



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



*April 2024*

# CBLD-9 GUIDANCE FOR THE EDUCATION SECTOR

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document was written by Deborah Greebon, Daniel Lavan, Jasmina Josic, and Scott Pulizzi. The authors would like to thank a number of USAID staff who offered critical insights at various stages of the development of this guidance, including Samantha Alvis, Jessica Bagdonis, Rebeca Martinez, Andrew Meaux, Amanda Satterwhite, Benjamin Sylla, and Elena Walls. The authors would also like to thank Lisa Slifer-Mbacke and Gunjan Maheshwari for contributions to earlier drafts of the document.

This document was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Education Development Center (EDC) for the Leading through Learning Global Platform contract.

## PHOTO CREDIT

Rachel Chilton/USAID

# CONTENTS

<b>ACRONYMS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>I. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE</b>	<b>4</b>
What is CBLD-9?	4
What is an “organization” under CBLD-9?	4
<b>II. APPLYING AND DOCUMENTING THE PROCESS CRITERIA OUTLINED IN THE CBLD-9 PIRS</b>	<b>8</b>
A. Criterion A: Resources and Documentation	8
B. Criterion B: Participatory Process	8
Process Criterion 1 (PIRS Condition B.i)	8
Process Criterion 2 (PIRS Condition B.ii)	10
Process Criterion 3 (PIRS Condition B.iii)	11
Process Criterion 4 (PIRS Condition B.iv)	12
C. Criterion C: Improved Performance	14
<b>III. REPORTING on CBLD-9</b>	<b>15</b>
Reporting Guidance	15
Additional Indicators to Complement CBLD-9 Reporting	17
Optimizing Learning about Capacity Strengthening and Performance Improvement	19
<b>IV. EDUCATION SECTOR EXAMPLES</b>	<b>21</b>
Example 1. Strengthening Capacity of Sub-Awardees (Education Sector-Wide)	22
Example 2. Improving Performance of Local Subcontractors to Support Early Childhood Education Quality (Pre-primary)	23
Example 3. Improving Performance of CSOs for Basic Education Advocacy (Basic Education)	24
Example 4. District Performance in School Supervision and Coaching (Basic Education System Strengthening)	24
Example 5: Private Sector Engagement in Youth Transitions to Employment (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	25
Example 6: Capacity Strengthening of Higher Education Institutions	26

## ACRONYMS

ASC	annual schools census
CBLD-9	Capacity Building-9 indicator
CLA	collaborating, learning, and adapting
CSO	civil society organization
ECE	early childhood education
EMIS	education management information system
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
HEI	higher education institution
LCS	local capacity strengthening
MEL	monitoring, evaluation, and learning
NGO	non-governmental organization
NPI	New Partnership Initiative
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OU	Operating Unit
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheet
PPR	Performance Plan and Report
SHARE	Supporting Holistic and Actionable Research in Education
SOAR	Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results Analysis
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

## I. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE

This document provides guidance on the application of the Capacity Building-9 indicator, or [CBLD-9](#), in education sector programming, both for USAID Operating Units (OUs) and for implementing partners. It complements existing cross-sectoral CBLD-9 guidance and provides recommendations for employing CBLD-9 across the education continuum, from pre-primary through higher education. This guidance encourages innovative, fit-for-purpose operationalization of the indicator while promoting alignment with existing CBLD-9 resources (refer to [Note 1](#): CBLD-9 Resources), USAID’s [Local Capacity Strengthening \(LCS\) Policy](#), and the [Strengthening the Capacity of Local Education Systems](#) guidance.

### What is CBLD-9?

CBLD-9 stands for Capacity Building-9, an outcome-level standard foreign assistance indicator that monitors the percentage of U.S. government (USG) assisted organizations with improved performance. CBLD-9 is designed for use by Missions and implementing partners to measure whether organizational capacity strengthening efforts funded by the USG have led to *improved performance* in local organizations. The indicator allows USAID to learn about and track agency-wide progress in strengthening the performance of local organizations. CBLD-9 represents a percentage, expressed as the number of USG-assisted organizations with improved performance (numerator) over the number of USG-assisted organizations that have planned and pursued performance improvement with USAID support (denominator). There is an additional standard indicator, [CBLD-11](#), that serves as an output-level indicator related to CBLD-9. CBLD-11 is CBLD-9’s denominator: “Number of organizations pursuing their own performance improvement priorities with USG capacity strengthening support.” Refer to page 15 for more details on CBLD-11.

#### NOTE 1: CBLD-9 Resources

If you are less familiar with CBLD-9, consult the [LCS measurement web page](#) for a comprehensive background for all sectors. The page provides links to the latest versions of these CBLD-9 indicator resources:

- [CBLD-9 Performance Indicator Reference Sheet](#) (PIRS)
- [CBLD-9 Measurement Guide](#) (2021)
- [CBLD-9 Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQs)
- [CBLD-9 Target Setting Guidance](#)
- [Worksheet for Missions](#) to input data related to CBLD-9
- [Worksheet for implementing partners](#) to input data related to CBLD-9

### What is an “organization” under CBLD-9?

This section clarifies the range of educational organizations that may, in principle, be considered as units under CBLD-9. Other sections will discuss the required criteria set out in the [CBLD-9 PIRS](#) for such organizations to be counted toward CBLD-9 within a specific USAID activity.

As per the PIRS, an “organization is a group of people who work together in an organized way for a shared purpose.” Organizations may be governmental, private, or civil society groups/entities. They may be formal or informal. The people working in organizations may be paid professionals or volunteers.

## NOTE 2: Strengthening Systems and Implications for Defining Organizations

An **education system** consists of people, public and private institutions, resources, and activities that jointly contribute to improving, expanding, and sustaining learning and educational outcomes. In the education sector, USAID is increasingly working to strengthen the performance of education systems as a whole, engaging with ministries and across networks of civil society and private sector actors. [Strengthening the Capacity of Local Education Systems](#) contains details regarding how USAID programs can support and strengthen education systems.

You can and should use CBLD-9 in activities working to strengthen systems where appropriate. When supporting large institutions to strengthen capacity with the aim of strengthening entire systems, you can use CBLD-9 by applying the guidance described in the following two paragraphs regarding subunits and decentralized offices.

**Subunits of larger organizations can qualify as organizations.** In the education sector, counting subunits of a complex organization as unique organizations, for the purpose of CBLD-9, can be appropriate. The term “organizational units” refers to distinct departments, subdivisions, or offices of a central ministry or complex organization (such as a higher education institution). Each of these may have their own distinct performance mandates and improvement priorities, thereby requiring distinct interventions to achieve those priorities, as well as distinct performance metrics to measure progress toward them. You can count each of these subunits as organizations for CBLD-9 when the additional specific criteria detailed in subsequent sections of this document are met. Please refer to [Process Criterion 4](#) (B.iv) and examples 4 and 6 in [Section IV](#) (Education Sector Examples).

**Decentralized offices can qualify as organizations.** Education ministries and agencies typically have many decentralized (e.g., regional, district) offices. You can designate these as organizational units for the purposes of CBLD-9 measurement, so long as all other PIRS criteria are met. Because decentralized offices at the same geographical level (e.g., regional, district) commonly share the same performance mandates (and often share the same challenges), they may also have similar or the same performance improvement priorities, resulting in similar or the same interventions and performance metrics. However, because decentralized offices stand on their own and have their own organizational culture and internal staffing arrangements, the nature and rate of each office’s performance improvement may differ. Refer to Example 4 in [Section IV](#).

### NOTE 3: A Caution About Considering Schools as Organizations for the Purposes of CBLD-9

---

In most USAID basic education activities, even when schools meet the basic definition of an organization as defined above, there are two compelling reasons to **not** include schools as organizations for reporting on CBLD-9. This also applies to other learning institutions such as Early Childhood Education (ECE) centers.

First, USAID often does not support schools directly, as activities tend to reach schools via cascaded training rather than more direct forms of capacity support. You should not count organizational units not receiving direct support for performance improvement toward CBLD-9 (refer to [Process Criterion 3](#), page 7).

Second, even if schools are receiving direct support, the number of schools typically covered by USAID activities tends to be so large that regular, well-validated measurement for the indicator would need to be sample-based. It is not appropriate to sample organizational units for reporting on CBLD-9 as noted in the [CBLD-9 FAQs](#).

**Measuring improvements in performance at the school or learning center level is often better accomplished via other specific indicators** commonly based on sampling, such as [Supp-10 on the provision of quality instruction](#).

In situations where an activity works more directly with just a small set of schools or learning centers (perhaps non-state, private, and/or community schools), it may be appropriate to use the schools or centers themselves as organizations of focus for CBLD-9. Indeed, private or community schools may have more agency over their own performance priorities than government-run schools.

For more details, refer to the [Process Criterion 4](#) sub-section “How do you apply the metric(s) under CBLD-9” on page 14.

For the education sector, illustrative (though non-exhaustive) examples of organizations and organizational units that you could count toward CBLD-9 are summarized in Table I. For simplicity, this table is organized by educational levels.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Note that disaggregation for CBLD-9 reporting, as defined in the [PIRS](#), differs from the categorization of organizations presented in Table I. CBLD-9 disaggregates are categorized by the organization’s primary function within the education system, distinguishing those working directly on teaching and learning from organizational units with other functions (e.g., central and district MOE offices, educational advocacy CSOs, and research institutes). Refer to the section titled “Specify the appropriate disaggregate” on page 15 for further details.

Table I: Examples of Education Organizations that Can Be Counted toward CBLD-9

Education Sub-sector(s)	Organizations (or organizational units)
Pre-primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Early Childhood Education (ECE) providers (public, private, community; refer to <a href="#">Note 3</a> for caveats)</li> <li>● Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)/civil society organizations (CSOs) focused on pre-school quality, access, and advocacy</li> <li>● Ministry of Education (central ECE department and specific subunits, e.g., standards, inspection, and state, regional, and district offices)</li> <li>● Ministry of Family and/or Social Welfare (specific departments and subunits)</li> <li>● Higher education institutions (colleges and training institutes)</li> </ul>
Primary and Secondary Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Education (central departments and specific subunits, e.g., curriculum, assessment, and state, regional, and district offices)</li> <li>● Teacher training colleges (as a whole or by departments)</li> <li>● NGOs/CSOs (e.g., accelerated or alternative education providers, advocacy and social behavior change organizations, parent-teacher associations, community groups)</li> <li>● School management committees (refer to <a href="#">Note 3</a> for caveats)</li> <li>● Schools (public, private, community, non-formal; refer to <a href="#">Note 3</a> for caveats)</li> <li>● Private sector (textbook publishers, non-state school networks, non-state school lenders)</li> </ul>
Youth and Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Secondary and post-secondary technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions</li> <li>● Quality assurance and accreditation systems of both formal and non-formal TVET institutions</li> <li>● Youth-led and youth-serving organizations</li> <li>● Private and non-profit training providers</li> <li>● Ministry of Education (central departments and specific subunits)</li> <li>● Ministry of Labor (central departments and specific subunits)</li> <li>● Ministry of Youth and Sports (central departments and specific subunits)</li> </ul>
Higher/Tertiary Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Universities (specific faculties, departments, and service-oriented offices, e.g., career services)</li> <li>● Teacher training colleges</li> <li>● Community colleges</li> <li>● Technical institutes and polytechnics</li> <li>● Academically linked research centers</li> <li>● Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (central departments and specific subunits)</li> <li>● Accreditation entities</li> <li>● Higher education associations</li> </ul>

The next section discusses additional criteria raised in the CBLD-9 PIRS for counting organizations of any type, including centralized subunits and decentralized offices.



## II. APPLYING AND DOCUMENTING THE PROCESS CRITERIA OUTLINED IN THE CBLD-9 PIRS

The CBLD-9 PIRS outlines criteria that must be fulfilled for any organization to be counted when reporting on the indicator. This section of the guidance explains each of these criteria and key principles for applying them in the education sector. Criteria A and B.ii-iv are all needed for an organization to qualify for inclusion in the CBLD-9 denominator. Criterion C qualifies an organization to be counted in the CBLD-9 numerator.

### A. Criterion A: Resources and Documentation

The first criterion (referred to in the PIRS as Point a) is expected to generally be straightforward: Are activity resources being allocated to capacity strengthening? For each organization to be considered under the indicator, the organization must have 1) USG resources (whether human, financial, or other) dedicated to organizational capacity strengthening, and 2) documentation reflecting those resource contributions.<sup>2</sup>

### B. Criterion B: Participatory Process

The following four process criteria are expressed in the PIRS as essential steps in demonstrating that USAID and implementing partners follow a participatory process of performance improvement and that they can then apply the CBLD-9 indicator. These are:

- **B.i. Process Criterion 1:** Collaborate with the supported organization and/or any other relevant stakeholders to jointly define desired performance improvement priorities.
- **B.ii. Process Criterion 2:** Identify the difference between current and desired performance.
- **B.iii. Process Criterion 3:** Select and implement performance improvement solutions.
- **B.iv. Process Criterion 4:** Identify and use a performance improvement metric(s) by which the organization will monitor and measure changes in performance.

Each of these process criteria will be explored further in the following section of the guidance.

#### **Process Criterion 1 (PIRS Condition B.i)**

Collaborate with the supported organization and/or any other relevant stakeholders to jointly define desired performance improvement priorities.

**The process of selecting organizational priorities can be used to advance key principles** of the USAID Local Capacity Strengthening (LCS) Policy, such as the principle for equitable partnerships. A critical implication of this principle is that USAID or implementing partners should not impose performance improvement priorities on local organizations. Instead, local organizations, along with relevant stakeholders, must be part of the process of determining their own priorities and identifying relevant indicators.

---

<sup>2</sup> As further explained under B.iii, these allocated resources should not be limited to *materials* or *equipment* (e.g., hardware or software); where materials and/or equipment are provided, there would still need to be an accompanying *intervention* that supports capacity to use any such products for improved organizational performance.

## NOTE 4: Different Tools for Different Purposes

---

Please consult the [Guide to Distinguishing Tools Used for Local Capacity Strengthening](#) for clarity on the types of tools that are fit for purpose. Note that capacity action planning tools, which assist local actors in identifying their priorities for improvement and should be used for CBLD-9 Process Criterion 1 (PIRS Condition B.i), differ from the performance measurement tools that are used for CBLD-9 Process Criterion 4 (B.iv).

As the *Guide to Distinguishing Tools Used for Local Capacity Strengthening* cautions, capacity action planning tools may often “rely on subjective preferences and priorities for improvement, (so) they do not objectively assess performance. In contrast, the primary purpose of performance measurement tools is to provide an objective assessment of change that has occurred. As such, using a capacity action planning tool—one that prioritizes self-identification of strengths and opportunities—for the latter purpose of performance measurement may pose limitations related to data quality standards.” Refer to [Process Criterion 4](#) (B.iv) for more information on performance measurement.

**You can use various approaches to collaboratively define performance improvement priorities.** While you are not required to use a tool for priority setting, you can use certain tools. Capacity action planning tools (refer to [Note 4](#)) can be appropriate for facilitating a process through which local actors identify their own priorities for performance improvement and own and manage their own progress. For example, a district-level education management information system (EMIS) unit could use a Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR) analysis (see description below) to prioritize improved organizational performance in quality and timeliness of annual school census data. Refer also to [Section IV](#), examples 3 and 5.

Examples of capacity action planning tools and approaches:

- An [Organizational Capacity Assessment \(OCA\)](#) helps an organization to reflect on its processes and functions and score itself against benchmarks.
- A [Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats \(SWOT\)](#) analysis encourages group or individual reflection of an organization’s position, characters, or a particular strategy.
- A [SOAR](#) exercise can be used to assess current performance and to plan a successful strategy for the future.
- Workshops or structured conversations can allow local organizations and implementing partners or USAID to bring together key organizational stakeholders, such as education ministry officials and/or external stakeholders; you should document these discussions to capture the process and learnings and/or agreements made.
- You can use past assessments (conducted by USAID or others) as the basis for discussing and defining performance improvement priorities, if the supported organization agrees that those assessments have accurately reflected their input.

**Promote involvement by all relevant stakeholders.** PIRS Criteria B.i mentions that other potential relevant stakeholders, even outside the organization, may be involved in setting priorities. These relevant stakeholders will vary according to the organization’s mandate, beneficiaries, and relationships to other organizations. Providers of youth workforce development training, for example,

besides involving their own management and instructors, could consider consulting learners, local entrepreneurs, and employers, and relevant local or national government agencies when setting performance improvement priorities. Refer to [Section IV](#), example 4.

**Allow for stakeholder input when pre-defining priorities.** There are cases where performance strengthening priorities are established by a USAID solicitation and subsequent award. For example, an award may dictate that the priority is improving local CSOs' performance in data collection and data use for operating youth skills training centers. Ideally, priorities prescribed in an award should be *the result of prior USAID consultations with relevant stakeholders*. After an activity starts, the implementer should *ensure a structured opportunity for the target organizations, and/or relevant stakeholders to further negotiate, finalize, and affirm clear buy-in for any priorities that had been proposed prior to start-up*. Refer to [Section IV](#), examples 2 and 5.

**For formal systems strengthening activities, ensure stakeholder input on priorities for organizational subunits and/or decentralized offices.** Education systems strengthening activities may also have predefined performance improvement priorities for multiple, parallel decentralized offices (e.g., regional or district offices). Even where the priorities for these decentralized offices have not been pre-defined in an award, it will generally not be optimal for each decentralized office to separately decide its own priorities. Authority for setting systemic performance improvement priorities for decentralized offices will usually reside at the central (e.g., ministry) level, and the central actors can be considered relevant stakeholders to the priority-setting decisions. However, to fully meet the criteria of the CBLD-9 PIRS, such activities should also conduct a process that consults representatives from the decentralized offices. When this is not possible, the organization should not be reported under CBLD-9, as the support does not respond to their own priorities. Refer to [Section IV](#), example 4.

**Ensure that performance improvement priorities are sufficiently within the control of the organization.** Organizations should be cautious when setting improvement priorities when their achievement would require important contributions of other actors, organizations, or enabling factors outside the organization itself and over which the organization has limited or no control. Refer to [Section IV](#) for examples.

## **Process Criterion 2 (PIRS Condition B.ii)**

Identify the difference between current and desired performance.

This criterion involves the clear articulation of where organizational performance is now, as well as where key actors from the organization want to be as a result of capacity strengthening support. Similar to the previous process criterion, the principles outlined in the USAID's LCS Policy state that LCS needs to be locally owned. Mutuality in partnerships can help drive local ownership.<sup>3</sup> Local organizations, along with relevant stakeholders, should be part of conversations that evaluate current performance and

---

<sup>3</sup> As stated on page 19 of USAID's [Local Capacity Strengthening Policy](#), "Mutuality is a positive condition or shared mindset about a relationship whereby two (or multiple) partners aim to balance power differences by striving for reciprocal partnerships that accrue benefit to each partner through relationships built on trust and respect. It is achieved when USAID and its partner(s) each share or exchange information and take action toward shared goals, such as through mutual accountability, which is a process by which partners agree to be held responsible for the commitments that they have voluntarily made to each other."

determine the desired performance for the organizations receiving support. Implementing partners and other stakeholders should play collaborative roles, providing scaffolding as necessary.

**The difference between current and desired performance may be defined in qualitative or quantitative terms.** It could be defined as a score on an index, but activities using quantitative index scores to define performance goals should do so cautiously, ensuring goals reflect organizations' own priorities. Often, it may be more appropriate to qualitatively define the difference between current and desired performance. For example, activities could use a visioning exercise to ask questions like: "If we work on a specific priority area for the next two years, where might we be? What would we be achieving, specifically? How does this compare with where we are now?" It is important to have a clear goal and be specific about where an organization is now and the desired future state. Note that visioning questions should steer clear of imposing external, ideal standards of desired performance and avoid focusing on performance deficits or gaps; any such exercise should rather encourage relevant and realistic goal-setting based on appreciation of an organization's current performance levels and assets.

### **Process Criterion 3 (PIRS Condition B.iii)**

Select and implement performance improvement solutions.

In order to utilize CBLD-9, the next step is to apply and document capacity strengthening interventions. Consistent with the USAID LCS Policy, section 11, capacity strengthening interventions should be designed collaboratively with the organizations that will apply them, along with any other relevant local stakeholders.

Helpful descriptions of performance improvement solutions applied to educational organizations can be found in the [Strengthening the Capacity of Local Education Systems](#) guidance. Broader discussion of performance improvement approaches can also be found in this resource: [Capacity Development Interventions: A Guide for Program Designers](#).

**Only consider organizations directly supported for CBLD-9 measurement.** Activities should carefully consider which organizational units are *directly receiving* capacity strengthening interventions, as a metric or metrics for CBLD-9 reporting should be designed only for these directly targeted units. Where activities hypothesize that additional organizational units may improve performance as a secondary byproduct of support to higher-level organizations, such additional units (*not* directly targeted by capacity strengthening interventions) should *not* be reported under CBLD-9.

For example, if an activity provides direct support only to regional offices of a national ministry, activities should not measure and report performance improvement in district offices that report to regional offices as part of CBLD-9, even if they anticipate improved performance of the district offices due to support to regional offices. To be sure, the activity in this example *should* monitor performance improvement of district offices, as resources allow, but any such measurement would not be included in CBLD-9 reporting. Organizational units not directly supported by an activity are unlikely to meet the PIRS criteria concerning an intentional and demand-driven performance improvement process. Refer also to [Section IV](#), examples 2 and 4.

## **Process Criterion 4 (PIRS Condition B.iv)**

Identify and use a performance improvement metric(s) that the organization will monitor to measure changes in performance.

This criterion requires identifying and using a performance improvement metric (or metrics) that the organization will use to monitor and measure changes in performance. This step in the CBLD-9 process may take some careful thought and consideration, both in selecting an appropriate metric and in determining how to apply and use it.

### *How do local organizations, implementing partners, and USAID choose an appropriate metric?*

Activities should select metrics through a collaborative process to ensure ownership by all partners. Metrics should be well-suited for each organization based on the definition of desired performance improvement and selected priorities determined in Step B.i. As such, metrics will differ for similar organizations with different priorities. For example, if a USAID activity works with three different subunits of a central education ministry that have each defined separate priorities based on their distinct mandates and key functions, each of these subunits would require a different metric. Refer also to [Section IV](#), examples 1, 4, and 6.

**Measure performance and outcomes not latent capacity.** The metric selected should focus on actual *performance* of one or a small set of key functions or roles that the organization is expected to *perform*. For example, a provincial education office's Department of Planning, Research, and Statistics has as a key mandate to ensure collection of school census (EMIS) data. Rather than verifying the existence or quality of protocols or plans for data collection or measuring staff knowledge of these protocols, the department chooses a metric of actual performance of accurate and timely collection: "the percentage of the province's primary schools from which annual school census data is collected and validated on schedule." **Note: Measuring actual performance will involve an outcome level metric, not one that is merely at the output level.** Refer to the examples in [Section IV](#).

**Measure performance over which the organization has sufficient control.** The performance improvement metric should focus on an aspect of performance that is internal to the organization itself, or over which it has substantial influence and responsibility, rather than performance that also depends heavily upon key contributions of other stakeholders or organizational units. For example, a regional education office that wishes to prioritize performance in accurate data analysis and visualization from school monitoring should devise a metric linked solely to their own accuracy and efficiency in treating whatever monitoring data they receive. Refer to [Section IV](#), examples 2, 3, and 4.

**Metrics may be qualitative, but must use a rubric and not rely solely on self-report.**

Especially in situations where a performance improvement priority is conceived in terms of improved quality of a core service or deliverable, it can be appropriate to design and apply a *qualitative* metric for assessing progress. Examples might include "quality of school monitoring reports submitted," "quality of data-informed planning," or "improved instructional quality of teacher education faculty." For any such metric, a simple self-report of improved quality is insufficient, whether it be from a group or an individual. Activities must apply a clear evaluation rubric that specifies the relevant forms of evidence that demonstrate quality improvement. Refer to [Section IV](#), examples 2, 3, 5, and 6.

**Learning outcomes will often not be an appropriate metric for this indicator.** Improved learning is the ultimate goal of an education system, and of its constituent organizations. However, learning outcomes are often not ideal metrics for the purposes of CBLD-9. This is because: 1) USAID’s local capacity strengthening efforts often work at levels of the education system other than the classroom level to influence behavior, even when the ultimate aims are to influence learning outcomes; 2) when classroom-level interventions are used, they are often only one input or intervention among many others; and 3) learning outcomes are influenced by many other individual, familial, and community-level factors.<sup>4</sup> Thus learning outcomes metrics may not yield an accurate measure of improved organizational performance for the purposes of CBLD-9. Measurement of learning outcomes remains important, however, and you should use it to complement CBLD-9 reporting, to test for relationships with CBLD-9 metrics, and as a component of feedback on capacity strengthening interventions. Refer to the next section on [Reporting on CBLD-9](#) (page 15) for more information on using additional metrics to complement CBLD-9 reporting.

**Ensure measurement approaches do not excessively burden local organizations.** Adhering to the principles of local ownership and collaboration with local partners, as advised in the USAID LCS Policy, keep in mind:

- **Existing metrics should be used whenever possible.** “Performance metrics and approaches already being used by the local organization, including those established under local authorities or by other local standards, should be used in place of those created for the sole purpose of reporting to USAID” (*USAID LCS Policy*, p. 13). Refer to [Section IV](#), example 6.
- **Align approaches with local capacity.** Selected measurement approaches should consider and align with local measurement capacity, be locally owned, and be sustained by local stakeholders.
- **Balance rigor and feasibility.** Rigor should not be neglected but should be balanced with feasibility to avoid overburdening local organizations with complex measurement processes.
- **Prioritize simplicity.** Where possible, use a single, focused metric instead of a complex tool. Complex tools themselves may not be well suited for repeated use in measuring an educational organization’s desired performance improvement progress for reporting on CBLD-9. This is because activities should identify and use metrics tailored to monitor and measure changes *in the specific areas of performance improvement selected by the educational organizations as priorities*. **This does not necessitate the use of a tool.** Refer to the [CBLD-9 measurement guide](#) for ideas on how to tailor performance metrics to an organization’s aspirations, goals, and needs without the use of a tool.

For activities structured around a mandate of broad institutional capacity strengthening and performance improvement (for example, where higher education faculties are supported to improve capacity and performance in a range of domains), it may be appropriate to conduct repeated administrations of an index tool, but this is not required. If appropriate, applicable indicators from an [Organizational Performance Index](#) or another index tool can be selected for CBLD-9 performance measurement. Refer

---

<sup>4</sup> There is a risk that learning outcomes could improve mainly because of factors unconnected to the capacity strengthening intervention of the targeted organizations. The opposite would also be probable, where the targeted organizations make significant, sustainable improvements in a performance area (e.g., frequency and quality of school supervision by district offices or even coaching practices by head teachers) but this has not translated into detectable learning outcome improvements in short activity time frames.

to the [Guide to Distinguishing Tools Used for Local Capacity Strengthening](#) for additional guidance on tool selection for performance measurement.

### *How do you apply the metric(s) toward CBLD-9?*

**Determine the level of change necessary.** Local organizations, in collaboration with the implementing partner and USAID, should establish appropriate increments to count as improvement. Depending on the nature of the metric selected, its sensitivity, and expected accuracy, you should establish increments for what qualifies as improved performance, for example, expanding the number of learners reached by 25 percent in the course of a year. Activities should avoid setting trivial increments that easily allow all organizations in their denominator to qualify as improved. Setting increments is not an exact science and may require adjustment after an initial cycle of measurement. If the selected metric is qualitative, establish clear guidance in advance to determine improvement. In either case, the activity's monitoring, evaluation, and learning plans should include a customized description of initial increments and decision procedures for defining improvement in the CBLD-9 PIRS, which can be later revised if necessary. Additional guidance on measuring incremental performance is provided in Question 8 of the [CBLD-9 FAQs](#).

**Set an appropriate and sufficiently flexible frequency for measuring improvement.** While the CBLD-9 PIRS specifies annual reporting, this does not dictate that annual measurement is required for each organization targeted for performance improvement. More or less frequent reporting may be necessary depending on the organizational context, performance metric(s) selected, and the scope of the capacity strengthening plans. As specified in Question 19 of the CBLD-9 FAQs, if activities anticipate performance improvement will take longer to achieve, then USAID and implementing partners may delay reporting on CBLD-9 during the first year or two of an activity. If so, other monitoring methods, such as using [CBLD-11](#) and other output-level metrics, can assess progress in the meantime.

**Measure performance for each organization individually.** This means that you should not use sampling to measure performance improvement for reporting on CBLD-9. As emphasized in the CBLD-9 FAQs, and as described in [Note 2](#) above, organizations that are so numerous that they would require sampling are unlikely to have adequately collaborated in deciding performance improvement priorities and will have received relatively *indirect* or cascaded capacity strengthening support. Each organization counted and reported for CBLD-9 should demonstrate *individually* that its performance on at least one key performance metric has improved.

## C. Criterion C: Improved Performance

While organizations meeting all the criteria in Steps in B.i-iv can be counted in the denominator for CBLD-9 reporting, this final criterion (C) qualifies an organization to be counted in the numerator for CBLD-9 reporting. Condition C of the CBLD-9 PIRS specifies which supported organizations can be counted in the numerator: “an organization demonstrates that its performance on at least one key performance metric has improved.” This demonstration of performance improvement assumes that the guidance in the previous sections of this document has been followed in terms of appropriately defining and applying the performance metric described under Criteria A and B.

### III. REPORTING on CBLD-9

This section describes how implementing partners and USAID staff should report on CBLD-9. Reporting on this indicator is an annual requirement for USAID Operating Units through the Performance Plan and Report (PPR). This section offers general guidance on reporting, lists additional indicators to complement CBLD-9, and describes a process for learning about capacity and performance strengthening.

#### Reporting Guidance

**Report on both the numerator and denominator.** The reporting type for CBLD-9, as per the PIRS, is a percentage; however, implementers and USAID OUs should always report on both the numerator and the denominator as well, as these are also tracked by USAID/Washington to provide a clearer picture of the magnitude of global organizational performance achievements.

Regarding the denominator: In 2023, the Locally Led Development Initiative launched the new indicator [CBLD-11](#) to measure the “number of organizations pursuing their own performance improvement priorities with USG capacity strengthening support,” which is the denominator of CBLD-9. This indicator was developed based on feedback from Missions that achieving performance improvement often requires longer time frames and that showing progress on localization before performance improvement is achieved would be useful. In other words, CBLD-11 is an output-level indicator related to CBLD-9. The first year using CBLD-11 (2023) was conceived as a pilot year for the indicator, and New Partnership Initiative (NPI) activities are encouraged to report on CBLD-11 if useful. In the future, NPI may require this indicator for new activities.

**Report annual and life-of-activity improvement.** During an activity and for USAID’s annual PPR reporting (refer to [Note 4](#)), in the reporting years or quarters when reporting on CBLD-9, compare each organization’s performance with its most immediate previous measurement of performance. For example, a measurement at the end of year one is compared with the baseline, or, if there was no reporting in year one, a measurement at the end of year two may be compared with the baseline. However, for final activity reporting, compare an organization’s final score with its baseline score.

**Specify the appropriate disaggregate.** The CBLD-9 PIRS stipulates that “selection of disaggregates is required” and that “only one organization *type* should be selected for each organization pursuing performance improvement with USAID support.” The CBLD-9 PIRS includes a list of disaggregation categories, several of which could be applicable to an implementing partner’s overall support in the education sector; these include educational institutions, research institutions, faith-based organizations, governmental agencies, private sector firms, and non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations. As a general rule, when an organization being counted toward CBLD-9 fits into multiple categories, count it under the education disaggregate *if it is an organization in which teaching and learning takes place*. Examples of organizations that would fall under the education disaggregate include higher education institutions, ECE centers, private or faith-based schools, and youth workforce training centers.

Count other organizations that are working within the education sector or supporting it, but are *not* directly involved in teaching and learning, under other appropriate disaggregation categories. For example, count district, regional, or central education ministry offices as governmental agencies; count organizations conducting sensitization and advocacy for basic education as non-governmental and not-



for-profit organizations; and count think tanks conducting research on education as research institutions (non-degree granting).

As suggested in the CBLD-9 PIRS, when an implementing partner is unsure of which disaggregation category to use, “the Contracting Officer’s Representative/Agreement Officer’s Representative should be consulted to inform selection of the disaggregate that best represents the organization type.”

**Use the narrative section to provide finer grained disaggregation and other details.** Add greater detail about disaggregation in the narrative reporting, for example regarding the education level(s) of organizations (e.g., pre-primary, primary, secondary, or tertiary). Furthermore, activities can include many other potential details in narrative reporting, such as detailing challenges and triangulating data. These are explained in the section below on “Optimizing Learning about Capacity Strengthening and Performance Improvement” on page 19. Additionally, **narrative reporting can and should complement the numerical reporting** by providing context and nuance to the numbers. For example, where numerical reporting does not yet show annual progress in the percentage, the narrative can help to show where organizations are in the process required by CBLD-9.

A technique such as **Stories of Change** or [Most Significant Change](#) could be useful. These techniques can be used to express values, accomplishments, and descriptions of change through narrative. The [Storytelling Hub](#) provides examples of USAID narratives. While Stories of Change are often used to feature changes for individuals, they can also showcase how local organizations have been engaged in their own performance improvement or where effort was made but improvement could not yet be measured. Refer to [Section IV](#), example 6.

**Consider using a standard worksheet to capture information.** Partners are encouraged to use the CBLD-9 worksheet, located on USAID’s [LCS measurement web page](#), and to upload the worksheet on the “Documents” tab of the CBLD-9 indicator data entry screen in Development Information Solution. The worksheet provides a structured approach to the process of determining whether an activity or organization meets the criteria outlined in the PIRS definition. It also provides valuable information to indicator owners in USAID/Washington about the types of capacity strengthening approaches and performance improvement objectives and metrics local organizations value.

**The CBLD-9 PIRS included in an activity monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plan should be customized.** Activity MEL plans should not simply include the [standard CBLD-9 PIRS](#) as the PIRS for the activity. While all of the standard PIRS content can be retained, always customize the PIRS included in activity MEL plans to include descriptions of the selected metric(s) and measurement approach(es) within the PIRS fields for definition and data source.

## NOTE 5: Guidance for USAID Operating Units during the Performance Plan and Report (PPR)

---

The **Performance Plan and Report (PPR)** is an annual, internal data call for performance information of all OUs in USAID and the U.S. Department of State that implement foreign assistance programs. For the PPR, USAID OUs should:

- Conduct a **comprehensive review** of all activities' indicator lists to ensure that all activities using CBLD-9 are included in PPR reporting. Double check to **avoid errors and inconsistencies in reporting** the disaggregation of both the numerator and the denominator for the education sector.
- **Provide adequate detail in the narrative section** for all activities using CBLD-9, specifying the sector of each activity and including the numerator and denominator for both the targets and actuals.

## Additional Indicators to Complement CBLD-9 Reporting

To further enrich learning and relevant reporting, USAID and implementing partners should also consider using additional standard and supplemental indicators of local capacity, performance, and systems strengthening alongside CBLD-9. Relevant indicators to consider include:

- The [Locally Led Programs indicator](#) measures the percentage of USAID-funded activities in which local partners and/or local communities lead development or humanitarian efforts in a given fiscal year. The indicator centers around 14 good practices in areas including priority setting, design, partnership formation, implementation, and defining and measuring results. The indicator covers multiple types of engagement with local actors, whether they are recipients of direct funding, sub-partners to an international intermediary, participants in a USAID program, or members of a community affected by USAID programming. Activities can get credit for focusing on performance improvement and using CBLD-9 under the Locally Led Programs indicator.
- [CBLD-11](#) is an output indicator associated with CBLD-9. Refer to page 15 for a description.
- [USAID standard education indicators](#):
  - ES.1-6: Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance.
  - ES.1-12: Number of education administrators and officials who complete professional development activities with USG assistance.
  - ES.1-59: Education system strengthened through USG-assisted policy reform.
  - ES.2-1: Number of host country higher education institutions receiving capacity strengthening support with USG assistance.
  - ES.2-52: Number of individuals affiliated with higher education institutions receiving capacity strengthening support with USG assistance.

- [USAID supplemental education indicators](#):<sup>5</sup>
  - Supp-7: Number of parents or community members trained to support children’s education with USG assistance.
  - Supp-10: Percentage of educators providing quality classroom instruction with USG support.
  - Supp-16: Education data systems strengthened through USG assistance.
  - Supp-19: Value of private capital mobilized with USG assistance to support education.
  - Supp-20: Number of parent teacher associations or community-based school governance structures engaged in primary or secondary education supported with USG assistance.
  - Supp-22: Percentage of learners targeted for USG assistance who have the appropriate variety of reading materials in the language of instruction with inclusive representation of diverse populations.

Note that the above list includes *output* level indicators (such as ES.1-6 and Supp-7) as well as *outcome* level indicators (such as Supp-10 and Supp-22) that measure intermediate results considered as essential educational processes, which can lead to improved learning. In addition to these standard and supplemental indicators, activities can use custom indicators that measure aspects of performance improvement and systems change, including possible secondary performance improvements. Finally, as discussed on page 13, while learning outcomes will generally not be an appropriate metric for reporting on the CBLD-9 indicator, in many cases it will make sense for activities to include relevant standard (or supplementary) outcome indicators at the learning outcome level to complement CBLD-9 reporting. At the learning outcome level, this includes the following indicators (the PIRS can be accessed in the [standard](#) and [supplemental](#) compendia):

- ES.1-1: Percentage of learners targeted for USG assistance who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading skills.
- ES.1-47: Percentage of learners with a disability targeted for USG assistance who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading.
- ES.1-60: Percentage of learners targeted for USG assistance who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in math skills.
- EG.6-13: Percentage of individuals with improved soft skills following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs.
- Supp-21: Percentage of individuals with improved reading skills following participation in USG-assisted programs.

---

<sup>5</sup> As per the *FY23 Compendium of Supplemental PIRS for Education Programming*, supplemental indicators are used by the Center for Education “to bring some of the benefits of standardization to non-aggregatable custom indicators. Supplemental indicators do not need to be reported in the PPR and will not be used for aggregate reporting” but can be a “resource to OUs ... (to) avoid the need to ‘reinvent the wheel’ of developing technically sound PIRS and methodologies.”

## Optimizing Learning about Capacity Strengthening and Performance Improvement

To promote continuous learning about performance improvement interventions, implementers should always systematically gather and analyze additional data to further complement their basic CBLD-9 reporting. This can be used within collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) efforts to learn what works in the local context around capacity strengthening of different organizations. Activities that have a strong capacity strengthening focus are encouraged to meet regularly—at least every six months—in planned pause and reflect sessions to review their data, revisit their overall theory of change and their specific approaches to organizational performance strengthening, and document lessons learned about capacity strengthening approaches in the local context.

USAID and OUs are encouraged to regularly review complementary data such as:

- **Details of the relevant performance improvement interventions, including the fidelity and quality of their recent implementation.** Reporting should clarify what specific approaches the activity is applying to support performance improvement. Activities should examine whether these support approaches have been delivered as planned, both in terms of dosage (frequency and duration) and quality. Is experience suggesting the need to revise or supplement the support approaches? What factors have promoted fidelity and quality of the planned interventions, and how can these be amplified?
- **Details of the challenges (both internal and contextual) encountered in implementation.** Activities should assess whether initial assumptions about contextual and enabling conditions for performance improvement need to be revised. Have unanticipated implementation challenges called into question what is feasible for performance improvement in activity time frames? What factors have inhibited fidelity of the planned interventions and how can they be addressed? Alternatively, does early progress warrant *increasing* ambitions for performance improvement?
- **Specific details of the nature of the performance improvement, including finer grained quantitative or qualitative data from the metrics, where possible.** Since basic reporting of CBLD-9 only indicates the *percentage* of supported organizations with improved performance, narrative reporting should explain the metric(s) behind the reported percentage, as well as *how much* improvement has been observed on these metrics. Such narrative detail enriches reflection among activity management, technical staff, and partners on specifics of performance improvement progress. As an example, the metric for a ministry’s teacher professional development unit is the *number of teachers accessing online professional development courses*, and the unit improves on this metric from 3,000 to 4,500 as the result of a new course being rolled out and improved connectivity provision. The activity includes these details in narrative reporting to complement reporting the percentage for CBLD-9.
- **Further learning about the measurement process itself, including nuance about what the metric does and does not capture.** Within the framework of considerations about performance metrics laid out in [Process Criterion 4](#) (B.iv) above, activities and their organizational partners should periodically review the measurement processes for the selected metrics—a process akin to informal data quality assessments—to evaluate their validity and reliability and explore possible improvements. While changing the metric itself mid-activity would likely have disadvantages, activities should nonetheless strive to learn about the limitations of selected metrics as signals of organizational performance improvement, and, where

relevant, explore with supported organizations potential supplementary modes of monitoring and measuring performance that can serve their improvement goals.

- **Triangulated qualitative data, such as stakeholder feedback.** As always, feedback from supported organizations and other relevant stakeholders should be an essential input for CLA and pause and reflect sessions. With regard to performance strengthening, it is important to have ongoing qualitative feedback from partners focused on initial capacity action planning, the performance strengthening approaches, the metric and measurement processes, and perceptions about performance improvement results and challenges.

## IV. EDUCATION SECTOR EXAMPLES

This section provides examples of different performance goals, metrics, and activities using CBLD-9 in the education sector.

Table 2: Examples of Education Sector Performance Goals and Possible CBLD-9 Metrics

Performance Goal Example	Metric Example
<b>Pre-primary:</b> Improved performance of local NGOs in providing quality coaching and monitoring of early childhood education (ECE) practitioners (Section IV, <a href="#">Example 2</a> )	Coaching provided to ECE practitioners meets agreed quality standards and improves from previous measurement
<b>Primary:</b> District offices deliver high-quality coaching to teachers	Percentage of submitted coaching visit reports that demonstrate meeting acceptable quality standard
<b>Primary/Secondary:</b> CSOs improve the reach and effectiveness of their advocacy work to support primary and secondary education (Section IV, <a href="#">Example 3</a> )	Improved reach and effectiveness of advocacy events for primary and secondary education
<b>Primary/Secondary:</b> Regional EMIS office completes annual schools census (ASC) for more timely delivery at lower per-school cost (by applying a new information and communication technology solution)	Number of days to complete validated ASC exercise
<b>Secondary:</b> District offices improve the execution compliance of school supervisory visits designed to promote minimum teaching and education standards (Section IV, <a href="#">Example 4</a> )	Percentage of planned school supervisory/coaching visits completed in a timely manner while ensuring that necessary protocols are followed
<b>Youth Workforce Development:</b> CSOs increase the number and quality of private sector organizations from different industries that engage youth in work-based training or employment (Section IV, <a href="#">Example 5</a> )	Number of private sector partnerships brokered and/or improved for youth work-based training or employment opportunities
<b>Youth Workforce Development:</b> Umbrella NGO expands a youth development program to more beneficiaries by setting up more local youth-serving organizations	Number of local youth-serving organizations operating at documented quality standards
<b>Youth Workforce Development:</b> Anchor organizations collect quality data on local workforce development providers (e.g., enrollment, attendance, assessments, and observations)	Average data quality checklist score for data sets produced

(continued)

<p><b>Higher Education:</b> Higher education institutions improve subunits’ abilities to prepare graduates for success in the labor market (Section IV, <a href="#">Example 6</a>)</p>	<p>Number of job offers and work-based opportunities secured by students via their services; number of courses demonstrating satisfactory integration of new job readiness curricular content</p>
--	---

The following examples demonstrate the types of activities that support local capacity strengthening in the education sector. The examples clarify the types of organizations supported and detail the process of priority setting, identifying performance improvement goals and metrics, measuring improvement, and reporting. Most examples in this section are fictional but are drawn from existing activities; example I describes an actual activity in implementation.

### Example I. Strengthening Capacity of Sub-Awardees (Education Sector-Wide)

*This example illustrates: local ownership of improvement priorities (p. 8); tool use for capacity action planning (p. 12); a focused metric for CBLD-9 (p. 12); prioritizing simplicity (p. 13); and reporting supported through qualitative data (p. 12, 19, and 20).*

**Activity Overview:** [Supporting Holistic and Actionable Research in Education \(SHARE\)](#) is a global award managed by the USAID Center for Education out of Washington, DC. The activity generates, translates, and uses high-quality, actionable primary research and evidence to inform programmatic and investment decisions.

**Type of Organization Supported for Capacity Strengthening:** By working through local research partners worldwide, SHARE strengthens the capacity of local education ecosystems while meeting the research needs of USAID OUs. SHARE builds channels of exchange between partners that promote multidirectional capacity exchange between implementing partners and local partners.

**Priority-Setting Process:** When a partner receives a subaward, the organization is evaluated on its capacity to contribute to the activity’s goal of generating, translating, and using data and evidence to inform programmatic and investment decisions. For capacity action planning (refer to page 9 for more information), SHARE developed an index tool with several domains, including research capacity. The tool allows partner organizations to identify relevant domains for priority capacity strengthening and notes perceived strengths that can be shared across institutions. Based on the organizational priorities and a corresponding performance strengthening plan, each partner organization selects one or a small set of key metrics as the focus of measurement to evaluate performance in a relevant domain over 18 months.

**Performance Goal and Metric:** Different performance goals and metrics are set for each partner research organization based on the performance strengthening plan identified through the priority-setting process described above. For example, several partners that want to strengthen their capacity in systems thinking use the metric “number of research reports written that use a systems-thinking approach.” One partner focused on supporting research uptake uses the metric “percentage of research activities that involve key stakeholders in research development and design.”

**Measurement Approach and Reporting:** Each partner organization reports improved performance on one or a small set of metrics, rather than reporting on all domains evaluated at the point of receiving

the subaward. Reporting on CBLD-9 by this method is supplemented by qualitative and narrative descriptions of performance improvement. SHARE regularly collects feedback from partners to assist the mechanism in improving their capacity strengthening processes, in addition to tracking changes in performance.

## Example 2. Improving Performance of Local Subcontractors to Support Early Childhood Education Quality (Pre-primary)

*This example illustrates: Pre-primary education sub-sector (p. 7); allowing for stakeholder input when priorities are pre-defined (p. 10); measuring performance over which the organization has sufficient control (p. 12); counting organizational units most directly receiving support (p. 11); and not counting organizations improved as a secondary byproduct of support to higher-level organizations (p. 11), and reporting qualitative data (p. 12, 19, and 20).*

**Activity Overview:** A pre-primary activity aims to increase access to and improve quality of private community ECE centers. To reach the goal of improved quality of ECE centers, the activity works directly with local NGOs with ECE expertise to establish a regime of coaching for the practitioners in community ECE centers that the NGOs support directly.

**Type of Organization Supported for Capacity Strengthening:** Selected umbrella NGOs that are local experts in the ECE field but are new to coaching.

**Priority-Setting Process:** The activity undertakes orientation sessions with the partnering NGOs to strengthen staff understanding of ECE quality programming and to appreciate the crucial importance of coaching as an input. As an outcome, NGOs commit to the introduction and continuous improvement of coaching as a performance improvement priority based on a coaching model co-designed to be practical in the institutional and cultural context.

**Performance Goal:** Initial establishment and continuously improved performance of local NGOs in providing quality coaching and monitoring of ECE practitioners.

**Performance Metric:** Improved scores of NGO coaches on a simple observation rubric.

**Measurement Approach and Reporting:** The implementing partner, NGOs, and other experienced local experts, including in government, collaboratively establish specific performance standards for delivery of coaching. All partners co-develop a simple observation rubric incorporating these standards, informed by initial qualitative observation of coaching, as well as by brief structured interviews with practitioners. Additional context and nuance for the rubric scores are collected through interviews with ECE practitioners and coaches and included in reporting.

To measure improvements in performance of ECE centers themselves (e.g., the pedagogical performance of practitioners or children's developmental and learning outcomes), the activity uses separate custom indicators.



### Example 3. Improving Performance of CSOs for Basic Education Advocacy (Basic Education)

*This example illustrates: Primary and secondary education sub-sector (p. 7); collaboratively defining improvement priorities (p. 9); measuring performance that the organization has sufficient control over (p. 12); and reporting qualitative data (p. 12, 19, and 20).*

**Activity Overview:** A basic education improvement activity includes interventions with various system actors, including with small-scale, local CSOs with a mandate and expertise that includes improving the formal education system.

**Type of Organization Supported for Capacity Strengthening:** Eleven smaller CSOs are motivated to improve their performance in supporting basic education, mainly through strengthened advocacy and local resource mobilization, including in-kind support.

**Priority-Setting Process:** At the beginning of the activity, each CSO collaborates with an implementing partner to conduct a SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) analysis (refer to page 9). The SOAR assists the CSO to examine their advocacy work and identify areas where they are excelling as well as those that require improvement. The CSOs then develop an action plan to strengthen their capacities and identify opportunities in the communities to strengthen advocacy efforts. CSOs are supported by the implementing partner to create their own action plans.

**Performance Goal:** CSOs improve the reach and effectiveness of their advocacy work to support basic education.

**Performance Metric:** Improved reach and effectiveness of CSO's advocacy events on basic education.

**Measurement Approach and Reporting:** A simple count of attendees at advocacy events determines reach. Effectiveness of the events is determined through the qualitative measurement of successful features of advocacy during the events. Implementing partner staff and national consultants with expertise in advocacy directly observe planned events as implemented and capture ratings of the features of successful advocacy using an agreed-upon rubric. CSO improvement for the purposes of CBLD-9 is counted only when the organization demonstrates improvements in both reach and quality.

### Example 4. District Performance in School Supervision and Coaching (Basic Education System Strengthening)

*This example illustrates: Ministry subunits and decentralized offices as organizations (p. 5); ensuring stakeholder input on priorities for subunits and decentralized offices (p. 10); measuring performance that the organization has sufficient control over (p. 12); and counting organizational units most directly receiving support and not those improved as a secondary byproduct (p. 12).*

**Activity Overview:** A five-year basic education activity strengthens an education system overall by supporting the teaching and learning process in primary schools nationwide with the end goal of improving learning outcomes. This example focuses on the district level, where the activity provides

training and embedded mentoring to school supervisors and facilitates inter-district communities of learning.

**Type of Organization Supported for Capacity Strengthening:** Four central ministry departments, four regional offices, and 51 district education offices.

**Priority-Setting Process:** The self-diagnostic review conducted by representatives from each organizational unit (central, regional, and district) uses baseline assessment instruments that focus on the core support functions relevant to each department and level; the instrument is developed in collaboration between central ministry actors and the implementing partner. The improvement priorities for each level are set during a series of consultative workshops with representatives from each level (central, regional, and district) reviewing the aggregated results of the baseline self-diagnostic review.

**Performance Goal:** District offices improve the execution compliance of school supervisory visits designed to promote minimum teaching and education standards.

**Performance Metric:** Percentage of planned school supervisory/coaching visits completed in a timely manner with necessary protocols followed. Protocols include that all data are gathered, entered/uploaded, and validated. Separate metrics are applied for regional offices and for each central ministry unit according to their improvement priorities.

**Measurement Approach and Reporting:** Standard protocols for school supervisory/coaching visits were established prior to the USAID activity, thus baseline values were available at the start of the activity. To address all elements of the process protocol, the performance metric requires that: 1) the visit takes place as scheduled (requiring budget and logistics), 2) the data are collected as directed in the protocol, and 3) the data flow according to protocol and are validated.

The activity supports the central ministry and regional offices in rolling out training for supervisors and coaches, and activity staff conduct rotating, embedded mentorship in district offices. Districts work internally and hold collaborative inter-district meetings to develop and iteratively revise performance improvement plans. At midline and endline, the districts that improve on this metric over baseline are counted in the numerator for CBLD-9.

## Example 5. Private Sector Engagement in Youth Transitions to Employment (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)

*This example demonstrates: Youth workforce development sub-sector (p. 7); allowing for stakeholder input when pre-defining priorities (p. 10); and reporting qualitative data (p. 12, 19, and 20).*

**Activity Overview:** A youth workforce development activity aims to strengthen TVET programs and increase livelihood opportunities for youth. As part of the approach, the implementing partner works with local partner organizations to expand the number of private sector stakeholders that can connect youth to a wider range of employment and skill-building opportunities.

**Type of Organization Supported for Capacity Strengthening:** Local partners include CSOs representing businesses, such as the chamber of commerce and trade and business associations.

**Priority-Setting Process:** At the beginning of partnership with these CSOs, a SOAR analysis (refer to page 9) is conducted collaboratively between the implementing partner and each organization. Each local CSO works with the implementing partner to shape the analytical approach in order to identify areas where they are performing well, as well as areas to improve and opportunities to optimize their improvement. In the context of their collaboration with the activity, CSOs commit to improving private sector partnerships that can boost youth employment.

**Performance Goal:** CSOs increase the quantity and quality of private sector partnerships that engage youth in work-based training or employment.

**Performance Metric:** Number of private sector partnerships brokered and/or improved for work-based training or employment opportunities for youth.

**Measurement Approach and Reporting:** Each organization conducts an annual review of its performance using an evaluation rubric developed in collaboration with the implementing partner. Organizations document their progress in improving private sector engagement with youth to offer work-based training, internships, or employment. Reporting includes both quantitative data of the number of private sector partnerships and number of youth placed by each in work-based training or employment, as well as qualitative data in the form of a narrative explaining improvement in private sector partnerships in the areas identified in the improvement plan. Improvement on either the quantitative or qualitative measure qualifies the CSO to be counted in the CBLD-9 numerator.

## Example 6. Capacity Strengthening of Higher Education Institutions

*This example demonstrates: Higher education sub-sector (p. 7); subunits of a large institution as organizations (p. 5); and reporting qualitative data (p. 12, 19, and 20).*

**Activity Overview:** A USAID activity supports capacity strengthening of higher education institutions (HEIs) to improve their performance in preparing graduates for employment and success in the labor market. For example, an activity works to support career centers to improve their services to increase students' skills in job search, resume development, and interview competencies and to boost their outreach to employers to encourage them to post opportunities and recruit via the career centers. The activity also works with the academic departments to embed job readiness curricula across subject areas to strengthen learners' technical knowledge and soft skills.

**Type of Organization Supported for Capacity Strengthening:** Subunits of HEIs, such as academic departments and career centers.

**Priority-Setting Process:** In collaboration with the USAID activity, HEIs develop a contextualized organizational performance index-type rubric designed to inform capacity and performance improvement action planning focused on student employment preparation. HEIs administer the tool to the relevant subunits (e.g., career centers, academic units) with the activity's support. The assessment is used by subunit leaders to prioritize areas for improvement and develop a tailored capacity strengthening plan for relevant subunits or departments in the HEI.

**Performance Goal:** Subunits improve performance in various aspects of preparing graduates for success in the labor market. Career centers strive to improve services offered to improve student job-seeking competencies. Academic departments focus on integrating job readiness curricular content.

**Performance Metric:** Career centers use a performance metric for which they already have data collection systems in place: “number of job offers and work-based opportunities secured by students via their services.” For academic departments, the performance metric is the “number of courses demonstrating satisfactory integration of the new job readiness curricular content within their delivery and assessment.” A rubric is developed defining quantitative and qualitative standards to ensure reliable evaluation of this curricular integration.

**Measurement Approach and Reporting:** The performance of each HEI subunit is evaluated and counted separately in the annual indicator reporting. Each subunit (career center or academic unit) conducts an assessment on an annual basis, using the appropriate metric as defined above for reporting on CBLD-9. In addition, subunits may choose to continue annual evaluation of performance across additional priority categories, such as external partnerships, administrative efficiency, and instructional capacity. The qualitative input is gathered with the objective of developing the narrative for reporting on the indicator. In addition, the activity invests time annually in producing Stories of Change, a method for detailing in narrative form how performance improvement has occurred at an organization; refer to page 16 for more detail on this methodology.