

Local Education Group – Republic of the Tajikistan

Education sector plan appraisal – NSED 2021/2030 Tajikistan

Report

13 August, 2020

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Final version

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Introduction

The National Strategic Document in Tajikistan at the horizon of 2030, developed in 2016, is accompanied by priority sector strategies, among which the National Strategy for Education Development. In the continuity of its actual NSED 2012/20, the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and partner ministries, have launched the process of the development of a new NSED 2021/30 in 2018 on the basis of an Education Sector Analysis, and validated a draft strategic document in April 2020. The present report is part of the Education Sector Plan (ESP) development process according to the Global Partnership guidance. This external appraisal is the final step before the ESP endorsement by all education sector stakeholders, including government and other local education group members (LEG - partners, CSO, NGO...).

The appraisal has been done remotely during the months of May and June 2020, and was funded by the LEG coordinating agency (UNICEF Tajikistan).

The Education sector analysis (ESA 2018) and the draft version of the new NSED 2012/30 are the documents analyzed in this report. The later is divided into five part and four Annex as follows : I-Main goals and objectives ; II-Socio-economic situation and legislative framework ; III- Strategic framework of reforms ; IV- Key reform areas; V- Final provisions – A1: Mid-term action plan (21/23); A2: financing of the NSED for the period until 2030; A3: Monitoring and evaluation mechanism; A4: Key performance indicators (KPIs).

The present appraisal is not intending to point out weaknesses of the NSED document in a prescriptive way but rather in a constructive one, identifying possible additional steps and tools that may be necessary and useful to make sure the education system adopts an effective and efficient results-based management in the long-term basis, through a regular cycle of development, implementation and monitoring of the new NSED.

Thus, recommendations take into account a good number of elements of context, the availability and competencies of the actors of the system and the planning standards applied at the national level. The establishment of a results-based management system implies a certain number of changes in practices in the more or less long term: this report, which is based on reference mechanisms and tools observed in many countries, should be seen as a guidance to consider changes in management practices according to the needs, requirements and current capacities of the system in place.

Executive summary: main elements and recommendations

Objectives and methodology of the external appraisal

The present reports follows the GPE guidelines for ESP appraisal¹ and is articulated around five key questions:

- Has the plan preparation process been country-led, participatory, and transparent? (leadership and participation)
- Does the plan constitute a solid corpus of strategies and actions addressing the key challenges of the education sector? (soundness and relevance)
- Are the issues of equity, efficiency, and learning soundly addressed to increase sector performance? (key issues of equity, efficiency, learning)
- Is there consistency between the various components of the ESP? (coherence)
- Do the financing, implementation, and monitoring arrangements offer a good perspective for achievement? (feasibility, implementability, monitorability).

According to the Terms of reference of the consultation, and in parallel to the reading of the reference NSED documents, Google forms questionnaires have been sent and distant individual and group meetings have been done through Teams, Skype and Whatsapp applications in order to collect data, especially to address the participation and relevance issues of the appraisal. The actors concerned were the members of the Working groups, LEG members and the Deputy Minister together with the Head of Planning².

Contexts

Tajikistan is historically guided by a strict legislative financing way of developing the education strategy. The new dynamic will be evolving from year to year and supported by a strong capacity building programme aiming at providing the education system with actors able to develop and use results-based management tools (e.g. partner's technical support to facilitate a move to RBM technical and financial planning). Thus, the new NSED 2021/30 is more seen as an on-going process in the mid and long term basis and this first step on developing the new strategy 1/ has prioritized the capacity building of the actors of the education system in the area of results-based monitoring (Education sector analysis and theory of change), 2/ was limited by national requirements in terms of format, size, content, political sensitiveness to fit with the planning norms in place at national level. As a matter of fact, the final version of the NSED document has been shorten especially when it comes to elements of analysis of the system and explanation of the theory of change considered.

¹ <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/guidelines-education-sector-plan-appraisal>

² See agenda of meetings, list of actors involved and questionnaires in Annex 1, 2 and 3 p. 29

At short term level, room for changings according to the recommendations addressed in this report are definitively the MTAP and corresponding M&E plan, through mechanisms which takes into account the on-going process and its new dynamic put in place. Nevertheless, further consultation is needed between the MoES and LEG partners before being able to provide more detailed information required in the present report (e.g. detailed MTAP including amount of funding per partner, Equity, Efficiency and learning strategy, criteria to identify beneficiaries and corresponding activities planned). Existing dynamics such that the working groups in charge of developing the actual NSED document, the coordination council to be nominated once the NSED approved by the Government as well as a joint sector review process adapted to the MTAP monitoring one can facilitate the monitoring process in its whole. Suggested tools are aiming at supporting these dynamics to be anchored in a long-term results-based management process.

Leadership and participation

The development of the NSED has benefited from a progressive inclusion of the other ministries during the NSED development process, once the new results-based mechanisms under control at working group levels, especially through the roadmap, the progressive move of decision-makers to a result-based management planning and the involvement of all actors within the working groups in charge of developing the NSED documents, including decentralized actors of the system.

There is a need to keep a continuity in the team and dynamic put in place during the development of the NSED when entering the implementation and M&E phases. This continuity begins with the development of an improved detailed MTAP and a corresponding M&E plan. The current development of MTAP 21/25 by the Government for the national strategy (NSD) should also provide facilities to link the global objectives to sectoral ones.

Soundness and relevance

No summary and recommendations of the ESA are clearly developed in the Chapter 3 of the document to announce the main reforms through the Strategic framework/Theory of change only presented in terms of table (p.20), even though elements of the ESA are widely detailed in each part of chapter 4 "Key reform areas". Nevertheless, reform measures are in direct link with the summary and recommendations of the ESA in each detailed part of Chapter 4 per sub-sector, even though, the ESA in its form is not relying on a rigorous methodology and exhaustive data that would permit an analysis of the system based on its results. Thanks to the methodology applied during the development of the NSED document, three specific reforms happen to be less owned by the MoES than expected: the 12-years education strategy, learning assessment strategy and teacher professional development system.

The ToC should be better introduced in Chapter 3, in terms of main reforms targeted (see examples part II.2), as well as the flow between those reforms, their reform measures, the key outcomes in the KPIs and activities planned in the Action plan. The availability of main quantitative objectives of reform measures would facilitate a better ownership of the reforms

to be put in place (e.g. 12-years education, learning assessments and teacher training systems) through the analysis of the gaps between elements already in the system and the ones needed. Elements on strategies considered to reduce dropout including the respect of official school time, to retain qualified teachers in rural areas, as well as learning assessments' corresponding remediation mechanisms at school level should be included to the NSED document for better understanding of the key objectives targeted. Elements of a possible communication plan developed in parallel of the NSED would also strengthen the soundness of the NSED document.

A more rigorous Education Sector Analysis (see and corresponding financial simulation model should be developed in the next phase of the NSED to be able to better plan the activities according to the share of budget between operational and investment costs. A table with the specific intermediate outcomes and activities already known to be implemented between 2021 and 2023 through existing or future external funding (name of partner and amount) would be necessary for the calculation of the effective gap of the NSED 2021/30, and especially on the MTAP period (2021/2023).

Elements are missing in the MTAP in order to be provided with a sound planning and monitoring tool, among which: Unit of implementation, Quantities (2021, 2022, 2023, Total), Unit costs, Budget planning (2021, 2022, 2023, Total), Source funding (state budget nomenclature, name of external partners, financial gap), Entity responsible of the implementation and monitoring of the implementation, Execution chain (initiative, ToR/CAR, procurement, administrative actions, execution, M&E, reporting)

Equity, efficiency and learning in basic education

Reforms measures and activities presented in the NSED take into account gender issues, regional disparities, level of vulnerability, and inclusiveness in access but also quality of education, efficiency as well as learning outcomes. Nevertheless, no specific strategies are developed in these three mainstreamed domains in the NSED document. Moreover, ESA lacks of data in relation with internal disparities, system efficiency and learning achievements to do so.

The document should present more details on the mechanisms to be put in place, including the identification of targeted populations, with selection criteria used in the choice of beneficiaries of strategies considered in order to ensure equity, efficiency and quality of learning outcomes during the whole period of the NSED and at all level of education. The exercise of better linking the different stages of outcomes would make possible a reduction of the number of KPIs and facilitate the choice of a matrix of key performance indicators (no more than 30) to feed the analysis of the implementation of the NSED at regular basis in terms of access, quality and monitoring.

Coherence

The differences observed between the share of budget in the national budget projections and the MTAP developed can be explained by the high level of construction in GSE, but also the absence of a financial simulation model able to identify detailed needs of the system in terms of investment according to the Theory of Change announced.

The presentation of the whole strategy in the NSED 2021/30 document should benefit from a better link between priority reforms, intermediate results and activities planned in the Mid-term action plan. Once again, there is a strong need to develop a more detailed MTAP and corresponding coherent M&E plan with a list of results, process and monitoring exhaustive indicators that will facilitate the story telling of the evolution of the education sector through the analysis of disparities observed among the country according to the key reforms objectives and activities planned within the NSED.

Feasibility, implementability, and monitorability

The MTAP is lacking details in terms of the external resources available, as well as strategies to raise additional funding. A detailed chapter is dedicated to the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to be put in place through the coordination council to be nominated once the NSED approved at national level. Nevertheless, the new strategy doesn't present a sound M&E plan that details process and monitoring indicators for each activity planned in the MTAP, including initial and targeted values, monitoring chain, means of verification, data sources and calculation methods (see part IV-3). Capacity building activities are mainstreamed in the document but not included in a sector-wide reform. A communication plan is known to be developed soon and should be linked to the NSED objectives in order to provide the education system with sensitized educational community and skilled implementation and M&E actors at national and local levels towards this new strategy guided by a results-based managed theory of change. The promising energy and dynamic observed within the joint reviews and working groups should be kept during the implementation and monitoring ones.

The coming capacity building programme and communication plan should benefit from an evaluation of the capacity of the system to implement and monitor the technical and financial implementation of NSED, if not already done. A risk matrix, known to be existing in the former version of the NSED, should be part of the NSED document, including mitigation measures (see examples of weaknesses identified part V.5).

The functioning of the technical coordination council to be put in place and in charge of the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the NSED at national level can benefit from 1/ the insurance of a continuity in the ownership and RBM dynamic already existing, and 2/ the development of a detailed M&E plan of the NSED 2030 in direct link with the detailed MTAP reviewed, as well as a guidance for results based analysis of indicators.

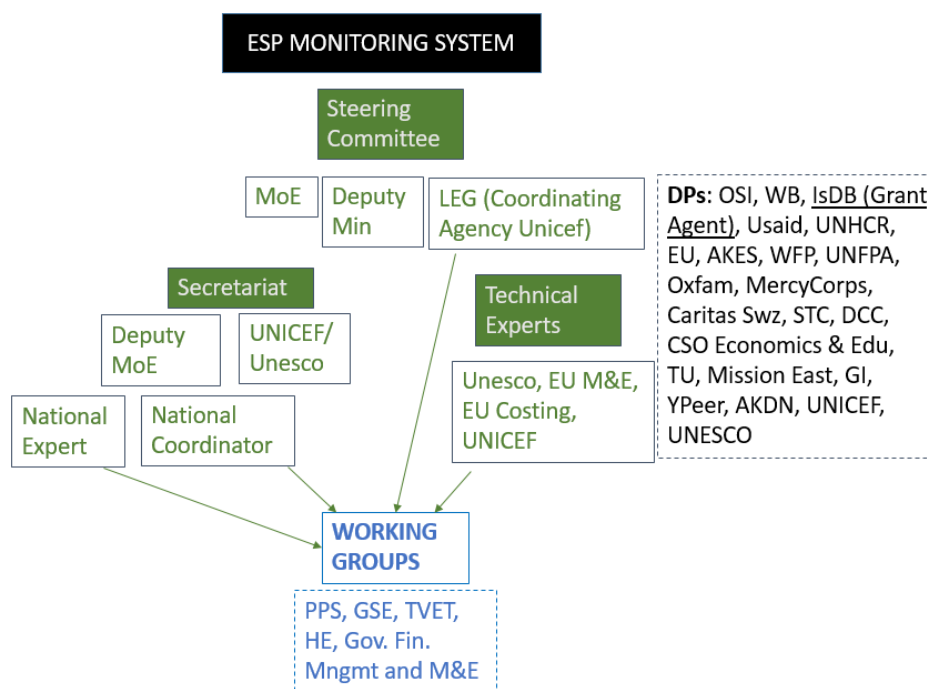
I/ Leadership and participation

Has the plan preparation process been country-led, participatory, and transparent?

1. Leadership and ownership

Rich from the implementation and monitoring of NSED 12/20, and alongside with the planning of the National Development Strategy (NDS 30), the government has decided to develop a new 10-years Education Sector plan in 2019, named NSED 21/30. A coordination mechanism has been established to facilitate the ESP development at all levels as follows. Once the MTAP approved by the MoES, a Coordination Council/Steering Committee will oversee its level of implementation and annual review, whereas the Secretariat will update key performance indicators and coordinate and communicate with national and international technical and financial partners in charge of the implementation of activities planned.

Graph 1: Coordination mechanisms of the planning of the NSED in Tajikistan

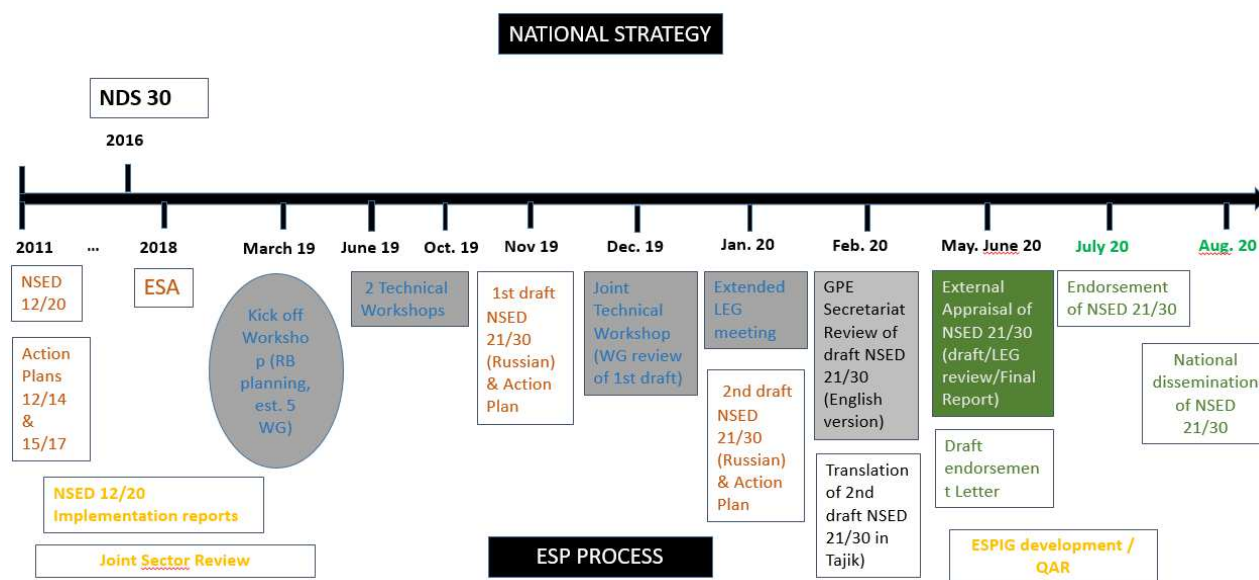


After the education Sector analysis proceeded in 2018, the preparation and planning of NSED 21/30 as been launched in March 2019, with a kick off workshop including capacity building in result-based planning and the establishment of 5 working groups to carry out technical development of the new ESP. Many activities have been done among which two technical workshops in June and October 2019. A draft NSED 21/30 was available in November 2019, including its challenges, a Theory of Change and a draft results framework. This first draft (Russian) was shared with LEG and further reviewed at joint technical workshop conducted in December 4-5, 2019. A second draft (Russian) of the NSED document was then developed by

the working groups and shared with DPs in January 2020. This draft was presented in extended LEG Meeting of January 28, 2020. The English version reviewed in the LEG meeting has been shared with GPE Secretariat on January 29 for further review and MoES is currently translating it in Tajik for inter-ministerial review. An updated 170 pages version available in April 2020 was subsequently reduced by more than 80 pages in order to fit with the national planning constraints and be provided with the final version at the end of May, 2020.

The exercise of development of the new NSED has benefited from the experience of the actual NSED 12/21 implementation and monitoring process. Nevertheless, the Education Sector analysis and the use of logical framework, Results framework, Theory of change were fairly new to all actors involved in the process and this was sometimes difficult within the different groups to highlight all education sector achievements so far and identify gaps in a systemic way. In this sense, the main issue, in the beginning of the process, has been to find professionals with the necessary knowledge and experience to develop a strategic format of sector plan based on results based management tools. But thanks to the leadership of the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), the team involved in the process built the capacities to do so, and reached a good level of quality in the new strategy document. Among facilitating tools during the technical process, the roadmap has been very useful to have a common understanding of the different steps for the development and implementation phases.

Graph 2: Summary of the different steps of the development of the NSED 2021/30:



The draft version delivered was reviewed in terms of format and transmitted to the government, with all suggestions from working groups included. Once validated, the M&E framework and corresponding EMIS indicators will be developed. The Communication plan and campaign will permit the dissemination and vulgarization of the NSED 2021/30 among the

population, at national and local levels, including non-education actors of the society, and other stakeholders.

2. Participatory process

The development of NSED 2021/30 has been done in a participative climate at all steps of the process, and included all partners of the MoES, at national and decentralized level, including actors from the districts but also developing partners from the Local education group (LEG), CSOs and NGOs.

After a first necessary and useful period of ownership by the MoE solely, other ministries have been involved in a second step. Hopefully, and thanks to the dynamism of the facilitation of the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) working group, Ministry of Labor, Employment and Migration attended to the different meetings in order to bring key expertise needed in this specific group for the development of a strategy linked with the economic/employment sectors constraints, needs and social demand. There is also a strong need to continuously work with the ministry of Justice, the Executive Office of the President and the first Deputy Prime Minister's office in order to plan feasible strategies according to the law and decrees in place and/or to be edited. The on-going Public Finance Management and Modernization Project (PFMMP2) due to end in December 2021 will facilitate the development of templates and document good practices for the development of national/sectoral strategies. The coordinated systemic monitoring system will be key to be able to address specific issues and their solutions during the implementation of the new strategy.

The NSED 2021/30 has been developed by five different working groups corresponding to the five key reform areas of the NSED 2021/30 (Preschool education, general secondary education, primary and secondary professional education, high professional education, governance and financing in the education sector). It has to be noted that the coordination of these five groups was somehow tricky at some point, especially when it came to the plans to attain 12-year education system. Among other working groups meetings (more than ten in total), three main workshops were organized in April June and December 2019, in order to share information and to product contents on the scope of SDGs, the theory of change of the NSED, its results framework and priorities for the Medium-Term action plan to be developed.

Despite remaining different levels of understanding of the strategic planning and results-based monitoring process and tools between the different actors, especially regarding the Theory of Change, the Key performance Indicators (KPIs) and results framework developed, the NSED 2021/30 today is the translation of a good supervision of the development process by the government, and its appropriation by the developing partners.

3. Capacity building

Specific technical support was provided by the Local education group partners during the three main workshop organized in 2019, gathering all actors from the different working groups.

In order to facilitate the development of each part of the NSED 2021/30, terms of reference and results based monitoring tools have been developed and shared to all working groups. Among them, worksheets helped identify priority problems and possible solutions, and build Theory of Change and Results Framework (indicators, evidence, source, cause, assessment of feasibility, desirability, sustainability). A suggested structure of the NSED 2021/30 document, including specific questions for each key reform areas according to ESA findings and possible solutions already identified, has also been shared with all actors involved in the process of NSED development.

Testimony of working groups and LEG members, when asking about the strengths and weaknesses of the new NSED 2021/30, reveal the efficiency of these workshops in terms of capacity building. For instance, it's been said that Tajikistan Education system is now benefiting from a results-based management mechanism (Theory of change, performance indicators, Mid-Term Action Plan, M&E system), thanks to the on-going process, which also brought a better involvement and common understanding of actors, as well as the construction of a dialogue platform. The new NSED is today able to mainstream issues such that gender, inclusive education, refugees and IDPs, and focuses on quality with a learning assessment process which respects international standards (PISA), and the quality of information available with a better level of details, thanks to the ESA, have facilitated the consideration of necessary reforms and corresponding measures.

Still, education system actors are thinking and reporting within a sub-sectoral or project vision at decentralized and central level, and the routine of data collection and analysis is limited to output and processes. There is a need to be provided with accurate guidelines and training in terms of systemic and programmatic results indicators, specifically in the phases of collection and analysis of data for the reporting of the implementation of the NSED. The strategic planning (or policy coordination) unit to be created within the Planning and Economy Department of the MoES will play a catalytic role in such a capacity building dynamic.

II/Soundness and relevance

Does the plan constitute a solid corpus of strategies and actions addressing the key challenges of the education sector?

1. Evidence-based sector analysis

The NSED 2021/30 development has benefited from the existence of an Education Sector analysis published in 2019, which gathers cumulative information collected and analysis produced on the sector since 2016, thanks to annual sector reviews and specific estimation of financing needs in GSE produced the last three years (Mirzoev, 2016-2017-2018). Data from EMIS, TajStat, UIS, UNDP, World Bank, EGRA, ETF, and other specific studies on school time (Argranovich, 16) or adult learning, or external efficiency (Qudiussov, 17) are used and mostly are dated from 2016 to 2019. Even though not enough documented in terms of data and not relying on neither rigorous methodology, nor a specific financial model, the ESA 2019 gives global, politic, institutional, economic, social and demographic background as well as main achievements of each sub-sector, in terms of access, quality and students flows (preschool, General Secondary education – which includes primary and secondary school grades from 1 to 11th – Primary and secondary professional education, higher professional education) The report analyses transversal issues such that disparities, gender, vulnerability, children with disabilities, cost and financing but also system capacity in terms of infrastructures, pedagogical materials, teacher allocation and qualification, information system, external efficiency and sector monitoring. Recommendations specifically addressed in the scope of the development of the new NSED 2021/30 are presented at the end of the document.

Recommendations and summary:

The next stages of the NSED would benefit from a more rigorous ESA, associated to a financial simulation model to be able to analysis the performance of the system and address adapted strategies to improve it (see <https://poledakar.iiep.unesco.org/en/publications/methodological-documents>). This being said, the ESA 2019 provides useful information to identify main strengths and bottlenecks, and corresponding strategic elements to be highlighted in the NSED 2021/30, as follows:

Beyond access increase over the past years in preschool, due to greater publicly-funded options, enrolment remains relatively low due to lack of trained personnel, physical space, and high fees, as well as a high inadequate provision of infrastructures, especially in rural areas (33,4% preschool vs 73,6 % of preschool age population). Education nearly reaches universality in primary and secondary education and equitable access between genders, and provide students the full cycle of general secondary education (grades 1-11) in eight out of ten GSE institutions. Nevertheless, the coverage of education for children with disabilities is still low and migration is one of the main factors that prevent children from attending school. Despite improvement in TVET (news curricula, effort in women enrolled), more absorption capacity is needed to train and re-train more students, especially the migrant returnees workers from Russia. In higher education, growing attendance of women does not hide low completion rates, partly explained by perceived irrelevance of education in finding employment. Adult education in Tajikistan is difficult to analyze due to a lack of data up to date.

Shortage in textbooks, pedagogical materials and equipment can partly explain the poor quality of education, especially in ethnic minority languages, and actual initiatives in collaboration with partners are addressing the issue of reading materials (GPE-4 trust fund). The lack of teachers in numbers and qualification is also a critical issue in the system, especially in rural areas, leading to lower level of pedagogical training required in preprimary

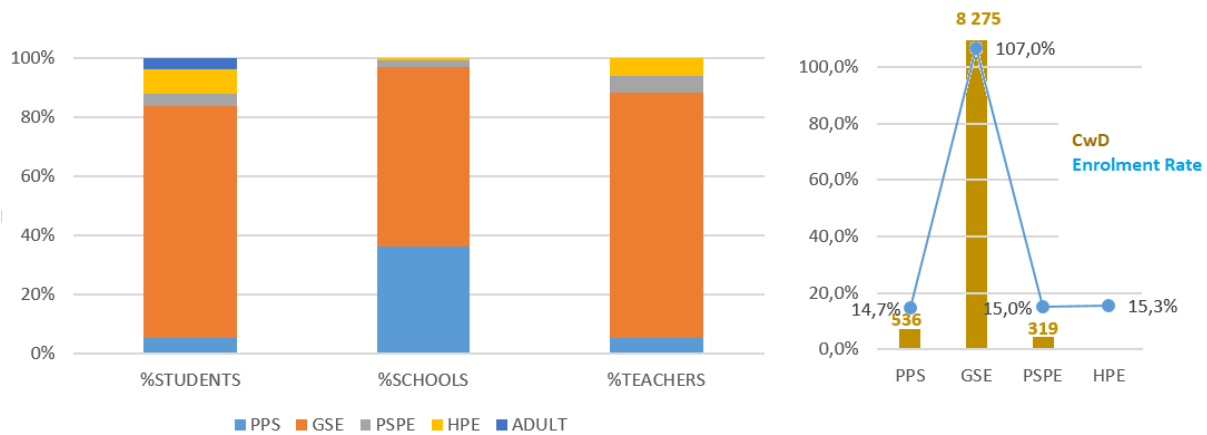
and GSE. The unattractiveness of the profession is partly explained by its low level of remuneration compared to other employments. Learning outcomes assessment are not systematic in the education system, and low participation to international programs such that PISA, PIRLS or TIMSS prevent the country from results-based monitoring of the education quality, even though last EGRA assessment in 2012 showed a high proportion of students unable to read properly. Teaching-learning process remediation mechanisms in the classroom are also very weak and national exams results remain the only requirement at administrative levels.

No census data exist in Tajikistan, which limits the analysis of the impact of education on social development, and reinforces the inadequacy between labor market demand (shifting from agriculture to trade and services) and education priorities to put in place. This results to a young labor force under employed, and lacking of accurate technical and soft skills.

The management system of the education system is not based on tools and mechanisms able to assess the performance of the sector according to the objectives and activities planned at annual and mid-term basis. Despite the organization of several joint sector review, the dialogue only exists at central level, and essentially with funding partners as counterparts, and is not relying on results-based budgeting and monitoring tools meant to guide the planning, implementation and analysis of the strategy in place in a systematic way. Moreover, the capacity of staff in the MoES to develop and use such mechanisms and tools is weak, and the roles and responsibilities of actors at decentralized level are not identified in the existing monitoring system in place. At last, the existing information system (EMIS) only contains administrative and quantitative data, mainly feeding the annual data report, with no link neither to the on-going strategy results framework, nor to the human and financial resources systems, and thus with limited use in planning, policymaking and M&E, especially in the regions, where no guiding mechanisms exist to facilitate the flow of information at school level.

The state budget is split into two components: republican at central level (primary vocational training and part of secondary), and local budgets (pre-primary, major part of GSE, part of secondary vocational training), and represents 17 of public expenditure with a total expenditure representing 6.3% of the country total GDP in 2018. Most of these allocations represent current expenses (60% to labor costs) and do not serve the quality of education, with a low level of investment budget so far. Unit cost are very high in preschool, TVET and Higher education and spending patterns inefficient. The per capita financing (PCF) mechanisms put in place in GSE since 2010 has shown encouraging improvements in the prevision and expenditure, with more adapted allocations to local means and corresponding needs, and an increase in school autonomy to plan and implement more coherent school projects. Nevertheless, decentralization, remains a main challenge in Tajikistan, with local disparities in terms of access, quality and efficiency. Moreover, the dependence of the MoES, on Main Administrators of Budget Allocations (MABAs) makes it difficult to plan, implement and report the education strategy according to the specificity observed in the sector at daily basis. At last, no financial simulation model is available for the sector, with an impact on the efficiency of the sector budget monitoring.

Graph 3: Summary data on Tajikistan education system: share of students, schools and teachers, children with disabilities, and enrollment rates

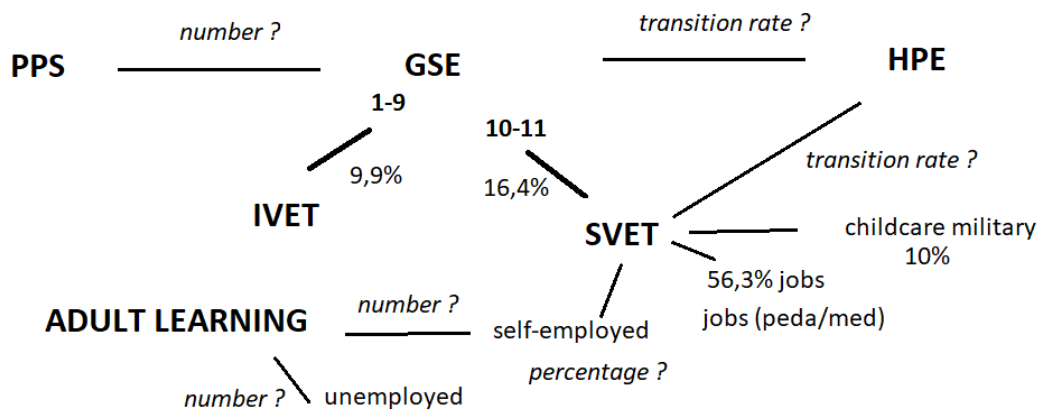


2. Relevance of policies and programmes

Global overview

Seventy-three priority reforms measures are presented in the document. Some of them represent blended activities and elements per sub-sector difficult to associate to one or another reforms not announced before in the document, except from the ones at governance axis. In other words, elements are available per sub-sector, but the final document is missing a prior definition of main reforms in the part dedicated to the “Strategic framework of reforms”. As noted by actors involved in the process, a sub-section 'assessment of the implementation of previous reform measures was available in the April version but removed due to national format constraints. Such an introduction of the Theory of change would tell a story, and thus facilitate the understanding of the national strategy, before listing the measures that accompany the process. Moreover reforms announced should embrace more than one sub-sector, since they are aiming at facilitating the flow between level of education as well as improving the quality of achievement and monitoring of the sector. For example, reforms should be able to solute the monitoring of main issues linked to access and transition as follows:

Graph 4: Monitoring elements of access and transition facilitated by the NSED 2021/30 reforms



As examples of reforms that would include a certain number of the measures presented, we could find the definition of the mechanisms provided for: the deployment of a 12-years education (infrastructures optimization and use - inclusion of PPS classes in GSI - compulsory education for 6 years old children, initial training in HPE), the strategy for the reduction of dropout phenomenon at all education level, reinforcement of teaching-learning process remediation (NQF, Learning assessment and teacher training on capacity-based education and continuous remediation through results based analysis), the strategy of diversification of primary education (alternative programmes, better transition to PSPE, adults learning), the revision of Human resource strategy in the whole sector, including the teacher training system, the improvement of dialogue within the government and with the partners (PPP, Joint sector review) through a revised M&E process of the NSED 2021/30 (tools, reporting, training), the reinforcement of decentralization mechanisms in parallel, the Communication plan...

Moreover, the different outcomes targeted by the reforms measures are not harmonized and not always linked to the right long-term objective which makes the understanding of the whole process difficult. The governance objectives are being presented per sub-sector in the priority reforms measures and then are transversal in the MTAP, which causes a mix when reading the NSED 2021/30 document.

Strategy details by long-term outcomes

Despite the absence of a common thread in the introduction of the strategy, all elements are present in the details available in the key reforms areas part, per sub-sectors (preprimary, GSE, PSPE, HPE, Governance). Most of the recommendations from the ESA have been taken into account in the NSED 2021/30. As the new policy is innovative, it is key to gain the ownership of all actors thanks to their understanding of its interconnections and expected results. The following part lists major groups of activities planned, linked to reforms envisaged as well as their corresponding key-related issues.

ACCESS

In all sub-sectors, child friendly access conditions, including hygiene norms, and inclusiveness of children with disabilities, are privileged through the construction, reconstruction and equipment of infrastructures, especially in rural areas, as well as the capacity building of principals and staff to address the equity issues at school levels.

Regulation of preprimary education, standards regarding learning outcomes, age, nutrition, as well as a framework for alternative modalities (private, CDC) at this level will be developed, with parallel advocacy actions to raise awareness of parents. Analysis is planned in preschool to optimize the construction of new buildings adapted to the children needs, and the physical capacity of primary school institutions to include preschool classrooms in the scope of the 12-years education reform will be assessed.

In GSE, a specific attention will be paid to out-of school children and to the strategy of reduction of dropout phenomenon. At the same time, gifted primary and secondary students will be encouraged through targeted competitions at national and international levels in order to promote the transition beyond 9th grade, especially among girls, whereas actions will be

put in place to ensure the promotion of IVET/SVET channels and an increase in the enrolment of female students, where the use of information technologies will be encouraged. Distant learning programs, as well as resources centers and scholarship will be expanded in higher education, with a specific focus in this level of education on the inclusion of children with disabilities, girls' education and the development of new courses based on market needs.

QUALITY

Curricula as well as capacity-based education standards and teaching materials will be reviewed and developed in all sub sectors, with a specific focus on inclusive education in GSE, an up-date of existing programmes and modernization of standards in IVET/SVET. In higher education awareness will raise towards public on the importance of HPE, curricula will be developed for a joint international system and international internship for teachers will be established. At this level, the use of ITC will be promoted through the expansion of distant and blended learning programmes, adapted to student with disabilities.

National quality frameworks (NQF) and Assessments (NQA) and M&E systems will be developed in PPS, GSE, PSPE and HPE, the last one including a system of credit, in order to provide data and information for action. The operational efficiency of workers and quality of in-service teachers training will be improved in preprimary school, whereas the question of the prestige of GSE teachers will be addressed.

The question of continuous adult learning is key in the reintegration of the many repatriated migrant workers from abroad and is addressed in the measures envisaged for PSPE. In order to improve the employability and entrepreneurship of young workers, and the relevance of TVET and HPE dual learning will be promoted in HPE, cooperation between HEI, IVET and SVET strengthened, with an independent program of accreditation with employers in PSPE, mechanisms to facilitate employment and a system of employment tracking to be put in place in IVET/SVET.

GOVERNANCE

The review of the current human resource monitoring, and staff training system is planned through a sufficient provision of resources according to the needs, but also capacity building in project planning and monitoring to enhance the M&E system at administrative but also pedagogical level (including actions at local level in GSE).

A specific attention is given to the strategy for the transition to a 12-year compulsory education, as well as to the management of HPE (qualification, structure, training, development of private institutions, and autonomy in the expansion of this sub-sector). The public-private partnership is also mainstreamed to support improved recruitment, but also better quality of TVET and HPE, as well as finding new way of investing in the sector.

New mechanisms for financial management are planned in preprimary, GSP, IVET/SVET, including the implementation of per capita system at all levels, and the strengthening of multi-channel financing, non-fiscal, state funding mechanisms for extra budget funds, and the implementation of the FMIS. Programs to attract additional funding are planned, especially for preprimary and TVET sub-sectors.

At last the implementation of a new EMIS using digital technology is aiming at providing a results-based management tool, able to collect and use disaggregated data, at national and local level.

Remarks and ways of improvement

The document and the MTAP are missing the quantitative informations in the detail of reform measures which renders impossible the comparison between elements available in the system and planning. Reading and learning in mother tongue are addressed in the NSED but not specifically mainstreamed in the MTAP, and no details are given regarding the strategy to reduce dropout, especially in upper secondary, TVET and HPE. The corresponding remediation mechanisms at school level following the learning assessment planned, including adapted teacher training, are not visible in the strategy announced. The monitoring of school time is not mentioned in the document. Despite elements in the NSED document, specific reforms and associate intermediate results should be considered in terms of human resource strategy (in collaboration with the MLMEP, including a strategy to retain qualified teachers in rural areas), and M&E system (in close collaboration with the MAPAs), including development of monitoring mechanisms, corresponding tools and staff capacity building. No communication plan associated specifically to the implementation and monitoring of the NSED2021/30 is proposed.

3. Soundness of the financial framework

No simulation model exists to take into account the structural, material, human, financial constraints of the system to ensure the achievement of planned feasible and realistic quantitative objectives. In this context, the new ESP and its planned budget for the 3-years MTAP have been projected on the basis of the annual growth (average of 10.7 between 2011 and 2017), the annual increase of budget allocation, and a medium scenario of level of spending on education (5.4% share of GDP, and share of aggregated budget expenditure 18%) for the sector. It has to be noted that in 2018, an adjustment was made due to a reduction in the allocation of Public investment program (PIP) and other changings in others sectors allocation.

The actual distribution of total budget allocations for education for different levels of education has be taken into account when deciding how to allocate the marginal cost per sub-sector as follows:

Table 1: Estimates of education sector expenditure and distribution among sub-sectors of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period until 2030 (in million somoni)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2021%	2025%	2030%	REF 2015
PPS	324,0	335,4	348,6	362,5	400,2	443,0	490,4	542,9	601,0	665,3	6%	6%	6%	+
GSE	3 148,3	3 258,8	3 386,7	3 512,6	3 888,4	4 304,5	4 765,1	5 274,9	5 839,4	6 464,2	59%	59%	59%	-
PSPE	297,6	308,1	320,2	332,1	367,6	406,9	450,5	498,7	552,0	611,1	6%	6%	6%	+ SVET
HPE	868,9	308,1	934,7	969,5	1 073,2	1 188,0	1 315,1	1 455,9	1 611,6	1 784,1	16%	16%	16%	=
PUBLIC ADMIN	702,8	899,4	756,0	784,1	868,0	960,9	1 063,7	1 177,5	1 303,5	1 443,0	13%	13%	13%	-
	5 341,6	5 109,8	5 746,2	5 960,8	6 597,4	7 303,3	8 084,8	8 949,9	9 907,5	10 967,7	21%	24%	66%	+

This initial linear distribution will be informed and reviews with regards to the performances observed during the implementation of the strategy, but we can already mention the efforts made in the area of preprimary school (6%) and secondary professional education (4%) which are subject to priority reforms implemented during the first years of the implementation of the NSED 2021/30. The share of General secondary education is meeting the conditions of GPE, with 59% of the total costs planned, and the division into levels of education can be considered in the preparation of the MTAP final version, since reforms and corresponding activities are not targeting the same objectives whether children are attending primary, lower or upper secondary school.

The MTAP for the period 2021/30 has been developed and its preliminary cost is estimated in the amount of 5,584.67 million somoni. According to details of activities and different long-term objectives targeted, this budget is distributed as follow:

Table 2: Distribution of the budget of the MTAP 21/30 by long-term objectives (Access, Quality and Governance) in million somoni

	Access	Quality	Gov	TOTAL	
PPS	720 228,9	28 106,6		748 335,5	13%
GSE	3 394 159,4	883 453,6		4 277 613,0	77%
PSPE	269 487,7	29 165,7		298 653,4	5%
HPE	53 019,3	162 367,6		215 386,9	4%
GOV			43 151,4	43 151,4	1%
	4 436 895,3	1 103 093,5	43 151,4	5 583 140,2	
	79%	20%	1%		

The initial distribution of costs between sub-sectors is not equivalent to the projection made and 77% go to GSE, whereas 13% go to preprimary education, and only 4% to HPE instead of 16% planned in the projections. This is explained by the investment nature of the present MTAP and the great part of construction and equipment of infrastructures includes in the access related reforms announces in the NSED 2021/30.

A second table shows the distribution with few changings according to the analysis of the reforms measures and associated log-term objectives which are not always coherent with each other (see detail in the part 4 of this report p. X) and with a distinction between construction/equipment costs and other access activities costs:

Table 3: Distribution of the budget of the MTAP 21/30 by long-term objectives (Access, Quality and Governance) with construction costs isolated in million somoni

	INFRA/Equip	Access others	Quality	Gov	TOTAL M TJS	TOTAL M USD
PPS	697 656,0	10 164,3	9 190,9	31 324,3	748 335,5	72 591,9
GSE	3 375 000,0	19 159,4	864 828,5	18 625,1	4 277 613,0	414 947,7
PSPE	268 844,7	643,0	27 955,3	1 210,4	298 653,4	28 970,7
HPE	4 300,0	39 339,3	130 070,8	41 676,8	215 386,9	20 893,5
GOV	-	-	-	43 151,4	43 151,4	4 185,9
	4 345 800,7	69 306,0	1 032 045,5	135 988,0	5 583 140,2	541 589,7
	421 562,2	6 723,0	100 113,1	13 191,4		
	78%	1%	18%	2%		

These details shows us that constructions represent 78% of the expenses planned for the 3-years MTAP 21/23, with 60% for only GSE infrastructures in GSE. Activities related to quality cost 18% of the total budget.

Of the total amount of the MTAP 2021/2023, approximately 34% will be provided from the state budget of the Republic of Tajikistan for the education sector and 66.6% from development partners. The activities covered by the state budget includes expenditure already provided for in the total resource expenditure envelope of the education sector (development of regulatory materials, development of standards, concepts, plans and programs).

Table 4: Distribution of state budget and external resources for the implementation of the MTAP 21/23 by sources of funding (in million somoni)

	REP BUDGET	LOCAL BUDGET	GRANTS LOANS	OTHER SOURCE	GAP
M TJS	1 374 158,0	376 215,0	3 718 570,0	114 195,0	2,2
M USD	133 299,5	36 494,5	360 718,0	11 077,4	0,2
	24,6%	6,7%	66,6%	2,0%	

The financial implication of each partner involved in the LEG is not specified and is included as a whole in the category “Grants, loans”. A table with the specific intermediate outcomes and activities already known as piloted between 2021 and 2023 by existing or future projects/programs, and funded by partners, including the amount of funding, would be necessary for the calculation of the effective gap of the NSED 2021/30, and especially on the MTAP period (2021/2023). Activities planned in projects known to be implemented in 2021/23 should be directly identified in the action plan (e.g. school environment in districts, upgrading classrooms, rolling out a revised math and language curriculum, providing new furniture and laboratory equipment, making schools more accessible to children with disabilities, new learning assessment system and improvement of education data).

Moreover, no unit cost is available in the MTAP. The availability of unit cost per nature of activity is necessary to proceed to an evaluation of the financial credibility and feasibility of the NSED and the MTAP. Main nature of costs useful for this exercise are the following:

Table 5: List of nature of unit cost necessary for the development of a sound budgeted action plan, per long-term objective

NATURE OF ACTIVITIES (REF. UNIT COST)	
ACCESS	
LEGALISATION/REGULATION	
CONSTRUCTION/EQUIPMENT	
STUDY	
QUALITY	
STANDARDS / NQS	
CURRICULA	
PEDAGOGICAL MATERIAL	
TRAINING	
LEARNING ASSESSMENT	
GOVERNANCE	
HR	
FUNDING	
M&E / NQS	
DECENTRALIZATION	
COMS	
EMIS	

4. Soundness of the action plan

A three-year action plan named MTAP 2021/2030 has been developed with all the actors and partners (working groups) involved in the NSED development process, in a participative way. It presents activities planned, by long-term objectives (access, quality and governance) and corresponding intermediate outcomes, and gives information on implementation period, priority reform measure, total cost, source of financing, and implementing agency, as follows:

Planned activities	Implementation period	Priority reform measure (#)	Total cost (in '000 somoni)	Financing (in '000 somoni)				Financing gap	Implementing agencies (in addition to MoES)
				Republica n budget	Local budgets	Grants, loans	Other sources		

The actual MTAP is not provided with a manual of procedures which would explain clearly its role, status, and describe methods of financial estimation, as well as chain of responsibilities during its implementation and M&E.

This first version of MTAP will be consolidated at national and decentralized level, according to GPE process. This activity will be coordinated by the M&E unit in charge of the monitoring of the implementation of the NSED 21/30.

The Action plan is presented by reform areas (5), long-term outcomes (3 per reform area: Access, Quality and Governance), intermediate outcomes (25 in total), and activities (149; 36 for preprimary education, 29 for GSE, 18 in IVET/SVET, 23 in HPE, and 23 for governance).

Activities are missing a few information in order to be able to define the roles and responsibilities involved in the implementation and monitoring process of the NSED, as follows:

- Unit of implementation
- Quantity (2021, 2022, 2023, Total)
- Unit cost
- Budget planning (2021, 2022, 2023, Total)
- Source funding (state budget nomenclature, name of external partners, financial gap)
- Entity responsible of the implementation and monitoring of the implementation
- Execution chain (initiative, ToR/CAR, procurement, administrative actions, execution, M&E, reporting)

Moreover, some intermediate outcomes are not always corresponding to the group of activities planned (e.g. GSE: IO 311, related to infrastructures does not plan construction, but the one on supportive learning environment does). The IO 511, is related to teacher training and curricula. This outcome should be divided into two different outcomes, with two different types of targets. In other words, it is important to harmonize the intermediate Outcomes and activities per sub-sector for better monitoring through KPIs and coming M&E plan.

At last, a few activity costs are missing in the MTAP: preprimary (20), GSE (28), PSPE (17), HPE (20, 31, 35, 41), Governance (7, 17).

Table 6: Summary of the 149 activities planned in the MTAP 21/23 per long-term objective

PPS		GSE		PSPE		HPE	
LTO21 ACCESS		LTO31 ACCESS		LTO41 ACCESS		LTO51 ACCESS	
IO 211 LEG SANIT REF		IO 311 INFRA		IO 411 INFRA		IO 511 INFRA	
A1	LEG	A1	REG	A1	INFRA	A1	ADV STRATEGIE
A2	LEG	A2	OOSC	A2	REPAIR	A2	LEG/REG QTY
A3	REG	A3	PGRM	A3	INFO COMS	A3	PGRM
A4	STD	A4	ACCEL PGRM	A4	PROMOTION	A4	LEG/REG PGRM
A5	STUDY	A5	IE			A5	LEG
A6	INFRA					A6	STD INFRA
A7	INFRA					A7	INFRA
A8	INFRA					A8	CURRICULA IE
A9	LEG					A9	CURRICULA TT IE
						A10	LEG/REG VULN
						A11	PGRM DIST LEARNING
						A12	TT ITC
							IO 512 LEARN ENV
						A13	CFS
IO 212 SOCIAL SAFE ENV		IO 312 LEARN ENV					
A10	VULN	A6	INFRA STUDY				
A11	STD	A7	INFRA				
A12	FIN ALT	A8	REPAIR				
A13	STAFF SCHEDULE (HR)	A9	PGRM				
A14	ROLES (HR)	A10	AGE d.o.				
A15	TV BROADCAST	A11	LEG				
A16	MED EQUIPMNT						
LTO22 QUALITY		LTO32 QUALITY		LTO42 QUALITY		LTO52 QUALITY	
IO 221 TT		IO 321 TT		IO 421 TT		IO 521 TT /CURRICULA	
A17	PGM IE	A12	ANALYSIS TT	A5	PGRM	A14	GIFTED STUDENTS
A18	INFO (COMS)	A13	PAYMENT	A6	NQF	A15	R&D
A19	ALTERN PGM	A14	CERTIF (HR)	A7	CLASSIF	A16	COMPETITIVE HR SELECTION
A20	PPS MODULE IN TT CURRICULA	A15	TT	A8	NTIC COMPUTERIZATION	A17	PGRM TT SCIENC TECHN ADMIN
A21	QUALIF REG	A16	TT	A9	TOOLS	A18	NQF
A22	PGRM IE	A17	NQF	A10	ACCRE	A19	HRMIS
A23	IE	A18	NQF	A11	MNGMT SYST M&E	A20	DISTANT LEARNING
A24	TT	A19	NQF-T	A12	NTIC RESOURCES	A21	QUALIF DISTANT LEARNING
A25	COURSES			A13	TRACKING EMPLOYEES	A22	M&E T
A26	TT			A14	QUALIF	A23	INTERNSHIP
A27	TT			A15	TT		
A28	ADMIN T			A16	HR SELECTION		
				A17	EMIS		
IO 222 CURRICULA		IO 322 CURRICULA				IO 522 TT/ QAR	
A17	PGRM	A20	CURRIC			A24	NQF
A18	CURRICULA AGE STD	A21	12-Y			A25	CLASSIF
A19	NTICs PGRM	A22	MAT			A26	STD INFRA
		A23	CURRIC			A27	CURRICULA
						A28	ACCRED
						A29	ACCRED
						A30	LA SYSTEM
						A31	AP INTERNATIONAL NQS
						A32	M&E SYST
						A33	ICT
						A34	ICT-T
IO 223 LA		IO 323 LA		IO 422 EMPLOYMENT		IO 523 PARTNERSHIP	
A17	NQF	A24	M&E QAR	A18	EMPLOYABILITY	A35	PARTNERSHIP INTERNAT
A18	NQF T	A25	LA			A36	LEG MOBILITY
A19	LEG EMIS	A26	TOOLS LA			A37	EMPLOYERS
A20	M&E SYST	A27	CB M&E			A38	PLATFORMS PRACT T
A21	EMIS IMPL	A28	COMS			A39	NTIC
		A29	REMEDATION			A40	LABOR MARKET
						A41	NTIC EDU RESOURCES
							IO 524 R&D
						A37	R&D
						A38	INNOV
LTO61 GOVERNANCE							
IO 611 PER CAPITA FIN		IO 612 MULTI CHANNEL FIN		IO 613 PPP		IO 614 EMIS	
A1	PER CAPITA FINANCING PPS/GS	A6	FIN ALTERNATIVE PPS	A10	STUDY PPP REGIONS	A12	EMIS
A2	LEG/REG	A7	FIN ECD MECHANISMS	A11	PPP INCLUSION	A13	EMIS
A3	PER CAPITA HPE	A8	SYST EXTRABUDGET FUNDS			A14	FMIS
A4	FINANCING PRO DVPMNT (HR)	A9	INCOME FROM EB FUNDS			A15	FMIS
A5	YOUNG PROFESSIONALS (HR)						
IO 615 M&E		A22	DRR-T				
A16	REG ADMIN	A23	DRM SYST				
A17	NCEQA						
A18	M&E SYST REVIEW						
A19	REG GOV BODIES						
A20	QAR SYST ISO ANALYSIS						
A21	QAR ISO IMPLM						

The analysis of the activities planned has showed inconsistencies in some outcomes and activities per sub-sector for better monitoring through KPIs and coming M&E plan. Possible changing in reforms measures are identified in the above table as follows (see colors) : blue means, the activity would better fit in Access outcomes, green in Quality and purple in governance.

Moreover, the policy based budgeting concept through MTF reform and its 3-year action plan cycle is not linked to the education results framework. This one still relies on a centralized process. A senior level decision is necessary to eliminate these two parallel management systems. At last, there is a specific need in terms of capacity building on management and planning, at national and regional levels, which is not reflected enough in the NSED document so far.

III/ Equity, efficiency and learning in basic education

Are the issues of equity, efficiency, and learning soundly addressed to increase sector performance?

1. Robustness and relevance of the strategies

Reforms measures and activities presented in the NSED take into account gender issues, regional disparities, level of vulnerability, and inclusiveness in access but also quality of education, efficiency as well as learning outcomes, despite a lack of data in the ESA in relation with internal disparities, system efficiency and learning achievements.

Gender issues as well as inclusive education are object to specific activities in Access components but also at quality one, and are mainstreamed in all levels of education (child friendly and inclusive infrastructures, materials adapted to disabilities, promotion of enrolment of girls in TVET and HPE, mechanism for identifying vulnerable children in pre-primary education, construction of schools and strategies to retain qualified teachers especially in rural areas).

National Learning Standardized assessments system and wider national quality frameworks and assessments of the system are planned to be systematize in all sub-sectors. Nevertheless, the remediation process linked to these assessments is not clearly defined and detailed in the document.

In general the document should present more details on the mechanisms to be put in place, including the selection criteria used in the choice of beneficiaries of activities implemented, in order to ensure equity, efficiency and quality of learning outcomes during the whole period of the NSED and at all level of education.

2. Change strategies

As above mentioned, the theory of change should be more explained to accompany the strategic result framework for reforms presented at the end of chapter 3.

The description of the strategies should rely on this credible chain of results and options chose linked to a certain number of innovative problem solving measures available in the different part of reform area in chapter 4, mainstreamed in the sector: management of students' flow, norms of quality (pedagogic and administrative), alternative education, link between TVET, GSE and HPE, orientation to adult learning, link to private sector and employability of youth.

The achievement of objectives should have a long-term impact on the key issues above mentioned:

- Equity: more supply adapted to the demand, all children in school with no difference
- Efficiency: less dropout, a better management of school time, of human and financial resources, a better orientation of students, graduates better adapted to labor market, and increasing GDP...

- Learning outcomes (better trained teachers, more adapted pedagogical materials, respect of school-time, readjusted supply, branches developed, improved competences)

3. Results framework

Key performance indicators (KPIs) have been developed but there is a need to readjust them in order to ensure a better flow between long-term outcomes, intermediate outcomes and activities planned in the MTAP. There is a necessity to reduce the number of KPIs which are 119 today. KPIs should be able to give an overview of the performance of the sector in terms of Access (GER, number of student, flows), quality (assessment rates), and governance (level of technical and financial execution of the MTAP, number of Joint sector review organized, share of R&D in the HPE budget), and included in a graphic visualization in a single slide/page of a report.

Moreover, some of the KPIs are process indicators that will be collected after the implementation of activities planned in the MTAP, meaning these indicators will find their place in the process and intermediate indicators of the M&E plan to be developed. The exercise of better linking the different stages of outcomes will permit a reduction of the number of KPIs and facilitate the choice of a matrix of key performance indicators (no more than 30) to feed the analysis of the implementation of the NSED a regular basis (see below).

IV/Coherence

Is there consistency between the various components of the ESP?

1. Coherence among the strategies, programmes and interventions

Once again, and as above mentioned, the different reforms, measures, intermediate outcomes and associated activities planned are not always coherent with each other. One of the solution to improve the presentation of the whole strategy in the NSED 2021/30 document, would be a better link between priority reforms, intermediate results and activities planned in the Mid-term action plan and a review of the KPIs in consequence so that the later directly feed them in order to reach targeted objectives. For example, KPIs indicators informing on the presence of standards, on the number of programs developed, the amount of constructions, the availability of staffing schedule in ECD (6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15) are more output indicators available at M&E plan level, informing the level of implementation of activities planned and feeding the level of achievement of results indicators and system performance (access rates for instance here). This exercise could be added with the development of a key performance indicator matrix (between 20 and 30) that would serve as the reference monitoring tool during the whole process in addition to the KPIs, in order to facilitate the analysis of the implementation of the MTAP, M&E plan and the development of annual technical and financial report.

The table below gives an overview of typical intermediate outcomes that are usually found at international level in the three different “generic” long-term objectives (Access, Quality and Governance):

Table 7: Suggestion of groups of intermediate outcomes per long-term objectives:

ACCESS
Infrastructure, equipment, normal age, OOSC, programme (PPS, alternative GSE, adult learning, gender, IE, vulnerable)
QUALITY
Teacher training, pedagogical material, curricula, pedagogical mechanisms (remediation), distant learning, NQF, Learning assessment, employability, orientation, private schools, R&D, innovation
GOVERNANCE
HR, dialogue, M&E, finance, budget mechanisms, decentralization, Coms, EMIS

A second table gives details of possible changing in reforms measures in terms of name or long-term objectives (see colors: blue means, the reform or immediate result would better fit in Access objectives, green in Quality and purple in governance. The two yellow boxes suggest a changing in the name of result attended):

Table 8: Correspondence suggestions between priority reforms measures of the NSED 2021/30 and accurate long-term objective

PPS	GSE	PSPE	HPE	GOV
ACCESS				
4.1.1 Regleg Framework Alternative edu	4.2.1 Infra (constr./IE)	4.3.1 Infra (constr. Reconstr.) equipment	4.4.1 Equitable access in all HEI	
4.1.2 Phy capacity of PS instit	4.2.2 Access conditions (CFS)	4.3.2 ICT	4.4.2 Expending and development of new courses based on market needs curricula	
4.1.3 Sanifing strds	4.2.3 Encourage gifted children	4.3.3 IE	4.4.3 Gender	
4.1.4 Coms Raising awareness of parents	4.2.4 Dropout OOSC	4.3.4 Promotion of IVE/TISVET	4.4.4 IE distance learning prgm resource centers scholarship	
4.1.5 ref. 4.1.1 LO, CP, age Std, Infra, nat, IE			4.4.5 Distant learning for all	
4.1.6 Infra IE, watsan, analysis reconstruction				
QUALITY				
4.1.7 HR Operational efficiency of workers	4.2.5 System of prof development (TT)	4.3.5 EMIS Tracking employment of graduates	4.4.6 New mat, Std use of NTIC, distanc eleraning IE conditions	
4.1.8 normal ag Curricula, prgm, teaching mat, ser	4.2.6 CBE-IE Std - teaching mat (curricula)	4.3.6 Updating programmes	4.4.7 Raising public awareness on importance of HPE	
4.1.9 Teacher training	4.2.7 HR Prestige of GSE teachers	4.3.7 IMS System of continuous prof developm	4.4.8 hire HR Internatinal internship for teachers, on line, talented graduates + hiring HR	
4.1.10 M&E system quality of services pr	4.2.8 LA system(NQA) tools	4.3.8 NQF	4.4.9 LA system, credit syst	
		4.3.9 Mechanisms to facilitate employem	4.4.10 ITC + blended learning, TT, use of NTICS	
		4.3.10 M&E/HR Common policy quality of PSPE	4.4.11 Curricula joint edu international system	
		4.3.11 Modernization of Standards	4.4.12 Dual learning system	
		4.3.12 Independant pgm of accreditation w	4.4.13 NQF	
		4.3.13 IVET prgm and material	4.4.14 Strengthening Coop. Between HEI/ employees	
			4.4.15 R&D (internship, Alumni, council practical learning)	
GOVERNANCE				
4.1.11 Entrepreneurship, investment, no	4.2.9 New mechanisms for fin edu	4.3.14 FIN Prgm to attract additional resources	4.4.16 Management of HPE/HEI (qualif., struc)	4.5.1 Implem. of per capita fin. Systm
4.1.12 EMIS includes indicators from AP	4.2.10 Transition to 12y edu GSE	4.3.15 FIN Training on development of investm	4.4.17 Autonomy expansion HPE	4.5.2 Strengthening of multi channel fin
4.1.13 Efficiency of fin, management of es	4.2.11 Optlm school infra development mecha	4.3.16 FIN State funding mechanisms revisio	4.4.18 Development of private HPE instit	4.5.3 EMIS
	4.2.12 Prof development of principals and ad	4.3.17 HR Suficient need of qualif HR	4.4.19 EMIS	4.5.4 Edu management efficiency
	4.2.13 Info Com collection at local level			4.5.5 Alignment between policy priorities and
	4.2.14 M&E of GSE at local level (remediation)			4.5.6 FMIS implementation
				4.5.7 Non fiscal mechanisms
				4.5.8 Digital technology in the EMIS
				4.5.9 FPP
				4.5.10 DR/MDRR

2. Comprehensive costing aligned with the budget

As observed in the part dedicated to the financial framework there is a difference between the distribution between sub-sectors projected in the national budget for the NSED and the distribution planned after the development of the MTAP.

Differences are due to the importance of constructions in the whole sector (78%), and especially at GSE level (60%). The availability of units, quantities, unit cost and details on mechanisms to be put in place will facilitate the analysis of the budget planned and the necessary adjustments.

3. Coherence of monitoring and evaluation indicators

Despite a comprehensive and detailed chapter dedicated to the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to be put in place through the coordination council to be nominated once the NSED approved at national level, no M&E plan is available yet. This document must be in direct link with the MTAP objectives, and present the corresponding process, output and

outcome indicators, for each activity planned to feed the results indicators and targeted values in the KPIs matrix. Reference and target values of each indicator should be available for each activity planned. M&E plan indicators are to represent an exhaustive list of useful elements that facilitate the story telling of the evolution of the education sector through the analysis of disparities observed during the effective implementation of activities planned in the NSED among the country according to the key reforms objectives. Details required per activity planned in such a plan are the following: initial and targeted values, monitoring chain, means of verification, data sources and calculation methods.

Table 9: Elements of a detailed M&E plan available per activity planned in the ESP:

4. RESULTS FRAMEWORK -> Sources : ACTION PLAN + directorates																	
MONITORING AND EVALUATION																	
OUTPUT INDICATORS	BASELINE VALUE	2011	2012	2013	Data collection frequency	Source/ methodology	Data collection / Entity in charge	Indicator definition	OUTCOME INDICATORS	BASELINE VALUE	2011	2012	2013	Data collection frequency	Source/ methodology	Data collection Entity in charge	Indicator definition

V/Feasibility, implementability and monitorability

Do the financing, implementation, and monitoring arrangements offer a good perspective for achievement?

1. Financial feasibility

The actual budget of the MTAP gives no opportunity to analyze the feasibility of the reforms planned, and corresponding activities, in terms of finance, since no financial gap is calculated so far, due to the non-availability of the amount of possible external funding per partner.

Moreover strategy for funding mobilization should also be included in the NSED document in order to face possible shortfall risks in national budget and other financial gaps not funded by external partners, in order to ensure a compatibility between budget and costs of the strategy.

2. System capacity

The sector plan defines the modalities of monitoring of the NSED 202/30 in Annex 3. Moreover, the long-term outcome related to governance plans the development of M&E system, the improvement of EMIS and a bunch of capacity building to actors in charge of the implementation and of the M&E of the NSED in order to be able to use results-based monitoring tools in purpose.

Sensitization and regular support to all actors, especially at local level, are key in a context of innovative reforms that call for changing in habits and a better transparency in information to be collected and analyzed through results-based mechanisms.

3. Governance and accountability

The NSED document does have a specific Communication plan. As mentioned before the changings in implementation and M&E habits will need the dissemination of tools and results, especially during the restitution of annual results during joint sector reviews at national and regional levels. A strong communication plan, with innovative support will facilitate the ownership of the new strategy among the whole educational community and thus facilitate the achievement of the objectives targeted (see supports such that videos, radio, data visualization, pictograms ...).

Moreover, the enactment of norms and respective implementation modalities induces a strong system of accountability within all actors involved. Evaluation of the capacity of the system to implement and monitor the technical and financial implementation of NSED should be useful to identify supplementary capacity building and additional technical support at each stage of the implementation of the strategy and specific key reforms.

4. Risks to implementation and the mitigation of risks

The initial risk matrix and mitigation measures present in the NSED April version has been removed from the final NSED document due to format constraints. Nevertheless, weaknesses and possible risks have been identified by actors interviewed during the present evaluation. Here are the potential risks that may limit the achievements of the goals of the new strategy:

- Costing of the NSED is informed, but we are missing a simulation model to document the possible scenarios regarding the policy options
- Lack of financial support from the donors
- Delay between planning and legalization, draft and vote of the Education code
- Impact of COVID19: availability of internal funds, prioritization of funding according to MTF reform and not NSED
- Staff turnover
- the risk of a return to former management of education system on the daily demand basis instead of the collaborative RBM adopted through this new strategy
- Discussions during the development of the new strategy have used good practices experienced through partners' projects, which was a good entry point, but the NSED 21/30 is still not built around them, even though the document is much stronger than the former one in terms of key results targeted and corresponding budgeting mechanisms. Nevertheless, ownership of this new strategy is still key, to make real the application of new implementation and monitoring mechanisms considered in the coming years.
- Leadership: the development of the NSED and the implementation and M&E phases are not clearly linked which could break the continuity of the process expected
- The lack of capacity to provide sound results based management at all level of implementation of the NSED 2030 is also a crucial issue that needs to be addressed

from the beginning. Thus here is a necessity to develop a detailed M&E plan of the NSED 2030 with roles and responsibilities, as well as guidance for results based analysis of indicators during the implementation of the new strategy and coordinated reforms planned.

5. Robustness of the monitoring and evaluation framework

The ownership of this new strategy is still key, to make real the application of new implementation and monitoring mechanisms considered in the coming years. Thus there is a necessity to develop a detailed M&E plan of the NSED 2030 in direct link with the detailed MTAP reviewed, for each activity planned, with roles and responsibilities, as well as guidance for results based analysis of indicators during the implementation of the new strategy and coordinated reforms planned. Despite the existence of a specific chapter on the M&E mechanisms in place in the sector, which shows the capacity to monitor the whole process, such a tool is not available yet and is necessary to make sure the monitoring of the activities planned in the MTAP will be effective and efficient.

Moreover, the coordination Council will be established once the NSED endorsed by the government. The continuity of the impulse of the mechanism put in place during the NSED development could be ensured by a sectoral coordination Council technically led by the Ministry of Education (Head of Planning) which would be in charge of the regular monitoring of the implementation of the NSED. This Council could include representatives from the Agency for Education Control and the National Cost Center (under the President of Republic), responsible for results reporting at national level, in order to facilitate the national leadership and decision making around the new education policy 2030. Such a committee in charge of overseeing the strategy could provide added value to support the DM in the medium and long term, in addition to the daily “time consuming” management of the education system.

Since 2014, an annual review system has been in place but it is still working into siloes within the education administration at central level. Moreover, this JSR mechanism is more assimilated to an annual Education sector analysis than to an annual moment of common thoughts and discussions, at all level of actors, based on the results observed during the implementation of the strategy according to specific priority outcomes and activities. The last three years reviews mainly focused on macroeconomic and quantitative data, the one in 2018 was an update of the previous one, the one that started in 2019 was supposed to be an input for the new strategy, but was not used as expected. The last JSR had a broader scope (including analysis of the implementation of the actual NSED 2012-2020 at local level), and was originally planned as an input for the development of the strategy (strengths, weaknesses, good and bad practices. However, the development of the new strategy used a different methodology and approach. The next JSR should pay attention to the necessity of merging its process to the MTAP monitoring one.

MTAP corresponding management tools, including a detailed M&E plan, will help the organization of more widely spread reviews during the implementation of the new NSED, especially through its Theory of change. The fear of a new council that would not add value at first sight, has given way to an awareness of its usefulness in the short, medium and long term for the smooth running of the announced strategy.

The energy and dynamic within the joint reviews and working groups during the development phase should be kept during the implementation and monitoring ones, involving all level of responsibilities (technicians, pedagogics, at national and district level).

At last, the interaction between MoES and LEG should be rethought for the next steps. For instance, some specific working groups linked to main reforms targeted in the three year period should be organized within the LEG. These working groups findings could feed the analysis produced during the M&E phase of the implementation of the NSED, especially through specific studies and field visits, and provide additional qualitative information during the next joint sector reviews in order to improve the quality of discussions and recommendations to addresses to decision makers.

Annex 1: Agenda of distance meetings for the appraisal of the NSED 2021/30

Date	Hour	Group	Participants
9th June, 20	10am	Working groups	Irina Karimova (Secondary Education), Zarina (TVET)
9th June, 20	2pm	Technical experts	Aliev, Shuhrat
16th June, 20	11am	Local Education group	Unesco, EU, Unicef, USAID, DCC
25 June, 20	11am	Deputy Minister	M. Kodirzoda
		Head of Planning	M. Muzaffarov Badriddin

Annex 2: List of participants to the NSED 2021/30 development process (Working groups, technical experts/coordination and Local education group members)

«Утверждаю»

Министр образования и науки

Республики Таджикистан

_____ Нуриддин Саид

«_29_» ____11____ 2019

Список

учасника 2-х дневного технического семинара по Разработке Национальной Стратегии Образования в период с 2021-2030 гг.

Дата проведения: 4-5 декабря 2019 года.

Место проведения: Национальная библиотека Таджикистана, г. Душанбе, ул. Техрон, 5, 3 этаже, зал №308

Основная цель совещания: Технический семинар по Разработке Национальной Стратегии Образования в период с 2021-2030 гг.

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Annex 3 – Questionnaires and extract of the analysis of the responses to the questionnaire sent to the Working groups members and actors in charge of coordinating the development of the NSED 2021/30

Introductory message (when sending questionnaires to the actors selected)

Dear colleagues,

As active members of the ESP development process, you are contacted today to respond to the following questionnaire, part of the external appraisal of the new NESD 21/30.

Happening at the end of the process, the appraisal aims at highlighting strengths and bottlenecks of the ESP document and related tools (Theory of change, results framework, action plan) according to the following areas in order to finalize an achievable education policy according to its major announced objectives:

- *participation and functioning of ESP planning coordination,*
- *strategy and relevance,*
- *mainstreamed main GPE objectives - equity/efficiency/learning, coherence and costing of the ESP components*
- *technical, financial, human resource feasibility and risks mitigation,*
- *sustainability and aid effectiveness*

For more details on the issues the appraisal will address, see the GPE guidelines for ESP appraisal:

<https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/2015-06-gpe-iiep-guidelines-education-sector-plan-appraisal.pdf>

QUESTIONNAIRE TO LEG CA, LEG GA, TECHNICAL EXPERTS (DPs & National), National Coordinator, WG Coordinators - return before the 15th Feb

Q1. In which political, economic, own professional context did the development of new NSED take place (bullet points)?

Q2. Is the ESP development process primarily driven by government, Local education group, coordinating agency, technical experts, all of them, others?

Q3. How many meetings have you personally participated in as part of the new NSED 21/30 development?

Q4. Have all the proposals from your working group been taken into account in the final NSED draft document? If not, have the reasons for not including them in the final document been sufficiently argued and based on evidence?

Q5. Have the draft documents of the working groups been discussed in the regions before sharing them with the Secretariat? If yes, please give an overall opinion on the quality of discussions/recommendations that came out of it?

Q6. Is the involvement of development partners in the entire NSED development process satisfactory? If not, what would you advice to the DPs to better support the planning, implementation and M&E process of the NSED?

Q7. Is there an annual Education Joint Sector review mechanism in place in the country? If yes, did you participate in any of them? If yes again, can you describe in a few words the quality of the discussions and recommendations during the last JSR?

Q8. Do you think the new NSED 21/30 has better planning and M&E tools than the last one (12/20)? If yes, name the specific tools and their usefulness in the national education planning, implementation and monitoring process?

Q9. In your opinion, what were the main challenges during the implementation and M&E of NSED 12/20. In your opinion, what are the points addressed by the new NSED 21/30 (in bullet points)?

Q10. What do you think are the remaining limits / bottlenecks of the new NSED 21/30 (in bullets)?

QUESTIONNAIRE TO WG Members (incl. Coordinators), LEG Members (excl. CA, GC and Technical experts) - return before the 15th Feb

Q1. The different steps of NSED 21/30 development process have been sufficiently described for a good individual and common understanding of the objectives to be achieved? Does each working group have specific terms of reference?

Q2. Which working group have you participated to? Preprimary School / General Secondary Education / Technical and Vocational Education Training / Higher Education / Finance Management & Monitoring / None. If none, are you a LEG member/other education actor?

Q3. As a member of the working group, have you been involved in every step of the development of NSED 21/30? How many meetings have you personally participated in as part of the new NSED 21/30 development?

Q4. Would you say the NSED 21/30 process is sufficiently participatory? If not, which category of education actor was missing in your working group?

Q5. Which reference documents were used during the working groups to develop the NSED 21/30 (bullet points)?

Q6. Have you benefited from capacity strengthening sessions during the process of NSED 21/30 development? If yes, please detail (bullet points)

Q7. Have your suggestions been sufficiently taken into account in the working group draft document shared with the Secretariat? If not, have the reasons for not including them been sufficiently argued and based on evidence?

Q8. Do you think the new NSED 21/30 has better planning and M&E tools than the last one (12/20)? If yes, name the specific tools and their usefulness in the national education planning, implementation and monitoring process?

Q9. In your opinion, what were the main challenges during the implementation and M&E of NSED 12/20. In your opinion, what are the ones addressed by the new NSED 21/30 (in bullet points)?

Q10. What do you think are the remaining limits / bottlenecks of the new NSED 21/30 (in bullets)?

	Q1. The Does differ each steps of NSED 21/30 develop specific	Q2. Which working group have	Q3. As a member of the working group	How many meetings you have	Q4. Would you say the NSED 21/30	If not, which category of education actor was missing in your working group?	Q5. Which reference documents were used during the working groups to develop the NSED 21/30 (bullet points)?	Q6. Have you benefited from	If yes, please detail (bullet points)	Q7. Have you thought the new	Q8. Do you think the new	If yes, name the specific tools and their usefulness in the national education planning, implementation and monitoring process?	Q9. In your opinion, what were the main challenges during the implementation of the NSED 21/30?	In your opinion, what are the ones addressed by the new NSED 21/30 (in bullet points)?	Q10. What do you think are the remaining limits / bottlenecks of the new NSED 21/30 (in bullet points)?
R1	1	technical 1 and 5. / Finance 1 and 5.	1	>10	1		NSRO until 2020, Statstnik ISDU MON RT, handout materials of 9 seminars	1	theory or change, a new approach that was used 1 In the process of Development of strategic documents and a matrix 1 of results	1	1	the developed medium-term action plan for 2021-2023 is 1 based on the planned activities	The absence of a proven strategy to achieve strategic priorities and Not all planned activities were implemented in the previous state standards, programs, the I can not answer. In my opinion, the document covers all aspects of the development of preschool During the implementation, it will be revealed, but it is possible to make adjustments		
R2	1	technical 1 and 5. / Finance 1 and 5.	1	around 20	1		Mainly statistical information of the ISMS of the Ministry of Education and Science of the statistics compilation of the Ministry of Education, reports of the Ministry of Education, World Bank	1	It was interesting to learn the theory of change and 1 Its use in the process of development partners presented their proposals 1 and visions on	1	1	the logical sequence or presentation of the strategy 1 and the complementarity and	The problem described above was taken into account in the new state standards, programs, the I can not answer. In my opinion, the document covers all aspects of the development of preschool During the implementation, it will be revealed, but it is possible to make adjustments		
R3	1	technical 1 and 5. / Finance 1 and 5.	1	>10	1		the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On state statistics data, reports and data on education mines and labor mines, data from labor the statistical collection of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education reports, World Bank	1	Seminars and meetings made it possible to come to a consensus and times, clarity on reform measures and 1 identification of key	1	1	new tools provide an opportunity, planning a 1 situation analysis, determining reflects all indicators for 1 specific reform measures	It is expected that monitoring based on key what is not implemented in the previous state standards, programs, the I can not answer. In my opinion, the document covers all aspects of the development of preschool During the implementation, it will be revealed, but it is possible to make adjustments		
R4	1	technical 1 and 5. / Finance 1 and 5.	1	20	1		the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On state statistics data, reports and data on education mines and labor mines, data from labor the statistical collection of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education reports, World Bank	1	1 and visions on	1	1	the logical sequence or presentation of the strategy 1 and the complementarity and	It is expected that monitoring based on key what is not implemented in the previous state standards, programs, the I can not answer. In my opinion, the document covers all aspects of the development of preschool During the implementation, it will be revealed, but it is possible to make adjustments		
R5	1	technical 1 and 5. / Finance 1 and 5.	1	all but the last with	1		the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On state statistics data, reports and data on education mines and labor mines, data from labor the statistical collection of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education reports, World Bank	1	1 and visions on	1	1	the logical sequence or presentation of the strategy 1 and the complementarity and	It is expected that monitoring based on key what is not implemented in the previous state standards, programs, the I can not answer. In my opinion, the document covers all aspects of the development of preschool During the implementation, it will be revealed, but it is possible to make adjustments		
R6	1	technical 1 and 5. / Finance 1 and 5.	1	around 15	1		the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On state statistics data, reports and data on education mines and labor mines, data from labor the statistical collection of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education reports, World Bank	1	1 and visions on	1	1	the logical sequence or presentation of the strategy 1 and the complementarity and	It is expected that monitoring based on key what is not implemented in the previous state standards, programs, the I can not answer. In my opinion, the document covers all aspects of the development of preschool During the implementation, it will be revealed, but it is possible to make adjustments		
R7	1	technical 1 and 5. / Finance 1 and 5.	1	almost all	1		the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On state statistics data, reports and data on education mines and labor mines, data from labor the statistical collection of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education reports, World Bank	1	1 and visions on	1	1	the logical sequence or presentation of the strategy 1 and the complementarity and	It is expected that monitoring based on key what is not implemented in the previous state standards, programs, the I can not answer. In my opinion, the document covers all aspects of the development of preschool During the implementation, it will be revealed, but it is possible to make adjustments		
R8	1	technical 1 and 5. / Finance 1 and 5.	1	all	1		the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On state statistics data, reports and data on education mines and labor mines, data from labor the statistical collection of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education reports, World Bank	1	1 and visions on	1	1	the logical sequence or presentation of the strategy 1 and the complementarity and	It is expected that monitoring based on key what is not implemented in the previous state standards, programs, the I can not answer. In my opinion, the document covers all aspects of the development of preschool During the implementation, it will be revealed, but it is possible to make adjustments		
R9	1	technical 1 and 5. / Finance 1 and 5.	1	all	1		the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On state statistics data, reports and data on education mines and labor mines, data from labor the statistical collection of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education reports, World Bank	1	1 and visions on	1	1	the logical sequence or presentation of the strategy 1 and the complementarity and	It is expected that monitoring based on key what is not implemented in the previous state standards, programs, the I can not answer. In my opinion, the document covers all aspects of the development of preschool During the implementation, it will be revealed, but it is possible to make adjustments		

	Q1. In which political, economic, own professional context did the development of new NSED take place (bullet points)?	Q2. Is the ESP development process	Q3. How many meetings have you personally participated in as part of the new NSED 21/30 development?	Q4. Have all the proposals from documents working the	Q5. Have the quality of discussions/recommendations that came out of it?	Q6. Is the involve development partners	Q7. Is there an annual Sector	If yes, did you participate in any of them?	If yes again, can you describe in a few words the quality of the discussions and recommendation	Q8. Do you think the new NSED 21/30	If yes, name the specific tools and their usefulness in the national education planning, implementation	Q9. In your opinion, what were the main challenges during the implementation and M&E of NSED 12/20.	In your opinion, what are the points addressed by the new NSED 21/30 (in bullet points)?	Q10. What do you think are the remaining limits / bottlenecks of the new NSED 21/30 (in bullet points)?
R1	Development Strategy of Tajikistan until 2030.	1	10, meetings of the WG - about	1	1	1	1	0	more realistic	N/A	more realistic	of the NSRO 12/20 remain unfulfilled.	Access to quality education, coverage of children with	Funding for early childhood education, support of the post of director of the school, head of
R2	NSRO was aimed at implementing state	1	Participated in all meetings	1	1	1	1	0	was stormy, pluralism of	1	1	of the NSRO 12/20 remain unfulfilled.	Access to quality education, coverage of children with	Funding for early childhood education, support of the post of director of the school, head of
R3	fulfill the tasks set by the Government for the NSRO for 2021-2030 in the sector of Higher	1	4	1	1	1	1	0	discussed at the	1	1	of the NSRO 12/20 remain unfulfilled.	Access to quality education, coverage of children with	Funding for early childhood education, support of the post of director of the school, head of
R4	NSRO for 2021-2030 in the sector of Higher	1	4	1	1	1	1	0	discussed at the	1	1	of the NSRO 12/20 remain unfulfilled.	Access to quality education, coverage of children with	Funding for early childhood education, support of the post of director of the school, head of
R5	NSRO for 2021-2030 in the sector of Higher	1	4	1	N/A	1	N/A	0	discussed at the	1	1	of the NSRO 12/20 remain unfulfilled.	Access to quality education, coverage of children with	Funding for early childhood education, support of the post of director of the school, head of
R6	NSRO for 2021-2030 in the sector of Higher	1	2	1	1	1	1	N/A	discussed at the	1	1	of the NSRO 12/20 remain unfulfilled.	Access to quality education, coverage of children with	Funding for early childhood education, support of the post of director of the school, head of
R7	NSRO for 2021-2030 in the sector of Higher	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	discussed at the	N/A	N/A	of the NSRO 12/20 remain unfulfilled.	Access to quality education, coverage of children with	Funding for early childhood education, support of the post of director of the school, head of
R8	NSRO for 2021-2030 in the sector of Higher	1	3	1	1	1	1	0	discussed at the	1	1	of the NSRO 12/20 remain unfulfilled.	Access to quality education, coverage of children with	Funding for early childhood education, support of the post of director of the school, head of
R9	NSRO for 2021-2030 in the sector of Higher	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	discussed at the	1	1	of the NSRO 12/20 remain unfulfilled.	Access to quality education, coverage of children with	Funding for early childhood education, support of the post of director of the school, head of