



ALIGN READINESS CHECKLIST

TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNTRY-LEVEL DECISION MAKERS



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ALIGN READINESS CHECKLIST

Overview: Use this document to determine a specific context's readiness to conduct the ALIGN process. Readiness is defined as the context's motivation and collective capacity to facilitate ALIGN and follow through on actions identified to address gaps or misalignments found through the ALIGN process.

Instructions: It is recommended that this document be completed by relevant decision-makers as well as curriculum experts in reading and mathematics. If you would like to have an ALIGN specialist review the completed checklist and provide feedback, email it to alignhelpdesk@edc.org along with your name, position, organization or institution, and country.

STEPS TO DETERMINE A COUNTRY'S READINESS TO CONDUCT ALIGN

1. Determine the context's interest in conducting ALIGN.
2. Evaluate the context's goals and motivation to conduct ALIGN.
3. Evaluate the context's ability to carry out the ALIGN process (time, technical expertise, financial resources, etc.)
4. Evaluate the context's ability and willingness to follow through on actions identified to address gaps or misalignments found in the ALIGN process.

STEP 1: Determine the context's interest in conducting ALIGN.

Review the [Interactive Introduction To The Global Proficiency Framework](#) and the [ALIGN For Minimum Proficiency Guidance Note](#) to develop a basic understanding of the Global Proficiency Framework (GPF) and how ALIGN can be used before answering the question below.

1. Do you want to more closely align your context's pedagogical supports (curriculum, teaching and learning materials, teacher training, and assessments) to the GPF (and other frameworks of interest) to ensure that students are prepared to meet minimum proficiencies in reading and mathematics?

Yes No

If YES, continue to Step 2.

If NO, refer to Steps to Build Readiness for ALIGN.

STEP 2: Evaluate the context's goals and motivation to conduct ALIGN.

Instructions: Answer each of the questions below based on your contextual priorities and stakeholder interest.

1. What immediate needs do you have in your context that you hope ALIGN will help you address? Do you have questions you would like to answer through the ALIGN process?
2. Which pedagogical components are you interested in evaluating through the ALIGN process? Select all that apply.

Curriculum standards and the curriculum

Teaching and learning materials (TLM)

Teacher training

Assessment

3. What target areas would you like to focus on in the ALIGN process? Select all that apply.

Formal, basic education sector

Non-formal education sector

Specific grade levels: *List grades*

Specific populations of students (e.g., language group, disability group): *List groups*

Specific programs (e.g., accelerated learning, catch-up, tutoring, etc.): *List programs*

4. How do you plan to use the ALIGN process in your context? Select all that apply.

Prepare for a new USAID funding cycle focused on improving reading and/or mathematics learning to co-design a new activity with USAID.

Develop a national action plan to improve reading and/or mathematics learning outcomes (e.g., improve performance on Sustainable Development Goal 4.1.1a or b and/or international assessments).

Develop an action plan to align formal and non-formal education programming to ensure certification or a successful transition into the formal education sector for students.

Develop an action plan to align national and local education systems.

Inform revisions of reading and/or mathematics education inputs (curriculum, teacher training, teaching and learning materials, and assessments).

Identify realistic short- and medium-term learning targets in reading and mathematics.

Provide data to decision-makers to advocate for informed education sector planning or for the development or revision of materials, supports, strategies, or policies.

Other:

5. Based on your answers above, have you identified a concrete justification for facilitating the ALIGN process and are you ready to be transparent and engage in an inclusive, participatory, data-driven decision-making process?

Yes No

If YES, continue to Step 3.

If NO, refer to Steps to Build Readiness for ALIGN.

STEP 3: Evaluate the context's ability to carry out the ALIGN process (time, technical expertise, financial resources, etc.).

Instructions: The inputs required for your ALIGN are dependent on the parameters you identified in Step 2. Reference the chart below or the ALIGN case studies to see what inputs were required for similar ALIGN processes.

INPUTS REQUIRED TO APPLY THE ALIGN PROCESS

Time

- The ALIGN process could take anywhere from one week to two to three months depending on the parameters of the ALIGN process and the types of activities selected.
- For example, the curriculum standards could be reviewed through a one-week workshop, while the textbook review may take place over a three-month period through a series of weekly meetings.
- After the ALIGN process, follow-up steps may include all the activities needed to update, finalize, and disseminate each component after review. The follow-up process can take several months or years depending on the number of revisions needed.

Leadership and Expertise

- One team leader who is based in-country to organize plans and teams. This person could be based in the Ministry of Education (MOE) or an implementing organization.
- Technical experts according to the parameters of the ALIGN selected (e.g., experts in reading and math curriculum development, teacher training and supervision, assessments, etc.).
- Technical experts may include representatives from the MOE, experts from implementing organizations, university-based experts, exemplary teachers, and local language specialists.
- As needed, international experts with familiarity with the GPF, MEL, reading, or numeracy instruction.

Budget

ALIGN expenses may include:

- Workshop(s) facilitation and hosting expenses (food, hall, materials).
- Per diem and travel expenses for workshop attendance.
- Fees and expenses for local or international consultants.
- Fees and expenses for local context experts to conduct data collection.

1. **Time:** Could the ALIGN process fit into any upcoming events? (e.g., national curriculum review, education sector planning, preparing for upcoming funding cycle, etc.)

2. **Experts:** Identify the experts you have to reliably conduct the ALIGN process according to the parameters you selected in Step 2. These may include technical experts.

Literacy experts for specific grade levels and/or program

Math experts for specific grade levels and/or program

Teacher training experts

Learning assessment experts

GPF expert

3. What is the availability of leadership, technical experts, and other local stakeholders for the ALIGN process? The time needed depends on the context and parameters selected.

4. **Budget:** Below are examples of expenses you may need to cover to conduct the ALIGN process. Place a checkmark next to the activities you have financial resources to cover and an X next to the activities you need but do not have resources to cover:

Workshop(s) facilitation and hosting expenses (food, hall, materials)

Per diem and travel expenses for workshop attendance

Fees and expenses for local or international consultants

Fees and expenses for local context experts to conduct data collection

Other:

6. Based on your answers above, do you have the time, expertise, and budget to facilitate the ALIGN process?

Yes No

If YES, continue to Step 4.

If NO, refer to Steps to Build Readiness for ALIGN.

STEP 4: Evaluate the context's ability and willingness to complete follow-up steps identified to address gaps or misalignments found through the ALIGN process.

Instructions: Below is a list of potential follow-up steps that could be considered for each component. For each of the components you selected, place a checkmark next to the steps you are currently able to complete and an X on the steps you are not able to complete at this time. (Note: Some of these activities may be discussed as concurrent.)

1. Curriculum standards and the curriculum

✓ X

Revise existing reading and mathematics curricula to fill in gaps and align with the GPF.

Pilot the revised curricula in 10-20 schools for six or more months (usually concurrent with TLM piloting).

Finalize the curricula based on feedback on the pilot and prepare the materials for publishing.

Roll out the updated curricula by publishing the materials and hosting teacher training.

2. Teaching and learning materials (TLM)

✓ X

Revise or create new pedagogical resources to fill in gaps and align with the GPF and/or updated curricula if it has already been through the ALIGN process.

Pilot the revised TLM in 10-20 schools for six or more months.

Finalize the TLM based on piloting feedback and prepare the materials for publishing and rollout.

Roll out the updated TLM by publishing the materials and hosting teacher training.

3. Teacher training

✓ X

Revise teacher training programs and their curricula to fill in gaps and align with the GPF and/or updated curricula if it has already been through the ALIGN process.

Pilot the revised curricula in teacher training institutions for six or more months.

Finalize the curricula based on piloting feedback and prepare the materials for publishing and rollout.

Roll out the updated teacher training curriculum by publishing the materials and hosting teacher training activities.

4. Assessment

✓ X

Revise assessments to align with the GPF and/or updated curricula if it has already been through the ALIGN process.

Administer the revised assessment in a representative sample of schools.

Use the [policy linking process](#) to set benchmarks so assessment results can be used for reporting, monitoring, and comparison nationally and internationally.

5. General

✓ X

Publicly acknowledge pedagogical priorities like those listed above by incorporating appropriate actions and targets in policy documents, for example, education planning frameworks.

7. Based on your answers above, do you currently have the capacity to carry out the follow-up steps for the components you selected?

Yes No

If YES, congratulations, you are ready to conduct the ALIGN!

If NO, refer to Steps to Build Readiness for ALIGN.

NOT READY TO CONDUCT THE ALIGN PROCESS YET?



PHOTO: FEED THE CHILDREN / AMOS GUMULIRA USAID/MALI

Steps to Build Readiness for ALIGN

The process is composed of the following stages:

1. **Assessment:** Steps 3 and 4 above have helped you to identify your context's readiness to facilitate the ALIGN process and the gaps you face towards implementation.
2. **Prioritization:** Motivation is the most important factor in building readiness for the ALIGN process. Once the appropriate stakeholders are motivated, they will make sources available more readily.
3. **Strategize:**
 - a. Learn more about the GPF and ALIGN process using the following resources:
 - i. [Interactive Introduction To The Global Proficiency Framework](#)
 - ii. [ALIGN guidance document](#)
 - iii. [ALIGN information sheet](#)
 - iv. [The ALIGN Kit](#)
 - v. [The ALIGN Planning Guide](#)
 - vi. ALIGN video (coming soon)
 - b. Conduct advocacy and training among stakeholders to develop an understanding of the GPF and ALIGN process, and their uses and to generate interest and motivation.

- vii. Identify which stakeholders have the decision-making power and resources necessary to carry out the ALIGN process (officials at the MOE, donors, implementing partners, etc.)
- viii. Identify priority needs within the education system that the ALIGN process could potentially address.
- ix. Identify opportunities to conduct the ALIGN process in the upcoming schedule (consider program cycle, curriculum revision, new MOE officials, etc.)
- x. Create a proposal for the ALIGN process for your context using the ALIGN Planning Guide.
- xi. Educate stakeholders about the ALIGN process (you can use the [Interactive Introduction To The Global Proficiency Framework](#) and [ALIGN Information Sheet](#)) and share the ALIGN proposal.