System Capacity Grant Annual Progress Report Template

Status: Accepted

Country	Grant ID	Grant Agent	Grant Effectiveness/Start Date
Tajikistan	GPE0000782	SCG	08/01/2022

Grant Amount	Timeframe Examined in this Report		Date of Report Submission
2,600,000 (USD)	From Date	To Date	10/28/2025
	07/31/2024	07/30/2025	

Area(s) and activity group(s) covered by grant

Window 1: Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for system-wide impact

- System diagnostics, compact development and education sector analyses
- Gender-responsive sector planning, including operational planning and budgeting
- Supporting policies and plans to identify and address multiple forms of exclusion (planning for children with disabilities, system resilience and inclusion of displaced children)
- Strengthening evidence-based diagnosis of critical implementation bottlenecks and identifying potentially scalable, transformative solutions

Window 2: Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change

- Strengthening sector coordination, including local education groups, joint sector reviews and monitoring the effectiveness of the country-level partnership
- Strengthening budget processes and ministry of finance engagement; identifying opportunities to improve the equity and efficiency of education expenditure, including processes toward gender equality

Window 3: Strengthen capacity, adapt, and learn, to implement and drive results at scale

- Strengthening data systems, including on improving the availability and use of sex-disaggregated data, and data on children with disabilities
- Training and support for government staff and central and decentralized levels, including on the uptake and use of data and evidence
- Support for implementation capacity, including sector plan implementation monitoring, gender responsiveness of the sector and evaluation of sector plans and policies/programs in priority areas; assess monitoring, evaluation and learning capacity, including use of evidence in policy process

Implementation Progress

Overall Project Progress this Reporting Period

Overall progress this reporting period [1]	Previous Rating
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Detailed Description including factors that lead to an upgrade/downgrade in the rating

This third annual reporting period (August 1, 2024–July 31, 2025) was marked by the successful completion of the Partnership Compact Mid-Term Review (MTR), which convened the Ministry of Education and Sciences (MoES), development partners and technical experts to assess progress and recalibrate implementation priorities. A major milestone was the finalization and endorsement-for-use of the Competency-Based Education (CBE) Roadmap and its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework, providing a single, time-bound reference for roles, milestones and indicators to coordinate partner support around CBE reform. UNICEF's partnership with UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) advanced a financial costing simulation model for the education sector by integrating additional datasets,

refining assumptions and improving the user interface for policy consultations. This tool will be used in structured discussions with MoES/Ministry of Finance (MoF) teams to align costing with the current (2024-2026) and next Mid-Term Education Action Plan (MTEAP) 2027-2030 priorities and NSED 2030 trajectories.

The Coordination and Analytical Unit within MoES reached full staffing and regularized operations in designated office space, with a new Head of Unit appointed following leadership transitions. A consultant-supported Transition Plan is under development to guide institutionalization from 2026, reinforcing sustainability.

EMIS modernization progressed through revision and design of new modules (e.g., financing and other modules listed in subsequent sections of this report - Activity 2c) and capacity building for regional/district focal points to enable nationwide rollout.

Which implementation challenges or delays the project experienced during this reporting period; the reasons behind these issues; how (well) these have been mitigated thus far; and what remains to be done by whom and by when to address the challenges.

The project experienced the following implementation challenges during the reporting period:

? Data access and standardization for education costing model: Persistent gaps in unit cost/expenditure breakdowns and data held across agencies slowed full parameterization of the model. Mitigation: IIEP/UNICEF conducted targeted bilateral data sessions with MoES/MoF and partners, documented data provenance/assumptions, and sequenced model features to allow iterative use. Remaining actions: MoES Planning/Finance Departments and MoF to validate cost lines and for UNESCO IIEP to share agreed templates by Oct–Nov 2025 with the MoES; IIEP/UNICEF to finalize model version and user guide by Dec 2025.
? Approval timelines for EMIS indicators and modules: Introduction of new/adjusted indicators requires State Statistics Agency alignment and formal approvals, extending timelines beyond the grant period. Mitigation: Staged submission of revised and new modules and early consultations with al counterparts. Remaining actions: EMIS Department to complete technical review and submit to State Statistics by Q1 2026; partners to support adoption pilots and documentation of benefits for approval notes. Once revised and new modules are endorsed by the State Statistics Agency, these modules will need to be incorporated into the EMIS platform, which will require technical ICT support to the MoES.
? Institutionalization of the Coordination & Analytical Unit: The operational and budget line integration of the Coordination Unit into the civil service structure remains pending. Mitigation: Transition Plan is under preparation (tasks, structure, costs, timeline). Remaining actions: MoES HR/Finance to sequence posts for absorption in 2026; UNICEF to seek support from GPE Secretariat to endorse a MoES' no-cost extension (NCE) request for 12 months in 2026 if residual SCG funds allow to bridge 2026.
? Leadership transitions at MoES (Deputy Minister for Planning change in March 2025): The departure of the previous Deputy Minister (Planning) in March 2025 resulted in temporary decision lags and sequencing adjustments for items requiring high-level clearance (e.g., the Coordination & Analytical Unit transition pathway). Mitigation: UNICEF and partners prepared a bridging brief and handover dossier, conducted targeted onboarding sessions, and reconfirmed milestones with the incoming leadership. Opportunity: The new Deputy Minister is the former GPE focal point, which improves continuity and stakeholder alignment for the grant. Remaining actions (Aug–Dec 2025): Secure written reconfirmation of Transition Plan for Coordination Unit, CBE Roadmap/M&E Framework implementation steps; designate decision authorities for EMIS approvals; schedule quarterly coordination meeting chaired by the DM (Planning); and document any scope/timeline adjustments for donor visibility

Grant Implementation Progress, by Grant Window

Grant Window	Level of Progress this Reporting Period [2]	Previous Rating
Window 1: Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for system-wide impact	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Detailed Description:

Activity 2a – Revision of Per-Capita Funding Mechanism:

During the reporting period, UNICEF, in partnership with the CSO Economics and Education, supported the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) in strengthening the per capita financing (PCF) mechanism for general education. The MoES working group reviewed existing policies, identified gaps, and consulted 27 regional economists and relevant stakeholders through seminars and surveys. Based on these consultations, three draft regulatory documents were developed addressing key financing issues, including funding for Early Childhood Development Centers, school feeding, teacher professional development, and multigrade rural schools. The drafts will be submitted to the Ministries of Education and Finance by September 2025 for review. This work is expected to advance equitable, need-based funding and improve learning conditions and service delivery in schools.

Activity 2b – Study on School Dropout and Low Attendance Among Girls:

A national study examined the drivers of school dropout and low attendance, particularly among girls. It found that absenteeism stems from individual, socio-economic, and institutional factors—including health, disinterest in studies, seasonal child labor, and poor school monitoring systems. The study calls for enhanced school psychological services, improved attendance monitoring, and multi-sectoral interventions. Findings will inform policy dialogue during the November 2025 JSR.

Activity 2c – Enhancement of EMIS Indicators and Analysis:

As part of Tajikistan's National Strategy for Education Development (2030), UNICEF, in collaboration with Economics and Education, supported the enhancement of EMIS indicators and analytical capacity to better capture the evolving needs of the education sector. Consultative meetings with stakeholders led to recommendations for new indicators on education financing, teacher development, and learning outcomes, which were submitted to MoES for technical review and integration. Inclusion of new official indicators will require approval by the State Statistics Agency.

During the reporting period, statistical reporting forms for preschool and general education institutions were revised and updated in collaboration with the EMIS Department. Consultations with 58 education specialists and feedback from development partners—including ACTED, the STEM project, UNICEF, the Trade Union of Education Workers, and the EU—ensured broad engagement. A new reporting module, FINANCING-1, was developed and validated with local education departments to track financial data and budget execution. Existing EMIS modules, including School Children-1 and 2, Education Workforce and Teachers-1, School Library-1, Material and Technical Resources-1, and Enrolment-1, were reviewed, adjusted, and updated with new indicators. The revised modules have been submitted to the EMIS Department for final review and endorsement, pending formal government approval.

Activity 2d – Joint Sector Review (JSR):

The 2025 JSR will focus on generating concrete policy commitments and advancing the CBE reform, building on the findings of the Partnership Compact MTR. Central to the discussions will be the updated CBE Roadmap and M&E Framework, developed by MoES with development partners to guide coordinated action among government institutions, donors, civil society, and school communities. The event will also present emerging data from sector studies, including school dropout analysis and the draft education simulation model, to inform decisions on equity, resource allocation, and system efficiency.

Key recommendations emphasize finalizing and operationalizing the CBE Roadmap, defining responsibilities and timelines, and establishing robust monitoring systems. Efforts will focus on addressing implementation bottlenecks, scaling tools nationally through the GPE STG Multiplier grant, enhancing access for marginalized groups via inclusive infrastructure and WASH facilities, and ensuring teachers from all communities are engaged in reform dialogue. Priorities also include the national rollout of EMIS with disaggregated data, the application of the per capita financing formula for equitable funding, and long-term strategies for integrating learning outcomes, strengthening financial planning, mobilizing new partners, and tracking reform progress through key indicators. (MORE DETAILS CAN BE FOUND IN THE UPLOADED PDF VERSION)

Grant Window	**Level of Progress this Reporting Period** [2]	**Previous Rating**
Window 2: Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Detailed Description:

Activity 3a – Establishment of the Coordination and Analytical Unit

The Coordination and Analytical Unit within the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) entered its second year of operation in 2025 with key progress achieved. The Unit is now fully staffed, led by a newly appointed Head, and operates from its designated office within MoES, enhancing internal coordination. Financial and technical support continues through the System Capacity Grant (SCG) until December

2025. In light of remaining funds, MoES has requested a no-cost extension to sustain the Unit's operations.

Activity 3c – Stocktaking of Financing Sources in the Education Sector

To strengthen coordination and transparency in education financing, the Unit developed a stakeholder matrix tracking financial and technical contributions from partners. Updated during the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Partnership Compact, the matrix now includes detailed resource mapping aligned with sector priorities, especially the Competency-Based Education (CBE) reform. The matrix supports MoES in identifying funding gaps and ensuring that key reforms are adequately resourced.

Activity 6b – Costing of Implementation of NSED 2030

UNICEF, in partnership with the IIEP and UNESCO Almaty, supported MoES in advancing costed policy planning for the implementation of the National Strategy for Education Development (NSED) 2030. This work focused on the development of a financial simulation model to inform evidence-based budgeting and long-term planning.

Activity 6c – Strengthening Alignment of MTEAP and Multiyear Strategic Budget Planning and Mid-Term Expenditure Framework

Workshops and bilateral meetings were held with key government and development partners to align the simulation model with the Mid-Term Education Action Plan (MTEAP) and national budget frameworks. The model is intended to bridge the gap between policy planning and realistic financial forecasting across the education sector.

Activity 6d – Development of Financial Simulation Model

Two technical missions were conducted to build national capacity, assess data needs, and further develop the simulation model. Despite challenges in accessing detailed expenditure data, progress was made in updating the model's structure, integrating new datasets, and improving user accessibility. A national workshop and consultations helped align stakeholders on model usage and assumptions. Continued technical support will be required beyond 2025, especially to strengthen subnational planning and address broader capacity gaps in education sector financial management. (MORE DETAILS CAN BE FOUND IN THE UPLOADED PDF VERSION)

Grant Window	**Level of Progress this Reporting Period** [2]	**Previous Rating**
Window 3: Strengthen capacity, adapt, and learn, to implement and drive results at scale	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Detailed Description:

Activity 1b – Strengthening Analytical Capacity of Staff in MoES and Subnational Government

The MoES, in partnership Economics and Education, has developed a nationwide training package to strengthen the capacity of central and local education and finance personnel in analyzing school management, performance, and financial data. Linked to the new EMIS solution, the training—supported by UNICEF through SCG funding—is currently in progress and will cover approximately 400 personnel across 64 districts. Participants will be responsible for timely data collection, analysis, and report generation. The training equips users to effectively interpret and apply EMIS data. The national rollout is expected to be completed by November 2025, enabling a full transition to the new platform and enhancing data-driven decision-making, transparency, and coordination across the education system. (MORE DETAILS CAN BE FOUND IN THE UPLOADED PDF VERSION)

Lessons, innovative/promising practices

During the reporting year, the MTR process emerged as a highly successful practice, demonstrating the value of a participatory, consultative approach to education sector reform. Structured technical and policy sessions brought together a broad set of stakeholders—government officials, development partners and technical experts—fostering strong MoES ownership and active leadership and ensuring that decisions and recommendations remained aligned with national priorities.

Tajikistan's experience in leading a participatory MTR has been pioneering globally, offering a practical, replicable model for consensus-building and for aligning partner support with government priorities. The approach received international recognition when Tajikistan's experience was presented at the GPE Board meeting in Paris in June 2025, underscoring the country's leadership in promoting inclusive, evidence-based and coordinated sector planning. This recognition highlights emerging gains in reform coherence, sector governance and, ultimately, educational outcomes for children.

This inclusive approach led to the development of a comprehensive CBE Roadmap and M&E Framework, which provide a clear, actionable plan for harmonizing partner efforts in support of CBE implementation. The tools clarify roles, timelines and accountability mechanisms and establish practical arrangements for tracking progress, strengthening the effectiveness of reform interventions at both central and subnational levels.

Impact stories

Press release on Steering Committee Meeting https://www.unicef.org/tajikistan/press-releases/advancing-key-learning-and-reform-outcomes-tajikistan-children
• Press Release at UNICEF's website: English, Russian, Tajik
• UNICEF social networks:
- Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/uniceftajikistan/posts/pfbid0WBkA17WFZYxesEuvMfXtu1rh7jVXh6EHMi1cjZA1prVWsq1a5GkrqRs7pZpGk3jVl?rdid=aORIeeCYVZKWNMxs#
- Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/p/DO-tiCajFwd/?img_index=1
- Twitter, Twitter II - https://x.com/unicef_tjk/status/1970779057844314323
- LinkedIn - https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7376542487177412609/
- Youtube - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8uCgA4J0UTQ
• Photo Repository - https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gAXZkqbGn-mQ4ADDUFwFZFO8GTJCh2lW
• Visibility Materials - https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1TiKWvXOkOISOWG6C_Q7px50T5ZGqCMRk

Tangible Outputs, Knowledge Products, Results Framework and other Supporting Documentation

#	File Name	Document Type	Description
1	LEG presentation 26092025.pptx	Knowledge Product	Costing model presentation to LEG
2	UNESCO IIEP Mission Report Dushanbe August 2025.docx	Knowledge Product	UNESCO IIEP 2nd Mission report
2	UNESCO IIEP mission report Dushanbe June 2025.docx	Knowledge Product	UNESCO IIEP 1st mission report
2	Comapct MTR Aide Memoire final 23 April 2025 clean04062025.docx	Knowledge Product	Partnership Compact Aide Memoire
2	Partnership Compact Midterm Review Report-for LEG.docx	Knowledge Product	Partnership Compact MTR Report
2	Roadmap_targets_Full Draft_RUS.xlsx	Knowledge Product	CBE Roadmap and M&E
2	Manual SimuED Tajikistan_clean.docx	Knowledge Product	Costing model manual UNESCO IIEP
2	Annex III SCG System Capacity Grant GPE.docx	Results Framework	SCG Results Framework

The documents listed were submitted with the progress report. If you'd like access to them, please contact the grant operations officer for your country.

Financial Reporting & Grant Management

Financial Reporting on GPE Grant

Cumulative Financial Absorption Rate

Approved Budget to Date	Cumulative Expenditure	Cumulative Financial Absorption Rate	Level of Financial Absorption
2,782,000	2,112,372.53	75.93	Slightly Behind

Since the financial absorption is not rated as 'on track', please provide an explanation that identifies the main activities that have been delayed and their corresponding unspent amounts, as well as reasons for the delay and steps taken to ensure that expenditure absorption gets on track in the next reporting period.

Financial absorption status: Slightly Behind. As of this reporting period, UNICEF has utilized approximately 76% of GPE SCG funds. The remaining balance is projected to finalize outstanding project deliverables and sustain the Coordination and Analytical Unit at MoES through 2026, contingent on approval of the requested no-cost extension (NCE). If approved, the balance would cover 12 months of staff costs and the Unit's core activities (capacity development, strategic coordination, and key sector processes), including support to MTEAP 2027–2030 development and the 2026 JSR. To maintain momentum on the education costing simulation model, a portion of the balance is expected to support the ongoing partnership with IIEP, providing continued technical assistance for model use in evidence-based planning and financial analysis. This engagement will help institutionalize the model within national systems and strengthen its application in policy and budgeting processes.

Budget Variance Analysis for the Current Reporting Period

Total Approved Budget for the Current Reporting Period	Total Expenditure for the Current Reporting Period
1,200,000	1,188,553.14

Management Performance

Level of management performance

Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Detailed Description

Management performance: The overall level of management performance for the reporting period is assessed as Moderately Satisfactory.

Key products finalized and disseminated: Several products developed in the previous year were finalized, presented to MoES, and shared with stakeholders, including the Partnership Compact MTR Report and Aide-Mémoire, the CBE Roadmap/M&E Framework, the [draft] costing simulation model (due December 2025), and the final report/policy brief on school dropout and low attendance in Tajikistan. The CBE Roadmap was further refined based on findings from the Mid-Term Review.

Management arrangements and effects: The Coordination and Analytical Unit continued to underpin multi-stakeholder coordination and dialogue, which positively supported implementation and progress toward results. At the same time, there is room to improve the Unit's structure and functions; UNICEF is maintaining close technical collaboration with the Unit to support the necessary adjustments.

EMIS workstream: EMIS-related activities remained dynamic, with ongoing technical discussions and stakeholder engagement to define priority tasks for EMIS modernization and rollout under the SCG.

Costing and fiscal planning: In efforts to improve domestic financing efficiency, UNICEF and MoES—supported by IIEP and financed through the SCG—made substantial progress on the education costing simulation model.

Operations and controls: Overall, operational management of the GPE SCG was effectively carried out in line with UNICEF procedures and the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT). Clear roles and responsibilities across UNICEF staff and implementing partners contributed positively to grant implementation and progress toward results.

Revisions to the grant

This period, have there been any revisions to the grant other than those submitted to the Secretariat for their approval?
No

How likely is that the grant agent will submit a request for revision to the Secretariat in the next 12 months for their approval?
Highly Likely

Detailed Description
MoES has formally requested that UNICEF (GA) approve a no-cost extension for January–December 2026 to sustain the operations of the Coordination and Analytical Unit within MoES and ensure a smooth transition from project financing to government structures and payroll. UNICEF (GA) will reach out to GPE Secretariat to discuss process for submission of no-cost extension request.

Annexes

Annex 1: List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
TT	Target Tracker
SDG4	Sustainable Development Goal 4
SCG	System Capacity Grant
RCICT	Republican Center for Information and Communication Technologies
PD	Professional Development
PCF	Per-Capita Financing
NSED 2030	National Strategy for Education Development 2030

NCE	No-Cost Extension
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MTEF	Mid-Term Expenditure Framework
MTEAP	Mid-Term Education Action Plan
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
LEG	Local Education Group
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
JSR	Joint Sector Review
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
ICT	Information and Communication Technology

1 Highly Unsatisfactory- The grant has major shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is unlikely. Unsatisfactory - The grant has significant shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is uncertain. Moderately Unsatisfactory - The grant has moderate shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs but a resolution is likely. Moderately Satisfactory - The grant is expected to achieve most of its major outputs efficiently with moderate shortcomings or delays. Satisfactory – The grant is expected to achieve almost all of its major outputs efficiently with only minor shortcomings or delays. Highly Satisfactory - The grant is expected to achieve or exceed all of the major outputs efficiently without significant shortcomings or delays.

2 Highly Unsatisfactory – The window has major shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is unlikely. Unsatisfactory – The window has significant shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is uncertain. Moderately Unsatisfactory – The window has moderate shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs but a resolution is likely. Moderately Satisfactory – The window is expected to achieve most of its major outputs efficiently with moderate shortcomings. Satisfactory – The window is expected to achieve almost all of its major outputs efficiently with only minor shortcomings or delays. Highly Satisfactory – The window is expected to achieve or exceed all of the major outputs efficiently without significant shortcomings or delays.

3 tooltip