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QUALITY READING MATERIALS ACTIVITY–HONDURAS 2018-2020

Final Report

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ACRONYMS

APF	Asociación de Padres de Familia/Parents' Associations
bTG	blueTree Group
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
DGITE	Dirección General Innovación Tecnológica Educativa/General Directorate for Education Technology Innovation
DLAL	De Lectores a Líderes/Honduras Reading Activity
DO	Development Objective
EMIS	Education Management Information System
GICA	Government Institutions Capacity Assessment
GOH	Government of Honduras
HRA	Honduras Reading Activity
IR	Intermediate Result
LMD	Last-Mile Distribution
MIDEH	Mejorando el Impacto al Desempeño Estudiantil de Honduras Project
NSCA	National Supply Chain Assessment
QRMA	USAID Quality Reading Materials Activity
SACE	Sistema de Administración de Centros Educativos/Honduran EMIS
SE	Secretaría de Educación–GOH/Ministry of Education
SMS	Short Message Service
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TLM	Teaching Learning Materials
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Honduras has made significant progress to establish an effective basic education system — by establishing the legal framework, increasing its national education budget, lowering illiteracy rates, and increasing access to education. However, there remain serious educational challenges that impact education service delivery and school performance, including economic inequality, urban-rural disparity, high crime, and high migration.

Although the provision of textbooks has seen notable improvement, the provision of supplementary reading materials traditionally has received limited funding from the government of Honduras (GOH). Most schools do not have access to quality supplementary reading materials, and there is no systematic delivery strategy in place, although donors, civil society, and the private sector traditionally have contributed to developing, printing, and distributing materials on a case-by-case basis. The precise quantity of existing supplementary materials is unknown, but the prevalence is considered low, with many public schools lacking access to a comprehensive set of materials. Access difficulties due to geographical constraints or high crime compounded the challenges in delivering teaching learning materials (TLM) to many schools.

International studies have demonstrated that timely access to appropriate reading materials (with content adapted to cultural, local, and age contexts) facilitates learning, supports classroom instruction, and promotes independent learning. According to *Mejorando el Impacto al Desempeño Estudiantil de Honduras* Project (MIDEH), having quality TLM in the classrooms (official textbooks and supplementary materials) was identified as one of five key factors that lead to better learning in Honduras.

USAID’s Quality Reading Materials Activity (QRMA) aimed to make a difference by supporting the GOH’s efforts for students and teachers to have access to a reliable, efficient, and sustained provision of quality TLM. This access supported other education improvement actions and was key to achieving better education service delivery and learning outcomes in the country. The activity was framed by the global USAID Education Strategy 2011-2015 and by USAID/Honduras’ Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) 2015-2019 with a priority on assuring learning outcomes for primary grade children, especially in reading. An important innovation was USAID’s linking of the QRMA directly with its education flagship Honduras Reading Activity (HRA)—*De Lectores a Líderes* (DLAL), establishing a set of complementarities between the two projects; QRMA ensured that learning and teaching materials were in schools in a timely manner and in proper quantities for the reading activity to be successful.

The primary goal of the three-year QRMA was to increase availability of quality Spanish reading materials for first to sixth grade students and teachers in Development Objective Area 1 (DO1) and DO2 target schools by strengthening the Secretaria de Educacion’s (SE) stewardship in supplying quality TLM for reading instruction. This was accomplished through two overarching components:

The first component (Result 1) directly supported the SE and DLAL by printing and distributing Spanish reading textbooks, teaching guides, and other supplementary materials, including decodable and leveled readers that will improve classroom practices and contribute to achieving quality education.

The second component (Result 2) analyzed existing book supply chains and, with the SE and stakeholders, designed an optimized, improved supply chain for future teaching and learning production, printing, and distribution. This component also strengthened systems in the SE and civil society to manage and monitor the supply chain.

Focusing on the participation, collaboration, learning, adaptation (CLA) approach and on long-term human and institutional capacity development, QRMA worked effectively to support the Honduran SE in its journey to self-reliance in achieving a robust TLM Supply Chain Management system. Using comprehensive, collaborative, and measurable supply chain interventions, QRMA designed and implemented with SE staff counterparts the activities that would gradually transition its functions to the SE:

- In Result 1, the SE used QRMA capacity development training, implementing the developed methodology and tools to identify TLM capacity gaps, forecast, complete acquisitions, and manage distribution — including planning, managing, and controlling the last-mile distribution (LMD) — to engage Asociación de Padres de Familia/parents' associations (APFs) in social oversight and TLM distribution track-and-trace activities.
- In Result 2 — starting with the 2018-2019 joint identification of capacity gaps and opportunities through the adaptation and implementation of the Government Institutions Capacity Assessment (GICA) and the TLM National Supply Chain Assessment (NSCA) methodologies and tools — QRMA and the SE team introduced improvements or new components to the TLM Supply Chain Management and implementation process, learned by doing, and sought creative solutions for high-quality delivery of program objectives.

With the new funding realities and the unprecedented threat of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, QRMA staff were more creative at the end of 2019 and the first half of 2020 because the project budget was modified, and there were new operational constraints imposed by health prevention and movement restrictions. Operating within the public sector's usual limitations, the project also had to step into the ministry's shoes and learn how to work remotely with government staff to complete the planned activities.

Highlights of Result 1 activities and key achievements. QRMA actions within Result 1 were to increase the availability of quality official and supplementary Spanish TLM for grades one through six in **DO1** and **DO2** target schools, including direct support to DLAL interventions. Among the main activities and key achievements were

Coverage Planning

Coordinating with and based on the revised coverage established for DLAL in 2018, QRMA's coverage was to reach at least **340,000** students in at least **2,511** schools located in USAID DO areas: **DO1** (Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, Choloma, Tela, La Ceiba) and **DO2** (Santa Barbara, Copán, Ocotepeque, Lempira, and La Paz).

- *Implementation of three TLM distribution cycles in 2019 and 2020.* QRMA acquired, printed, and/or distributed **2,190,016** TLM sets (more than **3 million** individual TLM), with **2,063,793** TLM sets reaching **DO1** and **DO2** schools (**1,155,570** and **908,223** respectively).
- *QRMA's gradual transference to the SE the responsibility over the TLM LMD to schools.* QRMA directly distributed TLM to schools in January 2019; SE gradually engaged in TLM distribution in July 2019 and was fully responsible for the February 2020 TLM LMD of **564,532** Spanish textbooks to schools, delivering **99.49 percent** of TLM quantities to **81.85 percent** of the schools within 30 days of the start of the school year.
- *Use of technology to enhance SE's capacity to track and trace TLM distribution.* SE linked supervisors and school directors in WhatsApp to coordinate, implement, and monitor the 2020 TLM last-mile activities. As well, QRMA worked with blueTree Group (bTG) to engage **3,243** APF representatives in a TIGO-based **track-and-trace** system, receiving a sample trend of short message service (SMS) messages from **1,491 (64 percent)** schools that corroborated the SE supervisor's monitoring of TLM reception at schools.
- *The SE-managed mobilization of 4,808 central, decentralized, and local staff.* These staff were responsible for last-mile planning, distribution, and monitoring during the 2020 TLM LMD activities, and they used methodologies, processes, and tools that were jointly developed with QRMA. Importantly, of these SE counterparts, **2,502 (52 percent)** were female (mostly in supervisory, distribution management, or technical roles) and **2,306 (48 percent)** were male.

Highlights of Result 2 activities and key achievements. Result 2 activities intended to analyze the existing TLM supply, with SE and other stakeholders designing and implementing an optimized TLM supply chain and focusing on strengthening human and institutional skills and systems to manage the TLM supply chain process. Among the main activities and key achievements were

- *Building a network of support,* engaging with the SE's Dirección General Innovación Tecnológica Educativa (DGITE) counterpart and other supply chain stakeholders.
- *Providing professional development training* in TLM Supply Chain Management (supported by consortium partners bTG and Room to Read) and introducing stakeholders to TLM Supply Chain Management concepts, tools, processes, components, and best practices. Exactly **203** people received professional development training, **157** of whom were government (SE) staff, achieving **75.2 percent** of the target people trained. (QRMA could not implement the last professional development training activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.)
- *Providing opportunities for learning-by-doing,* carrying out rapid participatory capacity assessments, and innovatively implementing with the SE the GICA and NSCA tools that were adapted to the Honduran education sector and TLM supply chain.
- *Jointly identifying TLM human and institutional management capacity gaps and opportunities for improvement:*

- Strategic TLM Supply Chain Management weaknesses: the lack of a single SE TLM Supply Chain Management and coordination point; the dependency on sporadic donor funding; the operation of a typical supply-led TLM provision system; the difficulties in central, departmental-municipal linkages; the lack of TLM reception, use, and stock management procedures; and the lack of accurate and updated student enrollment data (Sistema de Administración de Centros Educativos [SACE] system).
- Specific capacity gaps along the TLM supply chain, including detailed human and institutional capacity gaps at the TLM governance and executive management levels, and within the stages of the TLM supply chain. These were assessed and served as the basis for joint capacity development actions undertaken in the last 14 months.

Further, through Result 2 activities, SE officials learned the implications of adopting an improved (optimized) TLM Supply Chain Management system — including strategic support, coordination, component and process improvements, stakeholders, and roles and responsibilities along the five stages of the process (development/selection, quantification/planning, acquisition/printing, distribution, stock management) — agreeing on improvement steps, allocating the corresponding task groups, and achieving significant capacity development results in 14 months of implementation (since April 2019):

- *The SE achieved a very high standard in the four efficiency dimensions for TLM distributions: **99.49 percent** of the TLM quantities were delivered on time to **81.86 percent** of target schools within 30 days of the beginning of the school year (by March 3, 2020), with **93.57 percent** TLM quantities delivered as planned, and **100 percent** TLM deliveries with complete documentation and no reported damages.*
- Since implementing the 2019 NSCA, task groups were assigned to design and/or implement improvement interventions that would introduce new TLM Supply Chain Management elements or improve existing procedures or components. *During this period, they achieved seven capacity development improvement milestones:*
 1. Built internal support; obtained recognition of the importance of the TLM supply chain; and adopted the concepts, components, and stakeholders within the SE's optimized TLM Supply Chain Management process
 2. Prepared the terms of reference and got approval for the new TLM Supply Chain Technical Coordination Commission (la Comision Tecnica de la Cadena)
 3. Developed — and got approval for — the new TLM Supply Chain Management Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs, la Normativa)
 4. Defined the draft TLM Supply Chain Minimum Profile and its implementation steps
 5. Designed the TLM Quantification Methodology and forecast tool
 6. Prepared the TLM Supply Chain Management Skills Development Framework, which is recommended to be implemented within the Professional Development Unit
 7. Implemented two NSCA surveys, established the 2019 baseline TLM capacity management/Maturity Index, and remotely implemented the 2020 second NSCA survey to assess progress in 14 months of implementation (since April 2019)

- The two NSCA survey findings show that, after implementing the SE-QRMA supply chain improvement actions, the Honduran TLM Supply Chain Capacity/Maturity Index increased from *marginal* to *qualified*, moving from **2.1** to **3.1** on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high) during the period from April 2019 to June 2020.
- *Two SE TLM Supply Chain dimensions (distribution and development/selection) had the most significant improvements in 2020*; the other three dimensions also improved management capacity (quantification/planning, acquisition/printing, and stock management).
- Implementing parents' engagement and social oversight — and the successful introduction of track-and-trace tools — within TLM LMD, representatives from **2,489** APFs (of 2,511) accompanied and supported the SE municipal, district, and school authorities to perform a key social oversight role: verifying TLM reception at the school level. In addition, and supported by bTG, QRMA gradually piloted participatory TLM track-and-trace methodologies and tools during the three distributions, with **3,243** parents sending SMS messages. They represented **2,179** schools, with **64 percent** providing a sample of text messages that corroborated TLM reception at their schools.
- Throughout the life of the project, QRMA mobilized **5,067** government staff counterparts, with the SE contributing an estimated government cost sharing of close to US\$360,000 (estimated staff hours and other counterparts). Of the total government counterparts, **52.3 percent** were female, and **47.7 percent** were male participants.

During the implementation of Results 1 and 2, several key lessons were learned:

- The full engagement and commitment of stakeholders was key for successful joint QRMA-SE implementation (e.g., SE central, departmental, municipal/district and school authorities and units; APFs; other stakeholders — and including the effective coordination and support of the USAID Honduras Education Team).
- Having reliable and updated student enrollment data (from the SACE system) still is a challenge for the SE, hindering the cost effectiveness of the education service delivery and learning processes.
- Providing CLA opportunities to SE counterparts and other stakeholders was key for progressive human and institutional capacity development, with the SE's fully assuming TLM LMD responsibilities and implementing improvements to raise its supply chain management capacity throughout the life of the project.
- Implementing flexible and innovative approaches enabled QRMA to fulfill the majority of its goals and objectives, in spite of increased limitations and with interventions adapted to changes in project context and conditions (e.g., new funding realities, COVID-19 movement restrictions, the SE's pivot to new priorities during the pandemic).

Next Steps for the SE to Consolidate QRMA Gains

The SE achieved significant LMD performance results during the 2020 distribution and established the foundation for an optimized TLM Supply Chain Management system. The SE is

now equipped with key elements: TLM budget lines, a draft internal coordination mechanism, basic TLM development, quantification and planning tools, the first version of TLM Supply Chain Management SOPs, implementation tools for LMD, and participatory social oversight/track-and-trace at the decentralized level. The SE has a core group of committed and capable staff who are trained and experienced in TLM Supply Chain Management.

Under the premise that the SE should achieve excellence in organizational processes, the SE can increase its TLM management capacity/Maturity Index beyond Level 3 Qualified, to Level 4 Advanced Practices or Level 5 Best Practices. These high-capacity levels are within the SE's reach if it implements and consolidates the mechanisms, methodologies, processes, procedures, and tools that it established collaboratively with QRMA. Along this thinking, the final report presents four sets of recommendations and next steps for the SE to fully use and consolidate gains from the QRMA process:

1. Continue strengthening TLM Supply Chain Management and coordination.
 - Establish the TLM Supply Chain Coordination Committee (Comision Tecnica)
 - Implement and enhance the new Normativa (TLM Supply Chain Management SOPs)
 - Finalize and approve revisions to the TLM Minimum Profile
 - Carry out annual TLM Supply Chain Management performance reviews
2. Implement continuous improvement actions within specific components along the five stages of the TLM Supply Chain Management process through stakeholder engagement and collaborative work that is coordinated and monitored by the TLM Supply Chain Technical Coordination Commission.
 - Stage 1: Selection and Development
 - Stage 2: Quantification and Planning
 - Stage 3: Printing and Acquisition
 - Stage 4: Distribution
 - Stage 5: TLM Stock Management
3. Invest in staff capacity to manage and implement the optimized TLM Supply Chain process.
4. Establish and maintain effective TLM Supply Chain partnerships and alliances.

I. CONTEXT

A. Country Context

In 2017, el Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas estimated that Honduras had a population of close to 9 million people, of which 47.7 percent were men, and 52.3 percent were women. Of the population, 54.3 percent lived in urban areas and 45.7 percent in rural areas. The Central District (Tegucigalpa and surroundings) contained 26.2 percent of the nation’s urban population, with another 15.3 percent in San Pedro Sula. Forty-two percent of the population was younger than 19 years old.

According to the World Bank, the country faces high levels of poverty and inequality: More than 43 percent of the population lives in poverty (2018, with updated official poverty lines), and the percentage of people living in poverty in rural areas (60.1 percent) is higher than in urban areas (38.4 percent). Inequality (a GINI of 50.5 in 2017), among the highest in the region and the world, also had resulted in one of the smallest middle classes in Latin America and the Caribbean (11 percent in 2015, compared with 35 percent regional average). Honduras also is exposed to natural adverse events and climate change, especially heavy rainfall and drought that occur regularly, disproportionately affecting the poor. Moreover, the country struggles with high levels of violence, with more than 41 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (2017). High crime and dependence on emigration/remittance flows constitute two mutually reinforcing low-growth cycles that continue to affect the economy’s growth potential and available economic opportunities. These dynamics combine to act as push factors for migration; the primary triggers for migration are the search for better opportunities, persistent crime and violence in some areas, and the desire for family reintegration.

B. The Education Sector

Recognizing the importance of education for workforce and economic development, Honduras has made significant steps in the past 20 years to establish the framework for an effective basic education system. Honduras passed the Fundamental Education Law in 2012 that expanded universal basic education from grades six to nine and made one year of preschool mandatory; it is consistently one of the countries in Central America that spends the highest percentage of its national budget on education. According to INE, the country made steady improvements in key education indicators since the beginning of the century. The adult illiteracy rate fell from 14.5 percent in 2013 to 12.1 percent in 2015. Enrollment in basic education was high, with about 92 percent of appropriate-aged children enrolled in the first six grades.

The most serious educational challenges that Honduras faces, however, are low quality education, disparities in rural and urban school settings, and economic challenges to school performance (The Global Partnership for Education.Org; The Dialogue.Org). Although Honduras has made progress in raising average test scores in basic education in Spanish, the percentage of students mastering the curriculum remains very low. Only 38 percent of students

completed sixth grade reading at grade level, hindering learning in other subjects (such as mathematics and science). *Importantly, having quality TLM in the classrooms (official textbooks and supplementary materials) was identified as one of five key factors that lead to better learning performance in the country (MIDEH–CIDEH, 2011).*

These challenges provide the basis for USAID’s priority investment to improve the quality of Honduras’ education sector. USAID/Honduras’ CDCS 2015-2019 and the global USAID Education Strategy 2011-2015 are grounded in the overarching objective of advancing sustained, inclusive economic and social development in partner countries through improved learning outcomes. According to the latter document, USAID will ensure a greater education program focus on countries according to the country context, in support of strategic goals, and in search of the highest potential for results. In stable, well-performing countries that have unmet needs in basic education (Honduras included), the priority focus is on assuring learning outcomes for primary grade children, especially in reading.

USAID QRMA aims to make a difference, supporting GOH efforts so that students and teachers have access to the reliable, efficient, and sustained provision of quality TLM, which supports other education improvement actions and is key to achieve better education service delivery and learning outcomes in the country.

C. The TLM Supply Chain at the Beginning of the Project

Access to books and reading materials is essential to improving 1) student achievement in reading and 2) education quality. Many studies document that access to textbooks and learning materials shows some of the highest impact for improving primary school outcomes in developing countries. These studies further demonstrate that having timely access to appropriate reading materials (with content adapted to cultural, local, and age contexts) facilitates the learning process, supports classroom instruction, and promotes independent learning.

Compounding the many socioeconomic forces that inhibit school attendance and performance in Honduras (e.g., family economy, distance, threat of violence, gang recruitment, and human trafficking), there also were general weaknesses to the Honduran book supply chain. These weaknesses hindered GOH’s ability to provide sufficient quantities of quality reading materials to students and guides to teachers in a sustained manner, on time, within budget, and to established standards.

The dynamics of book provision to public schools in Honduras has shifted in the past decade, with the SE’s assuming a more prominent role in the development, printing, and distribution of textbooks and teacher guides. Before 2005, textbook provision was irregular; national curriculum allowed individual schools to select textbooks. Many parents ended up purchasing books, or the schools opted not to use textbooks.

In 2003, Honduras committed under the global Education for All initiative to free textbook provision and initiated improved textbook provision across the country. Results since 2005 have been mixed: Social audits in 2012 revealed progress in the provision and cost-effectiveness of

textbooks and teacher guides. They also showed, however, that although the materials reached schools, the quantity was not sufficient for the number of students: 29 percent of students did not receive textbook, and only half of the schools had adequate space for the books. Another study found that, in the department of Copán, more than 40 percent of textbooks were damaged or wasted between book distributions from 2010-2012.

Although the provision of textbooks has improved, the provision of supplementary reading materials traditionally received limited GOH funding. Most schools do not have access to quality supplementary reading materials, and there is no systematic delivery strategy in place, even though donors, civil society, and the private sector traditionally have contributed to developing, printing, and distributing materials on a case-by-case basis. The quantity of existing supplementary materials in schools is unknown, but the prevalence is considered low, with many public schools lacking access to a comprehensive set of materials.

Factors Affecting the Honduran Book Supply Chain



Finally, specific geographic situations also affect the TLM supply chain. The densely populated, high-crime, urban areas that correspond to USAID’s **DO1** areas — even with their higher incomes, better funding and attendance rates, and a higher teacher-to-student ratio than their rural counterparts — face crime and violence (and the desertion, outmigration, and displacement they provoke) that undermine student enrollment to the point that planning TLM quantities is challenging. San Pedro Sula and La Ceiba are subject to extortion along their entry routes, and some areas require permission from delinquents to gain access, making LMD perilous.

The rural populations in the six western districts of **DO2** areas are mostly indigenous; they suffer from lower enrollment and difficult delivery conditions because of poor, landslide-prone roads, and limited municipal resources. A high level of outmigration in some communities skews student data, so these communities receive a lower resource allocation from central government.

II. ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The three-year QRMA/Avanzando con Libros-Honduras intended to achieve an optimized, more effective, transparent, and sustainable national TLM supply chain system. Having quality TLM in classrooms (official textbooks and supplementary materials) constitutes one of five key factors that lead to better learning in the country (MIDEH–CIDEH, 2011).

Every child deserves access to the learning materials they need to build and retain knowledge, and teachers deserve quality teaching materials to foster these outcomes. Achieving this goal in Honduras is not out of reach. By the project’s end, QRMA envisioned that Honduran TLM supply chain stakeholders — from the SE to end users in the schools and communities to private sector stakeholders — would be equipped with the tools, skills, and systems to implement an optimized TLM supply chain that contributes to increased educational quality.

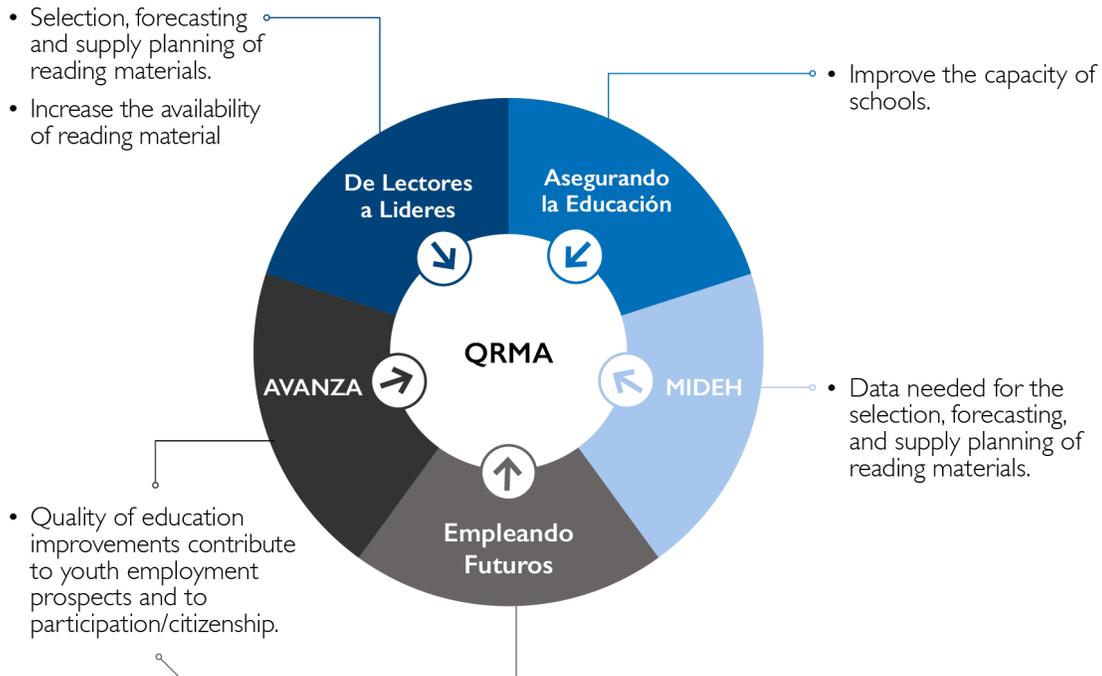
QRMA aligned directly with USAID’s Education Strategy, which addresses early grade reading, a foundational skill that is critical to children’s learning across subject areas. Early grade reading is a core subject that Honduran students are not mastering. Goal 1 — Improved reading skills for 100 million children in primary grades, emphasizes the need for adequate, age-appropriate reading materials. It also supports Result 1.2 Reading Delivery Systems Improved, which states the importance of improving “timely distribution and utilization of textbooks and instructional materials that utilize reading diagnostic tools” and “assuring girls and boys both have access to a supply of reading materials.”

QRMA specifically contributed to the achievement of USAID/Honduras CDCS, supporting two DOs at different levels: **DO1** Citizen Security Increased for Vulnerable Populations in Urban High-Crime areas; and **DO2** Extreme Poverty Sustainably Reduced for Vulnerable Populations in Western Honduras.

An important innovation was USAID’s approach to link the QRMA directly with USAID/Honduras’ flagship HRA-DLAL, establishing a set of complementarities between the two projects to achieve the common goal of improving student learning in the country.

One of QRMA’s goals was to directly support DLAL’s activities that aim at improving curriculum, classroom methods, and teacher in service training, ensuring that learning and teaching materials were in schools in a timely manner in proper quantities for the reading activity to be successful.

QRMA Linkages with USAID Honduras Education Activities



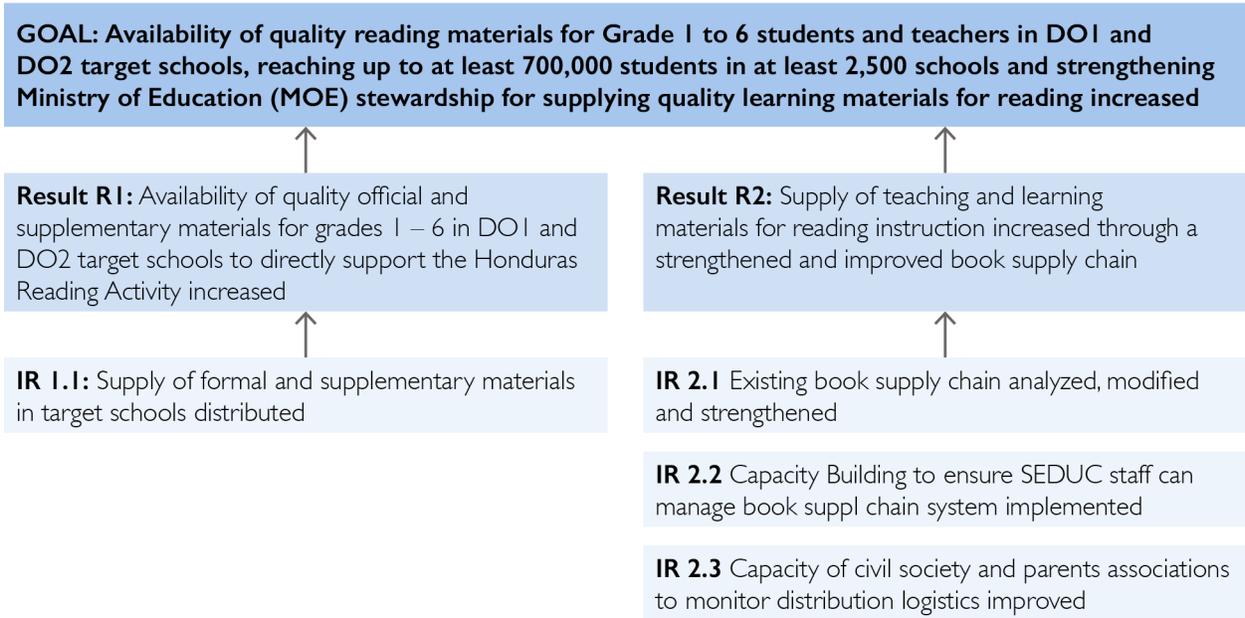
A. Scope of Work

The primary objective of this three-year activity was to increase the availability of quality Spanish reading materials for first to sixth grade students and teachers in **DO1** and **DO2** target schools by strengthening the SE stewardship for supplying quality TLM for reading instruction.

This was accomplished through two overarching components:

- The first directly supported the SE and DLAL by printing and distributing Spanish reading textbooks, teaching guides, and other supplementary materials, including decodable and leveled readers that will improve classroom practices and contribute to achieving quality education.
- The second analyzed existing book supply chains and, along with the SE and stakeholders, designed an optimized and improved supply chain for future teaching and learning production, printing, and distribution. This component focused on strengthening systems within the SE and civil society to manage and monitor the supply chain.
- This activity was implemented through collaboration and coordination with USAID, DLAL, the SE, and other donor activities. Results are presented in the exhibit on the next page.

Honduras Project Overview 2018–2020



With comprehensive, collaborative, participative, and measurable supply chain interventions, QRMA aimed to transfer sustainable systems and skills for the TLM supply chain, supporting the government to provide learning materials for its youngest citizens and future leaders.

The exhibit below summarizes QRMA’s theory of change and social impact.

IF the...

Secretaria de Educacion adopts QRMA’s evidence-based recommendations to strengthen the teaching and learning materials value chain through improved forecasting, financing, sourcing, procurement, and distribution methodologies

Secretaria de Educacion incrementally assumes greater autonomy over annual QRMA-supported quality teaching and learning materials distributions using track-and-trace systems

Community-based organizations and parents’ organizations are empowered to monitor and advocate for the on-time delivery of quality teaching and learning materials

THEN

The supply chain for quality teaching and learning materials will be transparent, efficient, and sustainable enough to provide educators and students with the pedagogical resources they need to increase childhood literacy rates in Honduras.

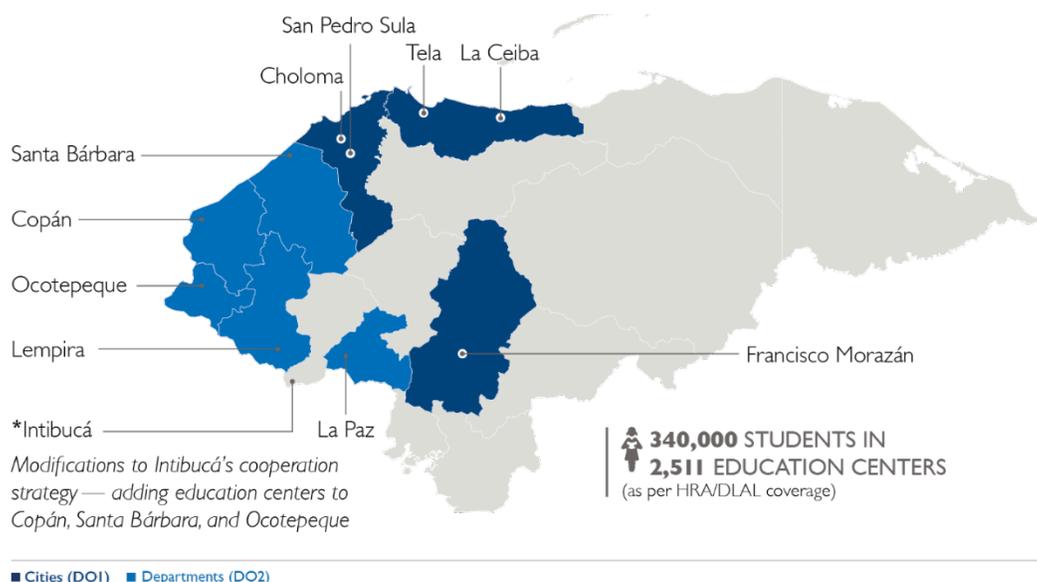
QRMA’S SOCIAL IMPACT

Through its collaborative work, QRMA contributes to enhance the quality of education services in Honduras, helping to increase student enrollment and reduce school drop-out rates in the country. Parents and families, therefore, are motivated to commit to their children’s education while remaining in their communities, which is key in the efforts to reduce migration “push” factors.

B. Geographic Coverage

In coordination with and based on the revised coverage established for DLAL in 2018, QRMA's coverage was to reach at least **340,000** students in at least **2,511** schools in USAID development objective areas **DO1** (Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, Choloma, Tela, and La Ceiba) and **DO2** (Santa Barbara, Copán, Ocotepeque, Lempira, and La Paz).

QRMA Honduras Coverage, 2018-2020



III. WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE A ROBUST TLM SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN HONDURAS

Journey to Self-Reliance

QRMA operated with the aim that, by the third year of the activity, SE would have an enhanced capacity to manage with key partners and stakeholders an improved and optimized TLM supply chain system. Their management would ensure that official textbooks and supplementary materials were delivered in the right quantities, at the right quality, on time, in the right location, at the right cost, and with transparency.

Focusing on participation, CLA, and long-term human and institutional capacity development, QRMA accompanied and supported the Honduran SE in its journey to achieve a robust TLM Supply Chain Management system. With comprehensive, collaborative, participatory, and measurable supply chain interventions, QRMA took on a facilitative role, designing and implementing with SE staff counterparts the activities that would strategically and gradually transition its functions to the SE.

*Concerning Result 1, increasing the availability of TLM, QRMA started in 2018 with the greater share of responsibilities and progressively transferred responsibilities to the SE. During the life of the project, there were three TLM distribution cycles; by the third cycle, the ministry had taken the lead in managing and implementing the 2020 TLM LMD of Spanish textbooks in target education centers in **DO1** and **DO2**. The SE used QRMA's capacity development training, implementing the*

Fostering Supply Chain Ownership

After the annual work plan and during preparation for the third and final TLM distribution in January and February 2020, the SE assumed responsibility for LMD to the schools. QRMA and SE leveraged existing hierarchies to promote efficiency and consistency in distribution, which elicited positive reactions from the SE and even better results. Facing the challenge of distributing to schools that lacked named directors and had unreliable enrollment data, the SE leveraged the QRMA tools — official WhatsApp groups and the track-and-trace system — to lead a very successful TLM distribution.

methodology and tools it developed with QRMA to identify TLM capacity gaps, forecast, complete acquisitions, and manage distribution, including planning, managing, and controlling the LMD. These improved LMD processes and tools included the capacity to engage parent associations (APF) that were involved in social oversight of distribution activities. The associations used the participatory track-and-trace SMS messaging systems, complementing the SE's supervision and control of these activities. The results of this responsibility handover were highly positive, with 81.85 percent of target schools reporting TLM reception within 30 days of the start of the 2020 school year.

Related to Result 2, human and institutional capacity development actions, and beginning with the 2018-2019 identification of capacity gaps and opportunities through the GICA and the TLM NSCA methodologies and tools, QRMA worked with the SE team to introduce new or improved components within the TLM Supply Chain Management and implementation process, learning by doing, and adapting and seeking creative solutions to ensure the continued high-quality delivery on program objectives.

The learning-by-doing institutional capacity development working sessions enabled SE staff to validate findings from the institutional capacity gap analyses and carry out in-depth root-cause and stakeholder analyses. These analyses were later used to identify and select improvements to the supply chain process, adjusted to SE's conditions, institutional requirements, and criteria. SE officials learned about the implications of an improved (optimized) TLM Supply Chain Management system, including strategic support, coordination, component, and process improvements; stakeholders; and roles and responsibilities along the TLM supply chain process. Moreover, the SE agreed internally on the short-, medium- and long-term steps to improve the TLM supply chain (reflected in the joint actions that were implemented in subsequent months).

QRMA staff were more creative at the end of 2019 and the first half of 2020, when the new funding realities and the COVID-19 pandemic forced project budget modifications and new operational constraints. In addition to managing the public sector's usual limitations, the project had to put on the ministry's shoes and work remotely with government staff for the long-term and with existing resources. Even with these challenges, because of its collaborative and participatory work, the SE was equipped to manage an improved (optimized) TLM supply chain process, ensuring that official textbooks and supplementary materials were developed, acquired,

printed, and delivered in the right quantities, at the right quality, on time, in the right location, for the best value, and with transparency.

Sections IV and V present in more detail these collaborative learning-by-doing activities that were implemented during the project and corresponding achievements within each QRMA result.

IV. RESULT 1 ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

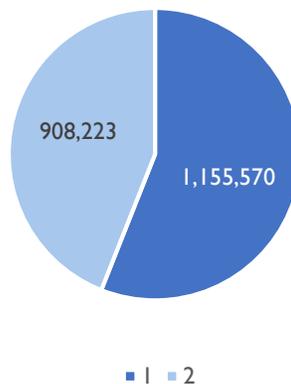
QRMA actions within Result 1 intended to increase the availability of quality official and supplementary Spanish TLM for grades one through six in **DO1** and **DO2** target schools, including direct support to DLAL interventions.

A. Activities

Implementation of three TLM distribution cycles. QRMA — through the implementation of three TLM distribution cycles in 2019 and 2020 — acquired, printed, and/or distributed **2,190,016** TLM sets (more than **3 million** individual TLM), with **2,063,793** TLM sets reaching **DO1** and **DO2** schools (**1,155,570** and **908,223** respectively). The remaining **126,223** TLM sets were distributed mostly to SE decentralized levels. They were contingency stock to cover gaps in TLM quantities at the school level and were managed by departmental and municipal offices. Small quantities were distributed to DLAL regional offices, the SE central level, and others to support their field activities.

QRMA/Avanzando con Libros–Honduras: Summary of TLM Procurement and Distributions, FY19-FY20									
FY 2019					FY 2020				TOTAL TLM FY19- FY20 2,190,016
Distribution 1			Distribution 2		Distribution 3				
Readers	Reading	Small P.	Texts	Total	Official Texts	Texts	Guides	Total	
390,164	267,755	65,754	572,499	1,296,122	261,815	593,801	38,278	632,079	

QRMA Honduras: 2,063,793 TLM Sets Delivered to Education Centers in **DO1** and **DO2** Areas, FY19-FY20



QRMA, using the CLA approach, was able to gradually transfer responsibility of the TLM LMD to the SE. Before the first distribution and for the second cycle, QRMA and bTG trained the SE at multiple levels to manage the distribution process and on key points in TLM reception; training was followed with oversight during distribution. The SE used QRMA methodology, tools, and training; they identified lessons learned and gaps, updated TLM quantities, and eventually fully managed the LMD process in 2020 by planning, managing, and controlling this activity using its own decentralized resources.



The exhibit below summarizes key features of each TLM distribution cycle and highlights increasing the distribution modality, TLM set definition, the gradual use of the TLM track-and-trace tool, and the capacity development and gradual assumption of responsibilities by the SE.

Summary of Key Features Within Each TLM Distribution Cycle			
	Distribution 1 	Distribution 2 	Distribution 3
TLM Quantities	1,232,230 TLM sets directly distributed to schools by QRMA at the beginning of the 2019 school year.	241,604 official Spanish Textbooks distributed by QRMA directly to schools at beginning of the second academic period in 2019.	564,532 official Spanish textbooks delivered by QRMA to SE municipal and district offices, which, in turn, carried out LMD to schools at the start of the 2020 school year. 38,278 teacher guides delivered by QRMA to HRA/DLAL, with 25,427 distributed through teacher training activities.
Distribution Modality	QRMA responsible for overall management and coordination, printing/acquisition, and direct distribution to education centers through contractors (printers and logistics operators). SE provided Central Level provision of student enrollment data for TLM quantification, observer role. HRA/DLAL acquired decodable readers and small materials packages (14 individual items each) for QRMA distribution.	QRMA responsible for overall management and coordination, printing/acquisition, and direct distribution to education centers through contractors (printers and logistics operators). SE Central Level engaged in support and provision of student enrollment data for TLM quantification, with departmental, municipal and school directors engaged in TLM LMD planning and direct coordination with logistics operator for last-mile route planning and reception at education centers.	QRMA responsible for printing and delivery to 103 SE municipal and district points. SE Central Level responsible for planning and managing the TLM LMD to schools, and 4,808 SE municipal/district/school directors and staff engaged and/or responsible for TLM LMD (quantification, planning, delivery, reception, monitoring) using methodologies, processes, and tools jointly developed with QRMA.
TLM Set Definition	Official Spanish textbooks (QRMA), supplementary materials (decodable readers	Official Spanish textbooks (QRMA), distributed at beginning	Official Spanish textbooks (QRMA) printed and

Summary of Key Features Within Each TLM Distribution Cycle			
	Distribution 1 	Distribution 2 	Distribution 3
	(DLAL), reading materials (QRMA), and small materials packages (DLAL).	of second half of the academic year.	distributed at beginning of academic year. Spanish teacher guides printed and delivered by QRMA to HRA/DLAL for distribution at teacher training.
Use of Track-and-Trace Tools	QRMA (with consortium partner bTG) established the feasibility of using mobile phone technology to implement participatory TLM distribution track-and-trace activities in 20 schools.	QRMA/bTG and SE staff piloted the participatory track-and-trace tools in 200 schools, based entirely on an SMS messaging system contracted to telecom provider TIGO.	SE and QRMA/bTG jointly implemented track-and-trace with a sample of 3,243 APFs representatives who were engaged in social oversight and monitoring of TLM reception in 1,491 schools by using the participatory track-and-trace mobile phone SMS messaging system.

QRMA also used a combination of technologies to enhance SE’s capacity to track and trace textbook distributions in 2020.

- First, SE helped to identify a local network of supervisors, parents, and school directors.
- Through collaborative work, education supervisors (municipal, district, and school directors) were encouraged to use WhatsApp to upload book reception forms photos, enhancing the institutional capacity to coordinate and monitor textbook deliveries and availability.
- Subsequent to this, QRMA also used TIGO, the largest mobile phone carrier in Honduras, to reach out to parents and stakeholders in the target schools via SMS messages, encouraging them to take part in social oversight activities and asking them whether TLM was available in school.
- By using this combination of technologies, the institutional information was corroborated by parent and community information, confirming that materials were available at the school level.

These capacity building activities and combination of technologies in Result 1 were cost effective and practical, helping SE to achieve results on the 2020 TLM LMD, with **2.039** education centers (**81.85 percent** of target schools) receiving their planned and complete TLM sets within 30 days of the start of the school year (by March 3), ultimately achieving **98.4 percent** schools reporting reception of texts weeks later.

B. Summary of Result 1 Performance Indicators

Intermediate Result 1 (IR 1) Increased availability of quality official and supplementary materials for grades one through six in DO1 and DO2 target schools. Sub-IR 1.1 Supply of formal and supplementary materials in target schools distributed		
IR 1.1 Indicator	Annual Cumulative — Actual FY18 to FY20	Achievement FY18 to FY20 (planned vs. actual)
1.1.1 Percentage of schools that received TLM accurately (on time and to standard, within 30 days of beginning of academic period)	2,109 schools Distribution 2	84.26%
	2,039 schools Distribution 3	81.85%
1.1.2 Number of schools equipped with a complete set of essential reading instructional materials	2,359 schools Distribution 3	95.5%
1.1.3 Number of primary school classrooms that received a complete set of essential reading instructional materials with U.S. government assistance (ES.1-11)	12,359 classrooms ¹ Distribution 3	78.1%
1.1.4 Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other TLM provided with U.S. government assistance (ES 1-10)	2,063,793 to schools Distributions 1, 2, and 3	93.5%

C. Mobilizing GOH Counterparts and Gender Participation Within Result 1 Activities

A total of **4,984** SE staff counterparts (with approximately US\$349,000 cost share) participated in Result 1 activities, with **1,814** in **DO1** and **3,171** in **DO2**. A total of **2,597** female staff (**52.1 percent**) and **2,388** male staff (**47.9 percent**) were engaged in Result 1 activities throughout the life of the project.

Distribution 3 mobilized **4,808** government staff counterparts to deliver **564,532** textbooks directly to **81.85 percent** of the target schools within 30 days of the start of the school year. Of these counterparts, **2,502** were female (**52 percent**), and **2,306** were male (**48 percent**), with most of the female participants performing LMD management, or technical or supervisory roles.

QRMA coordinated with Community Council for Education Development, providing information and mobilizing their support for SE implementation of the distribution process and participatory social oversight through the track-and-trace system.

D. Result 1 Key Lessons Learned

1. Effective coordination and collaboration between QRMA, DLAL, SE, and USAID-Honduras were key for the three successful Spanish TLM distributions to target schools. The synchronization of the USAID-Honduras education portfolio and support of its education team contributed to an effective joint implementation.

¹ The number of classrooms will be higher, pending the reception of Teacher Guide delivery notes.

2. The continuous and effective support of the SE’s senior authorities was instrumental to having the mandate and resources to effectively carry out capacity development actions and SE staff engagement and the assumption of TLM distribution responsibilities.
3. Engaging the SE’s local and decentralized staff to completely manage LMD was key for the very successful 2020 distribution.
4. Having a reliable and updated Education Management Information System (EMIS)-SACE student enrollment data continues to be the main challenge for the SE to consolidate gains in managing the optimized TLM supply chain. Accurate and current student enrollment data remains as a critical weakness in the preparation of TLM quantities forecasts, and provision plans and budgets, because it achieves cost effectiveness in the Honduran education sector service delivery.

V. RESULT 2 ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Result 2 intended to increase the supply of TLM for reading instruction through a strengthened and improved book supply chain. The focus of Result 2 activities was on analyzing the existing book supply chain and, with the SE and stakeholders, designing and implementing an optimized and improved TLM supply chain. Also, a focus was to implement capacity development actions to strengthen SE staff skills and improve supply chain management systems within the SE and civil society to manage and monitor the TLM supply chain. This joint SE-QRMA activity was implemented collaboratively with USAID, DLAL, and other activities.

A. Highlights of Activities

Building a network of support. After the official project presentation early in 2018, the SE designated DGITE as QRMA’s official counterpart. Coordinating with DGITE, QRMA carried out the first approximation to other TLM supply chain stakeholders, gradually building relationships and rallying support for transformational activities, engaging representatives from government (SE staff at the central and decentralized levels), printers and publishers, the Honduran Chamber of the Book, universities, Honduran writers and illustrators, and DLAL and other USAID activities.

Take Two: A Restart

The Honduran Book Chamber restarted its activities and updated its statutes to fit modern TLM Supply Chain Management concepts. These actions were a result of the chamber’s training and support received during stakeholder activities.

Professional development training in TLM Supply Chain Management concepts and best practices. In mid-2018, QRMA and consortium partners Room to Read and bTG led training for SE staff and other stakeholders. The training introduced TLM Supply Chain Management concepts and tools, processes, components, and supply chain stages. Participants also could access information on international best practices in TLM Supply Chain Management.

Late in 2018 and in the first half of 2019, QRMA and consortium partners led specialized training, providing deeper knowledge and skills about specific supply chain topics: planning, implementing and controlling the TLM supply chain; international best practices; detailed publishing standards and criteria; forecasting; acquisition; distribution; and stock management.

Training Valuable National Resources

Room to Read facilitated professional development training for 41 SE staff, university lecturers, project-based staff, and private individuals. Participants earned certification to mentor, write, and/or illustrate early grade reading stories, creating a valuable national resource for content development. Room to Read also designed and implemented workshops with the National Pedagogical University to guide in-service teachers in the creation and instruction of Spanish decodable readers.

During the life of the project, 203 people received professional training in assorted TLM Supply Chain Management themes, of which 157 were government (SE) staff, achieving 75.2 percent of the target number of people trained with U.S. government assistance. On this particular action, QRMA could not implement the final training sessions planned for FY20 due to COVID-19 movement restrictions and the SE's shift to home-based work and learning.

Providing opportunities for learning-by-doing. QRMA carried out rapid participatory capacity assessments in early 2018 (interviews, focus groups) and implementation with trained SE staff of two key human and institutional capacity assessments: GICA and NSCA. QRMA found an innovative way to use these tools: It adapted them to fit the education sector to identify TLM Supply Chain Management gaps and opportunities within the SE organization; and it introduced changes to design, sample size, interview questionnaires, and analytical criteria. Initial results of these assessments are presented in detail in Section B.

B. Jointly Identifying TLM Institutional Capacity Gaps and Opportunities for Improvement

Strategic TLM Supply Chain Management weaknesses. Using rapid participatory assessments, QRMA and the SE identified TLM Supply Chain Management weaknesses in early 2018. bTG experts also collaborated with QRMA staff and local stakeholders to conduct a gap analysis of printing and distribution capacity in Honduras; Room to Read experts conducted an extensive gap analysis of the Honduran publishing sector. QRME and the SE looked further into the joint institutional capacity assessments that were done in 2019: implementation of GICA and NSCA.

They found six key supply chain management weaknesses:

1. *Although functions were allocated in the different normativas (internal norms and procedures), there was no single point in the SE organizational structure where all the components of the TLM supply chain process are integrated, managed, and followed up.* Each unit has roles and responsibilities, but there is no clarity regarding how stakeholders integrate and implement the whole chain process, reducing capacity of the SE to establish a coordinated, sustained, cost-efficient, and effective TLM provision in the country.
2. *The country is dependent on sporadic donor funding.* There is still a lack of a sustained national commitment to budget allocation for short-, mid-, and long-term TLM acquisition needs. As a result, Honduras has become dependent on sporadic TLM donor funding, which, in most cases, is conditional on donor area and/or thematic priorities. The government is not able to establish real national and local demand for TLM, does not have a commitment to a matching funds strategy to top up its resources, and can only partially cover demand, even with donor funding.

3. *Honduras operates a typical supply-led TLM supply chain system.* There is no systematic assessment of TLM needs projected in the short-, mid-, and long-term from the demand-side point of view. The central level chooses textbooks titles and quantities for schools based on expressed TLM needs that are not based on demand forecasts. Enrollment data is insufficient to set TLM quantities, because the numbers frequently are out-of-date, inaccurate, and unavailable from EMIS-SACE. This supply-led bias and fragmentation often lead to over provision to some schools and under provision in others, increasing costs and hindering teaching and learning.
4. *The central-department-municipal linkages in the supply chain are dysfunctional.* Poor planning, coordination, and communication among SE levels often means that the TLM supply chain operates inconsistently, provides no certainty of equitable supplies for students and teachers, and often leaves out rural schools from operations. Because there is no demand-driven approach, schools receive TLM at varied and unpredictable times during the school year and, only rarely, before the start of academic periods.
5. *School-level capacity has severe gaps.* There were major variations in TLM availability and use between schools according to subject, grade level, and school type (urban or rural). School monitoring of TLM use, care, and management was adversely affected by lack of transportation, budgets, and difficult access conditions. There was no widely accepted system of management and storage, including lack of data on condition and use, which could be used for supervision to prepare selection/development and provision plans.
6. *TLM distribution faces challenges.* Effective TLM distribution planning is constrained by out-of-date and inaccurate student enrollment (SACE) data, as well as by the lack of information on itemized stocks at the schools. In addition, key stakeholders lack access to computer hardware and software, as well as the training to effectively use these systems; parental and community system oversight is virtually nonexistent.

Specific human and institutional capacity gaps along the TLM supply chain. Throughout 2019, QRMA and the SE continued to identify specific supply chain capacity issues at each stage. The gaps later served as the basis to improve the supply chain, making standardized and sustained changes; strengthening logistics; increasing participation, collaboration, transparency; and accountability; and ensuring all Honduran children have the resources they need to learn to read on time.

The exhibit on the next page summarizes these capacity gaps that guided SE and QRMA's actions to address the supply chain human and institutional capacity development challenges.

Honduran TLM Supply Chain: Summary of Institutional Capacity Gaps at the Central and Decentralized Levels, 2018 to 2019

TLM Supply Chain National Context/Public Policies

1. Lack of national political and budget support for building a robust and sustained Honduran TLM supply chain involving all stakeholders
2. Lack of a formal interface between the GOH/SE and the publishing and printing sectors
 - a. Lack of support to the Honduran Book Committee
 - b. Lack of sustained collaboration with relevant private sector in support of national education activities, including TLM provision (e.g., Consejo Hondureño de la Empresa Privada/Honduran Private Sector Council, FUNDARHSE, Camaras de Comercio)
3. Weak national publishing sector
 - a. Lack of public policies in support of national TLM publishing sector
 - b. Lack of support for establishing and maintaining a national pool of TLM content writers and illustrators
4. Weak local printing industry (including paper tax issues)

TLM Supply Chain Executive Management and Coordination

1. Lack of SE internal coordinating entity that plans, executes, and controls the various activities and stakeholders involved in the TLM Supply Chain Management
2. Lack of norms and procedures (*normativa*) integrating TLM Supply Chain Management roles, responsibilities, activities, and processes

TLM Supply Chain Stage 1 — Selection and Development

1. Lack of regular updates to guidelines on TLM content and curricula development, revision/editing, and validation.
 - a. New guidelines should align with international curricula development standards and include relevant TLM procurement, printing, distribution, and use/storage guidance
2. Lack of TLM Minimum Profiles to orient and inform integrated TLM selection/development, forecasting/planning, budgeting, donor mobilization, procurement, distribution, and use/storage activities

TLM Supply Chain Stage 2 — Quantification and Planning

1. Incomplete, inconsistent, and unreliable EMIS-SACE data for effective planning, implementation, and control of activities in the five TLM supply chain stages
2. No TLM provision plans based on short-, mid-, and long-term needs forecast
3. Fragmented and uncoordinated TLM need requests, each unit submitting its own technical specifications at different times and not including distribution costs in budget proposals

TLM Supply Chain Stage 3 — Acquisition

1. Lack of TLM-specific procurement procedures for TLM acquisition, printing, and distribution processes

TLM Supply Chain Stage 4 — Distribution

1. Lack of a systematic distribution strategy or processes that ensures TLM delivery to all educational centers in an opportune, transparent, safe, efficient, and effective manner:
 - a. There is a lack of coordination between the central and decentralized levels
 - b. Lack of staff skilled in distribution at the central and decentralized levels
 - c. Weak interaction with municipal level authorities for effective local TLM distribution
2. Lack of community and parent involvement in TLM LMD activities
 - a. Weak social oversight of TLM LMD activities

TLM Supply Chain Stage 5 — Stock Management

1. Lack of specific procedures regarding TLM use and storage at the school level
2. Weak capacity to monitor quality and quantity of available TLM at the school level
 - a. School level TLM stock management data does not flow up to education supervisors and EMIS-SACE system
 - b. Parents are not engaged in supporting TLM stock management with social oversight

C. Achieving Optimized TLM Supply Chain Management

Based on the joint identification of strategic weaknesses and specific capacity gaps and opportunities done in 2018 and early 2019, the QRMA team continued to work with the SE to

introducing new or improved components to the TLM Supply Chain Management and Implementation process, all while learning-by-doing and seeking creative solutions to ensure the continued high-quality delivery on program objectives. SE staff was equipped to validate findings from the institutional capacity gap analyses and carry out in-depth root-cause and stakeholder analyses; these were used in the identification and selection of improvements to the SE's TLM supply chain process. SE officials learned about the implications of an improved (optimized) TLM Supply Chain Management system, including strategic support, coordination, component and process improvements, stakeholders, and roles and responsibilities. As well, the SE agreed internally on steps to improve the TLM supply chain; these were implemented from the April 2019 NSCA baseline until June 2020. The remainder of Section C presents a summary.

The SE achieved a very high TLM distribution efficiency benchmark within Result 1 activities. During the 2020 TLM LMD, QRMA and the SE achieved a key TLM distribution efficiency benchmark of **98.27 percent** (percentage of TLM quantities delivered, delivered on time, with complete documentation, and with no reported damages), an improvement of **1.3 percent** over the previous Distribution 2 benchmark of **97 percent** (a direct-to-schools distribution modality carried out by the Cargo Express logistics operator).

The SE, demonstrating a high degree of commitment and professionalism, implemented lessons learned in the previous distributions; they also used the training, methodologies, procedures, and tools jointly developed with or provided by QRMA. The SE achieved very high standards in the four efficiency dimensions for TLM distributions:

1. **99.49 percent** of TLM quantities were delivered on time to **81.86 percent** of target schools within 30 days of the beginning of the school year (by March 3, 2020)
2. **93.57 percent** of TLM quantities were delivered as planned
3. **100 percent** of TLM deliveries had complete documentation and no reported damages

Seven TLM Supply Chain Management capacity improvement milestones were achieved within Result 2 activities (surpassing the five milestones target). QRMA worked with DGITE and others, using the learning-by-doing approach. Since the implementation of the 2019 NSCA, individual task groups designed or implements improvements by introducing new TLM Supply Chain Management elements or improving existing procedures or components. They met seven capacity development improvement milestones:

1. *Building strategic support and recognition of the importance of the TLM Supply Chain Management process* — Established the TLM Supply Chain within the GOH's Strategic Plan for the Education Sector (PES 2018-2030) and enabled budget and implementation actions within the SE's Plan Estrategico Institucional PEI 2018-2022 (Action Line 23 and Product 12). The SE adopted the concepts, components, and stakeholders of the jointly optimized TLM Supply Chain Management process, summarized in the exhibit on the next page.

The SE's Optimized TLM Supply Chain Management Process

Stage 1 — TLM Selection and Development

Stage 2 — TLM Quantification and Planning

Stage 3 — TLM Procurement (including printing)

Stage 4 — TLM Distribution

Stage 5 — TLM Stock Management

2. *Establishing the TLM Supply Chain Technical Coordination Commission (la Comisión Técnica de la Cadena)* — Prepared the corresponding Acuerdo Ministerial that was approved and adopted by the SE senior authorities, and defined the commission's interdepartmental TLM Supply Chain Management coordination scope and mandate, inner workings, and relevant internal stakeholders.
3. *Developing the TLM Supply Chain Management SOPs (normativa)* — Jointly prepared an SOP manual defining processes, tasks, and roles (*normativa*) in managing the TLM supply chain according to SE's criteria for organizational development processes; the SOPs were approved by senior SE authorities.
4. *Defining the TLM Supply Chain Minimum Profile and its implementation steps* — Systematically identified and selected the methodology for the SE's TLM minimum profile, comprising a minimum list of TLM (reading, supplementary, teaching aid materials) by grade level and subject, according to national curriculum learning objectives. It was agreed that the new TLM Minimum Profile should specify the publishing standards, expected useful life, and criteria for TLM use in future curriculum development or revisions, preparation of TLM quantities forecasts, estimation of TLM costs, budgets, and mobilization of donor contributions, as well as to provide guidance for TLM acquisition/printing and distribution. As a result, the SE issued an initial list of national TLM materials and agreed on steps to finalize details of the Minimum Profile (which could not be implemented during 2020 due the COVID-19 pandemic movement restrictions and SE priority changes).
5. *Designing and testing the TLM quantification and planning methodology* — Using elements of the draft Minimum Profile, QRMA and the SE technical staff designed the TLM quantification methodology and tool, specifying the data requirements, variables, and TLM quantity decision criteria. A test of the quantification tool was carried out using historical student enrollment data from the three QRMA Spanish textbooks and supplementary distributions. The SE also agreed on next steps to scale the quantification exercise to assess TLM needs for all grades and subjects at the national level. The quantification of national TLM needs could not be implemented in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic movement restrictions and corresponding change in SE priorities.
6. *Preparing the TLM Supply Chain Management Skills Development Framework* — To address the human and institutional gaps identified during the participatory capacity assessments and the joint implementation of the GICA and NSCA tools, QRMA and the SE prepared a TLM Supply Chain Management Skills Development Framework, providing the outline for an in-service professional capacity development program

(*diplomado*) to SE staff and other relevant stakeholders. The skills development framework is recommended to be installed in SE's Professional Development directorate. It is structured around TLM Supply Chain Management core functional areas to help the SE overcome immediate critical TLM Supply Chain Management capacity gaps while focusing on developing longer-term supply chain capabilities. The skills development capacity core functional areas are

- TLM Supply Chain Management skills
- Technical capacities for implementing specific components in the five stages of TLM Supply Chain Management: TLM selection and development, TLM quantification and planning, TLM acquisition and printing, TLM distribution, and TLM stock management and use
- Technical capabilities to promote transparency and accountability
- Technical skills to engage and promote participation and social oversight in implementing TLM Supply Chain Management

7. *Implementation of the second NSCA* — Enabling the SE to assess progress and improvements in the TLM Supply Chain Management capacity. Given the importance of the results achieved by the SE, Section D below explores the findings of the second NSCA and the SE's progress in 14 months of implementing improvement actions.

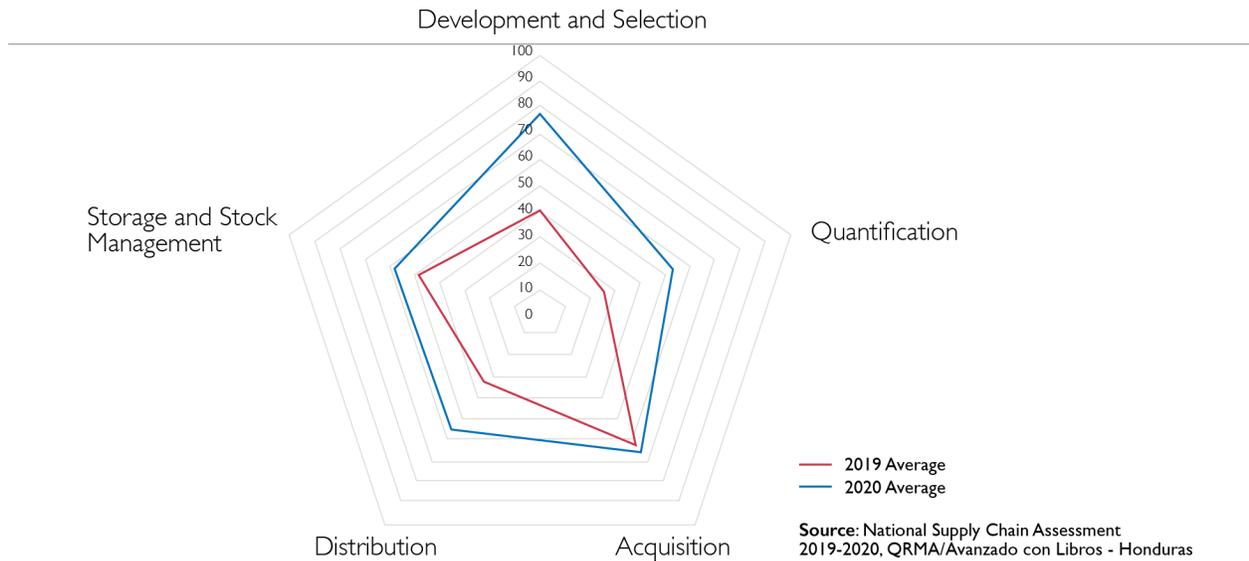
D. Assessing Progress Made Since the 2019 Baseline: The 2020 NSCA Measurement

In June 2020, QRMA adapted to COVID-19-related movement restrictions to carry out its field component with remote interviews. It implemented a second NSCA survey, establishing the second TLM Supply Chain Maturity Index. The 2019 baseline and the 2020 supply chain maturity index were the basis for assessing the institutional capacity performance to manage the TLM supply chain, focusing on five organizational dimensions: development and selection; quantification and planning; acquisition; distribution; and storage and stock management.

*The two NSCA survey findings show that, after 14 months of SE-QRMA supply chain improvement actions, the Honduran TLM Supply Chain Capacity Index increased from Marginal to Qualified. The SE, on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high), increased the TLM Maturity Index from 2.094 in 2019 to 3.1 in 2020, from **Marginal** (with basic TLM supply chain processes not used consistently with mostly manual systems) improving to **Qualified** (with several TLM supply chain processes defined and documented, with some use of technology).*

The next three exhibits present the comparison between the 2019 and 2020 TLM Supply Chain Maturity Index results for five TLM supply chain organizational factors in Honduras. They clearly indicate the steady progress that SE made with QRMA since the April 2019 baseline.

The Honduran TLM Supply Chain Maturity Index, 2019 to 2020 Comparison



As the exhibit above shows, the SE TLM Supply Chain Maturity Index in 2019 was highly skewed toward the acquisition dimension (the **red** line, with the other four factors being generally low); the 2020 measure, however, indicates that all five supply chain dimensions increased positively (the **blue** line), after the SE incorporated QRMA concepts, methodologies, tools, and training, reflecting a more consistent and balanced implementation.

The Honduran TLM Supply Chain Maturity Index — Progress Since April 2019 Baseline — June 2020 Measure (data updated September 2020)

Organizational Factors	2019		→	2020	
	Average	%		Average	%
Development and Selection	2	40		3.75	75.0
Quantification	1.3	26		2.65	53.1
Acquisition	3.15	63		3.32	66.4
Distribution	1.67	33.4		2.77	55.5
Storage and Stock Management	2.35	47		2.8	56.1
TLM Supply Chain Maturity Index	2.1	41.88		3.1	61.2

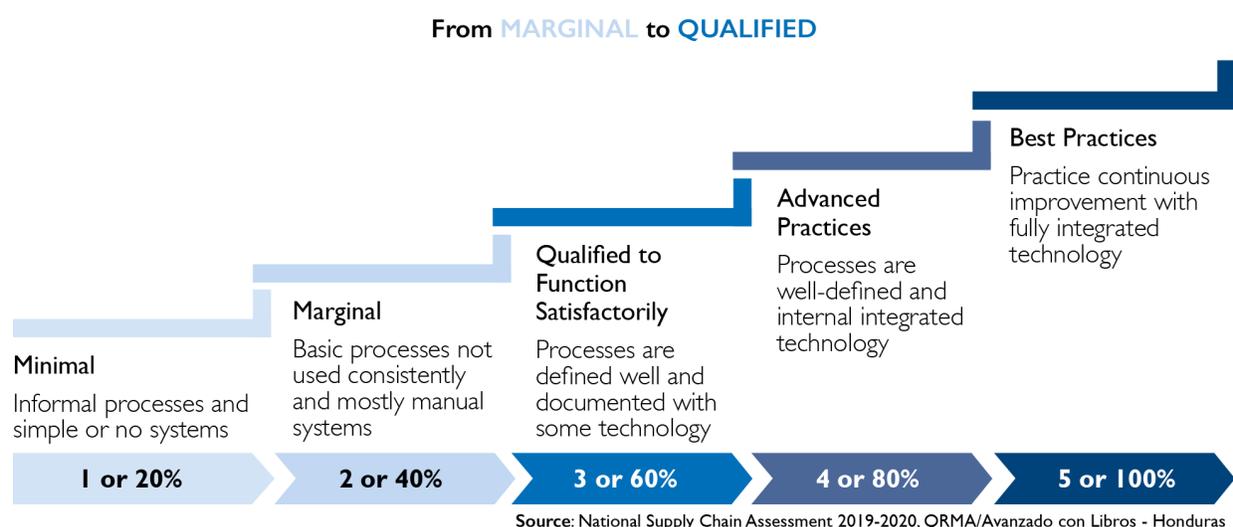
In the exhibit above, two SE TLM supply chain dimensions (Development and Selection, and Distribution) stand out with the most significant improvements in 2020.

1. *Distribution*, from a score of **1.67** to **2.77**, as a result of SE's issuing central level written instructions to municipal, district, and local levels for the 2020 TLM distribution; the corresponding use of LMD planning tools at central, decentralized, and local levels; the use of TLM distribution control tools (e.g., delivery reception notes, use of WhatsApp groups, local manual logbook reception controls); the successful participation of more

than **4,808** SE staff in the third distribution; and the engagement of more than **1,491** APFs in social oversight/TLM LMD track-and-trace activities.

2. *Development/Selection*, from a score of **2** to **3.75**, as a result of SE’s implementing improvements in the preparation of a national list of essential books; the submission of the TLM Supply Chain Management Coordination Committee (Comision Tecnica) for approval; the submission of the draft TLM *normativa* (TLM processes and procedures) for approval, including the joint SE-DLAL development of Spanish reading and teaching materials development that took place in this period.

The following exhibit presents a summary list of the improvement actions reported by SE staff for the 2020 NSCA survey that were implemented in the five stages of the TLM supply chain since the April 2019 baseline.



TLM Supply Chain Management Improvements Implemented by the SE Since the April 2019 Baseline (June 2020 Supply Chain Maturity Index Measure)	
Development and Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a national list of essential books • Draft TLM Supply Chain Management Coordination Committee — pending approval • Draft <i>normativa</i> (TLM processes and procedures) — pending approval • Development of Spanish reading/teaching guides materials — DLAL/SE curriculum development
Quantification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft tool for estimating TLM needs (collaborative work with SE staff and ACL)
Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralized acquisition/procurement planning and follow-up Excel tool • Dedicated hardware for centralized acquisition/procurement processes
Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of LMD plan tool at central, decentralized, and local levels • Use of TLM distribution control tools (delivery reception notes, manual local logbook reception controls) • Written central level instructions/guidelines to municipal/district and local levels for TLM LMD and reception • More than 4,000 SE staff involved in TLM LMD processes, use of WhatsApp groups • More than 1,400 APFs engaged in social oversight/TLM track-and-trace activities, use of SMS text message system

**TLM Supply Chain Management Improvements Implemented by the SE Since the April 2019 Baseline
(June 2020 Supply Chain Maturity Index Measure)**

Storage and Stock Management

- Improved inventory management controls (control sheet, logbooks)
- Improved reporting procedures for shipments and damaged materials
- Improved storage classification for educational materials

Implementation of parents' engagement and social oversight, and the successful introduction of track-and-trace tools within TLM LMD. Within the three distributions, QRMA mobilized and engaged representatives from **2,489** APFs (out of 2,511 target school APFs). These parents accompanied and supported the SE municipal, district, and school authorities, performing a key social oversight role in the 2019 and 2020 TLM distribution cycles. Parents participated in the reception of materials, serving as community witnesses to verify TLM quantities and condition. They signed and certified corresponding delivery reception notes with school representative(s). These reception notes were submitted to SE municipal, district, and departmental levels, reaching the SE central level and QRMA, where they were used for distribution planning, monitoring, and decision-making.

Supported by consortium partner bTG, QRMA gradually piloted and introduced track-and-trace tools with cost-effective TIGO-based mobile phone technologies to engage parents in TLM LMD monitoring and track-and-trace activities. During the first distribution cycle in 2019, 20 schools participated to assess parents' interest and field connectivity issues, establishing the feasibility of using mobile phone for track-and-trace at the field level. During the second distribution cycle in 2019, a larger pilot engaged 200 schools/APFs; this demonstrated the feasibility of using low-cost mobile phone SMS text messages to share TLM delivery confirmation reports with the SE central level and QRMA for distribution management oversight purposes.

During Distribution 3 in 2020, more than 12,000 APF members were invited to participate in the track-and-track social oversight exercise, using SMS messages to monitor the SE's TLM LMD. Of these, a sample of **3,243** parents/APF members participated by sending SMS text messages, representing a sample of **2,179** schools/APFs. During the first four weeks of the LMD, **2,076** APF members confirmed the reception of TLM materials in **1,491** schools (**64 percent** of participating APFs). The data from the participatory track-and-trace SMS text messages was uploaded and consolidated in a purpose-built Excel spreadsheet for TLM distribution follow-up. The data provided real-time information and clearly corroborated data from TLM reception forms that were received through WhatsApp groups established with the SE municipal, district, and school directors for TLM distribution planning, coordination, and supervision.

E. Summary of Result 2 Performance Indicators

Intermediate Result 2 (IR.2) Increased Supply of Teaching and Learning Materials for Reading Instruction Through A Strengthened and Improved Book Supply Chain		
IR 2.1 Existing book supply chain analyzed, modified, and strengthened		
IR 2.1 Indicator	Annual Cumulative — Actual FY18 to FY20	Achievement FY18 to FY20
2.1.1 Value Chain Performance Index (four factors: TLM delivered on time, correct quantity and quality, without damages, and complete documentation)	97% Distribution 2 98.27% Distribution 3	98.27% (1.3% improvement)
2.1.2 Supply Chain Capacity Assessment Index (average scores in a 1 to 5 scale along five stages of the TLM supply chain)	2.1 in 2019 3.1 in 2020	3.1 (47% increase)
2.1.3 Number of Operating Procedures Improved or Created Under the Quality Management System	5 planned 7 operating procedures introduced	7 (140% planned vs. actual)
2.2 Capacity development strategy to ensure that SE staff can manage and expand the book supply system implemented		
IR 2.2 Indicator	Annual Cumulative — Actual FY18 to FY20	Achievement FY18 to FY20
2.2.1 Percentage of Transition Milestones Achieved on Time	5 planned 4 achieved	80% (TLM <i>normativa</i> pending approval)
2.2.2 Number of Education Administrators and Officials Who Complete Professional Development Activities with U.S. Government Assistance (ES 1-12)	270 planned 157 GOH staff completing professional development activities	51.8% (cancellation of TLM Supply Chain Management training activities due to 2020 health emergency restrictions)
2.2.3 Number of People Trained with U.S. Government Assistance to Advance Outcomes Consistent with Gender Equality or Female Empowerment Through Their Roles in Public or Private Sector Institutions or Organizations (GNDR-8)	270 planned 203 people completing training consistent with gender approach	75.2% (cancellation of final batch of 2020 TLM Supply Chain Management training activities due to COVID-19 health emergency restrictions)
2.3 Improve the capacity of civil society and parent associations to monitor distribution logistics		
IR 2.3 Indicator	Annual Cumulative — Actual FY18 to FY20	Achievement FY18 to FY20
2.3.1 Percentage of Reports of Reading Materials Delivery Confirmed by the Users Trained in the Track-and-Trace Tool	3,243 SMS text messages received corresponding to 2,179 school APFs 2,076 (of 3,243) SMS text message reports from 1,491 schools confirming TLM reception	A trend of 64% of participating parents sending positive SMS text message reports confirming TLM reception
2.3.2 Number of Parent Teacher Associations or Community Governance Structures Engaged in Primary or Secondary Education Supported with U.S. Government Assistance (ES-1-13)	1,772 planned in 2019 2,489 engaged in 2019 2,283 planned in 2020 2,156 engaged in 2020	2,489 140.4% 2019 benchmark 2,156 94.4% 2020 benchmark

Intermediate Result 2 (IR.2) Increased Supply of Teaching and Learning Materials for Reading Instruction Through A Strengthened and Improved Book Supply Chain		
2.3.3 Dollar Value Contributions from Local and International PP Stakeholders to Support QRMA Results	US\$17,848 in 2019	US\$359,592 GOH counterparts/ estimated cost share during the life of the project
	US\$341,744 in 2020	

F. Mobilizing GOH Counterparts and Gender Participation During the Life of the Project

Throughout the life of the project, QRMA mobilized **5,067** government staff counterparts, with the SE contributing an estimated government cost sharing of close to **US\$360,000** (estimated staff hour and other counterparts). Out of total government counterparts, **52.3 percent** were female, and **47.7 percent** were male participants. It is important to note that a high percentage of female participants had supervision or technical positions during these joint activities. SE participation focused mainly on implementing specific components of the TLM Supply Chain Management process (e.g., institutional capacity gap analyses, forecasting, planning, acquisition, distribution, and stock management).

G. Result 2 Key Lessons Learned

1. One of the greatest contributing factors to the success of QRMA was the rich education project environment that USAID Honduras created under its CDCS and implemented by its partners and donor organizations. The harmony of the Honduras education programs, particularly with the designed interconnectivity between QRMA, HRA-DLAL, and the SE, fomented sustained educational development that resulted in improved learning outcomes. Where possible, donor support should replicate this connectivity to enable the highest potential for results.
2. It was key to raise awareness on the complexity of the TLM supply chain system. Heightened awareness allowed QRMA to secure understanding and buy-in from the start, and then to engage and work effectively with counterparts as activities progressed. At first, the public sector may not recognize the complexity of the TLM supply chain nor understand that it requires strategic, multisector, and multidisciplinary systemic management. It took several iterations of designing and providing information, opportunities for learning by doing, and human and institutional capacity improvement actions to support the SE to achieve results and improve its TLM Supply Chain Management capacity.
3. Having reliable and updated student enrollment data (from the SACE system) still is a challenge for the SE and limits its effectiveness in managing the TLM Supply Chain Management system. It also could have a negative impact on the achievement of education learning objectives (see Section VI for recommendations on this point). In the meantime, while the SACE data is being improved, the SE can partially mitigate this weakness by 1) using data proactively to mitigate gaps; 2) forecasting additional TLM on a given procurement cycle (an average of 5 percent extra stock to mitigate gaps) and; 3) empowering municipal and district directors to reassign individual school TLM quantities

based on the latest student enrollment data, which will reduce the margin of error in planned vs. actual TLM quantities delivered to schools.

4. Developing TLM — traditionally a public sector role — requires engagement from other sectors. The participation of other stakeholders, like the private sector, can maximize resources and contribute to public education. The project implemented a participatory approach that encouraged the SE to interact with the private sector to develop, produce, and distribute TLM. The SE should continue to engage all sectors to rally resources and participation in TLM supply chain activities.
5. QRMA worked with the SE to design the methodology and tools for municipal and district LMD plans, establishing effective lines of communication, coordination, and support. One effective tool was that the QRMA and SE empowered municipal and district directors to plan and manage LMD to schools, mobilizing more than 4,400 staff. This action established an allowance for schools to use mitigation and/or received TLM stock, giving directors the capacity to reassign school TLM quantities according to the latest education center enrollment data and to record the quantities on the delivery forms.
6. With the capacity to adapt to new funding realities, QRMA, supported by bTG, developed an outreach strategy to cover the maximum APFs participating in the TIGO-based SMS text message track-and-trace system. QRMA asked SE for a database of APF contacts at all 2,511 schools, casting a wide net to encourage participation in social oversight and LMD track-and-trace activities. The sample reports from participating parents corroborated data from normal SE supervision channels and complemented municipal and district directors' efforts to monitor and manage LMD.
7. Having the capacity to adapt and respond to the demands of new situations was key to continuing QRME-SE activities until program close. The SE had to address urgent COVID-19 prevention measures and movement restrictions, pivoting to priorities that supported students' remote learning. Since mid-March 2020, QRMA has worked remotely with SE counterparts to continue the activity, coordinating virtual meetings and collaborating creatively. To address these challenges, the activity pivoted to continue remaining capacity improvement actions as much as possible, including continuing to learn by doing: The SE received remote task-related on-the-job training while completing specific TLM Supply Chain Management components.

VI. NEXT STEPS FOR THE SE TO CONSOLIDATE THE GAINS

Through collaborative work with Avanzando con Libros, the SE increased its supply chain management capacity to reach Level 3 QUALIFIED, with basic processes defined, documented, and including technology. The SE achieved significant LMD performance results in the 2020 distribution. Additionally, it established the foundation for an optimized TLM Supply Chain Management system that is equipped with key elements: TLM budget lines, the internal coordination mechanism, the first version of the manual for TLM Supply Chain Management SOPs, basic TLM development, quantification and planning tools, and the tools for implementing LMD and participatory social oversight/track-and-trace at the decentralized level.

Additionally, the SE has a core group of committed and capable staff who are trained and experienced in TLM Supply Chain Management.

It is important to note that the SE can increase its 2020 TLM Supply Chain Maturity Index to consolidate the gains by implementing

1. TLM Supply Chain Management Coordination Committee (Comision Tecnica)
2. TLM Processes and Procedures (*normativa*)

Additionally, and to ensure a steady and robust supply of TLM for all students in Honduras, the SE should continue to improve its supply chain management capacity, moving beyond Level 3 QUALIFIED to having ADVANCED PRACTICES to becoming an example of BEST PRACTICES in TLM Supply Chain Management (Levels 4 and 5 in the Supply Chain Maturity Index Scale). Now that it counts with the foundation for TLM Supply Chain Management, these high capacity levels are within reach. They can be achieved if the SE continues to implement, consolidate, and improve the mechanisms, methodologies, processes, procedures, and tools established with QRMA. In the following sections, we present four sets of recommendations and next steps for the SE.

A. Continue Strengthening TLM Supply Chain Management and Coordination

Establish the TLM Supply Chain Coordination Committee (Comision Tecnica)

- Continue the process to establish and consolidate the TLM Supply Chain Technical Coordination Commission (the TLM Commission).
- Annually prepare and approve the TLM Commission's annual work plan activities and coordination and reporting procedures.
- In the long term, assess the feasibility of establishing a permanent TLM Supply Chain Management Coordination unit with a mandate to coordinate and follow-up internal collaborative work to implement the components along steps of the supply chain.

Implement and enhance the new normativa (TLM Supply Chain Management SOPs)

- Implement the new TLM Supply Chain Management SOPs (*normativa*).
- Regularly update the *normativa* procedures through a collaborative, continuous process.
- Continue to harmonize and integrate each unit's roles, responsibilities, and micro-processes in the optimized TLM Supply Chain Management macro process, including decentralized units.

Finalize and approve revisions to the TLM Minimum Profile

- Follow the steps agreed at the beginning of 2020 to finalize the TLM Minimum Profile.
- Integrate curriculum and syllabus designers.
- Specify required TLM (printed, electronic) for teachers and students according to grades and subjects.

- Analyze cost implications and adopt the corresponding publishing standards, useful life, use criteria, and quantification needs and budget parameters for the TLM needs forecast, provision plans, and public tender processes.

Carry out annual TLM Supply Chain Management performance reviews

- Use the NSCA methodology and tools provided by Avanzando con Libros to measure and assess the status of the TLM Chain Maturity Index annually.
- At the Technical Commission level, use updated TLM Maturity Index results to guide decision-making and to identify TLM Supply Chain Management improvements.

B. Implement Continuous Improvement Actions Within Specific Components Along the Five Stages of the TLM Supply Chain Management Process Through Stakeholder Engagement and Collaborative Work That Is Coordinated and Monitored by the TLM Supply Chain Technical Coordination Commission

Stage 1: Selection and Development

- Update the national curriculum that has been adapted to the new realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, clearly defining an adequate mix of at-class/at-home teaching and learning content and activities.
- Accordingly, define the policy and parameters to use public tenders for textbook development (paper, electronic) instead of the traditional, inefficient, and costly direct contracts model.
- Integrate national curriculum and the TLM Minimum Profile with the authoring process. It will achieve better content and cost-efficiency by contracting integrated teams of writers and illustrators, effectively engaging the talented pool of writers, illustrators, and mentors who have been trained by Avanzando con Libros/Room to Read.
- Incorporate lessons learned in the grades one through six Spanish curriculum and textbook development process that was recently implemented by the SE and DLAL.

Stage 2: Quantification and Planning

- Improve the EMIS-SACE system by developing and enforcing clear roles and responsibilities in collecting and updating enrollment and TLM stock management data. Have municipal and district supervisors monitor data quality and ensure that it is transferred from individual education centers to the SACE system. Incorporate the local level TLM stock management monitoring module (Excel tool) provided by Avanzando con Libros.
- Using the TLM quantification/forecast methodology and Excel tool from Avanzando con Libros, carry out a national exercise to identify short-, medium-, and long-term TLM needs according to grades and subjects. Establish the demand by age cohorts, TLM useful life, TLM per student and teacher, and replenishment data. Define quantities and parameters for the acquisition and provision of the TLM (e.g., printing, purchase, LMD, etc.)

- Based on the TLM Needs Forecast and Provision Plans, commit to an annual national budget allocation for short-, medium-, and long-term TLM provision (within the Plan Operativo Annual, funding budget line number 3360, chapter 39200). Include TLM needs according to subjects and grades. Define parameters for the corresponding matching funds strategy to engage with donors (international, private sector) and obtain additional funding for TLM provision.

Stage 3: Printing and Acquisition

- Review existing and/or establish new public policy frameworks so that private publishers may participate in public tenders to implement components in the TLM supply chain. Incorporate, as feasible, measures to encourage Honduran publishers and other providers to compete in these processes.
- Review procurement guidelines/launch tender processes adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, including providing TLM for the preferred mix of in-class and at-home learning.
- When developing the tender and print timeline processes, work backward from the date when TLM is required in classrooms. Plan the time required for each step to ensure that there is sufficient time to develop the materials and the tender; to evaluate proposals and negotiate contracts; and to print and distribute to schools. It is recommended that the tender for printing be released at least six to eight months before the date that TLM are needed in the classroom.
 - Ensure the quantities and specifications for each title, including print quality, paper, bindings, cover type, etc. Roles and responsibilities and all steps of preprint and print processes should also be clearly defined.
 - Include in the tender a draft timeline for the print process. Include timeliness in the evaluation criteria.
- Inspect the selected printer's facilities before entering into any contractual agreement. Include the possibility of an inspection as part of the evaluation process in the tender.
- Review digital TLM files with the printer and other relevant partners before printing to ensure that their readiness and to avoid errors. When digital files are finalized, the printer should produce dummy copies of each title for a quality control review before the full print run.
- Conduct quality control reviews upon receipt of any printed materials.

Stage 4: Distribution

- Begin the distribution tender process at least six months before TLM is needed in the classroom. Ensure that the logistics operator's scope of work is clear in the tender and that the quantities, weights, and volumes (where possible), as well as types and titles of TLM to be distributed, are included as annexes to the tender. Also include the addresses of designated delivery points, quantities to be delivered to each point, a clear delivery procedure, pick-and-pack specifications, and a sample delivery note.

- If a logistics operator will be responsible for the picking and packing of TLM for each school, the tender should include the offeror's ability to conduct the pick-and-pack process in its evaluation criteria.
- Include a draft distribution timeline in the tender and include timeliness as an evaluation criterion.
- When working with a logistics operator, establish regular and clear lines of communication, including regular written updates; a person responsible for the overall operation, as well as for regional level operations; explicit expectations for drivers and supervisors regarding customer service; and a delivery note of completion.
- Engage SE officials at the departmental, municipal, and district levels in the development of delivery routes (if relevant), a plan for oversight and quality of control of distribution, and the methodology to redistribute excess or missing materials between schools.
- Work with a logistics operator to carry out pick-and-pack and distribution to municipal/district delivery points, as well as a transition to the SE for LMD. Departmental and municipal level SE officials should be engaged directly in the process and encouraged to use available tools (*convocatorias*, distribution planning, etc.) to ensure that delivery to the last mile is timely, clear, and efficient.
- TLM delivery notes should be signed and stamped by the director or official designee at each school, as well as signed by the person responsible for delivery and an APF representative, if possible. One copy should stay at the school; additional copies should be delivered to each level of the SE (district → municipal → departmental → central).
- For future distributions, continue the combination of simple technologies to monitor TLM distribution (supervisor WhatsApp groups, SMS phone messages for parents to handle social oversight, and DLAL-provided electronic tablets for supervisors). Ensure that dedicated staff at the municipal/district, departmental, and central levels receive and consolidate this data, preparing periodic follow-up reports to SE decision-makers, and providing feedback and support to the local level during distribution.
- For upcoming distribution, apply lessons learned in the participatory TLM track-and-trace used in the 2020 distribution process. Engage trained staff to implement the monitoring and reporting tools.

Stage 5: TLM Stock Management

- At school, district/municipal, and department levels, implement and monitor the TLM use and stock management parameters that were established in the revised TLM Minimum Profile.
- Use the TLM Stock Management Excel tool provided by Avanzando con Libros to monitor the use and condition of existing TLM stocks at the school, municipal, district, and departmental levels. Supervisors should ensure that this data is uploaded regularly into the centralized SACE system.
- At the school level, engage parents and other community members through groups such as the APFs to provide additional oversight on proper TLM management.

C. Invest in Staff Capacity to Manage and Implement the Optimized TLM Supply Chain Process

- Build awareness among stakeholders on the adopted, optimized TLM Supply Chain Management, the TLM Technical Coordination Commission, and the adopted TLM Supply Chain SOPs (*normativa*).
- Based on the TLM Supply Chain Management Staff Development Program provided by Avanzando con Libros, finalize and implement the recommended *diplomado* within the training programs offered by Direccion de Formacion Profesional-SE.
- Engage as instructors the Honduran staff from Avanzando con Libros and staff from SE who were trained during QRMA implementation.
- Train SE staff and others from universities and/or other projects according to the proposed TLM Supply Chain Management Staff Development Program.

D. Establish and Maintain Effective TLM Supply Chain Partnerships and Alliances

- Be proactive in convening donors (private sector, international) around key TLM provision priorities. If necessary, use a matching-funds strategy to top up funding.
 - Obtain donor support for SACE improvement actions, including the TLM stock management module.
 - Mobilize donor support for printing and TLM LMD.
- Within the framework of the Empresarios por la Educacion tripartite agreement (SE, Fundación Hondureña de Responsabilidad Social Empresarial/Honduran Association of Corporate Social Responsibility Foundations, and USAID), effectively engage private sector foundations to contribute to components along the stages of the TLM supply chain: curriculum/textbook development, printing and/or distribution financing, participatory track-and-trace activities, social media campaigns, support, etc.
- Engage with and support the activities of the Honduran Chamber of the Book (Camara del Libro Honduras) to participate in specific steps of the TLM supply chain.
- Assess or remove tax and customs barriers for Honduran printers' participation in providing TLM (e.g., paper customs taxes for locally printed books).

E. Challenges for the TLM Supply Chain in a World Living with COVID-19

It is clear that the world will need to learn to live with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prevention measures and movement restrictions will continue for a long time, taking a toll on global supply chains and on the nature and scope of public service delivery. It is likely that supply chains will become more regional, relying on localized production and services.

From the education sector service delivery view, the TLM supply chain will need to adapt to the new reality while incorporating new class and curriculum methodologies and tools. In the short and medium term, governments will need to mix teaching methods and TLM to include physical

and electronic class materials. Students will learn through a combination of at home and class methodologies supported by relevant TLM.

The following are recommendations for the SE to address short-term challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Provide subject-based activity notebooks to vulnerable at-home students who do not have access to technology. Start by printing grades one through six Spanish activity notebooks.
2. Use DLAL/SE-approved camera-ready materials.
3. Print in sufficient quantities to reach areas that were not covered in the 2020 **DO1/DO2** distribution (based on estimations of grades one through six at-home students who do not have access to technology).
4. Apply lessons learned in the 2020 LMD by implementing the same methodology and tools used by SE and Avanzando con Libros (for printing, TLM pick and pack, delivery to municipal and district collection points, etc.).
5. Learning from the February-March 2020 distribution exercise, task municipal/district directors and education center authorities with carrying out LMD to students' homes. Engaging and mobilize APFs, local community organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and others.
6. Set up an appointment system and corresponding biosecurity protocols for school directors and official designees. Apply the same system at the school level with staggered times, use of masks, etc.
7. Use the participatory track-and-trace tools to promote community and parental social oversight of this distribution.
8. Mobilize and train volunteers (youth, families, others) to mentor, accompany, and support students at home.
9. Use existing USAID education capabilities and resources to quickly coordinate and support the SE in this operation (Avanzando con Libros, Lectores a Lideres, Asegurando la Educacion, etc.).
10. Engage with other donors and the private sector to match or complement USAID resources to support this urgent national operation.
11. Replicate the operation by providing other existing subject-based activity notebooks, reaching out to other vulnerable at-home students as resources allow.