



USAID Higher Education Framework and Resources for Changing Contexts

CIES 2021

Presenters



**Samantha Alvis,
PhD**

Senior Advisor,
Higher Education
USAID



Morgan McMaster
Program Assistant, USAID
Education Support
Initiative, Dexis
Consulting Group



Deborah Greebon
Senior MEL Advisor
USAID Education
Support Initiative,
Dexis Consulting
Group

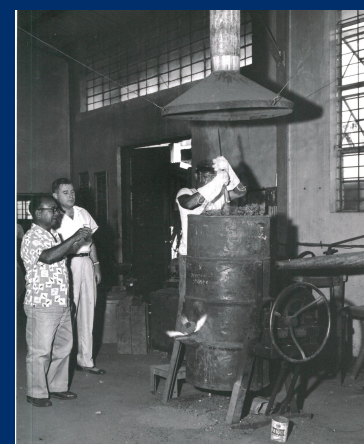
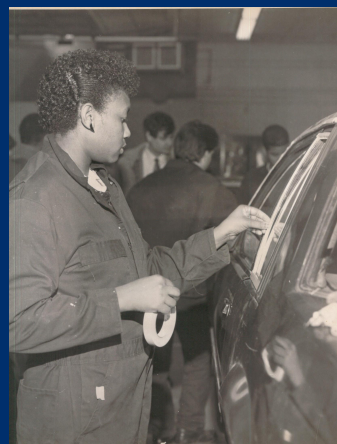
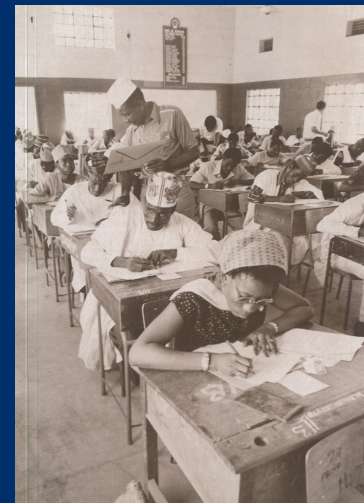


Ilham Chelabi
Consultant (RA),
USAID Education
Support Initiative, Dexis
Consulting Group



USAID's Higher Education Program Framework and the Future of Programming

—
Samantha Alvis



About USAID

USAID leads USG international development and humanitarian efforts to **save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance** and help people progress beyond assistance.

USAID has programming in 100+ countries to:

- Promote Global Health
- Support Global Stability
- Provide Humanitarian Assistance
- Catalyze Innovation and Partnership
- Empower Women and Girls



USAID Education Policy

- **Vision:** A world in which education systems in our partner countries enable all children and youth to acquire the education and skills needed to be productive members of society.
- The **primary purpose** of USAID's education programming is to achieve sustained, measurable improvements in learning outcomes and skills development.



USAID EDUCATION POLICY

November 2018



Education Policy Priorities

- Increasing access to quality education for children and youth, particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable.
- Ensuring children and youth gain literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills that are critical to future learning.
- Helping youth gain the skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment, and positively contribute to society.
- Supporting higher education institutions to have the capacity to be central actors in development.

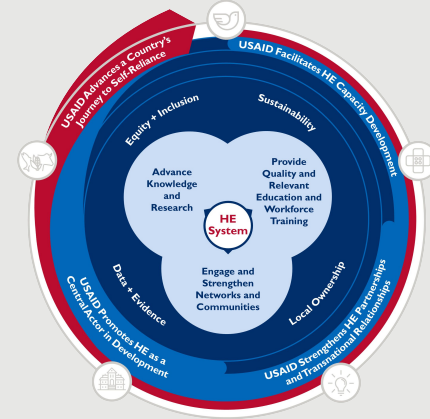
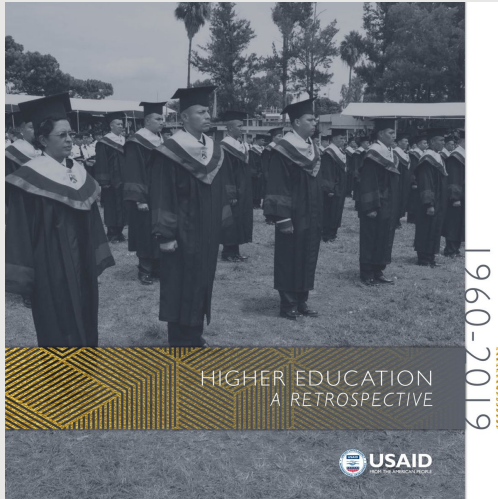


Education Policy Principles

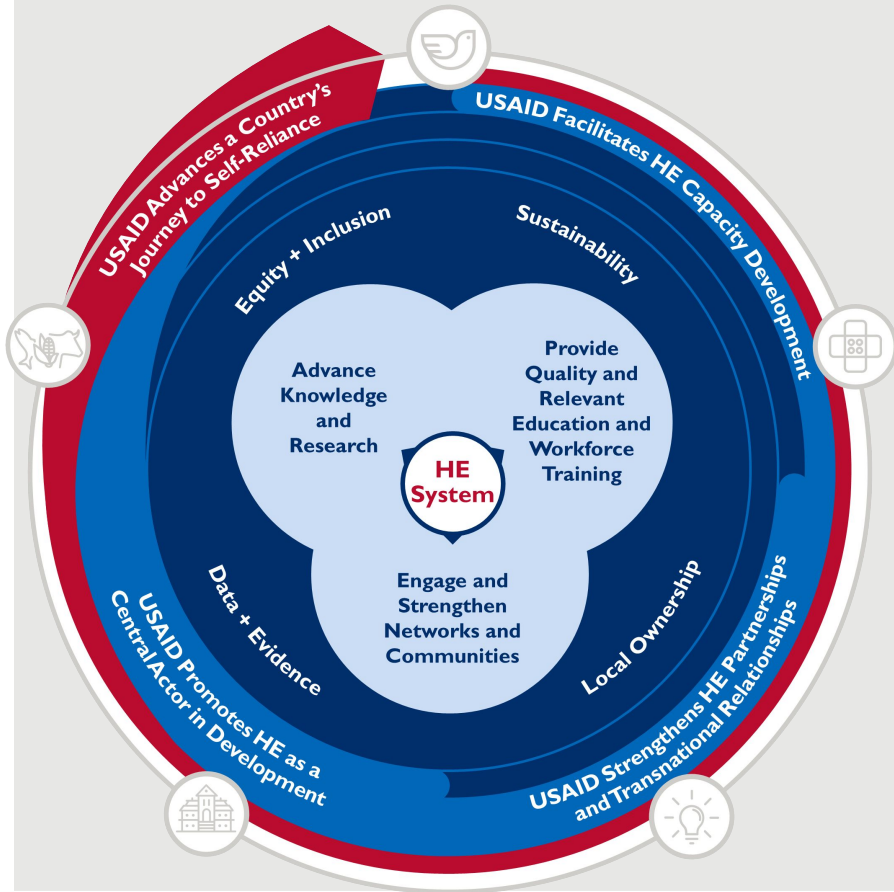
- Prioritize **country-focus and ownership**
- Focus and concentrate investments on measurably and sustainably improving **learning and educational outcomes**
- **Strengthen systems** and develop capacity in local institutions
- Work in **partnership** and leverage resources
- Drive decision-making and investments using **evidence and data**
- Promote **equity and inclusion**



USAID Higher Education Past, Present, and Future



Higher Education Program Framework

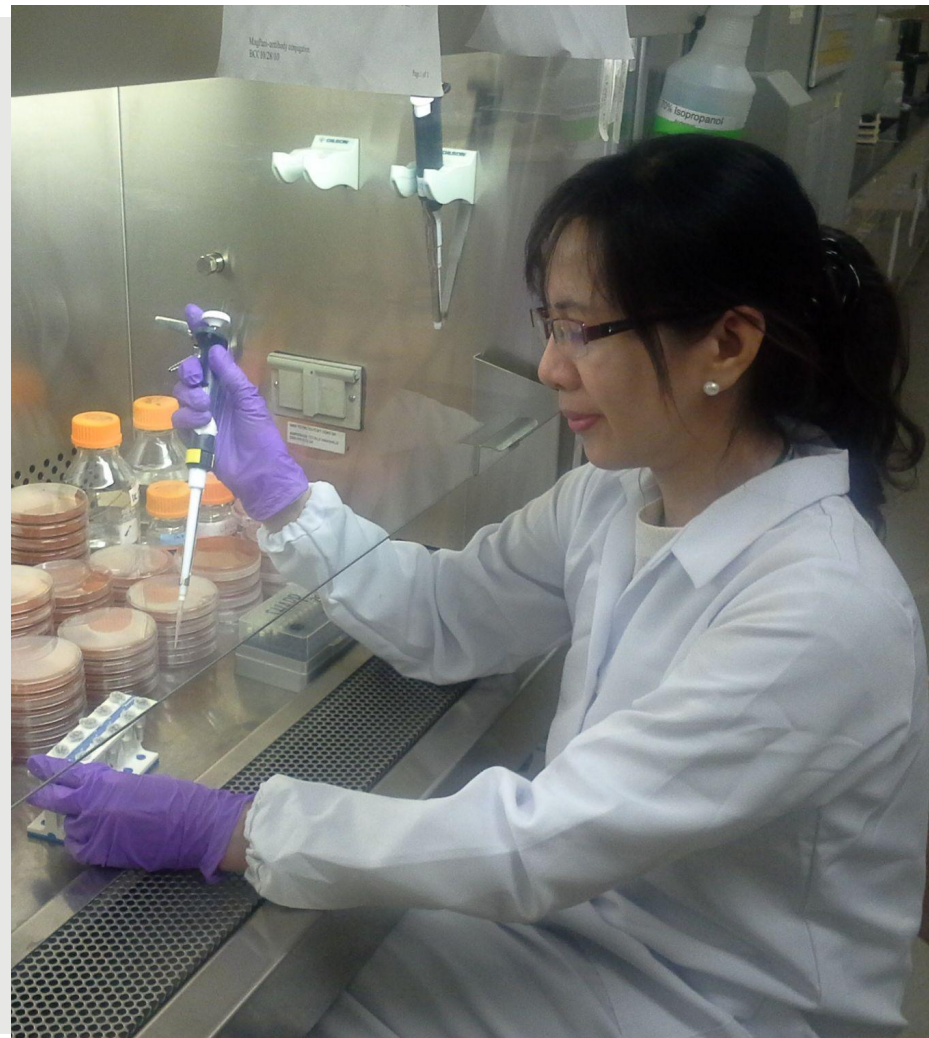


Three Outcomes of USAID-Funded Higher Education Programming

- Developing the capacity of individuals and higher education institutions
- Strengthening partnerships and transnational relationships
- Promoting higher education as a central actor in locally led development

Higher Education Future

- Puts the higher education system at the center
- Based on data and evidence of what works
- Focused on locally-led development
- Partnerships with two-way learning that are equitable from design through implementation





EducationLinks and USAID's Higher Education Resources

Morgan McMaster



EducationLinks

EDUCATIONLINKS

USAID
FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

ABOUT RESOURCES TOPICS LEARNING ANNOUNCEMENTS EVENTS

Education: Opportunity Through Learning

USAID invests in global education because we know that the positive effects of education are far-reaching - that it serves as a driver for all other development and for the reduction of extreme poverty.

VIEW TOPICS →

EDUCATIONLINKS IS THE SPACE TO EXPLORE THE LATEST learning, resources and events in USAID education.

www.edu-links.org

USAID Higher Education: A Retrospective: 1960 - 2020

Vision: Chronicle the way in which higher education has contributed to and benefitted from U.S. development efforts.

Goals:

- Highlight the **breadth and depth** of higher education programming at USAID
- Chronicle the **evolution and adaptation** of higher education activities
- **Tell the story** of higher education at USAID



Retrospective Approach

Research Methods

- Desk Review
- Participant and Personnel Interviews
- Analysis of Congressional Reporting

51

Activity Spotlights

6

Individual Profiles

427

Activities Identified

USAID HIGHER EDUCATION: A RETROSPECTIVE 1960-2020

1960-1970 Countries within the Near East and South Asia region emerging and during the 1960s included Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Turkey, Yemen, Yord and Oman, Persians, Turkish, etc. During the 1960s, some European countries were added to the region, and it was named as the Near East and Europe until the beginning of the 1990s.

1980 **Near East**

During the 1980s, institutions of higher education became major actors in regional development. Creating skilled labor for all sectors, including agriculture, education, administration, and engineering was their primary focus. Overall assistance to the Near East concentrated on economic diversification through the strengthening of the industrial sector. Activities engaging higher education were mainly focused on investing in individuals to provide them with experience and expertise to be utilized in their home countries in the private or public sector. Universities in the Near East received assistance adding and updating science and technology curriculum in universities. Engineering disciplines were created to increase the competitiveness of the industrial sector to aid in the evolution of Near East economies.

1990-2000

2010-2020

IMPACT STORY

Michaela Erbenová

In 2005, Michaela Erbenová was among the first class of students to enter CERISE's (its name later changed to the newly established Ph.D. program, at the time, she knew little of what an economic education would entail, but was drawn to a community of students and academics that were dedicated to improving the world around them. At CERISE, Erbenová was part of a program that, from the beginning, sought to become an internationally competitive. Students from all over Central and Eastern Europe received instruction from economists representing a host of Western nations and she was exposed to opportunities to continue her education on a global scale. She spent semesters at both the Tinbergen Institute in Amsterdam and Princeton University before becoming a consultant for the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development assisting the Czech Republic in its transition to join the European Union. During this period she worked also at Charles University, former of CERISE, as a lecturer, educating the next generation of economists and policy leaders. Erbenová's specialization in international cooperation while at the Czech National Bank spanned her well when, in 2007, she joined the operational Monetary Fund. There, she was responsible for oversight of the Fund's work in regulation and supervision policies for international financial markets until 2016 when she was called upon to represent the Czech Republic and seven other European nations as an Executive Director on the IMF Executive Board. Of the 24 Executive Directors, she was one of only two women and the first in 10 years from the Czech Republic. Erbenová was able to use her platform while on the Executive Board to represent not only her Central and Eastern European constituency, but women at the Fund and throughout the world. After her two-year appointment, Erbenová returned to the IMF, where she serves currently as the Assistant Director of the largest department.

Source: Michaela Erbenová interviewed by Morgan McKinley. Personal Interview. Washington, D.C., October 4, 2015.

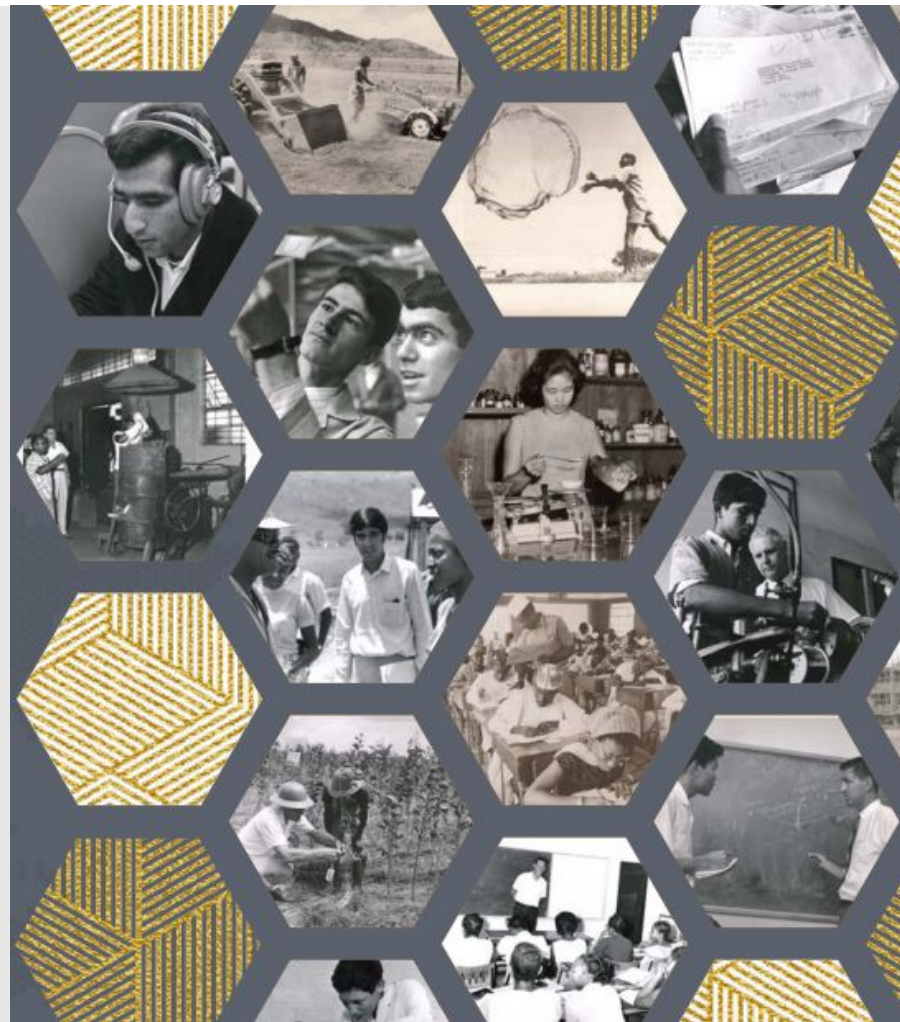
1920s - Europe & the Newly Independent States

73

Selected Findings of the Retrospective

Trends in Higher Education Programming

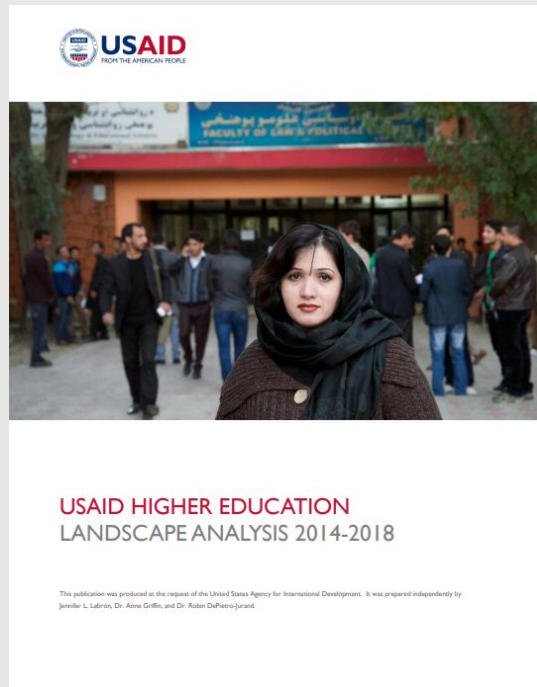
- Evolution in focus of higher education activities
- Higher education institutions as lasting investments
- Scholarship Assistance Models
- Partnership Models
- Monitoring and Evaluation Rigor



USAID Higher Education Landscape Analysis 2014-2018

Objectives:

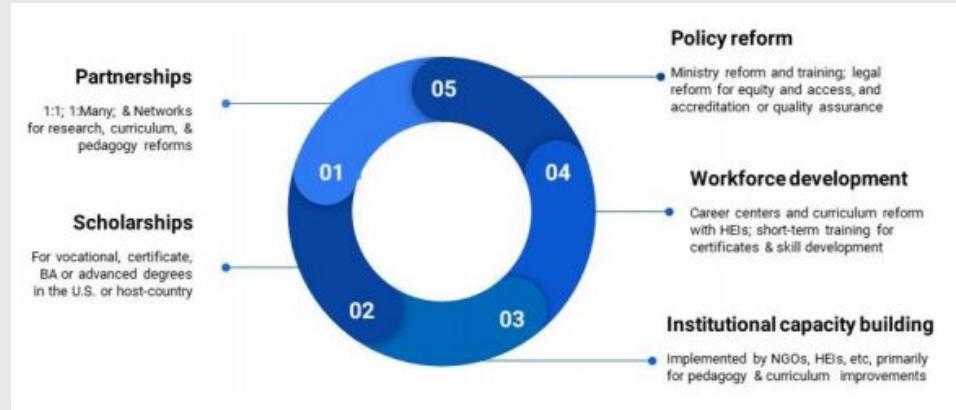
1. **Determine what HE engagement** happened across USAID Operating Units from FY 2014 to FY 2018.
2. **Identify successes, challenges, lessons learned, and gaps** of higher education program implementation.
3. **Share experiences** on the contribution of HE programming to achieving development priorities.
4. **Inform future USAID HE programming** and how higher education institutions (HEIs) can be integrated into programming.



HE Engagement at USAID

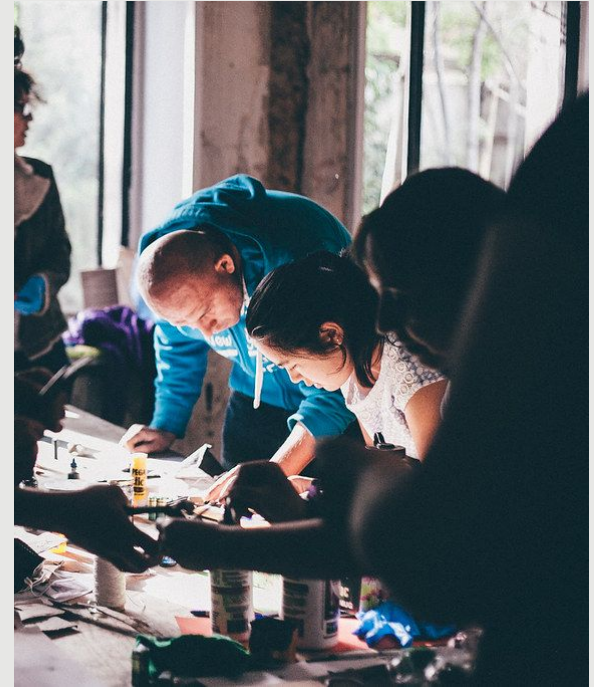
Higher Education...

- Takes many different forms
- Occurs across USAID Operating Units
- Institutions are both partners in and recipients of USAID assistance
- Is used to achieve development objectives across sectors



Recommendations for Future Programming

1. Focus on institutional capacity development
2. Continue to engage the private sector and clarify workforce development goals
3. Strategically improve coordination and communication within USAID bureaus, operating units, and missions
4. Create meaningful mechanisms to collect data
5. Generate, collect and disseminate evidence





USAID's Higher Education Learning Agenda

Deborah Greebon



The Higher Education Learning Agenda

5 Themes

10 questions

USAID Higher Education LEARNING AGENDA QUESTIONS

Management and Financing of Systems and Institutions

1. How can Higher Education (HE) systems and institutions become more strategic in planning, implementing, and monitoring core activities (e.g., enrollment, academic programs, research, and outreach)?
2. How can financing of HE systems and institutions become more sustainable?

Academic Programs

3. How can the viability and effectiveness of online and other forms of distance education be improved?
4. How can skills or competencies (e.g., technical and soft skills) for employability best be identified, analyzed, and incorporated into curricula, teaching, and learning?
5. How can the practice and culture of teaching become more learner-centered?

Research and Innovation

6. How can HE systems and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) play a more active role in the development and strengthening of national and regional innovation ecosystems?

HEI Outreach and Engagement

7. How can HEIs collaborate most effectively with the private sector to enhance the relevance and quality of teaching and learning, and research and innovation?
8. How can USAID best partner with HEIs to make use of local knowledge and expertise?

Access, Equity, and Student Services

9. How can HE access, retention, and completion rates be improved for underrepresented populations (e.g., women, indigenous and marginalized populations, and people with disabilities)?
10. What institutional and behavioral changes are needed to improve gender awareness and gender equity?

Higher Education Learning Agenda Development and Approach

The Agency-wide Higher Education Learning Agenda was developed collaboratively with over 100 individuals from USAID Missions, USAID Washington, implementing partners, and other stakeholders. These contributors supported learning agenda development and catalyzed a collective movement towards advancing the higher education evidence base.

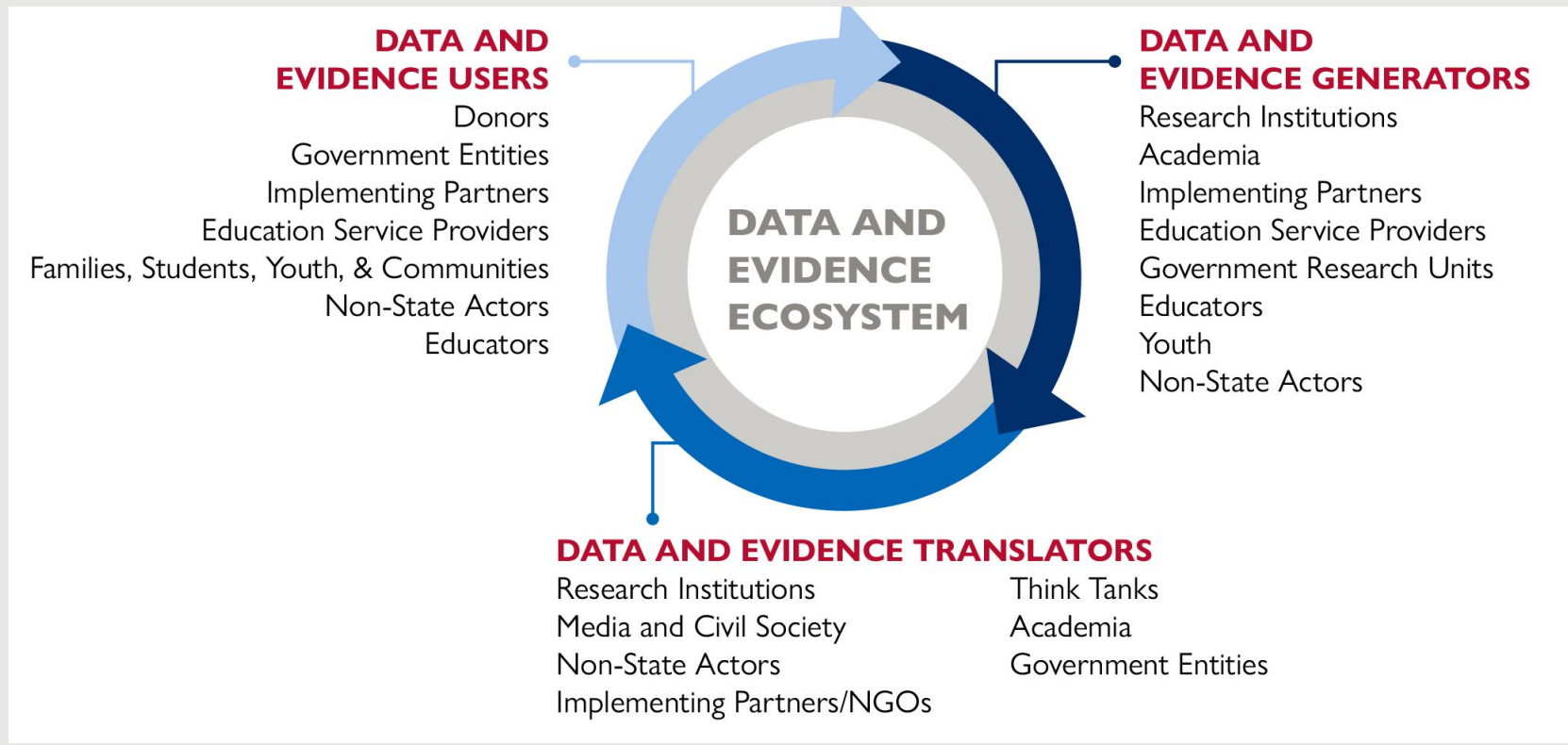
Questions in this learning agenda are diverse and require different approaches:

- **Evidence Generation:** Minimal evidence exists for these questions, which require generation of new evidence.
- **Evidence Gathering:** Evidence exists for these questions, but it is dispersed and requires gathering and analysis to transform it into usable information.
- **Evidence Dissemination:** Evidence exists in a usable form, but it is relatively unknown and requires targeted dissemination and socialization.

Visit edu-links.org/HELearningAgenda on EducationLinks for more information. We invite you to join us in implementing and learning through USAID's Higher Education Learning Agenda!



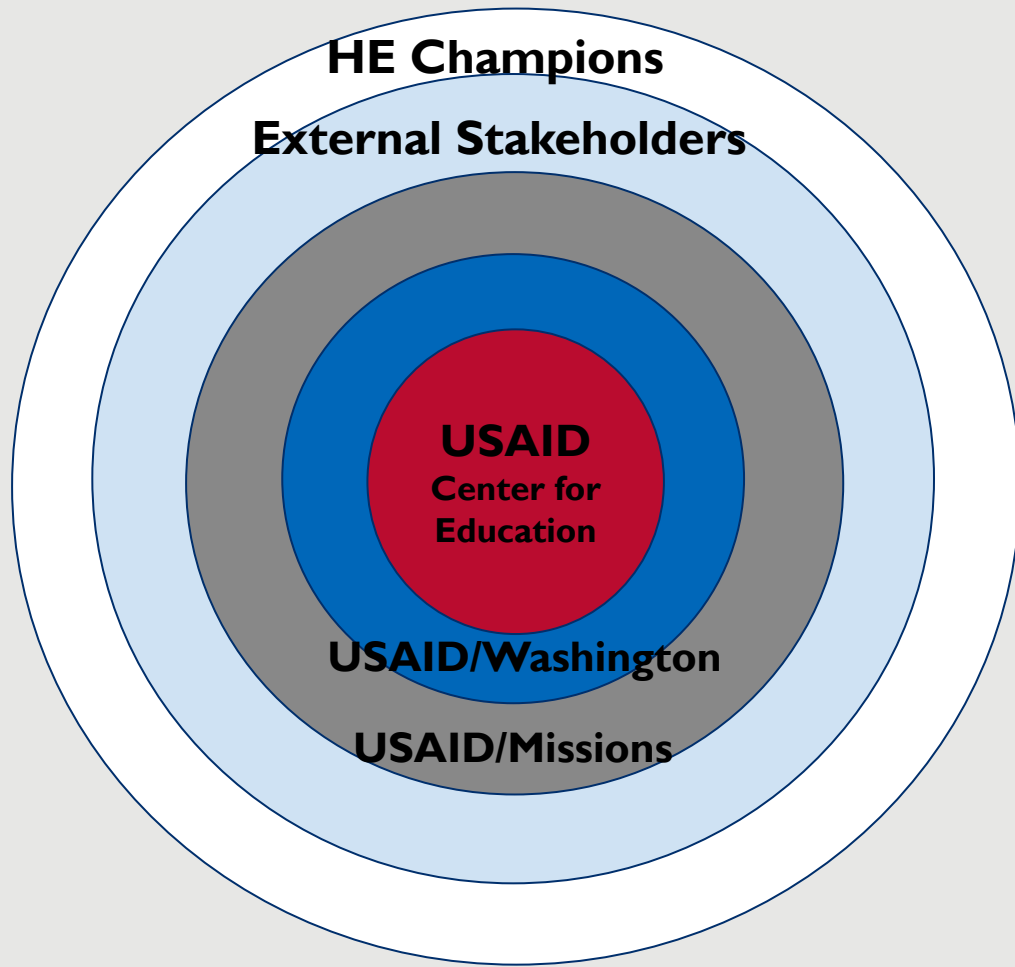
Goal: Improve the Data and Evidence Ecosystem



Learning Agenda Development Process



1. Stakeholder Analysis
2. Workshops to engage USAID staff, Implementing Partners, and the Higher Education community
3. Questions Finalized
4. Evidence Review and Gap Map
5. Implementation Plan



Engagement in the Development of the Learning Agenda

USAID/Missions = USAID Mission staff from 8 Missions

External Stakeholders = 60 partners, HE associations, HEIs from US and abroad

HE Champions = nearly 300 external stakeholders who follow USAID's HE work

Learning Agenda Themes and Questions

	QUESTION	THEME
1	Strategy: How can higher education systems and institutions become more strategic in planning, implementing and monitoring core activities (e.g., enrollment, academic programs, research, and outreach)?	Management and Financing of Systems and Institutions
2	Sustainable Financing: How can financing of higher education systems and institutions become more sustainable?	
3	Distance Education: How can the viability and effectiveness of online and other forms of distance education be improved?	Academic Programs
4	Skills for Employability: How can skills or competencies (e.g., technical and soft skills) for employability best be identified, analyzed, and incorporated into curricula, teaching, and learning?	
5	Learning: How can the practice and culture of teaching become more learner-centered?	
6	Innovation Ecosystems: How can higher education systems and higher education institutions (HEIs) play a more active role in developing and strengthening national and regional innovation ecosystems?	Research and Innovation
7	Private Sector Collaborations: How can HEIs collaborate more effectively with the private sector to enhance the relevance and quality of teaching and learning, and of research and innovation?	HEI Outreach and Engagement
8	HEI Expertise: How can USAID best partner with HEIs to make use of local knowledge and expertise?	
9	Underrepresented Groups: How can higher education access, retention, and completion rates be improved for underrepresented populations (e.g., women, indigenous and marginalized populations, and people with disabilities)?	Access, Equity, and Student Services
10	Gender: What institutional and behavioral changes are needed to improve gender awareness and gender equity?	

Evidence Gap Ranking



1. **Generation**: Minimal evidence exists for these questions, new evidence required.
 - Q2 Finance
 - Q6 Innovation ecosystems
 - Q8 HEI expertise
2. **Capture**: Evidence exists, but is dispersed and needs analysis to transform it into usable information.
 - Q5 Learning
 - Q9 Underrepresented groups
 - Q10 Gender
3. **Dissemination**: Evidence exists in a usable form, but it is relatively unknown and requires dissemination.
 - Q1 Strategy
 - Q7 Private Sector Collaborations
 - Q3 Distance Education
 - Q4 Skills for Employability

Learning Agenda Implementation: Phases

..... PHASE 1

..... PHASE 2

OBJECTIVE 1:
Build Awareness & Participation
in the Learning Agenda

OBJECTIVE 2:
Advance Learning through Evidence Generation & Synthesis

OBJECTIVE 3:
Promote Evidence Dissemination & Use

Learning Agenda Implementation: Stakeholders for Collaboration

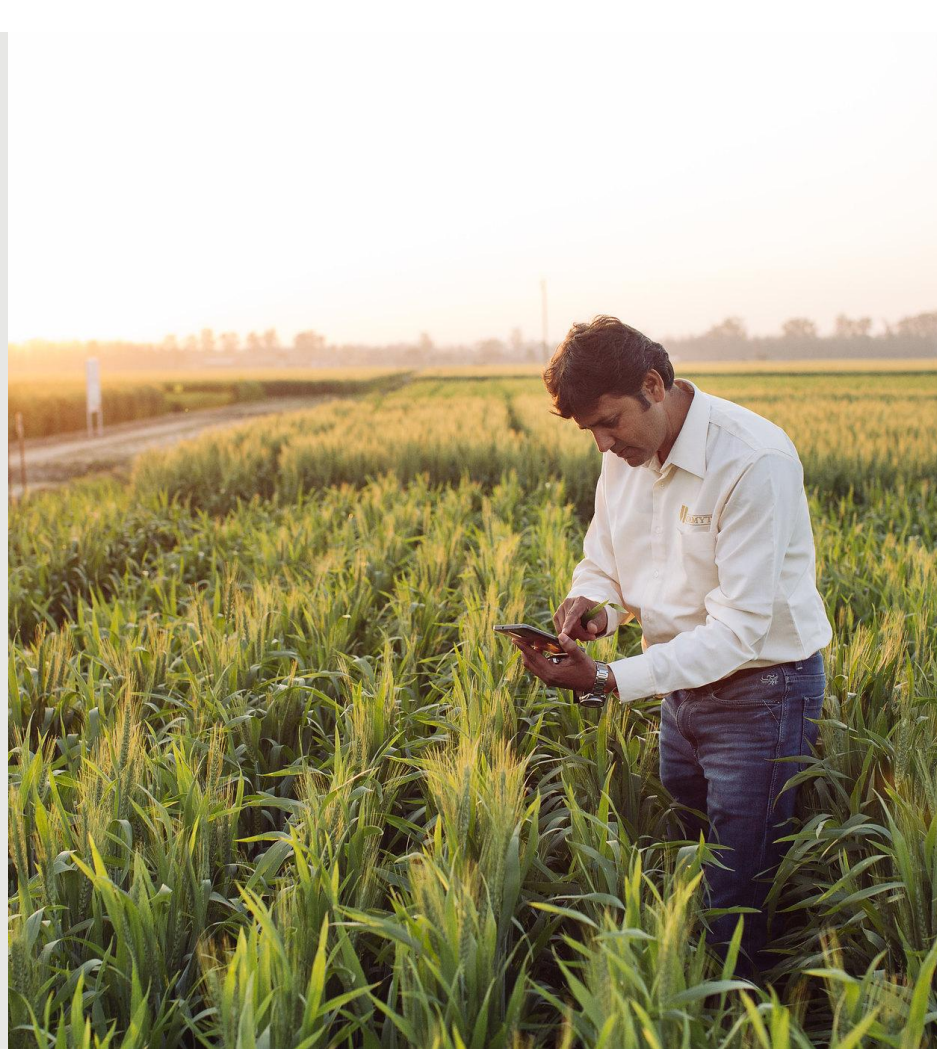
- USAID Missions and Operating Units (internal)
- Implementing Partners
- Researchers and Research Institutions



How You Can Collaborate: Partner with Us!

- Submit concept notes, applications, and proposals that incorporate learning questions
- Align research interests and complete research projects of mutual interest
- Inform us of knowledge and research related to learning agenda themes
- Keep up-to-date by checking our site:
<https://www.edu-links.org/resources/usaaid-higher-education-learning-agenda>
- Join networks and communities of practice

Contact us at helearning@usaid.gov





Higher Education Scholarships For Development

Ilham Chelabi





Consultancy Project Aims

- Identify **good practices, challenges and opportunities** within USAID Higher Education Scholarships
- **Advocate** for **evidence-based approaches** in higher education scholarships programming
- **Enhance** USAID students' learning and university experience, emphasizing **student-centered approaches**
- Create **12 knowledge products** for current and future USAID higher education scholarships programming.

Our approach

Methods

- Interviews
- Document review
- Follow up

Diversity of programs

- Embedded
- Stand-Alone Programs



Research Questions

1. What are the main challenges to designing, implementing, and managing successful USAID scholarship programming?
2. What are existing promising approaches used in scholarship program design, implementation, and management?
3. What additional information do USAID staff and implementing partners need to design, implement, and manage scholarship programming effectively?
4. What is the most convenient presentation or type of knowledge products for USAID staff and implementing partners to use?
5. What are the focal areas (trends, populations, questions) which need further consideration or investigation for the next stage of USAID scholarship programming?

Higher Education Scholarships Toolkit

1. **Seven Important Questions to Ask when Designing a USAID Scholarship Activity**
2. Stages of Implementing a USAID Scholarship: Placing Students at the Center
3. **Good practices for Scholarships Embedded in Larger USAID Initiatives**
4. Diversifying Scholarships: Lessons Learned in Supporting Students who are Marginalized
5. Beyond Financial Assistance: Good Practices for Extracurricular Programming in USAID Scholarships
6. **USAID Scholarship Alumni Engagement: Good Practices Paper**
7. Guidance for Monitoring, Evaluating, and Learning for Scholarship Activities
8. Higher Education Storytelling Toolkit
9. Case Study: Program to Extend Scholarships and Training to Achieve Sustainable Impact (PRESTASI)
10. Case Study: Afghanistan's Women's Scholarship Endowment
11. Annotated Bibliography of USAID Evaluations of Scholarship Activities
12. Glossary of Terms and Additional Resources

Seven Important Questions to Ask while Designing a USAID Scholarship Activity

A Checklist of questions and subquestions that provides a starting point for **USAID Mission and Washington staff** to:

- **Determine** if scholarship programming is a good fit to achieve development objectives
- **Avoid** pitfalls in activity design
- **Help adapt** the activities to the local context
- **Account for** possible risks associated with the activity and **mitigate** them



Scholarships Embedded in Larger USAID Activities

This **good practices brief** is focused on embedded scholarships. It helps USAID designers and implementers to:

- **Think strategically** about how higher education scholarships activities fit with other interventions
- **Enhance** the scholarships activities' quality, scope, and impact
- **Identify** how other aspects of the larger activity can improve the scholarship or alumni experience for the student
- **Match** qualified graduates with **employment** and other opportunities



Scholarship Alumni Engagement

This good practice brief is designed to:

- **Plan for alumni engagement** according to the intended outcomes of their scholarship.
- **Integrate** alumni into scholarship and other programming for USAID
- **Identify challenges** to successful engagement
- **Highlight good practices** in current alumni engagement across USAID



Scholarships Tool Kit will be at <https://www.edu-links.org/>

EDUCATIONLINKS



ABOUT

RESOURCES

TOPICS

LEARNING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS



Education: Opportunity
Through Learning

— Discussion

