National Project Manager Manual

COVID-19: Monitoring Impacts on Learning Outcomes (MILO)

31 March 2021, Version 1.1

Acknowledgements

Contents

ACRONYMS

ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
CONFEMEN	Conference of Ministers of Education of French-Speaking Countries
DA	Data Administrator
DEO	Data Entry Operator
DM	Data Manager
DMM	Data Management Manual
GEM Centre	Global Education Monitoring Centre
GIB	Global Item Bank
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
LST	List of Students
MILO	Monitoring Impacts on Learning Outcomes
STF	Student Tracking Form
NC	National Centre
NPM	National Project Manager
NRA	National/Regional Assessment
PASEC	CONFEMEN Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems
QM	Quality Monitor
SC	School Coordinator
ScQ	School Questionnaire
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SQ	System Questionnaire
SPF	School Participation Form
SQTF	School Questionnaire Tracking Form
StQ	Student Questionnaire
TA	Test Administrator
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics

INTRODUCTION TO COVID-19 MILO STUDY

Introduction

1. The COVID-19: Monitoring Impacts on Learning Outcomes (MILO) project aims to measure learning outcomes in order to estimate the impact of COVID-19 on learning and to evaluate the effectiveness of distance learning mechanisms utilised during school closures. In addition, this project will develop the capacity of countries to monitor learning after the crisis.

2. The four overarching goals of the project are to:

    -   Evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on learning outcomes and measure the learning loss by reporting against SDG indicator 4.1.1b

    -   Identify the impact of different distance learning mechanisms put in place to remediate the learning disruption generated by COVID-19

    -   Expand the UIS bank of items for primary education

    -   Generate a toolkit so that assessment results can be scaled to international benchmarks, reporting against SDG 4.1.1.b.

Overview

3. This chapter provides a brief overview of COVID-19: Monitoring Impacts on Learning Outcomes (MILO), the management structure, your role as a National Project Manager (NPM), and other key information that is important for a successful implementation of MILO study.

4. Robust data and evidence are key to evaluate and understand the variety of education responses to COVID-19 in different contexts and to make recommendations for building more resilient education systems. In the context of this study, a new method of developing learning assessments is proposed, whereby items are selected from the UIS Global Item Bank (GIB).

Instruments Overview

5. This study will gather student learning and contextual data through administering pencil and paper test booklets and questionnaires to students at the end of primary school[1] in school settings in two domains:

- Reading

- Mathematics.

6. There are two parts of this project:

- **A) The MILO assessment (DAY 1), and**

- **B) The national/ regional assessment (DAY 2).**

7. Table 1 shows the study outline:

Table 1: Study outline

LEVEL	DAY 1	DAY 2
	MILO assessment	**National/Regional Assessment**
Student	MILO assessments and student questionnaires	PASEC/ NASMLA/ NAS test booklets
School	MILO School Questionnaires	
System	MILO System Questionnaire	

The MILO Assessment (DAY 1)

8. On DAY 1 students will receive:

- one MILO assessment comprised of Reading and Mathematics items, and

- one MILO Student Questionnaire.

9. The MILO test booklets and Student Questionnaires will be administered by Test Administrators (TAs) and completed by sampled students in the target grade.

10. This assessment will also collect contextual information through the following questionnaires:

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[1] The definition of end of primary schooling will likely vary across countries. Defining the end of primary school for the purpose of reporting against SDG 4.1.1b will be determined on a case by case basis in consultation with each country and the UIS

- **School Questionnaire**: is a paper-based questionnaire. It will be administered by School Coordinators (SCs) and completed by principals of the sampled schools.
- **System Questionnaire**: is an online questionnaire. It will be administered by NPMs and completed by a nominated educational authority.

The national/regional assessment (DAY 2)

- On DAY 2 students will receive the national/regional assessment test booklets in Reading and Mathematics with a link to prior learning outcomes based on the target population grade. The assessment for DAY 2 is based on the following materials:
- PASEC G5/6, 2019 Booklet in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cote d'Ivorie, Senegal
- NASMLA G7, 2019 Booklet in Kenya
- NAS G5, 2016 Booklet in Zambia.

National Project Manager Manual

11. This NPM Manual is the central operational manual to assist you in carrying out the test administration in your country. You should use this manual as the starting point for reviewing project requirements and planning national tasks, referring to other specific key documents when appropriate.

12. The NPM Manual is structured in sections as follows:

- **Introduction to COVID-19 MILO study** section provides an introduction and a summary of the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders.
- **Communication protocols** section describes protocols for communication between and among international and national MILO staff.
- **Data security and confidentiality protocols** section describes protocols for ensuring security and confidentiality of the assessment materials.

13. The remaining sections correspond to the key phases of the study implementation as follows:

- **Phase 1: Study initiation**
- **Phase 2: Test administration preparation**
- **Phase 3: Test administration.**

INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Key Management Entities, their Roles and Responsibilities

14. The international management of COVID-19 MILO study is organised by three key management entities with their different roles and responsibilities. Table 2 below shows the participating entities and their roles:

Table 2: Roles of key management entities

Entity	Role
UIS	Study Manager
ACER	Technical Partner
CONFEMEN	PASEC Coordination Partner

15. The responsibilities of the key management entities are shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Responsibilities of key management entities

Entity	Responsibilities
UIS	• Determine project parameters and funding • Liaise with participating countries • Liaise with technical partners
ACER	• Design and provide all documentation and materials for procedures and production • Liaise with countries to design and implement school samples • Provide data management systems and services • Undertake analysis • Reporting • Quality assurance • Capacity development
CONFEMEN	• Liaise with Francophone participants • Coordinate implementation of Francophone participants • Provide psychometric data and instrumentation from PASEC 2019

16. The COVID-19 MILO study is managed by the UIS who is responsible for project parameters, funding, liaising with technical partners and participating countries and making sure they comply with the agreed timelines. The UIS also needs to ensure that all communications are with NC staff members who are subject to confidentiality agreements.

17. The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) as a technical partner implements the technical aspects of the project on behalf of the UIS.

18. The CONFEMEN as a PASEC coordination partner is responsible for liaising with Francophone participating countries, coordinating the study implementation and providing psychometric data and instrumentation from PASEC 2019.

Participating Countries

19. The participating countries are responsible for implementation of COVID-19 MILO study on the national level. Responsibilities of the participating countries are shown in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Responsibilities of participating countries

Entity	Responsibilities
Participating Countries	- Liaise with UIS - Liaise with technical partners, as appropriate - Provision of prior assessment test booklets, framework and data - Provision of school sample frame - Recruitment of schools - Materials production and distribution - Data collection, including organising and training test administrators - Data management including student sampling and data entry - Documentation of all technical processes - Quality assurance

20. Each participating country has to establish the National Centre (NC) that is led by a NPM who oversees the implementation of COVID-19 MILO study on the national level. The relationship between NPMs and ACER focuses on providing the technical support and advice for issues related to project implementation, study design, documentation, data management systems and services, quality assurance and capacity development.

Communication between NCs and UIS

21. Study implementation is the primary focus of the NCs' exchanges with UIS and ACER. ACER seeks to provide the NCs with the appropriate technical information and support to implement the project to the required standard. In their communications, ACER is required to respect certain protocols, mainly that communication should be through the NPM or an authorised delegate of the NPM.

NCs contact details

22. In order to ensure effective communication with the NCs, UIS and ACER needs to maintain up-to-date records of contact information. This includes your contact details as NPMs, as well as additional NCs team members as appropriate (e.g., Data Manager, Sampling Manager) if these details are different from yours.

23. For each NC member, the following contact information should be submitted via email uis.lo@unesco.org to the UIS:

- Name
- Email
- Organisation
- Country/Economy
- Role

DATA SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY PROTOCOLS

ACER Protocols for Handling Personal Data

24. ACER, being a public company incorporated in Australia, is committed to protecting all of the personal data that it collects, processes, analyses and reports on both in digital and paper-based formats. We strive to ensure that we are following best practice and are in compliance with relevant legislation and regulations in the countries in which ACER conducts its work.

Data Security and Confidentiality

25. Strict confidentiality when handling assessment materials is vital to protecting the integrity of the MILO project. This includes test booklet and questionnaires (both draft and final versions), and data collected. It also includes the tracking forms and list of selected schools, as the publication of such a list could potentially breach security. No individual person or school may be identified in any report released through the assessment program.

26. Formal confidentiality arrangements need to be established with all people who are given access to the secure materials. Those people include:

- NC staff
- School Coordinators (SCs)
- Test Administrators (TAs)
- Data Manager (DM)
- Data Entry Operators (DEOs)
- Data Administrators (DA)
- print company
- courier company (if applicable)
- all recruited supportive administrative officers.

27. The NPM must ensure that assessment materials are always kept in a secure place and can be accessed only by authorised staff.

28. The NPM may also need to consider confidentiality requirements at the national level, such as legislative requirements related to student privacy. Please discuss the relevant data security legislation with the UIS in relation to sharing student assessment data with international organisations.

PHASE I: STUDY INITIATION

Overview

29. This section provides an overview of all of the tasks involved in the initiation phase of the study.

30. There are many tasks to be completed in a short span, so it is important that you have a clear plan in place to organise your time. It is also important to ensure that you have enough support staff to assist.

Key Documents

Table 5: Key documents for the Phase 1: Study initiation

Area	Key document
Quality Assurance	Technical Standards
Framework	Study Design
Field Operations	NPM Manual

Checklist of Tasks

31. Table 6 lists the tasks to be undertaken in Phase 1. This can be used as a checklist to ensure that all tasks are completed. More detailed descriptions of these tasks are provided after the table. To prepare your country's work plan please refer to Appendix 5: National Centre Work Plan (template).

Task	Task description	Suggested time prior to the assessment day	Done ✓
1. Establish a NC	• Identify NC staff and required resources • Submit NC team members' contact details to UIS and ACER	[11-12] weeks [10-11] weeks	
2. Establish security protocols	• Prepare Confidentiality Agreement • Have it signed by all NC staff • Return them to UIS	[9-10] weeks [8] weeks [8] weeks	
3. Attend key meetings	• Project management meetings with UIS and ACER (online, every week/fortnight as needed) • NPM training	Feb-Mar 2021 29 March 2021]	

Establish a NC

Identify NC staff and required resources

32. A NC needs to be established within each participating country, and appropriate NC staff need to be appointed.

33. The NC team should ideally consist of 2-3 full-time staff (or equivalent part time staff) for the duration of the project. It is recommended that these staff be appointed from the Ministry of Education (or equivalent). This core team will be led by the NPM, who will be nominated from the department and is usually responsible for leading national and/or international assessments. NC staff usually consist of:

- NPM
- Administration/ Logistics Manager
- Sampling Manager
- Data Manager

34. Short term casual technical staff are often needed. These should be recruited and managed by the NC team. Due to their temporary functions, they are not considered members of the NC, however they are expected to work closely with and report to relevant NC team during their period of engagement. These may include:

- Domain Experts
- Translators

- Proof Readers

- TAs

- SCs

- Data Administrators

- Data Entry Operators

- National Quality Monitors

35. The NC will also need adequate equipment, such as:

- Suitable office space

- Communication devices (phone, email)

- Computer with access to the Internet

- Computers for data management software ACER Maple

- Up-to-date computer software (e.g., video conferencing software) and hardware

- IT support.

Submit NC contact details

36. In order to ensure effective communication UIS and ACER need to maintain up-to-date records of contact information. For more details see the section 'NC contact details' section, paragraph 23.

Primary email address

37. We recommend that only ONE e-mail address should be maintained as the primary e-mail address of the NC. It can be the same as the NPM's personal e-mail address. However, it will be very useful for the NC to have a generic project e-mail address for communicating with ACER. One advantage of this is that the NPM can control the flow of information within the NC (e.g., you can specify internally who receives emails addressed to the generic address). All information, dissemination and communication from ACER, including mail dispatches, will be sent to this e-mail address and will be followed up if delivery failure notices are received.

38. ACER regularly sends emails to the NC. These emails sometimes may have large attachments. Please ensure that your NC's primary email account has sufficient storage to allow for the reception of attachments of at least 1MB.

Secure file transfer

39. The transfer of large files is not always practical through e-mail due to mailbox restrictions and security. ACER will use a secure file transfer platform called 'MyCloud'. This platform will be used to transfer confidential or large files between the NC and ACER, such as tracking forms, any document containing personal

information, test instruments, national datasets, and data reports. Please keep any MyCloud passwords shared with you secure.

Establish security protocols

40. **Strict confidentiality when handling assessment materials is vital to protecting the integrity of the MILO project.** This includes assessments and questionnaires (both draft and final versions), and data collected. It also includes the tracking forms and list of selected schools, as the publication of such a list could potentially breach security (e.g., schools testing later in the testing period contacting schools that tested earlier in the testing period).

41. **Formal confidentiality arrangements need to be established with all people who are given access to the secure materials.** Those people include:

- NC staff
- SCs
- TAs
- Data Managers
- Data Administrators
- Data Entry Operators
- National Quality Monitors
- Print company
- Courier company (if applicable), and
- All recruited casual technical staff.

42. **Please ensure that assessment materials are always kept in a secure place and can be accessed only by approved staff.**

43. **Due to potential security breaches during test administration sessions in schools please ensure that that:**

- NO school staff observes the test administration session
- NO school staff look through used or unused test booklets
- NO-ONE copies or photocopies the test booklets and questionnaires under any circumstances,
- NO-ONE takes photographs or videos of the participating students, the school, the test administration session or any of the used or unused test booklets and questionnaires under any circumstances.

44. **You may also need to consider confidentiality requirements at the national level, such as legislative requirements related to student privacy. An example of the Confidentiality Agreement to be signed by the NC staff and recruited staff is in** Appendix 2.

45. **Remember:**

- All data collected in MILO must be kept strictly confidential, and

- No individual person or school may be identified in any report released from the assessment program.

Attend key meetings

46. During the Study Initiation phase, the following meetings will be organised:

- Project management meetings with UIS and ACER

- NPM training.

47. Please make sure you have done the following preparation BEFORE attending these meetings:

- Identify who will attend

- Read relevant documents where provided

- Provide relevant documentation where required.

Data management

48. ACER will provide a customised data management software called ACER Maple, Data Management Manual and Data Management training to all participating countries.

49. The Technical Standards relating to the Data Management are shown in Figure 1 below.

Standard 9.1
Each NC should appoint a data manager (DM). Data managers will be required to attend training on data management and use of ACER Maple data management software, provided by ACER prior to data collection. Data managers will train NC data administration and data entry personnel on the use of ACER Maple in line with the procedures described in the Data Management Manual (DMM).

Standard 9.2
ACER Maple software is used for data management, data entry and preliminary data verification prior to submitting data to ACER.

Standard 9.3
The data verification procedures, as specified in the DMM, will be executed by the NC staff in ACER Maple software before submitting the final database to ACER.

Standard 9.4
A data manager from the NC will be available upon submission of the database to ACER. The data manager:
- is authorised to respond to ACER data queries
- is available for a four-week period immediately after the database is submitted unless otherwise agreed upon
- is able to respond to ACER queries in English within three working days
- is able to resolve data discrepancies.

Figure 1: Technical Standards relevant for the Data Management

50. The NC will be responsible for completion of data management tasks specified in the Data Management Manual, which can be divided in three broad stages:

- Preliminary tasks that are necessary for configuration of the software:
    o Agree with ACER School Sampling team on the List of Sampled Schools and the number of administrative sets in this list
    o Agree with ACER Questionnaire team on the Questionnaire Structural Adaptations (QSA) and Questionnaire Non-Structural Adaptations (QAS)
    o Submit final versions of national/regional assessment instruments for final optical check and software configuration.

- Data management tasks to be completed by the NC before the assessment:
    o Plan for personnel and equipment
    o Prepare computers according to ACER Maple system requirements and nominate personnel to participate in data management training provided by ACER

o Download, install and initiate data management software ACER Maple

o Modify tracking form templates in ACER Maple, if required

o Draw student samples for each participating school in ACER Maple

o Fill tracking form templates with data from ACER Maple and prepare them for TA

o Label and pack materials.

PHASE 2: TEST ADMINISTRATION PREPARATION

Overview

51. This section provides an overview of all of the tasks involved in preparing for the test administration.

52. Figure 2 below shows the overview of the test administration preparation.
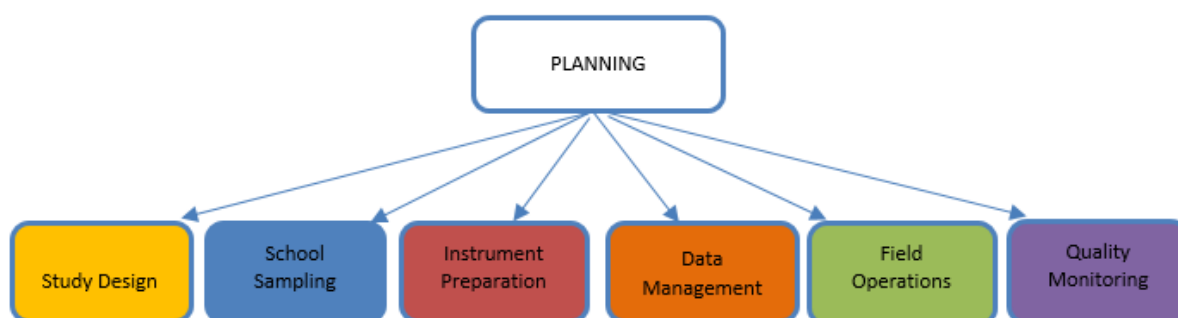
Figure 2: Test administration preparation

53. During this phase, test booklets and questionnaires will be developed, adapted, and finalised by ACER in both English and French. At the same time sampling tasks must be completed.

54. The main activities in the test administration preparation are:

- Study design:
    - Standalone administration of the MILO assessment and the national/regional assessment
- School Sampling:
    - Sampling forms completion
    - Sampling frame completion
    - List of Sampled Schools agreed
- Instrument preparation:
    - Layout verification
    - Assembling materials
    - Printing
    - Labelling

- Data Management :
  - Data Management Software (ACER Maple):
    - Ensuring equipment and system requirements necessary for data management training
    - Attending Data Managers' training by ACER
    - ACER Maple installation and initialisation
    - Training Data Administrators by the Data Manager
  - Collecting Lists of Students from schools
  - Sampling students in ACER Maple
  - Filling in student tracking forms templates with sampling data from ACER Maple
- Field Operations:
  - Packaging
  - Secure dispatch of materials to SCs and TAs
  - Test Administration
- Quality Monitoring.

Key Documents

Table 7: Key documents for the Phase 2: Test administration preparation

Area	Key document
Quality Assurance	Technical Standards
Instrument Preparation	Assessment Blueprint
	Study Design
	Contextual Framework
	Adaptation Guidelines
	Questionnaire Adaptation Spreadsheet (QAS) template
	Questionnaire Structural Adaptation (QSA) template
	Test Construction Guidelines
School Sampling	Sample Preparation Guide
	Sampling Framework
	Survey weights and response rates overview paper
	Sampling Forms and Sampling Frame template
	Population definition and sample design document
Data Management	Data Management Manual (DMM)
Field Operations	National Project Manager (NPM) Manual
	School Coordinator (SC) Manual
	Test Administrator (TA) Manual with the Test Administrator's Script (international version)
	Test Administrator notes for the Student Questionnaire items

Checklist of Tasks

55. To achieve the goals of this assessment the MILO NCs, UIS and ACER will work closely together in a productive partnership in which each organisation would be responsible for different areas of the study.

56. In preparation of the test administration, the NPM should organise the work at the NC to complete the following tasks as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Checklist of the NPM tasks for the Phase 2: Test administration preparation

Task	Task description	Suggested time prior to the assessment day	Done ✓
1. Prepare School Sampling forms and Sampling frame	• Prepare and submit all required Sampling Forms and Sampling Frame template with complete information. • Prepare School Participation Form (SPF) from the list of sampled schools	[7-8] weeks [5-6] weeks	
2. Review assessment material	• Review MILO test booklets and questionnaires, student tracking forms and the Test Administrator's Script	[6-7] weeks	
3. Adapt questionnaire items	• Complete Questionnaire Adaptation Spreadsheet (QAS) and Questionnaire Structural Adaptation (QSA) templates, and submit to ACER • Develop the national versions of questionnaires and submit to ACER for checking	[6-7] weeks [6-7] weeks	
4. Undertake layout verification of assessment material	• Review layout and formatting of: • a) MILO test booklets • b) MILO questionnaires (StQ, ScQ, SQ) • Sign off the MILO test booklets and questionnaires • Submit to ACER the national/ regional assessment test booklets for final optical check and configuration of the data management software (ACER Maple)	[5-6] weeks [6-7] weeks	
5. Adapt operational materials	• Adapt SC Manual and TA Manual and submit to ACER	[4-5] weeks	
6. Prepare for data management training webinar	• Organise equipment • Ensure system requirements • Ensure data manager attendance	[5-6] weeks	
7. Produce assessment materials	• Find a suitable printer (refer to the technical standards on printing) • Print the national/ regional assessment test booklets with required cover pages for MILO tracking purposes (School name, MILO School number and Student ID) • Print MILO test booklets, Student and School Questionnaires	[5-6] weeks [5-6] weeks [4-5] weeks	

8. Work with participating schools	• Identify SCs • Organise information session for SCs • Obtain List of Students (LST) • Schedule testing dates	[6-8] weeks [6-8] weeks [6] weeks [4] weeks	
9. Work with Data Manager	• Ensure student sampling and STF production	[4] weeks	
10. Attend the webinar on data management	• Identify NC participants for the webinar • Prepare equipment • Read provided material and prepare for the webinar • • Train Data Administrators and DEOs	[5-6] weeks [5-6] weeks [5-6] weeks [4] weeks	
11. Complete data management tasks required before the assessment	• Prepare equipment for Data Administrators • Employ and train Data Administrators • Draw student sample using ACER Maple • Fill STF templates with sampled students data	[5] weeks [5] weeks [4-5] weeks [4] weeks	
12. Prepare all assessment materials for distribution	• Print student tracking forms and labels • Label test booklets and questionnaires • Prepare packages of assessment materials • Prepare and send the information letter with login details for completion of the online SQ by a nominated educational authority • Distribute the assessment materials with student tracking forms to TAs or schools	[4] weeks [4] weeks [2-3] weeks [2-3] weeks [1] weeks	
13. Recruit and train TAs	• Identify and recruit TAs • Organise training session for TAs • Print TA materials (TA manual, Script, Student Tracking Forms, TA Notes on Student Questionnaire Items, Confidentiality Agreements)	[4-5] weeks [3-4] weeks [3-4] weeks	
14. Recruit and train national Quality Monitors (QMs)	• Identify and recruit national QMs • Organise information session for national QMs • Invite QMs to attend the training session for TAs	[4-5] weeks [3-4] weeks [3-4] weeks	

School Sampling

Draw School Sample

57. The objective of sampling is to represent a larger population by collecting data on a carefully defined subset of that population. The first step is to specify the population the sample is to represent.

58. The schools for the test administration will be selected by ACER following completion of all sampling forms and the preparation of the sampling frame by the NC.

Sampling Frame

59. A sampling frame is a list of all primary schools (see Appendix 3) in the participating country serving students cohort attending the final grade of primary schools, the total number of students enrolled in these schools and other information about those schools.

60. Detailed instructions for preparing the school sampling frame and forms are provided in the MILO Sample Preparation Manual.

61. The required sample size for the test administration is a minimum of 150 schools, 5000 students. However it is likely that the sample design will require at least 250 schools with 20-25 students from each school to meet the required level of precision. The Technical Standards related to school sampling is shown in Figure 3 below.

Standard 1.7

The school sample size needs to result in a minimum of 150 participating schools[2]. For each sampled school, two substitute schools will be selected where possible, using a systematic method, to ensure a proper level of school response as indicated in Standard 1.9.

Standard 1.8

The student sample size is a minimum of 5,000 assessed students.

Figure 3: School Sampling Technical Standards

Target Population

62. The target population of the MILO study are students at the end of primary school (see Figure 4 below).

Standard 1.1

The UIS, ACER, CONFEMEN and the participating countries will work together to identify the population to which inferences will be made. This population is referred to as the Desired Target Population.

The target population for the study is all students in the final grade of primary school where the language of instruction is English or French. By agreement, countries may use a grade other than the final grade of primary school where that is the grade that a country references to report against SDG indicator 4.1.1(b).

All students enrolled in the final year of primary school in recognised schools where the language of instruction is either English or French belong to the National Target Population (NTP). In simple terms, the NTP is intended to provide full coverage of all eligible students in the education systems of participating countries of Africa. Any deviation from the full national coverage must be described and quantified in advance.

Figure 4 : Target Population Technical Standards

Sampling Design

63. The process for selecting students has two stages. First, based on the list of individual schools having students from the final grade of the primary schools and their characteristics provided by the NC staff in each participating country. ACER will sample the schools that will be selected for the test administration.

64. Once the schools are selected, the NC will need a list of students in each selected school along with other information about the students. You should send an electronic version of the List of Students to SCs for completion unless a paper version is required, and send it to you 5 weeks before the assessment day. More information about sampling is available in the Sample Preparation Guide.

Response Rates

65. The expected school response rate is 85% or more of sampled schools. The expected student response rate is 80% or more of sampled students. The Technical Standards relating to the response rate are shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Response Rates Technical Standards

Adapt Questionnaire Items

66. Within each of the questionnaires there are specific terms that need to be adapted in such a way as to make it appropriate for the local context. Examples of these terms are the names of people or places which may need to maintain their essential characteristics (so that they are easy to read, and sound familiar to students).For more details regarding the national adaptations please refer to Questionnaire Adaptation Guidelines.

Complete Questionnaire Adaptation

67. Questionnaire booklets will be adapted first using the Questionnaire Adaptations Spreadsheet (QAS). QAS contains the central record of all structural adaptations to be made to questionnaires. It is an MS EXCEL file that is updated and passed on between relevant NC and ACER staff.

68. Undertake layout verification of questionnaire booklets. Please refer to the Questionnaire Adaptation Guidelines.

69. You will be required to review the questionnaire booklets by making sure that the design of your booklets is identical with the international source version. Revisions to translations of the items will not be accepted at this stage.

Operational Manuals

70. ACER will only provide the English versions of the following operational manuals:

- School Coordinator (SC) Manual
- Test Administrator (TA) Manual
- Data Management (DM) Manual.

71. The Test Administrator's Script included in the TA Manual will be provided in both English and French language versions.

Adapt the Test Administrator Manual

72. The international source version of the TA Manual may need to be adapted depending on work processes and communication in your country. The text to be

adapted in the SC and TA Manuals is shown in red font between **square brackets** [ ].

73. Other adaptations may be required where your intended procedures differ in some way to that outlined in this manual. Discuss with ACER any further changes you wish to make to the manual. You will be required to submit the national version of the TA Manual for ACER to review and approve it.

Distribute the DM Manual to Data Manager

74. Distribute the DM Manual to the Data Manager as soon as it's available. This will enable Data Manager to have maximum time to familiarise her/himself with the role and associated tasks and prepare for the training.

Distribute the TA Manual to Test Administrators

75. Distribute a national version of the TA Manual to TAs no later than 1-2 weeks before the TA training. This will allow enough time for the TAs to review the manual and to prepare for the training.

Work with Schools

76. It is important to develop a strategy that defines how contacts will be made and what information will be provided at each of the different levels. Letters, informational materials telephone calls and personal visits are all useful ways of contacting the appropriate authorities.

77. In some systems, it is not enough to notify the appropriate authorities; permission must be obtained. Obtaining permission can be time consuming. It is important to begin the process of securing cooperation early enough so that all necessary permissions are obtained in time.

78. Once schools have been selected, and they agree to participate in MILO, it is important to work with the schools to ensure that staff and students are informed and engaged. Providing a clear rationale and purpose of the assessment can assist schools in understanding their role.

Identify School Coordinators

79. An essential part of securing the co-operation of the selected school is identifying someone within the school who will act as the SC. The SC acts as the liaison between the school and the NC. This person is very important to the success of the study.

80. The work of the SC involves collecting and recording information about the eligible students within the school, disseminating information to the school community

(teachers, students, parents, and other school staff) and assisting the TA in organising the assessment activity.

Organise Information Session for School Coordinators

81. You should organise an information session for SCs to inform them of the MILO study, their role and responsibilities. The information session should cover topics such as:

- An overview of the MILO study

- The role and responsibilities of SCs

- Activities to be undertaken before, during and after assessment

- Test administration dates allocated to schools

- Review of the student tracking forms and procedures for their completion, including some practice examples

- Timing of assessment session

- Review TA notes on Student Questionnaire items

- Security protocols and confidentiality

- National Quality Monitors

- Any issues specific to your national context.

Distribute the SC Manual to School Coordinators

82. Distribute the SC Manual to SCs no later than 1 week before the information session for SCs. This will allow enough time for the SCs to review the manual, prepare for the training and complete the preparatory tasks required for the assessment.

83. The SCs will need to provide the lists of eligible students for student sampling and then subsequently identify which teachers are most knowledgeable about the sampled students. SCs will also collaborate with the TAs when the school holds student assessment sessions and encourage principals to complete their questionnaire on time. The most important attribute of SCs is an ability to liaise effectively with parents/guardians and school staff.

Obtain Student List

84. The NC will need to obtain a list of target population students from each participating school (see Data Management Manual) about 6 weeks prior to the assessment. The student sample should fit the target population definition approved by ACER (see Target Population Technical Standards).

85. It is preferable that schools provide student information for sampling in electronic Excel spreadsheet.

86. If there is a central database in the country that contains up-to-date information about students including their demographic information, then this database can be used to prepare the necessary inputs.

Data Management

87. ACER will provide training for Data Managers 5-6 weeks prior to testing date. You need to identify the Data Manager and supply him/her with PC that meet the system requirements. You also need to ensure the Data Manager attendance at the training.

88. After the Data Manager is trained, he/she can install and initialise data management software (ACER Maple) and train Data Administrators. Data Management Manual explains how to prepare Data Administrator training

89. Once you have obtained a student list from each school, the student sample should be selected by Data Administrators using ACER Maple. Then the STF templates distributed together with ACER Maple are filled with sampled students' data from ACER Maple. The details are explained in the Data Management Manual.

Schedule Assessment Dates for Schools

90. It will be important to work with SCs to identify a suitable testing date for each school approximately 6 weeks prior to assessment. Factors such as the length of time required to complete the assessment are described in detail in the TA Manual. The locations of schools and length of the testing period should also be taken into account. You will need to develop a strategy to communicate with the SCs, especially any changes or updates to testing dates.

91. You may need to allocate resources to deal with queries as they arise. It may be useful to compile a list of 'frequently asked questions and answers' to use during telephone or e-mail communication with the schools.

92. You can only schedule the assessment sessions after you have completed the TAs recruitment and have a full knowledge of the numbers and the availabilities of the TAs during the testing period.

Recruit Test Administrators

93. TAs will be recruited to administer the assessment at participating schools. They will assist in administering the assessments and be ready to help or support students having problems.

94. To decide how many TAs you will need for test administration you have to consider the following aspects:

- number of participating schools (approximately 250 schools)

- one TA per each administration session (a maximum of 34 students per test session).

95. TAs should not be school staff, if possible and cannot be a teacher or instructor of any of the students to which they administer the instruments. TAs who have a teacher-student relationship with the students may affect how they interact and introduce non-comparable test conditions.

96. MILO does not require that TAs meet specific academic or professional requirements, yet they should be familiar with schools and how they operate. They should also be familiar with standardised testing procedures. Before the beginning of MILO assessment, you should train TAs in their role and responsibilities placing particular emphasis on the importance of uniform test conditions throughout the country.

Train Test Administrators

97. All students at every participating country need to hear and experience the same introduction to the material, the same answers to questions, have the same time window to complete the instruments, and have issues and challenges resolved in the same way. These detailed procedures will need to be part of the training. The face-to-face training should take place no more than 1 week prior to the testing period. You should distribute TA Manual including the TA Script to TAs no later than 1 week before the TA training. This will allow enough time for the TAs to review the manual and to prepare for the training. The TA Script will be provided in both English and French versions.

98. It is strongly recommended that you cover the following points in your training of TAs:

- Introduction to MILO, explaining what the results are used for in the local context.

- Discussion about the security of materials at all times of test administration (signing a Confidentiality Agreement) and the necessity for the swift return of all assessment related materials (material checklist).

- Description of the role of TAs, emphasising the importance of uniform testing conditions in an international context.

- Review of TA's activities before, during and after assessment as detailed in the TA Manual, test administration dates allocated to schools and TAs' roster.

- Review of the student tracking forms and procedures for their completion, including some practice examples.

- Review of the Test Administrator's Script, emphasizing the importance of adherence to the wording of the script and to session timing.

- Review and discussion of issues which commonly arise: procedures for changes to assessment dates, managing students, admitting students who are late, recording students who leave the session temporarily, managing disruptive students.

- Review and discussion of any nationally specific issues such as protocols for entering schools or communicating with school staff.

99. This training should be offered to the QM to attend.

Prepare All Assessment Materials for Distribution

100. Please note, information in this section should be applied to both MILO and the national/regional assessment materials. However, how it is applied will depend on the test administration arrangements in your country.

Print Assessment Materials

101. It is necessary to make sure that the printing quality of all assessment materials (including test booklets and questionnaires of both MILO and the national/regional assessment) meets the standards specified in the Technical Standards document. Therefore, it is required to print sample booklets first (one sample for each booklet type) to check the quality before all booklets are produced and ensure that all images are clearly visible. This will minimise any last-minute errors that may occur due to, for example, differences between your print settings and those of the printer. It will also allow you to confirm that the paper quality and print resolution are of the desired standard. After the sample booklets for DAY 2 are finalised, they must be submitted to ACER for final optical check and configuration of ACER Maple.

102. For constructing MILO assessment materials, please refer to the MILO Test Construction Guidelines for more details. For constructing the national/regional assessment materials, please refer to available guidelines.

103. Print test booklets for DAY 2 national/regional assessment

Prepare and Print Labels

104. To prepare materials for dispatch, print the following:

- Student Tracking Form for each participating school where each student is assigned a unique ID and allocated a specific test booklet type (Test booklet 1 or Test booklet 2):

- Three copies of student labels to identify for each student:
    - MILO test booklet
    - MILO Student Questionnaire
    - National/regional test booklet for DAY 2

- Labels to identify the School Questionnaire.

105. Student labels (see Figure 6)should include the following information:

- School name
- MILO school number
- Student ID

School Name	African Primary School
MILO School Number	1 2 5
Student ID	1 3 1 2 5 1 6 1

Figure 6: Labels for student test booklets and questionnaires

106. The labels for School Questionnaires should include the following information (see Figure 7):

- School name
- MILO school number
- Principal ID

School Name	African Primary School						
MILO School Number	1	2	5				
Principal ID	2	3	1	2	5	0	1	1

Figure 7: Labels for the School Questionnaire

Label Test Booklets and Questionnaires

107. Based on the information on the STF columns 'MILO Testlet', label the relevant test booklet types assigned for the particular student so that the test booklets type printed on the label corresponds with the actual test booklet.

108. There is only one type of Student Questionnaire and each student should be allocated one questionnaire.

109. Label all the test booklets for the DAY 2 national/regional assessment so that each student has one test booklet allocated

110. After completing the steps above, prepare two types of packages of assessment materials: one for the TAs, and the other for the SCs.

Note to NPMs

There are three different scenarios for the adaptation about provision of pencils, erasers and pencil sharpeners:

Scenario 1: Students will bring their own pencils, erases and a pencil sharpener (this is the best option for hygiene reason).

Scenario 2: Each school will provide pencils, erases and a pencil sharpener for students and SCs will make necessary arrangements and provide them to the TA before the assessment session.

Scenario 3: NC will provide the stationery by including it in the TA package and TAs bring them to the assessment session.

Please remove this box before finalising the adaptation to this manual.

Package for Test Administrator

111. The package for TAs should include the following test materials for each participating school:

- Test booklets (one for each student according to the Student Tracking Form allocation). Note: The MILO and the national/regional assessment test booklets should be ordered according to the order students are listed on the Student Tracking Form.

- MILO Student Questionnaires (one for each student). Note: Student Questionnaires should be ordered according to the order students are listed on the Student Tracking Form.

- Student tracking forms

- Spare test booklets and Student Questionnaires (at least 5 each)

- Session Report Form (template included in the TA Manual)

- Materials Reception Form (template included in the TA Manual)

- Materials Return From (template included in the TA Manual)

- [Pencils, erasers, and a pencil sharpener (if necessary)]

- Nomination Letter for TA (if required)

- Blank labels for TAs to place on desks on the assessment day (one for each student plus 10 extra labels)

- Any other materials required.

Package for School Coordinator

112. The package for SCs should include the following test materials for each participating school:

- School Questionnaire

- Student tracking form

- Nomination Letter for SC (if required).

Distribute Assessment Material to TAs and SCs

113. NCs are responsible for printing and distributing final hard copies of the assessment materials 1week before the assessment day. The prepared packages can be distributed at TA Training Sessions and Information Sessions for SCs or sent via courier or collected from the NC. You might opt to distribute both packages to SC at the same time. However, considering the maintenance of security of the materials, it is preferable that test booklets and questionnaires will be sent directly to the TA.

114. A week before the assessment the TA should call the SC to discuss arrangements for the MILO administration.

115. The System Questionnaire should be completed online by a nominated educational authority in your country. You should prepare an information letter with login credentials and instructions how to complete this online questionnaire and send it to the relevant educational authority around the same time of the test administration.

Quality Monitoring

116. To ensure the integrity and high standards of the testing process, quality assurance procedures should be employed. Quality monitoring is one of the quality assurance procedures, and it involves the physical presence of a Quality Monitor at the selected schools. The Quality Monitor should observe and report whether test administration is taking place using standardised procedures. The Quality Monitor guidelines and forms are provided as Appendix 6.

117. It is recommended to organise at least 5% sampled school to be visited by the national QMs in your country (see Figure 8).

Standard 8.2

At least 5% school visits are conducted in each participating country to observe MILO test administration sessions. A range of different types of schools will be included in the sample for monitoring.

Figure 8: Technical Standards relevant for the Quality Monitoring

118. To support the Quality Monitoring NPMs should complete the following tasks:

- Recruit and nominate suitable candidates for the QM role based on the national requirements and context

- Chose a method to select schools that will be monitored

- Calculate a number of unannounced QM school visits based on the Technical Standards requirements

- Calculate a number of QMs needed

- Prepare a list of selected schools for each QM detailing the testing dates, address/location of school and the TA's name.

- Organise training for QMs or allow them to attend the TA training session.

- Provide QMs with the national versions of the SC and TA Manuals.

- Prepare nomination letters for Quality Monitors (if needed).

- Provide assistance to QMs to access the school ground on the assessment day, if required.

PHASE 3: TEST ADMINISTRATION

Overview

119. This section describes tasks directly associated with the preparations of the test administration.

120. Each participating country will administer the MILO Assessment to minimum 5000 students at the last year of the primary school in at approximately 250 sampled schools. Each student will complete one paper-based test booklet and questionnaire.

121. School principals from the sampled schools will complete the School Questionnaire. There is also the System Questionnaire to be completed online by the relevant educational authority.

122. Technical Standard related to the test administration are shown in Figure 9.

Standard 6.1

All MILO assessment sessions follow the procedures as specified in the TA manual, particularly the procedures that relate to:

- Test session timing
- Student tracking:
  - a STF is prepared for each sampled school administrating the MILO and the national/regional assessments
  - MILO testlets are distributed to students according to the order specified in the STF
- Maintaining the MILO assessment conditions.

Standard 6.2

TAs are trained in the field operations procedures outlined in the TA manual. TAs receive a copy of the TA manual prior to the MILO assessment session.

Standard 6.3

TAs read out the standard TA script prior to the students sitting the MILO assessment session.

Figure 9: Technical Standards relevant for the test administration

Key Documents

Area	Key Document
Quality Assurance	Technical Standards
	TA Training Package
Quality Monitoring	Quality Monitor Checklist
Field Operations - Test Administration	NPM Manual
	SC Manual
	TA Manual with the Test Administrator's Script (national version)

Checklist of Tasks

123. below outlines the different tasks that need to be completed by the NPM directly before, during and after the test administration.

Table 10: Checklist of the NPM tasks for the Phase 3: Test administration

Task	Task description	Suggested time prior to or after the assessment day	Done ✔
Before DAY 1 test administration			
1. Ensure reception of the assessment materials packages by TAs and SCs	• Ensure that all TAs and SCs have received/collected their respective Assessment Materials' packages. • Ensure that all TAs have prepared the additional materials that are not included in the TA package: TA Manual (national version), including the Script Student Tracking Form TA Notes on Student Questionnaire Items A watch, a clock or other timing device • Ensure that all TAs are familiar with the test administration procedures. • Ensure that all TAs will contact the SCs via phone to review assessment plans and ask SCs to confirm reception of the assessment material package from the NC.	[2] weeks before DAY 1 test administration [1] week before DAY 1 test administration	
During DAY 1 and DAY 2 test administration			
2. Provide support to SCs, TAs and QMs, if needed	• Ensure the NC staff is reachable during the test administration in case of urgent queries from TAs and QMs. • Coordinate activities of TAs and the national QMs (if applicable).	During DAY 1 and DAY 2 test administration [insert date]	

	• Continue liaising with schools.		
3. Monitor response rate	• Monitor student's response rates. • Monitor data collection of School Questionnaires and the System Questionnaire.	During DAY 1 and DAY 2 test administration [insert date]	

After DAY 2 test administration

4. Collect assessment materials and tracking information	• Coordinate with all TAs and collect all assessment materials (the MILO and the national/ regional assessment materials together) after DAY 2 test administration as soon as possible. They need to be stored at the NC or other secure location. • Organise follow-up sessions, if needed, based on the information above.	[Within 1] week after DAY 2 test administration	
5. Monitor return of assessment materials to the NC	• Receive and check all assessment material upon return to the NC. • Continue to monitor data collection in case of follow-up sessions. • Archive your assessment materials in a secure place.	[1-2] weeks after DAY 2 test administration	
6. Complete Data Management tasks	• Prepare materials for data entry into ACER Maple • Organise data entry and train data entry operators. • Enter tracking and response data into ACER Maple. • Submit your data to ACER. • Review your national data and analysis reports. • Be available during post-submission data processing.	[1-2] weeks after DAY 2 test administration At the time of test administration [1-4] weeks after DAY 2 test administration [4-8] weeks after data submission	

Test Administration Timing

124. The timing of the test administration of both MILO and the national/ regional assessments is as follows:

DAY 1

Part 1. First hour MILO test booklet (+introduction/practice)

Part 2. Second hour MILO test booklet

Part 3: 30-35 min questionnaire

DAY 2

Part 1: First hour national/regional test booklet (+introduction and practice if needed)

Part 2: Second hour national/regional test booklet (if required).

125. One test administration session means the time required for participants to complete one test booklet/questionnaire. For example, if participants sit 60 minutes to complete the first part of a test booklet, have a break of 5 minutes, and then sit another 60 minutes to complete the second part of the same test booklet, the entire test administration time is considered one session.

Receipt of Assessment Materials Package by TAs and SCs

126. Ensure that all TAs and SCs have received and collected their respective Assessment Materials' packages. Also ensure that all TAs have prepared the additional materials that are not included in the TA package, e.g., pencils, erasers, a pencil sharpener, a watch, a clock or other timing device.

Provide support to SCs, TAs and QMs

127. The coordination of the activities of TAs is a significant task that involves the scheduling of testing dates, the provision of contact information for each school, the maintenance of the security of testing materials while in the field and the secure collection and return of these materials. Depending on the number of TAs and the length of your testing period, the assigning of test dates to schools and the coordination of these activities may require substantial logistical and communication work.

128. TAs should be able to contact the NC before, during and after the test administration period. It is essential that the TA and SC inform you of any changes to testing dates, as these may affect the national quality monitoring activities.

Monitor Student Response Rates

129. The Technical Standards regarding response rates and the number of assessed students are important in achieving high-quality data. During the testing period you will need to develop and implement a procedure to monitor the student response rates, and the number of assessed students.

130. If the response rates are at risk of not meeting the standards, then extra resources or effort may be required to address this. Depending on your national context, to improve response rates you may involve upper-level authorities to encourage higher participation at the school level.

Organise Follow-up Sessions (if needed)

131. During the administration period NPMs need to monitor the response rates of all respondents on a regular basis to check whether they comply with the requirements given by the Technical Standards. If there is a risk the participation will not reach the required minimum, it's necessary to organise the follow-up administration sessions with students who were absent on the assessment day to reach the required student response rate or to follow up the principals and the relevant authority in case they didn't complete their questionnaires. In this case the NPM will need to contact the SC for the relevant school and ask him/her to organise the follow-up session for students or contact relevant principal. Then the NC will nominate a suitable date in cooperation with the SC and TA.

In order to determine if a follow-up session is needed, the NPM should calculate a response calculate a response rate for the session using the Worksheet for Calculating Response Rates. Response Rates.

132. Table 11 shows an example of determining if a follow-up session is needed, and a blank example is shown in Appendix 7.

Table 11: Worksheet for Calculating Response Rates (Example)

MILO School No.: ____ [23]

School Name: ___ [African Primary School] ___

STEP 1	On the Student Tracking Form, column "ATTENDANCE – MT", count the number of students who were coded "0." If you have more than one copy of the Student Tracking Form due to multiple sessions, count students coded "0" across all sessions. Enter the number in the table as the **STEP 1 RESULT**.	**STEP 1 RESULT**	Number of students who were coded "0" **[5]**
STEP 2	Is the number in **STEP 1** less than or equal to 1? Yes → No →	You do **NOT** need to arrange a follow-up session. The number of absent students is too small to arrange such a session. Go to **STEP 3**
STEP 3	On the Student Tracking Form, column "ATTENDANCE – MT", count the number of students who are coded "1." If you have more than one copy of the Student Tracking Form due to multiple sessions, count students coded "1" across all sessions. Enter the number in the table as the **STEP 3 RESULT**.	**STEP 3 RESULT**	Number of students with codes "1" **[15]**
STEP 4	On the Student Tracking Form, count the total number of students listed on the form. Enter the number in the table as the **STEP 4 RESULT**.	**STEP 4 RESULT**	Number of students listed on the Student Tracking Form **[20]**
STEP 5	Calculate: (**STEP 3 RESULT / STEP 4 RESULT**)*100 Calculate to 2 decimal places and round to the nearest whole number. For example, 84.50 rounds up to 85 and 84.49 rounds down to 84. Enter the number in the table as the **STEP 5 RESULT**.	**STEP 5 RESULT**	Percentage of students assessed **[75] %**
STEP 6	Is the number in **STEP 5** less than [80] %? No → Yes →	You do **NOT** need to arrange a follow-up session. You need to arrange a follow-up session.

Monitor Return of Assessment Materials to NC

133. Following the test administration, all materials must be accounted for and kept secure. It is very important that strict procedures be followed in receiving and returning materials.

134. TAs need to ensure that the MILO assessment material completed on DAY 1 is kept secure. TAs should ship materials back to the NC as soon as possible after the completion of test administration of the national/regional assessment on DAY 2 together with completed MILO assessment materials from DAY 1. Depending on the resources available and the time it takes to return assessment materials, consider engaging the support of additional staff working together to prepare for return of assessment materials from TAs.

135. In case of any breach of security such as a missing test booklet (including unused), it is essential that you take all possible steps to recover it immediately. General breaches of security or missing test booklets should also be reported as soon as possible.

136. Correct information on the Student Tracking Form greatly enhances the efficiency of the materials return procedures. Therefore, it is important to emphasise to the TAs that providing complete and accurate information on the STF is essential. It is also recommended that you ask TAs to package materials in a specific order specified in the TA Manual.

137. In addition, NC maintains School Questionnaire Tracking Form and School Participation Form dispatched together with ACER Maple and fill them on receipt of materials (one form for NC to track school participation and the receipt of School Questionnaire, see Appendix 3 and Appendix 4).

Data Management

- Data management tasks to be completed by the NC after the assessment:
    - Receive, check and prepare materials for data entry
    - Prepare equipment for data entry operators
    - Employ and train data entry operators
    - Update tracking data in ACER Maple
    - Enter the MILO assessment data (test and questionnaire responses)
    - Enter the national/regional response data
    - Track school participation
    - Submit the data to ACER
    - Participate in data cleaning.

138. Please refer to the Data Management Manual for more details.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Key Documents

Document Name	Description
SCHOOL SAMPLING	
Sample Preparation Guide	Guidelines for the sampling procedures, population definition and selection of test dates.
Survey weights and response rates overview paper	Description of the survey weights and response rates requirements.
Sampling Forms and Sampling Frame template	Description and purpose of sampling forms and sampling frame.
INSTRUMENT PREPARATION	
Frameworks	
Study Design	Description of the conceptual framework underlying the assessment of reading and mathematics.
Assessment blueprint	Description of the conceptual framework underlying the assessment design of reading and mathematics.
Contextual Framework	Description of the framework underlying the contextual questionnaires.
Adaptation Guidelines	Description of the procedures for questionnaires adaptation
Questionnaire Adaptation Spreadsheet (QAS) template	The central record of questionnaire national non-structural adaptations.
Questionnaire Structural Adaptation (QSA) template	The central record of questionnaire national non-structural adaptations.
Booklet Construction	
Test Construction Guidelines	Guidelines for construction of: a) standalone test booklets (MILO assessment on DAY 1) b) integrated test booklets (national/regional assessment on DAY 2) c) contextual questionnaires
FIELD OPERATIONS	
Test Administration	
National Project Manager (NPM) Manual	Description of the NPM's tasks, timeline of activities and phases of the project implementation.
School Coordinator (SC) Manual	Description of role and tasks of the SC.
Test Administrator (TA) Manual with the Test Administrator's Script (international version)	Description of role and tasks of the TA.
TA Notes on Student Questionnaire Items	Explanatory notes for Test Administrators to help students to complete items in the Student Questionnaire
DATA MANAGEMENT	
Data Management (DM) Manual	Description of the data management procedures and ACER Maple software for student sampling, data entry and data validation.

Document Name	Description
Student Sampling	
Population definition and sample design document	Description of the population definition and sample design requirements.
QUALITY ASSURANCE	
Technical Standards	Description of the technical standards for the collection of the data.
Workshop materials and training for the NPMs	Material package for training of the NPMs
Test Administrator (TA) training package	Material package for training of the TAs
QUALITY MONITORING	
Quality Monitor (QM) checklist	Checklist tasks of the Quality Monitor

Confidentiality agreement

COVID-19 MILO

I understand that the signing of this form is an acknowledgment of my professional responsibility to maintain complete integrity of security for this study.

I declare that I will not divulge any study information marked as confidential, or any trial materials, test materials, contents or results pertaining to the technical implementation of the assessment, to any person or organisation, unless I have prior written approval from the NPM. I understand that the above does not apply to information that is in the public domain.

I have read and accept the conditions as outlined above.

Name: _____

Institution: _____

Phone: _____

Number: _____

Email: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3: School Participation Form (SPF) example

COVID-19 MILO School Participation Form (SPF)

MILO School No.	Participation code	Comments

Participation Codes	
1	Participant
2	Refusal
3	Non-participation for other reasons (please specify, e.g., school fire or flood, teacher strike, conflict zone)
4	No eligible students
5	School closed (permanently)
7	Replacement school not contacted
9	School exclusion (specify type and number of eligible students)
11	School ineligible for other reasons (please specify)

Instructions

Please provide a participation code for **every** school listed.

Codes 3, 9, and 11 **require** comments.

Appendix 4: School Questionnaire Tracking Form (SQTF) example

COVID_19 MILO   **School Questionnaire Tracking Form**   **(SQTF)**

MILO School No.	School Principal ID	Receipt code	Comments

Participation Codes	
1	Returned
2	School refusal to participate
3	Non-participation for other reasons (please specify, e.g., school fire or flood, teacher strike, conflict zone)
4	No eligible students
5	School closed (permanently)
7	Replacement school not contacted
8	School ineligible for other reasons (please specify)
9	School exclusion (specify type and number of eligible students)
0	School questionnaire has not been returned for any other reason

Instructions

Please do **NOT** change **MILO School No**. and **School Principal ID** exported from ACER Maple.

Provide a participation code for **every** school listed.

Codes 3, 8, and 9 **require** comments.

Appendix 5: National Centre Work Plan (template)

Task	Task description	Suggested time prior to or after the assessment day	Done ✓
1. Establish a NC	• Identify NC staff and required resources • Submit NC team members' contact details to UIS and ACER	[11-12] weeks [10-11] weeks	
2. Establish security protocols	• Prepare Confidentiality Agreement • Have it signed by all NC staff • Return them to UIS	[9-10] weeks [8] weeks [8] weeks	
3. Attend key meetings	• Project management meetings with UIS and ACER (online, every week/fortnight as needed) • NPM training	Feb-Mar 2021/ [8-10] weeks 29 March 2021	
4. Prepare School Sampling forms and Sampling frame	• Prepare and submit all required Sampling Forms and Sampling Frame template with complete information. • Prepare School Participation Form (SPF) from the list of sampled schools	[7-8] weeks [5-6] weeks	
5. Review assessment material	• Review MILO test booklets and questionnaires, student tracking form and the Test Administrator's Script	[6-7] weeks	
6. Adapt questionnaire items	• Complete Questionnaire Adaptation Spreadsheet (QAS) and Questionnaire Structural Adaptation (QSA) templates, and submit to ACER • Develop the national versions of questionnaires and submit to ACER for checking	[6-7] weeks [6-7] weeks	
7. Undertake layout verification of assessment material	• Review layout and formatting of: a) MILO test booklets b) MILO questionnaires (StQ, ScQ, SQ) • Sign off the MILO test booklets and questionnaires • Submit to ACER the national/ regional assessment test booklets for the final optical check and configuration of the data management software (ACER Maple)	[5-6] weeks [6-7] weeks	

8. Adapt operational materials	• Adapt SC Manual and TA Manual and submit to ACER	[4-5] weeks	
9. Produce assessment materials	• Find a suitable printer (refer to the technical standards on printing)	[5-6] weeks	
	• Print the national/ regional assessment test booklets with required cover pages for MILO tracking purposes (School name, MILO School number and Student ID)	[5-6] weeks	
	• Print MILO test booklets, Student and School Questionnaires	[4-5] weeks	
10. Work with participating schools	• Identify SCs	[6-8] weeks	
	• Organise information session for SCs	[6-8] weeks	
	• Obtain List of Students (LST)	[6] weeks	
	• Schedule testing dates	[4] weeks	
11. Work with Data Manager	• Ensure student sampling and STF production	[4] weeks	
12. Attend the webinar on data management	• Identify participants for the webinar	[5-6] weeks	
	• Prepare equipment	[5-6] weeks	
	• Read provided material and prepare for the webinar	[5-6] weeks	
	•		
	• Train Data Administrators and DEOs	[4] weeks	
13. Complete data management tasks required before the assessment	• Prepare equipment for Data Administrators	[5] weeks	
	• Employ and train Data Administrators	[5] weeks	
	• Draw student sample using ACER Maple	[4-5] weeks	
	• Fill STF templates with sampled students data	[4] weeks	
14. Prepare all assessment materials for distribution	• Print student tracking forms and labels	[4] weeks	
	• Label test booklets and questionnaires	[4] weeks	
	• Prepare packages of assessment materials	[2-3] weeks	
	• Prepare and send the information letter with login details for completion of the online SQ by a nominated educational authority	[2-3] weeks	
	• Distribute the assessment materials with Student Tracking Forms to TAs or schools	[1] weeks	

15. Recruit and train TAs	• Identify and recruit TAs • Organise training session for TAs • Print TA materials (TA manual, TA Script, Student Tracking Forms, TA Notes on Student Questionnaire Items, Confidentiality Agreements)	[4-5] weeks [3-4] weeks [3-4] weeks	
16. Recruit and train national Quality Monitors (QMs)	• Identify and recruit national QMs • Organise information session for national QMs • Invite QMs to attend the training session for TAs	[4-5] weeks [3-4] weeks [3-4] weeks	
17. Ensure reception of the assessment materials packages by TAs and SCs	• Ensure that all TAs and SCs have received/collected their respective Assessment Materials' packages. • Ensure that all TAs have prepared the additional materials that are not included in the TA package: TA Manual (national version), including the Script Student Tracking Form TA Notes on Student Questionnaire Items A watch, a clock or other timing device • Ensure that all TAs are familiar with the test administration procedures. • Ensure that all TAs will contact the SCs via phone to review assessment plans and ask SCs to confirm reception of the assessment material package from the NC.	[2] weeks before DAY 1 test administration [1] week before DAY 1 test administration	
18. Provide support to SCs, TAs and QMs, if needed	• Ensure the NC staff is reachable during the test administration in case of urgent queries from TAs and QMs. • Coordinate activities of TAs and the national QMs (if applicable). • Continue liaising with schools.	During DAY 1 and DAY 2 test administration [insert date]	
19. Monitor response rate	• Monitor student's response rates. • Monitor data collection of School Questionnaires and the System Questionnaire.	During DAY 1 and DAY 2 test administration [insert date]	

20. Collect assessment materials and tracking information	• Coordinate with all TAs and collect all assessment materials (the MILO and the national/ regional assessment materials together) after DAY 2 test administration as soon as possible. They need to be stored at the NC or other secure location. • Organise follow-up sessions, if needed, based on the information above.	[Within 1] week after DAY 2 test administration	
21. Monitor return of assessment materials to the NC	• Receive and check all assessment material upon return to the NC. • Continue to monitor data collection in case of follow-up sessions. • Archive your assessment materials in a secure place.	[1-2] weeks after DAY 2 test administration]	
22. Complete Data Management tasks	• Prepare materials for data entry into ACER Maple. • Organise data entry and train data entry operators. • Enter tracking and response data into ACER Maple. • Submit your data to ACER. • Review your national data and analysis reports. • Be available during post-submission data processing.	[1-2] weeks after DAY 2 test administration At the time of test administration [1-4] weeks after DAY 2 test administration [4-8] weeks data submission	

Appendix 6: Quality Monitor Guidelines and Forms
National Quality Monitor Guidelines

Objective of Test Administration monitoring

Monitoring the implementation of the MILO test administration enables the identification of deviations from standard testing procedures, as well as any issues and challenges experienced within schools. These documented observations can then be used by the National Centre to reflect on field operating procedures, and to address identified issues for the data collection.

Quality Monitor role

The primary role of the national QM is to observe and document:

- the TA training, and
- the test administration procedures.

The core purpose of the QM is to visit a selection of schools participating in the MILO study to observe the test being administered, and document the extent to which testing procedures are implemented in accordance with the standardised test administration procedures. Schools will be selected for observation by the NC. This is an essential quality assurance mechanism for the data collection period, as these observations provide valuable information about the extent to which the agreed test administration procedures are being followed, and enable the identification of any irregularities that need to be addressed for the future assessments.

Required resources

The following resources are required to successfully undertake the QM role. These will be provided by the NC:

- COVID-19 MILO Confidentiality Agreement
- Observation schedule (schools will be selected by the NC)
- QM Guidelines (including the TA Training Observation Form and enough copies of the Data Collection Form for each school visit)
- TA Manual and SC Manual
- TA Script
- Travel to/from sampled schools
- Pen (or laptop)
- Watch/clock/phone

Quality Monitor tasks

Preparation

QMs should complete the following tasks prior to visiting the schools.

Review relevant materials

The first task is for QMs to read the QM Guidelines. This will enable QMs to become familiar with the overall purpose and design of MILO, the quality monitoring process, responsibilities of the QM, and the tools and forms the QM will use to undertake their work including:

- **A. Test Administration Observation Schedule**
- **B. Test Administrator Training Observation Form**
- **C. Data Collection Form**

Participate in QM training session

The QM training session will provide further detail on the role of the QM and process of the quality monitoring. At this training the QM will also:

- sign the Confidentiality Agreement
- receive details of the TA training
- receive details of school visits and travel arrangements

The QM training session will take place before the TA training.

Selection of schools

The NC will select the schools for observation and provide the following information to QMs:

- School testing dates/times
- School IDs
- School names, locations and contact details
- Names of TAs
- Names and contact details of SCs.

Attend TA training

QMs must attend the TA training to gain a more detailed understanding of testing procedures, receive any additional special instructions required to access the selected schools, and observe and document the TA training. The NPM will provide the details of the TA training.

At the TA training, QMs will:

- review the TA Manual, SC Manual, and the TA Script

- learn about country-specific procedures related to school protocol and test administration procedures; and

- review assessment materials including test and questionnaire materials.

The role of the QM at the TA training is to:

- become familiar with the testing procedures that TAs are required to learn in order to identify any deviations during the school visits; and

- document the training using the **TA Training Observation Form** (Section B).

The key aspects of the training to observe and document include:

- who conducted the training

- the activities and exercises included in the training

- the number of participants and duration of the training.

This information will be used to reflect on the TA training and identify opportunities for improving the training for the future assessments.

QMs should complete the **TA Training Observation Form** during the training, and send it to the NPM within 24 hours of the TA training.

Contact selected schools

QMs should contact the SC the week before the testing is scheduled. The TA should not be made aware of the QM visit in advance.

When contacting schools, QMs should:

- Introduce themselves and explain the role of QM;

- Seek confirmation of the date and time of the test session;

- Seek confirmation of the TA arrival time;

- Advise their planned arrival time (which should be just before the TA);

- Seek confirmation of required proof of identification or introduction letters for entry to school grounds; and

- Provide their contact details in case the school needs to notify them of last-minute changes (e.g., school closures on test day, emergencies).

School visits

Arriving at the school

When visiting schools, QMs must approach school staff, TAs and students diplomatically and politely.

QMs should arrive at the school just before the TA is scheduled to arrive (TAs are instructed to arrive at schools at least 1 hour before the start of the assessment). QMs can use this time to:

1. Introduce themselves to the SC

2. Explain the purpose of the school visit, emphasizing the importance of quality monitoring for improving field operations procedures

3. Provide assurance that names will not be recorded and the performance of the SC and TA will not be evaluated

4. Check if the school coordination tasks were clear and well understood, and if any challenges were experienced

5. Observe the preparatory activities

6. Locate the assessment room and select a discreet place to observe from where their presence won't be distracting

7. Introduce themselves to the TA upon their arrival and explain the purpose of the QM visit.

If multiple test sessions are conducted at the same time, QMs should choose one of the sessions and observe it from start to finish.

If the questionnaire session is conducted at a different time on the same day, QMs should stay and observe this session. If the questionnaire session is conducted on a different day, QMs do not need to observe this session.

Observing the assessment

The role of the QM during the assessment is to:

1. Passively observe the test administration; and

2. Document those observations using the Data Collection Form and referring to the TA Script and TA Manual.

During the test administration, QMs should:

1. Ensure their phones are turned off or on silent mode;

2. Remain silent throughout the entire test; and

3. Not take any photographs or video.

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The Observer Effect

The QM's role is to passively observe the study implementation. The QM role does not involve interjecting in the assessment. However, the presence of QMs during test administration may cause unintended consequences for the TA and participating students. For example, a TA may become nervous because they are being observed or students may be distracted by the presence of the QM.

When these unintended consequences of the QM presence impacts the behaviour of the TA and/or participating students, it is called the 'observer effect'. The above guidelines for monitoring the assessment help to minimise the observer effect and any impact the QM's presence may have on the test administration.

</div>

Complete Data Collection Forms

The most important aspect of the QM role is to document what happens during the assessment as completely as possible, including:

- how the forms are reviewed for accuracy and completeness
- preparation and distribution of the assessment materials
- how the TA records student attendance
- how closely the TA adheres to the TA Script (please only record major deviations that may impact how students respond to questions such as omissions, additions or paraphrasing the Script)
- how the TA responds to students' questions
- how accurately the session is timed
- student behaviour
- security and confidentiality
- aspects of the assessment environment that may negatively impact test conditions.

QMs should document their observations during the assessment using the Data Collection Form, using as much detail in the comments sections as necessary.

Follow-up Sessions

Where student attendance is low, the TA and SC will arrange a follow-up session at another time. If this is required, QMs should make a note if this in the Data Collection Form, but do not need to observe the follow-up session.

Return completed Data Collection Forms

After each school visit, the QM should review the Data Collection Form and ensure all sections of the form are completed clearly.

After all school visits have been conducted, the QM should return the Data Collection Forms to the NPM, and be available to respond to any queries from the NPM.

A. Test Administration Observation Schedule

Test Date and Start Time	MILO School Number	School Name	School address, city, state/province	Principal name	School phone/ email	School Coordinator name	School Coordinator phone/email	Test Administrator name

B. Test Administrator Training Observation Form

Please use this form to record your details and observations about the MILO Test Administrator (TA) training.

QM name:

TA training date(s):

TA training location (name of the institution (e.g., National Centre) and region/city:

1. **How many days was the TA training delivered over? _____ days**

2. **How many days did you attend the TA training? _____ days**

3. **How long was the TA training each day? _____ hours**

4. **How many TAs participated in the training? _____ TAs**

5. **Was the TA training held in-person?**

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

If no, please describe how the training was delivered (e.g., webinar, teleconference):

6. **Who delivered the TA training? Please provide the role title of each training instructor/facilitator (e.g., National Project Manager, National Centre team members):**

7. **Which topics were covered in the TA training? Please list each topic covered (e.g., introduction to MILO, confidentiality, TA Script):**

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8. Did the TA training include exercises (e.g., simulations, worksheets)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please describe the exercises and the topic(s) covered by each exercise:

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9. Which approaches were used to deliver the training (e.g., PowerPoint, videos, group activities, worksheets, simulations)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please list the tools used:

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10. Were participants assessed on their knowledge of the test administration procedures?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please describe how participants were assessed:

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11. Were any photos or videos taken of any assessment materials or confidential presentation/training material by participants?

☐ Yes
☐ No

C. Data Collection Form

This form is used by the MILO Quality Monitor (QM) to document their observations of **the MILO assessment on DAY 1**. This includes preparing for, administering and concluding the assessment.

When observing the test administration and completing this form, QMs should closely refer to the following materials which detail the standardised procedures:
- Test Administrator (TA) Manual

- School Coordinator (SC) Manual

- TA Script

Preparing for the assessment

1. **Did the TA report to the school at least 1 hour before the assessment?**

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   ☐ Did not observe

If no, how long before the assessment did the TA report to the school? _____minutes

2. **Did the TA meet with the SC before the test to review the Student Tracking Form (STF)?**

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   ☐ Did not observe

3. **Did the TA update the STF?**

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   ☐ N/A (no changes required on the STF)
   ☐ Did not observe

4. **In addition to the TA, were there any observers present during the session?**

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

If yes:

    a) How many? _____observers

    b) What was their role? _____

    c) Did they stay for the entire duration of the session or only parts of the session?

☐ The entire duration of the session
☐ Parts of the session

   d) If the observers stayed for parts of the session, please describe which parts:

5.   **Did all observers sign a Confidentiality Agreement?**

☐ Yes   (all observers signed a Confidentiality Agreement)
☐ No (not all observers signed a Confidentiality Agreement)
☐ N/A (no observers)

6.   **Did the TA have all required materials for students (e.g., sufficient number of test booklets and questionnaires, pencils, erasers)?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

7.   **Were the test booklets distributed before the students arrived?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

8.   **Was the assessment room suitable for the test session (e.g., were there enough tables and chairs for students)?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

If no, please describe the issue/s and how students were impacted:

9.   **Did the TA cover or remove all displayed materials that may have assisted students to answer test questions (e.g., posters, dictionaries etc.)?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

If no, please describe the materials on display:

10. **Were all required testing materials ready before students arrived?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

If no, please describe:

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Conducting the assessment

QMs should follow the TA Script and instructions closely, and document any significant deviations that may impact how the students respond to questions.

MILO Testlet Session Part 1and Part 2

11. **Did the TA confirm that sampled students were in the correct room?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

If no, please describe:

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12. **Were any challenges experienced when distributing the test booklets?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, please describe the issue/s and how the TA responded:

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13. Did the test session begin on time?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If no, what time did the test session begin? _____ am/pm

14. Did the TA read the TA Script for the test session exactly as it is written?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If no, please describe any significant additions, deletions or paraphrasing of the TA Script:

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15. Did any students refuse to participate in the test after the test session began?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, please describe why, if known:

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If yes, did the TA collect the materials and record the incident on the STF?

☐ Yes
☐ No

16. Did any students leave the test room during the test session?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, please describe why, if known:

If yes, did the TA record this on the STF?

☐ Yes
☐ No

17. Did the students follow the test instructions?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If no, please provide details and describe the TA's response:

18. Did the TA assist any students with answering the test questions?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, please describe:

19. Did the TA time the test session correctly?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If no, how long was the session? _____minutes

20. Did students comply with the session timing?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, please provide details and describe the TA's response:

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21. Did students work independently?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, please provide details and describe the TA's response:

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22. Were any students disruptive during the assessment?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please provide details and describe the TA's response:

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23. Did you notice any students cheat during the assessment?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please provide details and describe the TA's response:

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24. Did any unauthorised people view the test items at any time?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please describe who viewed the test and the TA's response:

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25. Did the TA collect and count all test booklets before dismissing the students?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, please describe what happened at the end of the test session:

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MILO Questionnaire Session (Part 3)

26. Did the TA read the TA Script for the questionnaire session exactly as it is written?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, please describe any significant additions, deletions or paraphrasing of the TA Script:

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27. Did the TA answer any questions about the questionnaire items appropriately, using the TA notes for Student Questionnaire Items?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ N/A (no questions were asked)

If no, please describe:

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28. Did students follow the questionnaire instructions?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, please provide details and describe the TA's response:

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29. Were any students disruptive during the questionnaire session?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please provide details and describe the TA's response:

30. Did any unauthorised people view students' responses to the questionnaire?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please provide details and describe the TA's response:

31. Did the TA collect and count all questionnaires before dismissing the students?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, please describe what happened at the end of the questionnaire session:

Concluding the assessment

32. Were any gifts/presents given to the students after they completed the assessment?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please provide details of the incentives:

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33.   Did the TA review the STF to ensure all information was complete?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, please provide details:

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34.   Did the TA review the Session Report Form to ensure all information was complete?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, please provide details:

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35.   Did the TA organise the assessment materials and forms correctly and securely in the return box?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, please provide details:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; min-height: 200px;"></div>

Security and confidentiality

36. Did the TA leave any secure material unattended at any stage?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Please describe:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; min-height: 200px;"></div>

37. **Did you observe any security or confidentiality breaches of the assessment** material?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Please describe:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; min-height: 200px;"></div>

General observations

38. Please describe if there were any disruptions during the assessment and how the TA responded (e.g., fire alarm):

<div style="border: 1px solid black; min-height: 150px;"></div>

39. **Please provide any additional comments on the contribution of the TA:**

40. **Please provide any additional comments on the contribution of the SC and their involvement with the assessment:**

41. **Please provide any additional comments or recommendations for improving the MILO test administration processes based on your observations:**

Appendix 7: Worksheet for Calculating Response Rates (template)

| MILO School No.: _____ |
| School Name: _____ |

STEP 1	On the Student Tracking Form, column "ATTENDANCE – MT", count the number of students who were coded "0." If you have more than one copy of the Student Tracking Form due to multiple sessions, count students coded "0" across all sessions. Enter the number in the table as the **STEP 1 RESULT**.	**STEP 1 RESULT** — Number of students who were coded "0" **[ ]**
STEP 2	Is the number in **STEP 1** less than or equal to 1? Yes →	You do **NOT** need to arrange a follow-up session. The number of absent students is too small to arrange such a session.
	No →	Go to **STEP 3**
STEP 3	On the Student Tracking Form, column "ATTENDANCE – MT", count the number of students who are coded "1." If you have more than one copy of the Student Tracking Form due to multiple sessions, count students coded "1" across all sessions. Enter the number in the table as the **STEP 3 RESULT**.	**STEP 3 RESULT** — Number of students with codes "1" **[ ]**
STEP 4	On the Student Tracking Form, count the total number of students listed on the form. Enter the number in the table as the **STEP 4 RESULT**.	**STEP 4 RESULT** — Number of students listed on the Student Tracking Form **[ ]**
STEP 5	Calculate: (**STEP 3 RESULT / STEP 4 RESULT**)*100 Calculate to 2 decimal places and round to the nearest whole number. For example, 84.50 rounds up to 85 and 84.49 rounds down to 84. Enter the number in the table as the **STEP 5 RESULT**.	**STEP 5 RESULT** — Percentage of students assessed **[ ] %**
STEP 6	Is the number in **STEP 5** less than [80] %? No →	You do **NOT** need to arrange a follow-up session.
	Yes →	You need to arrange a follow-up session.