

g. Partnerships and Sustainability Plan: YES, INC. has a GQ partnership plan that will be instrumental in guaranteeing that we can sustain GQ past the five-year funding period. To begin with, our team was successful in securing an initial meeting with Dr. Mendoza, MINERD. During this meeting, we established that should we be awarded the Collaborative Agreement, we would begin right away working together to get the MEL approved so that we could begin implementing the project. An important factor in securing sustainability of a project is to begin focusing on sustainability at the beginning of the project not at the end of the project. Begin able to have the first unofficial partnership meeting was very important to the creation of GQ and will be important to the implementation and sustainability of the project. We believe our partnership and sustainability plans are reasonable, realistic and will ensure that the desired results of the program can be sustained after the completion of the activity, including for marginalized and vulnerable populations. We have begun our sustainability work in 2010 with the USDE and we have been improving in this area for the past 12 years. We believe we have the knowledge and

training to ensure that our partnership and sustainability plans will work to ensure that GQ continues operationally after USAID funding has been completed.

-Partnerships Plan: We have a comprehensive plan to include diverse partners in meaningful and significant ways in the GQ project. We noted the numerous references to specific entities and agencies throughout the NOFO application for this project. To manage the partners that we have identified below and to expand the partnership options, we needed to begin with the concrete partners that are required, USAID and MINERD and the soft partners we collaborated with to create GQ. Please note that in the sustainability plan that partners are included as significant entities that will be needed to successfully continue GQ after five years.

1). Defining partners and partnerships: The need for the Basic Education Recovery Activity to successfully improve the educational systems for the Dominican Republic's schools, leaders, teachers, students, and parents is so great, that having partners and partnerships is better than just companies, individuals and entities working in isolation. The term "partner" will generate a greater sense of commitment to the project and will ensure a greater sense of accountability and responsibilities for the outcomes working together with the other partners.

2). Defining the Guaranteed Quality (GQ) Education for all three (3) partnership groups:

- A) Concrete Partnership Group – This partnership is mandated by the USAID NOFO on page 23. The steering committee is required to include the USAID, MINERD, and the applicant (YES, INC.). These three entities will be required to meet and make implementation decisions together to ensure that the objectives are made. This partnership is required and thus titled "Concrete Partnership Group".
- B) Dominican Republic Soft Partnership (DRSP) – This partnership's roles and responsibilities are detailed in the written agreement document. The term "soft partnership" is used to indicate that these partners are volunteering to be of assistance and support without any financial benefit except as required should any of these partners be procured to provide services and or products to support the implementation and achievement of the objectives. To become a member of this partnership group, each entity, working with YES, INC. as the applicant is confirmed to be located and currently doing business in the Dominican Republic. There are three Dominican Republic Soft Partners (DRSP) identified for the project as of September 6, 2023.
- C) Vendor Partners (VP) – Each entity that the applicant (YES, INC.) selects through the procurement process to provide products and/or services will be identified as a vendor partner (VP). There are approximately 20 entities that have submitted responses through the procurement process to be included in the application for services needed to achieve the proposed outcomes. Once YES, INC. is approved for funding, it expects to need additional services and products after receiving further guidance from the "Concrete Partnership Group", steering committee (USAID and MINERD) and will expeditiously procure the additional services and products needed from other potential vendors interested in becoming vendor partners.
- D) The agreement includes and outlines of the terms, expectations, and conditions under which YES, INC. and the DRSP partners will provide insights, advice, and thought partnership to enhance GQ's technical application, business cost application, and ultimately the sustainability of GQ after funding has ceased.

Creating an initial partnership structure to begin implementing GQ is a very important first step in securing the ability to sustain GQ. The sustainability plan is detailed below and includes the importance of partners.

-Sustainability Plan: YES, INC. has had 12 years of extensive experience and training with creating, designing, and implementing sustainability plans. Beginning in 2010 with YES, INC.'s first \$13,000,000 USDE grant funded activity, the national training was on how after five (5) years were we going to be able to sustain the work we were funded to complete. Then in 2017, the USDE sponsored a two-three-day Sustainability workshop to provide guidance, expertise, and support to our projects. We plan to utilize our knowledge and lessons learned over the years to implement a successful sustainability **GQ** plan to guarantee that the work described above can continue with MINERD, public and private organizations, and alliances. The sustainability plan will provide for the Applicant to oversee contractual and non-contractual relationships to promote the capacity building activities, focus on local ownership and continuation of interventions and the desired outcomes after the life of award.

-Sustainability with YES, INC.: YES, INC. has developed “vested interests” in 100% of the projects we have been implementing over the past 12 grant funded years. We have provided been significantly involved in the sustainability of work with our current clients now for two years past the life of the awards we have received. In addition, our in-kind commitments and our cash matches have been significantly used by our clients to implement sustainability plans to work to institutionalize the program within the school systems we have helped transform. We are bringing this same high-level of commitment to GQ. By implementing the plan YES, INC. will lead below to sustain the project, we guarantee successful results in the interventions and program activities continuing past the funding period. It is important to note that we plan to begin the sustainability work immediately upon being selected as the applicant to receive the Collaborative Agreement. The plan below details what the work will include as we collaborate with the concrete and soft partners to

-Specific **GQ** Sustainability Plan Components: We have been trained to begin the sustainability process with including as many partners as possible and stakeholders that we are willing to be a part of the process of training and planning for sustainability. We will utilize the sustainability guide created by the USDE's office of Teacher Quality Programs. There are four major components we will utilize for us to include during our training sessions at the start of the program and as we begin the process of sustainability GQ upon notification of selection. They are a) Partnership and Stakeholder Support, b) Financial Support, c) Widespread Use and d) Return on Investment. Within the components are the following training topics that will be utilized to begin the sustainability process.

a. Partnership Support includes Partnerships, Stakeholder Engagement and Communications, Program Champions, Stakeholder Engagement, Communications and Documentation.

b. Financial Support includes ongoing financial support decisions, calculation of full-cost of implementation, reducing costs through program modification, resource reallocation, pursuit of multiple funding sources, cost-sharing from other initiatives and partners.

c. Widespread Use and continuing Fidelity includes staff capacity and organizational authority, data systems capacity, continuous improvement, alignment, and integration.

d). Return on Investment includes Identification of quantifiable and appropriate outcomes, planning formative and summative evaluation, alignment of value to outcomes, assessment of effectiveness and documenting and communicating.

As stated above, we have been successful with helping our clients sustain projects in the past and we look forward to being a significant partner in the sustainability of GQ after funding has ended.