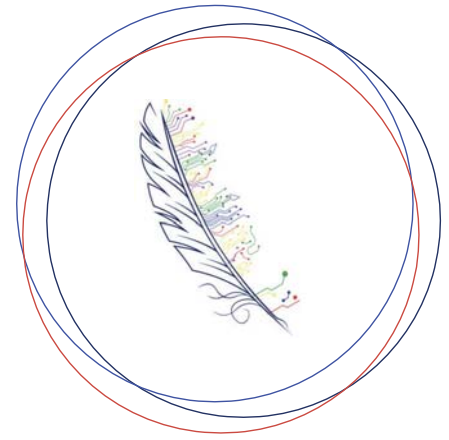


**Ministry of
Education, Science and Youth of Georgia**

**Georgia Innovation, Inclusion
and Quality Project (I2Q)**

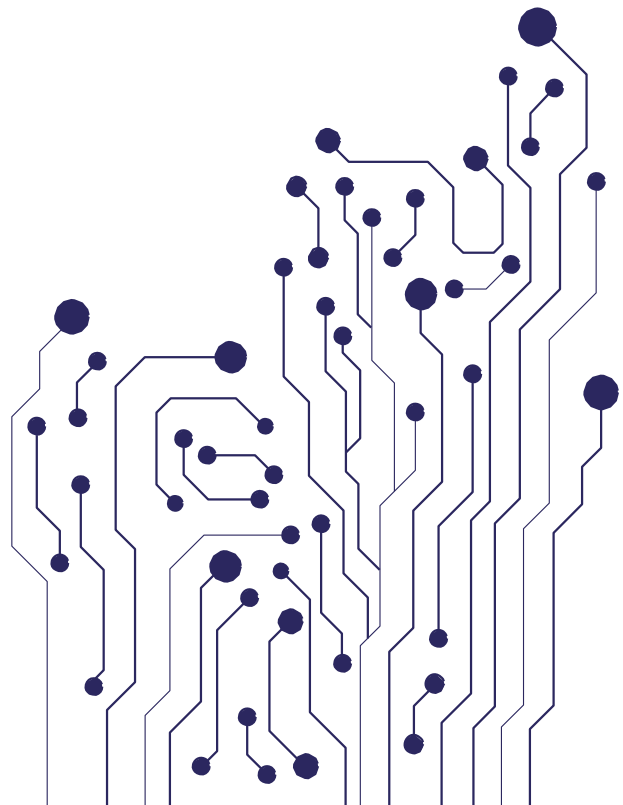


PROGRESS REPORT

**For the period of
January-June
2024**

Submitted by: Project Management Unit

www.iiq.gov.ge



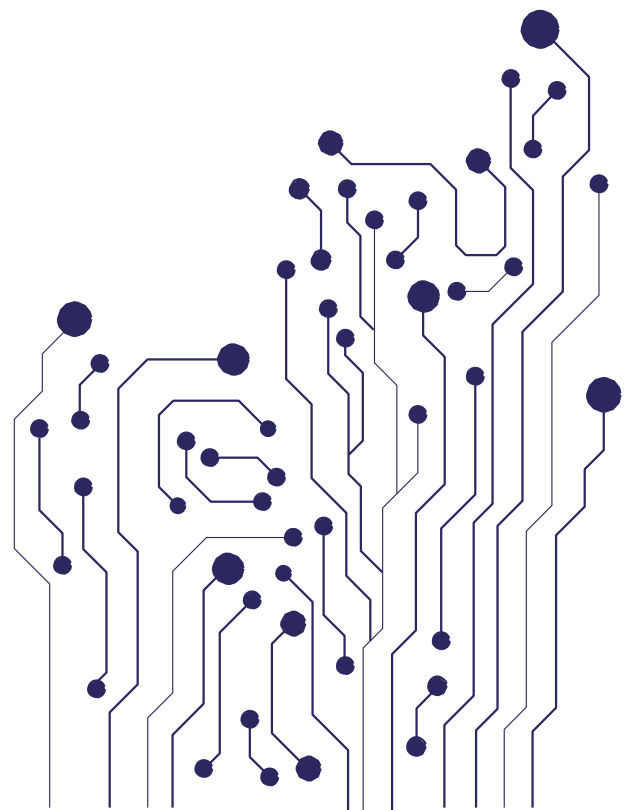


PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

PROJECT TITLE: Georgia Innovation, Inclusion and Quality Project (I2Q)

PROJECT NUMBER: Ministerial Decree №338

FOR: The World Bank Group



ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CFA	Continuous Formative Assessment	MoF	Ministry of Finance of Georgia
CIF	Competitive Innovation Fund	MRDI	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia
CIF AU	Competitive Innovation Fund Administration Unit	MTR	Mid-Term Review
CPD	Continuous Professional Development	NAEC	National Assessment and Examinations Center
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care	NCEQE	National Center for Education Quality Enhancement
ECE	Early Childhood Education	PBF	Performance-based Funding
EMIS	Education Management Information System	PDO	Project Development Objective
ESIDA	Education and Science Infrastructure Development Agency	PMU	Project Management Unit (under MESY)
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan	PMT	Project Management Team (under MDF)
FEF	Front -end Fee	QA	Quality Assurance
GE	General Education	QAF	Quality Assurance Framework
GoG	Government of Georgia	QCBS	Consultants Quality and Cost-Based Selection
HEI	Higher Education Institution	RFP	Request for Proposals
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	RFQ	Request for Quotations
IES	International Excellence School	SDSURF	San Diego State University Research Foundation
IMDS	Information Management Database System	SRP	School Readiness Program
IPF	Innovative Programs Fund	ToT	Training of Trainers
MDF	Municipal Development Fund of Georgia	TPDC	Teachers Professional Development Center
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation	WB	World Bank
MESY	Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia		



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I. INTRODUCTION

The Government of Georgia has signed the Loan Agreement for financing the implementation of Georgia Innovation, Inclusion and Quality Project – Georgia I2Q (I2Q Project) with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). The Project development objectives are to (i) expand access to preschool education and (ii) improve the quality of education and the learning environments and enhance relevance of higher education programs. The loan amount is 90 million Euros.

Original Loan agreement N8955, Section III, Withdrawal of Loan Proceeds.

Category	Amount of the Loan Allocated (expressed in EUR)	Percentage of Expenditures to be financed (inclusive of Taxes)
(1) Works, Goods, non-consulting services, consulting services, Operating Costs and Training for the Project except for Parts 1(c), Part 2(a) and Part 5 (a) for the Project	29,775,000	80%
(2) Works, Goods, non- consulting services, consulting services, Operating Costs and Training under Part 1(c), Part 2(a) and Part 5(a) for the Project	60,000,000	80%
(3) Front-end Fee	225,000	Amount payable pursuant to Section 2.03 of this Agreement in accordance with Section 2.07 (b) of the General Conditions
(4) Interest Rate Cap or Interest Rate Collar premium		Amount due pursuant to Section 4.05 (c) of the General Conditions
TOTAL AMOUNT	90,000,000	

Due to budgetary cuts resulted by COVID-19 outbreak, the MESY requested restructuring of the Loan Agreement. The new scheme was ratified by the Parliament of Georgia on September 30, 2020. Therefore, the counterpart financing has been removed from the Loan Agreement Category (1) amounting to EUR 29,775,000 for Works, Goods, Non-consulting services, Consulting services, Operating Costs and Training for the Project except for Parts 1(c), Part 2(a) and Part 5 (a) for the Project.

The Table in Section III. A of Schedule 2 to the Loan Agreement is amended to read as follows:

Category	Amount of the Loan Allocated (expressed in EUR)	Percentage of Expenditures to be Financed (inclusive of taxes)
(1) Works, Goods, non-consulting services, consulting services, Operating Costs and Training for the Project except for Parts 1(c), Part 2(a) and Part 5 (a) for the Project	29,775,000	100%
(2) Works, Goods, non- consulting services, consulting services, Operating Costs and Training under Part 1(c), Part 2(a) and Part 5(a) for the Project	60,000,000	80%
(3) Front-end Fee	225,000	Amount payable pursuant to Section 2.03 of this Agreement in accordance with Section 2.07 (b) of the General Conditions
(4) Interest Rate Cap or Interest Rate Collar premium		Amount due pursuant to Section 4.05 (c) of the General Conditions
TOTAL AMOUNT	90,000,000	



The Project Development Objectives are to (i) expand access to preschool education and (ii) improve the quality of education and the learning environments.

The loan will be dedicated to:

- 1) Improvement of the quality of and access to early childhood education;
- 2) Fostering quality teaching and learning in general education;
- 3) Strengthening financing options and promoting internationalization in higher education;
- 4) System strengthening and stakeholder communication and
- 5) Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation.

Table below represents the reallocation of the Project funds among components, as per approved POM¹:

Project Components	IBRD Financing (EUR)
1. Improving Quality of and Access to Early Childhood Education (ECE) (works, goods, non-consulting services, consulting services, operating costs and training for the Project except for Parts) 1(c), Part 2(a) and Part 5 (a) for the Project)	4,325,000
2. Fostering Quality Teaching and Learning in General Education (works, goods, non-consulting services, consulting services, operating costs and training for the Project except for Parts 1(c), Part 2(a) and Part 5 (a) for the Project)	9,015,000
3. Strengthening Financing Options and Promoting Internationalization in Higher Education	8,860,000
4. System strengthening and Stakeholder Communication	3,585,000
5. Supporting Project Management, Monitoring, and Evaluations (works, goods, non-consulting services, consulting services, operating costs and training for the Project except for Parts 1(c), Part 2(a) and Part 5 (a) for the Project)	3,990,000

¹ To be reviewed based on the latest changes.

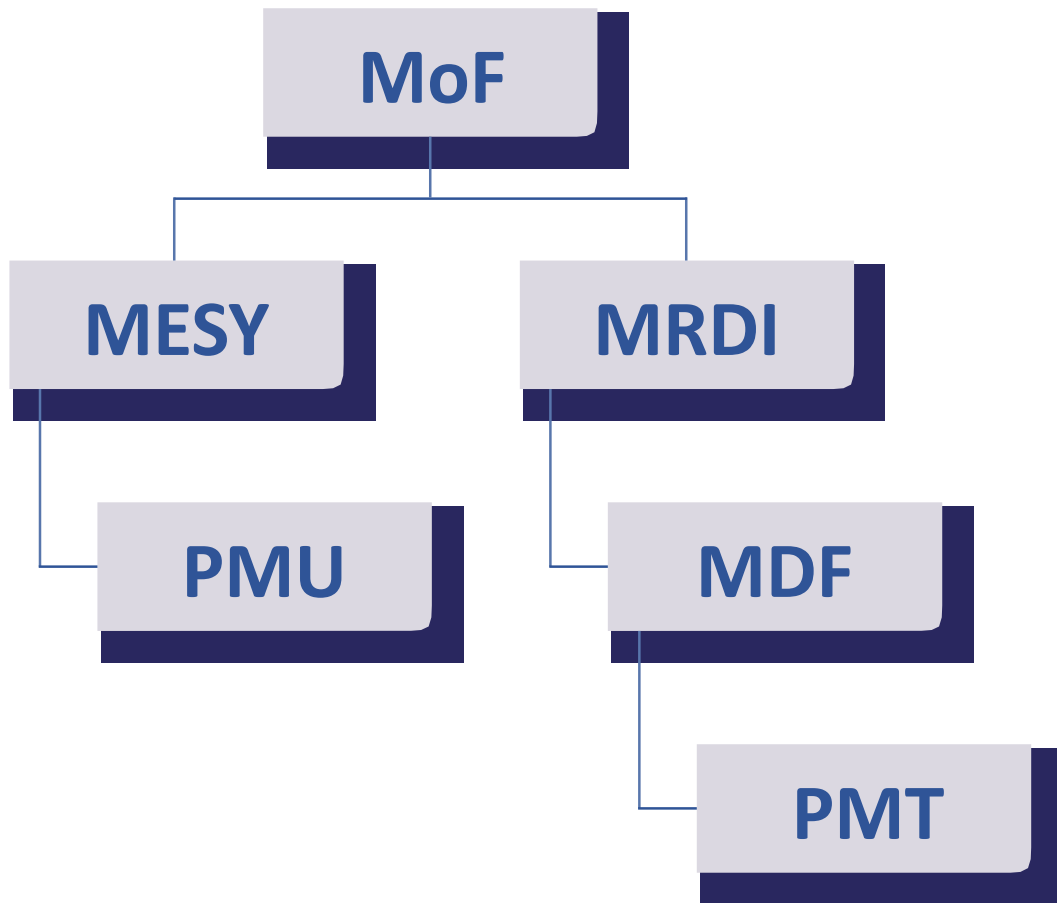
II. SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT PROJECT DATES

- The Loan Agreement was signed on June 18, 2019.
- Project was ratified by the Parliament of Georgia on October 16, 2019.
- Loan became effective on November 27, 2019.
- Project implementation period: November 2019 - March 2026.
- Official project launch event was held on March 5, 2020.
- Targeted program approval by the MESY on March 9, 2020 (Ministerial Decree No. 338). The latest amendment approved on January 29, 2024 (Ministerial Decree No. 80672) due to the changes GoG structure, as a result of which the name of the Ministry is changed into Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia.
- The Loan Agreement has been restructured and became effective on October 15, 2020.
Note: Due to the budgetary cuts as a result of a pandemic, the loan restructuring was conducted to accommodate the Government request to eliminate requirement of 20 percent co-financing (the table in Section III (A) of Schedule 2 to the Loan Agreement).
- The full package of Internal Regulations of the Project prepared in late 2020 was approved by the Executive Director of the Project on April 12, 2021.
- The last revision and amendments to POM approved by the WB on May 30, 2022.
- WB Implementation Support Missions - July 6-17, 2020; February 15-19, 2021; September 6-17, 2021; March 21-April 1, 2022; September 26 – October 3, 2022, March 27-31, 2023 (MTR Mission), October 2-6, 2023; April 4-11, 2024.
Note: Implementation of activities defined in the last Aide Memoire is provided below in respective parts of the report.
- I2Q project Steering Committee established on October 28, 2020 (Ministerial Decree No. 1046328). Current composition of the Steering Committee approved on January 29, 2024 (Ministerial Decree No. 85231).
- Note: The first official Steering Committee meeting held on December 15, 2020. The second official Steering Committee meeting held on November 26, 2021. The third official Steering Committee meeting held on December 19, 2022. The fourth (last) Steering Committee meeting held on December 27, 2023.

The I2Q Project is implemented over a six-year period by the following implementing partners – the MESY and the MDF operating under the MRDI. The PMU created within the MESY supports implementation of the designated project components, as specified in Legal Agreement. The PMT created within MDF supports implementation of relevant subcomponents under Components 1 and 2 aimed at improving the education infrastructure.



III. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE



SECTION I – OVERALL PROJECT PROGRESS AND KEY ISSUES

A. THE WORLD BANK IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT MISSION

The WB task team conducted the latest Implementation Support Mission (hereinafter – the Mission) for the I2Q Project during the period of April 4-11, 2024. The Mission’s objectives were to (i) review the ongoing project implementation progress, fiduciary and safeguards aspects; (ii) identify any pending issues and agree on measures to resolve them; (iii) follow up on the project restructuring needs identified at the mid-term review (MTR) in March 2023; and (iv) organize the 4th education sector donor coordination meeting.

Table below provides a summary of actions agreed during the last WB Implementation Support Mission and status of their execution (see Table 1 below).

TABLE 1 - STATUS OF AGREED ACTIONS

No	Key Actions	Responsible	Due Date	Current Status
Component 1 – Improving Quality of and Access to Early Childhood Education and Care				
1	Conduct professional development system piloting for kindergarten educational and administrative personnel in 5 out of 6 target municipalities	PMU	June 30, 2024	Completed. Note: Trainings were implemented throughout March 11 – June 7, 2024 in all target municipalities (Gori, Vani, Lanchkhuti, Zugdidi, Dedoplistskaro, Akhalkalaki). Additional cycle of trainings was conducted for different sample of administrative and educational staff of Gori Municipality kindergartens.
2	Pilot data reporting tools and merit-based remuneration scheme in 6 municipalities	PMU	August 31, 2024	In progress – on track. Note: The sample for participating in data reporting piloting selected and provided from all six target municipalities. Preparation of training modules is in progress and will be finalized by end July 2024. Piloting will be implemented by August 2024. Detailed information on the progress is provided under relevant part of the report.
3	Pilot data reporting tools and merit-based remuneration scheme in 6 municipalities	PMU	August 31, 2024	In progress – on track. Note: The sample for participating in data reporting piloting selected and provided from all six target municipalities. Preparation of training modules is in progress and will be finalized by end July 2024. Piloting will be implemented by August 2024. Detailed information on the progress is provided under relevant part of the report.



Component 2 – Fostering Quality Teaching and Learning in General Education				
4	Sign contracts for all the remaining school construction and rehabilitation works, except for 4 schools in Tbilisi	MDF	May 31, 2024	Completed – with a slight delay. Note: In case of several schools, contracts were signed in June 2024.
5	Share the detailed design and ESMP for 4 schools in Tbilisi	MDF	June 31, 2024	In progress – with a slight delay. Note: Detailed designs for 4 Tbilisi schools were developed and shared with the WB. Tbilisi N120 public school ESMP was submitted to the Bank by end June. As for the remaining ESMPs, they are being developed and as planned, will be shared with the Bank by end of July 2024.
6	Receive a confirmation from the MESY on the national assessment for basic and upper secondary level	PMU	July 31, 2024	Completed. Note: On June 3, 2024 the PMU was notified on MESY decision to implement diagnostic assessments on the basic level of general education, according to the revised subject standards and considering legislation amendments concerning adjustments in general education levels, as described under Component 2.
7	Procure STEAM equipment for the remaining 120 pilot schools and initiate STEAM pilot	PMU	July 31, 2024	In progress – on track. Note: Procurement documentation are prepared and the requests for quotations to be announced by mid-July 2024.
Component 3 – Strengthening Financing Options and Promoting Internationalization in Higher Education				
8	Release of the merit-based scholarship module, including university portal and MESY portal	PMU	August 31, 2024	In progress – on track. Note: The first release of a merit-based scholarship system is prepared and the testing process is underway.
9	Conduct academic program costing analysis	PMU	July 31, 2024	In progress – on track. Note: Costing information from selected universities is received and is being elaborated.
10	Conduct the second International Excellence School (IES 2)	PMU	July 31, 2024	In progress – on track. Note: The 2nd IES will be held on July 5-7, in Batumi. The topics of IES are intersectoral cooperation, technology transfer and innovation.
Component 4 – System Strengthening and Stakeholder Communication				
11	Sign the contract with a firm for LMS development	PMU	May 31, 2024	Delayed, but now on track Note: Contract negotiations are ongoing – the PMU is awaiting decision of the MESY and MoF on the recurrent costs to move further with the contract signature. Estimated contract signing period is August 2024.
12	Sign the contract with a firm for eSchool development	PMU	July 31, 2024	Delayed, but now on track Note: Evaluation of the Second Stage Technical Proposals required longer time than expected due to the need to receive much needed clarifications from the proposers. Estimated contract signature period is September 2024.

Note:

During the mission, the Aide Memoire was developed, and the implementation timelines were agreed. The detailed description of the progress made during the reporting period is provided under relevant parts of the report.

B. PLANNED RESTRUCTURING AND AMENDMENTS TO THE PROJECT SCOPE

As previously reported, having discussed the rationale of the restructuring with the WB, agreement was reached to ensure official initiation of the restructuring upon receiving clarification from the MESY on the scope of the national assessment system development on the General Education level in the frames of the I2Q Project. The reporting period was dedicated to defining exact scope of the intended changes to fully respond to the system needs.

Following final clarifications received from the Ministry regarding intended changes and upon preliminary discussions conducted among the MESY and the MoF, on June 28, 2024 the PMU initiated submission of the restructuring request letter to the MoF. As discussed and agreed with the WB during the last WB Implementation Support Mission held in April 2024, the restructuring of the Project is time-sensitive since (i) evaluation of project has to be conducted per the revised results indicators agreed with the Bank, and (ii) implementation of certain activities planned under the Project go beyond current project end date, thus requiring official grounds for the commitment and signature of respective agreements/amendments. Planned restructuring includes modifications in both – the Loan Agreement and the results framework.

1. Restructuring the Loan Agreement

- a. **Modification of Part 3(d) of Schedule 1 of the agreement („Strengthening the quality of pre-service teacher education programs for all levels of education professionals from the inception“).** The need for modification is constituted by changes in the scope of Higher Education Component. In particular, considering the needs of the ongoing reform agenda, the MESY has decided to strengthen support with regard to development of new options of higher education financing under the Project. Decision was made to cancel the ongoing procurement related to the development of pre-service teacher education programs and divert allocated funds towards the implementation of prioritized activities, i.e. development of HE core funding model and conducting analysis of academic program costs. Therefore, respective sub-part of the Schedule 1 is no longer relevant.

Moreover, decision was reached to ensure adequate reflection of the ongoing activities related to the HE quality assurance and internationalization in Project Description provided under Schedule 1 of the Loan Agreement. Thus, it was deemed necessary to add the new Part 3(d) to the Schedule 1 of the Loan Agreement – “Strengthening the entrepreneurship and discipline-specific English language skills of the Bachelor level students”.

- b. **Extension of the Project implementation deadline with additional 9 months (until the end of 2026).** As discussed and agreed with the WB, this modification is necessary to support implementation of several activities planned under the Project, as their completion either coincide or go beyond the project implementation deadline. These activities relate to the development/upgrade of the IT infrastructure (eSchool) considered under Sub-Component 4.1 and the ongoing multi-component contract under Component 2. The need for the extension is also constituted by the delay in estimated completion of the planned civil works to be im-



plemented by the MDF. As confirmed by the MDF via official letter N703590 dated June 19, 2024, ninemonth extension is sufficient for ensuring finalization of all planned rehabilitations and constructions under the Project.

2. Restructuring the results framework

The results framework restructuring has been initially agreed during the WB Mid-Term Review Mission (MTR). In the course of the action, other changes have also been communicated with the WB. Particularly, on December 8, 2023 the PMU received official letter from the MDF providing the updated cost escalation for all civil works under the Project. As the budget allocated for infrastructure development under the I2Q Project could not cover all planned rehabilitations and constructions, per request of the MDF, the PMU ensured selection of priority schools, considering available budget. As a result, reduction of the target of the indicator from 60 to 23 schools was agreed with the Bank. Changes of the results framework are reflected in Annex III of current report.

The restructuring request letter shared with the MoF by the MESY includes detailed information and rationale behind the intended modifications. Per established procedures, the MoF will refer Loan Agreement restructuring matter to the GoG for approval and address the WB with an official restructuring request for further actions and parliament's ratification. As for the restructuring the results framework, it does not require ratification and will be coordinated by the PMU in parallel.

SECTION II: IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS BY PROJECT COMPONENTS

A. COMPONENT 1 - IMPROVING QUALITY OF AND ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Sub-Component 1.1 - Improving the Quality of ECE Programs Across the Country

The objective of this sub-component is to introduce systems that improve the quality of ECE programs in Georgia. All activities considered under this sub-component, except for the already completed comprehensive diagnostic study of the ECE sector, are envisaged in the ongoing multi-component contract – “Improving ECE Institution Management System and Enhancing the Quality of Programs Across the Country” (Contract No: GE-MESCS-212213-CS-QCBS). The third phase of the works were launched in June 2023 and have been completed within the current reporting period (January 30, 2024), in accordance with the timeline defined in the respective contract. Key outputs of the phase 3 (R-2) included:

- Qualification requirements of ECE institution’s personnel;
- QAF revision and recommendations for further improvement;
- Training plan for capacity building of QA experts;
- ECE Curriculum framework;
- CPD scheme shared with six target municipalities for public revision;
- 93 ECE institutions selected for piloting educational and administrative personnel of ECE institutions;
- Outline and plan for conducting capacity building of 180 educational and 150 administrative personnel in six target municipalities;
- All training modules for ECE institutions’ educational and administrative personnel;
- Processes for collection, entry, storage, & usage of ECE data;
- Questionnaires for parents/legal guardians, educational personnel and ECE institutions’ managers to collect necessary information;
- Qualification requirements for ECE data reporting trainers;
- Salary projection instrument and data collection tool for the instrument;
- Outline and plan for carrying out pilot of the salary projection instrument;
- A self-reflection instrument designed for personnel (caregiver-pedagogue/caregiver) engaged in teaching within early childhood education and care institutions;
- Guidelines for the introduction and orientation of newcomers and/or new employees;
- Recommendations for optimal efficacy in the certification process of personnel engaged in early childhood and preschool education;
- Professional development scheme of education personnel of ECE institutions;
- PD raining modules for SRP personnel;
- Revised, modernized and improved curriculum for 2-6 YO children;
- Outline and plan for carrying out the SRP trainings.

For the purposes of accepting the Phase III report (R-2), on February 5, 2024, the deliverables were presented to the Contract Steering Committee. During the revision process, several



recommendations for improvement were suggested by the contract committee members by February 20, 2024. Accordingly, the Consulting Company (SDSURF) worked on advancement of (i) qualification requirements of ECE institution's educational, administrative and technical personnel, (ii) processes for collection, entry, storage and usage of ECE data, (iii) salary projection instrument, and (iv) professional development scheme.

After due consideration, on February 22, 2024, R-2 Progress report was successfully accepted and from March 2024, the SDSURF commenced with phase IV, which is still being implemented. Current (fourth) phase, which considers piloting all key areas, as well as developing recommendations and plans for long-term capacity building, is expected to be finalized by the beginning of September 2024.

Throughout phase IV of the contract, the SDSURF team has executed comprehensive TOTs for trainers selected to pilot PD and QA trainings. Throughout March – June trainers carried out the pilot of PD trainings in six target municipalities. SDSURF international experts visited Georgia during the PD pilot and participated in training sessions in Gori and Dedoplistskaro municipalities. Trainings were held during dates provided below:

- March 11, 2024 – April 5, 2024 – Gori
- April 3, 2024 – May 2, 2024 – Vani, Lanchkhuti, Zugdidi
- May 13, 2024 – June 7, 2024 – Dedoplistskaro, Akhalkalaki.

As a value added to the ongoing contract activities, SDSURF expanded the coverage and conducted second cycle of the PD training in Gori Municipality during May 28-June 17. Training was based on PD modules revised after first cycle of the pilot. In total, 25 PD trainers were prepared, and 213 caregivers/caregiver-pedagogues and 175 administrative personnel across 108 kindergartens have benefited from PD trainings.

During the reporting period, in close collaboration with the NCEQE, SDSURF has implemented various activities related to introduction of the revised QAF, including but not limited to the chain of trainings for authorization experts concerning nutrition, quality assurance, curriculum, models of ECE programs, conflict management, effective communication, and sanitary-hygiene (February 12-14 and May 29, 2024), as well as conducted simulation of authorization experts visit in ECE institution located in Gori Municipality (May 30, 2024).

SDSURF international and local experts were present on all the QA support activities. Dr. Fisher and Dr. Fray have developed the authorization experts' visit simulation analysis as a value added to the project and shared it with the ECE QA Department of the NCEQE. Consequently, overall, 12 QA trainers and 120 authorization experts have advanced their skills.

Per request of the NCEQE, the Consulting Company has agreed to facilitate simulation of authorization council meeting. Two days (October 1-2) will be dedicated to simulation, where cases of approximately 10 to 20 ECE institutions will be discussed. Simulation sessions will be attended by managers of respective kindergartens, up to 200 authorization experts and authorization council members, along with SDSURF international and local experts and NCEQE representatives.

TOTs on the ECE data reporting commenced in February 2024. The SDSURF team and local trainers have developed ECE data reporting online training module which is designed to equip administrators and municipality official body representatives occupied in the ECE sector with the necessary skills to collect and accurately report essential data. This will support various agencies in effective intersectoral cooperation and enforcement of the evidence-based decision-making process. The training focuses on the systematic and timely gathering of necessary information related to ECE institutions, caregivers/caregiver-pedagogues, groups, parents/legal guardians, and children. Participants will gain practical insights into the data entry process, ensuring the integrity of the data reported. The trainings incorporate interactive sessions, practical workshops, and assessments to reinforce learning.

Concerning the pilot phase of ECE data reporting system, as discussed and agreed with the WB in April 2023 and considering the timeline of works for establishment of ECE data reporting system (eSchool) planned in the frames of Component 4 of the I2Q Project, the team of international and local experts of SDSURF will execute the pilot in absence of actual system in place. For that reason, the experts have developed the spreadsheets of data entry with various technical features.

From July 1, 2024, through July 19, 2024, a total of 90 designated personnel from six target municipalities will participate in piloting. As a result, SDSURF experts will revise the data functional, develop recommendations and suggestions for improvement of ECE data reporting system functional, and elaborate business processes of robust ECE data reporting system.

Since May 2024, SDSURF international and local experts, along with ACT Global representatives have been working on TOTs for local trainers selected for salary projection instrument introduction and pilot. Throughout July 12- 31, 2024, series of online sessions will take place, in the frames of which key stakeholders, such as mayors and kindergarten union/agency heads from six target municipalities, respective department representatives from MoF, MRDI, MESY, and Education Committee members of Parliament of Georgia will be introduced with the instrument, including salary projection variables.

In terms of the piloting phase of merit-based remuneration model of educational personnel, SDSURF experts designed the pilot plan, which starts by introducing the instrument model to the key stakeholders and relevant representatives from six target municipalities. Within the pilot, the financial/budgetary departments divisions of municipality city halls and kindergarten unions/centers/agencies will be instructed on application of the instrument model in their ECE system, utilizing the tool to identify gaps between current remuneration and possible increased remuneration. The pilot envisages simulation of the revised salary scheme in 6 target municipalities (90 kindergartens in total).

In order to receive needed guidance on the application of the new scheme, the teams from each of the target municipalities will have series of meetings with SDSURF experts throughout the pilot. By the end of July 2024, SDSURF will ensure gathering of pilot outcomes, conducting analysis and developing recommendations, which will be presented to the key ECE stakeholders, upon which necessary amendments will be made to the instrument.



Sub-Component 1.2 - Increasing Equitable Access to Pre-school Education for Successful Transition to School

To support increasing equitable access to preschool education for successful transition to school, the Project envisages development of 150 school-based SRP Groups and introduction of modern, and child-centered SRP.

As reported under the Sub-Component 1.1, as of end June 2024, in the light of extensive consultations with early ages and child development local and international experts and organizations, as well as ECE Development Division of the MESY, the SDSURF experts have completed the revision and upgrade of 2-5 YO children's program and SRP, and developed modules for professional development of SRP educational personnel. Trainings of the selected personnel will be implemented from July 2024.

As for infrastructure development, by end June, minor rehabilitation works are completed in 130 target schools. Considering assessment of infrastructural conditions conducted by Project Engineer (PMU) and the designated representative of ESIDA, 11 schools could not be selected from the original long list of 279 schools agreed with the WB. In May 2024, the PMU received letters from Bolnisi, Ckhorotsku, Kharagauli, Dusheti and Vani municipalities stating that there is a lack of access to SRP, thus kindly requesting the Project to consider specific additional schools in the list for the planned interventions. Considering the aforementioned and requests received, the PMU together with ESIDA's designated representative, ensured verification of actual state of premises and identified that suggested schools meet selection criteria agreed with the Bank. Upon no objection received from the WB on June 4, 2024 regarding replacement of 11 schools, the PMU has notified the ESIDA regarding the decision. As a result, ESIDA has ensured commencement of rehabilitation works in newly selected 11 schools and as of the end of June 2024, rehabilitation works of 20 SRP spaces are underway. Considering timeline defined in respective contracts, works in remaining 20 schools are expected to be finalized in stages (rehabilitation of selected spaces in 9 schools is expected by end July 2024, while in case of newly selected 11 schools – works are planned to be completed by end August 2024). This will not hinder introduction of the revised school readiness program from September and is in line with the workplan agreed under the ongoing multi-component contract signed with the SDSURF.

In order to support the provision of the revised, modern and child-centered SRP in the rehabilitated 150 schools, through close consultations with SDSURF experts, the list of much needed furniture, technology and resources has been identified. As a result, tender documentation was prepared and RFQ was announced in early June 2024. As a result of evaluation, winner companies for supplying 150 schools with stationary were identified and respective contracts have been awarded. As for procurement announced for purchasing furniture, as well as technology and related equipment, evaluation process is ongoing. Per terms of respective contracts, delivery of all resources is expected to be finalized by the beginning of academic year (mid-September).

Sub-component 1.3 - Improving Infrastructure to Support Innovative Primary Education, Including Pre-school

The objective of the sub-component is to introduce a new model of primary education (grades 1-6) accommodating preschool programs. The detailed information on infrastructure development is provided under sub-component 2.1. below (Section II, part B of the Report).

Immediate Next Steps:

- Support and monitor the implementation of Phase 4 of the ongoing contract - “Improving ECE Institution Management System and Enhancing the Quality of Programs Across the Country”;
- Supervision of Contract Steering Group operation;
- Coordinate with ESIDA to ensure timely implementation and completion of the minor rehabilitation works in the remaining 20 schools. Conduct site visits, as necessary;
- Coordinate finalization of preparatory works (transfer of spaces, trainings of educational personnel) necessary for the introduction of the revised, modern and child-centered SRP in all 150 target spaces;
- Coordinate pilot of the data reporting tools and merit-based remuneration schemes in 6 target municipalities.



B. COMPONENT 2: FOSTERING QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING IN GENERAL EDUCATION

Sub-component 2.1. Improving the Educational Infrastructure to Support Learning

This sub-component aims to foster high-quality learning environments and enhance school safety. To this end, this sub-component would support the review and modernization of school infrastructure standards and develop new architectural design blueprints based on international best practices to ensure energy efficiency and safety.

School infrastructure standards development process was initiated in September 2021 and the final draft of the document was developed and officially submitted to the MESY for further actions and adoption in the previous reporting period.

Period from January through June 2024 was dedicated to the implementation of the final phase of the contract (stage IV), which considers (i) revision of the final standards document during the design stage of schools to be constructed under the project, if necessary; as well as (ii) delivery of short-term consultations to introduce the newly established standards and conduct additional explanations, based on the Client's request. The consulting company - GIB was actively involved in the process of reviewing the designs prepared by respective contractors. Considering that some 'design-build' contracts were signed with a delay, to have the company on board throughout the design stage of the upcoming school constructions, contract duration was extended for additional two months (through end July 2024).

During the reporting period, the Legal Department of the MESY commenced with the procedures necessary for the official adoption of the document. Throughout the ongoing process, additional comments were presented by structural units of the MESY, that regarded to various aspects, such as height of windows, determining number of students in spaces dedicated for SRP, requirements regarding mandatory storage facilities, as well as recreational spaces, etc. Suggested amendments were discussed together with respective consulting company (GIB) and in March-April the document underwent revisions. The final revised package has been handed over to the MESY for further actions on May 2, 2024. As of the end of the reporting period, procedures necessary for official adoption of the document are underway.

This sub-component also supports construction of up to 8 new model buildings using the revised school infrastructure standards. Since activities related to the planned constructions under Component 1 and 2 of the project are executed in parallel, implementation progress both – under components 1.3 and 2.1 in this regards is provided hereunder.

The Project Engineer worked closely with the MDF and contractors, was actively involved in the review of school designs produced by consultants hired by the MDF and attended numerous meetings and provided recommendations for improvement. The Project Engineer also served as a liaison between the MDF, on the one hand, and the MESY and ESIDA, on the other hand, to support smooth implementation of the planned infrastructural works under the Project. Throughout January-June 2024, the Project Engineer has traveled to project sites to observe the ongoing rehabilitation works

and participated in the planning process with the MDF, as necessary.

As prioritized by the MESY, 14 schools have been defined for construction under the Project. The list includes 5 schools to be built under the scope of Sub-component 2.1. and 9 schools under the scope of Sub-component 1.3. As of the end June 2024, all tenders are successfully completed and 'design-build' contracts are signed. The current situation of contract implementation is as follows:

In case of 6 schools (Arashenda, Rukhi, Rodinauli, Igoeti, Abkhazeti N10 and Kvareli N1 public schools), architectural projects were agreed and detailed designs are being prepared. On June 21, a public discussion of the ESMP report was held in the village of Igoeti, where school representatives, parents and representatives of the Municipal Development Fund were present. In the case of 5 schools (Sabechisi, Nardevani, Araflo, Safarlo and Ghoubani schools), evaluation procedures of the architectural projects presented by the design consultant are underway, after the completion of which, detailed design preparation will begin. In the case of Sulda, Gvimriani and Shuapartkhma schools, the contract was signed and the procedures for the preparation of the architectural project are underway. Based on estimated timeline provided by the MDF, the deadline for the completion of school construction works in the case of 13 schools is September 2026, as for the remaining one school (Rodinauli village public school), completion is anticipated by end of 2025.

As stated in previous biannual reports, in case of 10 out of 14 schools, existing buildings need to be demolished and to support the process, the PMU Engineer is actively involved in cooperation with the MESY and schools in this regard. As of the end of June 2024, 3 school building have already been demolished, while demolishing works are actively being implemented in 6 schools. Demolition works will be completed by the end of July in five schools, while completion of works in Kvareli N1 school is expected by the end of September 2024. The process is relatively behind in case of one school located in Marneuli Municipality, Village Araflo, where not a single company expressed interest in the auction. It was revealed that there will be no valuable building material for construction companies after demolition. Therefore, based on the decision of the MESY, instead of auction (which is standard procedure), tender will be announced for the planned demolition of the school building by the middle of July.

This sub-component will also support full rehabilitation of up to 60 selected public general education institutions. On December 8, 2023 the PMU received official letter from the MDF providing the updated cost escalation for all civil works under the Project. As stated in the letter, budget allocated for infrastructure development under the I2Q Project cannot cover all planned rehabilitations and constructions. The letter provided breakdown of existing financial situation, including budget of already processed 17 rehabilitation and 14 construction schools, budget needed for supervision of the works, as well as estimation of costs necessary for rehabilitation of all remaining 31 schools. The letter also provided that cost of already processed contracts may increase due to unforeseen circumstances.

Therefore, the MDF requested the PMU to ensure selection of priority schools, considering available budget. For the selection, MDF sent a list of remaining 31 schools with school size, number of students and estimated costs of rehabilitation (which will be finalized before completion of the



detailed designs). The PMU immediately started communication with relevant structural unit of the Ministry and sent official letter requesting prioritization on December 11, 2023. The list of prioritized schools was received from the Preschool and General Education Development Department of the MESY on January 23, 2024. The priority was given to:

- a. Schools located in Tbilisi which have already been moved to alternative spaces and are implementing learning process in the second shift or in case of which alternative space has already been allocated in nearby schools. These are:
 - Tbilisi Public School N50
 - Tbilisi Public School N63
 - Tbilisi Public School N99
 - Tbilisi Public School N120.
- b. Village Chitatskari school located in Zugdidi Municipality (public meetings are already held);
- c. Village Bardnala school located in Tsageri Municipality.

The meeting was held among PMU (MESY) and PMT (MDF) teams to agree upon the above prioritization and respective official letter was sent to the MDF via electronic document flow system on January 24. The MDF expressed readiness to ensure rehabilitation of 23 schools, including 4 Tbilisi schools which are of significant importance for MESY and have more complex technical requirements.

The Project team also made efforts for ensuring further use of remaining 25 designs prepared/being prepared under the Project. Considering status of works under various donor-funded projects as provided by the MDF, it was decided to start negotiations with the EBRD and KfW co-funded ongoing 'Green Investment in Buildings (GRIB) Georgia' project. Meeting among the PMU team and the EBRD Senior Banker, Sopho Chikhradze, was held on March 1, 2024. Communication was also made with the local representatives of the KfW. Based on information received during the meeting, decision has to be made by the Project Steering Committee and the issue needs to be initiated by the MDF. As of the end June 2024, as agreed with the KfW, the MDF has shared part of the prepared designs with the latter to enable evaluation of whether the schools and designs meet with requirements defined under the above mentioned Project.

Tangible progress was made throughout January-June with regard to rehabilitation works. By the end of June 2024, rehabilitation of 19 out of the selected 23 schools is ongoing, while 11 out of the mentioned 19 rehabilitations have commenced during the reporting period. As for 4 Tbilisi schools, consulting company completed second stage of works in April 2024 and commenced with the next stage of implementation, which includes preparation of the Bill of Quantities (BOQ), ESMP and technical documentation. However, these documents were not completed within the defined deadline. Considering the urgency of starting rehabilitation works, the MDF decided to terminate ongoing design preparation contracts and announce rehabilitation tenders using 'partial design-build' method. In such case, the winning company, prior to starting rehabilitation works, will ensure

completion of the design part and ensure implementation of procedures for obtaining permit from Tbilisi City Hall. This arrangement was agreed with the WB. As a result, on June 19, 2024, a tender was announced for the rehabilitation works of the Tbilisi School N120 using the partial Design Build method and on June 24, 2024 ESMP report was discussed with the stakeholders. As for the remaining 3 Tbilisi schools, tenders will be announced in the beginning of July 2024.

Per information provided by the MDF, completion of rehabilitation in 19 out of targeted 23 schools is expected by end of 2025. In case of 4 Tbilisi schools, finalization of rehabilitation works is expected by the end of 2026, which goes beyond current project implementation deadline.

Immediate Next Steps

- Supervise implementation of the final phase of the ongoing contract – “Developing General Education Infrastructure and Physical Environment Standards for General Education Institutions (schools) of Georgia”.
- Review school designs produced by MDF and provide recommendations, as needed.
- Coordinate with relevant structural unit/units of MESY and target schools regarding timely completion of demolition works to support smooth implementation of construction-related activities under the Project.
- Travel and observe project sites, as necessary.

Sub-Components 2.2 - Supporting the scaling up of the whole-school improvement pilot - 2.4. - Development of a national assessment framework

Activities under sub-component 2.2. as well as sub-components 2.3 and 2.4 of the I2Q project are currently being carried out as part of the ongoing contract titled “Enhancing Quality Teaching and Learning in General Education through the Introduction of Effective Quality Management Systems, Whole School Improvement Plans and Programs, Improved Assessment Policies, Practices, and Methodologies.” Since August 15, 2022, the Contract has been managed by an International Consortium with the lead of the IBF International (thereafter – Consultant). Throughout the reporting period, the Consultant has implemented activities envisaged under the fourth reporting phase of the contract. Specifically, the Consultant launched the pilots in three primary thematic areas: Whole School Improvement (WSI), Continuous Formative Assessment (CFA), and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM). Bottom of Form Following the Contract Steering Group’s approval of the Progress Report Four (R4), since May 2024, the Consultant has been closely collaborating with MESY and the Project Management Unit (PMU) to execute tasks outlined for next fifth reporting period (R5) of the contract.

The following table provides a brief overview of the completed and ongoing pilots within the Contract.



Table 1 – Completed and Ongoing Pilots

<i>Pilot Name</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>
School Authorization (External QA)	Completed
Whole School Improvement (Internal QA)	Spring 2025
Continuous Formative Assessment (CFA)	Spring 2025
STEAM Extracurricular Program Pilot (STEAM)	Fall 2025
National Assessment	TBD according to the revised task of MESY dated on June 3, 2024.

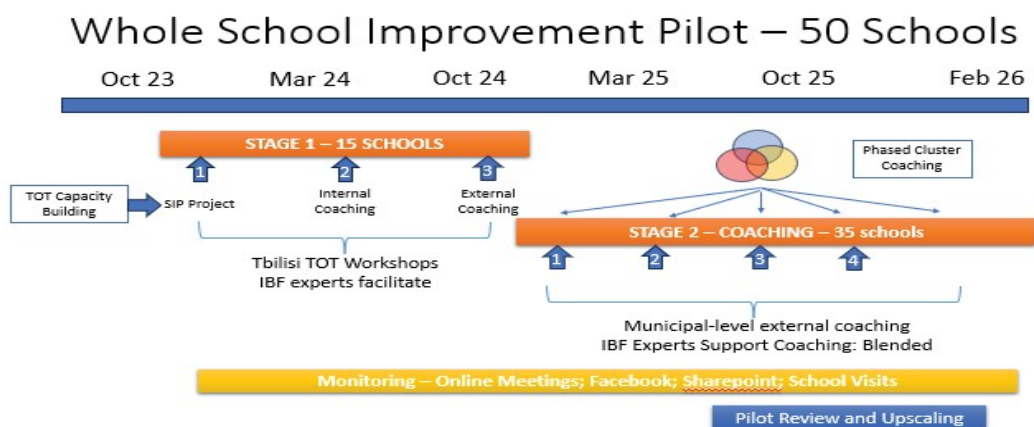
The following section outlines the principal accomplishments of the present reporting period pertaining to all three Contract Objectives.

Objective A. Whole School Improvement: develop a policy framework, mechanisms and instructions for whole school improvement and support the scaling up of the pilot to help the schools improve quality.

The Whole School Improvement (WSI) Pilot represents one of the core initiatives within Objective A, focusing on several key content areas. Central to driving overall school improvement is the implementation of the Community of Practice model. Through effective shared leadership, schools are encouraged to exchange practical experiences and knowledge, identify issues and prioritize areas for improvement. WSI places a strong emphasis on learning as the fundamental purpose of schooling, moving away from mere administrative compliance. This approach involves assessing each learner’s educational journey through rigorous assessment and data management practices, enhancing learning outcomes by refining teaching methodologies to meet individual learner needs, and nurturing a collaborative community of practice within each school to enact these improvements effectively.

Consultant is overseeing the implementation of the WSI Pilot across 50 designated pilot schools throughout Georgia. Initially, 15 TOT schools have been engaged in the pilot, with plans for these schools to subsequently mentor 35 local network schools, sharing the knowledge and experiences gained from the pilot workshops. Each of the 15 pilot schools has formed a leadership team comprising the principal and two selected expert teachers. For the reporting period, these teams participated in thematic workshops and follow-up training sessions covering essential elements of the WSI pilot, including data management and school improvement planning. Following the trainings, the teams implemented individual school projects targeting the key areas of whole school improvement. The chart below outlines the methodology employed in the implementation of the WSI pilot.

Chart 1. WSI pilot implementation methodology



The second core activity under Objective A of the Contract is the STEAM Extracurricular Program Pilot, aimed to encompass all 200 schools by the Contract’s conclusion in February 2026. This pilot initiative will introduce STEAM Extracurricular programs in participating schools by providing a structured learning framework, STEAM resources, and tailored training for STEAM teachers. To ensure systematic implementation, the pilot phase was divided into two parts. During the 2023-2024 academic year, the pilot was commenced in 80 selected schools, with 165 STEAM educators undergoing targeted orientation workshops. Online platforms such as the Georgian Education Media (GEM) platform and WhatsApp groups were established to facilitate ongoing communication among the pilot schools and monitoring of the pilot’s progress. Preliminary findings submitted by consultant, based on platform interactions, uploaded materials, and school visits, indicate that 78% of the 80 schools are actively engaging students in STEAM extracurricular activities.

Additionally, as part of expanding the pilot impact, two STEAM Extracurricular Program facilities were established at Tbilisi N126 Public School and Zugdidi N5 Public School, that were equipped with additional educational resources and furniture. The pilot phase demonstrated the efficacy of these labs in implementing STEAM activities within schools and fostering collaborative networks with neighboring general education institutions, extending involvement in STEAM projects beyond the initial scope of the I2Q project. Initial data from the first pilot phase also reveals that out of 1,281 students regularly participating in STEAM extracurricular program activities, 51% are girls.

In relation to the STEAM Extracurricular Program Pilot, the Consultant developed an Innovative Programs Fund (IPF) Manual to facilitate sustainable implementation of innovative programs in schools. Furthermore, the STEAM Baseline Attitudinal Survey, initially shared in R3, has been revised to incorporate feedback from 109 respondents. This data together with the pilot report will inform the planning of the second phase of the STEAM pilot and the subsequent phase of innovation programming under the I2Q project.



Table 2 –Training Achievements

Purpose	Achievement
TOT for WSI Pilot – (14 schools)	42
Total	42

In addition to the ongoing pilots, the following important activities were completed during the reporting period under the Objective A of the Contract:

- E-Resources Effectiveness Survey Report was prepared, accompanied by recommendations on textbook effectiveness prepared by the Consultant in the previous reporting period.
- The Principal Recruitment Report was developed, incorporating a national system analysis and comprehensive review of international practices. The report includes recommendations aimed at improving legislation to enhance school leadership capabilities through shared leadership. It also proposes a recommended legal framework to institutionalize a new remuneration model.
- Two documents were prepared at the request of the NCEQE to provide the continuous support to the ongoing public school authorization process:
 - A Concept Note was developed to outline the development and implementation of the Quality Assurance (QA) Expert Corps Evaluation System.
 - A School Authorization (SA) Best Practices document was created, featuring exemplary case studies to assist all schools in preparing for authorization process.
- The initial draft of the data use guidelines document was prepared, providing additional rationale, explanations, and support for school data management aspects.

B. Continuous Formative Assessment of Students: support capacity-building of school leaders to adapt, develop, and implement school-based assessment practices.

Continuous Formative Assessment (CFA) pilot is a classroom-based activity and aims at shifting the balance from summative assessment practices to the formative assessment. In other words, the pilot focuses to change the culture of classroom assessment so that the formative assessment strategies are embedded in every day practices of teachers. Participants in the pilot are working in teams of three teachers from the same school and were encouraged to take on the role of facilitators with the aim of establishing the community of practice among their colleagues and with other teachers in nearby network schools. During the ongoing pilot, the teachers’ teams were piloting the formative assessment practical tools such as success criteria, right questioning, providing proactive feedback to students, etc. The evidence of the results of the work in the area was gathered by participants in short video material and in presentations, which are discussed at the follow up workshops and seminars.

The Consultant introduced the Moodle platform as experience sharing opportunity for teachers. The

introduced CFA tools and school project material were uploaded onto Moodle as resources to be used by all participants when they are taking forward the TOT role. In leading sessions during follow-up days, participants were provided with support and advice based on the TOT criteria set out in the Moodle module.

As a good example of the successful schools networking in CFA thematic area, the conference “Using Effective Formative Assessment Strategies in the Teaching Process” was hosted by the 126th Public School of Tbilisi. The school is actively involved in the several thematic pilots general education component of the I2Q Project. The conference took place in early June 2024 under the leadership of the international consulting company IBF International. The conference was attended by over 20 teachers from four nearby schools and was aimed at receiving the feedback on effective strategies for formative assessment of students and to share the experience gained in the teaching process of pilot schools.

Table 3 –Training Achievements

Purpose	Achievement
TOT for CFA practices	34
Total	34

C. National Assessment Policy Implementation: design the mechanisms and instructions to implement, pilot, roll out, and quality assure the new national assessment policy framework.

In November 2023, MESY management recommended suspension of all current activities related to the National Assessment system due to ongoing revisions of national curricula and subject standards on general education level. Simultaneously, MESY submitted an updated task regarding the National Assessment system to PMU, suggesting commencement of work from fall 2024. This updated task now includes developing diagnostic assessment tests for basic general education level and certification exam content for upper secondary education. Consequently, during the reporting period, consultants focused on revising the action plan and addressing budgetary issues, collaborating extensively with the National Assessment and Examinations Center (NAEC) financial team and PMU.

The most significant development regarding the National Assessment System for this reporting period is the MESY’s official decision to launch the envisaged tasks under the I2Q project. On June 3, 2024, the MESY formally notified the Project Management Unit (PMU) about the revised task for basic general education level, emphasizing the urgency of commencing work on diagnostic assessment tests for all subject groups. The revised task is based on the MESY’s recent initiated amendment in the Law of Georgia on General Education regarding the adjustments in general education levels. The proposed change entails an extension of study duration to 10 years instead of the current 9 years at the basic education level. This amendment is currently under review by the Parliament of Georgia, particularly, two hearings are conducted and one last hearing is left. Once approved, the revised National Curriculum approval process will be commenced.

According to the revised task of MESY dated by June 3, 2024, the assignment package will include the item bank development for six subject groups of basic general education level including: state



language, math, natural science, social science, foreign languages and aesthetic education. Besides, the capacity building activities package for NAEC as for the implementing unit of the national assessments, is envisaged in the contract. The tailored trainings and workshops will be organized from fall 2024 for the recruited item writers, item review committee members and other relevant staff of the NAEC. Consequently, the next reporting period will be focused on preparatory works, which will be conducted in close collaboration with the MESY Preschool and General Education Development Department and NAEC. Namely, the planned works include the recruitment of the additional international subject experts, item-writers and item review committee members, as well as planning and initiation of the capacity building activities for NAEC. Regarding the task on national assessment system for upper-secondary level, the MESY intends to define the needs by the end of 2024.

Bi-Annual Project meeting. On April 19, 2024, IBF International held a bi-annual progress review conference for relevant GE stakeholders. The team leader presented the progress under the Contract and the next steps regarding the whole school improvement, continuous formative assessment and national assessment related activities. Two panels were organized with the participation of international experts and pilot schools. Among the pilot school participants, there were STEAM extracurricular program participant students, who presented the STEAM projects to the audience.

Other important interventions of the I2Q project for the general education system:

- Per request of the MESY management IBF experts revised the draft of the updated National Goals of the General Education. The comments were discussed at online meeting with the management of the MESY and the representatives of the Preschool and General Education Development Department.
- To enhance the STEAM teachers' professional development and support the implementation of the STEAM Extracurricular Program pilot in Georgian schools, the collaboration with the Harvard University program LabXchange has been initiated with the recommendation of the World Bank team. LabXchange is a portal of learning resources for natural science. The program's resources, developed by Harvard University and other educational research centers (such as Khan Academy, the Jackson Laboratory, etc.) are reliable, free, and can be tailored to the individual student needs. Early in March 2024, an introductory meeting for the LabXchange platform was held for Georgian teachers. 75 teachers from 80 STEAM pilot schools attended the meeting. On the next stage, with support of the World Bank and Harvard University, the additional workshops were organized for the Georgian selected teachers, who were trained in operation of the LabXchange platform. Per agreement with the management of MESY, the Georgian navigation system will be added to the platform in the coming months.
- In March, the IBF Expert on Quality Assurance and Management delivered presentation on Canadian experience on school external quality assurance area at the NCEQE annual conference. I2Q project activities under the general education component of the project were highlighted by the General Education Component Lead at the same conference.

Immediate Next Steps:

Provide continuous support to the Consultant in contract implementation, work with Contract Steering Committee to elaborate their feedback on the report(s) to be submitted. Following key actions are expected to be executed throughout the following reporting period (July-December 2024):Top of Form

- **Objective A: Whole School Improvement.** The Consultant will further advance the TOT cohort's development to facilitate the implementation in support of the school network coaching model, aimed at involving 50 pilot schools in the WSI pilot. It is noteworthy that the Consultant, in collaboration with MESY and TPDC, will provide the drafts outlined of the training modules on WSI. As for the STEAM Extracurricular Program pilot, the plans for the second phase include procurement of the STEAM resources for the remaining 120 schools and conducting training sessions for STEAM teachers. Responding to requests from the MESY, 10 additional STEAM Labs will be established among 120 pilot schools, equipped similarly to existing STEAM Extracurricular Program facilities.
- **Objective B: Continuous Formative Assessment of Students.** CFA pilot will be expanded to network schools. The initial 10 pilot schools will share the gained experience with the adjacent schools. The Moodle platform and CFA WhatsApp group will be used as a platform for sharing the experiences among schools. The first draft outline of the CFA training module will be developed incorporating the pilot findings.
- **Objective C: National Assessment System Development.** The action plan of the Contract will be modified according to the MESY revised assignment scope. The implementation of the actual activities will start from fall 2024.
- The Fourth biannual progress review conference will be organized in October 2024 to share the Contract progress and next envisaged steps to MESY management and its relevant units, World Bank team, pilot schools and other stakeholders.



C. COMPONENT 3 – STRENGTHENING FINANCING OPTIONS AND PROMOTING INTERNATIONALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Sub-Component 3.1 - Developing new options for higher education financing, including performance-based options to support the Government's strategic objectives

With respect to Component 3, higher education financing reform remains a priority for the MES. The selected Consulting Company - Seatig Inc. performed works as stipulated in the Contract for Consulting Services (Contract No.: GE-MESCS-212278-CS-QCBS-1) signed on November 7, 2022.

During the reporting period, the approval process of R3 (the content of R3 is described in the previous biannual progress report for the period of June-December 2023) was finalized and on February 6, 2024, the corresponding delivery-acceptance act was signed. Based on the contract amendment signed on December 19, 2023, in January 2024 the Consultant began performing new tasks focusing on the development of the core funding model of higher education.

During the period covered by the present report, the PMU had intensive communication with a renewed team of key experts. The project team exchanged ideas with experts and discussed the content of the new assignment, to ensure common understanding of what should be the main pillars of higher education financing and what role should the core financing model play in the system (Sustainability and Progressive Development), what components should be reflected in the core financing model (scholarship funding + stability insurance funding), how the differences between academic programs should be reflected in the financing model, what are relevant approaches (using different coefficients based on the program specifics, etc.). The PMU also clarified expectations and agreed that all the necessary legal regulations shall be prepared in stages. In the first stage, a package of relevant amendments and regulations will be prepared on merit-based scholarship delivery model, which will be important for determining the relevant business processes for its implementation.

At the same time, the PMU had a number of working meetings with the MESY, including the Minister and deputy-minister, Mr. Nodar Papukashvili. In consultation with the Ministry, it was decided first to conduct the academic program costing activities and to make a decision about the core funding model formulation. The Consultant has submitted the project management approach for the per-student program costing analysis, which was discussed and agreed with MESY. Accordingly, the MESY sent a formal letter to the selected universities, emphasizing the importance of costing activities and encouraging universities to collaborate with the Consultant. On April 9, 2024, the company contacted all selected university representatives to obtain their preliminary input on how they would calculate the per-student cost/budget within the university, what calculation approach would be used, and how the university would carry out the calculation, if necessary. HEIs responses were analyzed by the consulting company and the preliminary considerations on costing methodology was discussed during the meeting on May 29, 2024. Based on the feedback received from the PMU, the Consultant continued analysis and presented their vision of the methodology. After numerous discussions with the Consultant, agreement was reached towards different aspects of the planned actions, including the list of information that is necessary to be analyzed by the team in order to calculate the average cost of one program.

Accordingly, in June 2024, the Consultant developed a comprehensive Excel file to be filled by universities, covering both - direct and indirect cost analyzes. A formal request to participate in this survey was sent to universities through MESY. At each level of HE (bachelor's, master's, PhD) 3 programs from each of the selected 7 universities will be evaluated, that is, about 60 academic programs covering different fields and levels. To make such an assessment, the Consultant needs to analyze huge volume of different information from universities. Accordingly, the costing activities will be finalized in July 2024.

Based on discussions held with the consultant, agreement has already been reached on several basic principles and pillars for the new approach. It is clear that lab-based programs and those requiring clinical placements, labs, studios or production facilities (e.g., arts and engineering) cost more than those that have no such requirements (Law, Business administration, etc.). Accordingly, it was agreed to use the logic of grouping programs based on the specific criteria. At the international level, there are several examples (USA, Canada, Ireland), which will be analyzed by experts in more detail and a specific model will be proposed. There are examples where the cost of one standard program is calculated and for other programs funding weights (such as 1.5 or 2.0) are used to cover the differences. For example, the voucher value of programs that require clinical practice can be set at twice the standard value. Therefore, it is necessary to define how to rationally group/ categorize programs - based on different characteristics, like lab-based, practical-oriented, etc.

As for the new software system – IMDS, the company is working to create a system that will allow testing of the proposed PBF financing schemes. Based on the agreed workplan, the software development process consists of 2 pilots. The introduction of the first pilot of a merit-based scholarship system is planned for August 2024. This process is already underway – Seatig Inc. has been working with EMIS to identify the data (March 2024) and prepare data for uploading into the system.

During the reporting period, PMU assisted the consulting company in communicating with EMIS. Namely, the working meeting was held between the PMU and EMIS on May 20, 2024 to clarify issues concerning the format of the planned working process. As a result, it was clarified that: (i) company issues will be discussed with EMIS through local consultant - Lasha Verulava and he will be responsible for obtaining the necessary data from EMIS and passing it back to the company; (ii) EMIS is ready to be engaged in the process that involves testing the system. Mr. Zaza Karsaulidze will be coordinating this issue from the EMIS's side; (iii) The acceptance testing needs to test all documented test cases on the real data in Georgian from EMIS, meaning that he/she needs to go through each row and each cell of these files to check whether the system produces the expected results. The tester should have very good understanding of internal data of EMIS and be the point of contact from EMIS with Seatig's team for all detailed technical communications until end of the project. It was also decided, that we (PMU) will find a solution to formally authorize the tester appointed from the Client/MESY side (with the official mandate). Accordingly, on June 17, the Minister issued an order (N684554) determining the composition of the technical group. The team will be responsible for testing the system and officially confirming its compliance with the requirements for its approval.



Under the first working product, the company will present the IMDS with two portals - the Ministry's portal and the HEIs portal. The users will have the opportunity to test and simulate the system, in particular, create tasks, upload and display information in the system, and implement the business processes. Therefore, the MESY will see how this system will work towards merit-based scholarship delivery. At this stage, discussion regarding the format for the planned user training is ongoing. It was agreed that the workshop will be held in person, at the MESY, with the participation of representatives of the MESY, EMIS and HEIs. The presentation will be made by the local team members in Georgian language, so, by the time of the workshop, launch the Georgian version of the portal will take place and the user manual will be translated into Georgian. The exact dates of the workshop are still being discussed. This depends on the completion of all preparatory work by both the consultant and the EMIS system testing process, to make sure there is a readiness to meet users with the system that works correctly.

Sub-Component 3.2 - Setting up Competitive Innovation Fund (CIF) for public and private universities, in partnership with private sector

Significant progress has been made towards a sub-component 3.2. Namely, the second CIF grant competition was finalized, and 14 proposals were selected and awarded grants. In a close communication with the WB and the MESY, an award ceremony of CIF took place on April 30, 2024.

On June 6, 2024 the draft grant agreements were agreed with the GoG and approved by a decree #817 of the Prime-Minister. The contract negotiation process with all 14 successful applicants is completed and all contracts are signed by leading public HEIs. USD 2,153,688.00 is allocated to 14 funded projects. The first tranche – 90% of each grant amount (which equals to approximately USD 1,845,029 USD) is transferred to the leading HEIs. The CIF Administration Unit (AU) will manage contracts and monitor their implementation in accordance with the CIF OM.

As evaluation of applications under the second call of the CIF was finalized and accepted, in April 2024 a contract “Consulting Services for creating a pool of evaluators for CIF” (No.: GE-MESCS-309233-CS-CQS) was fully executed and a partnership with AGOGE Partners LLC/USA in frames of the contract was successfully finalized.

In March-April, 2024 monitoring and evaluation process of individual projects funded under the 1st grant competition took place. The CIF AU carried out the process in accordance with the CIF Operations Manual (OM) and monitored a 6-month progress of each 13 ongoing project. Monitoring results were presented to and approved by the CIF Awards Committee, as instructed in the OM. In the first 6 months of project implementation, two projects required contract amendments, which was caused by Force Majeure circumstances, such as obstacles with infrastructure and administrative changes in the HEIs. Amendments mostly affected the project timelines and implementation plans and did not require additional resources. Therefore, project incentives remain unaltered.

In April, 2024 in frames of the WB Mid-Term Review Mission (April 4-11, 2024) a visit was paid to one of the 1st call beneficiaries – LEPL Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. As provided in the CIF OM, in addition to the 6-month reports, the CIF AU have the right to organize ad-hoc site visits

to projects with monitoring aims. This practice will regularly be addressed throughout the 6-month implementation period. Furthermore, site visits are planned to be conducted with an involvement of the WB and the MESY officials.

Sub-Component 3.3 - Internationalization of Higher Education

Concerning the sub-component 3.3 – “Promotion of the Internationalization of Higher Education”, during the reporting period, the implementation process went smoothly. In line with the Contract for Consulting Services (Contract No.: GE-MESCS-212280-CS-QCBS) signed on March 2, 2023, the first International Excellence School (IES) dedicated to competitive research projects in the fields of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, their application and management was held on January 26-28, 2024, hosted by Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (first day) and British University in Georgia (second and third days). It was an engaging experience not only for the participants but also for the international and the Georgian speakers. Keynote speakers were academics from UCL, TSU, and the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia. There were 30 early career academics (members of academic staff in a higher education institution with a maximum 5 years from their Ph.D. completion, or Ph.D. candidates currently conducting their doctoral studies) selected by the international commission through the open competition - 18 participants from Tbilisi, 10 from the Georgian regions, and 2 international participants.

On February 20, 2024, the first draft of the progress report 3 (R3) was submitted by the consultant. R3 refers to the organization of the first International Excellence School (IES 1). The report consists of three main chapters: (a) the organization of IES 1, (b) the implementation of IES 1, and (c) the output and the evaluation of IES 1. Finally, at the end of the report, the schedule of the next two IESs (IES 2 and IES 3) is provided. The R3 was shared and discussed with the MESY (on February 20, 2024) and approved on March 11, 2024.

During the reporting period, the PMU had intensive communication with the Consultant to discuss the progress of the project and the necessary steps to meet the R4 requirements. The PMU also assisted the consultant in communicating different issues with MESY, HEIs and national quality assurance agency to clarify the requirements of accreditation standards, e.g. the rationale (“market research”) for the program has been finalized and agreed with NCEQE with the support of the PMU. The PMU helped the consulting company and partner universities (implementing the new PhD program) receive additional financial support from the MESY. In particular, the PMU negotiated with the MESY and prepared a draft of an agreed funding request letter, which TSU should sign and send to the MESY. It is significant that according to the reached agreement, the MESY will provide funding for the new program amounting EUR 100,000 annually during the first three years of its implementation.

Following the contract, the fourth progress report - R4 was submitted by the Consultant on May 3, 2024. Considering the 10-day Easter holidays, the report was sent to the MESY on Monday, May 13, 2024. R4 is a comprehensive document covering several deliverables under two different tasks (Task 1 and Task 2) envisaged under the Contract. Namely, it consists of draft joint doctoral Program, syllabi for each module offered in the PhD program, international innovative aspects of program,



benchmarking analysis, etc. In agreement with MESY and PMU, the consultant will complete the preparatory work for the new program accreditation in July 2024, and the information about the submitted program will be included in R5 (submission date: November 1, 2024).

As for the Task 2, the new entrepreneurship module and 6 subject specific English language modules are submitted under the R4. Accordingly, with the acceptance of the R4 by the MESY (on May 21, 2024), the work related to the second task was completed. It should be noted, that R4 was analyzed by the PMU as well and 2 minor adjustments have been highlighted when sharing the general feedback to the Consultant on May 22, 2024. After addressing all the submitted comments and providing the necessary documentation by the consultant, the R4 was approved by the PMU on June 17, 2024.

During the reporting period, the company also worked on organizing the 2nd international excellence school. The 2nd IES will be held from July 5 to 7, in Batumi, hosted by Batumi State University and Batumi State Maritime Academy. The topic for the school is - Intersectoral cooperation, technology transfer and innovation. The call for abstract for IES2 was announced on April 8, 2024 and has attracted 37 applications. Based on quality of submitted proposals, the scientific committee selected 30 participants. The selection can be broken down as follows: Batumi applicants, all selected (18/18), regions' applicants - 10 selected (10/16), internationals - 2 selected (2/3).

Immediate Next Steps

Sub-Component 3.1 - Developing new options for higher education financing, including performance-based options to support the Government's strategic objectives

During 2024, implement the project in parallel in two main directions - the PBF model and the development of the core funding model for HE, namely:

- Conduct the institutional cost analysis and complete the preparatory works for the academic program costing activities;
- Recommend a differentiated cost of vouchers for programs/fields of study/different levels of studies;
- Develop HE core funding model;
- Develop funding implementation strategy and transition plans;
- Identify and propose the necessary changes in all relevant legal and sub-legal acts governing the financing of HE at the state level to ensure the implementation of new funding schemes/models/policies developed under the project;
- Making progress in the IMDS development process with two planned pilot system deployments (Release N1 - release of the scholarship module and release N2 - release of the Performance-based funding modules).

Sub-Component 3.2 - Competitive Innovation Fund (CIF)

- Conduct mid-term evaluations of CIF projects (narrative and financial reports).

Sub-Component 3.3 - Internationalization of Higher Education

- Applying for accreditation of a new doctoral program by November 2024;
- Delivery of second IES in July 2024.





D. COMPONENT 4 – SYSTEM STRENGTHENING AND STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

Sub-Component 4.1 - Supporting data-driven decision-making accessible to the entire education system

The sub-component will support EMIS in developing a Learning Management System (LMS) software for a collaborative e-platform for sharing teaching and learning practices. It will target not only teachers and school leaders, but also parents and students, including children with disabilities and diverse learning needs. The e-platform will support and strengthen the development of peer-to-peer school networks using resources such as lesson plans, videos, images, weblinks, and developing eLearning. Collected data will allow evaluating eLearning and school-based program design and overall eLearning strategy so that schools can pinpoint areas for improvement.

The **“Learning Systems Solutions and Support (LMS) for General Education in Georgia”** project made significant strides in its procurement process. In January 2024, following a rigorous evaluation, JV CoreFour Inc. from Canada and Orient Logic from Georgia were invited to present their financial proposal due to their high-ranking technical proposals. The financial proposal, presented on March 6, 2024, Their initial offered price was EUR 497,000 which exceeded allocated budget. However, as a result of series of negotiations, the company agreed to adjust their price to fit within the project budget, without changing the scope.

To further refine the project scope, a meeting was held between the MESY, EMIS, and the applicant company, where the full capabilities and resources of their product were demonstrated. This was followed by a high-level meeting in London at the Education World Forum (EWF) between the Minister and the applicant company. During this meeting, they explored plans and discussed the importance of ongoing costs and support following the pilot phase and throughout the full-scale implementation. As a result of this meeting, the company offered discounted prices, which have been forwarded to the MESY.

The project is currently at a crucial stage, awaiting additional information from MESY before proceeding further. Contract negotiations largely depend on the Ministry’s position on the LMS scaling costs and the flexibility of the Consultant to meet MESY expectations. This information is vital for finalizing the contract and moving forward with implementation. As of the end of the reporting period, negotiations among MESY and MoF regarding the recurrent costs (annual commitments) is ongoing and is soon expected to be finalized.

Due to these ongoing negotiations and discussions, the project timeline has been adjusted. The expected contract signature date has shifted, with the project implementation period projected to run from August 2024 to May 2026. This adjustment allows for a more realistic timeline given the complexities of the negotiations and the importance of ensuring all stakeholders’ needs are met in the final agreement.

The sub-component also supports the Project **“Upgrade of the eSchool General Education and Early Childhood Education software system and the Enterprise Architecture, Data and Domain**

Models for the EMIS education systems,” which covers (i) the upgrade of the eSchool software system supporting General Education; (ii) developing Enterprise Architecture, Domain and Data Modeling and Common System Modules for the EMIS education systems and subsystems; (iii) database streamlining & containerization of software modules and (iv) design and implementation of additional new modules of the Preschool elements.

During the reporting period, procurement procedures of the upcoming activity - ***“Upgrade of the eSchool General Education and Early Childhood Education software system and the Enterprise Architecture, Data, and Domain Models for the EMIS education system”*** has also progressed significantly. Based on the results of first stage technical proposal evaluation, two companies (Orient Logic and Softengi), were invited to submit second-stage technical and financial proposals.

Both companies met the extended deadline by submitting their technical and financial proposals on time. The technical proposals for the second stage were opened on April 10, 2024 and were sent for evaluation to the consulting company responsible for assessment. During the evaluation of the Second Stage Technical Proposals, the need for clarifications was revealed. Clarifications were requested from both bidders on various aspects including the Service and Support Plan, Service Level Agreement, Training Plan, Warranty, system performance, Education Data Standards, and the Distributed System model from the RFP. The clarifications requested were received on May 31, 2024 and were promptly evaluated. This process has constituted prolongation of the ongoing evaluation. As a result of the assessment, both companies met requirements outlined in the Request for Proposals (RFP), passing the minimum qualifying score of 60%.

The Final Technical evaluation report is currently pending review and approval from both - the World Bank (WB) and the Tender Committee. Once this crucial step is completed, the project will progress to the next phase, which involves opening and evaluating the financial proposals submitted by both companies.

Considering developments in procurement process, as described above, the estimated implementation period of the assignment has shifted and now expected to run from September 2024 to September 2026. Additionally, the Warranty Defect Repair/Technical Support period has been respectively moved to September 2026 - September 2027. These adjustments result in an overall delay of 8 months compared to the original timeline.

As reported in previous reports, given the significant risks and technical complexity related to the procurement, consulting company was hired to engage in the procurement process of for the assignment related to upgrading eSchool General Education and Early Childhood Education software system. As of the end of reporting period, the consulting company has successfully completed the first three phases of the assignment. Currently, the contract implementation is in Phase 4, which focuses on processing and evaluating the Second Stage Technical Proposals as outlined in the Request for Proposals (RFP). This stage will be followed by the review of the draft negotiated contract with the chosen supplier before signing the contract.

The contract commenced on April 3, 2023. During the implementation period the contract was



extended until July 3, 2024. Owing to the significant time required for the second stage of technical evaluation, an additional extension is expected until October 4, 2024. This issue is currently under consideration to ensure the thorough and complete execution of all procurement stages.

Immediate Next Steps:

- For the upcoming activity - “Learning Systems Solutions and Support (LMS) for General Education in Georgia” - continue contract negotiations and finalize the agreement with the winning company, with the aim of signing the contract once all details, including ongoing software costs, are clarified.
- For the upcoming assignment - “Upgrade of the eSchool General Education and Early Childhood Education software system and the Enterprise Architecture, Data and Domain Models for the EMIS education system” project - complete the evaluation of second-stage documents, open financial proposals, prepare combined evaluation and finalize the selection of the winning company.
- Supervise the implementation of envisaged activities by the Consulting company implementing the activity “Consulting Services for Evaluation of Proposals to Upgrade eSchool software systems”.

Sub-Component 4.2 - Communication and Stakeholder Consultations for Education Reform

This sub-component considers the development of an effective communication strategy on the current education reforms and proposed project activities, as well as an action plan to engage various stakeholders and their representative groups.

The following tasks were undertaken/completed during the reporting period:

- a. Regular updates of the Project website and social media pages;
- b. Workshops/events for stakeholders organized;
- c. The PMU closely collaborated with internal stakeholders, such as representatives of structural units of MESY, national agencies, etc. to support implementation of Project activities. The most effective and active work is underway in the frames of the steering groups established for supporting implementation the ongoing multi-component contracts. The PMU also closely coordinates with external stakeholders and will continue such collaboration in the future. Below are listed the meetings conducted with external partners/donors throughout the reporting period:
 1. April 25-26, 2024 – ECE Component Lead of the Project participated in international conference - “Promoting Quality Early Learning for All Children Across Europe and Central Asia” held in Vienna, Austria. The conference was organized by the World Bank and facilitated exploring and exchanging of best practices in early childhood education policy and practice to enable quality early learning for all children.
 2. January 11, 2024 – a meeting was held with the UNICEF representatives - Ms. Ana Janelidze

and Ms. Natia Jokhadze and WB Education Specialist - Ms. Anna Berdzenadze. Parties discussed the ongoing and planned activities under the ECE and GE components of the I2Q project.

3. February 22-23, 2024, - GE Component lead participated in workshop dedicated to overview of the scope, key objectives and outcomes of the Asian Development Bank planned education program in Georgia – “Improving Learning Outcomes in Secondary Education Sector Development Program”.
 4. March 6, 2024, - GE Component lead delivered the presentation on completed activities and future actions of the GE Education Component under the I2Q project. Besides, the QA expert Dr. Ron Titus participated presented the paper – “Continuous Professional Development in Quality Assurance: A Canadian Perspective”.
 5. March 11-15, 2024 - per invitation of the World Bank team, GE Component lead with the MESY team participated in the WB ED-Tech Policy Academy dedicated to the topic of technology in education. The program was aimed to equip education team, government partners, donors and CSOs with necessary skills and knowledge to design, implement, and monitor educational technology policies and programs.
 6. April 24, 2024 - working meeting was organized to discuss the Harward University LabXchage program in Georgia. The meeting was attended by the GE Component Lead and the representative of Harward University.
 7. April 29-30, 2024 – GE Component Lead of the Project participated in international conference “Teachers at the Center of Transformation in Education”, which was organized in Vienna, Austria. The conference was aimed to bring together technical level experts and counterparts from ECA region to explore, discuss, and develop teachers’ strategies that is crucial for quality and inclusive learning. The event was hosted by the World Bank and attended by the representatives of over 15 countries.
- d. For the I2Q Project’s promotional purposes, provided the following media coverage:
1. Topic: Internalization of Higher Education and the first International Excellence School in Georgia
Speaker: Nino Begiashvili - HE Component Lead, I2Q Project
Channel: [Radio Imedi, Educational Talks with Teiko Anjaparidze](#), January 23, 2024
 2. Topic: International Excellence School in Georgia
Speakers: Nodar Papukashvili – Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, Mikheil Gurgenidze – founder of the British University in Georgia, Kyung Feng – International Students
Channel: TV Stories on [IMEDI TV](#), [Maestro TV](#), January 27, 2024
 3. Topic: Opening of the STEAM Program at Tbilisi 126 Public School



Speakers: Rolande Pryce - World Bank Regional Director for the South Caucasus, Nodar Papukashvili – Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Georgia
Channel: TV Stories on [IMEDI TV](#), [Maestro TV](#), February 2, 2024

4. Topic: Opening of the STEAM Program at Zugdidi 5 Public School
Speaker: Khatia Tsiramua – I2Q Project GE Component Lead
Channel: Radio Atinati, [Morning Broadcast](#), February 5, 2024
5. Topic: Training Series for ECE Quality Assurance Experts
Speaker: Douglas Fisher – SDSURF ECE Expert, Manana Chkareuli – QA Expert, Lasha Margishvili – NCEQE Acting Director
Channel: [Maerstro TV](#) February 15, 2024
6. Topic: Current Legislative Changes in Higher Education
Speaker: Tamar Sanikidze – Executive Director, I2Q Project
Channel: [BMG TV](#), [Sakmis Kursi](#), live, March 1, 2024
7. Topic: Training Cycle for Professional Development of the Kindergarten Administrative Staff in Gori Municipality
Channel: [Imedi TV](#), March 15, 2024
8. Topic: Training Cycle for Professional Development of the Kindergarten Educational Staff of Gori Municipality
Speakers: Giorgi Shatirishvili, Head of Kindergarten Management Agency of Gori Municipality, Tamar Chkonia – ECE Component Lead, I2Q Project, Teona Kvantrishvili, Kindergarten caregiver
Channel: [TV Monitoring](#), March 28, 2024
9. Topic: Professional Development of ECE Administrative and Educational Staff in Pilot Municipalities
Speakers: Tamar Chkonia, ECE Component Lead, I2Q Project.
Channels: [Talks about Education with Teiko Anjaparidze](#), Radio Imedi, Live, April 2, 2024
10. Topic: Bi-annual Project Review Seminar by IBF International, General Education Speakers: Nodar Papukashvili – Deputy Minister of Education, Science and Youth, Shiro Nakata – Senior Education Economist, the World Bank, Irine Mchedlidze – Tbilisi 126 Public School principal.
Channels: [Imedi TV](#), [Rustavi 2](#), April 11, 2024
11. Topic: CIF 2nd Call Winner HEIs Awarded with Certificates
Speakers: Giorgi Amilakhvari, the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia, Rolande Pryce - the World Bank Regional Director for the South Caucasus, Aleksander Tevzadze – KIU Rector

Channels: [Imedi TV 1](#), [Imedi TV 2](#) April 30, 2024

12. Topic: Trainings for early and preschool education experts, focusing on food, authorization processes, conflict management, and positive communication

Speakers: Nancy Frey, SDSU Expert, James Marshall – SDSU Experts, Maka Chkonia –Head of the Ozurgeti Kindergarten Management Agency

Channels: [MAESTRO](#), May 31, 2024

13. Topic: SDSU experts Nancy Frey’s and James Marshall’s visit to Dedoplistskaro to discuss the ongoing activities aimed at improving the management system of the early and preschool education institutions and the quality of the programs with the mayor of the municipality.

Channels: [MAESTRO](#), May 30, 2024

14. Topic: An Authorization Simulation Visit to Gori #1 Kindergarten

Speakers: Giorgi Shatirishvili – Head of Kindergarten Management Agency of Gori Municipality, Tamar Chkonia, ECE Component Lead, I2Q Project, Liza Ebralidze– NCEQE ECE Department representative,

Channels: [TV Monitoring](#), June 4, 2024

Immediate Next Steps:

- Organize other workshops/events within the scope of the I2Q Project, as needed, including but not limited to:
 - (i) July 29, 2024 – workshop in the frames of the ongoing contract under Component 3 related to facilitation of implementation of the new model of HE financing. The workshop aims to introduce representatives of MESY and the selected HEIs with (i) the results of the implemented cost analysis of academic programs, as well as costing methodology and (ii) first module of the IMDS, which is allocated for implementation of the merit-based scholarship model – participants will be introduced with the system interface and functional.
 - (ii) November/December 2024 – workshop in the frames of the ongoing contract under Component 3 related to facilitation of implementation of the new model of HE financing. The workshop will be attended by top management of the MESY and HEIs in order to discuss and report on the activities implemented with regard to the core funding model and academic programs costing.
- Oversee the organization and implementation of events/workshops to be executed by consulting companies under various contracts of the Project.
- Ensure the I2Q Project awareness raising using relevant tools.



E. COMPONENT 5 - SUPPORTING PROJECT MANAGEMENT, MONITORING, AND EVALUATIONS

PROCUREMENTS

Progress

Following progress were reached in evaluation of proposals under the following procurements:

1. Procurement of Information Systems (Design, Supply, and Installation) to Upgrade of the eSchool General Education and Early Childhood Education software system and the Enterprise Architecture, Data and Domain Models for the EMIS education systems: 1st Stage Technical Proposals were submitted and evaluated. Following no objection received from the WB, the Proposers were invited to submit 2nd Stage Technical and Financial Proposals. 2nd Stage Technical Proposals were opened, Q/A session completed and proposals evaluated.
2. Quality based Selection of Learning Systems Solutions and Support (LMS) for General Education in Georgia: Submitted Technical proposals evaluated, the best qualified consultant identified and invited for the contract negotiations. The main points of the contract negotiations were discussed between MESY, THE consultant and the PMU.

Following RFQ were announced:

1. Purchase of Furniture for 69 Schools (Lot 1).
2. Purchase of Furniture for 81 Schools (Lot 2).
3. Purchase of Smart TV and related equipment for 150 Schools.
4. Purchase of Stationery for 150 Schools.

Next Steps:

Following RFQ will be announced:

1. Purchase of resources needed to support the implementation of STEAM extracurricular programs in 120 pilot schools, in July 2024

Following contracts will be signed:

1. Upgrade of the eSchool General Education and Early Childhood Education software system and the Enterprise Architecture, Data and Domain Models for the EMIS education systems.
2. Learning Systems Solutions and Support (LMS) for General Education in Georgia.
3. Purchase of Furniture for 69 Schools (Lot 1).
4. Purchase of Furniture for 81 Schools (Lot 2).
5. Purchase of Smart TV and related equipment for 150 Schools.
6. Purchase of Stationery for 150 Schools.
7. Purchase of resources needed to support the implementation of STEAM extracurricular programs in 120 pilot schools, in August 2024.

SECTION III. PROJECT FINANCES

The financial and administrative support for the I2Q Project, as well as procurement management under the Project, as defined by the Loan Agreement and the World Bank (IBRD) rules and procedures, is performed by the PMU under MES. The PMU maintains the Project financial management system in line with the World Bank requirements and performs disbursement of the loan proceeds accordingly.

During the reporting period (01 January 2024 – 30 June 2024), the total amount of expenditures under the I2Q Project amounted to EUR 4'079 million, which is 78% of the forecasted disbursements. As of 30 June 2024, cumulative payments for the project implementation are equal to EUR 17'8 million (excluding FEF 225'000.00 million), which is 60% of allocated IBRD funds (MESY part - EUR 29'775'000).

***Commitments and Disbursement Projections
(from the approved Procurement Plan)
(EUR)***

Category	Allocated amount	Signed contracts	Disbursed amount (IBRD)	Disbursed amount (Co-Financing)	Committed signed balance	Uncommitted contracts to be signed
Works, Goods, Non-Consulting Services, Consulting Services, Operating Costs and Training except 1c,2a,5a for the Project	29'775'000.0 EUR	23'903'784.00 EUR	17'795'904.00 EUR	30'001.00 EUR	6'077'789.00 EUR	2'549'907.00 EUR

Components			Actual Payment 2024 1 st part	Total Actual Payment 2024
Comp. 1	Improving the quality of ECEC programs across the country	1.1	EUR 774'576.00	EUR 774'576.00
Comp.2	Supporting the scaling up of the whole-school improvement pilot	2.2	EUR 286'712.00	EUR 286'712.00
Comp.2	Supporting capacity-building of teachers and school leaders to adapt, develop, and implement school-based curriculum	2.3		
Comp.2	Assisting the development of a national assessment framework	2.4		
Comp.3	Development of new options for higher education financing	3.1	EUR 392'288.00	EUR 392'288.00
Comp.3	Establishment of a competitive innovation fund for public and private universities	3.2	EUR 2'277'692.00	EUR 2'277'692.00
Comp.3	CIF Salary	3.5	EUR 38'105.00	EUR 38'105.00
Comp.4	Supporting data-driven decision-making accessible the entire education system	4.1	EUR 15'738.00	EUR 15'738.00
Comp.4	Communication and stakeholder consultations for education reform	4.2		
Comp.5	Short Term Consultant	5	EUR 6'614.00	EUR 6'614.00
Comp.5	Other Consulting Services	5		
Comp.5	PMU Salary	5	EUR 250'524.00	EUR 250'524.00
Comp.5	Operating Costs	5	EUR 37'034.00	EUR 37'034.00
Total			EUR 4'079'283.00	EUR 4'079'283.00

SECTION IV: ANNEXES TO THE REPORT

Annex I – Indicator Performance Tracking Table

Annex II – Information on Procurement Activities

Annex III – Changes in the Results Framework



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND SCIENCE OF GEORGIA**



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