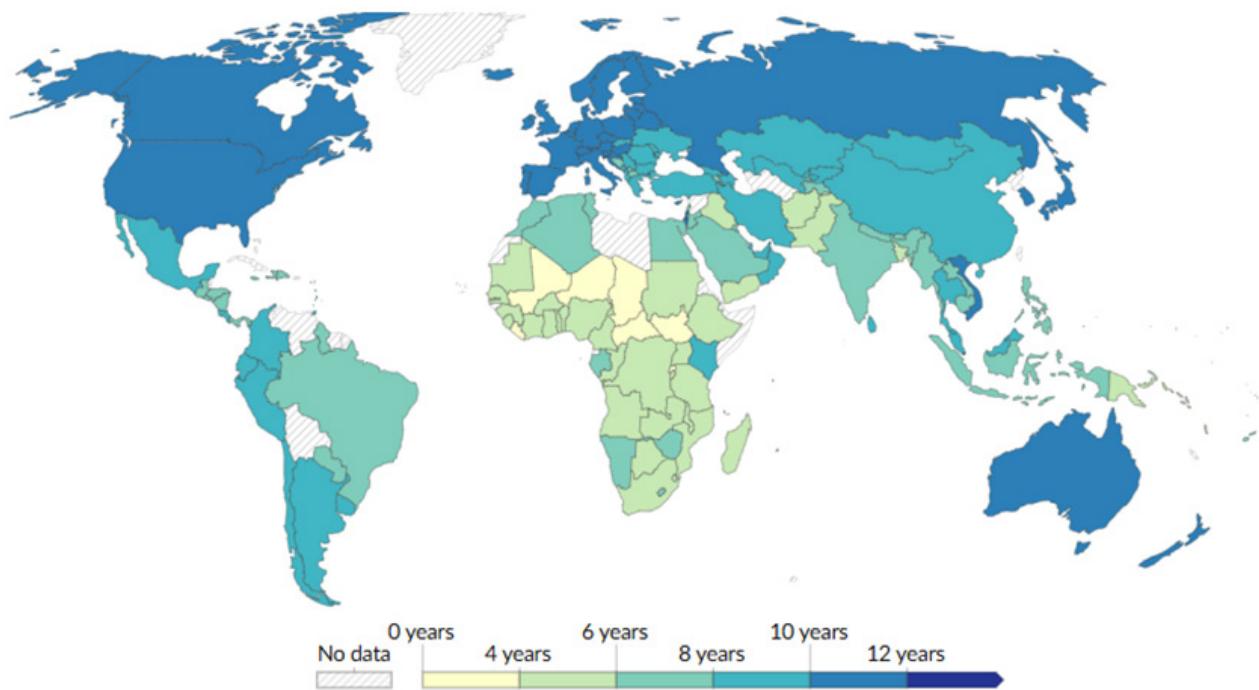
40 Earmarks and Directives in the Foreign Operations Appropriation

41 251M children and youth still out of school, despite decades of progress (UNESCO report) | UNESCO

42 ibid

43 ibid

Figure 22. Average learning-adjusted years of schooling, 2020



Data source: Average learning-adjusted years of schooling, 2020

Taliban regime. Another example is the Basic Education Activity in Palestine that was in the process of launching the provision of education services to underserved preschool and primary school learners affected by the conflict. The sudden withdrawal of resources is likely to lead to the closure of schools, the discontinuation of teacher training programmes, and the suspension of initiatives aimed at improving early literacy and numeracy skills. This disruption will disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, exacerbating existing inequalities in access to education⁴⁴.

In the long term, the consequences of USAID's withdrawal could be even more severe, as the loss of sustained investment in education systems undermines efforts to build resilient and inclusive education infrastructure. Education is a critical driver of economic growth, health improvements, and social stability. By cutting funding, the US risks stalling progress toward global education goals, such as SDG 4, which aims to ensure

inclusive and equitable high-quality education for all. The long-term impact could include lower literacy rates, reduced economic opportunities, and increased social instability in regions where education systems are already fragile. Furthermore, the withdrawal signals a retreat from US leadership in global development, potentially discouraging other nations and organisations from prioritising education funding.

The equity implications of USAID withdrawal are of particular concern. USAID has historically focused on addressing systemic barriers to education, such as gender discrimination, poverty, and geographic isolation. Programmes targeting girls' education, for example, have been critical in closing gender gaps in school enrolment and retention. Likewise, scholarship programmes implemented by USAID enable children and young adults to access education and chart healthier and more prosperous paths in life⁴⁵. Without this targeted support, progress towards gender equity in education could

44 Cutting education is an 'America last' not an 'America first' approach

45 Uncertainty as US-funded higher education projects suspended

reverse, leaving millions of girls without access to schooling⁴⁶. USAID's role in supporting higher education and vocational training in developing countries has been vital for creating pathways out of poverty for those with limited existing opportunities. The withdrawal of funding risks leaving these systems underfunded and unable to meet the needs of growing populations, undermining decades of progress, exacerbating inequalities, and risking destabilising regions that depend on education as a pathway to peace and prosperity.

Vocational, workforce, and skills building programmes

In addition to its leadership role in improving basic education systems in its partner countries, USAID's work in skills building and vocational training for youth is critical for addressing the global skills gap and improving labour market outcomes. Vocational and skills training programmes have been shown to enhance employability, increase wages, and provide pathways to better job opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged populations. These programmes are especially important in developing countries, where formal education systems may not adequately prepare students for the demands of the labour market. By equipping individuals with relevant skills, USAID initiatives help bridge the gap between education and employment, contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction.

Research from the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) highlights the effectiveness of vocational training programmes for young adults in improving labour market outcomes. Findings from experimental evaluations have shown that well-designed training programmes can lead to significant increases in employment rates and earnings, particularly when they are

tailored to the needs of local labour markets⁴⁷. USAID's focus on skills building aligns with these findings, emphasising the importance of practical, hands-on training that addresses the specific needs of employers and industries. By investing in vocational training, USAID not only enhances individual livelihoods but also supports broader economic development, making it a critical component of the agency's efforts to promote sustainable and inclusive growth.

USAID has funded numerous vocational and skills training programmes in its partner countries, to improve labour market outcomes, reduce poverty, and promote economic growth. These programmes often target youth, women, and marginalised populations, focusing on equipping participants with market-relevant skills. These programmes were designed to meet the needs of the context and commonly aimed to achieve a wide array of outcomes depending on the sectoral lens of the funding stream or streams used to finance the programme⁴⁸. In fragile contexts such programmes frequently seek to directly support unemployed youth through employability training, vocational training, direct placement into employment, or entrepreneurship coaching, alongside life skills and basic education. In contexts with robust vocational systems in place, USAID-funded programmes frequently aim to improve the quality and relevance of secondary technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes by updating curricula, improving industry connections, and training instructors. In other contexts, USAID-funded programmes partner with post-secondary education institutions to help improve their access and quality, particularly working to improve access to these programmes for disadvantaged populations and

46 "Your education was a problem to be solved": How dismantling USAID hurts access to education | First focus on children

47 Vocational and skills training programmes to improve labor market outcomes | The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab

48 Many of these programmes were funded from non-education funding sources and resulted in a wide range of skill-related outcomes. For example, a programme could be designed to engage with young people not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) to equip them with employability skills alongside broader civic education and community engagement. Another type of programme could combine vocational training with basic literacy/numeracy skills and basic health and family planning information. Another type of programme may engage youth in peer education relating to countering violent extremism at a community level through youth clubs and support networks. Many such programmes may not have been categorised under "education" in USAID databases and consequently are not included in this report.

to better align the qualifications of graduates with the skills that employers are seeking.

At a policy level, USAID sought to promote meaningful inclusion of youth in governance processes and enable inclusive and equitable access to education, training, and employment opportunities. At the foundation of USAID's youth efforts is an approach called "Positive Youth Development" (PYD), an evidence-based framework that ensures meaningful opportunities for youth to contribute to resolving challenges and promoting positive change in their own communities and countries⁴⁹. While the PYD framework was at the core of all USAID programmes for youth, the policy efforts varied depending on the context, as illustrated in USAID's congressional report on youth programmes in 2023: "In Africa, USAID's youth programming focuses on education, democratic resilience, employment, entrepreneurship development, health, food security and nutrition. In Europe and Eurasia, USAID's youth programming focuses on youth employment, reducing corruption, and civic participation to reduce 'brain drain' and outmigration. In Asia, programmes focus on health, economic growth, environment, and education. In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), USAID's youth programming focuses on preventing crime, recruitment by gangs, and promoting youth economic opportunity, workforce development, health systems, and other factors that contribute to mass irregular migration. In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), USAID's youth programming focuses on peacebuilding, youth leadership, education, and workforce development."⁵⁰

Key outcomes observed in USAID-funded vocational training programmes include⁵¹:

1. Improved employment rates. Many USAID programmes have successfully increased employment rates among participants by providing skills aligned with local labour market demands. For example, USAID's Training for Employment programme and Youth Employment and Skills (YES) programme in Jordan helped young people secure jobs in sectors like construction, hospitality, and IT by offering tailored training and job placement services⁵².
2. Higher earnings. USAID-funded vocational training programmes often lead to higher wages for participants. For instance, USAID's Workforce Development Programme in the Philippines improved incomes for trainees by connecting them with higher-paying jobs in industries such as manufacturing and tourism⁵³.
3. Enhanced skills and employability. Programmes like USAID's Strengthening Vocational Training in Afghanistan focused on improving technical and soft skills, such as communication and teamwork, which are critical for employability in competitive job markets⁵⁴.
4. Gender empowerment. Many USAID-funded programs prioritize women's participation, leading to increased economic independence and reduced gender disparities. For example, the Women's Economic Empowerment and Equality (WE3) Initiative in various countries has provided vocational training to women in non-traditional fields, enabling them to access higher-paying jobs⁵⁵.

USAID's workforce development and skill building programmes are particularly prevalent in ETF partner countries. In 2022-24, USAID

49 Youth in Development Policy. 2023 Report to Congress.

50 Ibid, p. 2

51 See Annex B for a snapshot of results of USAID youth workforce development programmes in 2023.

52 USAID/Jordan - Youth Employment and Skills program: <https://www.usaid.gov/jordan/education-and-youth> and USAID 'Training for Employment' Program Offers Skills to 6,000 Young People in Jordan | Al Bawaba

53 USAID/Philippines - Workforce development programme: <https://www.usaid.gov/philippines/education>

54 USAID/Afghanistan – Education: <https://www.usaid.gov/afghanistan/education>

55 USAID Women's Economic Empowerment: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>

funded such programmes in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Georgia, Jordan, Kosovo⁵⁶, Morocco, North Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and regionally across multiple countries

in the Eastern European region. Table 3 includes details of the five largest workforce development programmes in the ETF partner countries that were cancelled in February or March 2025.

Table 3. Summary of USAID-funded workforce programmes in ETF partner countries

COUNTRY	PROGRAMME NAME AND DESCRIPTION
Egypt	<p>Amount disbursed: \$30,926,418 (Total planned \$104,592,703)</p> <p>Name: Workforce Egypt</p> <p>Timeline: 2021-26</p> <p>Implementer: Management and Training International</p> <p>Summary: The project is helping to transform Egypt's technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system to produce the skills needed for a globally competitive labour market by creating sustainable jobs, especially for youth and women, and institutionalising structural labour market reforms that can support workforce development now and in the future. This five-year project works in 15 governorates in Egypt.</p> <p>Website: Press release; Notice of budget increase</p>
Palestine	<p>Amount disbursed: \$7,854,282 (Total planned \$27,500,000)</p> <p>Name: Technical and Vocational Education and Training Activity</p> <p>Timeline: 2022-27</p> <p>Implementer: International Research and Exchanges Board, Inc.</p> <p>Summary: The technical and vocational education and training (TVET) activity enables TVET institutions to meet labour market demands and provide Palestinians with meaningful, well-paid employment and income-generating opportunities. The TVET activity develops new technical training and improves the quality of existing technical programmes. These programmes will support Palestinian career paths and link participants to employment opportunities, or help them start their own business, in increasingly in-demand technical sectors. The activity increases TVET institutions responsiveness to the needs of the private sector and the effects of climate change; creates new partnerships between the TVET institutions and the private sector; and increases the number of skilled graduates. The activity works with around 12 TVET institutions to build their capacity and connect them with private sector employers. Approximately 2,230 students will benefit from new/modernised training programmes, and around 1,900 students are expected to find employment upon graduation from the new/modernised training programmes. In addition, the activity will enhance career development services and mentorships at the targeted institutions. This will benefit at least 400 females, enhancing their opportunities to find meaningful employment, and provide scholarships for 500 of the most marginalised youth to pursue technical training for employment and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>Website: Partner website</p>

⁵⁶ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ opinion on Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

COUNTRY	PROGRAMME NAME AND DESCRIPTION
Georgia	<p>Amount disbursed: \$14,859,154 (Total planned \$23,999,889)</p> <p>Name: Industry-led Skills Development Programme</p> <p>Timeline: 2021-26</p> <p>Implementer: International Executive Service Corps</p> <p>Summary: The USAID Industry-led Skills Development Programme is a five-year initiative designed to create pathways between skills training and high-value employment opportunities, helping to reduce unemployment and catalyse sustainable economic growth across the country. Implemented by IESC, the programme incentivises businesses in high-growth industries to systematically engage in innovative skills development, while engaging skills training providers to implement high-quality training programmes aligned with labour market demand and extend access throughout Georgia. Training programmes target underrepresented members of society, including residents of rural communities and women.</p> <p>Website: Implementer website</p>
Jordan	<p>Amount disbursed: \$5,632,757 (Total planned \$9,132,757)</p> <p>Name: The Youth Grow Activity (YGA)</p> <p>Timeline: 2023-28</p> <p>Implementer: THE QED GROUP LLC</p> <p>Summary: The Youth Grow Activity (YGA) is an innovative five-year (2023-28) project funded by USAID and implemented by Q2 Impact and its partners. YGA aims to empower youth in Jordan through positive youth development (PYD), not only for young people but for society at large. The YGA focuses on three core objectives: preparing youth for economic opportunities by providing access to high-quality online career counselling and entrepreneurship information; strengthening youth leadership through targeted support of local youth-led organisations (YLO) and youth-serving organisations (YSO), and strengthening Jordanian government systems to guarantee effective youth participation, create a youth-inclusive and enabling environment, and enhance the accessibility and quality of government systems and services to better cater for social and economic empowerment.</p> <p>Website: Sub-contractor website</p>

Data sources: ForeignAssistance.gov for data on programme name and implementer; USASpending.gov for data on budget and expenditure; cited project websites for the summary information.

Examples of vocational and workforce development projects outside the ETF's partner countries include the following, with the total funding listed in brackets:

- Guatemala – Puentes Project (\$60,641,654)
- Colombia - Juntos Aprendemos (2021-27; \$31,406,737)
- Afghanistan – Afghanistan Integrated Youth Activity (AIYA) (2024-2029; \$61mln)

- Ethiopia – Integrated Youth Activity (IYA) (2021-2026; \$45,741,611)

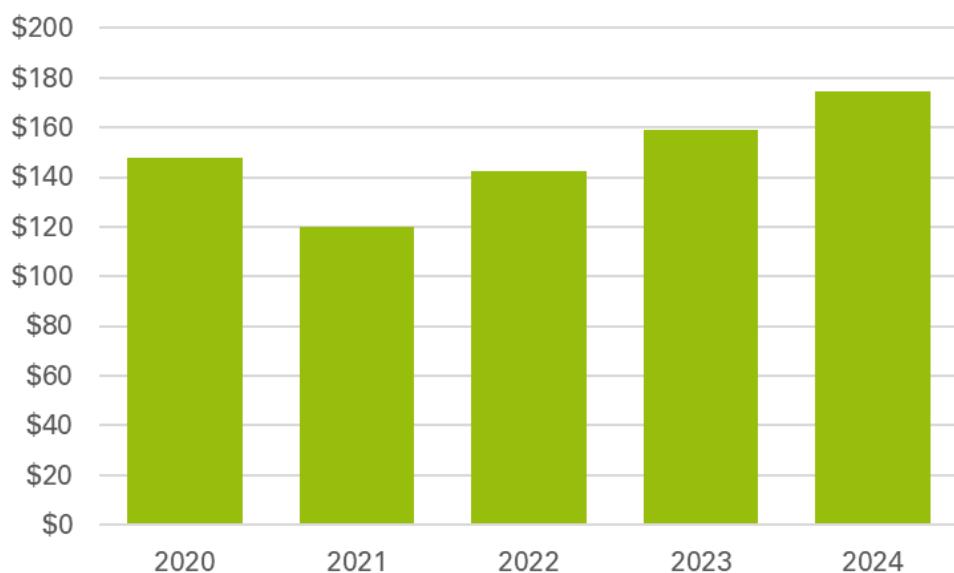
The withdrawal of USAID funding will disproportionately affect marginalised groups such as young people, women, and refugees. Programmes that relied on USAID support for industry-aligned training and job placements now face collapse, exacerbating unemployment and economic instability. Abrupt cancellations threaten to reverse gains in gender equity and

local entrepreneurship. Without alternative funding, there is likely to be a decline in skilled labour pipelines.

Long-term consequences include weakened education-to-employment systems and geopolitical shifts in development influence. USAID's role as a convener—aligning training curricula with private-sector needs in countries like Egypt and the Philippines—leaves a vacuum that multilateral organisations and

under-resourced governments will struggle to fill. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has expanded technical training in strategic partner countries such as Pakistan and Ethiopia, but its focus on infrastructure-linked skills fails to replace USAID's holistic approach. The loss of USAID's evidence-based models risks further fragmenting global efforts in workforce development, with marginalised communities paying the highest price.

Figure 23. USAID allocations for higher education programmes, USD mln



Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov, constant dollars

Figure 24. Core function of a higher education system



Source: USAID HE programme framework (2021)

Higher education programmes

USAID has had a long history of funding higher education programmes (Figure 23). The 2018 USAID Education Policy emphasises that higher education institutions (HEIs) can be central actors in development by conducting and applying research, delivering quality vocational and higher education, and engaging with communities (Figure 24). To realise this potential, they need to have the skills, the infrastructure, and strong connections to communities and industry. HEIs also have a critical role to play in strengthening basic education by providing quality training for new teachers, education administrators, and policymakers. HEIs can also provide the technical input and insight needed for stabilisation policies and laws and can teach students civic values and ideals that support rebuilding and recovery in fragile and post-conflict settings.

The USAID Higher Education Landscape Analysis report⁵⁷ identified five primary types of higher education engagement: partnerships, scholarships, institutional capacity-building, workforce development, and policy reform. These categories are not discrete and often overlap to respond to the specific challenges the programme seeks to address. USAID's support for higher education resulted in the following key outcomes⁵⁸:

1. Improved capacity of HEIs to advance local sector-specific objectives. USAID programmes helped HEIs improve their performance and position them to achieve a variety of developmental outcomes, both within the higher education system and within broader systems that affect a country's development. For example, USAID-funded THES program in Malawi used a rapid assessment process to determine the gaps between the current capacities of the HE system and the labour market needs to design and implement targeted solutions⁵⁹.

2. Strengthened partnerships and transnational relationships. USAID programmes supported HEIs (and the individuals affiliated with them) to sustain and continue to improve performance across higher education through expanded networks and capacity exchange. For example, the primary research programme SHARE⁶⁰ brought together a network of 28 higher education and research institutions across the globe and collaborated with national governments and USAID missions to promote links between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to ensure research is designed to meet the knowledge needs of decision-makers and promote the use of evidence and data.
3. USAID promoted higher education as a central actor in developing local solutions to local problems regardless of sector or education level. USAID used its convening power to make a place for HEIs in policy discussions. While HEIs receive USAID capacity development support, they are just as often—and often simultaneously—partners or key stakeholders in USAID programming in a variety of sectors and for a variety of outcomes. For example, USAID-funded US - Egypt Science and Technology Joint Fund facilitated a policy dialogue between the Government of Egypt and the US to strengthen scientific and technological capabilities in both countries through international cooperation .

Higher education programming is also a critically important supplement for USAID's investments in basic education. It is estimated that 26 million teachers will be needed by 2030 to achieve universal primary education . USAID's Education Policy (2018) placed an emphasis on teacher preparatory HEIs – teacher training colleges and colleges of education – for preparing the next generation of educators to improve primary and secondary education. USAID's investments in higher

57 USAID Higher Education Landscape Analysis 2014-18. USAID. Washington DC, 2018. For a snapshot of the most recent results of USAID-funded higher education programmes, please see Annex B.

58 Ibid: Higher Education as a Central Actor in Self-Reliant Development: A Programme Framework. USAID. Washington, DC. 2021.

59 USAID Malawi Transforming Higher Education-THES copy

60 Supporting holistic and actionable research in education // Projects // Pulte Institute for Global Development // University of Notre Dame

education aimed to both increase the number of education professionals and strengthen the capacity of higher education institutions to train those professionals, to help produce teacher educators capable of using student-centred and proven training methodologies that can improve the quality of instruction. Better-trained education professionals will then be capable of delivering high-quality instruction throughout

the education continuum, from early childhood education to higher education. The policy also recognised that specialised training is needed for teachers to support children and youth with disabilities .

Table 4 summarises the USAID-funded higher education programmes with the highest budget over the past three years.

Table 4. Summary of recent USAID education programmes with the highest budget, 2022-24

COUNTRY	PROGRAMME NAME AND DESCRIPTION
Egypt	<p>Amount disbursed: \$14,099,622 (Total planned: \$53,376,850)</p> <p>Name: USAID Scholars Activity</p> <p>Timeline: 2020-30</p> <p>Implementer: American University of Cairo</p> <p>Summary: The goal of this programme is to help Egypt's development through the creation of a cadre of change agents and problem solvers who have an understanding, experience and appreciation of development and democratic processes and values. Under this activity, a total of 700 students will receive scholarships in various majors that contribute to Egypt's development. Five cohorts of gender-balanced, financially disadvantaged Egyptian public high school graduates, including students with disabilities, representing Egypt's 27 governorates will be selected to receive a full-tuition scholarship to a high-quality university.</p> <p>Website: Programme portal; press release</p> <p>Other USAID higher education programmes in Egypt include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Career Development Centres in Public Universities (2017-25, \$51,297,565); ■ USAID Egyptian Pioneers (2022-31; \$43,327,225) ■ Centre for Excellence in Water (2019-29; \$34,030,095) ■ Centre for Excellence in Energy (2022-27; \$25,608,924) ■ US-Egypt Science and Technology Joint Fund II (2021-27; \$10,721,510)

COUNTRY	PROGRAMME NAME AND DESCRIPTION
Lebanon	<p>Amount disbursed: \$2,218,000 (Total planned: \$50,161,714)</p> <p>Name: Higher Education Scholarships Phase Two (HES-II)</p> <p>Timeline: 2022-31</p> <p>Implementer: Lebanese American University</p> <p>Summary: The Higher Education Scholarships Phase Two (HES-II) is one activity under the umbrella of the Higher Education Advancement and Development (HEAD) project. The purpose of the HEAD project is to improve the effectiveness of education institutions to enhance Lebanon's economic stability and prosperity through skills development opportunities and stronger higher education institutions. This programme provides full undergraduate scholarships to meritorious but economically challenged students from Lebanon's 26 districts to study at the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Lebanese American University (LAU). The scholarship covers tuition fees, housing or transportation expenses, medical insurance, textbooks, a laptop, and a monthly stipend to students. As part of this scholarship, students not only acquire quality education, leadership and critical thinking skills, but also engage in community service and volunteering initiatives. Since 2010, more than 1,500 students have benefitted from the programme.</p> <p>Website: Programme Facebook page; US Embassy Press Release</p> <p>Other USAID higher education programme in Lebanon includes: Higher Education Capacity development (HECD) activity (2019-25; \$13,999,990)</p>
World	<p>Amount disbursed: \$18,086,486 (Total planned: \$40,000,000)</p> <p>Name: Supporting Holistic and Actionable Research in Education (SHARE)</p> <p>Timeline: 2020-27</p> <p>Implementer: University of Notre Dame</p> <p>Summary: A primary research programme to advance learning priorities in the global education sector. The programme works to strengthen research capacity and knowledge translation skills of higher education institutions in USAID partner countries while filling critical evidence and data gaps in the education sector. While progress has been made in recent years to conduct research that strengthens education systems in developing countries, more targeted research is required to create systemic and sustainable change. This programme brings local scholars and higher education institutions together to address these challenges and opportunities in a number of low- and middle-income countries, with a view to developing a replicable model to guide decision-makers.</p> <p>Website: Implementer's webpage</p>

Other examples of higher education programmes funded by USAID included the following:

- Afghanistan – Higher education access and quality programme (2023-27; \$19,564,203) and Capacity Strengthening of the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF) (2021-25; \$16,507,659)
- Burma – Higher education exchange programme (2019-26; \$28,000,000); Lincoln Scholarship Programme (details unavailable); and USAID Development and Inclusive Scholarship Programme (details unavailable)
- Vietnam - Fulbright University Vietnam Growth and Sustainability (2021-25; \$25,000,000) and Higher Education Policy Support (HEPS) programme (2023-28; \$21,136,169)
- Pakistan - Higher Education System Strengthening Activity (HESSA) (2021-26; \$18,574,472)
- Malawi - Transforming Higher Education Systems (THES) Activity (2022-27; \$15,942,154)

The withdrawal of USAID funding has severely disrupted institutional capacity-building efforts in developing countries' higher education

systems. Many universities relied on USAID partnerships for critical infrastructure upgrades, faculty development programmes, and curriculum modernisation - particularly in STEM fields. For example, Malawi's \$15.9 million Transforming Higher Education Systems programme, cited above, which was providing training for academic leaders and digitising administrative systems, was halted mid-implementation, leaving 12 public universities without planned technology upgrades. Similarly, Uzbekistan's \$10.7 million University Innovation Partnership, aimed at aligning curricula with labour market needs, was discontinued just as it began showing results in reducing graduate unemployment rates. These disruptions come at a critical time when developing countries need skilled workforces to achieve SDG targets.

The research and innovation ecosystem has been particularly hard-hit, with long-term consequences for national development. USAID-funded research hubs like Egypt's Centre for Excellence in Water and Vietnam's Higher Education Policy Support programme were crucial for solving local challenges through applied research. These cancellations will have a long-lasting negative impact on local economies.

POLICY AND STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS OF USAID WITHDRAWAL

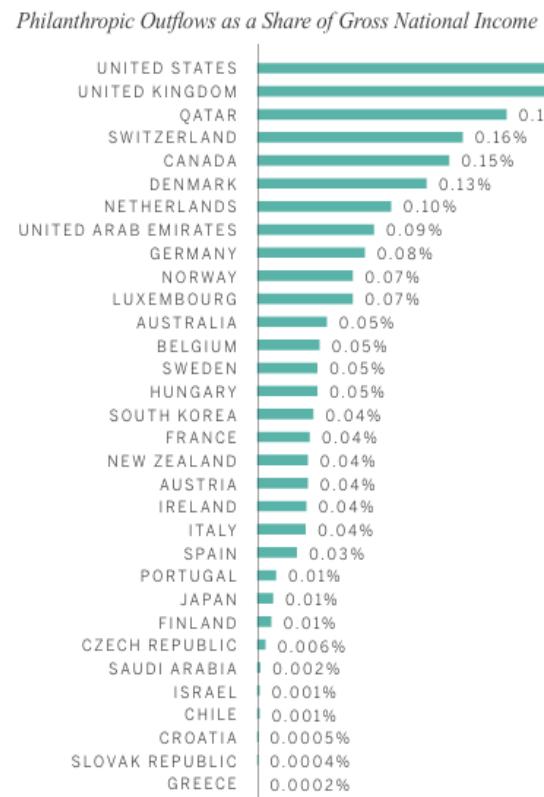
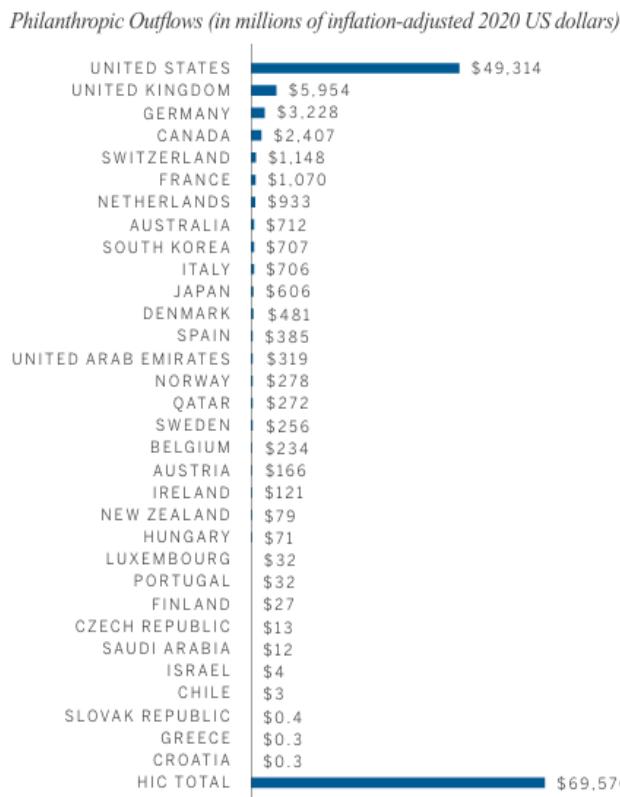
Alternative sources of funding

As the United States reduces its foreign aid contributions through USAID, questions arise about how development needs will be met. Several scenarios could emerge to fill the gap left by USAID's diminished presence. These include greater involvement of private philanthropies, increased foreign aid from China, and increased contributions from other wealthy nations. Each scenario presents unique opportunities and challenges, and the global development landscape may shift significantly as a result.

Philanthropy

One possible scenario is that private foundations and philanthropic organisations will step in to fill the gap left by USAID. Foundations like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations have long been active in global development, often partnering with USAID on projects. The shutdown of USAID could lead to a rise in private influence, with foundations taking on a larger role in funding and implementing development programmes. Education has traditionally been high on the priority list of many philanthropic organisations, alongside health, basic needs, and environmental causes.

Figure 25. Philanthropic outflows from high-income countries, 2020



Source: Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2023 Global Philanthropy Tracker

Data source: Global Philanthropy Tracker 2023. IUPUI Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. 2023.

According to some estimates, the global philanthropic outflows across all sectors were about \$70 billion in 2020⁶⁴, representing 8% of the total cross-border philanthropic resource movement. According to the Global Philanthropy Tracker 2023, historically, philanthropy has represented less than half of the ODA and less than a quarter of remittances. It has also trailed private capital investments in the Global South countries⁶⁵. Figure 25 illustrates philanthropic giving in 2020 based on the data from the World Bank, as reported in the Global Philanthropy Tracker 2023.

While private philanthropies undoubtedly play an essential role in supporting many development objectives previously championed by USAID, there are several constraints associated with their ability to fill the gap left by USAID:

1. Lack of coordination and focus on specific areas:

Private philanthropies often operate independently, pursuing their own specific focus areas rather than aligning with broader development goals. This lack of coordination can result in fragmented efforts, with some sectors or regions receiving disproportionate attention while others are neglected. For example, a foundation might prioritise global health initiatives like malaria eradication but overlook critical areas such as education or governance reform. This inconsistency undermines the ability to achieve sustained systemic changes, which require long-term, integrated approaches.

2. Limited convening authority:

Unlike USAID, which has the convening power to bring together multiple stakeholders—including national governments, multilateral organisations, and other donors—philanthropies often lack this authority. This limitation can hinder effective coordination and collaboration, leading to

duplication of efforts or gaps in coverage. Without a central coordinating body, it becomes challenging to align priorities, share resources, and ensure that development interventions are complementary and aligned with national strategies, rather than competing.

3. Limited understanding of local contexts:

Philanthropies may not always have a deep understanding of the political, economic, environmental, and socio-cultural dynamics in the countries where they provide funding. This lack of contextual awareness can lead to poorly designed programmes that fail to address root causes or resonate with local communities. For instance, a well-intentioned education initiative might overlook cultural norms around gender roles, resulting in low participation rates among girls. USAID, by contrast, often works closely with local governments and communities to ensure programmes are contextually relevant and sustainable.

4. Insufficient resources to meet needs:

While philanthropic contributions are significant, they are unlikely to fully compensate for the reduction in USAID funding. In 2020, total philanthropic investments in the U.S. amounted to approximately \$49.3 billion, comparable to the entire U.S. ODA budget of \$52 billion, of which \$26.2 billion was managed by USAID. The totality of philanthropic resources, however increased⁶⁶, is not likely to fill the gap left by USAID's reduced contributions. Moreover, philanthropic funding is often project-based and short-term, making it difficult to address long-term development challenges that require sustained investment.

In summary, while private philanthropies play a critical role in supporting development objectives, their ability to fully replace USAID is

64 Global Philanthropy Tracker 2023. IUPUI Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. 2023. P. 4

65 Ibid p. 23.

66 For example, following the Trump Administration's announcement of dismantling of USAID, MacArthur Foundation announced that they would increase their annual giving from around \$400 million annually to up to \$550 million over the next two years (MacArthur Foundation to increase giving for two years in response to 'crisis' | AP News).

constrained by their lack of coordination, limited convening authority, insufficient understanding of local contexts, and resource limitations. These challenges highlight the need for a multi-stakeholder approach that leverages the strengths of philanthropies while ensuring that governments, multilateral organisations, and other donors continue to play a central role in addressing global development needs.

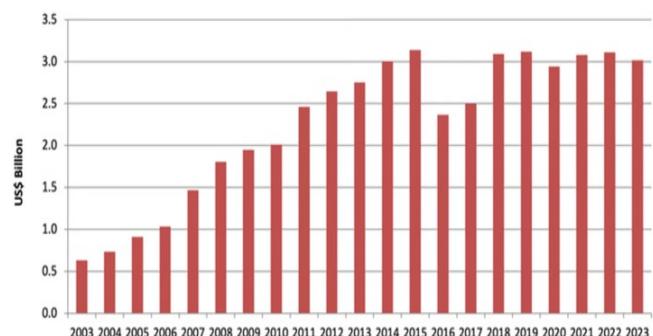
China

Another scenario is that China will increase its allocations to foreign aid, stepping into the gap left by USAID. In 2023, China's gross domestic product (GDP) represented 17% of the global GDP, compared to 26.5% of the U.S. and 19.4% of the EU⁶⁷. China has already been expanding its global influence through initiatives like the

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which funds infrastructure projects in developing countries.

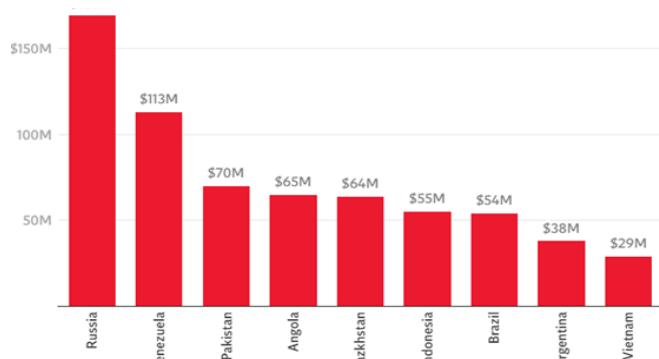
5. However, experts argue that China's ability to replace USAID is limited. China's foreign aid is structured differently, with a large proportion of aid transferred as zero-interest or concessionary loans. It is also much smaller in size. According to the China Africa Research Initiative at John Hopkins University, Chinese allocations for foreign aid fluctuated between \$2.5 and just over \$3 billion annually over the past decade, reaching only \$2.85 in 2024⁶⁸ (Figure 26). However, it is just a fraction of the \$42 billion that the US Government allocated for USAID's work in 2024.

Figure 26. Chinese global foreign aid expenditure, USD bln



1. Data source: Ministry of Finance of China, reported by China Africa Research Initiative, Johns Hopkins University⁶⁹

Figure 27. Top recipients of Chinese global development aid



Data Source: China Global Development Dashboard cited in How China will end up the biggest winner from UK and US foreign aid cuts | The Independent

67 Percent of world GDP by country, around the world | TheGlobalEconomy.com

68 How China will end up the biggest winner from UK and US foreign aid cuts | The Independent

69 How China will end up the biggest winner from UK and US foreign aid cuts | The Independent

According to the analysis of AidData, Russia and Venezuela have been the top two beneficiaries of Chinese global development assistance over the past two decades. The assistance encompassed various types of loan, grants, technical assistance, scholarships, training, and debt forgiveness (Figure 27).

Additionally, China faces its own economic challenges, including slowing growth and high domestic debt, which could constrain its ability to significantly increase foreign aid. While China may fill some gaps, its aid is unlikely to match the breadth and depth of USAID's programmes, particularly in areas like democracy promotion, health, and education.

Other wealthy nations

Finally, other wealthy nations may be able to increase their foreign aid contributions. Countries like Germany, the United Kingdom, and Japan have historically been significant donors to global development efforts. However, many wealthy nations are currently facing budget constraints and competing domestic priorities, which could limit their willingness to significantly increase foreign aid. Shortly after the news about the dismantling of USAID shocked the development world, the UK's prime minister announced the UK would cut its aid budget from about 0.5% to 0.3% of its gross national income (GNI). Sweden and the Netherlands also announced cuts, citing budget constraints and realignment of national priorities following the elections of more conservative governments. France said it would reduce aid by 35 to 40%; Germany and Switzerland are considering cuts, too. The general public in these countries broadly supports these cuts. Even if some nations step up their contributions, it is unlikely that they will fully compensate for the reduction in ODA funding, leaving critical gaps in development assistance.

In conclusion, while private foundations, China, and other wealthy nations may partially fill the gap left by USAID, none of these alternatives are likely to fully replace the comprehensive and long-term development support that USAID

provided. Private foundations, while influential, tend to have narrow focus areas and may struggle to address systemic issues. China's aid is often tied to strategic interests and may lack a focus on sustainable development. Other wealthy nations, though capable, face their own fiscal challenges and may not increase aid sufficiently. As a result, the reduction in USAID funding will leave significant gaps in global development efforts, particularly in areas like health, education, and the promotion of democracy. The international community will need to find innovative solutions and strengthen partnerships to ensure that critical development needs are met in the absence of USAID's leadership.

Implications of USAID withdrawal for education ODA by other donors

The loss of USAID education funding will have significant implications for other donors, including EU and non-EU countries and private philanthropies. Many multilateral agencies typically seen as donors, such as the UN agencies and the World Bank Group, are themselves dependent on contributions from member countries and may be affected by US cuts to its foreign aid. USAID was the largest bilateral donor in global education and its withdrawal creates a substantial funding gap, particularly in low-income and conflict-affected regions, where it was a critical player in supporting access to quality education, especially for girls and marginalised communities. As discussed in the previous section, other donors would face pressure to fill this gap, but many are already stretched due to competing priorities such as climate change, health crises, and humanitarian emergencies, and face their own cuts. This could lead to a fragmentation of efforts and a decline in the overall effectiveness of global education initiatives.

UN agencies like Unicef and UNESCO, which rely on bilateral funding to implement education programmes, would also be severely impacted. USAID has been an important contributor to the Global Partnership for Education and

Education Cannot Wait multilateral initiatives, and its withdrawal could undermine the ability of these agencies to deliver on global education goals, such as SDG 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all. The World Bank, another major player in global education financing, may need to step up its efforts, but its focus on long-term development projects and loans may not fully address the immediate needs of countries reliant on USAID grants. Moreover, as noted above, the Bank is likely to be impacted by cuts to foreign aid in the US and other countries.

At the country level, USAID used to operate in partnership with other donors, structuring all donor education funding around jointly developed country Education Sector Plans (ESP). USAID's convening power and brokering authority led many countries to adopt ambitious education goals and increase their own funding to priority areas, such as primary education. Donors and the partner government coordinated the implementation of the ESP, ensuring all key elements were funded and progress tracked, frequently resulting in the segmentation of assistance. The loss of USAID leadership in the education sector at a country level will have a ripple effect on how other donors coordinate their support for ESP implementation and who will be paying for the implementation of the ESP segments previously supported by USAID. Some countries, such as Malawi, will be particularly impacted by the loss of both USAID leadership and its resources. Figure 12 shows a list of 25 countries with the highest education-specific USAID funding; these countries will probably be impacted the most, although the loss will also be felt in other countries where USAID operated.

Likewise, other donors will need to compensate for the loss of USAID leadership in the multilateral initiatives that it championed

or contributed to. One such example is the Coalition for Foundation Learning created as a partnership between USAID, FCDO, the World Bank, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and UNESCO in 2022 to rapidly accelerate progress towards reducing the alarmingly high rate of learning poverty globally, by helping countries to access and use data, set ambitious targets and implement plans to achieve them⁷². The Coalition Secretariat members are carrying out activities in line with the following three pillars: support to country-led action and implementation, improvement of learning data and monitoring, and enhancing advocacy and communications. USAID staff played a central role in managing the Coalition Secretariat; this role will now need to be filled by other members.

Another example is a call to action to end childhood lead poisoning worldwide⁷³, led by the UN's Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint⁷⁴. Having joined the Alliance in 2024 under the leadership of then-administrator Samantha Power, USAID helped bring the issue of the impact of lead on children's ability to learn to the attention of education stakeholders and its partner governments⁷⁵. Without sustained, continued advocacy to eliminate lead exposure among children, progress already made may be jeopardised and gains may be reversed.

Consistent with the USAID's mission to prioritise the needs of the most marginalised learners, in 2022 USAID reasserted its commitment to disability-inclusive education. This spurred a renewed emphasis on advancing the knowledge base on what works in disability-inclusive education and incorporating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into USAID education programmes⁷⁶.

To sum up, the dismantling of USAID will have a profound impact on other donors in the international education sector, particularly in closing the funding gap, supporting countries'

72 Microsoft Word - The Global Coalition for Foundational Learning Narrative 31 03 23 UNESCO.docx; Foundational Learning; 73 A Call to Action to End Childhood Lead Poisoning Worldwide: A Neglected, Top-Tier Development Challenge | Center For Global Development

74 Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint | UNEP - UN Environment Programme

75 A Lead-Free Future is Possible. | by USAID | U.S. Agency for International Development | Medium

76 Financing Disability-Inclusive Education: USAID Roadmap

implementation of their Education Sector Plans, and supporting donor coordination on key initiatives in support of SDG 4. It will also have a ripple effect on the very fabric of international development cooperation and trust between developing countries and the donor community. The loss of this trust will likely undermine progress toward achieving SDGs.

Possible EU policy response

The dismantling of USAID is likely to have far-reaching implications for the European Union's external action and development cooperation in education, particularly in low- and lower-middle-income countries. In this context, the EU has an opportunity to reinforce its leadership and ensure continuity and innovation in global education efforts. The following four-point proposal outlines potential areas for EU policy development, building on existing frameworks, partnerships, and approaches that can contribute to shared progress:

1. Strengthening the EU's role as a reliable partner in education development:

The EU is well-placed to serve as a reliable and strategic partner to developing countries, helping to sustain the momentum in global education at a time of change. There is a growing recognition among education experts that enhanced EU engagement can help maintain progress where USAID has traditionally played a leading role⁷⁷. Drawing on its values-based approach, the EU can continue to promote inclusive, equitable and high-quality education. This aligns closely with SDG 4 and the objectives of the EU's Global Gateway strategy, which aims to strengthen global partnerships through sustainable investment. The EU has already demonstrated its commitment to education by allocating 10% of its international partnerships budget to education, amounting to €6 billion for 2021-27, confirming its position as a leading education donor⁷⁸.

Suggested actions:

- Consider increasing funding for education development in low and lower middle income countries, with a view to a 20% rise in EU aid to education.
- Explore the creation of a dedicated EU education development fund or a coordinating body to streamline resources and ensure predictable funding for partner countries.
- Develop a clear communication strategy to reassure partner countries of the EU's commitment to education, emphasising continuity and collaboration.

2. Leveraging existing frameworks

The Global Gateway Initiative⁷⁹ and the Team Europe Initiative (TEI)⁸⁰ offer strong foundations for expanding the EU's engagement in education worldwide. Global Gateway, with its €300 billion investment plan, supports sustainable and inclusive growth, including in education. TEIs translate this ambition into concrete projects by bringing together resources from the EU, its member states, and financial institutions (like the EIB and EBRD). These frameworks can support national Education Sector Plans (ESPs), ensuring EU engagement is aligned with country priorities and local contexts.

The Global Gateway's focus on digital transformation and infrastructure development can be particularly impactful in education. For example, the EU could support the expansion of digital learning platforms, teacher training programmes, and school infrastructure projects in partner countries. This approach aligns with the growing demand for digital skills and the need to address the digital divide exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁷⁷ The report section here draws on ideas expressed in Turmoil in USAID and the challenge for the EU's response - PubAffairs Bruxelles; USAID and the Uncertain Future of International Cooperation | IE Insights; and EU invests in education to change the world | #LeadingSDG4 | Education2030

⁷⁸ EU invests in education to change the world | #LeadingSDG4 | Education2030

⁷⁹ Global Gateway - European Commission

⁸⁰ Team Europe Initiatives - European Commission; Team Europe - Standing Stronger Together | EEAS

At the implementation level, the Team Europe Initiative (TEI) could also help mitigate the impact of USAID's reduced funding for global education by pooling and coordinating European resources, expertise, and partnerships. TEI combines funding from the EU, its member states, and financial institutions to support priority areas, including education, in partner countries. TEI can enhance efficiency, avoid duplication, and amplify impact. The initiative's focus on local ownership and sustainable development aligns with global education goals, ensuring continued support for access, quality, and equity in education systems. Additionally, TEI's multi-stakeholder approach promotes stronger collaboration with governments, civil society, and international organisations, helping to sustain education programmes in vulnerable regions.

Suggested actions:

- Allocate a portion of Global Gateway funding to education and consider using TEIs to target education development, with a focus on education-related digital infrastructure and teacher training.
- Collaborate closely with partner countries to align EU support with their ESPs to fill gaps and ensure ownership and sustainability.
- Consider using the Global Gateway to promote green and resilient school infrastructure, integrating climate adaptation and mitigation into education projects. Ensure that infrastructure is built to support inclusive education for learners with disabilities.

3. Strengthening donor coordination and partnerships:

As funding landscapes shift, effective donor coordination becomes all the more necessary in order to optimise resources and avoid duplication. The EU can play a constructive role in encouraging stronger collaboration among bilateral and multilateral

donors to ensure a harmonised approach to education development. Platforms such as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) fund offer opportunities to align and coordinate efforts. There may also be scope for the EU to support or lead new mechanisms to improve coordination, such as joint funding mechanisms or shared monitoring and evaluation systems.

Suggested actions:

- Consider launching an EU-led donor coordination task force for education to bring together key stakeholders to align strategies and resources.
- Promote joint funding initiatives, such as pooled funds or co-financing arrangements, to maximise the impact of reduced funding.
- Develop common results frameworks and pooled funding to measure results, track progress and ensure accountability across donor-funded education programmes.

4. Innovative private sector engagement:

Increased engagement with the private sector could offer new avenues for innovation and financing. While public funding remains essential, private sector contributions (including technical expertise and investment) could help offset some of the shortfalls resulting from USAID withdrawal.

The EU could incentivise private sector engagement through blended finance mechanisms, public-private partnerships (PPPs), and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. For example, a matching fund to encourage private sector contributions to education projects, with a focus on digital learning, vocational training, and STEM education could be put in place.

Suggested actions:

- Consider launching an EU Private Sector Education Innovation Fund, offering matching grants for private sector investments in

education.

- Develop PPP models for education infrastructure projects, such as building schools or providing digital learning tools.
- Encourage CSR initiatives by European companies, particularly in the tech sector, to support education development in low and lower middle income countries.

While the dismantling of USAID presents challenges, it also creates space for the EU to redefine its role in global education development. By positioning itself as a reliable partner, leveraging the Global Gateway strategy and TEIs, strengthening donor coordination, and promoting private sector engagement, the EU could ensure that progress toward SDG 4 continues unabated. This approach will not only contribute to global education outcomes, but also reinforce the EU's broader commitment to a more equitable and sustainable world.

Response to USAID dismantling by international education stakeholders

The dismantling of USAID presents significant risks to global education development, particularly in low- and lower-middle-income countries. To help mitigate these risks, coordinated action across the global education sector will be essential to ensure continuity in funding, programming, and partnerships. Below are some suggested approaches for key stakeholders.

5. Bilateral and multilateral donors:

As outlined in the sections above, bilateral and multilateral donors may need to step up their commitments to fill the funding gap left by USAID, if possible, or adjust the way aid is delivered to improve its efficiency.

The suspension of US funding has already disrupted important education programmes, leaving millions of children and young people at risk of losing access to schooling⁸¹.

Donors such as the EU, UK, Germany, and Japan, as well as multilateral institutions and initiatives like the World Bank and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE),

could consider increasing their contributions to education development. There is also an opportunity to improve coordination across donors to avoid duplication and ensure efficient use of resources. GPE, for example, could expand its funding pool and streamline the application process for countries affected by the withdrawal of USAID. UNESCO, Unicef, and Education Cannot Wait (ECW) could play a key role in stepping up advocacy and raising awareness about the risks of underfunding education. It is important to prioritise support for countries most affected, particularly fragile and conflict-affected states.

6. Governments of country recipients of USAID education funding:

Governments receiving education support should take proactive steps to mitigate the impact of reduced USAID funding. This includes diversifying their donor base, increasing domestic investment in education, and strengthening partnerships with non-traditional donors, such as private sector actors. Recipient governments can experiment with innovative financing mechanisms, such as education bonds or social impact investments. The efficient use of existing resources is essential. This could involve cost-effective interventions, such as teacher training and digital learning platforms, and investing in research where the evidence-base is limited. As highlighted in the Funding Cuts Threaten Education Crisis report by Relief Web, nearly a quarter of a billion school-aged children are at risk of losing access to education due to funding cuts, highlighting the urgency of these measures⁸². Strengthening regional collaboration, including with regional organisations and emerging donors, may also help broaden funding sources.

7. International organisations, including academia:

International organisations, including international NGOs and academic institutions, have a key role to play in ensuring the continuity of education reforms and support to affected countries. Academic research can help quantify the

impact of funding cuts and identify cost-effective solutions for education delivery. For example, the *How NGOs Reshape Global Education* report highlights the role of NGOs in innovating education delivery, which can serve as a model for scaling up effective interventions⁸³. International NGOs can also lead global advocacy campaigns to highlight the consequences of reduced education funding. This group of stakeholders is well-positioned to advance the global evidence base on innovative education models, such as community-based learning and digital education, to inform policy and practice.

8. Local non-profit and for-profit organisations:

Local organisations, including NGOs and private sector actors, must adapt to the changing funding landscape by diversifying their revenue streams and forging new partnerships. For example, they can develop innovative funding models, such as social enterprises or fee-for-service programmes, to reduce reliance on donor funding. Non-profits should explore collaborations with non-traditional donors,

private foundations, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives to sustain their programmes and access new resources and expertise. They can also advocate with national governments for increased local ownership of education programmes to ensure sustainability and alignment with community needs. For-profit entities, particularly in the tech sector, can play an important role in scaling up digital learning solutions and providing affordable education technologies. The Impact of US Funding Suspension survey by ICVA explains the vulnerability of local NGOs to funding cuts, highlighting the need for greater financial resilience⁸⁴.

The dismantling of USAID presents a significant challenge to the global education sector, but it also offers an opportunity for stakeholders to innovate and strengthen their collaboration. By adopting these strategic responses, donors, governments, international organisations, and local actors can ensure that progress toward SDG 4 continues, even in the face of reduced funding. This collective effort will be critical to safeguarding the right to education for millions of children and young people worldwide.

81 Lives on the Line: The human impact of US Foreign Aid Shifts. ICVA. March 2025

82 Funding cuts threaten education in crisis contexts, with nearly one quarter of a billion school-aged children needing support - World | ReliefWeb

83 How NGOs Reshape Global Education As Partners in Learning? - Educational Tools

CONCLUSION

The dismantling of USAID marks a significant change in the global landscape of education and skills development, with potential implications for access, equity, and quality of learning worldwide. As this report outlines, USAID's withdrawal puts at risk decades of progress in areas such as foundational education, vocational training, and higher education, particularly in low-income and conflict-affected regions. The loss of funding threatens to reverse gains in early-grade literacy, disrupt teacher training programmes, and undermine multilateral initiatives like the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW). Moreover, the erosion of USAID's convening power risks fragmenting donor coordination, leaving partner countries without the leadership needed to align resources with national education priorities.

Addressing these challenges, calls for a coordinated global response. The European Union, through initiatives such as the Global

Gateway and Team Europe, is well-placed to continue its strong leadership in this area by expanding support for education, strengthening partnerships, encouraging private sector engagement, and maintaining education as a priority within its broader development agenda. Bridging the current gap will require not only sustained financial support, but also fresh thinking, including greater private sector participation, stronger local engagement, and a focus on long-term, sustainable approaches. A wide range of international actors, including multilateral organisations, philanthropic bodies, and partner governments have a key role to play in maintaining progress. Without timely and coordinated action, the withdrawal of USAID risks widening inequalities, increasing instability in vulnerable regions, and denying millions of children and young people access to learning and future opportunities.

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ANNEX A. DATA TABLES

This annex contains data for the figures that do not include labels.

Figure 4. USAID education sector disbursement 2010-24, USD mln

YEAR	Basic Education (USD mln)	Other Education (USD mln)
2010	\$ 606	\$ 186
2011	\$ 629	\$ 136
2012	\$ 487	\$ 178
2013	\$ 531	\$ 187
2014	\$ 522	\$ 263
2015	\$ 572	\$ 288
2016	\$ 710	\$ 292
2017	\$ 702	\$ 320
2018	\$ 735	\$ 279
2019	\$ 719	\$ 300
2020	\$ 657	\$ 208
2021	\$ 665	\$ 153
2022	\$ 775	\$ 173
2023	\$ 757	\$ 226
2024	\$ 750	\$ 276

Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov

Figure 6. Share of education spending in USAID overall expenditure across years, USD mln

YEAR	Education (USD mln)	Other Sectors (USD mln)
2010	\$ 792	\$ 14,188
2011	\$ 765	\$ 16,015
2012	\$ 665	\$ 16,695
2013	\$ 718	\$ 16,452
2014	\$ 785	\$ 16,755
2015	\$ 860	\$ 17,360
2016	\$ 1,002	\$ 17,988
2017	\$ 1,022	\$ 18,298
2018	\$ 1,014	\$ 19,076
2019	\$ 1,019	\$ 19,721
2020	\$ 865	\$ 21,795
2021	\$ 818	\$ 27,532
2022	\$ 948	\$ 37,772
2023	\$ 983	\$ 42,807
2024	\$ 1,026	\$ 32,480

Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov

Figure 7. US share in the education ODA by DAC countries, USD mln

YEAR	US Share (USD mln)	Other DAC Countries (USD mln)
2014	\$ 1,232	\$ 9,693
2015	\$ 1,133	\$ 8,316
2016	\$ 1,643	\$ 9,051
2017	\$ 1,698	\$ 8,967
2018	\$ 1,730	\$ 10,228
2019	\$ 1,516	\$ 10,425
2020	\$ 1,415	\$ 10,513
2021	\$ 1,370	\$ 10,737
2022	\$ 1,383	\$ 10,382
2023	\$ 1,813	\$ 11,155

Data source: data-explorer.oecd.org

Figure 9. ODA investments to support SDG 4, by region and donor, cumulative 2010-21

	Other donors	US	percent of US in the total
Europe and Eurasia	\$11,423,000,844	\$440,156,846	3.7%
Western Hemisphere	\$20,300,762,774	\$1,161,280,037	5.4%
World (uncategorised)	\$22,486,513,609	\$1,864,483,354	7.7%
South and Central Asia	\$26,008,459,579	\$2,371,541,207	8.4%
East Asia and Oceania	\$27,631,784,706	\$1,113,558,974	3.9%
Middle East and North Africa	\$28,037,583,701	\$2,283,597,635	7.5%
Sub-Saharan Africa	\$35,418,090,757	\$4,103,380,326	10.4%

Data source: Burgess, B., Bengtson, A., and B. Lautenslager. (2023). Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Version 1.0. Williamsburg, VA. AidData. Accessed at <http://aiddata.org/sdg>

Figure 11. 25 Countries with highest USAID education funding 2022-24, USD

COUNTRY	2024	2023	2022
Jordan	\$ 142,801,613	\$ 122,757,149	\$ 136,987,359
Egypt	\$ 83,807,848	\$ 58,064,972	\$ 49,315,480
Lebanon	\$ 68,830,140	\$ 51,593,498	\$ 41,212,484
Afghanistan	\$ 40,216,364	\$ 27,251,362	\$ 64,494,561
Malawi	\$ 34,543,854	\$ 36,101,766	\$ 24,789,616
Kenya	\$ 46,444,233	\$ 10,984,298	\$ 13,141,052
DRC	\$ 25,601,484	\$ 19,815,711	\$ 22,616,734
Philippines	\$ 16,598,652	\$ 20,321,699	\$ 21,376,586
Senegal	\$ 21,175,967	\$ 18,586,638	\$ 13,870,443
Liberia	\$ 25,744,784	\$ 11,341,564	\$ 14,538,512
Somalia	\$ 16,995,190	\$ 22,023,405	\$ 10,408,768
Mozambique	\$ 16,462,845	\$ 19,021,934	\$ 13,067,272
Nigeria	\$ 22,810,876	\$ 16,407,855	\$ 8,629,236
Bangladesh	\$ 31,435,270	\$ 10,590,521	\$ 3,860,072
Pakistan	\$ 1,304,418	\$ 17,388,126	\$ 22,595,621
Guatemala	\$ 10,784,341	\$ 13,079,602	\$ 17,404,595
Uganda	\$ 2,413,079	\$ 19,587,244	\$ 18,406,280
Ethiopia	\$ 3,944,863	\$ 23,440,226	\$ 12,884,232
Zambia	\$ 7,317,748	\$ 11,346,166	\$ 21,309,710
Burma (Myanmar)	\$ 12,850,296	\$ 11,767,017	\$ 11,763,986
West Bank and Gaza	\$ 33,587,477	\$ 15,369	\$ 2,091,493
Tanzania	\$ 8,858,613	\$ 14,938,382	\$ 11,852,274

Vietnam	\$ 13,581,109	\$ 12,863,791	\$ 8,406,870
Nepal	\$ 12,905,257	\$ 6,524,822	\$ 14,404,895
Honduras	\$ 11,865,757	\$ 11,516,901	\$ 9,401,507

Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov

Figure 14. USAID education funding by sub-sector, 2023

SUB-SECTOR	FUNDING	PERCENT
Primary education	\$ 684,475,415	69.0%
Higher education	\$ 142,425,314	14.4%
Basic life skills for adults	\$ 117,455,012	11.8%
Education policy and administrative management	\$ 14,805,242	1.5%
Early childhood education	\$ 8,126,727	0.8%
Vocational training	\$ 7,841,779	0.8%
Educational research	\$ 5,764,248	0.6%
Education facilities and training	\$ 5,506,205	0.6%
other	\$ 991,466,678	0.5%

Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov

Figure 23. USAID education funding by sub-sector, 2023

YEAR	FUNDING
2020	\$147,663,739
2021	\$120,143,232
2022	\$142,425,314
2023	\$158,963,530
2024	\$174,559,026

Data source: ForeignAssistance.gov

ANNEX B. USAID EDUCATION RESULTS BRIEFS 2023



ADVANCING Foundational Skills FY 2023 Results Brief

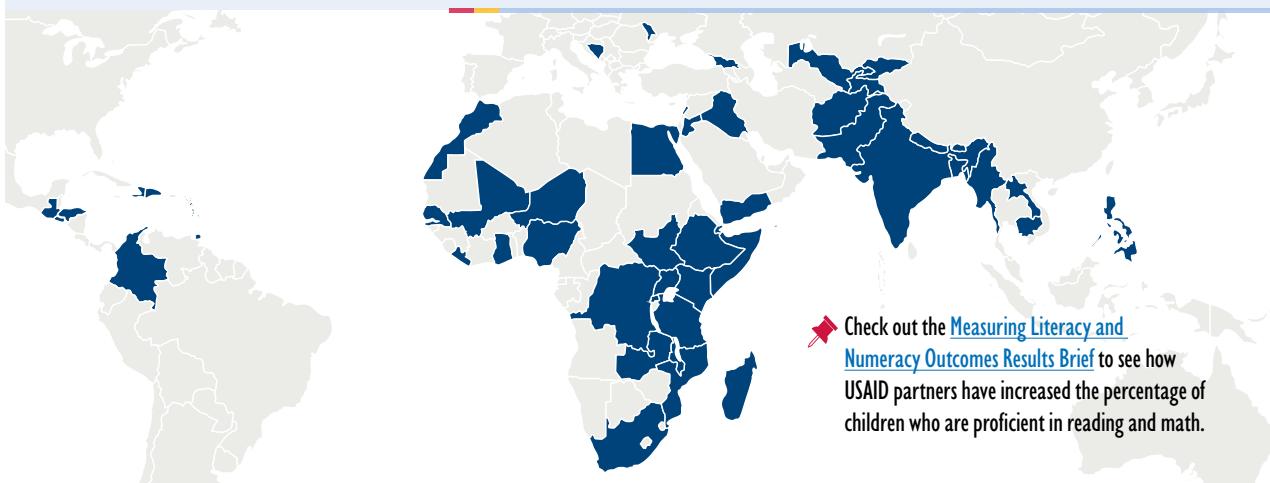


Literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills are foundational to future learning and success across the education continuum, from pre-primary to higher education and beyond. This brief summarizes USAID's efforts to advance foundational skills for all children and youth. The brief is organized around the seven components of the [Reading MATTERS Conceptual Framework](#). These components, which are not reading-specific, reflect cost-effective and efficient investments in foundational skills in any given circumstance or environment. The brief presents results up to and including the 2023 fiscal year (FY).

Global Snapshot

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countries where USAID partners are working to advance foundational skills.



Check out the [Measuring Literacy and Numeracy Outcomes Results Brief](#) to see how USAID partners have increased the percentage of children who are proficient in reading and math.

USAID fosters foundational skills for all children through:

- Evidence-based standards, norms, and policies
- Effective coaches and mentors
- Quality administrative support and supervision
- Effective teachers and classroom instruction

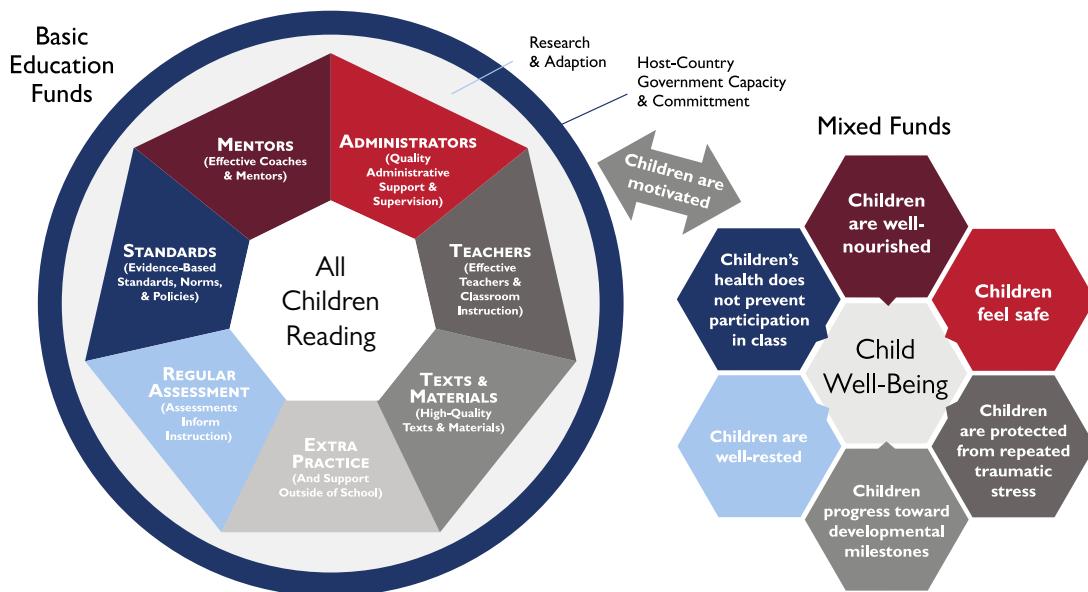
- High-quality texts and materials
- Extra practice and support outside of school
- Regular assessments to inform instruction



Additional Resources

USAID's Reading MATTERS Conceptual Framework

The Reading MATTERS (Mentors, Administrators, Teachers, Texts, Extra Practice, Regular Assessment, Standards) Conceptual Framework has seven components. These components are critical for all children to learn to read, as shown on the left side of the diagram below. The components form part of a larger education system that, ideally, is driven by host-country government capacity and commitment and calibrated by ongoing research and adaptation. As shown on the right side of the diagram, a constellation of other factors determining a child's well-being are also important, as they affect how motivated children are to read. While the framework is oriented around reading, the components are not reading-specific and can be applied to all foundational skills.



Local, regional, or national governments, as well as donor agencies and their implementing partners, can use the framework to inform the planning, execution, and evaluation of basic education programming. Using the framework as a starting point, practitioners and educators can identify strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in foundational skills instruction. They can conduct targeted analysis and develop context-appropriate interventions that advance USAID's education priorities in all types of learning environments. When possible, an intervention should explore all components in the Reading MATTERS framework as well as those related to child well-being, using a tool such as the [Applied Education System Diagnostic Toolkit](#). However, if this is not feasible, governments, donors, and partners can simply use the framework to identify potential gaps in analysis or programming, especially when an intervention is not having the desired impact.

[You can learn more about the framework and its components here.](#)



Evidence-based Standards, Norms, and Policies

USAID works with development partners to adopt standards and policies that support foundational learning. This includes adopting a national curriculum that reflects evidence-based sequencing and provides appropriate instructional and practice time. It also includes setting standards for developing and procuring learning materials, establishing assessment frameworks and benchmarks, and creating policies to support ongoing professional development for teachers



Photo: USAID/Claudia Gutierrez

EGYPT The Teach for Tomorrow activity partnered with the Ministry of Education to strengthen Egypt's teacher professional development system at scale. In FY 2023, Teach for Tomorrow and the Ministry continued to finalize Egypt's new teacher performance standards, defining the requisite skills and behaviors for all teachers and supplemental standards for teacher supervisors and school administrators. The activity drafted Egypt's first continuous professional development framework and designed tools for the Ministry to monitor educator performance and adherence to the new standards. **These efforts will strengthen the skills of Egypt's one million teachers, a key priority for the Ministry.**



Photo: R4D

GHANA In FY 2023, USAID launched the Advancing Partnerships for Improved Learning (APIL) activity. **APIL works with the Government of Ghana and private school associations to improve the policy environment for more than 200 private schools in northern Ghana.** These low-fee schools provide education to marginalized farming and herder communities but are often under-resourced. By improving the policy and regulatory framework governing these schools, and strengthening the capacity of government agencies to monitor them, APIL seeks to improve student learning outcomes and catalyze additional investment. These efforts will ultimately benefit more than 52,000 students with an improved learning environment.

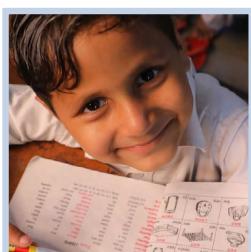


Photo: Care

INDIA The India Partnership for Early Learning (IPEL) activity collaborated with Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh states to develop a comprehensive foundational learning reporting system to support systemic change. **This reporting system will track the improvement of learning levels of students across the states.** The activity also worked closely with the State Council for Education Research and Training to design a summative assessment framework and a holistic progress card to track children's progress. In addition, the activity helped develop a first-of-its-kind teacher's guide for grades 1–3. This guide will help teachers focus on literacy and numeracy as well as students' social-emotional learning.



Effective Coaches and Mentors

Teacher coaches and mentors are trained education professionals who can effectively support teachers to improve their instructional skills. They model how to implement instructional models and use materials effectively, and provide teachers with focused feedback on their classroom practices. Coaching should occur at ongoing, regular intervals, with greater intensity at the beginning of a teacher's career and less intensity as teachers gain mastery of instructional skills.



Photo: Esho Shikhi

BANGLADESH The Esho Shikhi (Come and Learn) activity designed a monitoring and mentoring training program for head teachers and education officers. The training program strengthens the capacity of participants to in turn offer continuous mentoring support to Bangla subject teachers and ensure the quality of early grade reading. **The training program has been so effective that the Government of Bangladesh has decided to scale it up nationally.** Esho Shikhi provided technical support to incorporate other subject areas into the program, including English, science, and math, and customized the training package for the government's country-wide implementation.



Photo: FHI 360

EL SALVADOR The Educational Innovation activity worked with the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology to design a professional development and coaching program for teachers in grades 2–6. In FY 2023, the activity began training the first cohort of 654 in-service teachers. **The activity helped teachers integrate classroom strategies for universal design for learning, social-emotional learning, and technology into their teaching practice.** The program will train and coach a total of 2,000 teachers, bringing innovative pedagogical practices in math and literacy to improve the quality of education for more than 80,000 students.



Photo: USAID/Laos

LAOS The Learn to Read activity complements government efforts to improve reading instruction, especially for children who do not speak Lao and children with disabilities. The activity supported 2,540 teachers in pre-primary through grade 2 with coaching and trained 1,710 school principals to facilitate teacher learning circles (TLCs). TLCs are small groups of teachers who come together to learn from and support each other. TLCs are a cost-effective way to complement coaching by offering teachers longer-term support to improve their effectiveness. **Following their participation in TLCs and receiving at least one coaching visit, more than three-fourths of teachers were providing quality instruction in their classroom.**



Quality Administrative Support and Supervision

School leaders and district or regional-level education officers play a critical role to ensure instructional quality in schools. School administrators monitor teacher and student attendance and take steps to ensure that their schools are safe for all. This includes, for example, instituting protocols for reporting and responding to incidents of violence or abuse and ensuring that appropriate disaster risk reduction measures are in place. Administrators also strengthen instruction in schools by supporting teachers in making changes to their practices.



Photo: OECS

BARBADOS AND EASTERN CARIBBEAN The Digital Education Capacity Strengthening Initiative (DECI) supports teachers to develop digital teaching and learning materials and meaningfully engage students online. DECI trained 618 educators and administrators from grades K–3 in digital leadership, change management, and digital pedagogy. **As a result, administrators are now better equipped to supervise teachers' lesson plans and teaching practices.** Teachers are better able to use technology to plan and deliver lessons and assess student performance.



Photo: USAID/Ethiopia

ETHIOPIA The Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed (READ) II activity took several steps to create a safe and nurturing environment for children at school and in their community. **The activity trained 873 school directors and other administrators on school crisis management.** READ II also provided training to 4,900 teachers on psychological first aid and social-emotional learning to support trauma-affected students. Administrators and community leaders developed school crisis management plans and supported teachers with screening and referring vulnerable students. The crisis management plans will help schools recover from disruptions by outlining procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.

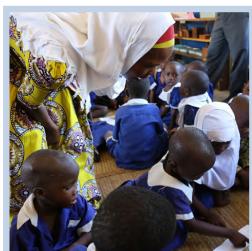


Photo: USAID Tanzania

TANZANIA The Jifunze Uelewe (Learn to Understand) activity continued to strengthen local government capacity to sustain improved learning outcomes. In collaboration with the Government of Tanzania, the activity conducted a four-day workshop to outline the responsibilities of Ward Education Officers (WEOs). WEOs are local government officials who play an important role monitoring the quality of basic education in their districts. They have frequent contact with schools but their activities can vary widely. **The workshop developed standardized guidelines for WEOs that focus on improving learning outcomes and providing coaching and mentoring to teachers.**



Effective Teachers and Classroom Instruction

The research is clear—investing in teacher education is the most effective way to improve learning outcomes. USAID programming supports teacher training in both the [pre-service](#) and in-service settings. This includes helping teachers implement evidence-based instruction in languages that students understand, maximize time on task, and use universal design principles to reach all learners. USAID also works to align pre-service and in-service training to each other, ensure training aligns to teacher needs and skill sets, and provide teachers with classroom-based opportunities to practice new instructional skills.



Photo: USAID

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO Through activities such as Elimu ni Jibu (Education is the Answer), USAID works with local communities to provide both formal and non-formal education opportunities. Many students in rural and conflict-affected areas are enrolled in non-formal learning centers, where teachers are often not registered and may be excluded from professional development opportunities. **USAID works with local officials to strengthen teacher competencies in both formal and non-formal schools, reaching 1,460 teachers in FY 2023.** USAID also partners with community members to offer non-formal education opportunities and connect schools and families to private sector financing for low-fee, non-state school access.



Photo: USAID/Morocco

MOROCCO The Inclusive Education Teacher Training Activity (MITTA) collaborated with the Ministry of Education and other local stakeholders to promote inclusive teaching practices nationwide. **MITTA completed a needs assessment and mapping of Moroccan deaf organizations, developed Moroccan Sign Language and bilingual deaf education training curricula, and trained eight master trainers to support a cascading training of trainers model.** Furthermore, the activity partnered with the Mohammed V University's Faculty of Education and the University of Tennessee-Knoxville's Center on Deafness to develop a new certificate program on bilingual deaf education, which will be used across Morocco.



Photo: UNMC

SOUTH AFRICA Through the Grade R Mathematics and Language Improvement Project, USAID is partnering with the province of Gauteng to strengthen learning in Grade R, the year before first grade. **In FY 2023, the activity helped teachers in more than 3,800 schools improve literacy and early numeracy play-based learning.** These teachers will be fully trained and equipped with teacher training guides and play resources for their Grade R classrooms. In partnership with the Gauteng Department of Education and local stakeholders, the activity's support has expanded the early childhood development sector to a scale not seen before in the province.



High-quality Texts and Materials

Every student needs their own learning materials, in languages that they use and understand in and outside of school. Teachers need different types of materials that are aligned with the curriculum to support instruction and teaching practices, including structured guides, supplemental readers, and textbooks. USAID partnerships work to ensure that high-quality teaching and learning materials are available, accessible, appropriate, and affordable. This support includes providing learners with disabilities with materials that have been specifically designed to meet their needs, such as braille or signed translation.



Photo: USAID/Dominican Republic

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC Requested by the Ministry of Education to support low-performing schools, the Read activity devised an approach that included printing and distributing decodable and leveled books. These are books designed to help children spell out words and match a child's reading level. **In FY 2023, the activity distributed nearly 1.4 million books to 1,900 high-priority schools.** Read subsequently conducted a review of student reading data and found that students enrolled in the intervention schools demonstrated improved performance. Based on this analysis, the Ministry worked with USAID to scale up the distribution of decodable books to more high-priority schools.



Photo: USAID/Senegal

SENEGAL The Renforcement de la Lecture Initiale Pour Tous (RELIT) activity partnered with the Government of Senegal to provide high-quality textbooks and reading materials. **RELIT delivered 78,500 early grade textbooks across seven regions and prepared teaching and learning materials in six local languages.** This included a full set of materials for kindergarten instruction and classroom kits made up of play-based learning materials. The activity also supported changes to the materials in kindergarten classes to reflect the transition in the language of instruction to French. Moreover, RELIT partnered with the Senegalese Association of Publishers to launch a "Made in Senegal" initiative, which will create a roadmap for using Senegalese printers for future large educational print runs.



Photo: USAID Yemen Gateway/Save the Children

YEMEN The Gateway to Education activity partnered with the Ministry of Education to develop grade 1–3 textbooks and teacher's guides. These literacy and numeracy materials were based on approved curriculum standards and adhered to international standards of inclusivity, gender equality, conflict sensitivity, social-emotional learning principles, and psychological well-being. USAID trained 1,400 teachers and 227 Ministry of Education mentors on the grade 1 literacy materials. **Teachers reported positive changes in their teaching practices, and their knowledge and skill scores more than doubled, from 37 percent to 87 percent.** The activity will scale up the training to 4,400 teachers in FY 2024.



Extra Practice and Support Outside of School

USAID partnerships help families, mentors, and community members support children with extra practice outside of school. This includes remedial education, or the reteaching and reinforcing of basic skills. While remedial education is often integrated in the school curriculum, learners can also receive additional support through extracurricular activities. Another approach is targeted instruction, which groups learners into small groups according to their skill level rather than their age or grade. Targeted instruction helps learners reinforce their skills and can be used both inside and outside of school.



Photo: Partners of the Americas

COLOMBIA During FY 2023, the Together We Learn activity continued to collaborate with the Ministry of Education and local stakeholders to strengthen its accelerated education (AE) program. AE is a flexible and age-appropriate program, offered both in and outside formal schools, that runs in an accelerated time frame. It aims to provide access to education for disadvantaged, over-age, out-of-school, and migrant children and youth in the border city of Cúcuta. **The activity opened eight new AE classrooms, provided AE training to 14 public school teachers, and reached 170 students, 40 percent of whom are migrants.**



Photo: Zineb Haddaji/FHI 360

DJIBOUTI The Djibouti Early Grade Reading Activity (DEGRA) collaborated with two local NGOs to extend community mobilization efforts to schools in the northern and southern regions of the country. **DEGRA organized 16 capacity-strengthening workshops for parents to support reading sessions with children at home.** The activity also promoted messages on social media and broadcast radio to increase parental involvement in children's learning. The campaign included images that defied traditional gender roles, such as a father reading to his young daughter, to transform gender norms in the school and home environment.



Photo: RTI

KENYA Through the Tusome activity, USAID and the Ministry of Education implemented a reading remediation program to help learners who were struggling. USAID and the Ministry redesigned an earlier pilot program to significantly reduce remediation group sizes, allowing for more targeted and frequent practice for struggling learners. The redesigned program provides remediation both in school and after school. In FY 2023, the program was rolled out in 97 schools by 411 trained teachers. **Sixty percent of learners who participated in in-school remediation improved their reading skills while 73 percent of those who participated in after-school remediation demonstrated improved reading skills.**



Regular Assessments to Inform Instruction

Continuous assessments are a critical tool to help teachers measure the effectiveness of their teaching. At the classroom level, USAID programming helps teachers assess student learning through both formative assessments (monitoring learning to provide ongoing feedback) and summative assessments (evaluating learning at the end of instruction). At district, regional, and national levels, USAID helps local partners analyze and widely share assessment results to inform instruction policy and practice.



Photo: USAID

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC The Okuu Keremet! (Learning is Awesome!) activity added digital applications to more than 1,700 previously distributed tablets to help teachers assess student progress in reading and math. **This included the BaalooApp for formative assessments, which allows teachers to quickly assess student performance during a lesson.** As one teacher noted, “before, we developed tasks by ourselves to test students, mostly handwritten and we had to analyze results also by ourselves. Now, it takes several clicks on tablets and you know your students’ performance. This is incredible!”



Photo: World Learning

LEBANON The Quality Instruction Towards Access and Basic Education Improvement (QITABI) 2 activity supported the Ministry of Education to develop reading benchmarks for English and French in grades 2, 3, and 6. **These benchmarks will support the Ministry of Education’s efforts to contextualize student learning and systematically monitor and evaluate progress.** QITABI 2 also rolled out a national Learning Recovery Program. The program trained over 10,000 teachers on conducting diagnostic assessments for students and using evidence for differentiated lesson planning. This training equipped teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to address learning losses and improve student well-being.



Photo: USAID

PHILIPPINES The Improving Learning Outcomes for the Philippines activity supported the Department of Education (DepEd)’s efforts to analyze national student assessment results and make them more accessible. The activity worked with DepEd’s Bureau of Educational Assessment (BEA) to analyze recent data, including grade 3 literacy and numeracy. **Through workshops, USAID strengthened BEA’s capacity to share timely and actionable analysis to inform policies and classroom instruction.** USAID also began analyzing national, regional, and division-level assessments to understand the extent to which teachers over-assess students at the expense of instruction. USAID’s findings will help DepEd guide teachers to find the right balance between assessment and instruction.

For questions, please contact: edulinks@usaid.gov



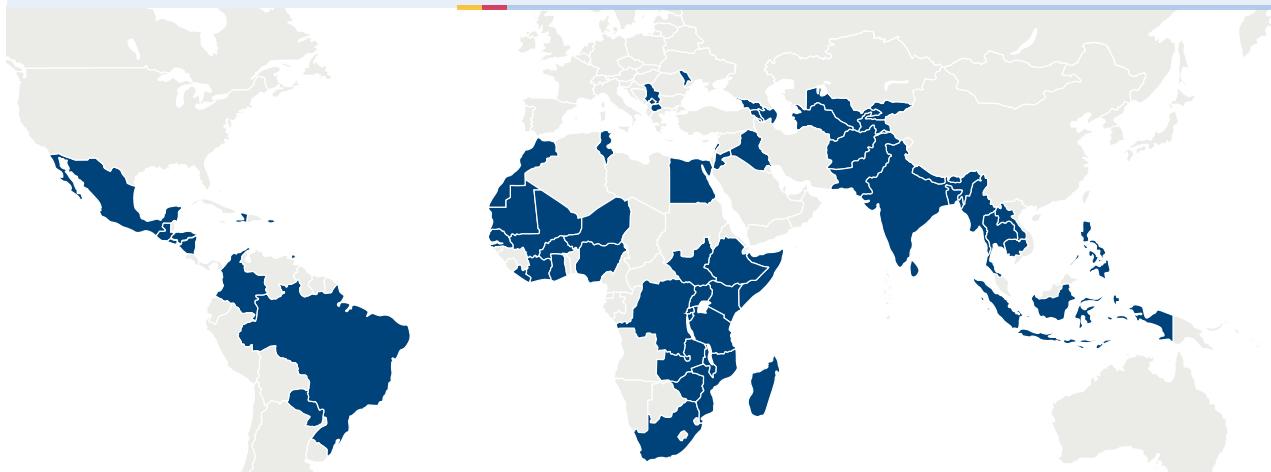


ADVANCING Youth Workforce Development FY 2023 Results Brief

Investing in young people is critical to solving pressing and growing development challenges. This brief illustrates USAID's commitment to ensuring all youth gain the skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment, and positively contribute to society. The brief summarizes USAID's efforts to advance youth workforce development (YWFD) during the 2023 fiscal year (FY).

Global Snapshot

66	113,000	26,800	37,000
countries advanced YWFD.	individuals completed YWFD programs.	individuals had improved soft skills.	individuals had new employment.



USAID invests in global youth programming by:

 Strengthening foundational skills	 Building technical and vocational skills
 Promoting youth entrepreneurship	 Leveraging work-based learning
 Promoting youth leadership and engagement	 Advancing gender equality and social inclusion
 Integrating a cross-sectoral approach	





Strengthening Foundational Skills

Youth need strong foundational skills—including literacy, numeracy, and soft skills—to successfully transition to and succeed in the workforce. The examples below highlight USAID's efforts to strengthen foundational skills for all youth, including in and out-of-school youth and those in stable and conflict-affected settings.



Photo: Aga Khan Foundation UK

AFGHANISTAN The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) provided 5,820 students from marginalized communities in 15 rural provinces with access to community-based accelerated education classes. GEC also supported local advocacy for girls' education, with a particular focus on adolescent girls. **In FY 2023, despite disruptions caused by Taliban edicts, 4,860 GEC students completed their three-year accelerated education program, equivalent to a full primary school education.** Recognizing that some learners, particularly girls, would not be allowed to continue their education, GEC provided supplementary training and peer mentoring in life skills, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy.



Photo: Egerton University

KENYA The Empowered Youth (EY) activity empowers Kenyan youth ages 18–24 years old and adolescent girls ages 15–19 years old by increasing their prospective economic opportunities. EY provided 6,160 youth with practical skills development in various sectors to equip them with the knowledge needed to pursue economic opportunities. Moreover, the activity provided slightly different training to 300 adolescent girls that emphasized soft skills, well-being, agency, and positive affirmation. **This ensured that adolescent girls participating in the activity received comprehensive, age-specific training on life skills and economic empowerment.**



Photo: Bantwana Initiative

UGANDA The Integrated Child and Youth Development (ICYD) activity enrolled out-of-school youth, including teenage mothers and youth with disabilities, in an accelerated education program and work-readiness training. **The program helped 1,440 youth learn literacy and numeracy skills and supported their transition to mainstream education.** The participants received materials and kits to enhance retention and social-emotional well-being. To encourage youth to enroll in the program, ICYD organized two radio talk shows and 18 community dialogues. In addition, Peace Corps volunteers organized a Drop Everything and Read Day, attended by 691 members of the school community, parents, and caregivers.



Building Technical and Vocational Skills

Technical and vocational education and training programs equip youth with the job-specific skills they need in their profession. The examples below highlight USAID's efforts to build youth's technical and vocational skills.



Photo: USAID/Azerbaijan

AZERBAIJAN The Economic Empowerment for Entrepreneurship and Employment (E4) activity drew on ongoing research around youth needs and expectations to organize a series of workshops in FY 2023. The workshops focused on the technical skills essential for youth employability. **As a result, 72 youth from all over Azerbaijan attended ten-day introductory technical courses where they learned to use information technology-based programs, including Excel, Linux, HTML, and CSS.** Additionally, the activity resumed English language courses to further improve the employability skills of youth. The second and third cohorts ended this fiscal year with 160 youth alumni.



Photo: UNDP/Pakistan

PAKISTAN The Merged Areas Governance Program (MAGP) worked with the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to implement a youth skills development program. **In FY 2023, MAGP trained 306 youth in key trades such as driving, mechanical work, graphic design, livestock management, dressmaking and design, and plumbing and sanitary works.** The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa plans to scale up the program to reach 5,500 youth over three years. MAGP also trained newly elected youth councilors of village councils in the merged areas (which were formally federally administered tribal areas) about their roles, responsibilities, and project management.



Photo: USAID/Tunisia

TUNISIA The Social Safety Net activity's school dropout prevention program reached 22 schools with 13,000 pupils. **The program identified more than 680 students at risk of dropping out and provided them with multi-dimensional support, including tutoring, remedial education, and extracurricular activities.** For youth who have already dropped out, the program provides a pathway back to school and access to vocational training and meaningful job opportunities through Second Chance Centers. These neighborhood centers are a safe space for youth. They provide support for youth to catch up on their studies, return to school, pursue vocational training, and—for those who are older—learn about job opportunities.



Promoting Youth Entrepreneurship

Youth need skills, networks, and access to financing to start and grow their businesses. The examples below highlight USAID's efforts to support youth entrepreneurship.



Photo: IJUS

BRAZIL USAID supported the Juruti UP activity to encourage and promote sustainable entrepreneurship in the Brazilian Amazon. **A total of 450 youth received training on sustainable entrepreneurship with a focus on forest conservation and the responsible use of forest resources.** The activity's goals are to understand participants' current knowledge, encourage an entrepreneurial spirit, and present tools and sustainable business opportunities in the region to develop economic opportunities. The first stage of the activity garnered many innovative plans and in the next stage, participants will be coached to develop business models, build strategic partnerships, and prototype services and products.



Photo: Duke University

LAOS The Laos Local Solutions Support (LSS) activity partnered with four Laotian universities to promote entrepreneurship and motivate students from diverse academic fields to pursue their potential. **LSS established a micro-entrepreneurship funding program and a student business pitch competition, which helped students formulate and shape their ideas.** The six winning teams have commenced implementing their business concepts, taking advantage of the program's funding and networking opportunities, legal guidance, and work spaces. The competition has stimulated the development of the youth startup community in Laos.

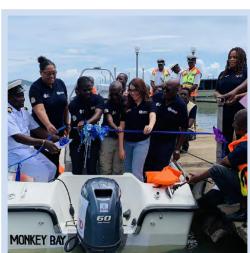


Photo: Oris Chimanya/USAID

MALAWI The Restoring Fisheries for Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Malawi activity partners with youth to conserve Lake Malawi's fish biodiversity. The activity addresses youths' challenges and opportunities by promoting alternative livelihoods and research initiatives to reduce the pressure on fish resources. **In response to its 2020 entrepreneurial diagnostic assessment, the activity supported 15 youth-based conservation enterprises, ranging from honey production to eco-tourism, with matching grants up to \$60,000.** USAID supported nine graduate and post-graduate students from three public universities with research grants in stock assessment and bio-economic modeling.



Leveraging Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning (WBL) is an asset-building strategy that allows youth to apply their learning through career exposure and real-life work experiences such as internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, service learning, career talks, workplace tours, and other experiential activities. WBL is a key component of youth workforce development programming, as it is often the bridge between skills training and employment. The examples below highlight different approaches to WBL in USAID programs.



Photo: ACDI/VOCA

GHANA The Market Systems and Resilience (MSR) activity partners with local stakeholders to increase inclusive agriculture-led economic growth in northern Ghana. The activity reached 17,500 youth ages 15–35, forming 26 percent of total participants. In collaboration with the University for Development Studies, the activity established a youth internship program for students to gain hands-on professional experience prior to graduating and entering the workforce. **The internship program successfully placed 100 students in agribusinesses, offering them opportunities to apply what they have learned in school while improving their skills for their future careers.**



Photo: Mispan Indarjo, USAID

INDONESIA In FY 2023, the Resilient Coffee activity extended its agronomy and climate resilience advocacy to about 5,300 coffee farmers in Aceh, North Sumatra, and East Java provinces. This initiative equipped small and medium-sized coffee enterprises to address climate challenges and adjust their agricultural practices to enhance productivity. To further strengthen capacity around climate-resilient farming, the activity placed young professionals as interns in coffee enterprises. These interns were trained to collect farmer data with cell phones; the phones were then used to provide technical support using text-based software platforms. **Many coffee enterprises subsequently hired these trained interns onto their teams.**



Photo: USAID/Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE The Empowering Young Persons with Disabilities for Economic Inclusion activity improved the skills of young persons with disabilities in the informal and formal sectors, breaking down barriers and ensuring their active participation in the economy. About 1,925 participants received employment and economic empowerment services, including entrepreneurship training integrated with vocational and technical, financial literacy, and soft skills training. This enabled participants to start and grow their own small businesses for self-employment. **About 275 young persons with disabilities undertook work-related apprenticeships in vocations such as carpentry, small livestock rearing, garment making, and welding to help them start their own small businesses.**



Promoting Youth Leadership and Engagement

USAID is committed to engaging youth and emerging leaders in education programming. The examples below highlight USAID's efforts to promote youth voices and youth leadership in workforce development programming.



Photo: U.S. Embassy Bridgetown

BARBADOS AND EASTERN CARIBBEAN In Saint Lucia, the Youth Resilience, Inclusion, and Empowerment (Y-RIE) activity collaborated with 35 Ministry of Youth Development and Sports officers and national Youth Council members to develop a life skills training curriculum. The curriculum emphasized leadership, teamwork, anger management, and conflict mitigation for 12–17-year-olds. **Subsequently, USAID supported the Ministry to hold a two-week camp where more than 130 young people received life skills training.** The camps focused on engaging youth from communities facing increased shootings and other incidents of violence.



Photo: CRS FOR USAID/IRAQ

IRAQ In FY 2023, the Shared Future activity started intensive bridging activities with a new cohort of youth participants. These activities bring together youth from different groups to explore shared interests and develop leadership skills. Shared Future organized a 12-session, in-person training with 413 youth, instilling in them a better understanding of their leadership and resilience potential by developing their interpersonal skills. **Seventy percent of participants exceeded the project target in demonstrating improved skills.** Graduates of the training subsequently joined teams to design small-scale projects to improve their communities or participated in entrepreneurship and work readiness programs.



Photo: Faton Hasani, USAID

KOSOVO Up to Youth supports a variety of youth engagement activities and skills-building to empower youth to improve their lives. During FY 2023, the program continued to strengthen the capacity of its Youth Advisory Board (YAB), a diverse group that supports other youth participating in the program across the country. **YAB members actively identified key challenges in their communities, designed solutions, and led implementation of initiatives that address priorities in their communities.** The program also continued to work with youth in vulnerable situations, including those from rural areas, minority youth, and youth with disabilities. In FY 2023, more than 2,200 youth participated in the program's activities.



Advancing Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

USAID is committed to advancing gender equality and social inclusion in and through education. The examples below highlight USAID's efforts to promote gender equality and social inclusion in youth workforce development programs for young women, youth with disabilities, and other marginalized groups.



Photo: PRO-jeunes.Energie

COTE D'IVOIRE Pro-Jeunes Women in Energy was a public-private partnership with the goal of improving employment opportunities in the energy sector for 750 young women. The sector provides an opportunity for young women, who are disproportionately underemployed, to generate income while contributing to the country's national goal of universal energy access. **In FY 2023, the activity exceeded its target by training a total of 863 women on domestic and solar electricity solution installations and maintenance, as well as technical sales training in solar electricity solutions.** These skills have helped participants gain employment as sales personnel, "last mile" technicians, and other positions.



Photo: Thomas Cristofolletti for USAID

EGYPT The Inter-Community Girls Empowerment activity trained 55 young leaders, known as "champions of change," from four communities in Minya. **To enhance livelihood opportunities for youth, the activity also trained 192 women and girls in countering gender-based violence and promoting community tolerance and social cohesiveness skills, as well as vocational training in jewelry making, kilim production, pottery, and silk weaving.** The activity is contributing to positive youth development objectives by fostering agency through skill building, promoting youth engagement and contributions, and empowering women and girls to increase their sense of inclusion and belonging.



Photo: Breakthrough ACTION

NEPAL The Local System Strengthening to Reduce Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (R-CEF) partners with local stakeholders to reduce child marriage. **In FY 2023, the activity provided training to 1,612 community leaders, local government officials, and other local organizations on how to integrate gender equity and female empowerment components into community-led social behavior change activities.** These interventions included engaging political and religious leaders to transform social norms, recognizing parents whose daughters wait until legal age to marry, training local child rights committees and ward child rights committees, and providing vocational training to adolescent boys and girls who complete their education and delay marriage.



Integrating a Cross-Sectoral Approach

USAID recognizes that young people are multi-dimensional and that positive youth development (PYD) programming is holistic. The examples below highlight how USAID's investment in youth-centered programming requires investments across different sectors.



Photo: USAID/Ethiopia

ETHIOPIA The Market Systems for Growth (MS4G) activity works across the agriculture, economic growth, WASH, and education sectors to significantly improve youth employment. **Using e-job and digital training platforms, MS4G collaborated with businesses and social enterprises to place 5,300 individuals in enhanced jobs within the food security and WASH value chains.** Sixty-eight percent of participants were women and 48 percent were young adults ages 19–29. Partnering with a milk processing company and a sanitation product distributor, MS4G provided demand-driven skills training, job placement, and follow-up services, reaching 15,400 participants, including 8,900 young adults.



Photo: USAID Unity Through Diversity Program

GEORGIA The Unity Through Diversity program supports a network of 15 youth centers across the country that offer a variety of training opportunities promoting integration, tolerance, human rights, gender equality, anti-discrimination, and inclusion. **The program directly engaged 1,330 young people, empowering young beneficiaries to implement more than 600 local and youth-led civic activism projects.** Additionally, the program issued 21 micro-grants to young leaders to implement projects promoting gender equality and women empowerment. The program also established partnerships with 22 businesses and supported 26 internship programs at private companies. Two summer schools brought together 200 youth participants from all 15 youth centers nationwide to promote unity.



Photo: U.S. Forest Service IP Honduras

HONDURAS As part of an interagency agreement with the U.S. Forest Service, 87 students aged 18–23 graduated from the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC). **Fourteen of these students were Afro-Hondurans sponsored by USAID's Conserving Coastal Ecosystems Activity as part of an effort to reach new, previously underserved communities.** The YCC curriculum includes topics such as community-based biodiversity conservation, watershed management, forest fire management, eco-tourism, and entrepreneurship, as well as soft skills and personal development. To date, 85 percent of the nearly 300 YCC alumni are currently employed or enrolled in a university.

For questions, please contact: edulinks@usaid.gov





ADVANCING Higher Education

FY 2023 Results Brief

USAID works in higher education to prepare local workforces, raise industry standards, build research and evidence, and reduce extreme poverty. The [Higher Education Landscape Analysis](#) included recommendations for bolstering higher education to achieve these objectives. This brief responds to three of those recommendations: improving coordination and communication within USAID, creating meaningful mechanisms to collect data, and developing evidence. The brief summarizes efforts to advance higher education during the 2023 fiscal year (FY), which ran from October 2022 to September 2023.

Snapshot of FY 2023 Results and Achievements

830

higher education institutions
were provided with capacity
strengthening support.

95,700

learners were reached by higher
education interventions.

690

peer-reviewed publications
resulted from USG support.

USAID developed the [Higher Education Program Framework](#) to capture its vision of higher education as a central actor in driving locally led development.

[Learn more about how USAID measures results across the framework.](#)



Higher education programming drives locally led development by:



Advancing knowledge and research



Providing quality and relevant education and workforce training



Engaging and strengthening the capacity of individuals



Engaging and strengthening the capacity of institutions



Strengthening higher education systems



Global Snapshot



Additional Resources

Global Snapshot

USAID partners in **64** countries advanced higher education during FY 2023.

Advancing Knowledge and Research



Providing Quality and Relevant Education and Workforce Training



Engaging and Strengthening the Capacity of Individuals



Engaging and Strengthening the Capacity of Institutions

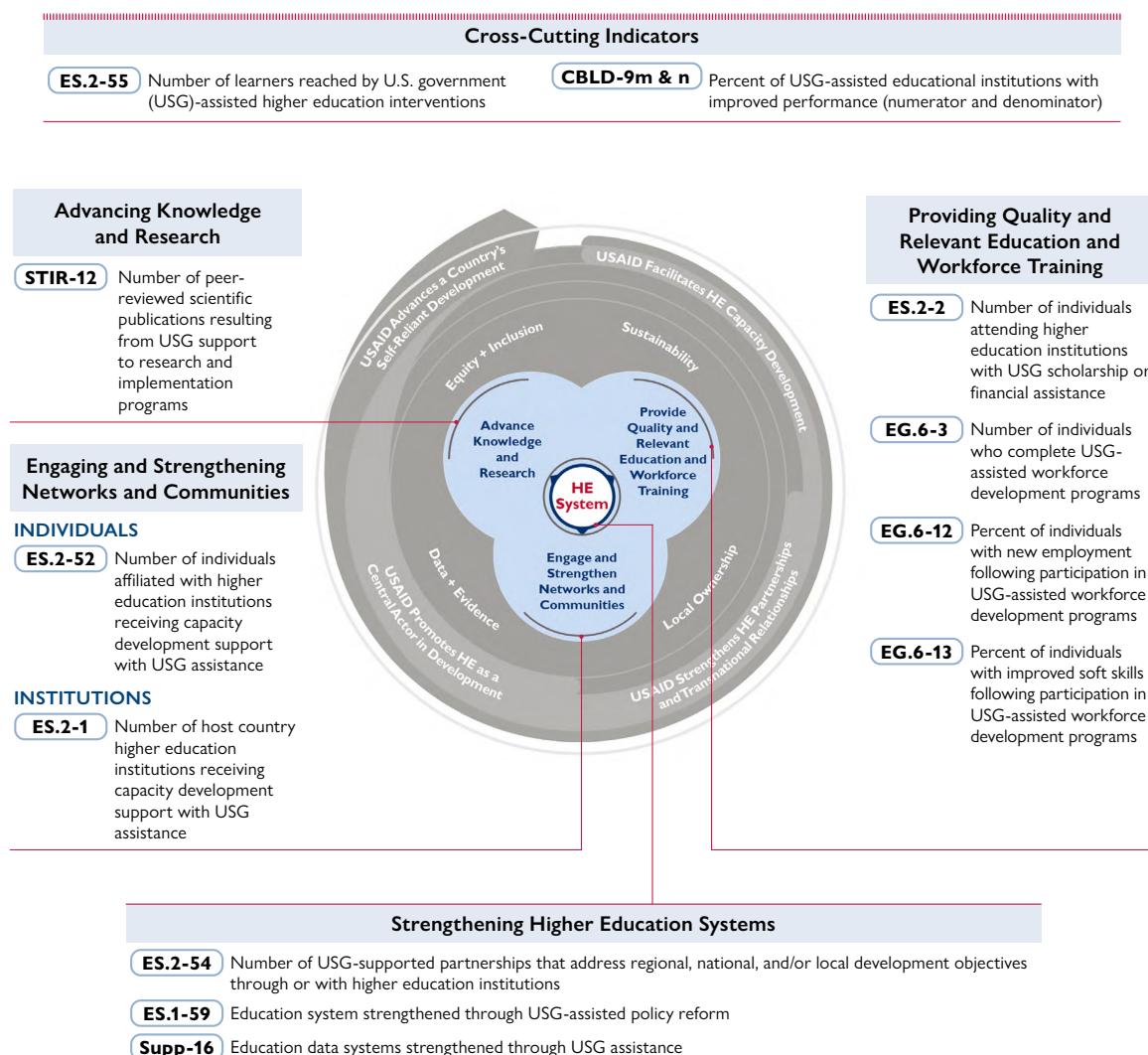


Strengthening Higher Education Systems



Measuring Results across the Higher Education Program Framework

The Higher Education Program Framework provides the vision, framing, and key outcomes of the Agency's broad and diverse higher education programming, regardless of sector or region. Here, we map foreign assistance standard indicators to different aspects of the framework to show how USAID measures results.




Advancing Knowledge and Research

Higher education systems advance knowledge across sectors by supporting applied research and cultivating innovative solutions. USAID uses STIR-12 (number of peer-reviewed scientific publications resulting from USG support to research and implementation programs) to measure results.

43

partner countries reported efforts to advance knowledge and research through higher education.

690

peer-reviewed publications resulted from USG support.

STIR-12


Photo: USAID MEASURE-BiH project

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA The Monitoring and Evaluation Support (MEASURE) activity supported the University of Sarajevo School of Economics and Business (SEBS) with developing a program evaluation course. **The course will help build a cadre of individuals who can conduct research needed for evidence-driven policy in the country.** Twenty graduate students enrolled in the pilot course. In the course evaluation at the end of the semester, 100 percent of respondents reported it enhanced their knowledge of social science research and evaluation. SEBS will incorporate this feedback to refine the content and make the course available to both graduate and undergraduate students.



Photo: PHER Vietnam

VIETNAM The Partnership for Higher Education Reform (PHER) activity advanced the research capacity of three national universities and their nine member universities. **PHER supported the universities with developing research integrity and research ethics committee regulations and operational procedures.** In addition, seven experts from Vietnam International Academic Networks provided peer review for emerging scholars' research reports, manuscripts, and workshop papers. PHER also supported the universities with teaching and learning reforms, accreditation with the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), human resources metrics, and other efforts. Eight business programs achieved progress toward ACBSP accreditation and 19 research papers were published with PHER's support.



Providing Quality and Relevant Education and Workforce Training

Higher education systems strengthen the workforce through continuous, market-relevant teaching, learning, assessment, curriculum, and pedagogical practices. USAID uses several indicators to measure results, including ES.2-2 (number of individuals attending higher education institutions with USG scholarship or financial assistance) and ES.2-55 (number of learners reached by USG-assisted higher education interventions).

45

partner countries reported efforts to provide higher education and workforce training.

11,400

individuals attended higher education institutions with scholarship or financial assistance.

95,700

learners were reached by higher education interventions.

ES.2-55

ES.2-2



Photo: IOM

EL SALVADOR The Scholarships for Educational Opportunities activity provided more than 900 scholarships for young people in vulnerable situations to attend technical education and vocational programs. **This training will help participants develop technical skills demanded by the private sector, improve access to new and better jobs, and reduce the risk of irregular migration.** The training is held at MEGATEC centers (Spanish acronym for Gradual Education Learning Model of Technical and Technological Education). Six local higher education institutions manage the MEGATECs. As part of the scholarship program, these institutions strengthened their capacity to deliver complementary services such as psychosocial support and job placement.



Photo: Checchi and Co. Consulting, Inc.

KOSOVO The Commercial Justice activity continued to partner with local universities to strengthen professionalism and specialization in commercial law. **In FY 2023, the activity provided internships to 15 university students in commercial law-related institutions dealing with dispute resolution, policy making, mediation, arbitration, and business.** The activity engages interns from a variety of backgrounds, including ethnic minorities and marginalized populations such as people with disabilities and LGBTQI+ community members. A total of 83 interns have been engaged over the life of the activity. Commercial Justice also provided mediation training to students to prepare them as future practitioners of commercial justice and alternative dispute resolution methods.



Engaging and Strengthening the Capacity of Individuals

Higher education systems engage individuals in local, regional, and international communities to both ground their work in local challenges and connect them to cutting-edge ideas in the higher education community. USAID uses ES.2-52 (number of individuals affiliated with higher education institutions receiving capacity strengthening support with USG assistance) to measure results.

22

partner countries reported efforts to engage and strengthen the capacity of individuals affiliated with higher education institutions.

7,460

individuals were provided with capacity strengthening support.

ES.2-52



Photo: Instituto Desarrollo

PARAGUAY Led by Instituto Desarrollo, a local NGO, the Rule of Law and Culture of Integrity activity aims to elevate the quality of legal education across nine higher education institutions. In FY 2023, the activity facilitated a community of practice for professors from four institutions. **This promoted peer-to-peer collaboration among participating educators, such as taking part in seminars, research, and other activities.** The activity also supported the National University of Asunción's Law School with conducting a faculty staff meeting, the first of its kind in more than 15 years. The meeting brought together more than 450 professors and fostered commitment and engagement among professors and administrators.



Photo: USAID/Philippines

PHILIPPINES The Advancing Basic Education in the Philippines (ABC+) activity conducted a training on participatory action research (PAR) for education officials and university faculty. **The training enhanced participants' knowledge and skills to generate contextually relevant, evidence-based research studies.** The program covered topics such as the role of principals as literacy leaders, effective pedagogical practices in afterschool reading programs, and improving the ability of in-service teachers to mentor pre-service students. By empowering participants to find solutions, the PAR process will help participants tackle challenges beyond the life of the activity and share their experiences with others.



Engaging and Strengthening the Capacity of Institutions

Higher education systems engage institutions in local, regional, and international communities to both ground their work in local challenges and connect them to cutting-edge ideas in the higher education community. USAID uses two indicators to measure results: ES.2-1 (number of host country higher education institutions receiving capacity strengthening support with USG assistance) and CBLD-9m & n (percent of USG-assisted educational institutions with improved performance). CBLD-9 includes both basic education and higher education institutions.

38

partner countries reported efforts to engage and strengthen the capacity of higher education institutions.

830

higher education institutions were provided with capacity strengthening support.

ES.2-1

68 percent

of educational institutions met performance improvement benchmarks.

CBLD-9m & n



Photo: U.S. Mission Egypt

EGYPT Through the Centers of Excellence for Water and Energy (COE/W and COE/E), Egyptian and American universities are strengthening undergraduate engineering programs and fostering innovation to solve Egypt's water and energy challenges. **In FY 2023, the COE/W introduced 13 courses in water engineering at Egyptian partner universities and awarded 13 applied research grants to Egyptian scholars to support the National Water Resource Plan 2037.** The COE/E developed plans for a technology center at Ain Shams University to develop new courses and certifications. The COE/E also partnered with Egyptian universities to improve teaching methods in energy engineering courses.



Photo: Universidade Eduardo Mondlane

MOZAMBIQUE The Higher Education Career Development Initiative (HECDI) continued to support three career development centers at Mozambican higher education institutions. **In FY 2023, these centers offered drop-in advising appointments and workshops on interviewing, resume writing, and other job search skills to 1,379 students.** HECDI supported staff with operating and expanding the centers through intensive training on topics such as organizational capacity development and soft skills for youth. The centers also improved their outreach to the university community by hiring and training career ambassadors, who are students that assist with the delivery of programs, services, and advising.



Strengthening Higher Education Systems

Strengthening higher education systems can take many forms, such as contributing to policy reforms, improving education data systems, and supporting higher education institution partnerships. USAID uses several indicators to measure results, including ES.2-54 (number of USG-supported partnerships that address regional, national, and/or local development objectives through or with higher education institutions) and ES.1-59 (education system strengthened through USG-assisted policy reform). ES.1-59 includes both basic education and higher education activities.

25

partner countries reported efforts to strengthen higher education systems.

181

partnerships through higher education institutions addressed development objectives.

34

activities strengthened education systems through policy reform.

ES.1-59
ES.2-54


Photo: University of SWAT

PAKISTAN The Higher Education System Strengthening Activity brings together American and Pakistani universities to improve higher education management, instruction, and student support. The activity partners with 16 Pakistani universities to expand equitable access to higher education, especially for women and marginalized groups. **In FY 2023, the activity provided training, coaching, and mentoring to 236 university staff.** It also led campus tours at U.S. partner universities. These efforts promoted an exchange of ideas around improving higher education governance, relevance, and student services. In FY 2024, the activity will focus on supporting Pakistani partner universities with developing strategic plans to systematically strengthen their operations.



Photo: Egerton University

KENYA In Kisumu County, USAID's Empowered Youth activity facilitated a partnership between the Grand Forty Hotel and the Akado Vocational and Training Center (VTC). **The partnership strengthened the link between higher education and employment, with collaboration on labor market-responsive training, curriculum development, and student internships and industry visits.** Additionally, the activity worked with higher education stakeholders on social inclusion and sensitization to access for vulnerable youth and adolescent girls, particularly student mothers. As a result, Akado VTC set up daycare facilities so that young mothers can effectively participate in learning with their peers.

 For questions, please contact: edulinks@usaid.gov