

e. GQ Technical Approach – Introduction/Overview: Youth Empowerment Services, Inc. (YES, INC.) has designed the Guaranteed Quality (GQ) Education for All Program based on the USAID Basic Recovery Education Activity application guidance and based upon YES, INC.'s 28 years of experience designing and implementing school district transformational systems in the USA. GQ includes a system that is guaranteed to meet and/or exceed the key activity objectives to 1) improve literacy instruction in pre-first and early primary grades, 2) Provide remedial reading interventions for students in first through third grade who are at risk for academic failure; 3) Implement social and emotional learning (SEL) interventions for all students in pre-first through third grade, 4) integrate the curriculum with the current curriculum program of ConBase, and 5) strengthen system-level input/processes to ensure improved reading and SEL outcomes for all children in the activity. -All GQ's activities will be provided in Spanish and English. Interpreters, who have native Spanish speaking fluency, will be utilized to ensure communication is clear, concise, and consistent. GQ will collaborate with MINERD and USAID (steering committee), school districts, school leaders, and the Dominican Association of Rehabilitation to intentionally include young people with disabilities. In its first year, GQ will target the region of Barahona with 5 districts and 82 schools where 410 teachers will be our target population. GQ levels up to add 7 schools from the San Juan De La Maguana region for the second year of implementation of the Basic Recovery Education Activity. We will add a new school district each subsequent year of the application. GQ will assign ten (10) Expert Teacher leaders to train and support teachers in strengthening their instructional skills to improve students' remedial reading ability. Once all training has been completed successfully each district will make decisions on the most effective teacher to lead in their district and centers. We will have a total of 21 teacher leaders for the region. Teacher leaders will be responsible for facilitating weekly teacher meetings (Unit meetings) where they will be trained on strategies from the Educator Effectiveness process to enhance teachers' instructional skills. They will be responsible for scheduling walk-throughs to observe the strategies taught in the meetings to ensure implementation with fidelity and to see what support is still needed for the teacher regarding the implementation of the strategy to strengthen teacher instructional skills. Each district will be responsible for assigning the teacher leader for their district. One (1) teacher leader per district is required to lead a minimum of five (5) teachers per district. Each teacher will receive a performance stipend annually of 10% of their annual pay not to exceed \$96 per year. (As approved by MINERD and USAID for sustainability). GQ will also work closely with districts to include marginalized populations such as children of Haitian descent, Venezuelan youth migrants, marginalized youth in groups such as orphans, trafficked and smuggled youth, and children and parents living with immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS). GQ will work with our vendor partners (see management plan) to support the creation of a customized needs assessment to address issues, gaps, and other factors that may require program adjustments in our implementation plan. We will work in collaboration with agencies in the Dominican Republic as required to make sure that we have a seamless integration of the program. We agree that the required management and oversight provided by the Steering Committee (MINERD and USAID) will guarantee that the targeted school districts will be ready to receive GQ implementation activities: including activities that are adequate and effective in improving literacy instruction, implementation of the Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plan, and closing long-standing gaps exacerbated by COVID-19 school closings.

YES, INC.,9/13,4 -We expect and anticipate that the Steering Committee will assist YES, INC. with collaborating with the school districts as we begin implementing the project to ensure that GQ has the flexibility to individualize, and utilize the best practices needed to involve all stakeholders to meet their individual district needs. The district leadership and YES, INC. will closely work with principals, and one teacher per district to create a Strategic Reading and Social-Emotional Wellbeing (SRSEW) Advisory Board to allow everyone to have a voice in decision-making, updates, and planning for major activities that will be implemented at district and center levels. Once organized, schedules will be developed for meeting times and places. The SRSEW Advisory Board will develop its mission, vision, and core values to ensure that students' needs are being met. The SRSEW Advisory Board members will share information learned in meetings with their campus stakeholders, bring back feedback on the success, or need for changes, to the initiatives, and will encourage buy-in. Written minutes will be kept, and shared, and leadership roles will be defined for continuity. Scheduled meeting agendas will be posted ahead of time. The Motivation, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan will support not only performance monitoring but will also promote knowledge sharing in a collaborative learning environment. The MEL plan is a fluid and living document that will be updated periodically in response to identified changes as needed in the activities and their context. *The implementation of the MEL plan will not happen until it is approved by the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR). GQ will implement research-based strategies to build capacity in developing fundamental foundational teaching skills that will improve teachers' ability to instruct children in literacy and social-emotional learning. These strategies will also strengthen system levels to improve reading and SEL outcomes for all children, through collaboration with USAID, MINERD, and other partner agencies in the Dominican Republic and in the United States. We will work collaboratively to ensure the most effective curriculum, activity design, and implementation to ensure the support of advancing positive climate action in and throughout the education system for all the children in the Dominican Republic. We will work closely with MINERD and partner Ministries to recruit, train, and support education leaders and plan for students, parents, and communities to work together to learn, grow, and change so that the sustainability of the activity outcomes can be implemented past the funding.

In IR-3.2 we explain how the Advisory Board creates the Advisory Committee at each district and at each school/center which consists of campus/center leaders, two (2) teachers per campus, and parents who represent the community. The overarching goal of the GQ activity is to enhance all educators' capacity to instruct children in reading, so they will be inspired to develop an appetite for becoming lifelong learners. YES, Inc. is designing the Guaranteed Quality Education for All Cooperative Agreement to meet the requirements of MINERD's strategic plan priorities: a) Provide consistent high-quality professional development to educational leaders and teachers, b) improve reading in pre-primary to 3rd grade with a targeted focus on decreasing the number of over-aged 3rd graders, c) improve and increase the ability of educators to integrate social-emotional learning strategies and activities into classroom instructions and d) help institutionalize the national education system so that concrete progress is realized throughout the year. YES, Inc. has and will continue to develop partnerships with agencies and businesses in the Dominican Republic and with the United

States that are committed to providing services, collaboration, materials, and supplies to ensure we are able to fully implement the activities in this application once funded. We will continue to reach out to the MINERD, Ministry of Development, Economy and Planning, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Women, and Dominican National Police to collaborate. YES, INC.,9/13,5 We will also collaborate with the United Nations Children's Fund, Business Action for Education, Fundacion Propagas, Dominican Initiative for Quality Education, and IDEICE. We will work closely with these organizations to ensure we can offer the highest quality of educational services to alleviate the repetition of students in the third grade and eradicate the children's inability to read at age-appropriate grade levels. YES, Inc. fully understands that barriers exist such as the ability to formally engage MINERD to start implementation however, we are in partnership with schools and businesses on the ground in the Dominican Republic who have contacts in the Ministry of Education with whom we can begin cultivating relationships to get the collaboration needed to implement the important work of ultimately institutionalizing nationally the inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes and have major impact on the educational system of the Dominican Republic. We are prepared to do the heavy lifting needed to achieve our goal to build all educators' capacity to instruct children in reading, so they will develop an appetite for becoming lifelong learners and ultimately want to continue their education past primary grades. We will work with our partners to gain access to vulnerable rural areas and remote communities to get internet services and technology for rural and vulnerable students for potential remote learning which will support learning for children in these areas. The impact of providing these services again will support reading and learning in these marginalized communities. Below you will find GQ's technical approach to the Basic Education Recovery Activity. A, B, and C is the detailed below, descriptive GQ plan for IR-1, IR2 and IR3.

- A. Intermediate Results (IR) 1: Objective: By the end of three (3) years of implementation of the activity 50% of the third-grade students will be reading at grade level and 50% of those retained will academically qualify to advance. Marcus Winters, a professor at Boston University said: "Holding back students increases their odds of dropping out." IR-1 – Third-grade students will demonstrate increased reading proficiency and decreased student repetition in marginalized schools by employing inclusive, remedial reading instruction through providing refinement, and reinforcement with resources. GQ will collaborate with vendors to customize a needs assessment that includes customized, hands-on, and real-world activities throughout the curriculum and lessons focusing on impacting the lives of the teachers and students.

(IR-1.1) Targeted schools utilize new and existing evidence-based inclusive teaching and learning remedial reading materials in grades pre-first to third: Once funding is awarded GQ will collaborate with MINERD and USAID to address the strategic priorities and present the ARC Core (American Reading Company) in alignment with ConBase, a research-based curriculum for reading in English and Spanish. The ARC program is a standards-based system that accelerates reading growth in English and Spanish in Grades PreK–12. Every child in America reading and writing will read on, or above, grade level. It is evidence-based practices and research that guide the development of the

curriculum. Parent meetings will be held to introduce the reading program to get buy-in so that parents support children in reading at home. This research-based curriculum has a proven record to increase student reading levels. "School Pace is a reinforcement for the ARC reading program that provides school leaders with insights into student data at the classroom, school, and district levels to monitor reading progress. A study of School Pace validity was conducted by the American Reading Company. GQ's approaches, objectives, expected outcomes, and activities are described in detail below. YES, INC., 9/13/16 We will also incorporate the Let's Begin with the Letter People Curriculum for pre-first learners. This curriculum is an early childhood literacy curriculum that uses 26 thematic units in English and Spanish. According to What Works Clearinghouse: "Let's Begin with the Letter People on the school readiness for preschool children to be medium to large for two outcomes domains- oral language and print language." The major focus is phonological awareness, including rhyming, wordplay, alliteration, and segmentation. We will align these materials and strategies to the UNICEF ConBase reading curriculum, which is to improve teacher quality, coordinate, and provide institutional management, and create an information and monitoring system to focus on developing more pedagogical skills. This curriculum will also be integrated with ConBase and will be taught in English and Spanish. Let's Begin with the Letter People® is an early education curriculum that uses thematic units to develop children's language and literacy skills. A major focus is phonological awareness, including rhyming, word play, alliteration, and segmentation. Let's Begin with the Letter People® is an early education curriculum that uses thematic units to develop children's language and literacy skills. Letter People programs follow a sequence that is grounded in what experts know about the order in which children typically acquire speech sounds. This reading curriculum incorporates the parents in the learning process for their students. This curriculum also allows for direct instruction of fundamental reading skills to increase pre-first to first reading skills. This curriculum increases inclusion and incorporates Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into the curriculum, teaching, learning materials, and instruction. Teachers will be trained in the implementation and strategies of this curriculum. The UDL is a framework designed specifically for educators. It is based on the principles of UDL that are used in architecture, space planning, and product development. UDL equips students in every classroom to face a variety of barriers that they must overcome to fully engage in a lesson. "UD and UDL address factors such as physical, emotional, behavioral, neurological and issues that impact education by promoting equity and inclusion." - umassglobal.edu/news/ -Learners with disabilities: GQ will work with MINERD and the Dominican Association of Rehabilitation to reach students with learning disabilities. GQ will provide teachers, administrators, and school staff with individualized multiple (1) one-day training that will focus on learners with disabilities. Some of the topics will include: 1) Empowering Success: 2) Strategies for accommodations and modifications, 3) Lesson Planning with Special Education in Mind, and 4) Classroom Management with Special Education in Mind. GQ will provide weeklong training that will include but is not limited to a) Understanding the Dominican Association of Rehabilitation guidelines, b) Focusing on Visual Impairment, c) Focusing on Hearing Impairment, d) Focusing on Autism, and e) Focusing on medical issues that

can lead to learning disabilities. GQ will work with MINERD to promote MINERD's framework to ensure services and strategies for students with disabilities are met. - Marginalized Populations: GQ will work closely with MINERD and its partners to ensure that we intentionally include young people with disabilities. GQ will also work closely to include marginalized populations such as children of Haitian descent, Venezuelan youth migrants, marginalized youth in groups such as orphans, trafficked and smuggled youth, and children and parents living with immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) receive the educational support needed. Teachers, administrators, and school staff will receive annual blood-borne pathogen training that will include training in the use of protective personal YES, INC., 9/13, 7 equipment (PPEs). Teachers, administrators, school staff, and parents will receive training in HIV/AIDS awareness yearly. Orphans trafficked or smuggled youth, children of Haitian descent, and Venezuelan youth migrants' awareness training will also be provided yearly. All training may be provided on a more frequent basis as needed.

(IR-1.2) School staff demonstrates strengthened capacity to deliver inclusive, remedial reading instruction in grades pre-first to third: GQ will implement the Educator Effectiveness Process (EEP). This major activity, the EEP process, is a comprehensive strategy for improving the performance of educators. It is a differentiated approach to provide teachers support based on their level of effectiveness. There are four core processes; 1) practical targeted professional development, 2) transparent, rigorous, and fair observations, 3) professional career options (grow your own) and 4) differentiated Human Capital Management System. This system comes with the United States Department of Education approval. Through the 2010 Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF 3) award, EEP began to go beyond the value-added outcomes-based success of the EEP process and is, in large part, a function of this integrated system of feedback that continually focused on reinforcing evidence-based teacher instructional behaviors that have been shown to result in significant student learning growth as measured by the Sanders' value-added model, which is how data is gathered. External professional development provided by YES, INC. and secured potential vendors (such as United Human Services, ProfoundEd, Kingdom Impact, and Baseline) for teacher training, leadership training, extended day remedial reading program, and summer camp. "External vendors were selected through a required RFP process and subject specific professional development related to reading and writing. Teachers who attend the professional development training will receive a daily stipend that is included in the budget based on their daily pay rate at the completion of the training. Research states that to have fully engaged participants in any program, best practice would be to get buy-in prior to the initiation of any program. This is clearly evidenced by the voluminous research on best practices in professional development. -GQ will collaborate with MINERD, districts, school leaders, teachers, and other school staff to obtain a minimum of 85% or above buy-in prior to implementing the activities of the program once the MEL plan has been approved. With the EEP process, all feedback and coaching teachers receive will directly tie to distinguishing teacher behaviors demonstrated during direct instruction that separates effective teachers from less effective teachers. Through the

2010 TIF 3 award, EEP began to go beyond the value-added outcomes-based results to a theory of educator effectiveness that required alignment of all the feedback a teacher received about instructional effectiveness to be tied to the same model. GQ will implement teacher observations that will give insight into where the teacher's strengths and current weaknesses are. We will use the EEP rubric which communicates expectations of quality teaching standards that delineate content criteria for scoring allowing educators the opportunity for self-evaluation, self-reflection, and peer review. The observation includes four (4) domains: 1) facilitation of student learning, 2) planning for learning, 3) mental, physical, and emotional learning, and 4) campus responsibility. The first three (3) domains establish the norms for student learning and teacher effectiveness in the class. The fourth domain establishes individual campus norms and associated individual teacher responsibilities. Teachers will receive three (3) observations annually from three (3) different certified observers. There will be a) announced observation and b) two unannounced observations. Each observation will be followed by a post conference with the announced YES, INC.,9/13,8 observation having a pre-conference prior to the observation. This program was also funded by the US Department of Education from 2010-2022 (12) years. EEP provides scores on observations and value-added scores. The value added is data that shows the rate of student progress and student level of results. The observation rubric is transparent, fair, reliable, valid, and rigorous will include research strategies for effective reading instruction and differentiation for multi-grade classrooms. Teachers who received a rating of 5, the highest score, based on their value-added (student growth) scores are considered to have the highest effectiveness ratings. There will be a customized teacher training program that will align with the MINERD, USAID, and individual campus' needs. We will collaborate with all stakeholders and other institutions to identify specific training needs and goals to enhance the professional development of educators. Teachers will be trained in differentiated instruction and provided with immediate feedback for growth to promote scaling up in their diversity and equity. Post-training support will be provided to focus on teachers' immediate needs. YES, INC. has secured an external company that will review and analyze our evaluation scores. The external company will be required to use statistical methodology and individual student achievement data to measure current academic gain or value-added data for a student or a group of students over a specific period. There are three (3) conditions that must be satisfied to accurately compute value added; 1) Each student must have at least three years of valid and reliable test data, 2) Each student's scores must be linked to his or her teacher and school. 3) At least five students per classroom are required to produce a reliable value-added score. YES, INC. has created the National Teacher Preservation University (NTPU) which specializes in teacher training for certification. We recognize the importance of teacher training institutions. This university will begin its freshman class in the Fall of 2024. The four-year program is virtual and utilizes grants and scholarships so that NTPU students do not have any out-of-pocket expenses. To improve the rate of teacher certification in the Dominican Republic. GQ will conduct a nationwide recruitment effort to interview, vet, and train potential teacher candidates for marginalized schools on a yearly basis. GQ mentors and coaches will work closely

with teacher candidates to help them prepare and pass their teacher assessment certification tests. GQ will partner with NTPU to support effective teacher training. Currently, all 5 of the school districts and 16 campuses who participated in the EEP program (100%) interviewed, reviewed demonstration lessons, and/or hired teachers from our teacher recruitment pipeline. This will allow the new hires to get acclimated to the district's culture, and processes, and prepare them to be effective starting on day one of the school year. YES, Inc. was able to recruit over 3,000 teachers who we interviewed, vetted, and trained for our HireUP teacher pipeline. Due to the effectiveness of our recruitment efforts and the pipeline process, one superintendent even commented. "We are all extremely excited about how well we are going to be able to prepare the teachers [through the Pipeline]. In fact, our existing teachers are jealous they didn't have these opportunities". Another leader said that "the Pipeline gives insights to candidates for a longer period" and yet another leader stated, "A lot of the success we have found is after spending so much time looking at hiring someone,". According to EEP records the average retention rate for educators in each high-need school rose to 72%. Before EEP, historically, all the charter LEA's (Districts) participating in the USDE programs had retention rates far below 30 – 40%. In 2010 before this work began, some of our Districts experienced a 100% turnover rate. After six years of implementing these programs, most of our Districts boosted their retention rates up to 80% - 100%. GQ will provide comprehensive YES, INC., 9/13, 9 training to strengthen their capacity to deliver inclusive, remedial reading instruction in grades pre-first to third. Teachers will participate in intensive educator training to prepare them to become more effective in classroom instruction. GQ will partner with consultants who are experts in their field as well as engage current YES, INC. staff with more than 200 years of combined educational experience that includes, superintendents, principals, counselors, special education teachers, general education teachers, and early childhood specialists to share their proven strategies and best practices. These training topics will include Emergent Literacy Strategies, Evaluating and Analyzing Data, Lesson Planning, Technology Use, Classroom Management, Social Emotional Learning, Understanding Your Why, Cultural Responsiveness, Work-Life Balance, Teacher Wellness, UDL Strategies, and the Reading Best Practices Five Strategies just to name a few. We will collaborate with MINERD and school leaders to ensure the customization of topics for the training. Weekly job-embedded professional development for teachers will include weekly walkthroughs and data-driven unit meetings, three (3) to five (5) days of mentor training, weekly in-class mentoring for teachers, bi-weekly executive coaching for principals and leadership, and teacher observations training and classroom observations. Research states the following: Teacher professional development allows teachers to reach their set goals. Accordingly, setting teaching career goals is a significant part of being an educator. The following quote states: "Educators can adjust their goals into more realistic achievements through professional development programs by creating a measurable timetable that reflects their personal and professional growth." Once trained mentors and mentees will be assigned to ensure the best fit for each mentee. Mentors will be matched with mentees in the same grade level, subject, and center/campus. If it is not possible to match this way the mentor

must be matched with a mentee with the same grade level, subject from another center/campus. Teachers will learn to use the monitoring, evaluation, and learning plans (MEL) to include baseline assessments to ensure accountability. We will determine what professional development is needed through classroom observations, leadership input, mentor and coaching input, and any requirements of the MINERD. Pre-primary teachers will receive coaching and mentoring in emergent literacy best practices and grade-level transitional procedures to ease the transition from pre-primary to primary grades. Evidence from a meta-analysis from Harvard professor Matthew Kraft suggests that: “instructional coaching can be more effective than traditional professional development in creating meaningful and lasting change in teacher practices”- superschool.org/teaching-learning/ GQ will collaborate with MINERD to assist teachers in lesson planning and lesson planning cycles to support educational outcomes. GQ staff will work with teachers to align MINERD tested tools and plans to assess the needs of the students to ensure children learn in the least restrictive environment. GQ will ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to learn to read and grow and become proficient in reading at their age appropriate level. These teacher training topics will include Emergent Literacy Strategies, Evaluating and Analyzing Data, Lesson Planning, Technology Use, Classroom Management, Social Emotional Learning, Understanding Your Why, Cultural Responsiveness, Work-Life Balance, Teacher Wellness, UDL Strategies, and the Reading Best Practices Five Strategies just to name a few. We will collaborate with MINERD and school leaders to ensure customization of topics for the training that will consist of topics such as a) Data Analysis, b) Goal Setting, c) Climate and Culture, d) developing Mission, Vision, and Core Values, e) Rhythm of Life, f) Relationship Building, g) Decision Making, h) Assessments, i) Building Trust with Staff YES, INC.,9/13,10 are just a few of the impactful topics that will be addressed during intensive leadership training. This intensive leadership training will strengthen MINERD and school leaders' ability to support teachers in their capacity to deliver effective remedial reading instruction as well as promote and sustain social-emotional well-being for staff, colleagues, and students. GQ recognizes the importance of diversity and inclusion in leadership development. GQ will utilize a variety of leadership training methods that may include 1) workshops, 2) seminars, 3) role-playing, 4) Powerful Learning Components, 5) experiential learning, and 6) building relationships between administrators to enhance their leadership skills. GQ will work collaboratively with potential secured vendors, MINERD, and USAID to ensure these trainings meet the needs of the leaders and impact the institutionalization of processes, strategies, and best practices for education.

(IR-1.3) Targeted schools strengthen supplemental remedial reading instruction plans in extended school day programs in grades 1-3. GQ will collaborate with MINERD, and USAID to provide extended school-day remedial reading instruction for all children in grades 1-3. This extended day program is a major activity that will consist of teachers working with their mentors to customize the instruction to meet the needs of the children. Small group tutoring, peer-to peer tutoring, and remedial instruction will strengthen reading skills and will include an initial robust reading assessment to support

the teacher's ability to teach at the right level in meeting every child's needs while participating in the extended day program. GQ will provide age-appropriate hands-on materials and supplies for the extended day program. Research says: In a review by (Lauer et al. 2006): "Students with low academic achievement prior to afterschool participation made greater academic improvements than high-achieving students who also participated in after-school programming. -The program will use multiple modalities to engage students in learning to love reading. GQ will provide a four (4) week Kids Improving Decoding Skills (KIDS) for remedial reading summer camp. During this major activity, four (4) week camp students will attend 20 hours per week. They will experience rotating between reading remediation, arts and crafts, bookmaking, storytelling, reading aloud, poetry, field trips, puppet making, and role-playing. Children will receive breakfast, lunch, and a snack. This summer activity will enhance children's ability to improve their reading and close the summer slide gap. According to Blair Taylor from TQEE; April 10, 2023: "The summer slide is especially devastating to children from low-income families. Summers without academic practice contribute to the big achievement gap that exists between disadvantaged kids." Additionally, Cooper et al. (2000) "recommended that summer programs should focus on teaching math and reading, allowing for local control of curricula and delivery systems and that funds should be set aside to increase program participation, particularly among disadvantaged youth."

(IR-1.4) Targeted schools implement early warning systems to identify academically at-risk students in grades 1-3. GQ will be implemented prior to any activities or program components the major activity of baseline testing will be conducted with all students to understand each student's academic level. GQ will collaborate with MINERD and implement benchmarking at schools at week four (4) for first through third grade and at week six (6) for pre-primary as an early warning system to identify academically at-risk students for grades 1-3. There will be additional benchmarking in the middle of the school year and monthly prior to the major activity of the Third Grade National Diagnostic Assessment. Our goal is to increase reading scores from 10% to 50% for public school students. We will conduct an end-of-the-year benchmarking for all YES, INC., 9/13, 11 grades to identify academically at-risk students. We will collect, analyze, and use benchmark data to improve educational quality and outcomes and adjust strategies to meet the needs of the students. The ultimate impact of the proposed activities will be children who are furthest behind will be reading at grade level, reduction of repetition in third and fourth grades, and teachers will strengthen their capacity to deliver effective remedial reading practices for all students. "Benchmark assessments often serve four interrelated but distinct purposes: a) communicate expectations for learning, b) plan curriculum and instruction, d) predict future performance." Illustrative Activities for IR1 will include but not be limited to: 1. Needs assessments and benchmarking will be utilized to start the children reading at the appropriate level and continue testing until we get to the level they truly are at and this is a starting platform for each child. 2. The American Reading Company program (ARC) is a research-based curriculum for reading in English and Spanish. The Standards-Based

System to Accelerate Reading Growth in English and Spanish in Grades PreK–12 starts with what students can do. 3. Let's Begin with the Letter People Curriculum for pre-first learners. This curriculum is an early childhood literacy curriculum that uses 26 thematic units in English and Spanish. 4. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a program that GQ will utilize. It a) provides multiple means of representation to present information and content in different ways, b). provides multiple means of action and expression to differentiate ways students can express what they know and c) provides multiple means of engagement to stimulate relevant interest.

- B. IR 2 Objective: By the end of 5 years of funding for the implementation of the activity, social-emotional learning (SEL) will be integrated into the climate and culture of the Dominican Republic schools, changing from a climate of fear and lack of safety, into a climate of a happy, safe, and harmonious learning environment where all children and adults are safe, are valued, and have positive self-worth. GQ will work with local stakeholders and coordinate with MINERD and USAID to implement a comprehensive SEL program for primary school students to improve social and emotional well-being in targeted schools to empower grades pre-first to 3rd grade for success in academic learning. GQ will customize a needs assessment that includes customized, hands-on, and real-world activities throughout the curriculum and lessons focusing on impacting the lives of the teachers and students. GQ will support MINERD in rolling out the school normative of behavior under the Psychology and Orientation Direction. GQ will work closely with MINERD to coordinate and train the school police in SEL and school safety. The mindfulness topics will be sent home weekly prior to the introduction to promote parent connections. Maurice J. Elias, a psychologist and academic known for his work in the field of social-emotional learning, character education, and school climate stated: "When students feel safe and connected, they're free to unleash their true potential in the classroom and beyond."

(IR 2.1) Targeted schools integrate social and emotional learning approaches into classroom instruction in grades pre-first to third. GQ will collaborate with MINERD and USAID to target schools to integrate social and emotional learning approaches into classroom instruction in grades pre-first to third grade. This collaboration is a major activity that GQ will undertake to ensure buy-in from all stakeholders. By identifying and clearly defining contextually and developmentally appropriate social-emotional learning (SEL), students' needs must be met to become successful in school. Using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles is a major activity the GQ program will use to work with school leaders to improve positive discipline, YES, INC., 9/13, 12 mediate conflict, and address bullying. GQ will support MINERD and USAID in implementing the Harmonious Interactions in Public Education Center activities. GQ will use monthly thematic units for stand-alone SEL instruction and will integrate the SEL skills in other academic content areas this major activity will support social-emotional learning in the classroom as well as academic activities connected to enhancing a literacy-rich environment. Initial success will be observed by increased student attendance, active participation in the classrooms, reduction in adverse behaviors, and accelerated

academic growth. SEL will also be incorporated into the extended school day program. There will be an increase in the reinforcement of academic skills and a decrease in the number of refinements. This will scale up academically and behaviorally. The ultimate impact of GQ's proposed program is an increase in students approaching grade level, and a decrease in disciplinary issues. GQ will embed SEL into the curriculum as well as offer SEL as a separate subject to be taught. GQ will use the continuous learning approach, which includes focusing on priorities, the plan, the culture, and the climate of the schools. GQ plans to utilize the tenets of the Education System Norms for Harmonious Interactions with Public Education Centers and models of the Twenty-One Precepts to Happiness selected as being age appropriate. To measure initial success GQ plans to "take the pulse" weekly of the schools to ascertain the positive changes in the climate and culture of schools. GQ's plan is for a safe, equitable, harmonious, and wellness-centered environment. GQ will collaborate with MINERD to ensure that the ultimate impact of SEL learning will provide students with a) academic success, b) relationship-building techniques, c) self-behavior management, d) resilience and coping skills, e) long-term positive mental health, f) bullying and conflict prevention techniques, g) preparation for the real world, h) holistic development, i) reduced drop-out rates, j) incorporate a growth mindset and k) inspire motivation and increase positive self-concepts. GQ's goal is to equip teachers, administrators, and stakeholders with the skills, strategies, and resilience needed to effectively support students, and promote a positive environment.

(IR2.2) Targeted schools utilize SEL teaching and learning materials in grades pre-first third. GQ will collaborate to work together with the target school districts to integrate social and emotional learning approaches into classroom instruction in grades pre-first to third grade. By identifying and clearly defining contextually and developmentally appropriate social-emotional learning (SEL) students need to become successful in school. Using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, the GQ program will work with school leaders to improve positive discipline, mediate conflict, and address bullying. GQ will support MINERD in implementing the Harmonious Interactions in Public Education Center activities. GQ will use thematic units for stand-alone SEL instruction and will integrate the SEL skills in other academic content areas as well. Initial success will be observed by increased student attendance, active participation in the classrooms, reduction in adverse behaviors, and accelerated academic growth. SEL will also be incorporated into the extended school day program. There will be an increase in the reinforcement of academic skills and a decrease in the number of refinements. This will scale up academically and behaviorally. The ultimate impact of GQ's proposed program is an increase in students approaching grade level, and a decrease in disciplinary issues.

(IR 2.3) School communities demonstrate increased capacity to improve social-emotional learning in grades pre-first through third. GQ will collaborate with MINERD, districts and USAID to support educators to examine and challenge biases in their teaching practice and work towards respect, equality, equity, inclusion, and justice

incorporating the Sequenced, Active, YES, INC.,9/13,13 Focused, and Explicit (SAFE) instruction plan. GQ will coordinate with MINERD and USAID to create programs on the development of educational training SEL and school safety for faculty, staff, and other key stakeholders. GQ will utilize Harvard's Ecological Approaches to Social Emotional Learning (EASEL) laboratory to develop instructional approaches that support active student instruction to master SEL skills during monthly thematic units. This will be done through a gradual release strategy of I do, we do, and you do to ensure understanding and mastery of the skills. A reinforcement activity, such as "Being Caught Unusually Good" (BUG) will be initiated to provide students with concrete positive reinforcement as an incentive program to reinforce throughout the campuses. Initial success will be measured by observing the growth and number of stakeholders utilizing the skills independently modeling that there is value in everyone. Positive behaviors will be measured by the number of positive student changes observed in the environment as exhibited in the mentors' monthly observations and anecdotal notes from teachers and students. Monthly student and teacher recognition will be practiced increasing student attendance, academic progress, and positive behaviors. Positive incentives will be used to promote and motivate the students in self-maintain their growth. The paradigm shift in positive behaviors and academic growth will decrease the number of conflicts, obstacles, and bullying that prevent the students from attending school and learning, and it will allow the teachers to teach. This is our proposed impact that will enable teachers and other key personnel to develop positive and supportive relationships with the pre-first to 3rd-grade students, parents, and teachers. GQ will collaborate with MINERD and local campuses to design school-based programs to increase student leadership and reduce bullying. -Illustrative Activities for IR2 will include but not be limited too: 1.GQ will incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL) thematic units and create cross curricular connections. 2). Mindfulness activities will be incorporated daily to include topics such as valuing everyone, active kindness, and developing awareness skills for self and others. 3)SEL will be reinforced in the extended day remedial reading program by including reinforcement and refining coping skills, attendance, anti-bullying skills, hygiene, conflict resolution, and school safety skills. 4)GQ will use the continuous learning approach, which includes focusing on priorities, the plan, the culture, and the climate of the schools, GQ plans to utilize the tenets of the Education System Norms for Harmonious Interactions with Public Education Centers and models of the Twenty-One Precepts to Happiness selected as being age appropriate. To measure initial success GQ plans to "take the pulse" weekly of the schools to ascertain the positive changes in the climate and culture of schools. GQ's plan is for a safe, equitable, harmonious, and wellness-centered environment.

- C. Intermediate Results (IR) 3: Objective: By the end of the five years of funding 100% of the reading and social-emotional wellness strategies, policies, and plans will be institutionalized nationally for pre-first to third grade. IR-3 Reading attainment and social-emotional well-being best practices will be institutionalized nationally for pre-first to third grades.

(IR- 3.1) MINERD demonstrates strengthened institutional capacity to use data for education decision-making and resource management in grades pre-first through third. GQ will work with MINERD, USAID, school leadership, teachers, and parents to create a Strategic Reading and Social-Emotional Well-Being (SRSEW) Advisory Board which is a major activity. This Board will consist of representatives from MINERD, representatives from each school leadership staff, YES, INC., 9/13, 14 teachers per grade level per school, and at least two (2) parent representatives from each school campus. This board will be responsible for the creation of the Strategic Reading and Social Emotional Wellness Plan (SRSEW). According to American Educator Spring 2018; "In general, the data indicates that schools are more likely to implement those elements of instructional leadership that are aligned with enhancing high standards, teacher accountability, evaluation, and performance. In contrast, schools are less likely to emphasize those elements of instructional leadership that entail recognition of, and support for, teachers and that are aligned with enhancing teachers "voice" and input into decision making." This plan will be inclusive of policies, procedures, and strategies for using data for educational decisions for students, and how to best manage their human resources such as hiring, training, supporting, compensating, dismissing, and retaining their most valuable resource so that children have equitable access to fundamentally equipped and strengthened educators and leaders. This will promote and advance their ability to read and support their social-emotional well-being in and out of the classroom setting. GQ plans to create a technology program for sustainability. This will be an automated system that will begin planning in year one (1) and two (2) and lead up to completion in year three (3). Year three (3) will be our first sustainable year.

(IR-3.2) MINERD adopts standards, curriculum, and or best practices for remedial instruction, SEL, and reducing grade repetition and rolls out promising interventions in select non-USAID funded education regions. GQ will collaborate with MINERD, USAID, and the Advisory Board in the creation of the SRSEW plan to ensure the major activity of the integration of standards, curriculum, and best practices for the curriculum and remedial instruction. The adoption of this plan will support the reduction of grade repetition for those schools under USAID funding. The impact will be a comprehensive SRSEW plan that is designed to institutionalize best practices nationally for pre-first-grade to third-grade students that will substantially decrease third-grade repetition, school violence, and bullying. It will also strengthen teachers' ability to deliver inclusive remedial instruction and to practice and model social-emotional skills that will help students build their own skills. The most impactful outcome expected is that teachers and school counselors will develop relevant social skills for themselves while developing the capacity to focus on the model of Sequenced, Active, Focused, and Explicit (SAFE) instruction that is learner-centered with an emphasis on the importance of developing a positive and supportive relationship with each learner. GQ will collaborate with MINERD and implement benchmarking at schools starting week four (4) for first through third grade and at week six (6) for pre-primary as an early warning system to identify academically at-risk students for grades 1-3. The Human Capital Management System is a plan that will be designed to have a systematic approach to 10 components for

managing the most valuable resources of a school district and campuses. Having a systematic approach allows for; 1) Performance Excellence: Defining Strategic Goals, aligning efforts to address those goals, and using data to drive continuous improvement, 2) Strategic Staffing: Recruiting and selecting staff through a strategic, data-driven approach, 3) Talent Management & Development: Providing the right resources and support to help educators develop and continuously improve their practice, and 4) Culture & Total Rewards: Fostering a culture where employees feel valued and engaged. This, according to the National Human Capital Leaders in Education (HCLE) standards is to develop recommendations for supporting the consortium's strategic goals through a world-class human capital management system. The ten (10) components of an effective HCMS plan are 1) Recruitment, 2) hiring, 3) Preparation, 4) YES, INC., 9/13, 15 Placement, 5) Compensation, 6) Professional Development, 7) Promotion, 8) Retention, 9) Tenure (time in service), and 10) Dismissal. These 10 components may be all-inclusive, or they may be decided upon based on the protocol currently in place by MINERD. The six (6) important principles of an effective HCMS program are 1) performance premiums are based on reliable criteria, 2) the plan is understandable, 3) rewards are attainable, 4) implementation of the new plan is feasible, 5) the pay plan must be affordable, and 6) the plan must be sustainable. GQ will work collaboratively with both MINERD and the SRSEW board and each individual school leader to create an HCMS plan that will institutionalize nationally how they manage their human capital and other valuable resources.

(IR-3.3) MINERD rolls out an early warning system for first to third-grade students in schools in select non-USAID-funded education regions. GQ will collaborate with MINERD and implement benchmarking at schools starting week four (4) for first through third grade and at week six (6) for pre-primary as an early warning system to identify academically at-risk students for grades 1-3. This early warning system is a major activity that will be implemented after the initial National Assessment has been conducted and the data from this assessment will inform targeted students who will need immediate targeted benchmarking assessments to ensure they receive early remedial interventions. GQ mentor teachers will work with local teachers under this funding to analyze the data to determine which students are most at risk. All procedures will be documented in the SRSEW plan and will be reviewed, revised, and approved by MINERD and the Advisory Board. Once the SRSEW plan has been approved it will be expected to be the standard. GQ will also work with the SRSEW Advisory Board, MINERD, and USAID to collaborate on an Early Warning/Crisis Plan for any weather-related, world health, and local incidents that will affect or interrupt student learning opportunities. We will look at four (4) pillars. Pillar 1: disaster risk knowledge, Pillar 2: detection, observation, monitoring, analysis, and forecasting of hazards, Pillar 3: warning dissemination and communication, and Pillar 4: Preparedness and response capabilities. These pillars represent the set of capacities needed to generate and disseminate timely and meaningful warning information to enable individuals, communities, and organizations threatened by a hazard to prepare and act appropriately and in sufficient time to reduce the possibility of harm or loss. GQ will engage all partners and stakeholders to ensure

the most comprehensive Early Warning/Crisis plan can be drafted, trained on, and institutionalized for all USAID-funded schools and non-funded schools. –

(IR-3.4) Private sector stakeholders increase engagement to strengthen the education system. GQ will work collaboratively with our partners on the ground in the Dominican Republic and with partners in the US to implement the major activity of creating a network of stakeholders to support and sustain the important work of strengthening teachers' capacity to instruct and implement plans to ensure equity in voice for teachers and parents. We currently have a Dominican Republic Soft Partner Non-Financial agreement with Mission Maranatha, United Human Services, ProfoundEd, Kingdom Impact, and Baseline. GQ is committed to 5 years of service after funding ends to continue providing professional development through summer training for teachers and leaders annually. We plan to conduct quarterly follow-ups with MINERD and school leaders on any support they may need to continue providing effective remedial reading for at-risk students and teachers who need support in becoming more effective. GQ plans to create a technology program for sustainability. This will be an automated system that will begin planning in year one (1) and two (2) and lead up to completion in year three (3). Year three (3) will be our first sustainable year. -Illustrative Activities for IR3 will include but not YES, INC.,9/13,16 be limited to: 1.GQ will work with MINERD, USAID, school leadership, teachers, and parents to create a Strategic Reading and Social-Emotional Well-Being (SRSEW) Advisory Board... This board will be responsible for the creation of the Strategic Reading and Social Emotional Wellness Plan (SRSEW). This plan will be inclusive of policies, procedures, and strategies for using data for educational decisions for students, and how to best manage their human resources such as hiring, training, supporting, compensating, dismissal, and retaining their most valuable resource so that children have equitable access to fundamentally equipped and strengthened educators and leaders.2) GQ will collaborate with MINERD and implement benchmarking at schools starting week four (4) for first through third grade and at week six (6)for pre-primary as an early warning system to identify academically at-risk students for grades 1-3. 3)GQ will work collaboratively with both MINERD and the SERSEW board and each individual school leader to create an HCMS plan that will institutionalize nationally how they manage their human capital and other valuable resources. 4)GQ will engage all partners and stakeholders to ensure the most comprehensive Early Warning/Crisis plan can be drafted, trained on, and institutionalized for all USAID funded schools and non-funded schools.GQ will work collaboratively with our partners on the ground in the Dominican Republic and with partners in the US to implement the major activity of creating a network of stakeholders to support and sustain the important work of strengthening teachers' capacity to instruct and implement plans to ensure equity in the voices of teachers and parents.