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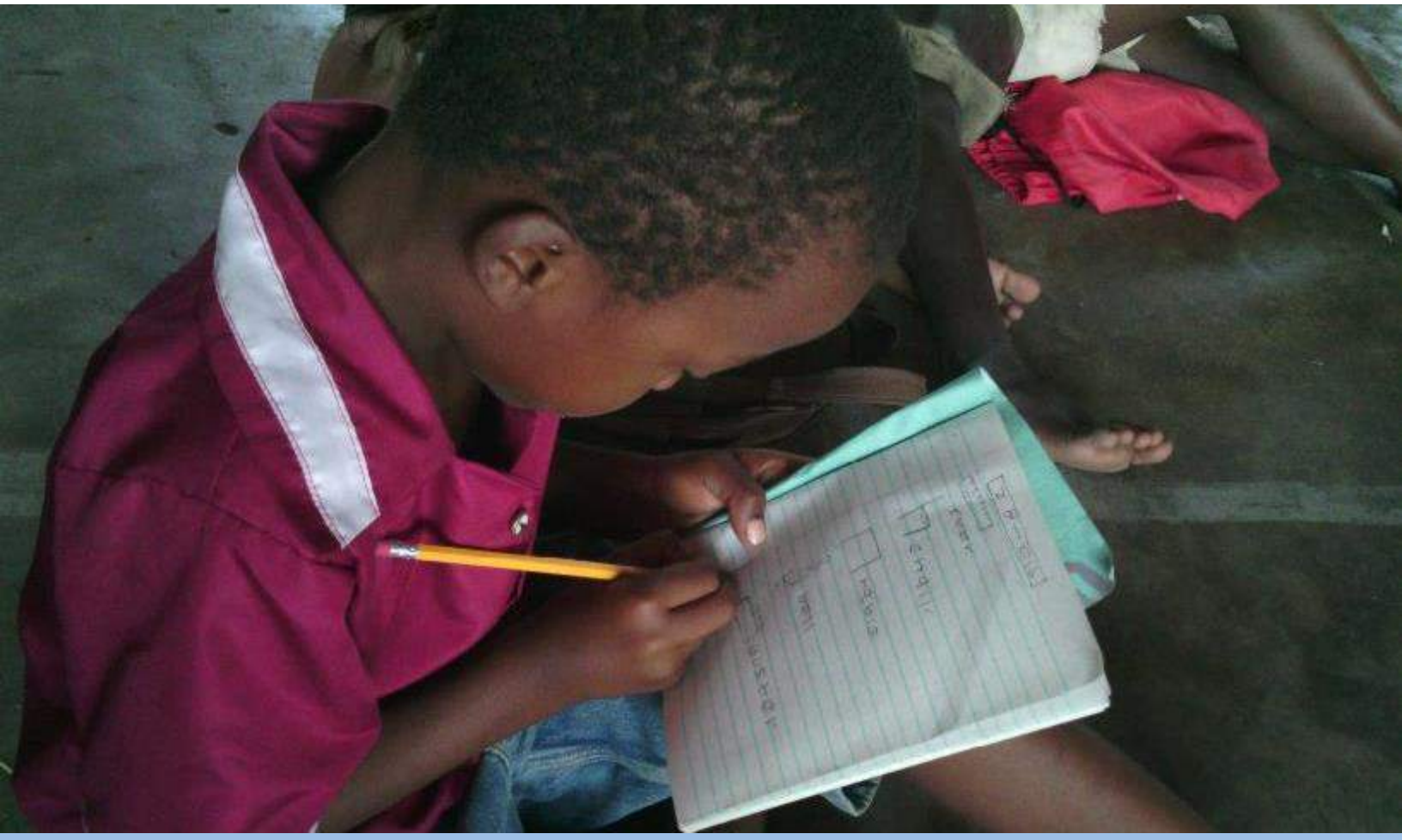

EVALUATION

Performance Evaluation of the USAID/Malawi Early Grade Reading Activity (EGRA)

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The core evaluators included: Peter M. Jere, Janet K. Orr and Jennifer Bisgard from Khulisa Management Services.

This report represents a collective effort and incorporates opinions and observations of a large community of individuals. To all who are committed to improving the quality of reading among children in Malawi, we offer these observations, analysis, and recommendations in the confidence that further progress will be realized through collective efforts.

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ACRONYMS

ADC	Area Development Committee
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BPG	Brattle Publishing Group
BTG	Blue Tree Group
CBAM	Concerns Based Adoption Model
CBE	Complementary Basic Education
CDA	Community Development Assistant
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CI	Collective Impact
COP	Country Operating Plan
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CRECCOM	Creative Centre for Community Mobilization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DCDO	District Community Development Officers
DCM	District Community Mobilization Officer
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DEM	District Education Manager
DEP	Department of Education Planning
DfID	UK Department for International Development
DGVP	Disability, Gender, and Vulnerable Populations Specialist
DIAS	Department of Inspection and Advisory Services
DSNE	Department of Special Needs Education
DTED	Department of Teacher Education and Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development

EGRA	Early Grade Reading Activity
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
ESIP	Education Sector Implementation Plan
EU	European Union
FAWEMA	Forum for African Women Educationists in Malawi
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FY	Fiscal Year
GIS	Geographic Information System
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation)
GUC	Grants Under Contract
IEP	Individual Education Plans
IPTE	Initial Primary Teacher Education
JICA	Japan International Co-operation Agency
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAT	Learner Assessment Tool
LCD	Local Capacity Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MaK	*Maziko a Kuwerenga*
MANEB	Malawi National Examination Board
MIE	Malawi Institute of Education
MLA	Monitoring and Learning Achievement
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MOGCDSW	Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability, and Social Welfare
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTPDS	Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support Activity
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NLS	National Library Service
NRS	National Reading Strategy

OAI	O'Brien and Associates International
ODK	Open Data Kit
ODL	Open Distance Learning
PCR	Primary Student to Classroom Ratio
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
PQTR	Pupil Qualified Teacher Ratio
PSIP	Primary School Improvement Program
PSLCE	Primary School Leaning Certificate of Education
PT	Permanent Teacher
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
RFTOP	Request for Task Order Proposal
RTI	Research Triangle International
SACMEQ	Southern and East African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SEGRA	Strengthening Early Grade Reading Activity (USAID with the Forum for African Women Educationalist Malawi -- FAWEMA)
SEGRIM	Strengthening Early Grade Reading in Malawi (USAID with the Malawi Institute of Education)
SHED	Shire Highlands Education Division
SMC	School Management Committee
SNE	Special Needs Education
TA	Technical Assistance
TA	Teacher Assistant
TDC	Teacher Development Center
TEVET	Technical and Vocational Education
TfD	Theatre for Development
TLM	Teaching and Learning Materials
TOI	Training of Implementers

TOT	Trainer of Trainers
TTC	Teacher Training College
TWG	Technical Working Groups
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VCRF	Volunteer Community Reading Facilitator
VDC	Village Development Committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The purpose of this performance evaluation is to examine the process and performance of the Early Grade Reading Activity (EGRA) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Malawi.

The evaluation responds to four questions:

1. How effective is the EGRA's approach toward achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary school students in Malawi?
2. How can the EGRA design, management, and execution become more efficient toward achieving program goals?
3. What are the key factors needed to take the EGRA to a national scale and ensure sustainability?
4. Where, how and to what extent have the EGRA's components been adopted/adapted without USAID assistance?

By focusing on changes (anticipated and unanticipated), the evaluation provides:

- Recommendations on how to address capacity gaps in order for the Government of Malawi to take over this activity as well as advise any course corrections necessary to achieve the EGRA's stated goals.
- An indication of EGRA's effectiveness in achieving outputs and outcomes and detail the effectiveness of program elements, while explaining why this is the case.

These results will aid in determining whether the Activity should be 'scaled-up' and which program components are sustainable.

ACTIVITY BACKGROUND

The USAID/Malawi Early Grade Reading Activity (EGRA), is a firm-fixed-price, three-year, four-month contract that was awarded to RTI International on June 17, 2013 and ends on October 16, 2016. It has a ceiling of $23,992,906. It is currently the flagship education activity for USAID/Malawi. It is designed to provide technical assistance to the MoEST to improve reading skills of Malawian students in Standards 1-3.

EGRA emphasizes deepening the capacity to effectively provide reading instruction in Standards 1 to 3 and introduces a community engagement component to support early grade reading. The main activity interventions are grouped into four component areas:

Component 1: Provide Quality Reading Instruction for Early Grade Students

Component 2: Provision of Teaching and Learning Materials for Reading

Component 3: Increasing Parental and Community Engagement to Support Reading

Component 4: Improving Policy Environment to Support Early Grade Reading

The following are program requirements, crosscutting issues and USAID/Malawi's integration efforts.

Monitoring and Evaluation and Crosscutting Issues

- Local Capacity Development
- Students with Special Needs/Learning Disabilities

- Grants under Contract (GUCs)
- Gender Equity
- Geographic Coverage
- Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)

Finally, EGRA is expected to contribute to integration within USAID/Malawi's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS).

These four components are implemented by RTI International and its five subcontractors – the local Malawian NGO, the Creative Center for Community Mobilization (CRECCOM), Brattle Publishing Group (BPG), Perkins International, blueTree Group (bTG), and O'Brien and Associates International (OAI).

EVALUATION DESIGN, METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

This evaluation was conducted by a team of three evaluators and eight research assistants over a five-month period (September 2014 to January 2015). The evaluation utilized a non-experimental design using a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analyses, including:

- Document and data review of activity documents and reports, donor and government reports and available RTI data (up to December 2014) listed in Annex 9.
- Eighty-three Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with RTI and subcontractor staff, the MoEST at the central, district and zonal levels, Malawi Institute of Education (MIE), USAID/Malawi, education Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and other donors/ stakeholders.
- School based fieldwork where research assistants conducted 171 classroom observations at 55 EGRA Treatment Schools and 26 Control schools (including two Special Needs Education (SNE) schools). They also interviewed teachers, head teachers, parents and community members. Data was captured on smart phones using Open Data Kit (ODK), a free and open source software based tool developed by the University of Washington specifically for use on Android smart devices.

Limitations of the evaluation included the sample size, generalizability and unavailability of some targeted respondents.

FINDINGS

Evaluation Question 1: How effective is the EGRA's approach toward achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary school students in Malawi?

The EGRA has effectively changed reading instruction in Standard 1-3 classes in Malawi in the 11 targeted education districts. In those schools, almost all (95%) teachers stated they have training to teach reading.

Evidence that the students are reading, showcased in competitions, was reported to be highly motivating for teachers, parents, and students. The Braille Cup and reading fairs are highly successful and inspiring for all involved. Overall, motivation is high because:

- Teacher confidence is raised as their students perform well.
- Parents are proud of their children's ability to read and are encouraged to ensure regular practice at home and at reading centers.
- Head teachers, chiefs and other community members are proud of the academic performance at their local schools.
- Siblings and parents are increasing their own reading skills through interactions with Standard 1 EGRA students.

Other motivational factors towards improved reading include:

1. Speedy achievement of reading outcomes among those in Standards 1-3 evidenced by improved reading scores on indicative termly assessments conducted in a sample of schools in each district.
2. Building the capacity of parents and volunteers to support reading centers and their children.
3. Implementation of reading fairs has exposed communities and parents to benefits of early grade reading.
4. Building the capacity of primary school teachers to support early grade instruction for children.
5. Improved access to teaching and learning materials although the expected levels of achievement are yet to be fully realized.
6. Improved speed of delivery of feedback of assessment results to inform decision making among actors including schools.

Evaluation Question 2: How can the EGRA design, management, and execution become more efficient toward achieving program goals?

EGRA provides impressive statistics on its reach as of September 30, 2014.[1] This performance evaluation focuses on Cohort A beneficiaries.

[1] Cohort A statistics reported in RTI Annual Report submitted to USAID/Malawi on Oct. 31, 2014. Cohort B statistics provided by EGRA Chief of Party via email on January 18, 2015.

Table 1: Overall EGRA Reach

	Male	Female	Total Students	Schools	Teachers/ Heads
Cohort A: **since 9/2013**	**294,309**	**279,343**	**573,652**	**1,188**	**10,811**
Cohort B: **since 9/2014**	**104,486**	**103,308**	**204,794**	**407**	**2,808**
Total	**398,795**	**382,651**	**778,446**	**1,595**	**13,619**

The design of EGRA/Malawi includes systematic implementation of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in-service teacher training based at the district and zonal levels, and CPD is effectively managed and executed. Strategies taught during CPD were observed in most Treatment Standard 1-3 classes, and in some control schools. Reinforcement of CPD taught strategies can be strengthened by mentoring and coaching but often scarce transport at the District and Zonal level (insufficient vehicles and motorcycles) reduces district and zonal staff effectiveness. A reading culture can be engendered by strengthening the parent/community component through support to capacitate Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators (VCRFs), reading fairs and reading centers.

EGRA Implementation has led to the increase in Chichewa reading instruction towards the one hour goal in primary classes in intervention schools. In observed treatment schools, the average reading class is 43 minutes, including 55 minutes in Standard 1 classes. The evaluators also observed more reading time in non-treatment schools. At the policy level, the evaluation observed that the one hour extension for Chichewa reading instruction was changed by donor engagement with MoEST.

The following chart summarizes and rates the performance in each component in response to evaluation questions 1 and 2:

KEY		Adequate		Balanced but could improve		Concerns	?	Outstanding questions

Table 2: Overall Conclusions to Questions 1 and 2

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Quality Reading Instruction		Reading instruction has improved and spread; implementation fidelity is uneven, but largely positive. EGRA, following on from the Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS), uses the extra hour added in intervention schools to demonstrate effective reading instruction.
Teaching and Learning Materials		Progress is slower than expected, but there is greater Malawian ownership of materials developed together with MIE and MoEST. The paper tax means that it is cheaper to print and ship materials from overseas, and this causes delays of several months.
Parental/ Community Engagement		Parental/community engagement is present, but not reaching its potential. Volunteers/parents are frustrated by the lack of training at the reading centers.
Improving Policy Environment		Overall, the Malawian government has adopted the EGRA approach in Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP) II and in the National Reading Strategy (NRS).
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)		M&E systems are good, but only serve the EGRA intervention. EGRA needs to build feedback loops and improve the provision of LAT and other data to schools, districts and government.
Local Capacity Development		The lack of local capacity development of CRECCOM impacts on the parental/community engagement component and, more importantly, on the long term sustainability of EGRA. RTI is currently working with CRECCOM to build their organizational capacity to address this gap.
Students with SNE		All respondents indicated increased awareness and knowledge on how to serve students with SNE, but this is a first step on a long journey.
Grants under Contract (GUC)		GUCs are supposed to reward improved reading performance, but performance data is unavailable, thus GUCs are being used to reward schools that 1) can fill out the forms and 2) who have a good idea.
Gender Equity		Respondents stated, and observations showed, high levels of gender equity.

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Geographic Coverage		EGRA is working in identified districts and has strong relationships with districts and zones. Co-location with other USAID programs is evident.
Public Private Partnerships (PPP)		While over 25 private sector enterprises have been identified and indicated willingness for more dialogue, any PPP successes are likely to be once off without any element of sustainability, as there is no Government of Malawi champion or process.
Contribute to USAID Integration		The USAID integration process recently began and RTI has developed an integration work plan, for example using Malaria messages in EGRA supported materials and experimenting with mobile money to reimburse teachers for transport costs.

Evaluation Question 3: What are the key factors needed to take the EGRA to a national scale and ensure sustainability?

ESIP II and the NRS are moving EGRA from experimental status to EGRA as a model for the mainstream MoEST Basic Education Program, thereby transitioning the EGRA instructional approach to national scale. USAID support of MoEST during this shift is essential for sustainability and coordination.

As stated by numerous key informants, major challenges to EGRA implementation are large class sizes (high student/teacher ratios), limited resources and high teacher mobility/transfers. In addition, the following statement from the USAID Study on Student Repetition and Attrition in Malawi was reemphasized repeatedly: "diverse community level factors contribute to repetition and attrition."[2] In the future, integration of the EGRA approach into primary school pre-service teacher training will ensure that more teachers are exposed to the approach, and therefore improve reading instruction to support scale up and sustainability efforts.

The fact that most parents do not get concerned, or upset, when their children move on to higher classes, and they still cannot read, highlights a much deeper problem. This challenge needs to be addressed in the home environment: parents and care givers need to be involved in their child's education to promote an improved early grade reading culture that encourages learning and high expectations for reading achievement. Strengthening EGRA's Parent/ Community component is therefore essential.

A print-rich environment supports students learning to read. Only a few parents had books at home; pupils are rarely allowed to take books home, and, currently, the volunteers running EGRA supported "reading centers" have yet to be trained. The reading centers lack reading materials—some enterprising schools have ensured old school textbooks are provided to the centers but overall books are scarce in Malawi. The policy challenge is to reduce the tax on paper, which, according to RTI subcontractor blueTree, is the major constraint on the local publishing industry.

[2] Report on the Study on Student Repetition and Attrition in Malawi, USAID, July 2014.

PPPs are a potential source of materials, but are structured as once-off donations. For PPPs to be sustainable, a MoEST champion is needed to nurture the PPP relationships. Finding alternative ways to source funding and materials should also be a priority, perhaps through a social media strategy. EGRA's lack of a social media strategy reduces public and diaspora opportunities to contribute through crowd sourcing funding and book donations.

Evaluation Question 4: Where, how and to what extent have the EGRA's components been adopted/adapted without USAID assistance?

Instructional materials developed for Standard 1 and 2 by EGRA are "owned" by MoEST and MIE. The materials and their theoretical foundation are integral to the recently approved MoEST 2014 NRS. The amalgamation of the EGRA strategy and materials is a strong adoption indicator.

Spillover effects from treatment to control schools is evident. The majority (87%) of the treatment classes and, 44% of the control schools observed are using scripted lessons. Control schools teachers that use scripted lessons indicated that they had transferred from an EGRA school, participated in previous MTPDS training or learned from a colleague. Teachers find the EGRA approach successful, especially the phonemic awareness and phonics as they fit very well with Chichewa, as a syllabic Bantu based language. Teachers are likely to use effective instructional resources if they are made available.

CONCLUSIONS

ESIP II and the 2014 MoEST NRS institutionalizes EGRA's approach. With the expanded use of the EGRA design, the funding of Strengthening Early Grade Reading in Malawi (SEGRIM) and other comparable EGRA-like implementing partners on the horizon, MoEST and USAID must closely monitor the integrity of the design, management and execution to achieve activity goals.

Although assessment is a central feature of the EGRA model, the feedback of the assessment results conducted by RTI three times a year are not reaching the schools, zones or districts in a timely manner. While this assessment data has been used to guide activity implementation and identify well-performing schools, broader and more timely dissemination of results to the MoEST's district personnel could increase the use and relevance of assessment for improved classroom instruction. This assessment data could be used to guide activity implementation, improve class instruction or reward schools for better performance. Although the mini-LAT is being conducted as part of the teacher coaching efforts, all students are not being assessed. Class wide assessment, which would provide teachers and parents with feedback on acquired learning, is not being conducted in classes following reading lessons.

While there are signs of increased parental involvement in promoting reading, the KII and FGD data revealed that the culture of reading to children remains weak. Parents who do not read to children cited reasons such as their own low levels of literacy leading to a fear of confusing their children; lack of free time, and insufficient access to books. This issue is compounded by head teachers' hesitancy to release books to young students fearing potential damage or loss.

While print is becoming more available in the classroom with instructional materials, posters, word cards and other books, teachers, district officials and parents all agree that more books and other printed material are still needed.

Not all Standard 2 Chichewa instructional materials and equipment were delivered prior to the 2014/2015 school year. Delays occurred due to the need to collaboratively develop the materials with MoEST and MIE, printing and shipping delays for the allotment procured from India, and the need to obtain more quotes for letter cards. These delays have been recognized by USAID and the EGRA Annual Work Plan was adjusted. The current tax on paper inhibits the development of a local publishing industry, whereas no duties are leveraged on imported books. This adversely affects printing and the development of a local publishing industry. The importation process often leads to delays. Dissatisfaction with EGRA was expressed only in relation to shortage of books and lack of training for reading center volunteers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are recommendations on how to address capacity gaps in order for the Government of Malawi to take over this activity, and advice for any course corrections necessary to achieve the EGRA's stated goals.

General Recommendations for USAID

- View EGRA as a "model/approach" for the mainstream MoEST Basic Education Program to implement nationally.
- Continue the detailed consultation processes with MIE and MoEST. Working together may delay deliverables (such as TLM completion). Money, though important, will not solve all education related challenges facing EGRA.
- Consider additional ways in which the EGRA approach can be embedded at MoEST to increase the systematic implementation by all TWGs with active support of RTI staff for the duration of contract implementation.
- Based on the existence of a spillover effect from MTPDS and EGRA to control schools, it would be beneficial to conduct CPD across the country during the activity period.
- Encourage the development of CPD points for teachers to ensure attendance at EGRA and other CPD sessions is recognized and leads to quality teacher recognition.
- Support the integration of the EGRA approach into pre-service training, and therefore improve reading instruction to support scale up and sustainability efforts.
- Strengthen the parent/community component to stimulate a reading culture through support to Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators (VCRFs), reading fairs and reading centers.
- Promote implementation consistency as the EGRA intervention expands to all 34 districts.
- Support innovation and creativity as the hallmark of the EGRA intervention to address teething challenges; an example is to demonstrate that mobile money works as a solution for reimbursing expenses to teachers at workshops.
- Localize LAT assessment scoring and analysis to improve efficiency of feedback and utilization of results by schools and districts—this will contribute to measuring ESIP II. Since LAT is used to sample student progress at schools, the District Offices could centralize scoring and analysis for district and zonal instructional decision making and planning of future CPD.
- Strengthen teacher knowledge and use of assessment techniques in classes following reading lessons to provide teachers with feedback on acquired learning. Large class assessment does not require a paper and pencil but rather a demonstration of learning, such as "hands/stand up" when you hear a specified sound /th/ in this sentence.
- Strengthen feedback loops of all data, including feedback to EMIS.
- Redesign PPPs and GUCs activities. PPPs should be facilitated with a government champion; GUCs will work better if LATs are implemented at zone or school level and can be used as evidence of improved reading performance.

In addition, the evaluation team makes the following specific recommendations:

One of the priority focus areas of the EGRA intervention should be the strengthening of the parental and community engagement in order to achieve scalability and sustainability of the program. EGRA needs to capitalize on the prevailing high parent and community demand for early grade reading among their children by ensuring that the volunteers and local leaders include decentralization structures that

are well supported in terms of capacity building to enhance efficiency, scalability and sustainability of the intervention. The role of the sub-contractor CRECCOM is critical in this regard. There is a need to urgently address the outstanding reconciliation issues that affected the funding flows to CRECCOM coupled with the appropriate financial management capacity building. It is encouraging that RTI is currently working with CRECCOM to build their organizational capacity to address this gap, and hopefully this will help address this issue.

The lack of planned training for community volunteers is dampening enthusiasm and motivation. Volunteer teachers have not been trained as planned and communicated during EGRA community sensitization meetings. Some of the volunteers are demotivated and have stopped working as a result. Training of the community volunteers should be considered an immediate priority. Furthermore, the linkage of EGRA to the decentralization structures such as Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Area Development Committees (ADCs) should be strengthened as one way of achieving institutionalization at the community level and to promote sustainability through "Education by Public Action."

MoEST should assume the role of the "catalyst" as EGRA has done, stated a key informant. In this case a "catalyst" is an organization that keeps its product up front in the eyes of potential users. That "catalyst" is also controlling quality of the disseminated product to assure future opportunities. As other contractors and NGOs begin to expand the implementation of the NRS in the remaining 22 districts, it is essential to maintain a consistent message and system of operations by all implementers to assure the quality and integrity of reading interventions.

EVALUATION PURPOSE & EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Khulisa Management Services (Khulisa) was contracted by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) /Malawi to undertake a Performance Evaluation of the Early Grade Reading Activity (EGRA) to date. This performance evaluation addresses whether EGRA is meeting the stated objectives, and provides a detailed analysis of major accomplishments/ weaknesses for each component of the activity, including the crosscutting issues. The evaluation will provide USAID and the activity implementer with data and recommendations for making mid-activity course corrections and will help the Mission forecast the results that are likely to be achieved by the completion date. Furthermore, the evaluation provides information to inform mission strategic processes, activity prioritization and future early grade reading designs. Users of the evaluation results include the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), the USAID/Malawi Education Office, other USAID Missions, USAID/Washington, the EGRA implementing partner, RTI International, and international donors that support similar reading programs.

USAID/Malawi requires this performance evaluation to guide the activity as it moves forward. The evaluation responds to the following questions:

1. How effective is the EGRA's approach toward achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary school students in Malawi?
2. How can the EGRA design, management, and execution become more efficient toward achieving program goals?
3. What are the key factors needed to take the EGRA to a national scale and ensure sustainability?
4. Where, how and to what extent have the EGRA's components been adopted/adapted without USAID assistance?

The evaluation aims to identify capacity gaps in order for the Government of Malawi to take over EGRA as well as advise any course corrections necessary to achieve the EGRA's stated goals. It also provides an indication and explanation of EGRA's effectiveness in achieving outputs, outcomes and details the effectiveness of program elements.

The evaluation must:

- Identify any implementation challenges, unmet needs, and/or unintended consequences or impacts of the EGRA, particularly focusing on changes related to unanticipated changes in the host country environment;
- Provide a better understanding of the progress made by each component of the EGRA on such issues as relevance, impact, scalability, sustainability and cost-effectiveness;
- Confirm the validity of the overall – and component-specific – development hypotheses or critical assumptions underlying the USAID/Malawi's education strategy and the how the EGRA was designed, funded and implemented to make the strategy operational;
- Evaluate how each activity component is progressing toward the overall objectives as described in the EGRA Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Results Framework;
- Examine the demand-side impacts of the activity and determine if and how aspects of the EGRA have been adopted/adapted outside of regular activity implementation;
- Provide recommendations for any course corrections necessary to achieve the EGRA's stated goals, as well as recommendations related to scale-up and sustainability; and
- Provide recommendations on how to address capacity gaps in order for the Government of Malawi to take over this activity."

EGRA BACKGROUND

CONTEXT

The education sector in Malawi comprises of five sub-sectors.

- Basic Education includes Early Childhood Development (ECD), Complementary Basic Education (CBE) that targets Out-of-school youth and Adult Literacy, and general Primary Education.
- Secondary Education covers Secondary Schools and Open and Distance schools
- Teacher Education covers Primary and Secondary Teacher Training.
- Higher Education includes Higher Education institutions (universities) as well as Technical and Vocational Education (TEVET).
- Support Services holds a range of departments including Administration, Policy, Planning and Budgeting, Financial Management, Human Resource Development, Procurement and the Department of Inspection and Advisory Services (DIAS)

ECD is critical for cognitive skills development and the absence of adequate coverage is found to contribute to underage primary school enrolment. Over 70% of eligible children in Malawi do not access any form of ECD. The 2010 and 2011 USAID/Malawi Early Grade Reading Assessments show that the majority of Standard 2 and 4 students had 0 scores in letter recognition, knew few letter names, read few words, and had minimal comprehension of grade level text; 97.1% of Standard 2 students and 69.3% of students in Standard 4 were unable to answer a single comprehension question correctly."[3]

There are 5,405 registered primary schools in Malawi. Between 2008 and 2013, primary school enrolment increased by 16% with an average annual growth rate of 4%. Additionally, the aggregate gender gap across the primary cycle has reduced by 0.3 percentage points (enrolment of girls was 49.8% of the total in 2008/09 and has increased to 50.1% in 2012/13). The majority of primary school students continue to reside in rural areas, accounting for 86% of total enrolment in 2012/13. The percentage of registered students with special needs enrolled in primary education is increasing: 2.16% in 2010/11 to 2.24% in 2012/13. In 2012/13, nearly half (47.6%) of registered students with special needs were girls. The percentage of orphan students has been steadily declining from 13.4% in 2008/09 to 10.5% in 2012/13.

Figure 1 Overcrowded Classroom

Classroom construction has not increased in line with enrolments, and the number of students per classroom is far from the government target of 60 students per classroom. The average primary student to classroom ratio (PCR) has increased from 105:1 in 2011/20112 to 124:1 in 2012/13. Population growth and a high demand for primary education is apparent. There are 56,534 teachers (both qualified and unqualified) competing for 14,267 teacher houses, leaving 42,267 teachers without housing. The teacher to house ratio for 2012/13 was 4:1.

[3] USAID Mission Director Quoted from the USAID/Malawi Country Development Cooperation Strategy District Coordination and Integration Implementing Partner Workshop Report May 23, 2014.

The number of both public and private primary school has increased 7% from 53,031 in 2011/2012 to 56,534 in 2012/13. At primary school level, all teachers are general class teachers; that is, they can teach all subjects in any standard. However, efforts are made that trained teachers under EGRA teaching Standards 1-3 remain with the same classes to maximize impact on student reading achievement. The Pupil Qualified Teacher Ratio (PQTR) has increased from 92:1 in 2011/12 to 95:1 in 2012/13, despite the target of 60:1 by 2017.

Table 3: Trend in primary qualified and unqualified pupil to teacher ratios

	Teachers		
	PTR (Prim-National)	PQTR (Prim-National)	PQTR (Prim-Rural)
2008	78	90	97
2009	81	92	98
2010	80	91	97
2011	76	92	96
2012	74	95	98

Source: EMIS 2012

In 2012-13 the PQTR for rural schools was 99:1 compared to 75:1 for urban schools. Although the government is deploying more teachers to rural schools and setting incentives for their retention by paying rural teacher allowances, rural areas are still relatively understaffed. ESIP II stipulates a student to textbook ratio of 1:1 for all subjects across all standards. In 2012-13 the recorded stock of textbooks was low, even with the delivery of nine million primary school textbooks from India distributed to schools in the last two quarters of the financial year.

The student textbook ratios are getting worse: for example, the ratio for Mathematics books in Standards 3, 4 and 7 is 6:1. For English textbooks, in Standards 5 and 6 the ratio ranges between 4:1 and 6:1. However, nationwide, the student to textbook ratio for Chichewa has increased to 1:1 in Standard 1 due to 1 million USAID/Malawi printed and distributed textbooks.

With regard to learning outcomes, the results of the regional standardized test to measure the attainment of cognitive skills in primary education by the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) shows Malawi performing consistently below the regional average. Malawi came 14th out of 14 countries in reading English and 13th out of 14 countries in Mathematics in 2000. No progress was measured in the follow up SACMEQ III exercise in 2007/8 with male students outperforming female students by an average of 10 test score results in literacy and by an average of 12 test score points in numeracy. While data was collected in 2013, the results of SACMEQ IV are expected only in 2015. [4]

[4] SACMEQ moved to the University of Botswana (formerly housed at UNESCO) in 2014. http://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/our-expertise/sacmeq

Results from several Early Grade Reading Assessments show that while overall reading performance remain low, the proportion of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text have improved from a mean score of 0.8 in 2010 to 1.3 in 2012 and that Standard 4 students have improved from 11.5 in 2010 to 15.4 in 2012 at national level. According to the EGRA Annual Report, the percentage of teachers demonstrating essential skills in teaching compared to baseline has also increased from 21.6% in 2010 to 70.2% in 2012. Further improvements are required, including scaling up of early grade reading interventions. Large absolute and relative gains were achieved in schools that participated in the MTPDS *Maziko a Kuwerenga* "Foundations of Literacy" (MaK) program.

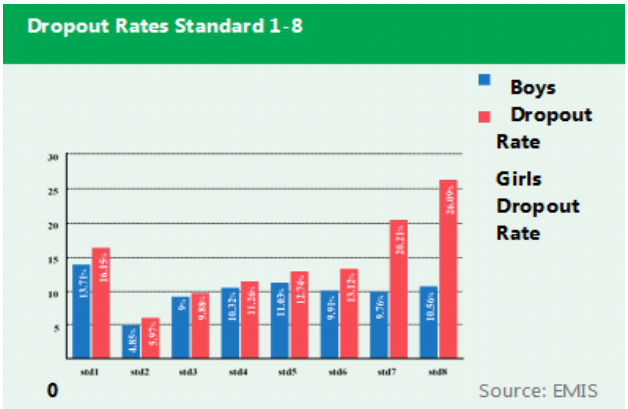

Figure 2: Drop Out Rates

With regard to internal efficiency of the primary education system, on average, the repetition rate has increased from 19% to 24.1% for girls and from 20% to 25% for male students between 2008 and 2013. On the other hand, Table 4 shows that 47% of students from the 2007 Standard 1 cohort progressed to Standard 6 within expected years. Each year 3-15% of students drop out, depending on the Standard, while approximately 15% repeat the Standard.

Table 4: Cohort Progression of 2007 Standard One Cohort

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	Standard 1	Standard 2	Standard 3	Standard 4	Standard 5	Standard 6
Totals	**845,631**	**662,957**	**621,892**	**504,139**	**426,138**	**348,370**
New entrants	637,846	529,940	496,866	424,130	359,556	299,724
Repeaters	207,785	133,017	125,026	80,009	66,582	48,646

Source: ESIP II cohort progression model

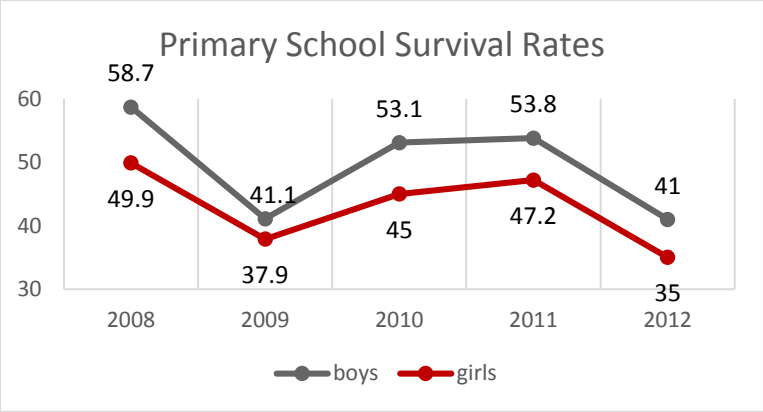

Figure 3: Primary School Survival Rates

Lastly, Figure 3 shows that the Standard 8 survival rate was 35% for girls and 41% for boys. An average survival rate of 38% thus suggests that an estimated 62% of standard 1 entrants in 2012 will not survive the primary school cycle within 8 years.

EGRA DESCRIPTION

EGRA is a three-year, four-month USAID activity designed to provide technical assistance to the MoEST to improve the reading performance of Malawian students in Standards 1 to 3. EGRA's goals include improving the quality and availability of pedagogical materials for early grade reading; providing training to teacher trainers, teachers, and school administrators in the effective use of those materials; equipping parents and communities with the knowledge and tools to support a school-based reading programming; and supporting efforts to build a policy environment conducive to improving early grade reading.

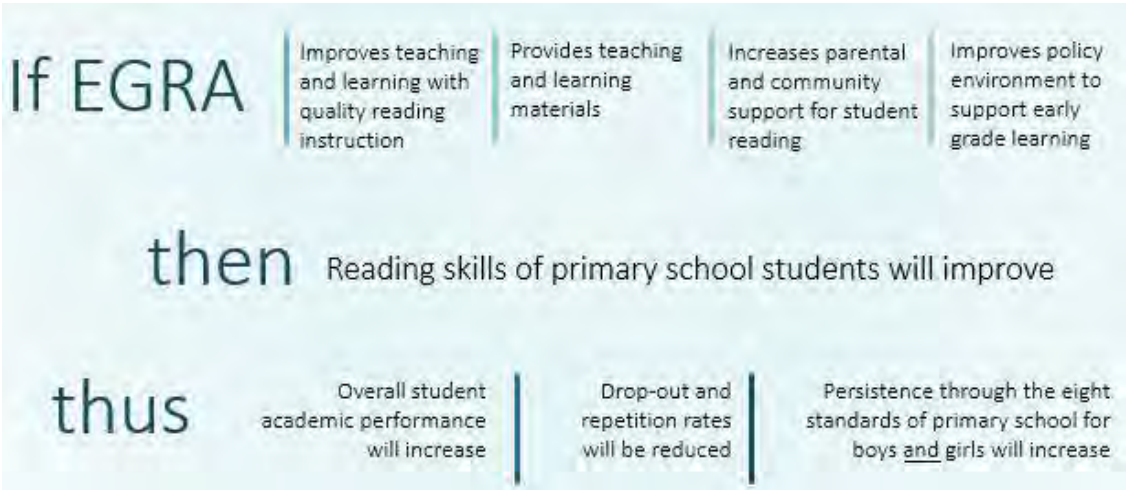

Figure 4: EGRA Theory of Change

EGRA is composed of the following components, each with a set of tasks:

Component 1: Provide Quality Reading Instruction for Early Grade Students

Component 2: Provision of Teaching and Learning Materials for Reading

Component 3: Increasing Parental and Community Engagement to Support Reading

Component 4: Improving Policy Environment to Support Early Grade Reading

The following are program requirements, crosscutting issues and USAID/Malawi's integration efforts.

Monitoring and Evaluation and Crosscutting Issues

- Local Capacity Development
- SNE/ Learning Disabilities
- Grants under Contract (GUCs)
- Gender Equity
- Geographic Coverage
- Public Private Partnerships

In addition to these tasks, USAID/Malawi launched an integration effort on May 23, 2014 that added the following to EGRA:

Integrating EGRA into USAID's Country Development Cooperation Strategy

- INT-1: Incorporating themes from other USAID activities into EGRA reading materials
- INT-2: Utilizing community reading centers to raise awareness for other USAID Activities
- INT-3: Explore ways to incentivize EGRA volunteers through other USAID activities
- INT-4: Pilot the use of Mobile Money to disburse funding to the field

RTI partnered with five organizations to achieve its EGRA objectives.

Table 5: Consortium Partnerships

Partner Name	Headquarters	Implementation Role
Creative Centre for Community Mobilization (CRECCOM)	Malawi	• Community mobilization • Training • Long term staff members at Districts
Perkins International	USA	• Special Needs Education • Long-term Disability, Gender, and Vulnerable Populations (DGVP) Specialist
The Brattle Publishing Group	USA	• Support the editorial development, design, and production of the Malawi Reading program for English Standard I and Chichewa language program • Build local capacity.
blueTree Group	Netherlands	• Provide technical training for book procurers focus on cost efficiency and durability • Deliver technical training to Malawian publishers to encourage local education publications • Support individual printer's capacity upgrade and strategy • Conduct book production and distribution chain analysis • Promote donor harmonization
O'Brien and Associates International (OAI)	USA	• Identifying potential partners to participate in Public Private Partnerships (PPP) to support EGRA related requirements (such as materials, communications, resourcing classrooms and communities).

EVALUATION METHODS & LIMITATIONS

To answer the four evaluation questions, the evaluation team utilized a non-experimental design that excluded a rigorously-defined counterfactual. The evaluation examines data contained in annual reports and other documents, while fieldwork and KIIs served as a foundation, and provided quantitative and qualitative data that could be triangulated.

Data Capturing and Analysis: KIIs were manually captured and analyzed using Atlas/TI. Microsoft Excel was used for other quantitative data analyses. The mix of qualitative and quantitative data generated through fieldwork was analyzed using methods appropriate to each.

LIMITATIONS

The most important limitation is the number of informants that are able to be included in the four-week period of data collection. Although every effort was made to speak with a representative group of stakeholders, from senior MoEST staff to classroom teachers and students' parents, the limited time available for field work, and especially for school visits, meant that there was no way to reach a statistically representative sample.

Availability of key informants was a limitation, especially in schools, district and zones due to absenteeism. Some Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) could not participate because they were attending ongoing EGRA activities outside their zones.

Some primary schools are affiliated or sponsored by churches and implement school breaks that are not aligned to the official MoEST school calendar. Some schools are closed on church holidays such as All Saints' Day and a few others posed a challenge to access due to extremely poor road conditions. As a result, the Khulisa research teams were required to change eight "randomly" selected schools delineated in the evaluation plan. PEAs often notified the team of the closure or inaccessibility and suggested a school with similar characteristics in the same zone. Head teachers and teachers in all primary schools were accommodating and somewhat pleased to be included in the evaluation, especially those in rural areas that rarely have visitors.

The evaluation team made every effort to minimize limitations by scheduling interviews by telephone prior to travel. Both DIAS and RTI offices supplied phone numbers for schools, zone and district offices. Some numbers were incorrect and others had recently changed phone numbers. In Malawi the majority of "office" phones are actually personal; as a result when a person is transferred from a position the phone number often goes with him/her to the new job. District Training Coordinators, PEAs and other district staff were helpful in locating some phone numbers. As a result, some schools had little or no advance notice of the data collection visit.

PEAs were generally helpful in locating the appropriate phone numbers and giving research assistants directions to schools. Some PEAs also traveled with research assistants to assure that they easily located rural schools. PEAs were instrumental in scheduling school visits as they generally had current information about schools. There was difficulty in accessing some schools: this is described further in Annex 2: Detailed Methodology. Alternative school recommendations by PEAs slightly changed the randomly representative sample, which may slightly skew evaluation results.

FINDINGS – MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

As of 31 December 2014 RTI had reported expenditure and accruals as follows:

Table 6: RTI and Subcontractor Expenditure and Accruals

Spent 9/14	Budget	Mo	% expended	Accrual 12/15	Total	Mo	%
$5,806,945	$23,992,906	15	24%	$1,711,726	$7,518,671	18	31%

September marked the end of 15 of the 40 months (38%) of the activity, so 24% had been spent during the period under which financial data was provided. In December 2014, RTI explained that this was, in part, due to the late Teaching and Learning Materials (TLM) delivery which should have been delivered prior to the beginning of the school year in September 2014 but was actually delivered in October 2014. However, by the end of month 18 of the 40 months (45%), expenditure had only risen to 31%. The following is a more recent explanation. On January 19 2015, RTI commented on the expenditure:

> "We have a budget realignment request pending with USAID. This was developed because certain aspects of our work have been found to cost a great deal more than budgeted (because of higher than anticipated numbers of teachers, among other things), while others have been found to cost less. For the first year of implementation we thus chose to spend cautiously as we tracked our ongoing expenditures and projected the implications of those elevated costs over the lifespan of the project. The proposed budget realignment currently with USAID for review represents our suggestion of how to best reallocate funds within the project to maximize impact on student reading outcomes. If approved, it will permit us to spend with greater confidence, and we expect our burn rate will improve."[5]

Table 7: Subcontractor Expenditure

Subcontractors Only	Spent by 9/2014	Budget	% expended
blueTree Group	$116,736	$210,703	55%
O'Brien and Associates	$123,709	$253,357	49%
Brattle Publishing Group	$177,357	$846,568	21%
Perkins School for the Blind	$95,885	$595,851	16%
CRECCOM	$247,246	$2,347,749	11%
Total	$760,933	$4,254,228	18%

CRECCOM's recorded "expenditure" is an advance. Since CRECCOM is responsible for much of the community training (and 10% of the overall budget), it is a concern that the money is not moving. Assuming a steady expenditure rate (since much of CRECCOM's activities are salaries) at the 15 month time mark, 39% of CRECCOM's expenditure should be around $915,000.

[5] Timothy Slade, Project Management Specialist, International Education Division, International Development Group, RTI International email Sunday 2015/01/18 11:38 PM.

> "You are already familiar with the challenges encountered to date in getting our subcontractor CRECCOM to implement as planned and spend as planned. You may not be aware that they lost their Financial Manager and subsequently replaced him with someone so spectacularly out of his depth that he was recently removed from his post. Our Finance and Operations teams from HQ have done excellent work with CRECCOM over the last two months, and due to recent substantive engagement by CRECCOM's Board we have strong reason to believe these efforts will bear fruit in terms of improved invoicing, which should in turn bear fruit in greater financial stability and capacity to implement the activities which reside under their budget. So we definitely expect spending under Component 3 to increase."[6]

As pointed out elsewhere in the evaluation, there is tension between building local capacity and achieving results. Yet the Mission's overall strategy is clearly local empowerment and systems development, while achieving results. CRECCOM central office and District level staff respondents reported tension between RTI and CRECCOM. One respondent said:

> "RTI did very little consultation. As a District Community Mobilization Officer, (DCM), I feel they should have used those with long-term experience such as CRECCOM to implement the community component of the activity and leaving themselves with the role of a sub-granter. Overall, I feel that… most Malawian workers do not put in much of their creativity. Furthermore there is no openness and accountability." (DCM during KII)

While this is only one opinion expressed by a DCM, other Malawian KIIs echoed this concern. It is triangulated with the complaints received from parent and community focus groups who had yet to receive the promised training.

This tension may have begun early on in the activity: the CRECCOM letter of Authorization was issued on July 18, 2013, yet the subcontract was only signed nine months later, on March 14, 2014:

> ""Negotiations took longer to get the details of the scope of work and budget, the communication and reporting structure between CRECCOM and EGRA staff, and for CRECCOM to provide all of the necessary documentation required for issuing a subcontract."[7]

Existing CRECCOM staff began work in August 2013. According to RTI, the financial and administrative delays prevented CRECCOM from implementing their assigned activities.

Demonstrating this tension, an RTI respondent suggested that RTI may have to take over the function of training parents and volunteers rather than leave it in CRECCOM's scope of work. However, this would further disempower CRECCOM in the RTI relationship and undermine the development of local capacity.

Typically, USAID does not interfere between prime and subcontractors, yet for long-term sustainability it may be important for USAID to monitor the situation. RTI reports that they are taking action as follows:

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[6] Project Management Specialist, International Education Division, International Development Group, RTI International email Sunday 2015/01/18 11:38 PM.

[7] RTI Project Management Specialist email dated Fri 2014/12/12 05:39 PM

> "Financial and administrative capacity has thus been the central focus of EGRA's capacity-development efforts involving CRECCOM. After multiple trips from headquarters to Zomba and several protracted exchanges over e-mail, they are now on the verge of receiving their second tranche of advance funding."[8]

Recommendation: As building local capacity is important for the sustainability of EGRA, USAID should monitor the relationship between CRECCOM and RTI more closely to achieve smooth implementation of the community component.

FINDINGS EVALUATION QUESTION 1 AND 2

The following sections cover Evaluation Questions:

1. How effective is the EGRA's approach toward achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary school students in Malawi?
2. How can the EGRA design, management, and execution become more efficient toward achieving program goals?

These questions are combined as USAID requested that the report be structured by program component and cross-cutting issues.

Component 1: Provide quality reading instruction for early grade students

EGRA's implementation includes:

Component 1: Provide quality reading instruction for early grade students.

- *Task 1: CPD of Standard 1-3 teachers in teaching reading.*
- *Task 2: Teaching practicum as part of in-service training*
- *Task 3: Scripted lesson plans and related reading materials*
- *Task 4: Consistent in-service teacher support and mentoring*
- *Task 5: Rewarding performing teachers and schools*

Findings:

The methodology used under EGRA is based on training teachers to provide quality reading instruction using a five-prong approach. Numerous research studies in the U.S., particularly the National Research Council's Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children, identified five essential components effectively used by early grade teachers to ensure that young students gain literacy quickly. They are as follows:

1. Phonemic Awareness - knowledge of sounds, particularly Chichewa consonant-vowel combinations
2. Phonics – knowledge of how sounds and their spelling relate systematically
3. Fluency – automaticity of the reading process
4. Vocabulary – expands meaning and understanding as it builds conceptual relationships
5. Comprehension – understanding what is read

EGRA focuses on developing effective practices among teachers of Standard 1 to 3 students. In addition, teachers learn how to assess students to inform their teaching practices, identifying the instructional needs of the young students at points in time.

[8] RTI Project Specialist email dated January 26, 2015.

Class Observations

In this performance evaluation, research assistants observed 171 Standard 1-3 reading classes in the eight performance evaluation target districts. Reading classes were observed in both treatment and control schools with 70% of the classes observed in EGRA treatment schools.

This is the second year of EGRA implementation in these schools. In the first year, Standard 1 teachers and head teachers were targeted for CPD training using the Chichewa Standard 1 course called *Maziko a Kuwerenga* (MaK), which was originally introduced under the USAID MTPDS activity. In the 101 MTPDS zones, instructional methods and techniques were reintroduced, and teachers and head teachers in 33 newly identified zones received initial training focused on Standard 1 Chichewa implementation. In August 2014, additional CPD took place that introduced Standard 2 teachers to the MaK approach and materials. Class observations conducted for this performance evaluation focused on Standard 1 and 2 classes as delineated in the table below.

Table 8: Class Observation by Standard

Performance Evaluation Class Observations by Standard				
School Type	**Standard1**	**Standard2**	**Standard3**	**Total**
Control	17	24	11	**52**
Treatment	51	46	22	**119**
Total	**68**	**70**	**33**	**171**

Characteristics of Class Teachers

Teachers that were observed in treatment and control schools were similarly distributed by gender with 56% female teachers in control schools and 55% in treatment schools. Male teachers observed comprised 44% of teachers in control schools and 45% in treatment schools.

In treatment schools, 95% (113) of the teachers stated that they have received training on how to teach reading. In control schools, only 21% (11) of the teachers said they received specific training on how to teach reading. In control schools, the same percentage (21%) of teachers stated that they had participated in MTPDS activities. USAID education sector activities have provided the majority of training to primary teachers on how to teach reading through EGRA, MTPDS and Read Malawi. One KII interviewee explained that there is a spillover effect as effective reading instruction techniques are "spreading through CPD and peer learning." Qualifications of teachers varied tremendously but the majority of Standard 1-3 teachers are Permanent Teacher (PT) 4, entry-level teachers. Only one teacher in a treatment school has a higher qualification and her head teacher felt it was likely that she would be promoted shortly. Initial Primary Teacher Education (IPTE) teachers are in their second year of teacher training as they are practicing skills learned in the first year. Open Distance Learning (ODL) teachers are community-based people recruited to be teachers. They receive some training prior to entering the classroom and continue their training during school holidays. The goal of hiring ODL teachers is to reduce class size quickly by getting teachers quickly into classrooms.

Figure 5: PT1 Teacher using real objects in the lesson. (Napache)

Table 9: Teacher Qualifications

	PT1	PT2	PT3	PT4	IPTE	ODL	Total
Control	0	5	10	26 (46%)	11	4	56
Treatment	1	12	28	58 (45%)	17	12	128

Key informants stated that a result of the EGRA training, teachers feel empowered to make decisions about what strategies they can use in the classroom. CPD has increased their opportunity to sharpen their skills.

Length of Lessons

Control schools and treatment schools have both increased the length of Chichewa lessons from the old standard of 30 minutes. In Standard 1 Chichewa lessons in control schools the lesson averaged 42 minutes whereas in treatment schools the average length of a lesson was 55 minutes. In Standard 2, Chichewa lessons in control and treatment schools were virtually the same length at 39 and 38 minutes respectively. Standard 3 lesson duration was slightly lower in control schools at 38 minutes versus 44 minutes in treatment schools. More elaboration on class time is summarized in the Component 4: Policy Environment section.

Table 10 Lesson Length

School Type	Standard	Number of Observations	Minimum Duration (minutes)	Maximum Duration (minutes)	Average Duration (minutes)
Control Schools	1	14	30	72	42
	2	18	19	100	39
	3	6	30	54	38
Treatment Schools	1	31	30	75	55
	2	39	21	69	38
	3	13	30	87	44
Total		**121**	**19**	**100**	**43 minutes**

Scripted vs. Unscripted Lessons[9]

The first scripted lesson plans for Standard 1 Chichewa were developed under MTPDS in collaboration with MoEST and the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE). Additional lessons were developed under EGRA using a workshop approach in October/November 2013. These scripted lesson plans guide Chichewa reading instruction in class and can be implemented at a variety of levels from use of the full script, partial use of the script or no use of the scripted lessons. A partially scripted lesson is indicated when teachers obviously referred to the scripted lesson plan occasionally during the lesson. Scripted lesson plans are contained in *Maziko a Kuwerenga,* a teacher's guide for each term. Three trainings occurred during the 2013-2014 school year for Standard 1 teachers on the use of these scripted lessons. In August 2014, the use of English scripted lesson plans were added to the training. When teachers in the treatment schools were asked to rate the EGRA training received, 89% rated it reasonably or highly successful. In addition, 94% of those teachers felt that the EGRA is responsive to the needs of Malawi. The use of scripted lessons observed in control schools is an example of spill-over and could be a result of earlier USAID funded activities such as MTPDS, teachers mentoring other teachers (between grades and schools, and teacher transfer from EGRA to non-EGRA schools.

Table 11: Use of Scripted Lessons

	Not Observed	Partial script	Scripted	Total
Control	**29**	**13**	**10**	**52**
Standard1	9	3	5	**17**
Standard 2	15	4	5	**24**
Standard 3	5	6	0	**11**
Treatment	**15**	**21**	**83**	**119**
Standard 1	1	11	39	**51**
Standard 2	3	7	36	**46**
Standard 3	11	3	8	**22**
Total	**44**	**34**	**93**	**171**

[9] Further data analysis tables disaggregated by standard and training can be found in Annex 6.

Table 12: Lesson Time for Scripted Lessons

Labels	Lesson Time	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	< 60 minutes	28	12	8	48
	≥ 60 minutes	1	1	2	4
	Total	**29**	**13**	**10**	**52**
Treatment	Not Applicable	1			1
	< 60 minutes	11	17	66	94
	≥ 60 minutes	3	4	17	24
	Total	**15**	**21**	**83**	**119**
Total		**44**	**34**	**93**	**171**

Conclusions

How effective is the EGRA's approach toward achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary school students in Malawi?

- In observed treatment schools classes, 64% of the students were engaged in the reading lesson whereas in half of the observed control school students were engaged in the lesson. Engaged students is an indicator of active learning behavior.
- Standard 1 reading classes in treatment schools average 55 minutes whereas in control schools they average 42 minutes. Treatment schools have more exposure to upcoming government initiatives through regularly scheduled CPD, and as a result they are slightly ahead of control schools in implementation. Extending the instructional time paired with CPD to guide the effective use of that time is one step toward increasing reading skills of Malawian primary school students.
- Evaluators and research assistants noted that parents, community members, teachers, and students are motivated by the increased numbers of Standard 1 students reading aloud successfully, which they attribute to the application of the EGRA approach.
- Phonemic awareness and phonics are dominant approaches to teaching reading in treatment schools. It is somewhat used in control schools by teachers who received training from MTPDS, mentoring from EGRA-trained teachers and teacher transfer. Teachers and parents stated that the use of phonics and phonemic awareness to teach reading is successful.
- Some teachers in both treatment and control schools are demonstrating the use of reading strategies that are identified as highly successful in reading research[10] Scaffolding instruction by setting the scene before reading, stating the book title, using students' background knowledge to

[10] August, D. Shananahan, T. (2008) *Developing Reading and Writing in Second-Language Learners.* Routledge, N.Y.: NY.

link to new reading and sequencing the action in the story. There is no significant difference between the use of these strategies in control and treatment schools. EGRA's first year focus was Standard 1, introducing students to the written page; this scaffolding instruction demonstration is more advanced and likely to be observed in Standards 2 to 3.

How can the EGRA design, management, and execution become more efficient toward achieving program goals?

The design, management and execution of the EGRA approach in Malawi has changed reading instruction in Standard 1-3 classes in treatment schools, as demonstrated by the following:

- In EGRA treatment schools, 95% of observed teachers stated they now have training to teach reading, compared to only 21% of the observed teachers in control school.
- Instructional practices learned in CPD are used in the classrooms of treatment schools.
- Standard 1 reading classes in treatment schools average 55 minutes whereas in control schools they average 42 minutes.
- Scripted lessons contained in *Maziko a Kuwerenga* teachers' guides, developed under MTPDS and used in EGRA Year 1 CPD training are in high use in Standard 1 treatment school classes (76%), and they are used to a lesser degree in Standard 1 control school classes (30%). Teachers in control schools using scripted lessons may have transferred from an EGRA school or participated in MTPDS training. Teachers are likely to use instructional resources if available.
- Textbooks in the hands of students or shared was more evident in treatment schools with 40% of students with a book in hand and 14% sharing a book. In control schools, 31% of students had a book in hand and 12% shared a book. Treatment schools have a slight advantage in the availability of textbooks for classrooms, demonstrating that textbook development and distribution to schools has been slow. (See following section.)
- More print is becoming visible to the students in the classroom. Teachers are making and acquiring posters, word cards and other instructional material for their classrooms. There is a great need for more books and instructional materials.
- Systematic professional development, through CPD based at the district and zonal levels, is effective. Instructional strategies taught during CPD are used regularly in Standard 1-3 classes. Reinforcement of CPD strategies are strengthened by mentoring and coaching, but often there is insufficient transport available to reach treatment schools. Although there is a fuel allowance provided by RTI, government vehicles (motor cycles and 4WD) are in short supply at the District and Zone Offices. This was reiterated by both district and zone staff in a zone.

Issues and Challenges

- Standard 1 to 3 classes had an average class size of 85, and a range from 5-289 students. Teachers said that they have removed furniture in classrooms to accommodate high student numbers. Large class sizes makes a challenge for teachers to individualize instruction or group students for instruction. Some teachers are experimenting with alternatives to whole group instruction such as small group tasks and pair work.
- Major challenges to EGRA implementation include limited resources and teacher transfers as stated by a number of key informants. In addition, a number of key informants reemphasized the following statement; "diverse community level factors contribute to repetition and attrition." Many factors are also documented in the USAID Report on the Study on Student Repetition and Attrition in Malawi.
- The MoEST should assume the role of "catalyst" as RTI has done, stated a key informant. As other contractors and NGOs begin to expand the implementation of the National Reading Strategy in the remaining 22 education districts, it is essential to maintain a consistent message

and system of operations by all implementers to assure the quality and integrity of early grade reading interventions.

Recommendations

"Keep the focus. Maintain the same procedures for introducing EGRA through MoEST," as it has had under RTI implementation, stated an official at the Department of Planning. The Director of MIE added, "…the current EGRA intervention is a success story but it is still in its experimental stage. We are now convinced the intervention works, it's time to 'roll it out' to all primary schools".

Unanticipated Outcomes

The MoEST endorsed methodology assures that implementation will continue beyond donor support. The Director of Planning from MoEST said that a "clear mindset, this is not a project but mainstream in Basic Education, it is ready for adoption in all schools." The evaluators observed high levels of motivation by teachers and students in treatment schools. Teachers are motivated when they see their efforts rewarded when students learn. Students feel success when their efforts to learn are successful. Parent and community groups repeatedly told us "we can see students in Standard 1 who are able to read and previously didn't learn to read until Standard 3." The speed at which learning to read occurs contributes to program satisfaction.

Component 2: Provision of Teaching and Learning Materials for Reading

- *Task 2-1: Develop and Distribute Decodable and Leveled Books*
- *Task 2-2: Develop and Distribute Story Cards for Home Use*
- *Task 2-3: Develop and Distribute Letter Cards*
- *Task 2-4: Production and Distribution of Chalk Slates*
- *Task 2-5: Supply of Mobile, Lockable Bookcases/Cabinets and Registers*

According the Government of Malawi's Education Sector Implementation Plan II (ESIP-II) covering 2013/4 to 2017/18, "TLMs are distributed through procurement cycles rather than regular replenishment" (page 88) and the current textbook to student ratio is estimated at one book per 4.2 students in primary schools.

Findings

The procurement of EGRA TLMs is running behind schedule on *Task 2-1: Develop and Distribute Decodable and Leveled Books.*

Only 16% (9 of 56) of treatment school respondents and 12% (3 of 25) control school respondents felt they had sufficient TLMs. When materials are present, about half of the respondents feel that they are distributed equitably. However, the Standard 2 materials should have been distributed prior to the beginning of the school year (September 2014), were only delivered to zones in November 2014 and had not been received by schools at the time of the evaluation fieldwork. Key informants attributed this to the following factors:

1. A highly consultative/workshop process is used to develop and level the materials. The MIE and MoEST appear to be on board and very supportive of the processes involved. From a sustainability point of view, this is considered desirable. Nonetheless, consultations take time and have caused delays.

Figure 6: Students with workbooks

2. The original proposal intended to adapt Standard 1 and 2 English materials from those developed for the Liberia Teacher Training Program (LTTP), but EGRA curriculum development staff indicated that locally-developed materials would be more relevant and effective. EGRA thus proposed, and USAID accepted, for full local development of English curricular materials to be included in the Activity work plan.
3. Printing is prohibitively expensive in Malawi due to the tax on paper (more about this in the section on Policy following). However, there is no tax on imported finished books, meaning that it is cheaper to print EGRA books abroad than in Malawi. As a compromise, and due to the commitment to build local capacity, a third of the books are procured in Malawi, with the rest being procured from India.
4. Delivery from India takes time, resulting in additional delays due to shipping.

Very few schools allow students to take materials home. Books are regarded by the school and local community as a scarce and precious resource because regular replenishment is nonexistent. Respondents indicated concern that the students would lose or damage books. At the same time, there was growing recognition by parents on the importance of reading and the joy of their children's ability to read to them at home.

Figure 7: A classroom library

As discussed under Component 3, reading centers have limited materials so do not provide alternative sources of reading material. Some head teachers are giving old textbooks to reading centers.

While the timeline originally called for the Standard 2 materials to be delivered prior to the September 2014 start of the academic year, this plan was shifted (with USAID approval) that they would be delivered during the term. This means that some learners experienced a break from the EGRA materials.

USAID has recently awarded an activity to the MIE called SEGRIM which also calls for materials development but works in Mchinji, Dedza, and Chiradzulu. USAID/MALAWI should closely monitor EGRA and SEGRIM to maintain complementary efforts in the field.

Recommendations

Task 2-1: Develop and Distribute Decodable and Leveled Books

- EGRA should avoid a similar delay for the Standard 3 materials, and they should be distributed before September 2015.
- EGRA should continue to work closely with MoEST and MIE/SEGRIM to develop the materials. Such collaboration ensures "ownership" by the Government of Malawi.
- EGRA and SEGRIM should combine efforts for Standard 3 materials development.

Task 2-2: Develop and Distribute Story Cards for Home Use

Story cards have reportedly been developed and the EGRA work plan reports that they will be distributed by January 2015.

Task 2-3: Develop and Distribute Letter Cards

Letter cards are for display in classrooms, to provide additional teaching and learning aids. EGRA management has also argued that getting community involvement to paint letters and numbers in classrooms is an alternative way to get more teaching and learning aids in the classrooms. This activity is delayed.

> "The delay has been due to a number of factors that include soliciting and reviewing the quotes from the paint companies, getting accurate statistics on the schools needing letter cards painted, identifying people in the communities able to carry out this task as well as finalizing an approach that schools and communities would afford to replicate. All of which has taken more time than anticipated."[11]

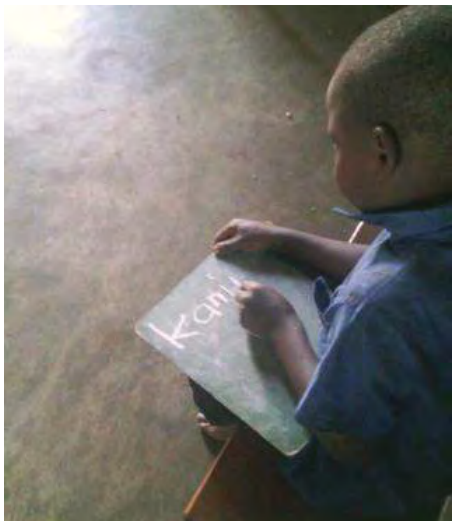


Figure 8: Chalk Slates in the Classroom

In the annual report, EGRA reports that 2200 Letter Card sets with each set containing 24 cards, have been printed[12] for Cohort A schools. The 2015 Activity Plan outlines steps including PEAs identifying needy classrooms targeted to receive the cards and finalizing distribution, particularly to classrooms that lack walls.

EGRA met with an NGO called "Bongo" that uses a "Happy Classrooms" methodology where they paint classrooms, but this has not developed into a partnership. The RTI Annual Report also mentions quotes for paints, with intent to involve the community to paint classrooms.[13]

Therefore, the EGRA strategy appears to provide letter cards to use in classrooms without walls, and to encourage communities to paint letters on classrooms that have walls.

Task 2-4: Production and Distribution of Chalk Slates

EGRA reports in their Annual Report that MoEST has procured chalk slates for all its primary schools. This was contradicted by the evaluation research assistants who observed only children using chalk slates in 3% of EGRA treatment schools and none in control schools visited. EGRA needs to confirm that the chalk slates have actually been delivered to schools before altering this in the work plan.

EGRA also reported that it had significantly under budgeted the cost of procuring chalk slates. This item is apparently on hold pending further discussions between EGRA, USAID and MoEST.

[11] Paula Green and Odala Banda, RTI, email dated Fri 2015/01/16 06:38 PM.

[12] RTI Annual Report page 51

[13] Ibid page 54.

Task 2-5: Supply of Mobile, Lockable Bookcases/Cabinets and Registers

Mobile, lockable bookcases or cabinets are meant to be secure and weather-proof to store books. EGRA appears to have underestimated the cost of these bookcases/cabinets: *"EGRA has looked into possibilities for procuring and producing mobile, lockable bookcases locally which has proven to be much more expensive than anticipated."*[14] So far, no bookcases have been ordered.

One of the objectives of the Public Private Partnerships (PPP) is to identify social responsibility funds from corporations and other organizations to provide additional funds for "Reading Tools in a Box" which would fulfill part of the objectives of Task 2-5. Thus far, while 20 organizations have indicated interest in providing financial support, only one (Monsanto[15]) is apparently processing the paperwork to donate $45,000 to support Reading Tools in a Box.

Component 3: Increasing Parental and Community Engagement to Support Reading

- *Task 3-1: Reading Fairs*
- *Task 3-2: Parental/Caregiver and Community Support for Reading*
- *Task 3-3: Provide Classroom Level and School Support for Reading*

Findings

This component was designed and implemented to encourage parental and community engagement to support student reading. Recognizing that learning does not stop at the classroom door, the component was intended to provide encouragement and resources to mobilize communities to create a culture of reading. The 2014 MoEST approved National Reading Strategy suggests that a culture of reading can only develop if reading is an important activity in and out of school. This component is being implemented by RTI and CRECCOM through an activity and budget sharing mechanism that is supported by a district staff and contingent upon personnel from the two organizations. The two organizations entered into a contract to capitalize on the extensive experience of CRECCOM in community mobilization work using the Theatre for Development (TfD) tool.

Figure 9: Parent-Community Discussion

[14] October 31 2014 Annual Report page 16.

[15] Steve Backman EGRA DCOP in an email dated December 17, 2014 wrote: "We just received a commitment yesterday for $45,000 from Monsanto." On January 19, 2015 the evaluators were shown a copy of the Grant Agreement which has not yet been signed by RTI.

Reading Fairs

The major achievement is that 581 EGRA (half of 1188 Cohort A schools) and community driven reading fairs were conducted locally. This demonstrates increasing community and school motivation to help students improve their reading. The evaluation has established that communities were engaged in implementation of reading fairs and open days through plans that the communities generated at the zone level through sensitization meetings. In an effort to achieve inclusive education as a crosscutting issue, the Braille Cup competition was implemented during the reading fairs with Perkins International providing the technical support for its implementation in treatment schools.

When asked if the schools have held a reading fair, Table 12 shows that 78% of the parent/community focus groups at treatment schools indicated they had held a reading fair over the one year of activity implementation. Approximately, 20% said they had not held a reading fair. When asked if they had attended a reading fair as parents or community leaders, Table 13 shows that about 66% of the focus groups indicated they had attended a reading fair with only about 2% indicating they had not attended one.

Table 13: Held and Attended Reading Fairs

Has the school or community held a reading fair?		
	Count	**Percentage**
No	10	20
Not sure	1	2
Yes	39	78
Grand Total	**50**	**100**
If yes, have you attended a reading fair?		
	Count	**Percentage**
NA/Missing	16	32
No	1	2
Yes	33	66
Grand Total	**50**	**100**

Overall, show that the majority of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants in treatment schools report that reading fairs have been instituted—typically only once in the last year, which shows there is still room for improvement. However, it was evident that reading fairs have created excitement in the communities because community members have been provided with an opportunity to publicly witness progress made by their children with their reading abilities. Interviews with head teachers and PEAs also showed that what started at zone level, is slowly turning into school and community driven activities held termly as part of the school closure events. Parents always attend the reading fairs to encourage the students. This is in contrast to the situation in control schools where FGDs revealed a dim knowledge of reading fairs with none of the participants in the FGDs indicating they have ever attended a reading fair nor heard of one being conducted.

The event has also attracted gifts to impressive students and teachers from parents and organizations in the treatment schools. For example, at Ntonda Primary School in Blantyre Rural District reading fair, Colgate Palmolive, an oral hygiene and health franchise gave out toothpaste and tooth brushes to all students. This is a PPP opportunity worth pursuing and reflects reading fair popularity. If well publicized, the reading fairs have the potential to draw in more PPP opportunities because of the inherent motivating attributes associated with seeing quick reading outcomes among young students. Although the overall targeted number of reading fairs was achieved (a target of 211 out of 1054 treatment schools

by September 2014), the rallying cry among community members is that the fairs should be conducted more frequently at school level to make sure that the students are motivated to read and gain in knowledge.

Parental/Caregiver and Community Support for Reading

The major achievements under this task were the production of the community mobilization handbook; identification of Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators (VCRFs), and increased involvement of parents and communities in supporting reading.

The community mobilization handbook is a guide that lays out the core the responsibilities of District Community Mobilizers (DCMs), strategies and activities, and it has been instrumental in guiding efforts to mobilize communities to support student reading. The handbook which was developed and designed based on a community mobilization framework in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW) (see Figure 13).

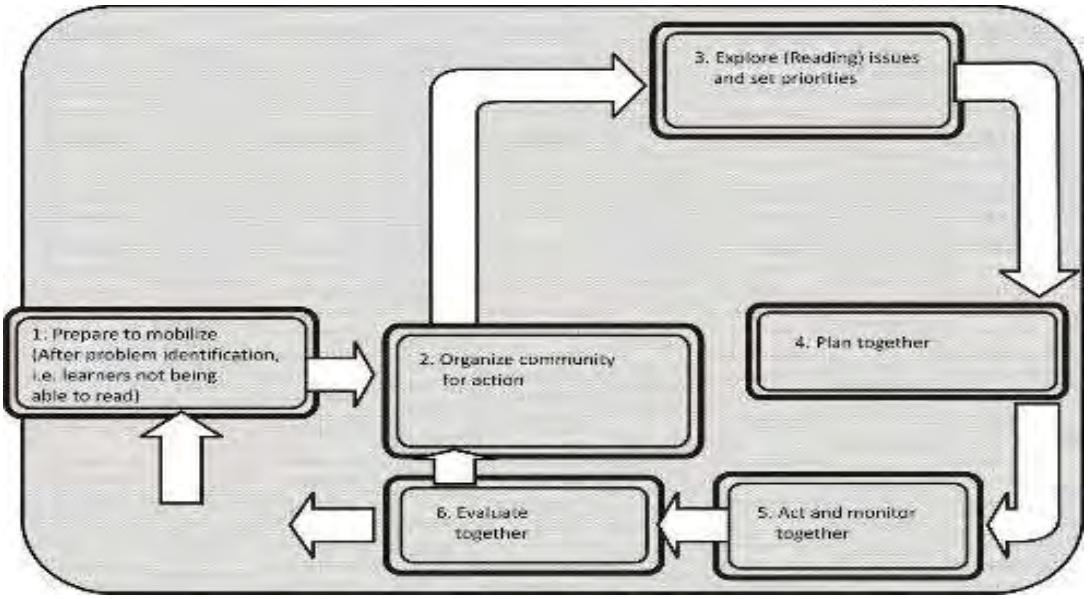


Figure 10: Community Mobilization Framework

EGRA staff, PEAs and Community Development Assistants (CDAs) were trained on use of the community mobilization handbook through five-day training sessions held in different parts of the country, which resulted in community mobilization action plans for each of the 11 EGRA districts. An assessment of the handbook shows that the design of the community mobilization framework and the process of engaging the community to embrace EGRA was based on a comprehensive empowerment model involving a conscious realization of the importance of early grade reading. This has culminated in a participatory, community-driven decision making process to address the issues, plan and implement the actions. However, the evaluation established that during its implementation, the initiative relied more on externally-led community sensitization meetings, which tended to be less engaging and therefore less empowering. This was largely due to capacity constraints among field staff in community mobilization techniques. According to CRECCOM, the plan to use TfD as a community facilitation tool did not fully materialize due to a lack of capacity building. CRECCOM further indicated that this issue emanated from its inability to fund its activities due to suspended disbursements from the prime contractor. The issues are currently being resolved, but the delays have affected delivery.

Identification of Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators (VCRFs)

Related to the administrative issues that affected implementation of TfD above, the evaluation also established that the potential for greater achievement in the component was hampered by the lack of resources to train and validate the VCRFs who were identified to coordinate the activity at community level. By the end of the first year, a total of 11,377 VCRFs were identified in 5,878 community facilitated reading centers that had been formed in all the 11 treatment districts. Of these VCRFs, 47% were male and 53% female. The number represents an average of about two VCRFs per reading center, which is in line with the targeted level of capacity by the activity and an average of about 534 reading centers per district.

Although the achievement in terms of distribution by village was not available due to the absence of village data, the numbers generally represent a significant achievement in progress considering that the activity has only been implemented for one year. However, the complete lack of training and validation of the VCRFs by CRECCOM has been a major setback in the efforts to build community capacity and make reading centers fully functional. While administrative challenges remain a common occurrence in activity management, the evaluators' major concern was that the process of rectifying the aforementioned issues was overly protracted, and significantly affected the delivery of the overall activity outputs and outcomes. The unusual momentum achieved in community mobilization, which often resulted from parents seeing improvements in the performance of their children in reading, faces significant risk of waning away if CRECCOM does not ramp up and consolidate the gains made so far by the activity.

Figure 11: Listening to a Parent Group

Involvement of Parents and Communities in Supporting Reading

An assessment of the performance of the task shows significant progress towards increased involvement of parents and communities in supporting reading. This is a result of some community mobilization efforts that have been implemented throughout the year at community level. The evaluation established that two-day community sensitization sessions were held during the year involving 10,183 community members (4572 male, 5611 female) who included the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA), SMC, Mother Group members, Traditional Chiefs, VCRFs, and Area Development Committee (ADC) members. About 1,173 head teachers also attended the sensitization meetings, which provided a good interface between the communities and schools. The meetings were aimed to equip community members, community leaders, school governance structures and head teachers to support reading in and out of school. The meetings also included orientation on how to conduct effective reading centers and reading fairs. Apart from the meetings, the evaluation established that some head teachers and VCRFs have since conducted personal driven efforts to encourage parents and students to conduct reading sessions through reading centers and in their homes.

The FGDs with parents in school based structures (SMCs, PTAs and Mother Groups) show that as a result of the EGRA intervention, the structures are able to discuss the need to enhance reading and teaching at home. Table 15 shows that about 94% of the focus groups in treatment schools indicated that they discuss the need to enhance reading and teaching at home which shows a significant positive effect of the EGRA initiative on parents. Interestingly enough, just as in the case of the treatment

schools, reading is also discussed as a priority at these meetings in control schools, but from their responses, they were not as clear on what steps they could take to improve reading. This could be a result of the normal MoEST initiative to improve reading that has resulted from a growing interest from reading achievements taking place in EGRA schools.

Table 14: Reading at Home

Is reading at home or the teaching of reading ever discussed at these meetings?		
	Count	**Percentage**
No	3	6
Yes	47	94
Grand Total	**50**	**100**

When asked how often they read to their children, **the results showed a positive correlation with school-based structures taking more interest to involve parents and the community to improve reading culture among students**. Table 16 shows that about 36% of the focus groups in treatment schools indicated that they read to their children daily while about 30% said they read to their children often[16]. In control schools results show that 25% of the focus groups said that they read to their children daily while about 42% do so often. Furthermore, Table 16 shows that about 50% of the treatment school focus groups indicated that their children read to their parents daily while about 26% do so often. In control schools, a similar pattern prevails; 29% of focus groups indicated that their children read to their parents daily while 25% do so often. These trends show that parent and community involvement is reportedly taken seriously in the control schools just as it is in treatment schools. This finding could be a result of normal MoEST efforts to promote reading in control schools as a result of trying to emulate the EGRA experience. Some control school respondents such as head teachers and PEAs indicated that some of their colleagues have initiated early grade reading in their schools either after getting transferred from their EGRA schools or after learning from their colleagues in EGRA schools. For example, the study showed that 18% of head teachers said they would promote EGRA if transferred to a non EGRA school. However, the lack of full-scale implementation of Component 3 by CRECCOM in the first year meant that the achievement levels in EGRA schools remained minimal. The lack of training for VCRFs and the limited functionality of reading centers remain the major concerns. The evaluation established that most reading centers are not operating to their full capacity, and many centers are not meeting the minimum standards stipulated in the community mobilization handbook.

[16] Often means less than daily but almost weekly

Table 15: Reading to Child- Treatment Schools

	How often do you read to your child?		How often does your child read to you?	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Missing	1	2	1	2
Daily	18	36	25	50
Often	15	30	13	26
Once in a while	14	28	11	22
Never	2	4	0	0
Grand Total	**50**	**100**	**50**	**100**

Table 16: Reading to Child- Control Schools

	How often do you read to your child?		How often does your child read to you?	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Missing	1	4	1	4
Daily	6	25	7	29
Often	10	42	6	25
Once in a while	6	25	7	29
Never	1	4	3	13
Grand total	**24**	**100**	**24**	**100**

When asked if younger children were learning to read differently than their older counterparts, all treatment focus group respondents indicated that younger children were learning to read differently while 54% said the same thing in control schools. The evaluation also found that the number of books that participants in control school FGDs had at home (4-5 books on average) were fewer than the numbers reported by EGRA treatment school FGDs (6-7 books on average). This suggests that the culture of reading at home is getting stronger in EGRA.

To assess the achievement of gender mainstreaming efforts, parents in FGDs were asked how successful their schools were at distributing the reading program to both girls and boys. Table 19 shows that about 94% of the treatment school focus groups said that their schools had paid attention to the gender needs of both girls and boys in the implementation of the program. Discussions showed that this was done through appropriate classroom seating plans[17], the use of inclusive language[18] of instruction, provision of appropriate infrastructure for girls, establishment of Mother Groups to support vulnerable groups and gender balanced Learner Assessment Tests (LAT) assessments. Of significant importance is the fact that that these interventions benefit children with special needs too.

[17] Classroom sitting plan is one where students with special needs sit where they feel most comfortable. Could be in front, in the middle, at the back, next to the window etc.

[18] Inclusive language includes sign language apart from English and Chichewa

Table 17: Gender Distribution

How successful is this school at evenly distributing the reading program to both boys and girls?		
	Count	**Percentage**
	2	**4**
Not sure	1	2
Yes, it is successfully reaching both boys and girls	47	94
Grand Total	**50**	**100**

When respondents were asked if they were satisfied with EGRA, and felt that EGRA's approach was achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary schools in Malawi, Table 18 shows that 70% of the treatment school focus groups indicated that it was highly successful while 24% said it was reasonably successful. This was consistent with the response when asked if EGRA had made a difference in their own child's reading abilities—64% of the respondents rated the achievement of reading skills as highly successful and 24% said reasonably successful. The visible evidence of younger children doing better in reading than their older siblings in higher classes is primarily the key-contributing factor to the rating. All FGDs held with parents confirmed that their younger children are learning to read faster than their older siblings.

Table 18: EGRA Success

How satisfied are you that the EGRA approach is achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary students in Malawi?		
	Count	**Percentage**
	3	**6**
4 – reasonably successful	12	24
5 – highly successful	35	70
Grand Total	**50**	**100**

Limited Engagement of MOGCDSW at Community and District Level

The evaluation observed that although efforts have been made to engage CDAs at community level, the engagement is largely passive with no evidence of pro-active planning on community mobilization for EGRA by the District Community Development Officers (DCDOs) and the CDAs. This has resulted in the field officers demanding perks for their participation in EGRA activities as they often see this as extra work outside their normal workday. The lack of an MOU between EGRA and the MOGCDSW at district level including direct provision of resources has tended to exacerbate matters and undermine the MOGCDSW's commitment to the cause of EGRA. The evaluators consider this a missed opportunity especially knowing that the MOGCDSW is a key player in community development with an extensive network of CDAs who do community mobilization work full time. Extending an MOU to the District Community Development Officers (DCDOs) adapted from similar MOUs currently running with District Education Managers (DEMs) could provide the needed active engagement of the office and its human resources that would augment the meager human resources provided by CRECCOM.

Provide Classroom Level and School Support for Reading

Overall, there has been limited achievement to provide classroom and school level support for reading. Key to this task was the identification of one school or zone in which the use of paraprofessional teaching assistants (TAs) would be modeled and include a certification process. Findings show that the implementation of this initiative has primarily been hampered by hesitation within the MoEST to launch because of doubts surrounding its technical and logistical feasibility. Interestingly, this happened amidst a precedent by the Primary School Improvement Program (PSIP) under the Directorate of Basic Education which utilized TAs in some of its activities. The evaluation also established that a similar initiative was recently commissioned and is under implementation by the Forum for African Women Educationists in Malawi (FAWEMA). FAWEMA's Strengthening Early Grade Reading Activity (SEGRA) is being implemented in Ntchisi district with the support of the MoEST and USAID, and gives room to test the TA concept. The fact that the recently launched ESIP II has adopted the concept of TAs as a strategy for addressing the student to teacher ratio in Standards 1-4 shows increased technical and political willingness by the MoEST to embrace the initiative. EGRA should therefore re-engage the MoEST on the initiative to avoid losing more time on implementation of the task. As a starting point, it will be essential for EGRA to agree with the MoEST on the implementation model perhaps drawing some lessons from the SEGRA and PSIP design and experience. The MoEST plans of enforcing the policy in ESIP II of one hour on reading per day will also help.

Scalability, Sustainability and Cost-Effectiveness

The short space of time at which EGRA has been able to achieve improved reading outcomes among the Standard 1-3 students has been the key incentive for parents to be motivated to participate in promoting a reading culture among their children. The 2014 MoEST approved National Reading Strategy (NRS) states that in many communities, parents entrust the education of their children to the school and do not actively engage in helping their children succeed in school, as many believe they do not have the requisite ability to help their children. This presents a potential for the activity to tap more into the role of parents and communities in enhancing the reading culture of their children to support scalability, sustainability and cost effectiveness of the activity. This is however "limited by the fact that building parents' capacity to support their children works better when focused on tasks they can learn to perform"[19]—this calls for a clear focus on identifying critical tasks that parents and communities can learn to perform better. The good thing is that the NRS presents some guidelines on this. It suggests that there are many ways in which parents can participate in their child's education. First, parents are advocates for their children. To engage in this role, parents and families may need training to deepen their understanding of the NRS, the acquisition of reading, and the appropriate benchmarks. In addition, parents and communities can be involved in the more traditional roles of helping their children with homework, helping out with classroom or school events, attending meetings, or joining parent-teacher associations.

Just as improving reading instruction is of paramount importance in improving reading outcomes among students, the NRS also acknowledges that the impact of families on educational achievement was equally important and that the best predictors of student achievement are (1) a home environment that encourages learning, (2) high expectation for achievement and the future, and (3) parent's being involved in the child's education. As such EGRA needs to capitalize on the prevailing high demand for the intervention by ensuring that the VCRFs and local leaders, including decentralization structures such as

[19] Murnane, Richard J. and Alejandro J. Ganimian "Improving Educational Outcomes in Developing Countries: Lessons from Rigorous Impact Evaluations", Working Paper 20284, National Bureau of Economic Research, 1050 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, July 2014 http://www.nber.org/papers/w20284.pdf

VDCs and ADCs, are well supported in terms of capacity building to enhance efficiency, scalability and sustainability of the initiative. The role of CRECCOM is critical in this regard. There is a critical need to hasten the steps being undertaken to address the issues that delayed implementation of component three of the activity.

Conclusions

Community mobilization is key to the success of EGRA considering that the intervention is pursuing the objective of building a reading "culture" among children. The activity has made significant achievement in the implementation of the component. However, the potential for greater achievement has been hampered by limited implementation of capacity building as a result of a limited funding flow due to the unresolved funding and financial management capacity issues between CRECCOM and RTI. A summary of community mobilization accomplishments follows:

- The reading fairs have slowly become an institutionalized event from a zonal, one-off event to a termly event in most schools as part of the school closing each term. This will contribute towards achieving efficiency, scalability and sustainability objectives of the initiative through greater community/school ownership of the event.
- 100 percent of treatment school FGDs confirmed that younger students in Standards 1-3 were learning to read differently than their older colleagues, while 54% indicated this was the case in control schools. This observation has partially contributed towards increased motivation among parents to get involved in supporting their children to read at home and at reading centers
- About 94% of focus groups in treatment schools reported that, among other things, EGRA is discussed during the PTA/SCM/MG meetings, but they also discuss the challenges associated with lack of resources such as books at home that hinder efforts to build a culture of reading. This is an opportunity to reinforce reading and build a culture of reading among young children.
- Although there are signs of improved involvement of parents in promoting reading, the culture of parents reading to children remains significantly weak. For parents who do not read to children, reasons cited included low levels of literacy leading to a fear of confusing their children; lack of free time, and insufficient access to books mainly because head teachers are hesitant to release text books with students for fear MoEST would not replenish them when they get damaged or lost. The lowest reported number of books owned at the home of the students was 0, the highest reported was 100. On average there are approximately 10 books in the home.
- Parents have affirmed the importance of the reading centers, and reported their efforts to establish them. However, the reading centers are not yet uniformly functional in all areas and most of them have not met the minimum standards provided in the community mobilization manual. Guidelines and training on how to establish, sustain, staff and resource reading centers would strengthen this aspect of EGRA's activities.
- The majority of parents in FGDs reported being satisfied or highly satisfied with the EGRA approach, both because of the learning gains (the ability for their children to learn to read quickly) they observe in students as well as the way that it has effectively mobilized parent and community involvement. Dissatisfaction with EGRA was expressed only in relation to a shortage of books.

Lessons Learned

The fact that most parents do not get concerned or upset when their children go to higher classes even if they cannot read means that there is a much deeper problem that needs to be addressed to achieve improved early grade reading culture. Apart from improved reading instruction, the success of achieving early grade reading culture depends a lot on the home environment that encourages learning, high expectation for achievement and the future, and parent's being involved in the child's education.

Issues, Challenges and Accomplishments

The major accomplishment of Component 3 is that it has managed to create motivation among most parents and communities to participate in the promotion of a reading culture in Malawi. The reading outcomes achieved so far have been the major factor contributing to this accomplishment. The potential to achieve greater accomplishments was the lack of training for VCRFs and community leadership structures mainly due to lack of implementation by CRECCOM as a result of funding disruptions. The evaluation also established that the other big accomplishment in this component is the institutionalization of reading fairs. Having introduced them at zone level involving all schools in the zone, the fairs have been adopted at school level and are now being implemented termly in collaboration with the local communities, which is a significant signal of empowerment. With the integration of the Braille Cup competition, the reading fairs have been able to address the needs of special needs students, thereby achieving inclusive education to some extent. One major shortcoming related to the implementation of reading fairs was that the grants under contract faced challenges to achieve full implementation due to capacity shortfalls to write grant proposals and selection criteria that is not objective enough.

Unanticipated Outcomes

The major unexpected outcome in this component is the increasing levels of motivation among parents and communities to promote reading among their children. This is as a result of parents seeing their children achieve quick and visible reading outcomes in the midst of minimal resources used including limited capacity building. The quick and expanded adoption of reading fairs from the zone to school level has demonstrated that reading outcomes can be a major incentive to support scale up and sustainability of the initiative.

On the down side, the evaluation established that there are some elements resisting use of VCRFs and parents to get involved in teaching children as they thought this was the role of government teachers and not volunteers. This can however be attributed to ignorance of the benefits of parental involvement in supporting reading for students. The community mobilization strategy is key to addressing this challenge.

Recommendations

EGRA should strengthen its efforts towards greater community engagement in order to achieve scalability and sustainability of the program. As the NRS suggests, parents need to assume their role more actively considering that the success of early grade reading depends a lot on the home environment that encourages learning, high expectation for achievement and the future, and parents being involved in the child's education.

Key to the improved performance in this area is the training of VCRFs, some of whom have given up on their roles as they felt not validated and equipped. As CRECCOM is getting engaged to assume its role more actively, it will also be important to EGRA to review the working arrangement with MOGCDSW, especially at district and community level. The evaluation recommends introduction of an MOU at district level with the MOGCDSW to engage its field staff more actively than the current passive arrangement.

Capacity building of CRECCOM to address issues related to financial capacity and management is critical and urgent as time has been lost, and this has affected potential investment in the parent and community structures.

The National Library Service has been engaged in the work under EGRA and was involved in the formulation of the National Reading Strategy. EGRA should however pursue further a more formalized involvement of this critical institution to assist in disseminating reading materials, with a particular focus on serving rural schools.

Another recommendation is to strengthen the linkage of EGRA to the decentralization structures such as VDCs and ADCs as one way of achieving institutionalization at community level and to promote sustainability though "Education by Public Action[20]."

Component 4: Improving Policy Environment to Support Early Grade Reading

- *Task 4-1: Attend MoEST Technical Working Groups (TWGs) Relevant to Early Grade Reading*
- *Task 4-2: Develop Memoranda of Understanding*
- *Task 4-3: Facilitate Extension of Reading Instruction Time*

The overall tasks do not reflect policy outcomes but outputs, yet there has clearly been some policy victories. Nearly universally, key informants were enthusiastic about EGRA and evidence is that USAID and other donors have positively influenced policy. In 2014, ESIP II notes that it "is possibly the most evidence–based plan developed by the MoEST" (page 14) and speaks about tackling wastage and shifting the focus from inputs to processes. It emphasizes a similar plan which matches EGRA's design such as:

- Develop PPPs with local publishers;
- Decentralize book procurement
- Ensure 50% of children reach Standard 4 Literacy and numeracy targets by 2017
- Lengthen the school day by an hour to focus on literacy
- Reduce repetition rates from 22% to 10%,
- Double access to secondary school, etc.

The ESIP II, document is peppered with references to EGRA data, reports and methodologies. It states clearly that the EGRA program needs to be scaled up.[21]

Task 4-1: Attend MoEST Technical Working Groups (TWGs) Relevant to Early Grade Reading

There are mixed findings on the attendance and participation in TWGs by EGRA. According to the Second Annual Report, due to misunderstandings/miscommunication, EGRA did not attend the Basic Education TWG or one of the Standard, Research and Development TWG sessions.

However, in ESIP II, the MoEST admits that "Not all TWGs are working as planned, but with determined leadership from the ministry and commitment from development partners (especially in providing technical assistance) the TWGs can play a key role in sub-sector development."[22]

Several development partner respondents stated that EGRA will not be able to influence the MoEST and have as effective a relationship since EGRA is not co-located with either the MoEST or MIE. Being based at the Ministry would ensure greater influence, and certainly more influence on the relevant TWGs.

Recommendation: Consider additional ways in which the EGRA approach can be embedded at MoEST to increase the systematic implementation by all relevant TWGs with active support of EGRA staff for the duration of contract implementation.

Task 4-2: Develop Memoranda of Understanding

[20] Education by Public Action is a strategy intended to institutionalize decentralization for enhanced community participation in solving local problems. VDCs and ADCs

[21] ESIP-II p. 26

[22] ESIP II p. 42

Overall EGRA has been very successful at signing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with multiple stakeholders as detailed in the table below.

Table 19: Memoranda of Understanding

Signatory	Signed	Out of Potential	Notes
Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare	1	1	Signed in April 2014
MoEST	None		Covered by bilateral
DEMS	11	11	100% coverage
Cohort A Schools	1181	1188	99.4% coverage
Cohort B Schools	0	409	Scheduled for 2015

Few schools are taking the MOU seriously and have implemented action plans (Figure 15 below).

But, this seems to be the exception rather than the rule. According to one KII, most of the items agreed to in the school MOU are beyond the control of the Head Teacher, PTA and Community signatories. The one item that is controlled by schools is the amount of time dedicated to reading. As noted above, most of the treatment schools are implementing approximately one hour of reading. In particular, schools cannot control teacher transfers and infrastructure commitments.

The evaluation team was unable to confirm the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare's commitment to EGRA. The respondents listed as potential KIIs were unavailable in spite of persistent efforts to set up a face-to-face or telephone interview. Again, the MOU is very general and not binding.

Figure 12: Example of an MOU Action Plan

Conclusions

It is impressive that EGRA has managed to organize so many MOUs. Given that the MoEST approved the 2014 NRS and the ESIP II strongly advocates using reading interventions introduced under MTPDS and EGRA (both as a learning strategy and the main evidence of improved outcomes for its M&E framework), MOUs may be less necessary.

Task 4-3: Facilitate Extension of Reading Instruction Time

From a policy point of view, the adoption in ESIP II of an additional hour of schooling focused on literacy is USAID's greatest accomplishment. This has been consolidated further as the MoEST has officially adopted the NRS. Finally, when the draft benchmarks for reading are adopted officially, this will provide further processes to support quality reading.

Monitoring and Evaluation and Crosscutting Issues

- ME-1: Internal Activity Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)
- ME-2: Coordinating with External Evaluator for Baseline and Midterm Assessments
- ME-3: Regular Ongoing Reporting
- XC-1: Local Capacity Development (LCD)
- XC-2: Students with Special Needs/Learning Disabilities
- XC-3: Gender Equity
- XC-4: Grants under Contract (GUCs)
- XC-5: Geographic Coverage
- XC-6: Public Private Partnerships

M&E Activities

Overall, there is satisfactory achievement on most cross cutting issues as they are not the direct focus of the activity but rather have an impact on all program activities.

It is a concern to the evaluators that the Education Management Information System (EMIS) data is not complete enough to provide the data without having to repeatedly ask the PEAs for such data. As discussed in the M&E Section (Section 4.5) below, many of the schools have been observed by EGRA related staff, evaluators and PEAs, yet the feedback mechanism to the EMIS staff at MoEST on classroom conditions does not exist. USAID's Data Quality Assessment of EGRA in August 2014, called for EGRA to be "focused on utilizing the vast database of management knowledge of the District Education Management Information System (DEMIS) Officers in relation to possible integration of some of the indicators collected under EGRA through the national EMIS." PEPFAR has, across the world, been encouraging routine data to be collected through the Health Management Information System.

- Provide data to be integrated into EMIS;
- Prepopulate routine monitoring forms from EMIS so that data can be corrected/updated;
- Use EMIS as the source of routine data, such as classroom conditions to plan procurement.

Coordinating with External Evaluator for Baseline and Midterm Assessments

RTI coordinated well with both Impact and Performance Evaluation data collection activities.

Regular Ongoing Reporting

RTI quarterly and annual reporting appears to be comprehensive and timely. Yet, the use of that reported data appears to be a missed opportunity as feedback loops are not apparent.

The concept of feedback comes from the field of cybernetics, but the term has been adopted in international development and M&E loosely and rhetorically, often sounding good in proposals and reports. In development speak, much of current discourse focuses on signals or data feedback, with some venturing into feedback mechanisms that are processes that do something with the data, and rarely to organizational feedback systems, also often referred to as iterative feedback loops. KIIs, particularly with District staff indicated frustration with the lack of feedback.

RTI notes that the Tangerine software does not allow rapid feedback and that it takes time. In particular they note:

"The LAT is designed to be conducted on a termly basis. During each cycle we (RTI) conduct assessments at 33 schools (three schools per district). At each school we assess 30 children (10 per Standards 1-3, five boys, and five girls). During each cycle a total of 990 students are assessed. We receive the data after each cycle, but it takes time to clean the data and analyze it. Up to this point we

have mainly been using the data to produce an overall summary report for each round which summarizes the mean scores and zero scores across all 33 schools for that term. We have also included the data in our most recent training manuals to let teachers, head teachers, and PEAs see how students are scoring on the reading skills."[23]

Table 20: Responses to Feedback

Respondent Type	Comments
Teachers	Teachers are not taught how to conduct the mini-LAT which makes it difficult for them to monitor their students' learning.
PEAs	Several PEAs wondered what happened to the data that they collect routinely and also why they are asked the same question often.
DEMs	District Managers complained that their District Councils are asking where the data is and also data is provided to them up to a year out of date.
DMEOs	"…the process limits real time feedback, thus limiting the interaction between DMEOs and District Leadership…DMEOs feel they are being utilized as data couriers." [24]
MoEST	EGRA uses EMIS data but does not have a mechanism to report EMIS errors back to the MoEST (for example, incorrect
USAID/Malawi	"It was noted that data once collected, processed and analyzed; there are no set mechanisms that will allow the flow of data back to primary stakeholders who are expected to use the data for decisions regard the implementation of the reading intervention. Where data is fed back, it is outdated and implementers of the reading intervention cannot make corrective measures to improve the implementation of the intervention."[25]

EGRA is reinforcing the timely availability of the LAT scores through a web link that is allowing some users instant feedback, however the functionality or degree of use of this add-on to the LAT was not assessed during this evaluation.

Recommendations

A few recommendations are provided to improve the M&E function of EGRA:

- Strengthen the M&E feedback loop to EMIS to improve the robustness and efficiency of the EMIS. SADC EMIS coordination efforts include improving EMIS systems by making the data more accurate
- Localize data processing as part of efforts to strengthen local capacity development and to enhance efficient delivery. Build the capacity of the local RTI office to undertake LAT data processing and dissemination
- Extend assessment of students to reading centers as part of strengthening the relevance and functionality of the centers

[23] Steven Backman Deputy CoP Email on Wed 2014/12/03 04:01 PM

[24] USAID Report of the Data Quality Assessment (DQA) of EGRA August 2014 Pages 7 and 8

[25] Ibid

Local Capacity Development

Sub-tasks

1. *Local capacity is built in area of early grade reading*
2. *CRECCOM's capacity is built in area of EGRA activity management*

LCD under EGRA aims to improve the capacity of Malawian structures and organizations to carry forward early grade reading activities once EGRA has closed. Based on this understanding, it is evident that the LCD was intended to be a strategy for sustaining the initiative. Key to performance assessment in this regard are the issues of the design of the model, implementation of the LCD, and CRECCOM capacity building.

Design of LCD

According to the plan, the LCD was premised on improving the capacity of Malawian structures and organizations to carry forward early grade reading activities once EGRA has closed. Institutions targeted for capacity building included MIE, the National Library Service (NLS) and CRECCOM. The mother institution responsible for implementation of early grade reading is the DBE, with coordination and support led by DIAS. The evaluation established that the MoEST was actively involved in capacity building efforts especially involving curriculum review and reading instruction. The lack of targeting of the MoEST under LCD in the design is however surprising in the context of addressing sustainability. The EGRA goals are to focus on sustaining momentum in such elements as improved reading outcomes, and the development of structures and a culture to support early grade reading. Although the MoEST was targeted with capacity building initiatives, the evaluation identifies the lack of the MoEST being targeted in the LCD design as a missed opportunity—this would have allowed the program to address some capacity issues affecting MoEST in a more comprehensive way as part of efforts to achieve sustainability of early grade reading. Although USAID basic education funding is limited in its use, the MoEST stands out as the main structure and organization to support the sustainability of EGRA and should have certainly been one of the focal institutions in LCD.

The evaluation also established that apart from the capacity assessment plan intended to understand capacity gaps at CRECCOM, the design of LCD did not envisage a capacity assessment plan for MIE and NLS, although the latter organizations participated in the training and activities that followed. The lack of clarity on capacity needs for MIE and NLS and more especially the MoEST meant that most of the capacity development responses lacked solid parameters to measure change in capacity of the targeted institutions after the interventions.

Implementation of the LCD

MIE, NLS and MoEST staff in particular received training, mentoring, and opportunities for practical application of their new skills with the support of Brattle Publishing Group (BPG). This was conducted through a collaborative working arrangement especially associated with the development of curriculum materials, preparation of trainings, and the facilitation of the training sessions and workshops. Although the MoEST was not particularly targeted in the LCD plan for the year, it was evident that the EGRA approach worked with and through MoEST personnel and structures to deliver on tasks—this was a positive development towards institutionalization of EGRA. The key question, however, is whether this is the appropriate model for achieving local capacity in the area of implementation—this is especially the case in the ministry if the activity is to achieve sustainability and scalability. Other donors suggest that in future EGRA designs, more efforts should be taken to imbed staff in the ministry to achieve more capacity through mentorship, structures and systems strengthening to achieve greater EGRA institutionalization.

In terms of training delivery, the evaluation established that the EGRA, in collaboration with the MoEST, adopted the cascade model with training conducted at three levels, namely:

- Level 1 – Training of Trainers (TOT), which involved senior staff from key MoEST Directorates, MIE, NLS, EGRA staff and TTC Principals. These individuals were trained to act as expert trainers for Training of Facilitators.
- Level 2 – Training of Facilitators, which involved PEAs and key teachers drawn from zones. These individuals were trained to act as trainers at TOIs held at zone level.
- Level 3 – Training of Implementers (TOI), which involved head teachers and teachers involved in early grade reading at school level. These individuals were trained to implement EGRA in Standards 1-3.

An assessment of the cascade model showed that it was more cost effective as it was held closer to the beneficiaries unlike other centralized training models. By adopting the CPD model, the cascade model has become more institutionalized and has the potential to enhance learning outcomes through mentorship. The major concern regarding the implementation of LCD is the lack of integration in the pre-service training through TTCs. Attempts were made to do this through involvement of TTC lecturers and Principals in the TOT. However, being a policy issue, these efforts did not bear much visible results. To achieve sustainability and scalability of training in early grade reading using the EGRA approach, integration of the approach in the pre-service curriculum remains a key strategy. The MoEST, through the National Reading Strategy and the ESIP II, has made its intentions clear to scale up EGRA. The pre-service training has been identified in the National Reading Strategy as a potential vehicle to achieve this. The EGRA intervention should position itself to support these efforts.

CRECCOM Capacity Building

Capacity building efforts targeting CRECCOM were on topics related to contractual negotiations and financial requirements. An institutional capacity assessment conducted at CRECCOM was used to guide the training intervention, which targeted 45 staff members according to the annual plan. An ongoing peer-mentoring program complemented the training with technical support from RTI International, which began in the early part of the activity.

Despite these efforts, the evaluators established that CRECCOM could not implement most of its activities, due to unresolved contractual and accounting related issues which resulted from limited financial management capacity and lack of financial liquidity for CRECCOM to manage cost-reimbursable contracts (i.e. this is where a firm expends its own resources to implement an activity and invoice the funder for reimbursements). Further, the study noted that CRECCOM generally demonstrated low contractual negotiation capacity. They entered into the legal agreement with RTI but were generally unaware of ramifications and expectations in the contract clauses, particularly of the cost reimbursement implications and types of supporting document required. Most of the component three implementation delay were due to the agreement to allow CRECCOM to renegotiate the contract they had already signed.

The evaluation team is however pleased to note that the issues are being resolved and the capacity building work has commenced at the time of this performance evaluation to address this shortfall. The fact that CRECCOM only used 11% of their contract specified budget in a year and a half confirms that the issues were protracted which affected activity delivery especially with regard to the training of VCRFs and local leaders, which was key to the success of component three. The disruption to activity delivery was quite unprecedented as it was unreasonably protracted. RTI therefore needs to expedite the capacity building intervention at CRECCOM in order to redeem the output losses incurred in the first year.

Lessons Learned

The LCD is very critical to efforts intended to plan and implement the exit strategy for the activity. The MoEST, as the implementing agency, is best placed as a key institution to be targeted if EGRA is to achieve sustainability and scale up.

The pre-service training presents the most viable entry point to achieve scalability and sustainability of EGRA. Only limited strides towards institutionalization of EGRA can be achieved if LCD is implemented only outside pre-service training.

Recommendations

The following recommendations should support improvements in LCD:

- Review the LCD design to integrate the MoEST as a key implementing institution in efforts to carry forward early grade reading activities once EGRA/RTI has closed and to gain consistency among other projects implementing the NRS.
- In collaboration with the MoEST, the future design of EGRA should prepare to support MoEST efforts to integrate EGRA in pre-service training as planned in ESIP II.
- RTI should mentor CREECOM on USAID contractual matters and expedite the recently commissioned capacity building interventions for CRECCOM to reinvigorate implementation of component three.

Students with Special Needs

The number of teachers supported in the application of adapted early grade reading materials for special needs students is on the increase with evidence of SNE materials aligned with the EGRA approach. *Only one of the schools in the sample*[26] *was a Special Needs school, and they indicated they do not have sufficient materials for Standards 1-3.* Special needs students in Malawian primary schools have disabilities such as hearing impairments, visual impairments, mobility issues and communication difficulties including autism and learning disabilities. Khulisa research assistants observed special needs students in attendance in 44% of the control school classes and 49% of the treatment school classes.

FGDs held with parents, school management committees, mothers' groups, PTAs and other community members indicated that in treatment schools, EGRA was available to all students. A number of FGD participants stated that a special needs teacher would best serve these students, but there seems to be a shortage of such teachers in both treatment and control zones.

A government policy to support the provision of inclusive education exists, but there appears to be a serious disparity between policy and current practice.

Materials

In October 2013, the EGRA/Perkins Disability, Gender, and Vulnerable Populations (DGVP) Specialist conducted an assessment of the current TLM available to schools for children with disabilities and special needs. The conclusion drawn from that assessment is that TLM are not available in a variety of media for children with special needs (RTI Annual Report, October 2014, p. 1). As a result, the DGVP specialist developed a procurement plan, to be implemented in 2015, to obtain much needed low-tech assistive devices for use in EGRA districts.

[26] Per the USAID Evaluation Scope of Work.

A braille version of *Nditha Kuwerenga* was developed in collaboration with DSNE, Montfort College, and visually impaired students and teachers of Malingunde Resource Centre for the Blind. The final draft has been submitted to MoEST and is awaiting endorsement before being submitted to USAID for final clearance (RTI Annual Report, October 2014).

A Disability Education Resource Guide for parents and service providers was developed. It contains available resources and information on how to get services in Malawi. Unfortunately, the DGVP specialist stated that funds are not allotted in the EGRA Statement of work for printing and distribution of the guide.

Figure 13: Special Needs Materials

Teacher training

The DGVP specialist said that EGRA promotes inclusive education by addressing SNE strategies in teacher training. Teachers of SNE students are now included in the Training of Facilitators workshop so that they can assist in zonal training—effective strategies for the instruction of special needs students has been inserted in the training. Teacher Training Module 3 included a section on literacy instruction for students with special needs, and provided training on how to effectively teach fluency, comprehension, and phonological awareness, and how to conduct continuous assessment of reading[27]. An inclusive approach to teaching is a challenge due to large class sizes and the capacity of the teachers to individualize instruction. Primary class teachers are sensitized to SNE during training, explained the DSNE Director. EGRA staff regularly collaborate with DSNE and Monfort College—the DGVP specialist finds it to be more effective linking groups as he is the only such specialist on the EGRA team.

Recent training has focused on how to develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for SNE students. Budget limitations have affected the capacity to support more SNE efforts. For the three years of EGRA implementation, DGVP is allocated $5,000 per year for the training of parents of children with disabilities in EGRA districts.

Braille Cup

The Braille Cup showcases braille reading and partnerships. Five schools that teach braille each sent 4 participants for the competition at Salima LEA in July 2014. Thirty students competed in the categories of oral production, fluency, spelling and proofreading. The Braille Cup was a highly motivating event with lots of winners who received certificates and prizes as a result of the partnerships. Teachers, head teachers and other officials view the competition as a learning booster. The Braille Cup was also seen as creating a significant change by the DSNE in the field of blind education in Malawi.

[27] RTI Annual Report, p. 17

Perkins (Subcontractor)

Perkins supplied five braille printers and low-tech hand frames through MoEST. The equipment is much needed but some have broken and might be repaired easily if the teachers had tools and were trained to do the repairs.

Conclusions

As a cross-cutting area, SNE is well represented by Perkins in the EGRA intervention and serves as a link with other larger SNE initiatives. The addition of SNE instructional strategies in zonal training assures that class teachers are sensitized to the needs of SNE students and are introduced to some basic instructional strategies for application in the classroom.

Unanticipated Outcomes

Student, teacher and parent success among Braille Cup participants has created motivation to excel at reading braille.

Recommendations

EGRA should expand linkages with Braille Cup competitions in other countries to gain insight into sustainability in the future.

Gender Equity

Gender equity is a crosscutting issue for EGRA. Issues of gender-based constraints and opportunities are not prevalent in these early standards, but they may contribute to later student and/or parent decisions on school continuation or dropout. When young girls feel success at school in learning to read and the parents acknowledge this success, young girls are more likely to continue their education into upper primary and secondary school. It is too early in the life of the activity to determine if EGRA has affected the retention of girls in schools.

UN data[28] on girls' education notes that "inadequate and inappropriate sanitary facilities at the school for menstrual hygiene management and cultural and traditional practices which force girls into early marriage" exist in mid (Standard 5 & 6) to upper (Standard 7 & 8) primary standards.

Primary Classes

Parent and community FGDs report that reading is equitably taught to both boys/males and girls/females in Standard 1 to 3 classes in treatment schools in. A few FGD participants expressed that girls may now be out performing boys in reading using the EGRA intervention.

Evaluation data demonstrates moderate levels of attendance (66-69%) by both boys/males and girls/females in primary schools in Malawi. Attendance in treatment schools is generally the same as that in control schools. No gender or instructional model advantaged has emerged in relation to attendance at this time.

[28] http://www.unicef.org/malawi/reallives_15901.html and http://unjobs.org/vacancies/1355941605280

Table 21: Student Attendance

	Official Enrollment Average October 2014	Observed in Class Attendance November 2014	Percentage of registered in attendance
Control Schools			
Boys	62	41	66%
Girls	62	43	69%
Treatment			
Boys	64	43	67%
Girls	65	44	68%

Primary Teachers

Teacher gender in primary grades was fairly evenly distributed with 56% females in control schools and 55% in treatment schools. This small sample of 171 primary teachers shows an increase over the UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2012 data[29], which indicated that 40% of Malawian primary teachers are female. The World Bank data may represent all primary Standards 1-8 whereas the target of this preliminary evaluation is Standard 1-3 teachers.

All CPD sessions emphasize the use of strategies to assure gender equity during instruction. The DGVP specialist explained that these strategies focus on seating plans and the use of gender sensitive language by the teacher in EGRA training.

Feedback from FGDs held with parents, school management committees, mothers' groups, PTAs and other community members indicated that they thought EGRA targeted both male and female students. They also said that resources such as textbooks seem to be equally distributed. Some FGD participants reported that female students might be outperforming male students in reading performance.

Instructional Materials

One of the first tasks in the EGRA work plan was to review the existing TLM to assure alignment with USAID's *Guide for Promoting Gender Equity and Inclusiveness in Teaching and Learning Materials.* The TLM review focused on balance of male and female characters in text and illustrations; occupations; male/female attributes; and positive modeling of inclusion in the areas of gender and disability. Following the review, some materials were revised in collaboration with MIE. The DGVP specialist continued to participate and review all TLM development prepared in workshops, and contributed as needed to assure both gender equity in textbooks and instructional strategies. New decodable stories are being developed in collaboration with Malawi Pen, MIE and NLS that adhere to these guidelines on gender sensitivity.

Policy

EGRA has an MOU with the MOGCDSW at the national level but not at the district level. DCOP stated that this is link may have been overlooked effecting implementation level linkages.

Recommendations

The Social Impact (SI) Evaluation should take a close look at dropout rate of girls in EGRA treatment schools. The dropout data could be very telling as to whether EGRA has impacted on girls' school attendance and success in upper primary.

[29] http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.TCHR.FE.ZS

A clearer look at the achievement of girls is also essential. Anecdotally, some parents said that girls are developing reading skills better using the EGRA approach but this needs to be born out with assessment results.

Grants Under Contract

The GUC was intended to provide incentives to schools for good performance, but in fact, since there is no system to measure performance, respondents reported that it actually rewards the schools that have completed the application form. Since the PEAs are trying to encourage schools to apply, the process creates room for bias. In addition, the relaxed selection process (no proper criteria but based on the judgment of those involved in selecting during reading fairs) exposes the exercise to the subjective school selection.

Furthermore, the evaluation team noted that there was limited knowledge in general in writing grants proposals after successful schools have been informed of their success. Capacity building for grants proposal writing was not envisaged in the annual plan. At the same time, the idea of subjecting successful schools to the process of proposal writing in its current shape remains contentious among the participants—this is especially so with some head teachers who have found it difficult to write as evidenced by the many call backs, especially from PEAs. To-date, no grants have been disbursed, although successful schools have received communication.

The degree of achievement under this task has been hampered by two main factors. First, the initial plan to set minimum requirements for awards to winning schools did not materialize. This is because the criteria were changed to shortlist grant applicants to 10 per district rather than set minimum requirements per school regardless of district. This change of criteria tended to place all schools on equal footing, yet attendant environmental situations were clearly different. This put to question the issue of equitable treatment of competition schools. Secondly, most schools lacked the capacity to write grant proposals, and this was a requirement for selected schools to access their grants. Table 23 shows that about 76% percent of the eligible schools were unable to apply for an EGRA grant and the main reason was that most of them lacked the capacity to write the proposal. This is consistent with the activity records, which show that 1,162 schools applied for the grants and of these, a total of 55 schools (5 per district) have been awarded grants and were notified by MoEST. No grant funds have been distributed as of yet because EGRA is still finalizing the payment milestones for each of the grants. EGRA grants are designed to improve or expand reading in schools. Many schools also have infrastructure needs for which these EGRA funds could not be used because of the constraints of USAID Basic Education funding. However, with proper training in grants application, innovative ways could be identified to apply such funds within the existing guidelines of EGRA grants funding, which do not focus on infrastructure projects.

Table 22: Grant Application

Has this school applied for an EGRA grant to support community activities about reading?		
	Count	**Percentage**
Missing	**1**	**2**
No	38	76
Yes	11	22
Grand Total	**50**	**100**

Recommendations

EGRA should review the grants application process to make it less cumbersome for the schools to access the grants. A simple form with less technical proposal writing requirements should be designed and completed by the successful schools.

The grants selection criteria and process for schools should be strengthened to reduce chances of subjective selection.

EGRA should consider awarding grants to schools with a "good idea" or initiative idea to improve reading instruction rather than schools that are already performing well.

Public Private Partnerships

Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) implemented under EGRA refer to partnerships between EGRA and private sector donors. The rationale for the PPPs is to elicit additional support from the private sector to demonstrate additional commitment for education, specifically for reading in Malawi, and to increase the chances of sustainability after the activity ends.

O'Brien and Associates International (OAI) conducted an alliance assessment and mapping exercise in 2014 that identified several promising areas that have served as the initial partnership framework. These include:

Table 23: Partnership Framework

Type of Support	Identified Sponsors	Committed resources Jan 2015	Draft Agreement Committed	Potential Agreement
Teacher Resource Network	2	0	MWK 200,000	1
Braille Cup Competition	1	0		
Outstanding Teachers and Students Awards	1	0	0	1
Teaching Resource Hotline	1	0	0	1
Reading Tools in a Box	20	$45,000	0	20
USAID Global Education Partners	0	0	0	0
Total	25	$45,000	MWK 200,000	23

As of January 20, 2015, no PPP agreement has been signed (although RTI reported that Inde Bank would provide nearly $10,000 to support the Braille Cup—this funding has been delayed and may be available at a later date) and a Service Agreement between Airtel and RTI International has been drafted. In this draft agreement, Airtel agrees to pay MWK 200,000 towards installation of the two short messaging system (SMS) lines for the SMS Gateway System. Airtel will also cover the cost of bulk SMS to 10,000 recipients a month. Since the activity is providing training to 10,811 Cohort A teachers and head teachers, and 2,618 Cohort B teachers, EGRA will be covering the cost of additional SMSs at MWK 6.60 per SMS. The agreement of 10,000 SMSs per month suggests that teachers will only receive one message per month. This is in a time where other USAID projects are sending regular motivational, interactive and instructive messages to recipients (for example the USAID supported MAMA: Mobile Alliance for

Maternal Action[30] project, which uses USSD and voicemail technology). Finally, there is a concern about who else should be receiving the bulk SMS—the PEAs, other teachers, MIE and MoEST officials? How will capacity of the MoEST or MIE be built to use the SMS service and to continue to message teachers?

Of bigger concern is the lack of MoEST involvement in the PPPs due to funding constraints, which leads to sustainability concerns. In addition, the USG is not an actual PPP signatory. How are donations linked to the MoEST? When EGRA ends, will there be any continuity?

At the end of the activity, it will be important to conduct a cost analysis. Overall the OAI subcontract was $253,357 to assist with the PPPs and the design of the agreements appear to be set on corporate social responsibility lines (donations/charity), and not corporate social investment, nor a more conventional PPP[31] where the private sector and the public sector collaborate and profits are generated. Furthermore, the cost of delivering the books to schools/communities and the launch of the PPPs should be factored into the cost analysis.

Other opportunities could include crowdsourcing funding for books, identifying matching funds, and working with USAID's global education partners particularly Microsoft.

Integrating USAID's Country Development Cooperation Strategy

According to the Integration Implementing Partner Workshop Report May 23, 2014. EGRA plans to incorporate themes from other USAID activities into EGRA.

Possibilities include malaria awareness (Malaria Care), basic primary health care practices (SSDI Communications), and sensitization on child labor issues (Farmers Union). In addition, EGRA will utilize EGRA community reading centers to raise awareness and provide materials from other USAID activities and explore ways to incentivize EGRA volunteers through other USAID activities.

The 2014/5 Work plan includes the following activities:

- INT-1: Incorporating themes from other USAID activities into EGRA reading materials
- INT-2: Utilizing community reading centers to raise awareness for other USAID Activities
- INT-3: Explore ways to incentivize EGRA volunteers through other USAID activities
- INT-4: Pilot the use of Mobile Money to disburse funding to the field

[30] http://www.mobilemamaalliance.org/

[31] Examples of traditional PPPs include private sector building hospital or prisons on public land, covering the cost of infrastructure and receiving a government subsidy.

FINDINGS EVALUATION QUESTION 3 AND 4

Evaluation Question 3: What are the key factors needed to take the EGRA to a national scale and ensure sustainability?

Sir Michael Barber[32] a prominent internationally acknowledged education reform authority states that traditional definitions of sustainability (mostly borrowed from the private enterprise and environmental fields) are not appropriate for education. He suggests that sustainability should be defined as:

1. Irreversibility: are the changes wrought by the activity /program firmly entrenched?
2. Momentum which includes:
   2.1. Have Educational outcomes improved?
   2.2. Have bureaucratic structures changed?
   2.3. Has organizational culture changed

Respondents and government documents are unequivocal—EGRA is the preferred strategy by the Government of Malawi. Communities, teachers and parents are entranced by the method's ability to ensure that children read at a young age. Numerous stories were recounted about how younger children are teaching older siblings to read and how teachers at higher standards are using the methodology. ESIP II and the 2014 MoEST approved National Reading Strategy both firmly entrench EGRA as the methodology of choice for the MoEST. Evidence of spill-over reiterates this point.

Table 24: EGRA Scale and Sustainability

Criteria	EGRA Malawi
Irreversibility: are the changes wrought by the project/program firmly entrenched?	Yes, the approach is now entrenched in the ESIP II and the 2014 MoEST approved NRS. Attitudes of numerous stakeholders are supportive. If USAID pulled out tomorrow, elements of the program would continue
Momentum which includes:	
Have Educational outcomes improved?	Yes, both the LAT scores[33] and teacher/community and parent perceptions support better reading. But, better feedback mechanisms are necessary.
Have bureaucratic structures changed?	Partially. PEAs and DEMs in target districts and some other districts have adapted to fully embrace EGRA. However, the functions funded under EGRA will have to be taken on by MoEST. Most importantly, Pre-service Teacher training must be changed to include EGRA teaching and learning methodologies.
Has organizational culture changed?	Partially, one of the tests of success will be the continued increase of contact time from the present average of 43 minutes to the required one hour as required under ESIP II.

[32] Sir Michael Barber co-authored two major education reports: *How the world's best-performing schools come out on top* (2007) and *How the world's most improved school systems keep getting better* (2010). He previously served the UK government as Head of the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (from 2001-2005) and as Chief Adviser to the Secretary of State for Education on School Standards (from 1997-2001). Before joining government he was a professor at the Institute of Education at the University of London.

[33] RTI is the custodian of the LAT raw data scores and analyses, see EGRA Activity Reports.

Sustainability also includes concerns about feasibility and efficiency. There are two primary education assessments used by development partners: the Monitoring and Learning Achievement (MLA) undertaken by UNICEF is a bi-annual subject competency assessment in Chichewa, English and Mathematics. Early Grade Reading Assessment was undertaken by USAID's MTPDS activity to establish a national baseline to identify areas of investment need in reading. RTI also conducts a tri-annual assessment (LAT) in treatment districts to survey acquisition the acquisition of specific reading skills. It is a sizeable population but not sufficiently large to be a representative sample. There seems to be wide-spread misperceptions over the utility and purpose of these various assessments. Also the reference to EGRA as the project/program, EGRA as a method to teach reading, EGRA as an assessment tool, and EGRA as a sampling tool confuses the peripheral stakeholders.

The fact that EGRA LAT data is cleaned and analyzed in North Carolina was a sore point for many respondents, who felt that sustainability can only be achieved if there is solid responsibility, ownership and capacity to clean and analyze data in Malawi. Then the data could be disseminated quickly and utilized to modify training and class instruction. Other assessments such as SACMEQ and MLA are analyzed locally indicating that the capacity is present in-country, increasing the possibility of rapid feedback to teachers, schools and districts.

All development partners interviewed expressed **collaboration and support** for EGRA, stating that they explicitly link their programs to EGRA when possible. DfID's flagship girls' education project is considering funding EGRA in 2015. When asked the best route to sustainability, two pieces of advice were offered by donors experienced with working in Malawi:

- "The problem with the USAID approach is that they use expensive external consultants to implement projects. This poses scalability and sustainability challenges." Donor KII
- "They need a different model to achieve scalability. Better to embed staff in the ministry to work together with the ministry and ensure capacity development and mentorship to strengthen systems and structures.' Donor KII

The two comments seems to reflect a theme of working more closely with MoEST headquarters, perhaps by moving RTI headquarters into the MoEST, with Malawians (such as the RTI Chief of Party) leading the effort. These themes were reiterated by many respondents throughout the evaluation and, as USAID develops its process of more deeply integrating EGRA with MoEST, they need to be considered.

Recommendations

In order to achieve sustainability, EGRA should:

- Focus on continuing to build EGRA supporting systems such as:
    - Teachers attending teacher training should become eligible for CDP points;
    - Pre-service training should incorporate EGRA. Although this was not part of the statement of work for EGRA activity implementation, integration of EGRA in pre-service training stands out strongly as a sustainability factor which needs to be considered. Efforts by the MoEST towards integrating EGRA in pre-service training through an upcoming review of the pre-service teacher training curriculum expected to start in March, 2015 is an encouraging development that will should be supported;
    - Investigate policy options that would eliminate the tax on paper to promote a print rich society;
    - Parents and volunteer training provided with explicit recognition (certificates, acknowledgement);
    - Rapid systems of collecting data (including testing) developed with multiple, active feedback loops using technology.

    - Investigate and pursue other opportunities with technology, such as developing an EGRA social media strategy.
- All donor partners and Government of Malawi entities should
    - Develop a national assessment framework to determine which assessments will serve the variety of needs in primary education: diagnostic, proficiency and achievement.
    - In addition to typical assessment criteria (sensitivity, validity, reliability, etc.) the framework should take into account practicality, potential degree of coverage and capacity in Malawi.
    - Some assessments should take advantage of mobile technology and computing to ensure the fastest sets of feedback loop to students, parents, teachers, schools, districts and the MoEST.
- EGRA should collaborate with MANEB as assessment instruments are developed and their use expanded. This would ease the modification and development of future assessments that serve a variety of purposes, possibly creating clarity on the purposes of the various assessments in use.
- To date, EGRA has really been focused on proving its case as an intervention that can work, it is clear that it is time now to focus on strategies that support going to scale and institutionalization.

Evaluation Question 4: Where, how and to what extent have the EGRA's components been adopted/adapted without USAID assistance?

The evaluators looked at two primary factors to respond to this question. The first is an index developed using observational data and KII at the schools and is called EGRA Implementation Fidelity (IF). The IF index amalgamates classroom observations (typically 3 per school) and responses from the teachers. It shows that there is a degree of good implementation fidelity in approximately a third of the control schools, and conversely that not all treatment schools are implementing with the same level of success. Fourteen of the 51 treatment schools had less than optimal IF, showing need for more support.

The second factor is the evaluation fieldwork conducted far from the EGRA implementation districts. Mulanje is a district in the far south of Malawi. At the Evaluation Inception Workshop, the MoEST specifically asked the evaluators to conduct fieldwork in four schools in Mulanje. USAID concurred with this recommendation. Fieldwork was conducted on November 19, 2014. This includes a report from the field in Mulanje by the research team.

Other evidence of spill over found during the evaluation includes:

- Teachers or administrators with experience with MTPDS or EGRA at another school
- DEM and PEA leadership and EGRA knowledge with motivation to make a change
- Use of school improvement grants and other District funds to support reading improvement
- CPD by PEA in neighboring zones with a focus on the "syllabic approach"
- Primary teachers sharing with intermediate teachers who have students who do not read well

Spill Over Measured Through Implementation Fidelity

In order to further define spill over, the evaluators calculated and quantified Implementation Fidelity (IF) by creating an index based on key items, which the evaluators feel are major contributors towards IF. These include[34]:

[34] The actual scoring can be found at the Summary Data Analysis Annex 6 on Implementation Fidelity

Teacher Training	Student Comfort	Reading Lesson Focus
Teacher Qualifications	Student Engagement	Style of Student Reading
Scripted Lessons	Before-reading Activities	Questioning by Teacher
Teacher Balance	Comprehension Strategies	Post-reading Tasks

Each item was scored according to the different response options. Every school was assigned a score for each of the items based on their respective responses to the various items. A score of 0 (zero) indicates no IF, whereas a score of 100 indicates the maximum IF. The overall scores of all the Indicators of Fidelity are as follows:

Table 25: Implementation Fidelity

School Type	Average	Min	Max
Control	45	23	78
Treatment	57	32	79

As can be seen from the Table 25, treatment schools on average scored 12 points higher than control schools, which indicated a greater degree of IF (as would be expected). However, the table also demonstrates that there was a degree of IF observed in control schools which could indicate spill-over into these schools.

Forty-one of the 55 (75%) of treatment schools achieved a score above 50 points, which indicates high levels of IF; teachers demonstrate EGRA-supported activities and teaching practices in the classroom. Interestingly, eight of the 26 (30%) control schools also scored within this range which could be evidence of activity spill-over. Eight treatment schools and a Mulanje school scored above 70 points which demonstrates very high levels of IF. School by school details are included in Annex 6.

Despite the majority of treatment schools scoring above 50 points, 14 schools that were included in the classroom observations scored 50 points or below, which is a result of more traditional teaching practices and poor use of EGRA promoted skills in the classroom during classroom observations. More than half of the control schools (18 out of 26) scored 50 points or below, as would be expected because EGRA has not been formally implemented in these schools.

The converse is also true, that nearly 31% (8 out of 26) of control schools are implementing elements of EGRA.

Mulanje Case Study

The Senior Education Methods Advisor for Shire Highlands Education Division (SHED), MoEST in October 2014 wrote a report about EGRA implementation in Mulanje in October 2014. Permission is currently being sought from DIAS to include this report as Annex 10.

Even though Mulanje District is outside of the USAID implementation districts, the District Council has decided to implement EGRA. They report spending over MKw 4 million of district funds to conduct EGRA LAT assessments of 44 randomly selected schools in September, 2014. The SEMA provided a full data set of the scores of Standard 2 and 3 students, by school.

They note that they have implemented reading fairs and are starting to implement EGRA but face constraints including:

- Insufficient materials
- Lack of access to training and teacher development materials.
- Minimal reading books to practice

One of the Mulanje schools, Mulanje LEA actually has an EGRA implement fidelity score of 78, which matches the highest scores in the USAID implementation zone.

An Evaluation Research Assistant, summarized qualitative data gathered on 19/11/2014:

Home-Grown EGRA: A Case of Masongola Zone In Mangochi

The PEA for Mulenga Zone has been there for just a month now. Previously he was a PEA of Masongola Zone in Mangochi where he managed to introduce and implement early grade reading using a personal initiative after learning it from his colleagues in EGRA intervention zones.

He first heard of the MTPDS at district meetings where Salima success stories were mentioned in passing. He later attended a phase out meeting of the MTPDS where he linked up with one of the key tutors present at the meeting.

With support from DEM he managed to use school improvement grants to pay tutor allowance for training of teachers in all zones on all the five basic principles of reading. After trainings the PEA was holding CPDs at TDC were teachers would do self-assessments and continual coaching. The PEA was also going to school to supervise and provide further coaching.

The schools were holding reading fairs and students were highly motivated to the point of demanding books to take home for reading practice. This was a case of Masongola 1 primary where a Standard 1 boy won the top prize at a reading fair for being able to follow all the basic reading principles during the completion.

Before he left Mangochi, the zone conducted a student's assessment which indicated that reading in early grades had increased with 15%.

He was planning to start implementing the community component when he was transferred to Thyolo.

According to the PEA, the DEM and the PEAs are critical to the sustainability of the activity. He highly recommended the Mangochi DEM and Mulanje DEM for the innovativeness since they were able to use the available resources to initiate necessary changes in their districts.

He said teachers need motivation from DEMs and PEAs and that CPDs can be used sustain the EGRA interventions even after the activity phases out.

Currently, he plans to implement "EGRA" without activity support in Mulenga Zone.

This eagerness to implement EGRA indicates extensive trust gained from the experience of others in the potential for positive instructional results.

FINDINGS COST ANALYSIS

Using a cost effectiveness analysis methodology, the evaluators assessed the unit cost per teacher per component and analyzed this by examining at the difference in perceptions for each component between treatment and control schools. The cost data per component provided by RTI in its Annual Report is shown in Table 26.

Table 26: Component Expenditure

	Total Expenditures (USD)
Quality Reading Instruction	$3,500,068
Teaching and Learning Materials	$402,686
Parental and Community Involvement	$955,975
Improving Policy Environment	$950,215

The EGRA FY 2014 Annual Report states that a total of 11,001 teachers, head teachers, and teaching assistants had successfully completed in-service training. Using the 11,001 figure as the denominator, the following raw component cost per teacher can be calculated as shown in Table 27.

Table 27: Cost per Teacher

Component	Cost per Teacher (USD)
Quality Reading Instruction	$318.16
Teaching and Learning Materials	$36.60
Parental and Community Involvement	$86.90
Improving Policy Environment	$86.38

When looking at the teacher perception indices per component, we see the following differences:

Table 28: Component Indices

Component	Treatment	Control	Difference
Quality Reading Instruction	86	68	18
Teaching and Learning Materials	72	42	31
Parental and Community Involvement	84	65	18
Improving Policy Environment	89		89

The component indices are calculated by using Likert scale indicator data from the classroom observation, parent/community, head teacher and KII instruments. The Likert scale data measures satisfaction for each indicator. The satisfaction ratings were quantified and then an unweighted average was calculated for the relevant basket of indicators for a component, and the result was multiplied by 100 to get the index value. A theoretical component index value of 100 would mean that all respondents were completed satisfied with each indicator relevant to that component. Table 29shows that treatment school respondents had a higher satisfaction rating than their control school counterparts for each component. There is an 18 point difference in perceptions of Quality Reading Instruction between treatment and control schools, a 31 point difference for TLM and an 18 point difference for Parental and Community Involvement. By looking at these differences, we can calculate the component point difference per teacher based on the raw component cost per teacher in Table 27.

Table 29: Cost per Increase

Component	Cost per Teacher (USD)	Point Difference	Cost per Point Difference
Quality Reading Instruction	$318.16	18	$17.47
Teaching and Learning Materials	$36.60	31	$1.19
Parental and Community Involvement	$86.90	18	$4.71
Improving Policy Environment	$86.38	N/A	N/A

Please note that there were no control school indicators for Improving Policy Environment, thus the cost effectiveness calculation for this component is not meaningful. What we are seeing, though, is that treatment teachers' aggregate index ratings of the first three components are higher than their control school counterparts and the cost per point difference is $17.47, $1.19 and $4.71 respectively—these dollar amounts indicate the cost for each point of satisfaction increase for treatment school teachers per component. So, the component that provides the best value for money in achieving a higher degree of satisfaction for treatment school teachers is TLM.

Value for Money

During the evaluation fieldwork, the evaluators were told that the learner assessment test (LAT) data was limited to three schools per district with the same schools visited during each of the first three administrations. However, the students were randomly selected each time and RTI did not record any unique indicators for the children, just the grade, class and gender. RTI stated that "the LAT data is not meant to be representative" nor "to measure any type of impact or cost-effectiveness of the intervention as a whole". Given this limitation of the LAT data, the evaluators were unable to carry out the value for money calculation as laid out in the Inception Report. The Value for Money equation is summarized in Annex 6.

CONCLUSIONS

How effective is the EGRA's approach toward achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary school students in Malawi?

EGRA has changed reading instruction in Standard 1-3 classes in Malawi in 11 education districts targeted by the EGRA. In EGRA treatment schools, 95% of observed teachers stated they now have training to teach reading. Those teachers are demonstrating the use of reading strategies that are identified as highly successful in reading research: setting the scene before reading, stating the book title, using students' background knowledge to link to new reading and sequencing the action in the story.

More print is becoming visible to the students in the classroom through the production of instructional materials. Teachers are making and acquiring posters, word cards and other instructional material for the classroom. But the call for more books and instructional materials is loud.

Competitions that showcase the reading skills of youth seem to be highly motivating for teachers, parents, and students. The Braille Cup and Reading Fairs are highly successful and motivating for all involved.

- Teacher confidence is raised as their students perform well.
- Students' skills in reading are reinforced during public performance of reading skills.
- Parents' pride in their children's ability to read, and are encouraged to ensure regular practice at home and the Reading Centers.
- Head teachers, chiefs and other community members are proud of the academic performance at their local school.
- Siblings and parents are increasing their own reading skills through interactions with Standard 1 EGRA students

How can the EGRA design, management, and execution become more efficient toward achieving program goals?

Systematic CPD implementation based at the district and zonal level is effectively designed, managed and executed. Strategies taught during CPD are used regularly in Standard 1-3 classes. Reinforcement of CPD taught strategies can be strengthened by mentoring and coaching but often insufficient transport is available to reach treatment schools in a zone was cited by both district and zone staff.

The 2014 MoEST approved NRS assures that the EGRA design will be utilized by MoEST to expand the distribution of effective reading strategies. With the expanded use of the EGRA design, the funding of SEGRIM and other comparable EGRA like training on the horizon, MoEST and USAID must closely monitor the integrity of the design, management and execution to achieve program goals.

Although assessment is a central feature of the EGRA model, assessment conducted three times a year is not reaching the schools, zones or districts in a timely manner that could be used to guide program implementation or class instruction. Little teacher assessment is being conducted in classes following reading lessons that would provide teachers with feedback on acquired learning and they do not have results from EGRA sampling data collected. Feedback loops with EMIS are also non-existent.

What are the key factors needed to take the EGRA to a national scale and ensure sustainability?

There are signs of improved involvement of parents in promoting reading; but, the culture of parents reading to children remains significantly weak. For parents who do not read to children, reasons cited included illiteracy or low levels of literacy leading to a fear of confusing their children; lack of free time,

and insufficient access to books mainly because head teachers are hesitant to release text books with students for fear of damage and loss since they are young.

The lack of promised training for community volunteers is dampening enthusiasm and motivation. Volunteer teachers up to now have not been trained as they were told during sensitization meetings. So some of them are demotivated and have stopped. Strengthen linkage of EGRA to the decentralization structures such as VDCs and ADCs as one way of achieving institutionalization at community level and to promote sustainability though "Education by Public Action."

At the policy level, expanded implementation is observed of the policy to increase Chichewa reading instruction to one hour in primary classes. In observed treatment and control schools the average reading class is 43 minutes including 55 minutes in Standard 1 treatment schools. It is extending the school day in both EGRA treatment schools and non-treatment schools.

The shift of EGRA as an activity to EGRA as a model for the mainstream MoEST Basic Education Program moves EGRA instructional program to the national scale. This should be coupled with integration of the EGRA approach in pre-service training for primary school teachers to ensure that more teachers are exposed to the approach and therefore improve reading instruction to support scale up and sustainability efforts. The upcoming planned review of the pre-service teacher training curriculum (expected to start in March, 2015) is an encouraging development that will need to be supported. Although integration of the EGRA approach in pre-service training is not within RTI's work plan, a few small steps can be made to expose TTC staff to the approach. For example: some lecturers from TTC are presently utilized for Training of Facilitators, lecturers could be rotated for each sequence of training so enable other TTC lecturers to gain an understanding of the EGRA approach. As a result, they may use that understanding to train TTC students in the future.

EGRA has considered a multiplicity of strategies to support reading, yet social media is ignored. Social media is growing in Malawi and is currently neglected by most development partners (including USAID/Malawi) and development programs such as EGRA. Yet, as smart phones spread, the growth of tablet sales in Malawi and likelihood that data will become cheaper, we recommend that EGRA develop a social media strategy that could be linked to its communications strategy (and perhaps messages sent via the SMS gateway program could also be delivered using WhatsApp or a social media platform such as Mxit).

For example, Malawi Nation has nearly 124,000 followers and Airtel Malawi, an EGRA supplier, have over 55,000 followers on Facebook

Figure 14: Social Media in Malawi

With a social media presence, it is possible to reach out to the Malawian diaspora or wealthier Malawians who may be keen to sponsor little libraries for schools and reading centers.

It is important to highlight particular policies which are outside the direct EGRA mandate but which left unaddressed will continue to impede the sustainability of the EGRA activity. These include teacher/student ratio in the classroom, teacher placement and the paper tax.

Malawi's paper tax needs to be addressed urgently for the following reasons:

- It creates a market distortion on the printing of textbooks which affects timely availability of textbooks and general availability of reading materials.
- The current environment is not competitive as it favors external players with low production costs as they do not have to pay tax on printed materials.
- The current tax regime negates efforts by Malawi Government to improve Balance of Payments through externalization of taxpayers' money to international printers.
- Tax on paper reduces the potential of the labor market that would improve if the printing industry market is not stifled and distorted by the tax regime and that a competitive environment is created for the local printers alike international printers.
- The tax regime in its own merit does not serve the education investments efforts as it contributes to delays in printing and distributing textbooks which are viable printed from outside Malawi due to tax on paper. It takes longer to print and deliver for use in Malawi if printed outside than otherwise under similar competitive environment.

Recommendation: While the Ministry of Education has begun this discussion - not only within EGRA - more work needs to be done to lobby Ministries of Finance and Trade & Industry. It would be helpful to develop a formula to help monitor that tax exempt paper is strictly being used in educational materials. This evaluation can be used as a basis for engaging policy makers by factoring it into a policy paper to the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Trade and Industry. While lobbying for policy change is a long-term endeavor, it needs to follow a plan and must be steered by a dedicated team.

Where, how and to what extent have the EGRA's components been adopted/adapted without USAID assistance?

Spillover effects from treatment to control schools is evident. The use of scripted lessons are in high use, 87% of the classes in treatment schools but also used in 44% of the classes in control schools. Teachers in control schools using scripted lessons may have transferred from an EGRA school or participated in the legacy MTPDS training. Teachers find the approach successful especially phonemic awareness and phonics as it fits very well with Chichewa, as a syllabic Bantu based language. Teachers are likely to use effective instructional resources if available to them.

Instructional materials developed for Standard 1 and 2 by EGRA are "owned" by MoEST and MIE. The materials and their theoretical foundation are an integral part of the recently approved MoEST 2014 National Reading Strategy. This "integration" of materials is one of highest levels of program adoption with fidelity defined in the well-researched Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM).[35] CBAM provides

[35] SEDL is a US-based non-profit education research, development, and dissemination organization who developed CBAM see http://www.sedl.org/cbam/levels_of_use.html

tools and techniques that enable leaders to gauge implementers concerns and program use in order to give each person the necessary supports to ensure success.

Issues and Challenges

A major challenge to EGRA implementation is large classes (high student/teacher ratio), limited resources and teacher transfers stated a number of key informants. In addition a number of key informants reemphasized the following statement; "diverse community level factors contribute to repetition and attrition," from the Report on the Study on Student Repetition and Attrition in Malawi.[36]

MoEST should assume the role of the "catalyst" as EGRA has done, stated a key informant. In this case a "catalyst" is an organization which keeps its product up front in the eyes of potential users. That "catalyst" is also controlling quality of the disseminated product to assure future opportunities. As other contractors and NGOs begin to expand the implementation of the National Reading Strategy in the other districts, it is essential to maintain a consistent message and system of operations by all implementers to assure the quality and integrity of the program.

Production and delivery of instruction materials and equipment is behind the schedule delineated in the Work Plan. Not unusual situations in a "resource challenged" environment like Malawi where it seems to take longer to get basic supplies. The current tax regime is affecting production of reading materials locally hence they are often imported thereby affecting delivery time. Dissatisfaction with EGRA was expressed only in relation to shortage of books and training for reading center volunteers.

The fact that most parents are not concerned or upset when their children go to higher classes without the ability to read indicates a poor early grade reading culture. The NRS argues that a strong early grade reading culture depends on a home environment that encourages learning, high achievement and future expectations and the future, and parental involvement in the child's education.

EGRA needs to capitalize on the prevailing high parents and community demand for early learning to read among their children by ensuring that the volunteers and local leaders including decentralization structures are well supported in terms of capacity building to enhance efficiency, scalability and sustainability on the initiative. The role of sub-contractor CRECCOM is critical in this regard.

[36] USAID Report Study on Student Repetition and Attrition in Malawi. July 2014

RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall USAID should:

- View EGRA as a "model/approach" for the mainstream MoEST Basic Education Program to implement nationally.
- Continue the detailed consultation processes with MIE and MoEST. Working together may delay deliverables (such as TLM completion). Money, though important, will not solve all education related challenges facing EGRA.
- Consider additional ways in which the EGRA approach can be embedded at MoEST to increase the systematic implementation by all TWGs with active support of RTI staff for the duration of contract implementation.
- Promote implementation consistency as the EGRA intervention expands to all 34 districts.
- Continue to work closely with the MoEST to take on the role of the "catalyst" as EGRA has done, stated a key informant. In this case a "catalyst" is an organization that keeps its product up front in the eyes of potential users. That "catalyst" is also controlling quality of the disseminated product to assure future opportunities. As other contractors and NGOs begin to expand the implementation of the NRS in the remaining 22 districts, it is essential to maintain a consistent message and system of operations by all implementers to assure the quality and integrity of reading interventions.
- Develop social media strategies using the USAID/Washington published the Social Media Guide.[37]

EVALUATION QUESTIONS 1 AND 2

Component 1: Provide quality reading instruction for early grade students

"Keep the focus. Maintain the same procedures for introducing EGRA through MoEST," as it has had under RTI implementation, stated an official at the Department of Planning. The Director of MIE added, *"…the current EGRA intervention is a success story but it is still in its experimental stage. We are now convinced the intervention works, it's time to 'roll it out' to all primary schools".*

- Based on spillover evidence (from MTPDS and EGRA) support efforts to conduct CPD across the country at some point during the activity period.
- Encourage the development of CPD points for teachers to ensure attendance at EGRA and other CPD sessions are recognized and leads to quality teacher recognition.
- Support the integration of the EGRA approach into pre-service training, and therefore improve reading instruction to support scale up and sustainability efforts.
- Strengthen teacher knowledge and use of assessment techniques in classes following reading lessons to provide teachers with feedback on acquired learning. Large class assessment does not require a paper and pencil but rather a demonstration of learning, such as "hands/stand up" when you hear a specified sound /th/ in this sentence.

[37] To learn more about how to optimize Social Media, see USAID's Social Networking Guide http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00jx4x.pdf

Component 2: Provision of Teaching and Learning Materials for Reading

EGRA/RTI should:

- Ensure Standard 3 materials are distributed before schools open in September 2015.
- Continue to work closely with MoEST and MIE/SEGRIM to develop the materials. Such collaboration ensures "ownership" by the Government of Malawi.
- Combine efforts with SEGRIM for Standard 3 materials development.
- Confirm that the chalk slates have actually been delivered to schools before removing this activity from the work plan

Component 3: Increasing Parental and Community Engagement to Support Reading

EGRA/RTI should:

- Enhanced focus of the EGRA intervention on parents and community engagement in order to promote an early grade reading culture and achieve scalability and sustainability of the program.
- Strengthen the parent/community component to stimulate the reading culture through support to VCRFs, reading fairs and reading centers.
- Overcome the current implementation difficulties that are frustrating for parent/community members (e.g. training for parents and volunteers) through empowering CRECCOM and urgently providing training.
- Continue to build CRECCOM's capacity in line with the USAID emphasis on local capacity building.
- Strengthen EGRA's linkages to the decentralization structures such as VDCs and ADCs towards achieving institutionalization at the community level and to promote sustainability through "Education by Public Action."
- Build its efforts towards greater community engagement in order to achieve scalability and sustainability of the program. As the NRS suggests, parents need to assume a stronger role to support early grade reading.
- Train VCRFs, some of whom have given up on their roles as they felt not validated and equipped. As CRECCOM is getting engaged to assume its role more actively,
- Review the EGRA's working arrangement with MOGCDSW, especially at district and community level.
- Introduce an MOU at district level with the MOGCDSW to engage its field staff more actively than the current passive arrangement.
- Build CRECCOM's capacity to address issues related to financial reconciliation is critical and urgent as much time has been lost, and this has affected potential investment in the parents and community structures.
- Strengthen the linkage of EGRA to the decentralization structures such as VDCs and ADCs as one way of achieving institutionalization at community level and to promote sustainability though "Education by Public Action[38]."

[38] Education by Public Action is a strategy intended to institutionalize decentralization for enhanced community participation in solving local problems. VDCs and ADCs

- Strengthen the parents/community component to engender the reading culture through support to capacitate VCRFs, Reading Fairs and Reading Centers including exploring opportunities to develop linkages with ECD centers as one way of utilizing existing volunteer capacity in reading and strengthening transition.

Component 4: Improving Policy Environment to Support Early Grade Reading

- Consider additional ways in which EGRA can be embedded at MoEST and/or MIE.
- Use MOUs for Cohort B as a motivational tool, but start to address some of the issues out of the control of DEMs and Schools (such as teacher placement, classroom size).
- Advocate policy options to reduce or eliminate the tax on paper to promote a local publishing industry and a print rich society;
- Work with the MoEST to develop appropriate circulars supporting expansion of EGRA.

M&E and Cross Cutting Issues

A few recommendations are provided to improve the M&E function of EGRA:

- Strengthen the M&E feedback loop to EMIS to improve the robustness and efficiency of the EMIS. SADC EMIS coordination efforts include improving EMIS systems by making the data more accurate.
- Localize data processing as part of efforts to strengthen local capacity development and to enhance efficient delivery. Build the capacity of the local RTI office to undertake LAT data processing and dissemination.
- Extend assessment of students to reading centers as part of strengthening the relevance and functionality of the centers.

USAID and EGRA/RTI should:

- Localize LAT assessment scoring and analysis to improve efficiency of feedback and utilization of results by schools and districts—this will contribute to measuring ESIP II accomplishments. Since LAT is used to sample student progress at schools, the District Offices could centralize scoring and analysis for district and zonal instructional decision making and planning of future CPD.
- Strengthen feedback loops of all data, including feedback to EMIS.

Local Capacity Development

The following recommendations should support improvements in LCD:

- Review the LCD design to integrate the MoEST as a key implementing institution in efforts to carry forward early grade reading activities once EGRA/RTI has closed and to gain consistency among other projects implementing the NRS.
- In collaboration with the MoEST, the future design of EGRA should prepare to support integration of EGRA in pre-service training as planned in ESIP II.
- RTI should expedite the recently commissioned capacity building interventions at CRECCOM to reinvigorate implementation of component three of the activity which is behind on most outputs.
- As building local capacity is important for the sustainability of EGRA, USAID should monitor the relationship between CRECCOM and RTI more closely to achieve smooth implementation of the community component.

Cross-cutting Activity Elements

- Redesign PPPs and GUCs activities. PPPs should be facilitated with a government champion; GUCs will work better if LATs are implemented at zone or school level and can be used as evidence of improved reading performance.

Students with Special Needs

- Expand linkages with Braille Cup competitions in other countries to gain insight into sustainability in the future.

Gender Equity

- The Social Impact (SI) Evaluation should take a close look at dropout rate of girls in EGRA treatment schools. The dropout data could be very telling as to whether EGRA has impacted on girls' school attendance and success in upper primary.
- A clearer look at the achievement of girls is also essential. Anecdotally, some parents said that girls are developing reading skills better using the EGRA approach but this needs to be born out with assessment results.

Integration with other USAID Initiatives

- Support innovation and creativity as the hallmark of the EGRA intervention to address most of the teething challenges; an example is to demonstrate that mobile money works as a solution for reimbursing expenses to teachers at workshops.

Value for Money

In the final EGRA evaluation, when comparable LAT data becomes available, carry out the value for money analysis (see formula in Annex 6) using a version of implementation fidelity and perceptions indices.

Evaluation Question 3: What are the key factors needed to take the EGRA to a national scale and ensure sustainability?

In order to achieve sustainability, EGRA should:

- Focus on continuing to build EGRA supporting systems such as:
    - Teachers attending teacher training should become eligible for CDP points;
    - Pre-service training should incorporate EGRA. Although this was not part of the statement of work for EGRA activity implementation, integration of EGRA in pre-service training stands out strongly as a sustainability factor which needs to be considered. Efforts by the MoEST towards integrating EGRA in pre-service training through an upcoming review of the pre-service teacher training curriculum expected to start in March, 2015 is an encouraging development that should be supported;
    - Investigate policy options that would eliminate the tax on paper to promote a print rich society;
    - Parents and volunteer training provided with explicit recognition (certificates, acknowledgement);
    - Rapid systems of collecting data (including testing) developed with multiple, active feedback loops using technology.

  - Investigate and pursue other opportunities with technology, such as developing an EGRA social media strategy.
- All donor partners and Government of Malawi entities should
  - Develop a national assessment framework to determine which assessments will serve the variety of needs in primary education: diagnostic, proficiency and achievement.
  - In addition to typical assessment criteria (sensitivity, validity, reliability, etc.) the framework should take into account practicality, potential degree of coverage and capacity in Malawi.
  - Some assessments should take advantage of mobile technology and computing to ensure the fastest sets of feedback loop to students, parents, teachers, schools, districts and the MoEST.
- EGRA should collaborate with MANEB as assessment instruments are developed and their use expanded. This would ease the modification and development of future assessments that serve a variety of purposes, possibly creating clarity on the purposes of the various assessments in use.

Evaluation Question 4: Where, how and to what extent have the EGRA's components been adopted/adapted without USAID assistance?

To date, EGRA has really been focused on proving its case as an intervention that can work, it is clear that it is time now to focus on strategies that support going to scale and institutionalization.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: EVALUATION SCOPE OF WORK

C.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The objective of USAID/Malawi's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) is to improve the quality of life for Malawians. Development Objective One (DO 1) of the CDCS focuses on improving social development through self-reliance and increases in the quality and accessibility of essential services. The delivery of quality education services and the resulting increase in learning outcomes will strengthen the impact of investments in education. This will also lead to improved human resource capacity to deliver other services such as health, agriculture, food security, decreased dependence on humanitarian assistance and increased economic potential. Education development is essential to sound social, economic, and political development and a productive, educated human resource base is needed to achieve development goals.

In line with USAID/Malawi's CDCS, the USAID/Malawi Education Office has developed a five-year education strategic plan. The Education strategy reflects the challenges, accomplishments, host country and United States Government (USG) resource priorities as well as USAID's 2011 Global Education Strategy and USAID Forward Initiative. USAID/Malawi's Education Strategy will increase reading skills for two million primary school students over the five-year strategy.

USAID/Malawi's Education Office (EDU) development hypothesis postulates that **if** it supports the improvement of teaching and learning with quality reading instruction, provision of TLM, increased parental and community support for student reading and an improved policy environment to support early grade reading, **then** reading skills of primary school students will improve. This will result in overall gains in student academic performance, lower drop-out and repetition rates, and increased persistence through the eight standards of primary school for both boys and girls.

C.1.2.The Early Grade Reading Activity

Contract number: AID-612-C-13-00002 Solicitation number: SOL-612-13-000004

Award dates: June 17, 2013 – October 17, 2016

Implementing Organization: Research Triangle Institute (RTI) International

Contracting Officer's Representative: Kevin Roberts, Alternate COR: Ramsey Sosola.

The USAID/Malawi Early Grade Reading Activity (EGRA), a firm-fixed-price, three-year, four-month contract, was awarded to RTI International on June 17, 2013 and ends on October 17, 2016. It has a ceiling of $23,992,906.00.

The EGRA is the flagship education program for USAID/Malawi. It is designed to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) to improve the reading performance of Malawian students in Standards One to Three. The EGRA consists of four components which are outlined below. Please note: the EGRA has further refined the USAID/Malawi/EDU's focus on "improving reading instruction in the primary grades" into two components; Component 1, which focuses on pedagogy and Component 2, on TLM.

Component 1: Provide quality reading instruction for early grades students

Provides quality reading instruction for Standards One to Three students by building upon the Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS) activity's success with teacher training, the use of

scripted lesson plans, and coaching. This includes a practicum element to in-service training and performance incentives for teachers and schools.

Component 2: Provision of teaching and learning materials for reading

Creates new reading materials and draws upon existing reading materials from previous USAID activities (Read Malawi, Primary School Support Program, etc.), and adapts them as necessary. The learning materials for reading are decodable and grade appropriate books, story cards, and letter cards to equip students to practice reading, both in-school and independently. The teaching materials for reading are scripted lesson plans and teacher support materials for Standards One to Three both in Chichewa and English.

Component 3: Increasing parental and community engagement to support student reading

This encourages parental and community engagement to support student reading. Recognizing that learning does not stop at the classroom door, it provides encouragement and resources to mobilize communities to create a culture of reading.

Component 4: Improving policy environment to support early grade reading

Ensures sustainability by addressing the early grade reading policy environment, which includes formalizing collaboration through memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and promoting the integration of best reading practices; for example, the extension of reading instruction time in the classroom.

Cross-cutting Issues

The EGRA addresses four cross-cutting issues outlined in the USAID/Malawi CDCS:

Local Capacity Development: The EGRA aims to improve the capacity of Malawian structures and organizations to carry forward early grade reading activities once the EGRA is completed. The MoEST and the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE), an organization mandated to design, develop, monitor and evaluate the national education curriculum; personnel participate in the development of scripted lesson plans and associated supplementary reading materials. The MIE staff in particular receives training, mentoring, and opportunities for practical application of their new skills with the support of the EGRA Subcontractor The Brattle Publishing Group.

A book chain analysis conducted by the EGRA Subcontractor, the blueTree Group, has identified areas of strength and growth within the Malawian print industry. Their subsequent quarterly short-term technical assistance (STTA) training visits serve to gradually improve both printers' and the MoEST's ability to fruitfully collaborate to meet Malawi's future needs for educational print resources.

The corporate capabilities of the Creative Center for Community Mobilization (CRECCOM), a local Subcontractor, with respect to early grade reading are being developed as a result of the EGRA's integrated staffing structure and the associated peer-mentoring structure that were set in place in Year One. Also in Year One, the EGRA management created and applied an institutional capacity assessment instrument to CRECCOM's systems to set a baseline and determine what additional training and development needs exist. Remediation plans will be set in place, with regular progress monitoring carried out over the lifetime of the program.

Students with Special Needs/Learning Disabilities: The EGRA has hired a disability, gender and vulnerable populations (DGVP) specialist to ensure that the needs and concerns of students and teachers with special needs and learning disabilities are effectively integrated into the EGRA's regular programming. The DGVP specialist's efforts will ensure that this important perspective permeates all new continuous professional development (CPD), curriculum, and supplementary materials development.

Separately, the DGVP specialist and a Subcontractor, Perkins International, will take strides to identify and describe the set of materials, tools, and supportive resources already existing within Malawi. This will result in a Special Needs Education Resource Guide that will be shared with USAID and MoEST for broad dissemination within Malawi. Perkins local partner organizations such as Sight Savers, Department of Special Education Needs in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology and others will be mobilized to provide community-based trainings around disability and reading in an effort to shift cultural attitudes toward children with special needs. Malawi's first *Braille Cup* reading competition will be the culmination of these efforts.

At the school level, the DGVP and Perkins International will deliver training on the development and implementation of individual education plans (IEPs) for children with special needs. The

MoEST will be engaged regarding the best way to improve teachers' knowledge of and proficiency with IEPs at the pre-service training stage.

Grants Under Contract (GUCs): The GUC program serves as an incentive for schools and communities to collaboratively address the challenge of their children's poor reading performance. Development of the EGRA *Grants Manual,* incorporating the insight of MoEST and school personnel, was completed in Term 1 of the 2013-2014 School Year (SY1). Schools' and communities' eligibility for participation in the competition will be monitored over the course of Terms One and Two and the competition will open during Term Three of SY1. Disbursement of funds will occur near the end of the SY1 so funds can be used in preparation for the 2014–2015 SY2. Currently, a tool has been created for measuring the level of school participation in the EGRA; however, discussions are ongoing with the MoEST on how to use that tool to rank school eligibility for apply for grants.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs): Gains realized under EGRA will not be sustainable over the long term if they are solely financed and supported by donor funding. The EGRA has worked with Subcontractor O'Brien and Associates International (OAI) to identify private- and public-sector partners who have an interest in supporting early grade reading efforts in Malawi. OAI is currently in negotiations with these potential partners to fully or partially fund supplemental reading materials for schools participating in the EGRA.

As follow-on to the Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS) activity the EGRA:

- Expands the intensive reading intervention, including teacher CPD and coaching, from Standard One students and teachers only to Standards One to Three students and teachers;
- Expands coverage from seven to 11 education districts;
- Continues the use of scripted lesson plans and the phonics-based approach to reading instruction;
- Creates scripted lesson plans in Chichewa and English for Standards One to Three;
- Creates grade level appropriate supplementary reading materials including story books and story cards;
- Enhances collaboration between USAID and MoEST counterparts, utilization of MoEST systems and personnel, and alignment with MoEST-approved curriculum; and • Increases focus on materials development and community mobilization to support reading.

Geographic Coverage

The EGRA is implemented in 11 education districts in Malawi which include: Mzimba North, Ntchisi, Lilongwe Rural East, Lilongwe Rural West, Salima, Ntcheu, Balaka, Machinga, Zomba, Blantyre Rural and Thyolo.

Other Government of Malawi Partners

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare (MGCSW); the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE); and from the MoEST: the Department of Inspection and Advisory Services (DIAS), the Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED), the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Department of Education Planning (DEP).

C.1.3. The EGRA Impact Evaluation

In addition to activity level monitoring and evaluation, USAID/Malawi has contracted an independent Contractor to conduct an impact evaluation that measures the impact of the EGRA. The EGRA Impact Evaluation will also conduct national early grade reading assessments in 2014 and 2016 to measure overall reading skills. The main foci of the impact evaluation are to measure change in reading skills including letter naming, initial sound identification, syllable recognition and oral reading comprehension for students in Standards One to Three and to measure the change in the percentage of students who by the end of Standard Two demonstrate reading comprehension at grade level. The impact evaluation also includes a household survey that links household factors such as access to reading materials and parent's involvement in school activities to reading acquisition. The impact evaluation will also measure the effects of other USAID programming in the areas of health and agriculture as they relate to reading acquisition.

C.2. SCOPE/PURPOSE OF THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The Contractor will perform a performance evaluation to examine the process and performance of the activity to date, whether it is meeting the stated activity objectives, and provide a detailed analysis of major accomplishments/weaknesses for each component. Second, the Contractor will provide USAID and the activity implementer with data and recommendations for making mid-activity course corrections and help the Mission forecast what results are likely to be achieved by the completion date. It will also provide information to inform Mission strategic processes, activity prioritization and future early grade reading designs.

The primary user of this evaluation will be USAID/Malawi/EDU and the EGRA implementing partner RTI International, as the information and recommendations garnered in this evaluation will be of assistance to them for understanding the activity's strengths as well as areas where technical, administrative and management efforts could be improved.

Secondary users may include the officials of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology at the central, district and zonal levels for their own understanding and learning for future activities and approaches to early grade reading. Lastly, other USAID Missions, USAID/Washington and other donors that support similar reading programming may also find this evaluation relevant.

C.2.1. Target Areas and Groups

The Contractor must include a sufficient sample of sites in Mzimba North, Salima, Ntchisi, Ntcheu, Lilongwe Rural East, Machinga, Thyolo and Dowa. In addition to these districts, the Contractor may suggest other districts with justification for the choice and inclusion of those districts in the sampling framework.

Please note: Dowa is not a district that the EGRA is currently implementing in. It is included so the Contractor can a) gauge the demand for the EGRA in a non-intervention district and b) understand the extent to which the EGRA methodologies have spread to a non-intervention district.

To the extent possible the Contractor must disaggregate data to the zonal level as within most districts there are treatment and control zones. The Contractor will need to get a thorough understanding of the treatment and control zones before starting work.

Of particular interest is the role of community activities and organizations in the promotion and sustainability of early grade reading interventions. The Contractor should take special care to include the participation of community groups such as school management committees (SMCs), Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and mother groups in their data collection.

USAID requires evaluations to consider differences in the ways that women, men, girls and boys participate in or benefit from activities. The evaluation findings, conclusion and recommendations must include an analysis of any differences in how the EGRA model has affected the participation of men, women, boys and girls.

In addition, the evaluation findings, conclusion and recommendations should include an analysis of any differences in how the EGRA model has affected the participation of persons with disabilities.

C.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The focus of the evaluation will be analyzing the evaluation questions at the level of the individual activity components that comprise the EGRA, including the crosscutting issues. This will inform future implementation, project and activity design, and discussions regarding the possibilities of scaling up similar interventions.

The evaluation must:

- Identify any implementation challenges, unmet needs, and/or unintended consequences or impacts of the EGRA, particularly focusing on changes related to unanticipated changes in the host country environment;
- Provide a better understanding of the progress made by each component of the EGRA on such issues as relevance, impact, scalability, sustainability and cost-effectiveness;
- Confirm the validity of the overall – and component-specific – development hypotheses or critical assumptions underlying the USAID/Malawi's education strategy and the how the EGRA was designed, funded and implemented to make the strategy operational;
- Evaluate how each activity component is progressing toward the overall objectives as described in the EGRA Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Results Framework;
- Examine the demand-side impacts of the activity and determine if and how aspects of the EGRA have been adopted/adapted outside of regular activity implementation;
- Provide recommendations for any course corrections necessary to achieve the EGRA's stated goals, as well as recommendations related to scale-up and sustainability; and
- Provide recommendations on how to address capacity gaps in order for the Government of Malawi to take over this activity.

C.3.1. Evaluation Questions

The EGRA performance evaluation must answer the following questions:

1. How effective is the EGRA's approach toward achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary school students in Malawi?
2. How can the EGRA design, management, and execution become more efficient toward achieving program goals?
3. What are the key factors needed to take the EGRA to a national scale and ensure sustainability?
4. Where, how and to what extent have the EGRA's components been adopted/adapted without USAID assistance?

C.3.2 Tasks

- The Contractor must perform the following tasks as part of this scope of work:
- Draft Inception report;
- Develop evaluation model;
- Test and verify the evaluation model;
- Deploy a field team;
- Collect the relevant data to inform the evaluation;
- Conduct bi-weekly oral debrief meetings to update USAID/Malawi of evaluation progress and preliminary findings;
- Host a stakeholder's workshop to present the draft evaluation findings to relevant stakeholders for validation of findings;
- Draft Final Report;
- Upload Final Report (USAID-Approved) to the USAID Development Experience Clearance House (https://dec.usaid.gov);
- Produce and deliver 50 copies (hard copy) of the Final Report to USAID; and
- Produce and deliver one memory stick containing electronic copies of all evaluation products (data, tools, presentations and reports).

C.4. RESULTS: DELIVERABLES AND REPORTS

The Contractor must furnish the following deliverables and reports:

Inception Report

The inception report must describe the conceptual framework the evaluator will use to undertake the evaluation. It must detail the evaluation methodology (i.e. how each question will be answered by way of data collection methods, data sources, sampling and indicators) and address all technical requirements.

At a minimum the inception report must contain the following:

a. A work plan, which indicates the phases in the evaluation with key deliverables and milestones and key personnel responsibility. USAID evaluation point(s) of contact will review and approve this report before the Contractor begins implementing the evaluation plan.
b. Complete set of evaluation questions, elaborated on as necessary. Any questions added during the contract negotiations must be clearly indicated and any deleted questions must be mentioned with a reason as to their exclusion.
c. Discussion of the overall approach of the evaluation, highlighting the conceptual model(s) adopted. This must incorporate an analysis of the intervention logic of the program.
d. Discussion of risks and limitations that may undermine the reliability and validity of the evaluation results.
e. Specification of indicator, index, or indicators that must be used as a guide in answering each question.
f. Discussion of the data collection and data analysis methods that will be used for each question. State the limitations for each method. Include the level of precision required for quantitative and qualitative methods and value scales or coding used for qualitative methods. Standard data collection methods for USAID evaluations are: surveys, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, document review and observations.
g. Detail key data sources that will be selected to answer each evaluation question.
h. Explanation of how existing data will be incorporated and used to answer the evaluation questions.

i. Discussion of the sampling methods and details. Include area and population to be represented, rationale for selection, mechanics of selection, sample size (for each unit of analysis), sample precision and confidence and limitations.
j. Summarized evaluation methodology in an evaluation planning matrix that must contain the following column headings: evaluation question, measure (s) or indicator(s), data collection method(s), data source, design strategy / framework for each question, sampling methodology, data collection instrument(s) for each question and data analysis methodology on each evaluation question.
k. Timeline showing the evaluation phases (data collection, data analysis and reporting) with their key deliverables and milestones.
l. Specific responsibilities of each team member for each evaluation phase. Include any changes in the evaluation team.
m. Discussion of logistics for carrying out the evaluation. Include specific assistance that will be required from USAID, such as providing arrangements for key contacts within the Mission or Government.
n. Discussion on the use of spatial data collection methods and formats to ensure locations included in the evaluation sampling frame are captured for integration into the Mission's geographic information system and to permit spatial analysis of evaluation data at the facility level. The Contractor must provide geo-referenced data sets to the USAID/Malawi Contracting Officer's Representative (COR). At a minimum, data must be provided in an MS Excel sheet that includes a unique identifier for each data record, with latitude and longitude locations in decimal degree format to the fifth place (e.g., 34.45673 and -13.36712). During the inception plan the COR will work closely with the Contractor to determine other applicable evaluation data that will be included into the spatial data table for each evaluation location. USAID/Malawi will provide a generic EXCEL template for the Contractor to use that will facilitate this process.
o. Appended draft instruments for data collection specific to questions and indicators in the evaluation.
p. Standard USAID work plan outlying timeframes, etc. for implementation.

The inception report must clearly document and discuss how gender and disability analysis will be integrated into the design of the evaluation.

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation model must include appropriate sample sizes required to ensure scientific rigor and describe and document the methodological approach used as well as all analytical aspects. The model must be clearly developed and documented and follow USAID evaluation and performance evaluation best practices. The model must include an evaluation framework and assessment tools for each evaluation question and highlight the conceptual model(s); and specify the measurement criteria to be used to respond to each question. It must discuss any risks and limitations that may undermine the reliability and validity of the evaluation results. The model must outline data collection processes for each question.

At a minimum, the evaluation model must include the following elements:

1. Secondary data analysis of the available data provided by the EGRA implementer and impact evaluation implementer to determine if the activity is meeting its goals.
2. Key informant interviews or focus group discussions with stakeholders to determine the efficiency of the EGRA's design, management and execution on achieving activity goals. Key informants should include MoEST managers and administrators at central, district and zonal levels; EGRA staff; school community members and USAID education office staff.

3. Key informant interviews or focus group discussions with stakeholders to determine key enabling factors needed for taking the EGRA reading intervention to a national scale. Key informants should include MoEST managers and administrators at the central, district and zonal levels; the EGRA's staff; key education donors.
4. Focus group discussions with the EGRA's staff, community members and school-level personnel both from intervention and non-intervention schools to determine the extent to which EGRA methodologies have been adapted/adopted without USAID assistance.

Constraints to Data Collection and Analysis

A number of factors could constrain the ability to collect or analyze data:

1. Language: Though English is the official language for professional communication, some of the stakeholders, in particular teachers may be more comfortable communicating their ideas in Chichewa. The evaluator is encouraged to include individuals fluent in Chichewa on the evaluation team, particularly for the key informant interviews and focus group discussions.
2. Geography and infrastructure: Even with sampling, the evaluation will require considerable travel throughout the country to reach activity implementation sites and beneficiaries. The road infrastructure may render some sites difficult to access or inaccessible, particularly during the rainy season so the Contractor should prepare accordingly.

Gender Analysis

USAID requires evaluations to consider differences in the ways that women, men, girls and boys participate in or benefit from activities. The evaluation findings, conclusion and recommendations must include an analysis of any differences in how the EGRA model has affected the participation of men, women, boys and girls.

Persons with Disabilities

To the extent possible the evaluation findings should also take into consideration the differences in the ways persons with disabilities participate in or benefit from the EGRA. The evaluation findings, conclusion and recommendations should include an analysis of any differences in how the EGRA model has affected the participation of persons with disabilities.

Debriefing Meetings

The Contractor must provide bi-weekly debriefing meetings to the evaluation COR who is the Point of Contact (POC) and the Education Office Director. These meetings must include a discussion on progress to date, provide a summary of any analytical results, discuss challenges, successes and planned work over the remaining duration of the evaluation. The team leader of the evaluation team will be required to routinely communicate updates to the COR and the Education Office Director. In the debrief at the conclusion of the fieldwork the Contractor must deliver an oral presentation of the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations for each question to USAID, prior to finalizing the draft evaluation report.

Draft Final Evaluation Report

The Contractor must submit an evidence-based draft final evaluation report that answers each evaluation question and incorporates any relevant information resulting from discussions with from the debriefing meetings. It must address all aspects of the final evaluation report detailed below.

Findings Workshop

After incorporating USAID's comments into the draft final evaluation report, the Contractor is required to present the key findings, conclusions and recommendations at a half-day workshop no more than five weeks after the draft evaluation report is approved by USAID/Malawi and seven weeks after field work has been completed. The workshop must be held in Lilongwe and is anticipated to be attended by between 25 to 35 key stakeholders. The Contractor is responsible for costs, logistics and managing invitations to this workshop, at least 10 must be representatives from sampled districts outside of Lilongwe. The Contractor must produce a summary/briefer (maximum seven pages) of key findings, conclusions and recommendations to be distributed to stakeholders during the workshop.

Final Evaluation Report

The Contractor must submit an evidence-based final evaluation report that answers, in full, each evaluation question and incorporates any relevant information resulting from discussions from the findings workshop. The report must be no longer than 50 pages in length (excluding annexes) and comply with the Checklist for Assessing USAID Evaluation Reports and the technical requirements listed below. The Contractor must submit 50 hard-bound copies to USAID/Malawi and an electronic copy in a media device (memory stick or similar device). The media device must include electronic versions of all tools and products of the evaluation, including instruments and data in data formats suitable for reanalysis. The Contractor must ensure that Appendix One of the USAID Evaluation Policy – Criteria to Ensure the Quality of the Evaluation Report is followed. This includes:

- The evaluation report must represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the activity, what did not and why;
- Evaluation reports must address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work;
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the technical officer;
- Evaluation methodology must be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report;
- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on men, women, girls, and boys;
- Limitations to the evaluation must be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.);
- Evaluation findings must be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings must be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence;
- Sources of information must be properly identified and listed in an annex;
- Recommendations must be supported by a specific set of findings; and
- Recommendations must be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.
- The body of the report must be no more than 50 pages in length (excluding any annexes) and include the following sections:
- Executive Summary: This section must precisely provide the activity background, including evaluation design and methodologies, key findings, main conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation.

- Background: This section must provide a brief description of the activity that highlights the scope of the activity, activity development hypothesis, activities undertaken in the activity, key impact indicators of the activity and impact areas of the activity. Other activities that complemented the intervention activities directly or indirectly in the intervention districts must also be highlighted. In addition to this, the section must detail the methodology and related research protocols undertaken in conducting the evaluation and related limitations encountered during the activity implementation and evaluation.
- Findings and empirical facts collected during the evaluation: This section must present findings from the evaluation. The evaluation findings must be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. The evaluation findings must assess key outcomes and impacts as structured around the organizational framework of the evaluation questions. The findings must be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative and qualitative evidence analyzed through scientifically plausible methodologies. Sources of information used in arriving at the findings must be properly acknowledged and listed in an annex.
- Conclusions (interpretations and judgments based on the findings): Evaluation conclusions must be presented for each key finding. The conclusions must logically follow from the gathered data and findings. These must be explicitly justified. If and when necessary, the evaluator must state his/her assumptions, judgments and value premises so that readers can better understand and assess them.
- Recommendations (proposed actions for management): This section must precisely and clearly present recommendations that must be drawn from specific findings. The recommendations must be stated in an action-oriented fashion, must be practical, specific, and with defined responsibility for the requisite action. The recommendations presented in this section must follow the evaluation questions as the organizational framework. The Contractor must build into the allowable time schedules for debriefing with USAID/Malawi. This section must not be more than five pages.

Any information that may not be appropriate for public dissemination must be indicated in the report and cleared by the Evaluation COR who is the POC before being released in findings workshop or in the public version of the final report. This would include any information or recommendations that may be procurement sensitive. In such a case USAID/Malawi will request two separate electronic copies of the final report, an internal report that will be in electronic version only and a public report that will be printed and disseminated.

The Contractor must submit 50 hard bound copies to USAID/Malawi and an electronic copy in an appropriate media including all versions of the report, instruments, and data in formats suitable for reanalysis within seven weeks of the completion of field work. Within one week of delivering the final report the Contractor must provide proof to the COR that the approved report has been received by the Development Experience Clearinghouse.

Upload Final Report to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC).

Proof of submission to the Final Report to the DEC must be received by the COR no more than thirty days after acceptance is received.

C.5. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

The place of performance is Malawi with travel to school sites in intervention and non-intervention districts. The Contractor must include a sufficient sample of sites in Mzimba North, Salima, Ntchisi, Lilongwe Rural East, Machinga, Thyolo, and Dowa. In addition to these districts, the Contractor may

suggest other districts with justification for the choice and inclusion of those districts in the sampling framework.

C.6. TEAM COMPOSITION

The evaluator must include a team structure that will cost effectively complete the evaluation. In order to mitigate the perception or reality of biased measurement or reporting due to conflict of interest the evaluation team must comprise personnel external to management or implementation of the EGRA and the EGRA Impact Evaluation. In accordance with USAID Forward principles, and as a means of fostering local capacity/expertise, USAID/Malawi requires that at least one member of the key personnel be a Malawian expert in order to provide context and linkages to key stakeholders in Malawi's education sector. Curriculum Vitae for all key personnel that reflect the individual's expertise relevant to the evaluation must be submitted for review. The staffing plan should identify the Team Leader and demonstrate the team's balance between evaluation expertise, subject matter expertise, and research specialization. The staffing plan must also articulate the roles and responsibilities for each key personnel with regards to responding the evaluation questions. It is anticipated that the key personnel will be supported by an administrative or logistics assistant who must have at minimum a diploma in a relevant field.

Key personnel include:

1. TEAM LEADER – this must be a full-time position for the duration of the Evaluation. This person will serve as the primary point of contact between USAID and the Evaluation Team and in particular the COR for this performance evaluation. The Team Leader should have a postgraduate degree and at least 10 years of experience in the requisite technical background to provide state-of-the-art technical leadership and hands-on experience in managing education programs in developing countries. S/he should have at least three years of experience in conducting education evaluations. The Team Leader must:

- Be external to the implementing partner of the Early Grade Reading Activity and the EGRA Impact Evaluation (a third party Contractor managed directly by USAID)
- Be able to deal effectively with senior U.S. and host country officials and other leaders
- Have a proven track record in terms of being highly qualified to lead, coordinate, and deliver evaluations
- Have excellent English writing/organizational skills and proven ability to deliver a quality written product (Evaluation Report and PowerPoint)
- Must have the technical skills to manage the budget resources (dollars and staff) for the evaluation as well as assist and support the team with field logistics (e.g., coordinating with USAID and/or a government ministry to set up initial appointments for interviews)

In addition, the Team Leader may provide his/her technical expertise in one or more of the areas to support this evaluation.

2. SENIOR-LEVEL EDUCATION SPECIALIST: Strong data analysis and data management skills in the field of education. Knowledge of USAID's Global Education Strategy, evaluations, and development. Experience in evaluating and/or implementing education programs in Africa (preferable) and/or other under-resourced and under-performing environments. Masters with 10 years' relevant experience or a PhD (preferred) with five years' relevant experience.

3. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST: Proven successful design and management of development programs, including taking programs to scale, in Africa (preferable) and/or other under-resourced and under-performing environments, preferably in the education sector. Strong background and knowledge of current USAID procurement regulations. Strong academic background. Post graduate degree and seven years' experience.

USAID/Malawi M&E Specialists may work with the successful evaluation team as part of the Agency's efforts to strengthen the Agency's learning. They will work under the direction of the Evaluation Team Leader in: 1) instrument development and piloting; 2) data collection; 3) data analysis; and 4) synthesis of results. The Contracting Officer (CO) and COR are the only individuals within USAID who can provide technical direction on the evaluation to the Contractor. Other USAID staff will not have authority to provide technical direction to the Contractor.

Key personnel from the EGRA will work with the evaluator by providing key documents and insights. The evaluator should not contact the EGRA staff independently but coordinate all requests for information through the USAID/Malawi COR. In addition, USAID/Malawi encourages the involvement of representatives from the MoEST in the evaluation process as well.

C.7. COORDINATION WITH HOST COUNTRY COUNTERPARTS AND OTHER IMPLEMENTERS

C.7.1. Logistics

The Contractor is responsible for all logistics including coordinating all travel around the country, lodging, printing, office space, equipment, utilities, communication costs, and car rentals. The USAID/Malawi COR will work with the Contractor to set up initial meetings with key government personnel, partners, stakeholders, etc. but all requests should be made to USAID at a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the desired date of appointment. After initial meetings have been arranged, the Contractor must coordinate directly with partners, the Government of Malawi and other stakeholders while keeping the COR informed. The Contractor must follow all guidelines pertaining to the Harmonized Daily Subsistence, Fuel, and Transport Allowances Applicable to Events and Missions Financed under Development Partner Programs in Malawi.

C.7.2. USAID/Malawi Resources Provided

The following documents will be provided by USAID/Malawi to the Contractor for use in the performance evaluation:

- Early Grade Reading Assessments 2010 – 2012
- Early Grade Reading Activity Impact Evaluation Baseline Study Report
- Malawi Basic Education Statistics (Malawi Education Information Management System)
- Early Grade Reading Activity Annual Reports
- Timawerenga Early Grade Reading Assessment Baseline Report (if available)
- Maps of Early Grade Reading Impact Areas
- USAID/Malawi CDCS 2013-2018
- Program Description
- Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- Quarterly and Annual Reports
- Work Plan
- Harmonized Daily Subsistence, Fuel, and Transport Allowances Applicable to Events and Missions Financed Under Development Partner Programs in Malawi

ANNEX 2: DETAILED METHODOLOGY

District, Zone and School Sampling Procedure

The evaluators used a combination of probability (for the quantitative study) and non-probability (for the qualitative study) sampling approaches in the evaluation study. The sample size for the quantitative and qualitative studies is bounded by time accorded to data collection. RTI data stated that EGRA in the first year implemented the activity in 1,187 schools. We sampled 81 or 7% of those schools. In each of the 8 targeted districts, 10 schools were selected for inclusion in the performance evaluation. A multi-stage sampling approach was used as this approach is suited to a performance evaluation. The procedure is stated as follows:

Stage 1 of the sample is purposively specified by USAID/Lilongwe in the RFTOP39 requirements:

Table 30: Stage 1 of Sample Selection

Division	District	Intervention
Northern Education Division (NED)	Mzimba North	Treatment and Control
Central West Education Division (CWED)	Lilongwe Rural East	Treatment and Control
	Ntcheu	Treatment and Control
South East Education Division (SEED)	Machinga	Treatment and Control
Shire Highlands Education Division (SHED)	Thyolo	Treatment and Control
	Mulanje	Control/Comparison
Central East Education Division (CEED)	Ntchisi	Treatment and Control
	Salima	Treatment*

* No control schools presently in this District.

Stage 2 of the sample treatment selection, is based on the number of zones in which EGRA implementation occurred in a given districts. Some districts with larger area or population do not have high levels of EGRA implementation and some smaller districts do have high levels of implementation resulting in the selection of a higher number of zones in that district than in the other.

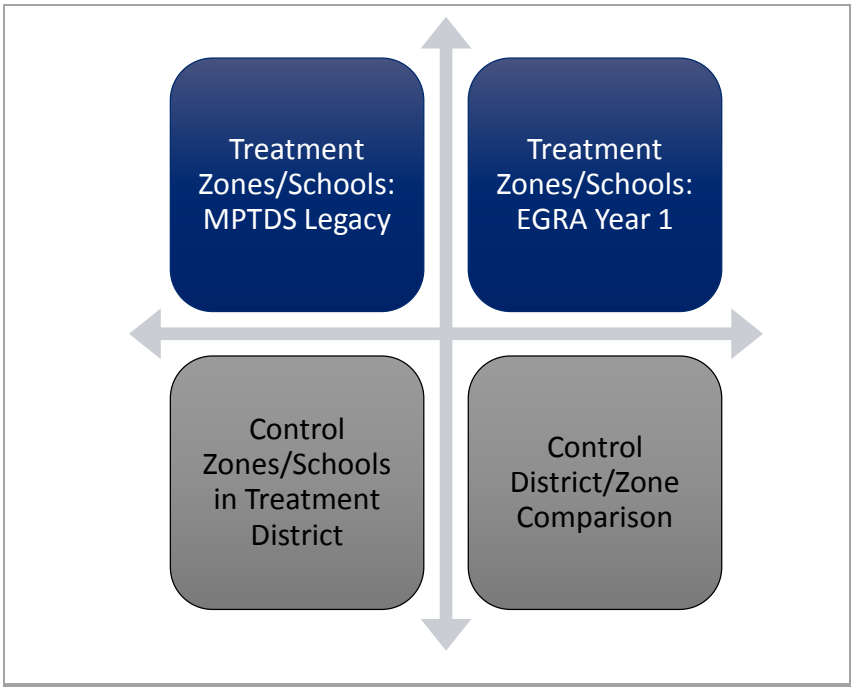
Some zones began EGRA like implementation as part of the legacy MTPDS include treatment and control zones randomly selected. A total of 27 treatment and 11 control zones were selected based on the number of zones in which program activities occurred in the first year of implementation (2013-2014). In any given education district, EGRA implementation occurred in all primary schools in a zone. In the majority of districts both treatment and control zones exist except in Salima District which is saturated with EGRA in every primary school. There are no control schools in this district.

Some EGRA based program support implementation began during the MTPDS era in Mzimba North, Ntcheu, Thyolo, Ntchisi, and Salima. It is hypothesized that set of treatment schools will demonstrate the lasting effects of EGRA with continued support. EGRA began Year 1 implementation in September 2013 through July 2014 in Lilongwe Rural East and Machinga with refresher training in 101 zones

[39] The RFTOP requirements prescribed that the control district would be Dowa. As a result of stakeholder input at the Inception Workshop, the control district was shifted to Mulanje.

including MTPDS legacy zones. EGRA year 2 implementation added 33 new zones in September 2014 and will continue through July 2015. This set of zones is not included in this study, as treatment began just two months prior to when the performance evaluation was undertaken. Therefore:

Four categories of zones are included in the evaluation fieldwork as follows:



Half of each district's zones, EGRA treatment and non-treatment (control) are included in fieldwork evaluation sample. Districts highlighted in are Year 1 EGRA Implementation Districts; highlighted Districts are MTPDS legacy districts.

Table 31: Stage 3 of the Sample Selection

District	Total Zones	Sample Zones	Total Zones	Sample Zones
Mzimba North	10	5	6	3
Lilongwe Rural East	4	2	4	2
Ntcheu	9	4	4	2
Machinga	3	1	2	1
Thyolo	7	4	3	1
Ntchisi	7	4	4	2
Salima	12	7	0	0
Total Zones	52	27	23	11

Stage 3 of the sample selection: 2 schools are randomly selected per zone, totaling 76 schools. These schools are selected from the 2013-2014 EMIS Dataset. Target Zones were extracted into separate worksheets in Excel, random numbers were assigned to each school with the two lowest numbered schools selected for the fieldwork component of this performance evaluation. The RFTOP stated that twenty percent of the schools selected will be the same schools as selected for the Social Impact's

impact evaluation to allow for cross analysis. The Evaluation's Education Specialist conducted the random site selection as she had little to no knowledge of zones or schools in Malawi at the time, assuring a lack of bias.

It is essential to include a Special Needs Resource Center in the study also. Referencing the MoEST Special Needs Education (SNE) Resource Centers list indicated that randomly selected Salima Primary School is one of the 5 special needs schools which participated in the Braille Cup in June 2014. Special Needs Mainstream Program representation was somewhat hand selected when St. Therese District was randomly selected. Then St. Therese Primary School with its Special Needs Mainstream Program was included for a site visit to assure representation of this style of instructional program.

Table 32: Stage 4 of the Sample Selection

District	Treatment		Control		Total Fieldwork schools
	Sample Zones	Sample Schools	Sample Zones	Sample Schools	
Mzimba North	5	10	3	6	16
Lilongwe Rural East	2	4	2	4	8
Ntcheu	4	8	2	4	12
Machinga	1	2	1	2	4
Thyolo	4	8	1	2	10
Ntchisi	4	8	2	4	12
Salima	7	14	0	0	14
Total Zones	27		11		
Total Schools		54		22	
Grand Total of Schools in Treatment Districts	76				

Stage 4: Two zones are randomly selected in Mulanje; in each zone, 2 schools are randomly selected; resulting in 4 additional control schools visited.

Data Collection Process

Eight Research Assistants were employed to collect data in the identified districts. All Research Assistants held Bachelor degrees and had previous experience as data collectors in evaluation studies. A three day training was held at CDM to assure a full understanding of current practices in primary school education in Malawi, EGRA principles, research etiquette and data collection using the Open Data Kit (ODK). (Training Annex 3)

The first day of the training focused on gaining knowledge of the program and instruments to be used for data collection. The second day two teams were deployed to randomly selected sites in Lilongwe Rural East for closely supervised data collection. The third day, results are compared among team members, establishing inter-rater reliability to assure that all team members are recording observations in the same way. Clarifying observation reporting among research assistants assures quality data for later analysis.

Two teams are formed with equal representation of males and females on each team of four. The teams worked in pairs with one male and one female research assistant conducting observations at each school. This assured that gender sensitive data would be collected and if there are parents or community members who feel comfortable speaking to a person of the same sex that opportunity would be available. Class observations in Standard 1 are generally one full hour whereas in Standard 2 and 3 the observation may be half an hour. Each research assistant conducted 1 or 2 class observations during the school visit and respective teacher interviews. Either of the research assistants can conduct the head teacher interview, depending on availability and timing of class observations. A focus group is also conducted at each school to gauge views of the school reading programs and their implementation as a major stakeholder and investor in their child's education. The members of the Parent Teachers Association, School Management Committee and Mothers' Group are invited by the head teacher to participate. Both research assistants participate in the focus group with one leading the discussion while the other takes notes and attendance.

Research team members:

South Team	North Team
David Mtekateka, team leader	Tapiwa Nsanja, team leader
Geofrey Juma	Susan Gondwe
Naomi Kalogwire	William Nyasulu
Wezzie Gondwe	Victor Sibale
(Janet Orr, Education Specialist)	(Peter Jere, Chief of Party)

Key Informant Interviews in zonal and district offices were conducted both by research assistants, the education specialist or the chief of party. Division, MoEST, RTI and other informants were conducted by either the education specialist or the chief of party.

Table 33: Key Informant Interview Participants

District and Zone Officials	School and Community Level
District Education Managers (DEM)	Head Teachers
District EGRA Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	Class observations – Standard 1-3
District EGRA Training Coordinator	Teachers
District EGRA Community Mobilization Officer	School Management Committees (SMCs), Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Mothers' Groups
Zonal Primary Education Advisors (PEAs)	

Application of Random Sampling

The zones and schools included in the random sample were mapped out using GIS data. A travel plan was created for the two teams. One team traveled north, primarily to Salima, Lilongwe Rural East and Mzimba North districts while the south team traveled to Salima, Ntcheu, Machinga, Thyolo, Ntchisi and Mulanje. Minor alterations to the pure random sampling conducted by the education specialist occurred. List below

are the changes and the rationale for each of those changes. Annex 4 delineates the final daily school data collection itinerary.

Anomalies in the fieldwork site selection:

New zones were recently defined in Salima district: Lifidzi and Katelera. When scheduling school visits with the DEM the evaluation team was advised that the randomly selected school Lifidzi Primary School is now in Lifidzi zone not Katelera. In addition, Mgando Primary School was in accessible by road as rivers have to be crossed without bridges. It was agreed that a substitute school should be selected in the interest of travel time. Two schools in the new Lifidizi zone not included in the EMIS dataset: Naliomba and Nangoagoda, had the lowest randomly selected number – 0. It was agreed that Naliomba would be selected for fieldwork as Nangogoda is also very inaccessible by road due to poor bridges.

Msalura Primary School in Msalura Zone was inadvertently visited on the first day of field work. Randomly selected Salima LEA was also visited the following day which resulted in 81 school visits rather than the 80 originally proposed.

When interviewing the PEA in Balila Zone she informed the team that Balila (Catholic) School would be closed for All Saint's Day and suggested Mpotola would be a comparable substitute for the visit the next day. Thanganikiya School in Kanyimbo Zone also took the All Saint's Day holiday but on Monday rather than Friday. The PEA for that district suggest Nsesendzi Primary as a comparable school. Kanjoka 2 in Kamsonga Zone was also closed on All Saint's Day, Mayala Primary was substituted.

In Mulanje district, Limbuli zone, Chimwalira School was replaced with Chitedze School because the teachers were attending WASH training so students were sent home.

The final list of sample schools and site visit schedule is provided in Annex 4.

National Stakeholders, Implementing Partners and Subcontractors

KIIs were conducted with national level government officials, implementing partners, sub-contractors and tangential stakeholders. Initial drafts of the Key Informant Interview (KII) protocols were designed then reviewed at the Inception Workshop and by USAID's COR and ACOR. Queries were adjusted based on provided input in other KIIs, observations in the field and additional supplied documents. Queries developed during fieldwork were also integrated into KIIs specifically for stakeholders who may be informed about a given situation. This procedure allowed evaluators to triangulate document review data, field interviews and observations with national, implementing partner and subcontractor interview data.

Annex 5 contains a list of respondents.

Instruments received

Table 34: Instruments Received Control Schools

Control Schools					
District	**Zone**	**Head Teacher Interview**	**Classroom Observation**	**Parent Community**	**SI School**
Lilongwe Rural East	Chiseka	Kambewe	Kambewe	Kambewe	Yes
		Mwenda	Mwenda	Mwenda	
	Mchemani	Kanthonga	Kanthonga	Kanthonga	
		Mseche	Mseche	Mseche	Yes
Machinga	Puteya	Lingoni	Lingoni	Lingoni	Yes
		Madziamera	Madziamera	Madziamera	Yes
Mulanje	Chitakale	Chanunkha	Chanunkha	Chanunkha	
			Mulanje LEA	Mulanje LEA	
	Limbuli	Muloza LEA	Muloza LEA	Muloza LEA	
		Chitedze	Chitedze	Chitedze	
Mzimba North	Enkondhlweni	Chikandazovu	Chikandazovu	Chikandazovu	
		Elunyeni	Elunyeni	Elunyeni	
	Enyezini	Ehlekweni	Ehlekweni	Ehlekweni	
		Matuli	Matuli	Matuli	
	Ezondweni	Baula	Baula	Baula	Yes
		Matheni JP	Matheni JP	Matheni JP	
Ntcheu	Kanyimbo	Njolomole	Njolomole	Njolomole	Yes
		Nsesedzi	Nsesedzi	Nsesedzi	
	Tsangano	Chilenga	Chilenga		Yes
		Ludoviko	Ludoviko		
Ntchisi	Chinthembwe	Chambawala	Chambawala	Chambawala	Yes
		Chinthembwe	Chinthembwe	Chinthembwe	
	Malomo	Dete	Dete	Dete	
		Phululu	Phululu	Phululu	Yes
Thyolo	Mulenga	Chilengo	Chilengo	Chilengo	
		Mulemba	Mulemba	Mulemba	Yes
Total	**13**	**25**	**26**	**24**	**10**

Table 35: Instruments Received Treatment Schools

Treatment Schools					
District	**Zone**	Head Teacher Interview	Classroom Observation	Parent Community	SI School
Lilongwe Rural East	Kang'oma	Chiuzira	Chiuzira	Chiuzira	
		Tsabango 2	Tsabango 2	Tsabango 2	
	Nchhoma	Chigodi	Chigodi		Yes
		Khokhwa	Khokhwa	Khokhwa	
Machinga	St Therese	Liwonde LEA	Liwonde LEA	Liwonde LEA	
		St Therese	St Therese	St Therese	
Mzimba North	Emcisweni	Kasangani	Kasangani	Kasangani	
		Zaro	Zaro	Zaro	
	Emoneni	Mphofwa FP	Mphofwa FP	Mphofwa FP	
		Zukuma	Zukuma	Zukuma	
	Lusangazi	Chivanga	Chivanga	Chivanga	
		Lusangazi	Lusangazi	Lusangazi	
	Mtende	Kambanga	Kambanga	Kambanga	Yes
		Mtende FP	Mtende FP	Mtende FP	
	Rukuru	Kamuwoli	Kamuwoli	Kamuwoli	
		Kapyolambavi	Kapyolambavi	Kapyolambavi	
Ntcheu	Bilila	Mpotola	Mpotola	Mpotola	
		Tambala	Tambala	Tambala	Yes
	Chikande	Khomba FP	Khomba FP	Khomba FP	
		Muthe	Muthe	Muthe	
	Matchereza	Matchereza	Matchereza	Matchereza	
		St Marys JP	St Marys JP	St Marys JP	
	Senzani	Bonongwe	Bonongwe	Bonongwe	
		Namisu	Namisu	Namisu	
Ntchisi	Boma	Chigwirizano	Chigwirizano	Chigwirizano	
		Kaphatiye	Kaphatiye	Kaphatiye	
	Chibweya	Chamathiko	Chamathiko	Chamathiko	
		Kafantandala	Kafantandala	Kafantandala	
	Kamsonga	Chitunda	Chitunda	Chitunda	
		Mayala	Mayala	Mayala	
	Mpherere	Kawaza	Kawaza	Kawaza	
		Mpherere FP	Mpherere FP	Mpherere FP	

Treatment Schools					
District	**Zone**	Head Teacher Interview	Classroom Observation	Parent Community	SI School
Salima	Chitala	Khotekhote	Khotekhote	Khotekhote	
		Nthumbo	Nthumbo	Nthumbo	
	Kanongola	Changoma	Changoma	Changoma	
		Mtidza	Mtidza	Mtidza	
	Lifidzi	Lifidzi	Lifidzi	Lifidzi	
		Mgando	Mgando	Mgando	
	Msalura	Chimbalanga	Chimbalanga	Chimbalanga	Yes
		Msalura	Msalura	Msalura	Yes
		Salima LEA	Salima LEA		Yes
	Ngodzi	Mauni	Mauni	Mauni	
		Napache	Napache		
	Ngolowindo	Parachute	Parachute	Parachute	
		Senga Bay LEA	Senga Bay LEA	Senga Bay LEA	
	Thavite	Chithiba	Chithiba	Chithiba	Yes
		Mchepa	Mchepa	Mchepa	
Thyolo	Gombe	Gombe	Gombe		
		Nsanje	Nsanje	Nsanje	
	Masambanjati	Chikumba	Chikumba	Chikumba	
		Mbalanguzi	Mbalanguzi	Mbalanguzi	
	Mpinji	Nachipere	Nachipere		
		Namitete	Namitete	Namitete	
	Ntambanyama	Malamulo	Malamulo	Malamulo	
		Mchenga FP	Mchenga FP	Mchenga FP	
Total	**27**	**55**	**55**	**50**	**7**

Geographic Coverage

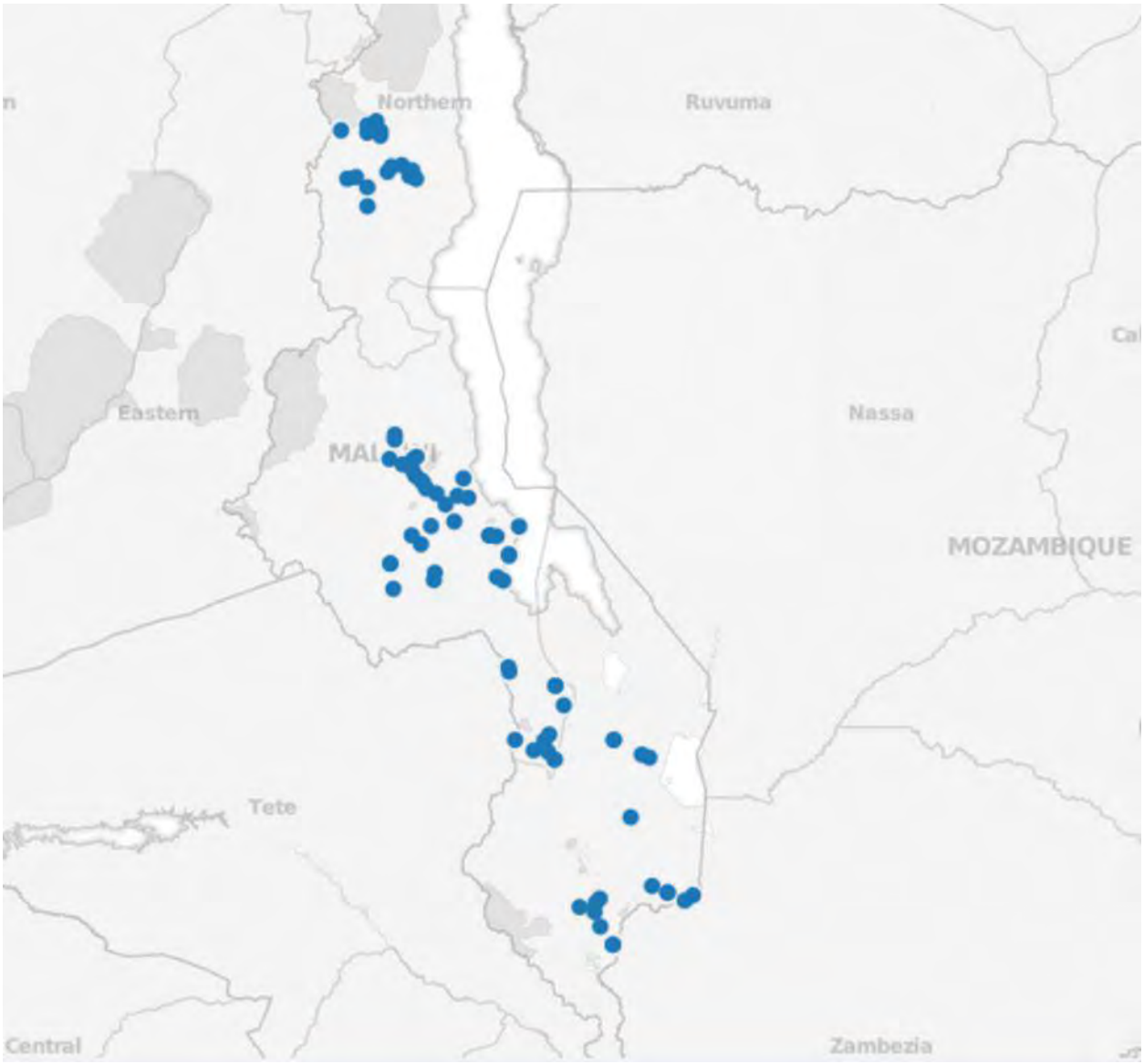


Figure 15: Geographic Coverage

ANNEX 3: DATA COLLECTION TRAINING GUIDE

Lilongwe, Malawi

October 22-24, 2014

EGRA PERFORMANCE EVALUATION TRAINING GUIDE

1. Introductions
2. What is EGRA? Early Grade Reading Activity
    a. Global Perspective - Janet
        1. Watch video – Liberia EGRA
        2. Success stories
            1. www.eddataglobal.org
            2. www.mtpds.org
    b. EGRA Malawi – Peter
        1. Donors, Implementers & Partners – past and present
        2. Goals of EGRA/Malawi
        3. 4 Components of EGRA Malawi

            Component 1: Provide Quality Reading Instruction for Early Grade Students

            Component 2: Provision of Teaching and Learning Materials for Reading

            Component 3: Increasing Parental and Community Engagement to Support Reading

            Component 4: Improving Policy Environment to Support Early Grade Reading

            Crosscutting issues, Monitoring and Evaluation

        4. Identifying Key People: Roles and Responsibilities
        5. Special Needs Students
        6. Gender Equity
    c. EGRA Evaluation – Peter & Janet
        1. Evaluation scope – objectives and expected outputs

            How effective is the EGRA's approach toward achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary school students in Malawi?

            How can the EGRA design, management, and execution become more efficient toward achieving program goals?

            What are the key factors needed to take the EGRA to a national scale and ensure sustainability?

            Where, how and to what extent have the EGRA's components been adopted/adapted without USAID assistance?

        2. Evaluation methodology – Qualitative and Quantitative
        3. Evaluation sampling framework – Random Sample 80 schools
        4. Evaluation operational plan
        5. Roles of RAs
3. Evaluation Data Collection - Quality Reading Instruction – What should you see when effective instruction occurs? - Janet
    a. Classroom Observation
        1. The Setting

2. The Teacher
3. The Pupils
4. Content of the lesson
5. Interactions during the lesson
6. Pupil performance

b. Video of Class (Senegal) – Observation Practice
   1. What did you see?
   2. What did you hear?

c. Observing or listening to boys and girls reading
   1. Fluency, Phonics, Letter sounds – Phonemes, using picture clues, other
   2. Video – High and Low

d. Video of EGRA Malawi
   1. Questions and Answers with Chikondi Maleta, USAID/COR

4. Using Smart Phones for Classroom Observations
   a. General familiarity with the phone
      1. Swipe on blank space to open.
      2. Previous screen is on the keyboard/return is on the screen
   b. Phone Stewardship – no private use only for data collection.
      1. Keep the phone charged.
         1. Nightly charging with electricity
         2. Charging in the car.
         3. Solar chargers
      2. Air time
         1. Starter airtime is in the phone
         2. When air time is low send message to Peter Joshua 999285120, he will push airtime to you.
      3. Gmail Account
   c. The Open Data Kit Program – Creates an XCEL spread sheet of your responses.
      1. File Naming conventions at the end of observation
         1. School – Class S1 (S2, S3) if more than one add teacher surname first letter.
         2. School – HT (Head Teacher)
         3. District – Position
         4. Zone – Position (1,2,3)
         5. Division – Position
   d. Photographs –
      1. Permission form to be signed by the Head Teacher
      2. Security: Images and details of pupils from schools or clubs allow for the remote possibility that people outside could identify and then attempt to contact them directly. The measures described below should help to minimize the risk of such unsolicited attention.
         1. Where possible, use general shots of group activities rather than close-up pictures of individual children.
         2. Consider the camera angle; photographs take over the shoulder or from behind are less identifiable.
         3. Use images of children in suitable dress and take care photographing sports activities to maintain modesty.
         4. Consider alternatives. Is a photograph of the children necessary or could an article be illustrated by the children's work for example?
      3. Labeling Photographs

1. School Name - Class S1, S2, etc. EVENT- assembly, artwork, read aloud, writing, teacher,
2. Uploading Photos to DROPBOX

e. Step by step through the Observation Protocol on the phone
   1. If Time: Practice – Repeat one of the videos and enter data as you see it.
   2. Compare notes among the group.
   3. Same and Different – Justify your selection.

f. Home practice – Ask a young learner to read aloud to you. Take notes focused on their reading skill.

5. Meeting the Head Teacher and Interview
   a. Greeting the Principal and Protocol – Peter
   b. Treatment and Control Schools – what they may or may not know
   c. Basic School/Principal data should be entered before you arrive at the school, then complete details.
   d. Head Teacher data sheet will have Longitude and Latitude reading for the whole school. (set up phones for 5 digit GPS readings.) If no cell phone reception, how to GPS readings.
   e. Interview each other as if you were a head teacher and take notes.
6. Parent, School Management Committee, Mother Group Focus Group
   a. Discuss responsibilities for each group in the school. EGRA focus on community and parent training.
   b. Reading Fairs – what are they?
   c. How to conduct a focus group. "Market Research"
      1. One facilitator and one note taker, time keeper.
      2. Keep in mind the evaluation questions and the EGRA components.
      3. Follow the question guide but allow for some stories and examples.
      4. Different perspectives and recommendations welcome.
      5. Keep it positive!
7. Other interviews in zonal or district offices to be conducted
   a. Key informant interviews with PEAs, SEMAs, District Staff
8. Field Practice-next day THURSDAY
   a. All data collectors go to one school proceed with data collection – closest in Lilongwe Rural East. In groups of 3 or 4 observe classes. Interview the principal, conduct a parent/community focus group.
   b. Debriefing session on the field experience:
      1. Challenges faced and how to deal with them
      2. Opportunities identified and how to make use of them
      3. Lessons learnt
9. Inter-rater Reliability Check FRIDAY
   a. As 2 groups compare results and align data collection standards.
   b. Clarifications in observations or interviews
10. Ethical issues, Schedule and Logistics
   a. Ethical issues related to research
   b. Pairing of RAs
   c. Work plan review
   d. Logistics arrangements
   e. Team - code of conduct
11. Schedule of school visits:
   - Team North and Team South: two male and two female research assistants in each team. One research assistant assumes the role of team leader.
   - Early morning, school begins at 7 or 7:30 – reading is generally taught first

- First RA pair is dropped at first school, vehicle continues on to second school and drops the second pair – driver stays there until observations and interviews are complete. Return to pick up first pair.

Each team will debriefing at the end of the day with notes transcribed by the team leader and emailed to COP Jere.

ANNEX 4: SAMPLED SCHOOLS AND SITE VISIT SCHEDULE

Table 36: Sample Schools and Site Visit Schedule

Teams	Districts	Zones	Intervention Schools	Control Schools	Dates	Proposed operational point	H/teacher contacts	Boys	Girls	Total	Teachers	Pupil/ Teacher Ratio
TEAM NORTH	Salima	Chitala	Khotekhote		Mon 27/10	Salima boma	099-9753451	109	97	206	7	29
			Nthumbo		Mon 27/10		099-1252147	436	446	882	10	88
		Thavite	Mchepa		Tue 28/10		099-9478120	605	534	1139	15	76
			Chithiba		Tue 28/10		088-8032042	298	252	550	7	79
		Kanongola	Mtidza		Wed 29/10		099-9010702	144	165	309	3	103
			Changoma		Wed 29/10		099-321564	312	224	536	8	67
TEAM SOUTH	Salima	Nsalura	Chimbalanga		Mon 27/10	Salima boma	099-2016691	557	503	1060	15	71
			Nsalura		Mon 27/10		099-9708115	964	995	1959	29	68
		Ngolowindo	Senga Bay LEA		Tue 28/10		099-9285797	870	858	1728	21	82
			Parachute		Tue 28/10		099-9390462	281	298	579	23	25
		Katelera	Lifidzi		Wed 29/10		09226888	754	759	1513	16	95
			Naliomba		Wed 29/10		099-658209	168	136	304	2	152
		Chipoka	Mauni		Thu 30/10		099-2833355	205	201	406	6	68
			Napache		Thu 30/10		099-9645692	377	315	692	6	115
TEAM [illegible]	Ntchisi	Mpherere	Mpherere FP		Thu 30/10	Ntchisi boma	099-9449818	508	546	1054	23	46
			Kawaza		Thu 30/10		099-9233976	229	244	473	6	79
		Boma	Chigwirizano		Fri 31/10		099-2513141	26	42	68	3	23
			Kaphatiye		Fri 31/10		099-5714910	383	434	817	12	68

Teams	Districts	Zones	Intervention Schools	Control Schools	Dates	Proposed operational point	H/teacher contacts	Boys	Girls	Total	Teachers	Pupil/ Teacher Ratio
		Kamsonga	Chitunda		Mon 3/11		088-4980757	277	253	530	7	76
			Mayala		Mon 3/11		099-63303220	104	132	236	4	59
		Chibweya	Kafantandala		Tue 4/11		099-9262558	222	201	423	6	71
			Chamthiko		Tue 4/11		099-4636712	101	126	227	3	76
		Chinthembwe		Chinthembwe	Wed 5/11		099-9476203	272	256	528	9	59
				Chambawala	Wed 5/11		099-9024068	129	153	282	4	71
		Malomo		Dete	Thu 6/11		099-9781117	244	218	462	4	116
				Phululu	Thu 6/11		099-3810135	208	211	419	6	70
	Mzimba North	Emoneni	Mphofwa FP		Fri 7/11	Jenda	088-4316701	248	247	495	5	99
			Zukuma		Fri 7/11		088-8547170	139	137	276	5	55
		Mtende	Mtende FP		Mon 10/11	Euthini	099-5 442 577	396	309	705	10	71
			Kam'banga		Mon 10/11		099-3172053	244	260	504	11	46
		Emcisweni	Zaro		Tue 11/11	Euthini/ Emchisweni	088-8039292	228	217	445	8	56
			Kasangani		Tue 11/11		088-801181	92	112	204	3	68
		Rukuru	Kapyolambavi		Wed 12/11		088- 4938717	101	91	192	6	32
			Kamuwoli		Wed 12/11		088-4073031	168	197	365	5	73
		Enkondhlweni		Elunyeni	Thu 12/11		088-4765383	277	331	608	7	87
				Chikandazovu	Thu 12/11			64	59	123	2	62
		Enyezini		Ehlekweni	Fri 13/11	Ekwendeni	088-8143875	205	228	433	8	54
				Matuli	Fri 13/11		088-8634 933	116	122	238	7	34

Teams	Districts	Zones	Intervention Schools	Control Schools	Dates	Proposed operational point	H/teacher contacts	Boys	Girls	Total	Teachers	Pupil/ Teacher Ratio
		Ezondweni		Baula	Mon 16/11		099-5675109	452	465	917	10	92
				Matheni JP	Mon 16/11		088-4315031	145	154	299	5	60
		Lusangazi	Lusangazi		Tue 17/11	Mzuzu	088-1172360	287	259	546	12	46
			Chivanga		Tue 17/11		088-8735577	162	209	371	8	46
	Lilongwe Rural East	Kang'oma	Chiuzira		Done as Pretest	Lilongwe city	088-81162545	253	286	539	10	54
			Tsabango 2		Done as Pretest		099-9484716	449	457	906	14	65
		Nkhoma	Chigodi		Wed 18/11		099-5677658	950	1155	2105	15	140
			Khokhwa		Wed 18/11		099-9425663	444	493	937	9	104
		Chiseka		Kambewe	Done as Pretest		099-9803807	298	333	631	5	126
				Mwenda	Done as Pretest		099-9398011	390	399	789	10	79
		Mchemani		Kanthonga	Thu 19/11		099-5640258	312	325	637	10	64
				Mseche	Thu 19/11		099-9178714	452	397	849	11	77
TEAM SOUTH	Ntcheu	Senzani	Bonongwe		Fri 31/10	Ntcheu boma	099-9753036	164	124	288	6	48
			Namisu		Fri 31/10			243	250	493	6	82
		Bilila	Tambala		Mon 3/11		099-1387248	340	398	738	10	74
			Mpotola		Mon 3/11		099-9322959	583	600	1183	24	49
		Chikande	Khomba FP		Tue 4/11			673	722	1395	12	116
			Muthe		Tue 4/11		088-1767703	426	429	855	11	78
		Matchereza	Matchereza		Wed 5/11			312	333	645	11	59
			St Marys JP		Wed 5/11		099-1048816	31	29	60	5	12

Teams	Districts	Zones	Intervention Schools	Control Schools	Dates	Proposed operational point	H/teacher contacts	Boys	Girls	Total	Teachers	Pupil/ Teacher Ratio
		Kanyimbo		Nsesedzi	Thu 6/11		099-9322950	499	550	1049	18	58
				Njolomole	Thu 6/11		088-1559760	475	550	1025	22	47
		Tsangano		Chilenga	Fri 7/11		088-1509717	230	217	447	4	112
				Ludoviko	Fri 7/11		088-1889295	305	319	624	9	69
	Machinga	St. Therese	Kamwendo		Mon 10/11	Liwonde town	088-8310912	950	1066	2016	40	50
			Liwonde LEA		Mon 10/11		01 542765	690	729	1419	24	59
		Puteya		Lingoni	Tue 11/11		088-1868357	170	192	362	12	30
				Madziamera	Tue 11/11		099-9214827	549	556	1105	11	100
	Thyolo	Mpinji	Namitete		Wed 12/11	Tholo boma	088-8891330	758	729	1487	20	74
			Nachipere		Wed 12/11		088-8584598	1329	1383	2712	30	90
		Ntambanyama	Malamulo		Thu 13/11	Makwasa	01 470 013	139	165	304	8	38
			Mchenga FP		Thu 13/11		088-1196954	835	717	1552	19	82
		Masambanjati	Chikumba		Fri 14/11		088-8023602	952	1038	1990	19	105
			Mbalanguzi		Fri 14/11		088-8650728	606	577	1183	12	99
		Gombe	Gombe		Mon 17/11		088-8126194	801	890	1691	20	85
			Nsanje		Mon 17/11		099-5512211	637	643	1280	14	91
		Mulenga		Chilengo	Tue 18/11	Tholo boma	088-8150677	514	566	1080	11	98
				Mulemba	Tue 18/11		088-1096426	321	369	690	11	63
	Mula	Limbuli		Muloza LEA	Wed 19/11	Mulanje boma	088-4026677	1292	1252	2544	30	85
				Chitedze	Wed 19/11		088-1224015	152	187	339	2	170

Teams	Districts	Zones	Intervention Schools	Control Schools	Dates	Proposed operational point	H/teacher contacts	Boys	Girls	Total	Teachers	Pupil/ Teacher Ratio
		Chitakale		Mulanje LEA	Thu 20/11		088-8506537	325	346	671	9	75
				Chanunkha	Thu 20/11		088-4570422	389	460	849	10	85

ANNEX 5: LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED

Table 37: List of Persons Contacted

	Organization	Department	Location	Role	Name
1.	USAID	Education	Lilongwe	EGRA COR	Kevin Roberts
2.	USAID	Education	Lilongwe	EGRA evaluation COR	Chikondi Maleta
3.	USAID	Education	Lilongwe	EGRA alternative COR	Ramsey Sosola
4.	USAID	Communication	Lilongwe	Development Outreach Communication Specialist	Oris Chimenya
5.	USAID	-	Lilongwe	Economist	Carter Nemphill
6.	USAID	-	Lilongwe	Participant Training Specialist	Florence Sepula
7.	World Bank	Education	Lilongwe	Education Advisor	Deepa Sankar
8.	WFP	School Feeding	Lilongwe	Project Officer	Chalizamudzi Matola
9.	WFP	School Feeding	Lilongwe	Consultant	Leountien Bielen
10.	WFP	School Feeding	Lilongwe	Joint Program Coordinator – Girls' Education	Luca Molinas
11.	DfID	Education	Lilongwe	Education Advisor	Emma Gremley
12.	UNESCO	Education	Lilongwe	Assistant Executive Secretary for Education	David Mulira
13.	Save the Children	Education	Lilongwe	Senior Manager for Education & Child Development	Leckson Ndalama
14.	GIZ BEP	Education	Lilongwe	Acting Team Leader	Constantin Laemmie
15.	FAWEMA	-	Lilongwe	Programme Manager	Wesley Chabwera
16.	UNICEF	Education	Lilongwe	Education Advisor	Eva Hardardottir
17.	RTI International	Administration	Lilongwe	Chief of Party	Zikani Kaunda
18.	RTI International	Administration	Lilongwe	Deputy Chief of Party	Dr. Steve Backman
19.	RTI International	Monitoring & Evaluation	Lilongwe	Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist	Dr. Mike Nkhoma
20.	RTI International	Component Leader	Lilongwe	Literacy Specialist	Dr. Paola Green
21.	RTI International	Component Leader	Lilongwe	Teaching & Learning Materials Coordinator	Odala Banda
22.	RTI International	Component Leader	Lilongwe	Community Mobilization Specialist	Dezie Trigu
23.	RTI International	Component Leader	Lilongwe	Senior Education Policy Advisor	Charles Gunsaru
24.	Perkins International	Component Leader	Lilongwe	Disability, Gender, and Vulnerable Populations Specialist	Augustine Kanyendula

	Organization	Department	Location	Role	Name
25.	RTI International	Division Coordinator	Lilongwe	LLRE, LLRW and Ntchisi	Chrissie Phiri
26.	RTI International	Division Coordinator	Zomba	SEED	Janet Chiromo
27.	RTI International	Division Community Mobilization	Zomba	SEED	Boniface Chifundo
28.	RTI International	Division Monitoring & Evaluation	Zomba	SEED	Lloyd Kalata
29.	Ministry of Education	Principal Secretary	Lilongwe	MoEST	Lonely Magreta
30.	Ministry of Education	Principal Secretary – Primary Education	Lilongwe	MoEST	Thokozire Banda
31.	Ministry of Education	Department of Inspection and Advisory Services (DIAS)	Lilongwe	MoEST counterpart	Raphael Agabu
32.	Ministry of Education	Department of Teacher Education Development (DTED)	Lilongwe	MoEST counterpart- In-service Training Officer Basic Education	Victor Mdangwe
33.	Ministry of Education	Department of Teacher Education Development (DTED)	Lilongwe	Deputy Coordinator Secondary CPD	Godwin Jere
34.	Ministry of Education	Department of Basic Education (DBE)	Lilongwe	MoEST counterpart	Mrs. L. Daka
35.	Ministry of Education	Department of Planning	Lilongwe	MoEST counterpart	Victor Lungu
36.	Ministry of Education	Department of Special Needs DSHNA	Lilongwe	MoEST counterpart – Cross cutting	Charles Mazinga
37.	Ministry of Education	Department of Basic Education	Lilongwe	MoEST counterpart	Joseph Chimombo
38.	Ministry of Education	DSNE	Lilongwe	MoEST counterpart	Prefer Kayedzeke
39.	Ministry of Education	DSNE	Lilongwe	MoEST counterpart	Mr. D. Njaidi
40.	Ministry of Education	DSNE	Lilongwe	Chief Education Office - SNE	Peter Msendema

	Organization	Department	Location	Role	Name
41.	Ministry of Education	Senior Education Methods Advisor (SEMA)	Lilongwe Central West	Central West Education Division Education	Charles Kapichi
42.	Ministry of Education	Senior Education Methods Advisor (SEMA)	Lilongwe Central West	Central West Education Division Education	Joyce Hamsini
43.	Ministry of Education	Senior Education Methods Advisor (SEMA)	Mzimba North	Northern Education Division	Mrs. Nkhonde
44.	MOGCDSW	Social Welfare	Lilongwe	Assistant DCDO	Pauline Simwaka
45.	CRECCOM	Sub-Contractor	Zomba	Implementing Partner	Levison Lijani
46.	CRECCOM	Sub-Contractor	Zomba	Director of Programs	Madolo Samati
47.	CRECCOM	Sub-Contractor	Zomba	Executive Director	George Jobe
48.	Ministry of Gender	Community services	Lilongwe	MGCSW counterpart	Nzeru Mwandira
49.	Lilongwe TTC	Principal	Lilongwe	Teacher training	Mrs. Gonani
50.	Lilongwe TTC	English Language Lecturer	Lilongwe	Teacher training implementer	Marvin Mtonga
51.	MANEB	Director	Zomba	EGRA Counterpart	Mr. Kananji
52.	MIE	Director	Zomba	EGRA Counterpart	Dr. W. Susuwele-Banda
53.	University of Malawi	Center for Language Studies	Zomba	Lecturer, Author	Dr. Stella Kachiwanda
54.	RTI International	District	Ntcheu	DME	Mr. Gift Mulumwaza
55.	RTI International	District	Ntcheu	DTC	Mr. Jerald Ntaja
56.	RTI International	District	Ntcheu	DEM Office	Mdima Banda
57.	RTI International	District	Ntcheu	DEM	Mr. George Ngaiyaye
58.	CRECCOM	District	Ntcheu	Community Mobilization Officer	Ms. Brenda Barone
59.	CRECCOM	District	Machinga	DTC	Mr. Maynard Papaya
60.	CRECCOM	District	Machinga	DCM	Andrina Simengwa
61.	Ministry of Gender	District	Salima	DCDO	Ellen Jana
62.	Ministry of Gender	District	Salima	ADCDO	Francis Banda
63.	CRECCOM	District	Salima	DME	Mr. Victor Mzungu
64.	CRECCOM	District	Salima	DTC	Mr. Nelson Mtchini
65.	CRECCOM	District	Ntchisi	DTC	Shadreck Chaguza
66.	CRECCOM	District	Ntchisi	DME	Sphiwe Bota
67.	CRECCOM	District	Ntchisi	DCM	Margaret Makawa
68.	Ministry of Gender	District	Ntchisi	DCDO	Benard Chanachi
69.	MoEST	District	Ntchisi	Coordinating PEA	Hamex Malithano

	Organization	Department	Location	Role	Name
70.	MoEST	District	Ntchisi	Deputy DEM	Nelly Kamtedza
71.	MoEST	District	Mulanje	Coordinating PEA	Mrs. Khoropa
72.	RTI International	District	Machinga	DCM	Mr. Charles Kamlenje
73.	RTI International	District	Machinga	DME	Ms. Precious Ussi
74.	RTI International	District	Machinga	DTC	Mr. Alipao Mabeti
75.	MoEST	District	Thyolo	DEM	Mr. Charles Sakwata
76.	RTI International	District	Thyolo	DME	Mr.Thom Nyirongo
77.	RTI International	District	Mzimba North	DME	Mr. Macmillan Gondwe
78.	RTI International	District	Mzimba North	DCM	Mr. Matatiyo
79.	RTI International	Division & District	Mzimba North	Division Coordinator & DTC	Mr. Speaker Nkhonjera
80.	RTI International	District	Mzimba North	Coordinating PEA	Mr. Mtumbuka
81.	RTI International	District	Mzimba North	DCM	Mrs. Kaunda
82.	MoEST	District	Mzimba North	DEM	Mr. Laurent Mwasikakata
83.	MoEST	District	Mzimba North	DEM	Mr. Enock Chumachawo

ANNEX 6: SUMMARY DATA ANALYSIS

TEACHER SATISFACTION BY COMPONENT

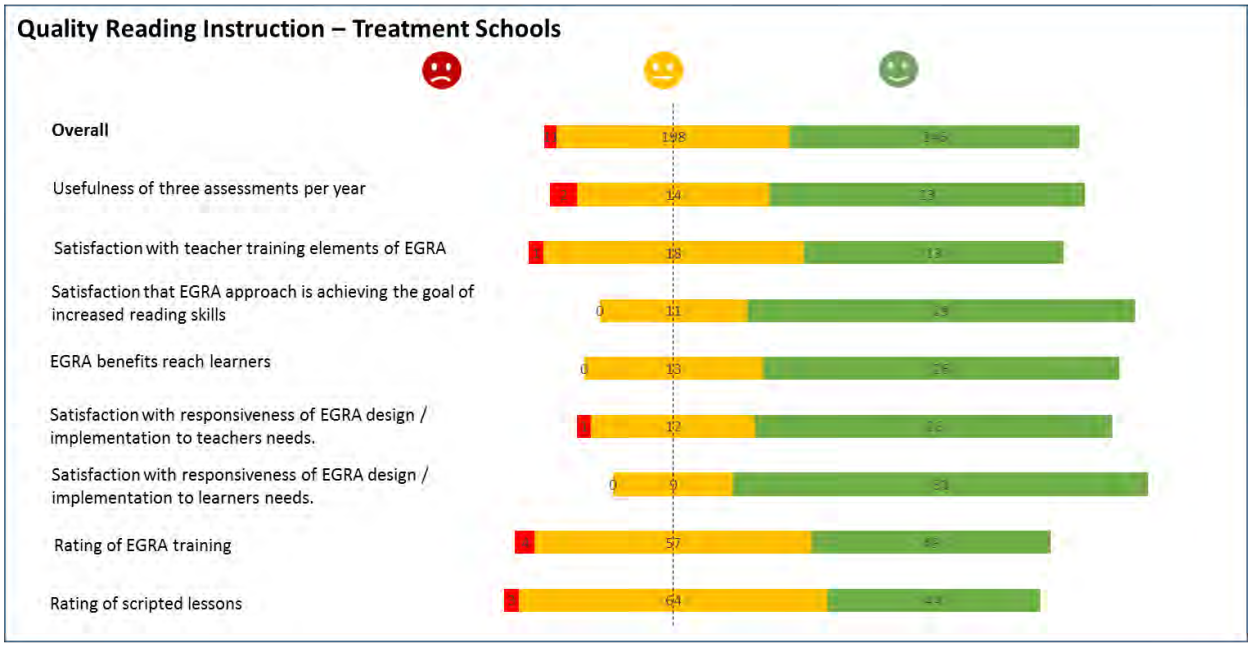


Figure 16: Quality of Reading Instruction by Component – Treatment Schools

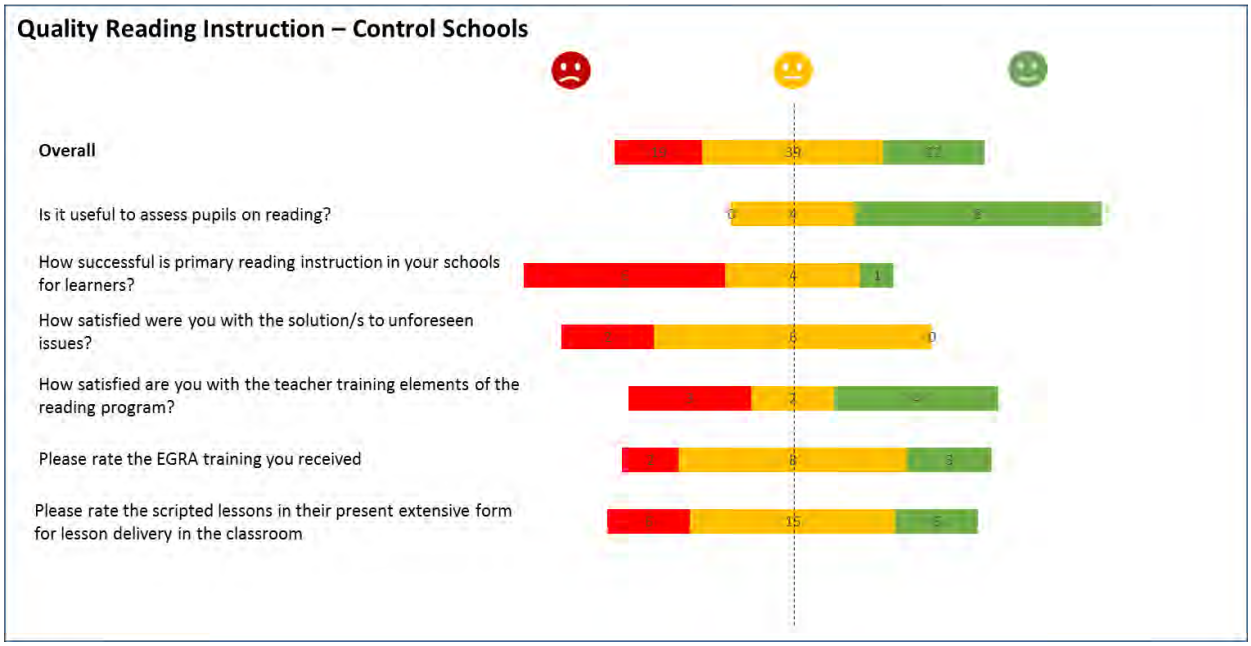


Figure 17: Quality of reading instruction by component - control schools

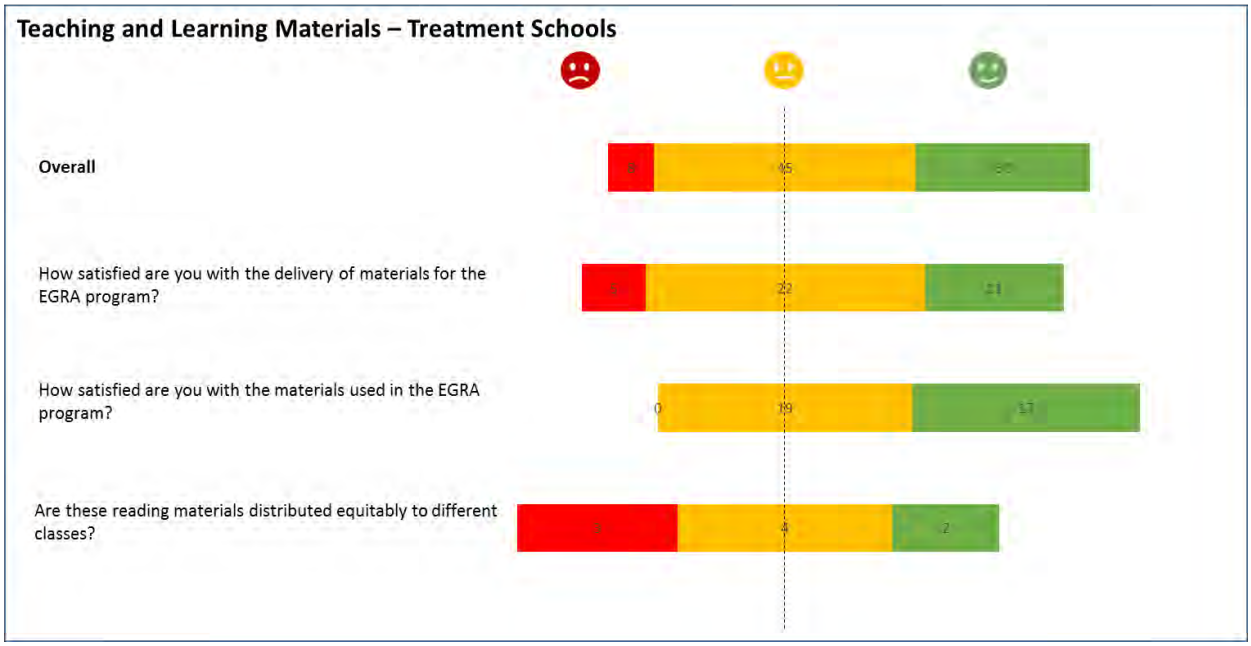


Figure 18: Teaching and learning material - treatment schools

IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY INDICATORS

Table 38: Implementation Fidelity Indicators

Num.	Indicator	Positive Score of 1	Somewhat positive Score of 0.66	Somewhat negative Score of 0.33	Negative Score of 0
1	Does Class Teacher have training in teaching reading?	EGRA, MTPDS, Read Malawi			Not sure, Other
2	Please select any qualification held by teacher	PT 4, PT 3, PT 2, PT 1			Volunteer teachers, ODL teachers
3	Scripted Lesson	Yes, Partial Script			No
4	Teacher Balance	Teacher clearly balances educator directed and learner centered activities	Teacher somewhat balances educator directed and learner centered activities	The teacher only did a few minutes of learner centered activities	The teacher is only engaging in rote learning techniques. Other.
5	Learner Comfort	Students respond well and feel comfortable with the teacher and initiate interaction with him/her.	Some students (but not all) respond well and feel comfortable with the teacher and initiate interaction with him/her.	A few students respond well and feel comfortable with the teacher and initiate interaction with him/her.	Students appear afraid or uncomfortable with the teacher. Other.
6	Learner Engagement	All students are engaged and interested in class activities.	The majority of students are engaged and interested in class activities.	A few students are engaged and interested in class activities.	All students appear bored and uninvolved in class activities.
7	Before reading lesson the Teacher… (Sets the scene, reads title, looks at pictures, predicts content)	All four options	Three options	Two options	One option, other, none

Num.	Indicator	Positive Score of 1	Somewhat positive Score of 0.66	Somewhat negative Score of 0.33	Negative Score of 0
8	Comprehension strategies observed (Uses student's background, sequencing, problem solving, main idea/details)	All four options	Three options	Two options	One option, other, none
9	Reading lesson focus observed	Phonemic awareness			No phonemic awareness
10	Style of learner reading (Oral reading, silent reading, pair reading, guided reading, group reading)	All five options	Four/three options	Two options	One option, other, none
11	Questioning by the teacher (Predict, give facts, reorganize information, evaluate, create a question)	All five options	Four/three options	Two options	One option, other, none
12	Post reading tasks (Discussing, reviewing predictions, applying/using information, writing)	All four options	Three options	Two options	One option, other, none

The scores for individual schools, listed from highest to lowest, can be found in the tables below. The first set of tables show schools who scored above 50 (which is considered the positive range), whereas the second set of tables show schools who scored 50 or below (considered more negative). Social Impact schools have been shaded in blue in the tables for identification. Mulanje schools are shaded in orange.

Table 39: School Implementation Fidelity Scores above 50

Treatment Schools	
School	**Index**
Namitete	79
Chitunda	75
Sttherese	75
Mpotola	75
Lusangazi	73
Khotekhote	73
Chigwirizano	71
Kapyolambavi	71
Bonongwe	69
Kaphatiye	69
Mtende FP	69
St Mary's JP	69
Changoma	69
Mayala	68
Khomba FP	66
Nthumbo	66
Lifidzi	65
Chithiba	65
Kasangani	65
Malamulo	64
Parachute	64
Chikumba	62
Chamathiko	62
Mphofwa FP	62

Control Schools	
School	**Index**
Mulanje LEA	78
Ludoviko	69
Matuli	62

Treatment Schools	
Gombe	61
Khokhwa	61
Zukuma	60
Tambala	60
Kambanga	58
Chiuzira	57
Nsanje	57
Mbalanguzi	57
Mpherere FP	55
Nachipere	54
Zaro	54
Napache	53
Mchepa	53
Chigodi	53
Tsabango2	52
Kawaza	51
Msalura	51

Control Schools	
Baula	59
Chikandazovu	57
Kanthonga	57
Ehlekweni	51
Chinthembwe	51

Schools that scored less than 50 points included:

Table 40: School Implementation fidelity scores below 50

Treatment Schools	
Chivanga	50
Matchereza	50
Mtidza	49
Chimbalanga	49
Mchenga FP	47
Liwonde LEA	47
Kamuwoli	46
Kafantandala	43
Mauni	40
Salima LEA	40
Mgando	40
Muthe	37
Senga Bay LEA	36
Namisu	32

Control Schools	
Elunyeni	50
Chambawala	47
Nsesedzi	46
Mwenda	45
Njolomole	43
Muloza LEA	42
Chitedze	41
Kambewe	40
Lingoni	40
Mathenijp	39
Chilenga	36
Chanunkha	36
Dete	36
Phululu	32
Chilengo	30
Mseche	28
Mulemba	25
Madziamera	23

The blue shading indicates that the school is in the Impact Evaluation sample conducted by Social Impact. The orange shading indicates Mulanje schools which are outside the target.

INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL SCORE PER ITEM ON IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY

Table 41: Individual School Score per item on Implementation Fidelity

Treatment Schools												
School Name	Items											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Bonongwe	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.50	0.33	1.00	0.50	0.00	0.33
Chamathiko	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.66	0.50	0.33	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.33
Changoma	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.83	0.50	1.00	0.33	0.33	0.33
Chigodi	0.50	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.67	0.50	0.33	0.33	0.50	0.33	0.33	0.17
Chigwirizano	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.66	0.66	0.33	1.00	0.17	0.50	0.50
Chikumba	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.50	0.67	0.00	0.50	0.66	0.00	0.50
Chimbalanga	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.66	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00
Chithiba	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.50	0.50	0.66	0.50	1.00	0.17	0.50	0.33
Chitunda	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.67	0.33	1.00	0.33	0.50	0.50
Chiuzira	1.00	1.00	0.67	0.66	0.77	0.66	0.22	0.33	0.67	0.55	0.22	0.11
Chivanga	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.67	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.33	0.00	0.00
Gombe	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.83	0.67	0.33	0.00	1.00	0.33	0.33	0.17
Kafantandala	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.33	0.33	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Kambanga	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.66	0.17	0.33	0.50	0.50	0.33	0.00
Kamuwoli	1.00	0.50	0.50	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.17	0.17	0.50	0.33	0.17	0.17
Kaphatiye	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.33	0.33
Kapyolambavi	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.66	0.50	0.50	1.00	0.33	0.50	0.50
Kasangani	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.67	0.50	0.66	0.17	0.17
Kawaza	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.50	0.00	0.33	0.50	0.50	0.17	0.00
Khokhwa	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.66	0.17	0.17	1.00	0.50	0.00	0.17
Khomba FP	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.33	0.17	1.00	0.66	0.00	0.33
Khotekhote	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.50	0.17	1.00	0.50	0.66	0.50
Lifidzi	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.00	1.00	0.66	0.00	0.33
Liwonde LEA	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.33	0.17	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.00
Lusangazi	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.83	0.66	0.50	0.50	0.33	0.66	0.83
Malamulo	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.67	0.50	0.50	0.33	0.00	0.00
Matchereza	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.66	0.33	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mauni	0.50	0.50	1.00	0.83	0.5	0.66	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.17	0.17

Treatment Schools												
School Name	Items											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Mayala	1.00	0.50	1.00	0.83	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.66	0.50	0.66	0.17	0.33
Mbalanguzi	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.66	0.33	0.17	0.50	0.17	0.33	0.00
Mchenga FP	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.83	0.67	0.67	0.17	0.17	0.50	0.17	0.00	0.00
Mchepa	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.5	0.5	0.17	0.17	0.50	0.50	0.17	0.00
Mgando	1.00	0.75	0.50	0.42	0.58	0.5	0.08	0.08	0.50	0.17	0.00	0.17
Mpherere FP	0.50	1.00	0.50	0.83	0.5	0.5	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.33
Mphofwa FP	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.50	0.50	0.66	0.17	0.50
Mpotola	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.33	1.00	0.66	0.33	1.00
Msalura	1.00	1.00	0.67	0.44	1.00	0.55	0.11	0.11	1.00	0.11	0.11	0.00
Mtende FP	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.66	0.67	0.50	1.00	0.33	0.33	0.17
Mtidza	1.00	0.67	0.33	0.89	0.77	0.66	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.22	0.00
Muthe	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.67	0.33	0.5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nachipere	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.17	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.17	0.00
Namisu	0.50	0.50	0.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.00
Namitete	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.50	1.00	0.66	0.33	0.50
Napache	0.67	0.67	1.00	0.55	0.66	0.55	0.55	0.22	0.67	0.44	0.11	0.33
Nsanje	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.5	0.50	0.00	1.00	0.33	0.00	0.00
Nthumbo	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.33	0.33	1.00	0.33	0.33	0.17
Parachute	1.00	0.67	1.00	0.89	0.89	0.44	0.33	0.22	1.00	0.66	0.22	0.33
Salima LEA	1.00	1.00	0.67	0.33	0.55	0.44	0.11	0.00	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.00
Senga Bay LEA	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.66	0.5	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.00
St Mary's JP	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.66	0.33	0.00	1.00	0.66	0.33	0.66
St Therese	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.67	0.50	1.00	0.66	0.33	0.33
Tambala	1.00	0.50	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.17	0.17	1.00	0.33	0.33	0.17
Tsabango	1.00	0.60	1.00	0.46	0.66	0.66	0.40	0.26	1.00	0.07	0.07	0.00
Zaro	1.00	0.50	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.66	0.17	0.17	0.50	0.50	0.33	0.17
Zukuma	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.00	0.33	0.50	0.33	0.17	0.17
Grand Total	0.95	0.90	0.87	0.78	0.71	0.64	0.35	0.24	0.68	0.35	0.19	0.20

Table 42: Individual School Score per item On Implementation Fidelity – Control Schools

Control Schools												
School Name	Items											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Baula	0.50	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.66	0.50	0.67	0.00	0.50	0.33	0.33
Chambawala	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.17	0.33	0.50	0.66	0.00	0.00
Chanunkha	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.17	0.33	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.00
Chikandazovu	0.50	1.00	0.50	0.83	0.66	0.66	0.33	0.33	0.50	0.66	0.33	0.50
Chilenga	0.50	1.00	0.00	0.66	0.67	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.17	0.17	0.00
Chilengo	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.66	0.66	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Chinthembwe	0.00	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.83	0.66	0.50	0.83	0.00	0.33	0.66	0.33
Chitedze	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.33	0.17	0.00	0.66	0.17	0.17
Dete	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.67	0.50	0.67	0.17	0.17	0.00	0.33	0.17	0.17
Ehlekweni	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.66	0.50	0.00	0.17	0.50	0.50	0.17	0.00
Elunyeni	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.33	0.50	0.17	0.00	0.17
Kambewe	0.00	1.00	0.50	0.67	0.50	0.50	0.17	0.17	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.33
Kanthonga	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.66	0.66	0.33	0.17	0.00	0.50	0.33	0.33
Lingoni	0.50	1.00	0.00	0.33	0.66	0.66	0.50	0.33	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.33
Ludoviko	0.50	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.50	0.67	0.67	1.00	0.66	0.33	0.33
Madziamera	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.66	0.67	0.50	0.17	0.17	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.00
Mathenijp	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.66	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.33	0.00	0.00
Matuli	1.00	0.50	1.00	0.83	0.83	0.66	0.33	0.33	1.00	0.66	0.17	0.17
Mseche	0.50	1.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mulanje LEA	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.50	0.50	1.00	0.66	0.33	0.50
Mulemba	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.50	0.17	0.00	0.66	0.00	0.17
Muloza LEA	0.50	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.17	0.00	0.00
Mwenda	0.00	1.00	0.67	1.00	0.89	0.78	0.11	0.11	0.67	0.22	0.00	0.00
Njolomole	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.50	1.00	0.33	0.33	0.00	0.33	0.66	0.00
Nsesedzi	0.00	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.67	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.33
Phululu	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.83	0.66	0.66	0.17	0.17	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.17
Grand Total	0.40	0.92	0.44	0.73	0.70	0.64	0.26	0.27	0.33	0.39	0.15	0.17

SCRIPTED LESSONS DISAGGREGATED

Table 43: Scripted Lessons Disaggregated

Labels	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	**55.77%**	**25.00%**	**19.23%**	**100%**
Standard 1	52.94%	17.65%	29.41%	100%
Standard 2	62.50%	16.67%	20.83%	100%
Standard 3	45.45%	54.55%	0.00%	100%
Treatment	**12.61%**	**17.65%**	**69.75%**	**100%**
Standard 1	1.96%	21.57%	76.47%	100%
Standard 2	6.52%	15.22%	78.26%	100%
Standard 3	50.00%	13.64%	36.36%	100%
Grand Total	**25.73%**	**19.88%**	**54.39%**	**100%**

SCRIPTED LESSONS VERSUS LESSON TIMES

The following tables show lesson times (yes = greater or equal to 60 minutes, no = less than or equal to 60 minutes) for all standards (overall) as well as individual standards (1, 2, and 3). All tables are disaggregated by school type (control and treatment).

Overall

Table 44: Scripted Lessons versus Lesson Times

Labels	Lesson Time	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	< 60 minutes	28	12	8	48
	≥ 60 minutes	1	1	2	4
	Total	**29**	**13**	**10**	**52**
Treatment	Not Applicable	1			1
	< 60 minutes	11	17	66	94
	≥ 60 minutes	3	4	17	24
	Total	**15**	**21**	**83**	**119**
Total		**44**	**34**	**93**	**171**

Table 45: Scripted Lessons versus Lesson Times (Percentages)

Labels	Lesson Time	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	< 60 minutes	53.85%	23.08%	15.38%	92.31%
	≥ 60 minutes	1.92%	1.92%	3.85%	7.69%
	Total	**55.77%**	**25.00%**	**19.23%**	**100.00%**
Treatment	Not Applicable	0.84%	0.00%	0.00%	0.84%
	< 60 minutes	9.24%	14.29%	55.46%	78.99%
	≥ 60 minutes	2.52%	3.36%	14.29%	20.17%
	Total	**12.61%**	**17.65%**	**69.75%**	**100.00%**
Total		**25.73%**	**19.88%**	**54.39%**	**100.00%**

By Standard

Table 46: Scripted Lessons versus Lesson Times—Standard 1

Labels	Lesson Time	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	< 60 minutes	8	2	4	14
	≥ 60 minutes	1	1	1	3
	Total	**9**	**3**	**5**	**17**
Treatment	< 60 minutes	1	9	25	35
	≥ 60 minutes		2	14	16
	Total	**1**	**11**	**39**	**51**
Total		**10**	**14**	**44**	**68**

Table 47: Scripted Lessons versus Lesson Times—Standard 1 (Percentages)

Labels	Lesson Time	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	< 60 minutes	47.06%	11.76%	23.53%	82.35%
	≥ 60 minutes	5.88%	5.88%	5.88%	17.65%
	Total	**52.94%**	**17.65%**	**29.41%**	**100.00%**
Treatment	< 60 minutes	1.96%	17.65%	49.02%	68.63%
	≥ 60 minutes	0.00%	3.92%	27.45%	31.37%
	Total	**1.96%**	**21.57%**	**76.47%**	**100.00%**
Total		**14.71%**	**20.59%**	**64.71%**	**100.00%**

Table 48: Scripted Lessons versus Lesson Times—Standard 2

Labels	Lesson Time	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	< 60 minutes	15	4	4	23
	≥ 60 minutes			1	1
	Total	**15**	**4**	**5**	**24**
Treatment	< 60 minutes	3	6	33	42
	≥ 60 minutes		1	3	4
	Total	**3**	**7**	**36**	**46**
Total		**18**	**11**	**41**	**70**

Table 49: Scripted Lessons versus Lesson Times—Standard 2 (Percentages)

Labels	Lesson Time	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	< 60 minutes	62.50%	16.67%	16.67%	95.83%
	≥ 60 minutes	0.00%	0.00%	4.17%	4.17%
	Total	**62.50%**	**16.67%**	**20.83%**	**100.00%**
Treatment	< 60 minutes	6.52%	13.04%	71.74%	91.30%
	≥ 60 minutes	0.00%	2.17%	6.52%	8.70%
	Total	**6.52%**	**15.22%**	**78.26%**	**100.00%**
Total		**25.71%**	**15.71%**	**58.57%**	**100.00%**

Table 50: Scripted Lessons versus Lesson Times—Standard 3

Labels	Lesson Time	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	< 60 minutes	5	6		11
	Total	**5**	**6**		**11**
Treatment	Not Applicable	1			1
	< 60 minutes	7	2	8	17
	≥ 60 minutes	3	1		4
	Total	**11**	**3**	**8**	**22**
Total		**16**	**9**	**8**	**33**

Table 51: Scripted Lessons versus Lesson Times—Standard 3 (Percentages)

Labels	Lesson Time	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	< 60 minutes	45.45%	54.55%		100.00%
	Total	**45.45%**	**54.55%**		**100.00%**
Treatment	Not Applicable	4.55%	0.00%	0.00%	4.55%
	< 60 minutes	31.82%	9.09%	36.36%	77.27%
	≥ 60 minutes	13.64%	4.55%	0.00%	18.18%
	Total	**50.00%**	**13.64%**	**36.36%**	**100.00%**
Total		**48.48%**	**27.27%**	**24.24%**	**100.00%**

Scripted Lessons versus EGRA Training

Table 52: Scripted Lessons versus EGRA Training

Labels	EGRA Training	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	No	26	10	5	41
	Yes	3	3	5	11
	Total	**29**	**13**	**10**	**52**
Treatment	No	2	1	3	6
	Yes	13	20	80	113
	Total	**15**	**21**	**83**	**119**
Total		**44**	**34**	**93**	**171**

Table 53: Scripted Lessons versus EGRA Training (Percentages)

Labels	EGRA Training	Not Scripted	Partial Scripted	Scripted	Total
Control	No	50.00%	19.23%	9.62%	78.85%
	Yes	5.77%	5.77%	9.62%	21.15%
	Total	**55.77%**	**25.00%**	**19.23%**	**100.00%**
Treatment	No	1.68%	0.84%	2.52%	5.04%
	Yes	10.92%	16.81%	67.23%	94.96%
	Total	**12.61%**	**17.65%**	**69.75%**	**100.00%**
Total		**25.73%**	**19.88%**	**54.39%**	**100.00%**

As can be seen from the table above, there is no clear link between the use of scripted lessons and whether or not teachers had been trained to teach reading. Only 6 teachers indicated they had not been trained to teach reading, which is a relatively small figure. As such, it is impossible to deduce relationships. In fact, contrary to what would be expected, half of the group using scripted lessons had not been trained, whereas the remainder were using partially scripted lessons, or no scripted lessons.

VALUE FOR MONEY

In the inception report, the evaluators suggested the following to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the EGRA design — value for money — cost data for the project is required for a particular period of time, where:

Time

$p = time\ period\ of\ analysis\ in\ years$

$Y = period\ of\ performance\ of\ project\ in\ years$

Cost

$TC_p = total\ cost\ of\ project\ for\ period\ p$

$TS = total\ start\ up\ cost\ for\ project$

$TI_p = total\ implementation\ cost\ for\ period\ p$

$TI_p = TC_p - TS \times \frac{p}{Y}$ (We subtract a pro-rata project start-up cost for the period p being analysed)

Ideally, cost data per EGRA project component is required so that the value for money analysis can be undertaken at an overall, aggregate level as well as at a project component level.

Unit Cost

$S_p = Total\ number\ of\ students\ directly\ benefiting\ from\ EGRA\ during\ period\ p$

$UC_{S_p} = Unit\ cost\ per\ student\ during\ period\ p$

$$UC_{S_p} = \frac{TI_p}{S_p}$$

Performance Measure

$p_1 = Beginning\ of\ period\ p$

$p_2 = End\ of\ period\ p$

$TS_{p_1} = Average\ Test\ Score\ of\ S_p\ students\ at\ beginning\ of\ period\ p$

$TS_{p_2} = Average\ Test\ Score\ of\ S_p\ students\ at\ end\ of\ period\ p$

$TP_p = Test\ performance\ for\ period\ p$

$TP_p = TS_{p_2} - TS_{p_1}$

The learner performance data is required for all schools in the sample.

Value for Money

$VM_{1_p} = \frac{UC_{S_p}}{TP_p}$

VM_{1_p} is a value for money score not taking into consideration other evaluation factors. It will provide a $ to test performance percentage increase (decrease) score. The VM_{1_p} score indicates a cost per learner to achieve a one percent increase in reading performance.

EF_p is a value between 0 and 1 taking into consideration a basket of evaluation factors such as targets (e.g. No. of Reading Fairs, No. of Teachers Trained, etc.) being met as well as other evaluation factors such as the satisfaction indicators per component. An $EF_p = 1$ is desirable, as it means that all targets are being met and all other evaluation factors being considered in the formula are achieving maximum ratings.

$VM_{2_p} = VM_{1_p} \times EF_p$ and provides an adjusted value for money score taking into consideration the basket of evaluation factors.

The value for money analysis will be conducted at an overall, aggregate level for the schools in the sample. It will also be conducted at the component level, where the EF_{p_c} adjustment value and the Unit Cost calculation, UC_{S_p}, will be conducted at the component level, c.

The value for money analysis described above is based on the assumption that RTI would provide the required cost and performance data for the period in question.

Limitations of the Value for Money Analysis

During the evaluation fieldwork, the evaluators were told that the learner assessment test (LAT) data was limited to three schools per district with the same schools visited during each of the first three administrations. However, the students were randomly selected each time and RTI did not record any unique indicators for the children, just the grade, class and gender. RTI stated that "the LAT data is not meant to be representative, so we are hesitant to have the test scores used to measure any type of impact or cost-effectiveness of the intervention as a whole". Given this limitation of the LAT data, therefore we were unable to carry out the value for money calculation as laid out in the Inception Report. We recommend that when comparable LAT data becomes available, that the value for money analysis be carried out.

ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

The tables below show which instruments, and which specific items, were used to develop the indices for each component, where:

CO = Classroom Observation

HT = Head Teacher Interview

KII I C = Key Informant Interview with Implementers in Control Schools

KII I T = Key Informant Interviews with Implementers in Treatment Schools

PCT = Parent-Community Treatment Focus Groups

Table 54: Instruments and items used to develop indices for component 1

Component 1: Quality Reading Instruction	
Source	**Item**
CO	Please rate the EGRA training you received
CO	Please rate the scripted lessons in their present extensive form for lesson delivery in the classroom
HT	How would you rate EGRAs approach to teaching reading in the early standards? Why?
KII I C	How satisfied are you with the teacher training elements of the reading program?
KII I C	How satisfied were you with solution?
KII I C	How successful is primary reading instruction in your schools for students?
KII I C	Is it useful to assess pupils on reading?
KII I T	Are you satisfied that the EGRA Malawi design and implementation is responsive to the needs of students?
KII I T	Are you satisfied that the EGRA Malawi design and implementation is responsive to the needs of teachers?
KII I T	Did EGRA benefits reach the students?
KII I T	How satisfied are you that the EGRA approach is achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary pupils in Malawi?
KII I T	How satisfied are you with the teacher training elements of the EGRA program?
KII I T	Is it useful to assess students three times a year?

Table 55: Instruments and items used to develop indices for component 2

Component 2: Teaching and Learning Materials	
Source	**Item**
HT	Are these reading materials distributed equitably to classes?
KII I C	How satisfied are you with the materials used in the MoEST reading program?
KII I T	How satisfied are you with the delivery of materials for the EGRA program?
KII I T	How satisfied are you with the materials used in the EGRA program?

Table 56: Instruments and Items used to Develop Indices for Component 3

Component 3: Parental and Community Involvement	
Source	Item
HT	Evaluation Question: If yes, how would your rate the Fair in its success to excite students and parents about reading?

Component 3: Parental and Community Involvement	
Source	Item
HT	How active are community structures such as SMC at your school? (T- in supporting EGRA program?)
KII I C	Have you been to a Reading Fair? If yes, rate
KII I C	How satisfied are you with the community support elements of the primary schools?
KII I C	How satisfied are you with the parent involvement initiatives in the primary schools?
KII I C	How successful is primary reading instruction in your schools for community?
KII I C	How successful is primary reading instruction in your schools for parents?
KII I T	Are you satisfied that the EGRA Malawi design and implementation is aligned to Community needs?
KII I T	Did EGRA benefits reach the community?
KII I T	Did EGRA benefits reach the parents?
KII I T	How satisfied are you with the community support elements of the EGRA program?
KII I T	How satisfied are you with the parent involvement initiatives supported by the EGRA program?
KII I T	Rating of parent community awareness
KII I T	Rating of reading fair
PCT	How satisfied are you that EGRA made a difference in your children's reading ability?

Table 57: Instruments and Items used to Develop Indices for Component 4

Component 4: Improving Policy Involvement	
Source	**Item**
KII I T	Are you satisfied that the EGRA Malawi design and implementation is aligned to the District Development Plan?
KII I T	Are you satisfied that the Malawi design and implementation aligned to the School Improvement Plans?
KII I T	How satisfied are you with the role played by the PEAs?
PCT	How satisfied are you that the EGRA approach is achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary pupils in Malawi?

SCORING PER ITEM

Treatment Schools

QUALITY READING INSTRUCTION

Table 58: Quality Reading Instruction Scoring- Treatment Schools

Scores assigned	0	0	1	2	3	0					
Response options	Don't know	No opinion	Unsatisfactory	Somewhat satisfactory	Totally satisfactory	Missing	Total	Responses	Total score	Actual score	Index
Please rate the scripted lessons in their present extensive form for lesson delivery in the classroom	3	3	3	64	44	2	119	111	333	263	0.78978979
Please rate EGRA training received	5	0	4	57	49	4	119	110	330	265	0.803030303
Are you satisfied that the EGRA Malawi design and implementation is responsive to the needs of learners?	0	0	0	9	31	0	40	40	120	111	0.925
Are you satisfied that the EGRA Malawi design and implementation is responsive to the needs of teachers?	1	0	1	12	26	0	40	39	117	103	0.88034188

Scores assigned	0	0	1	2	3	0					
Response options	Don't know	No opinion	Unsatisfactory	Somewhat satisfactory	Totally satisfactory	Missing	Total	Responses	Total score	Actual score	Index
Did EGRA benefits reach the learners?	1	0	0	13	26	0	40	39	117	104	0.888888889
How satisfied are you that the EGRA approach is achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary pupils?	0	0	0	11	29	0	40	40	120	109	0.908333333
How satisfied are you with the teacher training elements of the EGRA program?	3	0	1	18	18	0	40	37	111	91	0.81981982
Is it useful to assess students 3 times/year?	0	1	2	14	23	0	40	39	117	99	0.846153846
											0.8577

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Table 59: Teaching and Learning Materials Scoring - Treatment Schools

Scores assigned	0	0	1	2	3	0					
Response options	**Don't**	**No opinion**	**Unsatisf actory**	**Somewh**	**Totally**	**Missing**	**Total**	**Total**	**Total**	**Actual**	**Index**
Are these reading materials distributed equitably to different classes?			3	4	2	47	56	9	27	17	0.62962963
How satisfied are you with the materials used in the EGRA program?	4	0	0	19	17	0	40	36	108	89	0.824074074
How satisfied are you with the delivery of materials for the EGRA program?	1	1	5	22	11	0	40	38	114	82	0.719298246
											0.724333983

PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Table 60: Parent and Community Involvement Scoring - Treatment Schools

Scores assigned	0	0	1	2	3	0					
Response options	**Don't know**	**No opinion**	**Unsatisf actory**	**Somewhat satisfactory**	**Totally satisfact ory**	**Missing**	**Total**	**Used Total**	**Total score**	**Actual score**	**Index**
If yes, how would your rate the Fair in its success	0	0	1	14	30	11	56	45	135	119	0.881481481

Scores assigned	0	0	1	2	3	0				
Response options	**Don't know**	**No opinion**	**Unsatisfactory**	**Somewhat satisfactory**	**Totally satisfactory**	**Missing**	**Total**	**Used Total**	**Total score**	**Actual score**	**Index**
to excite learners and parents about reading?											
How active are community structures such as SMC at your school?	0	0	8	22	26	0	56	56	168	130	0.773809524
Are you satisfied that the EGRA Malawi design and implementation is aligned to Community needs?	1	1	1	12	25	0	40	38	114	100	0.877192982
Did EGRA benefits reach the community?	0	0	2	20	18	0	40	40	120	96	0.8
Did EGRA benefits reach the parents?	0	0	2	19	19	0	40	40	120	97	0.808333333
How satisfied are you with the parent involvement initiatives supported by the EGRA program?	0	1	3	16	20	0	40	39	117	95	0.811965812
How satisfied are you with the community support elements of the EGRA program?	0	0	2	22	16	0	40	40	120	94	0.783333333
Parent community awareness? If yes, rate	0	0	0	17	20	3	40	37	111	94	0.846846847

Scores assigned	0	0	1	2	3	0					
Response options	**Don't know**	**No opinion**	**Unsatisfactory**	**Somewhat satisfactory**	**Totally satisfactory**	**Missing**	**Total**	**Used Total**	**Total score**	**Actual score**	**Index**
Reading fair? If yes, rate	0	0	0	11	24	5	40	35	105	94	0.895238095
How satisfied are you that EGRA made a difference in your children's reading ability?	0	0	0	12	32	6	50	44	132	120	0.909090909
											0.838729232

IMPROVING POLICY ENVIRONMENT

Table 61: Improving Policy Enviroment Scoring - Treatment Schools

Scores assigned	0	0	1	2	3	0					
Response options	**Don't know**	**No opinion**	**Unsatisfactory**	**Somewhat satisfactory**	**Totally satisfactory**	**Missing**	**Total**	**Total used**	**Total score**	**Actual score**	**Index**
Are you satisfied that the EGRA Malawi design and implementation is aligned to the District Development Plan?	3	4	2	8	23	0	40	33	99	87	0.878787879
Are you satisfied that the Malawi design and implementation aligned to the School Improvement Plans?	0	2	0	11	27	0	40	38	114	103	0.903508772
How satisfied are you with the role played by the PEAs?	0	0	0	16	24	0	40	40	120	104	0.866666667
How satisfied are you that the EGRA approach is achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary pupils?	0	0	0	12	35	0	47	47	141	129	0.914893617
											0.890964234

Control Schools

QUALITY READING INSTRUCTION

Table 62: Quality Reading Instruction Scoring - Control Schools

Scores assigned	0	0	1	2	3	0					
Response options	Don't know	No opinion	Unsatisfactory	Somewhat satisfactory	Totally satisfactory	Missing	Total	Total used	Total score	Actual score	Index
Please rate the scripted lessons in their present extensive form for lesson delivery in the classroom	5	16	6	15	6	4	52	27	81	54	0.666667
Please rate the EGRA training you received	13	17	2	8	3	9	52	13	39	27	0.692308
How satisfied are you with the teacher training elements of the reading program?	0	2	3	2	4	1	12	9	27	19	0.703704
How satisfied were you with the solution/s to unforeseen issues?	0	0	2	6	0	4	12	8	24	14	0.583333
How successful is primary reading instruction in your	0	1	6	4	1	0	12	11	33	17	0.515152

Scores assigned	0	0	1	2	3	0				
Response options	Don't know	No opinion	Unsatisfactory	Somewhat satisfactory	Totally satisfactory	Missing	Total	Total used	Total score	Actual score	Index
schools for learners?											
Is it useful to assess pupils on reading?	0	0	0	4	8	0	12	12	36	32	0.888889
Overall	18	36	19	39	22	18	152	80	240	163	0.679167
											0.675603

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Table 63: Teaching and Learning Materials Score - Control Schools

Scores assigned	0	0	1	2	3	0					
Response options	**Don't know**	**No opinion**	**Unsatisfactory**	**Somewhat satisfactory**	**Totally satisfactory**	**Missing**	**Total**	**Total used**	**Total score**	**Actual score**	**Index**
Are these reading materials distributed equitably to different classes?			3			22	25	3	9	3	0.333333
How satisfied are you with the materials used in the MoEST reading program?	0	0	6	6	0	0	12	12	36	18	0.5
											0.416667

PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Table 64: Parental and Community Involvement Score - Control School

	0	0	1	2	3	0					
Response options	**Don't know**	**No opinion**	**Unsatisfactory**	**Somewhat satisfactory**	**Totally satisfactory**	**Missing**	**Total**	**Used Total**	**Total score**	**Actual score**	**Index**
If yes, how would your rate the Fair in its success to excite learners and parents about reading?	0	0	0	3	2	20	25	5	15	12	0.8
How active are community structures such as SMC at your school?	1	1	12	4	6	1	25	22	66	38	0.575758
Have you been to a reading fair? If yes, rate	0	1	0	1	4	6	12	5	15	14	0.933333
How satisfied are you with the community support elements of the primary schools?	0	1	2	7	1	1	12	10	30	19	0.633333
How satisfied are you with the parent involvement	1	0	5	5	1	0	12	11	33	18	0.545455

	0	0	1	2	3	0					
Response options	**Don't know**	**No opinion**	**Unsatisfactory**	**Somewhat satisfactory**	**Totally satisfactory**	**Missing**	**Total**	**Used Total**	**Total score**	**Actual score**	**Index**
initiatives in the primary schools?											
How successful is primary reading instruction in your schools for community?	0	1	4	6	1	0	12	11	33	19	0.575758
How successful is primary reading instruction in your schools for parents?	0	1	6	4	1	0	12	11	33	17	0.515152
											0.654113

ANNEX 7: DETAILED M&E DISCUSSION

M&E in EGRA includes cross cutting issues. For the sake of this assessment, the evaluators have isolated all the elements and discussed them as standalone sections. The assessment of M&E will therefore focus typically on M&E as an element intended to support effective management of EGRA.

M&E DESIGN

The Activity Management and Evaluation Plan (AMEP) outlines the approaches to M&E adopted by EGRA to demonstrate the overall impact of program interventions. The AMEP also serves quality management purposes to ensure that all objectives are met and activities are performed in a timely manner. As a management tool, AMEP summarizes the methods and guiding principles that EGRA adopted to gather, analyze, utilize, and disseminate information while building the capacity of program staff, MoEST counterparts, and other key stakeholders. The AMEP was designed to comprehensively monitor and evaluate progress against a concrete set of indicators across the four program components and crosscutting issues. It is based on a results framework which is directly aligned with the USAID/Malawi Education Strategy's Program Objective of "Improved Early Grade Reading Achievement" and its three intermediate results (IRs).

An assessment of the design of M&E shows that it is aligned to MoEST goals and performance indicators as articulated through the two guiding policy documents for MoEST: the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) and the Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP). The alignment means that the RTI EGRA design and implementation is contributing to national education goals and indicators which is important for enhancing education outcomes and impacts especially in early grade reading. Seven indicators were specifically identified as providing a link between the RTI EGRA and MoEST goals, namely: Primary school repetition rate; Primary school dropout rate; Primary school pupil-qualified teacher ratio; Primary school pupil-textbook ratio; Number of primary school management committees trained; Number of primary school teachers trained annually; Number of staff trained in planning, monitoring, and supervision. The alignment to the national education sector policy framework also strengthens relevance and prospects for achieving sustainability of the program.

In principle therefore, the RTI EGRA M&E design intended to create a communication loop with the Education Management Information System (EMIS), which is the national M&E system for measuring education outcomes. In practice however, the evaluation established that the flow of EMIS data is one way from the MoEST to RTI and not vice-versa. Thus, when RTI picks up issues in its database, the issues are not fed back to EMIS mainly because of a lack of strong interface between the RTI EGRA and EMIS. Changing this process would be a value addition in that it would improve the robustness and efficiency of the EMIS. SADC EMIS coordination efforts include improving EMIS systems by making the data more accurate. RTI could consolidate all the issues picked up during the course of time and provide them to the MoEST before their annual data collection to confirm with the districts.

M&E IMPLEMENTATION

The RTI EGRA implementation is conducted at different levels, namely: Internal EGRA M&E, Coordinating with External Evaluator for Baseline and Midterm Assessments; and, Regular Ongoing Reporting. It is supported by the senior leadership within the activity. With support from the Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP), the M&E and Learning Specialist provides technical guidance to 10 District M&E Officers (DMEs) who are supervised by four Divisional Coordinators. The M&E team, under the leadership of the M&E and Learning Specialist, are responsible for providing strategic planning and logistics, training, and oversight of all M&E activities, including data collection, data quality assurance, analysis, reporting, and information sharing.

INTERNAL EGRA M&E

The evaluation observed that most ongoing regular data collection was conducted using M&E forms and questionnaires, including classroom observation instruments and Coaching Visitation Reports rendered electronically using RTI's Tangerine software. The activity also made use of a set of Learner Assessment Tool (LAT) reading assessment instruments that were developed, field-tested/trialed, and subjected to equating procedures over the course of the project. LAT data collected with the tablets goes direct to RTI headquarters in North Carolina for processing while the other general data is managed and processed locally at RTI. The evaluation further observed that PEAs and DMEs were trained on the administration of these tools.

An assessment of the internal EGRA M&E shows that most of the data collection in the field was done in collaboration with MoEST personnel, with PEAs being the primary data collectors at the school level. On the other hand, the planned involvement of Community Development Assistants (CDAs) in data collection at the community level did not generally materialize largely due to weak engagement with the CDAs and their district office. The active utilization of MoEST staff in data collection meant that it provided them an opportunity to access valuable information to enhance their knowledge of the performance of teachers, students, schools, and communities in supporting reading while also enhancing their capacity to gather and apply such valuable information. However, the potential to achieve more benefits was hampered by the often delayed feedback of LAT data outcomes from RTI International for unspecified reasons.

The evaluation considers this a missed opportunity in the area of learning to inform managerial decision making especially at school, zone and district level in support of teaching. The overseas processing of LAT data also brings to question the capacity of the local RTI M&E office and overall contribution towards local capacity development. The evaluation was informed that the local M&E office was only involved with processing of project monitoring specific data such as enrolment, distribution of books, reading fairs etc. Due to such a setup, the evaluation observed that the PEAs were often confined to act as data collectors with little opportunity to invest in understanding the meaning of the data they collected which was in contrast to the initial plans which intended to enhance their capacity to apply such valuable information apart from gathering it. Further, the plan to disseminate the information during TWG meetings did not fully materialize which to an extent compromised the efforts to reinforce awareness of EGRA in policy processes. Lastly, the evaluation observed that the lack of assessment of students in Reading Centers was identified as a gap that needs to be addressed within the context of strengthening implementation of component 3. This should help to strengthen the functionality and impact of Reading Centers especially if coupled with the training of VCRFS and Reading Center committees.

COORDINATING WITH EXTERNAL EVALUATOR FOR BASELINE AND MIDTERM ASSESSMENTS

The evaluation established that EGRA worked closely with Social Impact (SI), the external evaluator, to ensure that their impact assessments are able to accurately identify student learning gains related to EGRA activities. It also included involvement of SI in discussions with MoEST and USAID to strike the appropriate balance between delivering a reading intervention of sufficient depth and duration for children to maximize their odds of becoming independent readers, and affording SI the opportunity to have a robust 'control' cohort that will allow for accurate attribution of learning gains. Overall, the evaluation found that the engagement of SI strengthened project accountability and enforced capacity for M&E. The implementation of treatment and control school project implementation model meant that there was a strong mechanism to monitor the effects of EGRA which provided important lessons to MoEST and the project implementers. The research project implementation model has to a significant

extent contributed to efforts to convince the ministry to embrace EGRA in its policies (ESIP II and Reading Strategy) and the increased desire to scale up the initiative to the national level.

ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGETS

This section presents a summary and analysis of progress achieved in the EGRA activity towards EGRA targets for each indicator in the AMEP, as of September 30, 2014.

The following summaries are based on the analysis of the indicators in the tables.

Component 1: The study shows that learning gains by students in Standards 1-3 are meeting and exceeding expectations based on the LAT test results which is an improvement in performance in the component. This is supported by other indicators. For example, based on indices for essential skills, the study established that teachers in treatment schools scored 50% for essential skills in teaching reading. The indicators also show that there is an increase in the frequency of lesson delivery using the EGRA approach/*Maziko a Kuwerenga*. However, the indicators also showed that there was a lower than expected number of lessons delivered in class. This could be because teachers were instructed not to introduce the next lesson until the class has 80% mastery of material, which could be affected by large class size also. The study noted that class enrollment continues to increase especially in lower grades. Actually, a concern as student enrollment increases so does student/teacher ratios, which could have a detrimental effect on effective instruction. Another explanation with regard to lower number of lessons is that teachers are not using the full one-hour for instruction with review and repetition especially in grade 1.

Often this is because of limited mastery of delivery of the EGRA approach which indicates more need for capacity building through training and coaching. Indicators however show that the number of teachers, head teachers, teaching assistants, administrators and officials who successfully completed in-service (CPD) training supported by USG funds is generally on the rise. The study established that in treatment schools, 94.96% of teachers indicated they have received training in EGRA. Similarly, the number of person hours administrators and officials attended training was generally high including the number of schools and teachers receiving mentoring or coaching with USG support. However these estimates may have been low, as some officials were not anticipated to participate. It was also observed that the percentage receiving mentoring and coaching with USG support was derived based on the number of visits to schools/classrooms rather than evidence of coaching or mentoring occurring in the classes. Strengthening of CPD and introduction of in service training may assist to strengthen the current levels of reading instruction for early grade students.

Component 2: The analysis of the indicators in the table shows lower than expected number of students with eyes on print or taking a book home. These results reflect the high value of textbooks and the continued limitation to reading material access especially in rural areas. The important thing however is that most of the households actually own some books which could be used to address this gap. When asked how many books parents have at home, the study showed that 94.24% of parents from treatment schools said they have books at home. On average, each parent has between 5 and 6 books and these can be used as a substitute to the lack of books from schools.

With regard to teaching materials, the indicators show that the number of sets of scripted lessons prepared in Chichewa and English are on the increase. During classroom observations, 85.71% of classes demonstrated students' eyes on some form of written text during class. However, this was undermined generally by lower achievement in distribution of books and materials to schools due to slower than expected production and procurement processes. There was also a slightly lower than expected number of books and materials provided by USG as a result in delays in Standard 2 English textbook production. Findings from the study confirmed this. Of the Head Teachers in treatment schools, only 16.07% indicated that the school is supplied with sufficient reading materials for S1 – S3.

Component 3: It is evident that the number of community, local governance, and/or private sectors led advocacy activities conducted to support increased reading skills in primary schools. For example, of the Head Teachers in treatment schools, the study shows that 80.36% indicated that their schools had participated in reading fairs which was the main event that constituted the advocacy initiatives. The downside of it is that although many schools responded to the grant questionnaire, no grants have been awarded at this time as few schools have been able to complete the grant application due to capacity limitations. The potential for greater achievement under this component was mainly due to reduction in activity as a result of limited engagement of CRECCOM, the sub-contractor, because of contractual issues which are currently being resolved.

Component 4: A number of achievements have been registered in this component. For example, the MOUs have been implemented although a lot needs to be done to enhance understanding of the contents and role of stakeholders in implementing them. Standards for reading outcomes for standards 1-3 have been established but they are not yet approved. Again, trained EGRA teacher retention in standards 1-3 remains high although this remains a challenge in some schools as it is beyond the control of EGRA/RTI due to normal teacher transfers and life events which seem to be high.

Further, the table shows that slightly fewer classes are conducted for a full hour as recommended in standard 1. Class time is increasing in Chichewa Standard 1 but is not consistently held for a full 60 minutes yet. In total, the study noted that about 20.17% of the treatment schools were providing lessons of 60 minutes or longer which is still lower than expected.

Table 65: Current Status of Progress towards Annual Targets

Indicator		Targets			
		Baseline	Year 1 (FY 2013–2014)	Actual as of September 30, 2014	Relevant evaluation findings
AO1 Proportion (%) of pupils who, by the end of two years of schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text		Conducted by external impact evaluator	5% over baseline	n/a[40]	NA
AO2 Learning gains among Standard 1-3 students on core early grade pre-reading and reading tasks as measured by regularly administered reading assessments compared to beginning of school	Std 1	ORF: 0.7 cwpm[41]	ORF: ↑7 cwpm	7.8 cwpm (↑7.1 cwpm)	NA
		Comprehension: 0.4%[3]	Comprehen-sion: ↑5%	6.1% (↑5.7%)	NA
	Std 2	ORF: 4 cwpm[3]	ORF: ↑7 cwpm	9.7 cwpm (↑5.7 cwpm)	NA

[40] Data for this indicator will be provided by the external evaluator, Social Impact, during its midterm and end-of-activity assessments.

[41] Baseline LAT data collected early January 2014 at beginning of Term 2.

Indicator		Targets			
		Baseline	Year 1 (FY 2013–2014)	Actual as of September 30, 2014	Relevant evaluation findings
year		Comprehension: 3%[3]	Comprehension: ↑5%	8.4% (↑5.4%)	NA
	Std 3	ORF: 13.6 cwpm[3]	ORF: ↑7 cwpm	25.8 cwpm (↑12.2 cwpm)	NA
		Comprehension: 13.7%[3]	Comprehension: ↑5%	25.5% (↑11.8%)	NA
OC1 Proportion (%) of Standard 1–3 teachers demonstrating essential skills in teaching reading		To be conducted Term 1, Year 1	40%	59.3%[42]	Based on indices for essential skills, teachers in treatment schools scored 50% for essential skills in teaching reading
OC1.1B Proportion (%) of teachers who complete expected number of lessons in Terms 1–3, Standards 1–3		n/a	40%	23.5%[4]	NA
OP1.1a Number of pupils receiving reading interventions in Standards 1–3		0	419,231	563,270[43] (238,387 m, 230,417 f)	NA

[42] Based on TOIs conducted during Term 3 (sample size of 430 teachers). The lower number may be due to the instruction teachers were given during trainings to not continue on to the next lesson until 80% of children have understood what they are taught.

[43] This total is calculated by taking the average attendance rate (72.24% boys, 75.67% girls) as indicated in the TOIs for classes that were observed by PEAs and EGRA staff and projecting that percentage across the entire enrolment of 778,446 (385,795 boys, 382,651 girls). The enrolment data comes from school level data collected from head teachers by EGRA in October 2013 for Cohort A intervention schools and in June 2014 for Cohort B intervention schools.

Indicator	Targets			
	Baseline	Year 1 (FY 2013–2014)	Actual as of September 30, 2014	Relevant evaluation findings
OP1.1b Number of teachers, head teachers, and teaching assistants who successfully complete in-service training	0	2,951	11,001 (5,988 m, 5,013 f)[44]	In treatment schools, 94.96% of teachers indicated they have received training in EGRA
OP1.1c Total number of person hours of teachers, educators, and teaching assistants who successfully completed in-service training	0	150,000 hrs	790,392 hrs[45]	Confirmed 8 hour training sessions through CPD
OP1.1d Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with US Government support	0	175	311[46] (180 m, 131 f)	NA
OP1.1e Total number of person hours of administrators and officials successfully trained with US Government support	0	4,000	26,608 hrs[7]	NA
OP1.1f Proportion (%) of teachers/educators/ teaching assistants who received intensive coaching or mentoring with US Government support	0	40%	68.7%[47]	NA

[44] Total number trained in August-September 2014. This does not account for teachers who were trained in previous trainings but did not attend in August-September 2014, therefore the actual number may be even higher than reported here.

[45] Based on 8 hours per day for each training session.

[46] This includes PEAs, SEMAs, CDAs, DCDOs, and those trained as expert trainers from MoEST, MIE, TTCs, and DCE. The total is much higher than the target because the CDAs and DCDOs from MGCSW were not anticipated in the original target.

[47] Reflects the percentage of Cohort A Standard 1-3 teachers visited during SY1.

Indicator	Targets			
	Baseline	Year 1 (FY 2013–2014)	Actual as of September 30, 2014	Relevant evaluation findings
OP1.1g Proportion (%) of schools receiving at least one coaching/support visit per term	n/a	75%	89.6%[48]	NA
OC1.2A Proportion (%) of students in intervention districts and target grades who take home and use a book or other reading materials at home	n/a	25%	13.6%[49]	When asked how many books parents have at home, 94.24% of parents from treatment schools said they have books at home. On average, each parent has between 6 and 7 books.
OC1.2B Proportion (%) of children in intervention districts and target grades who interact with text on a daily basis	n/a	65%	60.3%[50]	During classroom observations, 85.71% of classes demonstrated students' eyes on some form of written text during class.

[48] Reflects the percentage of Cohort A Standard 1-3 schools visited during SY1.

[49] These data come from the TOIs from Term 3 (n=430 classes) where the observer counted the number of learners that raised their hand when asked if they brought a book from school to read at home divided by the number of learners in attendance. It has been difficult to convince schools to allow children to take books home because they are afraid the books won't last or will be lost, hence the lower number than the target.

[50] These data come from the TOIs from Term 3 (n=430 classes) where the observer counted the number of learners with a book in hand divided by the number of learners in attendance.

Indicator	Targets			
	Baseline	Year 1 (FY 2013–2014)	Actual as of September 30, 2014	Relevant evaluation findings
OP1.2a Number of complete sets of lesson plans designed, tested, revised, and approved by the MoEST and USAID for Terms 1–3 for Standards 1–3 that support the use of local language instruction in target districts	0	Selected and agreed	2[51]	NA
OP1.2b Number of schools that have received the appropriate number of full sets of materials and equipment (decodable leveled books, story cards, home-use story cards, letter cards, slates, storage cabinets, materials registers)	0	Sets of reading materials: 1,054	0[52]	NA
	0	Slates: 1,054	0	NA
	0	Cabinets: 1,054	0	NA
OP1.2c Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with US Government support	n/a	1,556,054	1,337,362[53]	Of the Head Teachers in treatment schools, only 16.07% indicated that the school is supplied with sufficient reading materials for S1 – S3.

[51] Scripted lesson plans for English Standard 1 and Chichewa Standard 2 for Term 1 were completed and approved by MoEST. Lesson plans used for School Year 1 were adopted from the *Maziko a Kuwerenga* teachers' guides developed under MTPDS. Therefore, these are not counted under EGRA's indicator. Terms 2 & 3 materials for School Year 2 are still being finalized and yet to be approved.

[52] Full sets of materials have not yet been finalized. Therefore, no schools have received full sets yet although all Cohort A schools received sets of letter cards in August.

[53] This number is lower than the target because it was anticipated that the English Standard 2 books would be printed this year, but as explained under Task 1-3 those books will not be developed and printed until next FY.

Indicator	Targets			
	Baseline	Year 1 (FY 2013–2014)	Actual as of September 30, 2014	Relevant evaluation findings
OC2 Number of community, local government, and/or private sector–led advocacy activities conducted to support increased reading skills in primary schools	n/a	316	784[54]	Of the Head Teachers in treatment schools, 80.36% indicated that their schools had participated in reading fairs.
OC2.1 Proportion (%) of schools in intervention districts with MOUs or social contracts on reading	0%	60%	99.5%[55]	NA
OP2.1a Number of reading fairs hosted by school communities or clusters	n/a	211	581	Of the Head Teachers in treatment schools, 80.36% indicated that their schools had participated in reading fairs.
OP2.1b Number of stakeholders consulted to establish and review MOUs	n/a	60	78	NA
OC2.2 Proportion (%) of schools with community, local government, and/or private sector-led initiatives supporting early grade reading	n/a	60%	49%[56]	Of the Head Teachers in treatment schools, 80.36% indicated that their schools had participated in reading fairs.

[54] There has been some inconsistency in the way this indicator has been reported across districts.

[55] Reflects on Cohort A schools. Cohort B schools have not yet been introduced to MOUs.

[56] This reflects the percentage of Cohort A schools which conducted reading fairs during SY1. The actual percentage is likely higher but we did not count other community activities because the data is not reliable, as explained in footnote #16 above.

Indicator	Targets			
	Baseline	Year 1 (FY 2013–2014)	Actual as of September 30, 2014	Relevant evaluation findings
OP2.2a Number of PTAs or similar school governance structures supported by US Government	n/a	1,054	3,561[57]	NA
OP2.2b Number of schools applying for grants to support early grade reading	n/a	632	1,162[58]	NA
OP2.2c Proportion (%) of school grant applications that meet minimum requirements for award	n/a	50%	n/a[59]	NA
OC3 Standards for reading outcomes formally established for Standards 1–3 by MoEST	Proposed by MoEST EGRA Coordinating Committee	Drafted	Workshop planned in November 2014	Workshop was validated, although there are still no standards.
OC3.1A Proportion (%) of teachers who stay in the early grades after initial training	n/a	75%	79.4%[60]	NA

[57] All 1,187 Cohort A schools had representatives from their three governance structures (SMC, PTA, and mother group) supported during the CM sensitization meetings. The original target anticipated that only SMCs would be supported.

[58] Based on number of GUC questionnaires submitted to EGRA.

[59] Minimum requirements were never established for the GUCs. Instead, each district shortlisted the ten top performing schools based on the data provided from the GUC questionnaires.

[60] This percentage comes from information provided by teachers in the TOIs during Term 3 (n=430) who reported to be teaching in Standards 1 to 3 during the previous school year.

Indicator	Targets			
	Baseline	Year 1 (FY 2013–2014)	Actual as of September 30, 2014	Relevant evaluation findings
OC3.1B Proportion (%) of children in intervention districts and target grades receiving an average of one hour time-on-task reading instruction per day	n/a	75%	56.7%[61]	In total, 20.17% of the treatment schools were providing lessons of 60 minutes or longer.
OP3.1a Number of laws, policies, regulations, or guidelines developed or modified to improve primary grade reading programs or increase equitable access	n/a	2	5[62]	NA
OP3.1b Number of teachers in special needs schools supported in the application of adapted early grade reading materials for special needs pupils	0	0	36	In our sample, only one school was Special Needs, and they indicated they do not have sufficient materials for Standards 1 – 3.
OC3.2A Improved institutional capacity for supporting reading by local NGO	To be conducted Term 1, Year 1	Major deficiencies identified	Major deficiencies identified	NA
OC3.2B Number of PPPs supporting early grade reading	n/a	2–5 identified	0[63]	NA
OP3.2a Number of mentoring and training meetings conducted	n/a	50	116	NA
OP3.2b Number of meetings held with private organizations to establish potential PPPs	n/a	10	134	NA

[61] This percentage comes from head teacher reporting in March on Standards 1–3 in their schools. It has been difficult to verify this number, even though all schools signed the MOU committing themselves to an additional hour of reading instruction.

[62] Five different MOUs were established for: SMCs, PTAs, head teachers, DEMs, MGCSW.

[63] While OAI has been working on establishing PPPs with a number of organizations, none has been formalized yet. OAI has drafted 29 concept notes, which are being reviewed by potential PPPs.

ANNEX 8: FOCUS ON SOCIAL IMPACT EVALUATION SCHOOLS-

Component 1: Provide quality reading instruction for early grade students.

- Task 1: Continuous professional development (CPD) of standard 1-3 teachers in teaching reading.
- Task 2: Teaching practicum as part of in-service training
- Task 3: Scripted lesson plans and related reading materials
- Task 4: Consistent in-service teacher support and mentoring
- Task 5: Rewarding performing teachers and schools

Evaluation Question: How effective is the EGRA's approach toward achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary school students in Malawi

CONTEXT

Based on calculation by Khulisa, 5.48% of the schools in the Social Impact EGRA Impact Evaluation are in common. Of the 310 schools in the list of schools SI is following, 17 are schools in the Khulisa EGRA Performance Evaluation. This includes 7 treatment schools, and 10 control schools. The list of districts, zones and schools follows. In parenthesis are the number of class observations conducted by Khulisa.

Lilongwe Rural East

Nchoma - Chigodi – Treatment (2)

Mchemani - Mseche – Control (2)

Chiseka - Kambewe – Control (2)

Machinga

Puteya – Madziamera – Control (2)

Puteya – Lingoni – Control (2)

Mzimba North

Mtende – Kambanga – Treatment (2)

Ezondweni – Baula – Control (2)

Ntcheu

Tsanango – Chilenga – Control (2)

Kanyimbo – Njolomole – Control (2)

Balila – Tambala – Treatment (2)

Ntchisi

Chinthembwe – Chambawala – Control (2)

Molomo – Phululu – Control (2)

Salima

Msalura – Chimbalanga (Treatment) (2)

Msalura – Msalura (Treatment) (3)

Msalura – Salima LEA (Treatment) (3)

Thyolo

Mulenga – Mulemba – Control (4)

Thavite – Chitiba (Treatment) (2)

The performance evaluation sample includes 10.9% of Khulisa treatment schools are also SI schools, 38.5% of Khulisa control schools are also SI schools. In total, 19.8% of the Performance Evaluation schools are also included in the EGRA Impact Evaluation.

In the 17 schools that are contained in both evaluation studies, Khulisa research assistants observed 38 classes in Standard 1 to 3. Twenty-two classes in control schools and sixteen in treatment schools. A breakdown of classes observed follows.

Table 66: Social Impact Schools Standards of Classes Observed

Standards of Classes Observed				
	Standard 1	**Standard 2**	**Standard 3**	**Grand Total**
Control	6	12	4	22
Treatment	7	7	2	16
Total	**13**	**19**	**6**	**38**

The average observed class size in SI schools was similar to the average class size in all schools in this evaluation at 89 and 86 students per class respectively. SI treatment schools had an average of 97 students present whereas the overall average was 87, thus a 10% increase in attendance. A significant portion of the increase appears to be the attendance of girls at 44 average class attendance at all schools vs. 51 at SI treatment schools.

FINDINGS

Teachers were interviewed following each class observation to gain an understanding of their background and some lesson specific information. Teachers were asked if they had training to provide reading instruction as part of the EGRA or MTPDS projects. The majority of teachers (15 out of 16) in treatment schools had training as part of the EGRA project. In the control schools, 14% or 3 out of 22 teachers had EGRA training. Teachers in the SI treatment schools were more likely to have recent EGRA training (94%) than legacy MTPDS training (19%). Three teachers in control schools also said that they had reading training as part of Read Malawi.

Table 67: Social Impact Teachers with EGRA Training

EGRA Training			
	No	**Yes**	**Grand Total**
Control	19	3	22
Treatment	1	15	16
Grand Total	**20**	**18**	**38**

Table 68: Social Impact Teachers with MTPDS Training

MTPDS Training			
	No	**Yes**	**Grand Total**
Control	19	3	22
Treatment	13	3	16
Grand Total	**32**	**6**	**38**

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Entry level fully qualified teachers (PT$) made up over half of the teachers in both control and treatment schools. Both SI control and treatment schools have higher percentage of entry level teachers than the Khulisa performance evaluation total population (46%/59% and 45%/56% respectively).

Table 69: Social Impact Teacher Qualifications

	PT1	PT2	PT3	PT4	IPTE	ODL	Total
Control	0	2	3	13 (59%)	3	2	23
Treatment	0	1	5	9 (56%)	0	1	16
Grand Total	**0**	**3**	**8**	**22**	**3**	**3**	**39**[64]

LENGTH OF LESSONS

The duration of reading lessons in the subset of SI impact evaluation schools is significantly lower than in the set of all performance evaluation schools. Most noticeably is Standard 1 in treatment schools that in the whole performance evaluation group averages 55 minutes, close to the recommended one-hour, whereas the average for the SI subset is 33% lower. The SI class subset generally has fewer minutes of class time than the whole set of classes included in the performance evaluation except for Standard 3 in SI treatment schools but this average is only for two class observations. Implementation of the new one hour Chichewa reading policy has yet to be implemented extensively in either control or treatment schools.

[64] Note that some teachers indicated more than one qualification

Table 70: Social Impact Lesson Lengths

	Count	Min of observation duration	Max of observation duration	Average SI subset observation (n=38)	Average performance evaluation set (n=121)
Control	**22**	**23**	**60**	**33**	
Standard 1	6	24	60	35	42
Standard 2	12	23	50	32	39
Standard 3	4	30	40	35	38
Treatment	**16**	**30**	**75**	**39**	
Standard 1	7	30	52	37	55
Standard 2	7	30	45	37	38
Standard 3	2	35	75	55	44
Grand Total	**38**	**23**	**75**	**36**	**43**

SCRIPTED VS. UNSCRIPTED LESSONS

Only three teachers used partially scripted lessons in SI control school classes (this may be the same three teachers who attended EGRA or MTPDS training). In treatment schools, 14 of the 16 teachers used scripted or partially scripted lessons with an equal number in each of Standard 1 and 2. In SI treatment schools, 100% of the teachers rated the scripted lessons as reasonably or highly successful. Whereas, approximately 59% of the teachers in control schools either had no opinion or said they didn't know about scripted lessons.

Table 71: Social Impact Use of Scripted Lessons

Scripted Lessons Observed				
	No	**Partial script**	**Yes**	**Grand Total**
Control	**19**	**3**		**22**
Standard1	6			6
Standard2	10	2		12
Standard3	3	1		4
Treatment	**2**	**4**	**10**	**16**
Standard1	1	1	5	7
Standard2		3	4	7
Standard3	1		1	2
Grand Total	**21**	**7**	**10**	**38**

SIGNIFICANT CLASS OBSERVATIONS

There is a high correlation, .91, between how teachers in SI treatment schools and Khulisa treatment schools rated the training received by EGRA.

Classroom atmosphere in SI control and treatment schools tends to follow the trends seen in the larger set of Khulisa performance evaluation schools.

Students in SI treatment (44%) and control (36%) schools are less likely to have their eyes on textbooks than set of Khulisa treatment (50%) and control (40%) schools.

Khulisa treatment and control school classroom behavior results closely reflect SI treatment and control school results.

Khulisa research assistants observed special needs students in classes 32% of the SI control schools and 56% of the SI treatment schools.

ANNEX 9: LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

USAID DOCUMENTS

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Full EMIS Data Set, Malawi-EGRA Sampling Frame, November 2015.

Implementing Partner Workshop Report, RTI 2014

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UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2012 http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.TCHR.FE.ZS

United Nations Environment Program Interview Guide 2013.

ANNEX 10: MULANJE EARLY GRADE READING REPORT

MULANJE EARLY GRADE READING ASSESSMENT BASELINE SURVEY REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2014

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

I, Alex B.C. Mbewe, the Senior Education Methods Advisor for Shire Highlands Education Division (SHED), submitted this report on Mulanje Early Grade Reading Assessment (Chichewa) Survey to the District Education Manager for Mulanje, Mr Gossam S. Mafuta on 07 October, 2014. The purpose of the survey was to establish the reading levels of the Mulanje District students, and determine the possible interventions to improve the situation. The survey started with training of data collectors from 11th to 13th September, 2014 then followed by the data collection in 40 primary schools from 22nd to 26th September, and 29th September to 3rd October, 2014 out of 157 Primary schools in the district. The activity was funded by the Mulanje District Manager's Office at total cost of Four million, seven hundred twenty six thousand, seven hundred Kwacha (K4,726,700.00).

2.0 PROCESS:

The district used primary education advisors as data collectors supervised by primary education advisors who were once involved in the national Malawi Early Grade Reading Assessment activity within Shire Highlands Education Division. Forty study schools were sampled by picking the folded and jumbled pieces of paper with school names according to the number of schools in the zone. Three schools were picked from each zone except Chitakale which had four.

3.0: SURVEY OBJECTIVES

1. Assess 400 standard two students in reading fluency, phonological awareness, word segmentation, and listening and comprehension skills.
2. Assess 400 standard three students in reading fluency, phonological awareness, word segmentation, and listening and comprehension skills.
3. Interview 40 head teachers on school administration pertaining to Chichewa reading.
4. Observe 160 lessons for both Chichewa and English in standards 2 and 3 classes.
5. Compile a report and submit to the District Education Manager on the findings and suggestions for interventions on early grade reading activities.

4.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

1. 400 standard two students assessed in reading fluency, phonological awareness, word segmentation, listening and comprehension skills.
2. 400 standard three students assessed in reading fluency, phonological awareness, word segmentation, listening and comprehension skills.
3. 40 head teachers interviewed on school administration pertaining to Chichewa reading.
4. 160 lessons observed for both Chichewa and English in standards 2 and 3 classes
5. A report compiled and submitted to the District Education Manager on the findings and suggestions for interventions on early grade reading activities.

5.0 THE SAMPLED STUDY SCHOOLS, TEAMS AND PROGRAM:

5.1 Sampled study schools

Table 72: Sampled Study Schools

Study School	Zone	Study school	Zone	Study school	Zone
1. Chimwamesi	Namulenga	15. Chisitu	"	29. Chigombe	Mathambi
2. Kachere II	"	16. Likole	"	30. Nansongole	"
3. Makande	"	17. Nalingula	Maveya	31. Misyoni	"
4. Nakoma	Thuchira	18. Ruo	"	32. Chinyama	Ntata
5. Mtendere	"	19. Lujeri	"	33. Mitawa II	"
6. Mwangothaya	"	20. Mgodi	Namphungo	34. Ntata	"
7. Nselema	Masubi	21. Mgumera	Namphungo	35. Chilera	Dyanyama
8. Namikhate	"	22. Muonekera	"	36. Nakamba	"
9. Masubi	"	23. Chindola	Mombo	37. Mulomba	"
10. Nansato	Chambe	24. Mapanga	"	38. Chimalira	Limbuli
11. Mthuruwe	"	25. Nanjala	"	39. Nanchidwa	"
12. Namadidi	"	26. Ngolowera	Ulongwe	40. Muloza	"
13. Thawale II	Chitakale	27. Mulanje CCA	"		
14. Sikoya	"	28. Misanjo	"		

5.2 Data collection teams:

Table 73: Data Collection Teams

Group One	Group Three
1. Chimwemwe Phaiya (MJ) (Leader)	1. Cecilia Kamera (CZ) (Leader)
2. Baxter Evale	2. Ann Khoropa
3. Emma Majawa	3. Jimmy Villiera
4. Stadweck Paliyani	4. Snowden Mateyu
Group Two	**Group Four**
1. Alex Mbewe (SHED) (Team Leader)	1. Radson Sideni (PE) (Leader)
2. Thokozire Kambale	2. Annita Katchana
3. Rosemary Mnyaka	3. Wisness Lipenga
4. William Namakhula	4. Lonely Mpate

5.3 Data collection programme:

Table 74: Data Collection Program

Date	Group One	Group Two	Group Three	Group Four
22nd September, 2014	Mtendere	Nakoma	Mwangothaya	Kachere II
23rd September, 2014	Chilera	Nakamba	Makande	Mulomba
24th September, 2014	Mgumera	Mgodi	Chimwamesi	Muonekera
25th September, 2014	Muloza LEA	Chimalira	Nanchidwa	Chigombe
26th September, 2014	Nselema	Chinyama	Mitawa II	Ntata
29th September, 2014	Nalingula	Ruo	Lujeri	Nansongole
30th September, 2014	Naminkhate	Ngolowera	Masubi	Chindola
1st October, 2014	Mapanga	Mulanje CCAP	Nanjala	Misanjo
2nd October, 2014	Nansato	Likole	Mthuruwe	Namadidi
3rd, October, 2014	Misyoni	Thawale II	Sikoya	Chisitu

6.0 READING LEVELS DATA COLLECTION:

800 students (400 boys and 400 girls) were assessed in reading alphabet letters, syllables, familiar words, created words and comprehension passage. They were also assessed in decoding words into syllables as well as phonics (letter sound) and answering comprehension questions.

The survey focused on learner competency in the following skills since they are very crucial in early grade reading and text comprehension:

1. Phonological awareness (letter sound);
2. Word segmentation (decoding);
3. Reading fluency (speed and accuracy);
4. Comprehension (context understanding).

6.1 Skills assessment:

Students were assessed as follows:

a. Number of alphabet letters read in a minute;
b. Number of syllables read in a minute;
c. Number of familiar words read in a minute;
d. Number of created words read in a minute;
e. Number of words decoded correctly (among ten words);
f. Number of letter sounds produced correctly (among ten letters);
g. Number of correct answers comprehended (among 5 questions).

7.0 FINDINGS:

7.1.1 Reading performance levels by students: Standard Two:

The table below shows number of students in the ranges of scores for each reading skill assessed in Std. 2 (n=400)

Table 75: Ranges of Scores for Reading Skills – Standard Two

Reading skill	0-10 %	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100 %
1. Alphabet letters	342	38	6	7	1	2	0	1	3	0
2. Word segmentation	289	6	13	9	7	21	16	16	20	3
3. Phonics (letter sounds)	387	6	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
4. Syllables	375	14	3	4	1	2	0	1	0	0
5. Familiar words	389	3	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
6. Created words	380	9	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Comprehension (passage read by student)	387	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	0
8. Comprehension (listening and speaking)	6	57	0	115	0	112	0	77	0	33

7.1.2 Reading performance levels by students: Standard Three:

The table below shows number of students in the ranges of scores for each reading skill assessed in Std. 3.

Table 76: Ranges of Scores for Reading Skills – Standard Three

Reading skill	0-10 %	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100 %
1. Alphabet letters	242	76	31	17	13	8	1	7	3	2
2. Word segmentation	194	8	17	21	21	30	24	41	32	12
3. Phonics (letter sounds)	362	13	12	7	2	1	3	0	0	0
4. Syllables	332	16	15	10	4	7	3	2	4	7
5. Familiar words	333	19	14	3	6	10	2	2	2	9
6. Created words	343	23	13	8	0	7	0	2	1	3
7. Comprehension (passage read by learner)	335	8	12	12	9	5	6	4	6	3
8. Comprehension (listening and speaking)	11	29	0	51	0	116	0	129	0	64

7.1.3 Observations:

1. Teachers who were trained in early grade reading by MTPDS were moved to classes beyond standard 4.
2. Teachers who are teaching lower primary are not using the early grade reading skills to train students.
3. Head teachers do not supervise teachers for the implementation of the above.
4. Inadequate textbooks for both Chichewa and English.
5. Inadequate teachers in many schools.
6. Large classes in some schools.
7. Overcrowded classes due to teacher misallocation e.g. an overcrowded class allocated with more than one teacher instead of splitting the class.
8. Most classrooms are not print rich (no display of teaching and learning materials) to promote independent reading opportunities.
9. Out of the 800 students assessed in fluency, 90% of Std. 2 students scored within the range between 0% and 10% where as 80% Std. 3 students also scored within the same range. Most students had problems with naming alphabet letters, reading syllables as well as both familiar and created words.
10. Word segmentation was another challenge. 70% of the students managed to score the same range of between 0% and 10%. This indicates that students are not given enough practice in decoding words.
11. Both Std. 2 and 3 students struggled to give alphabet letter sound. This denotes that students are not trained in phonological awareness skill; a basis to learning alphabet letters as well as syllables and words.
12. It was surprising to note that the same students who strived to comprehend the passage read on their own, were able to answer comprehension questions correctly from the story read to them by the enumerator.

7.2.1 Reading fluency: (read per minute)

The table below shows the highest and lowest performance for both students and schools in fluency.

Table 77: Performance for both Students and Schools in Reading Fluency

Area of assessment		Most fluent learner score	Lowest fluent learner score	Most fluent average school score	Lowest fluent average school score	Highest performing school(s)	Lowest performing school (s)
1. 100 alphabet letters	Std 2	86%	0%	22%	1%	Ruo	Mgodi
		Ruo					
	Std 3	98%	0%	68%	3%	Nakamba	Nansongole
		Nakamba					
2. 100 syllables	Std 2	100%	0%	90%	0%	Nakamba	Nansongole, Chindola, Mapanga, Nakoma, Lujeri, Makande, Chilera, Mitawa II, Mgodi.
		Nakoma					
	Std 3	100%	0%	58%	0%	Nakamba	Lujeri
		Nakamba					
3. 50 familiar words	Std 2	93%	0%	14%	0%	Mulomba	Nansongole, Nakoma, Ntata, Chimwamesi, Chindola, Mtendere, Nalingula, Mitawa II, Makande.
		Chimalira					
	Std 3	100%	0%	60%	0%	Nakamba	Lujeri
		Nakamba					
		Chimalira					
4. 50 created words	Std 2	34%	0%	7%	0%	Mulomba	Chimwamesi, Makande, Nalingula, Mwangothaya, Nansongole, Ntata,
		Mulomba					

Area of assessment		Most fluent learner score	Lowest fluent learner score	Most fluent average school score	Lowest fluent average school score	Highest performing school(s)	Lowest performing school (s)
							Lujeri, Mgodi, Chindola, Mapanga, Mulanje CCAP, Mtendere, Nakoma.
	Std 3	97%	0%	44%	0%	Nakamba	Mgodi, Lujeri, Chigombe.
		Chimalira					

Comment:

1. Although students in most of the schools have low fluency, there are a few students who performed very convincingly to the extent of finishing reading assessment area in less than 60 seconds. These students are in some of the schools such as: Ruo, Nakamba, Nakoma, Chimalira and Mulomba.

2. Nakamba, Ruo and Mulomba primary schools are good examples of institutions with high fluency levels, whereas schools that frequently appear on the lower side are: Mgodi, Mwangothaya, Nansongole, Chindola, Lujeri and Makande.

7.2.2 Word segmentation:

The table below shows the highest and lowest performance for both students and schools in syllables.

Table 78: Performance for both Students and Schools in Syllables

Area of assessment		Most decoding learner score	Lowest decoding learner score	Most decoding average school score	Lowest decoding average school score	Highest performing school(s)	Lowest performing school(s)
Decoding ten Words	Std 2	100% Nakoma Masubi Sikoya	0%	51%	0%	Nakoma	Nansongole
	Std 3	100% 6 schools	0%	70%	0.40%	Nanchidwa	Mulomba

Comment:

Standard 3 performed better than standard 2 students in word segmentation. In standard 3, 12 students from six schools managed to score 100% where as in standard 2, 3 students from three schools managed to score the same grade. There were few schools that scored 0% in word decoding.

7.2.3. Phonological awareness:

The table below shows the highest and lowest performance for both students and schools in letter sound.

Table 79: Performance for both Students and Schools in Letter Sounds

Area of assessment		Most phonological aware learner score	Lowest phonological aware learner score	Most phonological aware average school score	Lowest phonological aware average school score	Highest Performing school(s)	Lowest performing school (s)
Making the first letter sound of ten words	Std 2	60% Masubi	0%	20%	0%	Masubi	Nansongole, Ruo, Mulomba, Lujeri, Nanchidwa, Ntata, Chimwamesi, Nanjala, Mtendere, Chindola, Nakamba.
	Std 3	70% Mtendere Nakamba Nselema	0%	30%	0%	Mtendere Chilera	Nakoma, Lujeri, Mapanga, Chimalira

Comment:

This was the most unpopular area of assessment of which the highest score by a learner was 70% and the highest average school score was 30%. It appears teachers ignore teaching this reading skill and that's why it takes longer for students to acquire reading competencies.

7.2.4 Comprehension:

The table below shows the highest and lowest performance for both students and schools in comprehension.

Table 80: Performance for both Students and Schools in Comprehension

Area of assessment		Most comprehension learner score	Lowest comprehension learner score	Most comprehension average school score	Lowest comprehension average school score	Highest performing school(s)	Lowest performing school(s)
Answering five questions from the passage read by the learner.	Std 2	85% Nakamba	0%	22.80%	0%	Nakamba	Mwangothaya, Makande, Mgodi, Chimwamesi, Nselema, Masubi, Makoma, Lujeri, Mtendere, Ntata, Mapanga, Chilera, Mulanje CCAP, Ngolowera, Nansongole, Matawa, Nalingula, Chindola, Chigombe.
	Std 3	90% Kachere II	0%	43.60%	0%	Nakamba	Makande, Lujeri, Chigombe, Mgodi, Nakoma, Mitawa II, Mulanje CCAP
Answering five questions to the	Std 2	100%	0%	84%	35%	Nakamba	Chinyama

Area of assessment		Most comprehension learner score	Lowest comprehension learner score	Most comprehension average school score	Lowest comprehension average school score	Highest performing school(s)	Lowest performing school(s)
passage read by the enumerator		17 schools					
	Std 3	100% 26 schools	0%	86%	48%	Mgumera	Mulomba

Comment:

Students did well especially in a comprehension where the story was read to the learner. Incompetency in reading hindered most students from answering comprehension questions from a passage read on their own. This shows that our students have a good understanding and can do well in comprehension if trained well in reading.

8.1.1 Early Grade Reading Levels by schools: Standard Two

Table 81: Early Grade Reading Levels by Schools: Standard Two

School	1. Kudziwa dzina la lembo	2. Kudziwa maphati-kizo a malembo mmawu	3. Kutchu-la liwu loyamba	4. Kuwere-nga ma-phatikizo	5. Kuwe-renga mawu odziwika	6. Kuwe-renga mawu opeka	7. (a&b) Kuwere-nga ndi kumvetsa nkhani	8. Kumve tsa nkhani	Average
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1. Nakamba	17.5	19	0	8.6	9.7	4.9	22.8	84	20.80%
2. Masubi	8.8	43	17	2.8	2.2	0.8	0	66	17.50%
3. Mulomba	15.8	14	0	8.3	13.8	6.5	11.6	60	16.30%
4. Namikhate	8.6	24	4	6.5	4.2	2.6	7.8	66	15.40%
5. Nakoma	4.1	51	2	0	0	0	0	54	13.90%
6. Sikoya	11.5	30	1	4.7	1	0.8	0.4	60	13.60%
7. Mitawa II	6.4	35	7	0	0		0	62	13.50%
8. Nanchidwa	12.3	28	0	2.2	2.8	3	2.1	58	13.50%
9. Mthuruwe	11.3	31	3	3.2	3.4	2.8	2	50	13.30%
10. Chimalira	10	17	4	5.9	9.3	2.6	4.3	53	13.30%
11. Ruo	22.3	1	0	8.1	6.3	1.2	0.5	66	13.20%
12. Mgumera	6.1	15	4	2	0.8	0.6	0.7	72	12.90%
13. Kachere II	6.5	12	3	2.1	4.4	3	6.2	62	12.40%
14. Muloza LEA	6	21	2	0.4	1.2	0.6	0.1	64	11.90%
15. Mtendere	4.6	15	0	0.4	0	0	0	74	11.80%
16. Mulanje CCAP	6	25.1	1	0.2	0.1	0	0	62	11.80%
17. Nselema	4.5	21	3	6.2	2	7	0	50	11.70%
18. Chigombe	3.9	15	1	0.6	0.2	0.6	0	60	11.60%
19. Nansato	5.1	36.2	4	0.1	0	0	0	46	11.40%
20. Chilera	3	13	1	0	0.1	0.2	0	70	10.90%
21. Mapanga	4	15	4	0	0.1	0	0	62	10.60%
22. Mwangothaya	2.5	25	3	0.1	0.2	0	0	52	10.30%
23. Muonekera	3	16	2	0.9	2.2	1.4	8	48	10.20%
24. Namadidi	5.7	22	0	0.3	0.2	0	0	49.5	9.70%
25. Lujeri	3.1	10	0	0	0.2	0	0	46	9.40%

School	1. Kudziwa dzina la lembo	2. Kudziwa maphati-kizo a malembo mmawu	3. Kutchu-la liwu loyamba	4. Kuwere-nga ma-phatikizo	5. Kuwe-renga mawu odziwika	6. Kuwe-renga mawu opeka	7. (a&b) Kuwere-nga ndi kumvetsa nkhani	8. Kumve tsa nkhani	Average
26. Ngolowera	9.5	17	2	7.4	1	0.6	0	38	9.40%
27. Nanjala	5.5	21	0	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.1	40	8.60%
28. Chindola	1.2	13	0	0	0	0	0	54	8.50%
29. Chisitu	3.6	13	0	0.7	1.2	1.2	0.2	48	8.40%
30. Likole	1.4	18.2	0	0	0	0	0	45	8.10%
31. Chinyama	4.3	14	2	4.9	2.7	0.7	1.1	35	8.10%
32. Nalingula	6.3	11.2	3	1	0	0	0	42	7.90%
33. Misanjo	1.7	6	1	0.1	0	0	0	55	7.90%
34. Chimwamesi	2	6	0	1.2	0	0	0	52	7.70%
35. Misyoni	5.8	7	3	0.5	0	0	0	40	7.50%
36. Ntata	2.4	7	0	0.1	0	0	0	50	7.40%
37. Thawale II	1.1	16	0	0	0	0	0	39	7.00%
38. Mgodi	0.4	2	2	0	0.2	0	0	50	6.80%
39. Nansongole	0.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	54	6.80%
40. Makande	1.9	9	1	0	0	0	0	42	6.40%

8.1.2 Early Grade Reading Levels by schools: Standard Three

The tables below show the reading performance for students according to schools.

Table 82: Early Grade Reading Levels by Schools: Standard Three

School	1. Kudziwa dzina la lembo	2. Kudziwa maphati-kizo a malembo mmawu	3. Kutchu-la liwu loyamba	4. Kuwere-nga ma-phatikizo	5. Kuwe-renga mawu odziwika	6. Kuwe-renga mawu opeka	7. (a&b) Kuwere-nga ndi kumvetsankhani	8. Kumve tsa nkhani	Average
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1. Nakamba	67.4	47.8	19	57.7	59.1	43.9	43.6	84	52.80%
2. Chimalira	51.1	16	0	43.3	42.6	35.3	40.6	66	36.90%
3. Mtendere	18.7	57	29	20.5	20.4	15.6	38	78	34.70%
4. Chilera	18.7	57	29	20.5	20.4	15.6	38	78	34.70%
4. Mgumera	20.8	48	11	14.6	16.4	12.4	13.3	86	29.40%
6. Nanjala	5.5	6.7	5	2.7	3.6	2.6	4.1	54	26.40%
7. Nselema	26.9	59	9	11.2	12.8	10.8	15.9	64	26.20%
8. Nanchidwa	12.6	69	13	4.3	4.8	3.4	6.8	80	24.20%
9. Sikoya	15.3	45	15	8.4	4.6	2.8	4.5	84	22.40%
10. Chinyama	22	9.2	3	22.1	20.9	14.5	20.2	68	22.40%
11. Mapanga	15.7	66	0	8.2	7.2	3.9	7.3	64	21.80%
12. Namikhate	17.3	49	3.1	7.3	4.2	4.3	9	78	21.50%
13. Masubi	19.4	33	2	9.7	9.2	3.8	7.3	76	20.00%
14. Misanjo	14.4	30	1	6.5	7.2	5	13.6	78	19.50%
15. Nalingula	15.3	50	4	5.9	4.2	2.6	3.6	66	18.90%
16. Chigombe	6.2	30	2	0.4	1.6	0	0	73	18.90%
17. Muloza	17.9	38	1	11.3	9.1	5.2	5.3	62	18.40%
18. Kachere II	6.1	23	2	5.1	8.4	8.6	17.8	56	17.90%
19. Nakoma	14.1	64	0	2.5	1.3	0.7	0	58	17.60%
20. Thawale II	6.4	50	3	7.4	1.2	1.3	4	64	17.20%

School	1. Kudziwa dzina la lembo	2. Kudziwa maphati-kizo a malembo mmawu	3. Kutchu-la liwu loyamba	4. Kuwere-nga ma-phatikizo	5. Kuwe-renga mawu odziwika	6. Kuwe-renga mawu opeka	7. (a&b) Kuwere-nga ndi kumvetsankhani	8. Kumve tsa nkhani	Average
21. Mulanje CCAP	17	42	6	4.5	1.3	1	0	63	16.90%
22. Chimwamesi	9.5	4.4	1	4.5	5.2	1.1	3	62	16.30%
23. Mwangothaya	12.9	37	6	3.5	3.8	2.4	3.2	60	16%
24. Makande	17.5	38	6	2.3	0.6	0.4	0	60	15.60%
25. Ntata	8.5	29	2	1	1.4	0.8	2.8	78	15.40%
26. Ngolowera	8.1	39	2	2.4	1	0.7	2.3	66	15.20%
27. Likole	22.1	20	5	9.6	5.2	2.8	0.8	52	14.70%
28. Mthuruwe	8.8	38	0	1.8	4.2	2.6	4.7	58	14.70%
29. Nansato	2.7	28	1.3	1.3	1	1.1	1.3	72	13.50%
30. Nansongole	2.9	26.2	1.2	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.1	75	13.40%
31. Chisitu	3.7	12	6	1.1	2.2	1	2	77	13.10%
32. Chindola	4.2	19	3	1.6	3.2	2.6	4.5	67	13.10%
33. Mgodi	14.9	24	0.1	0.2	0.2	0	0	64	12.90%
34. Namadidi	8.8	0	2	6.4	6.9	3.4	7.4	68	12.80%
35. Muonekera	9.6	6	2	5.3	6.6	4.6	8.9	56	12.40%
36. Mitawa II	11.9	12	2	2.9	1.6	1.6	0	66	12.10%
37. Mulomba	17.1	0.4	0.1	4.1	8.4	4.2	11.6	48	11.70%
38. Ruo	18	31	7	6.6	9.4	3	8	76	10.40%
39. Lujeri	6.9	13	0	0	0	0	0	52	9.10%
40. Misyoni	11.5	2	2	1.3	2.3	0	0	50	8.60%

9.0 READING LEVELS BY ZONES:

9.1 Standard Two

The tables below show the reading performance for students according to zones.

Table 83: Standard Two Reading Performance for Students according to Zone

Zone	1 Alphabet letters	2 Word Segmentation	3 Alphabet letter sound	4 Syllables	5 Familiar words	6 Created words	7 Reading a passage & comprehension	8 Listening to a story & comprehension	Average
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1. Dyanyama	12.1	15.3	0.3	5.6	7.9	3.9	11.5	71.3	16%
2. Masubi	7.3	29.3	8	5.2	2.8	3.5	2.6	60.7	14.90%
3. Limbuli	9.4	22	2	2.8	4.4	2.7	2.2	58.3	12.90%
4. Thuchira	3.7	30.3	1.7	0.17	0.7	0	0	60	12.00%
5. Chambe	7.4	29.7	2.3	1.2	1.2	0.9	0.7	48.5	11.50%
6. Maveya	10.6	7.4	1	3	2.2	0.4	0.2	51.3	10.20%
7. Namphungo	3.2	11	2.7	1	1.7	0.7	2.9	56.7	10%
8. Ntata	4.4	18.7	3	1.7	0.9	0.2	0.4	49	9.70%
9. Ulongwe	5.7	16	1.3	2.6	0.4	0.2	0	51.7	9.70%
10. Chitakale	4.4	19.3	0.3	1.4	0.7	0.5	0.2	48	9.30%
11. Mombo	3	16.3	1	0.1	2	0.1	0	52	9.20%
12. Namulenga	3.5	9	1.3	1.1	1.5	1	2.1	52	8.80%
13. Mathambi	3.5	7.3	1.3	0.4	0.1	0.2	0	51.3	8.60%

9.2 Standard Three

Table 84: Standard Three Reading Performance for Students according to Zone

Zone	1 Alphabet letters	2 Word segmentation	3 Alphabet letter sound	4 Syllables	5 Familiar words	6 Created words	7 Reading a passage & comprehension	8 Listening to a story & comprehension	Average
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1. Dyanyama	34.4	35.6	16.3	27.4	29.3	21.2	31.6	70	33.60%
2. Limbuli	27.2	41	4.7	19.6	18.8	14.6	17.6	69.3	26.50%
3. Thuchira	15.2	53	11.6	8.8	8.5	6.2	13.7	65	22.80%
4. Masubi	21.2	47	4.7	9.4	8.7	6.3	10.7	72.7	22.60%
5. Mombo	8.5	30.6	2.7	4.7	4.7	3	5.3	61.7	20.30%
6. Namphungo	15.3	26	4.4	6.7	7.7	5.7	7.4	68.7	18.20%
7. Ulongwe	13.2	37	3	4.5	3.2	2.2	5.3	69	17.20%
8. Chitakale	11.8	31.8	7.3	6.6	3.3	2	2.8	69.3	16.90%
9. Namulenga	11.3	21.8	3	4	3.7	3.4	6.9	59.3	16.60%
10. Chambe	6.8	22	1.1	3.2	4	2.4	4.5	66	13.70%
11. Mathambi	6.9	19.4	1.7	0.8	1.4	0.2	0.03	66	13.60%
12. Ntata	14.1	16.7	2.3	8.7	8	5.6	7.7	70.7	12.90%
13. Maveya	13.4	31.3	3.7	4.2	4.5	1.9	3.9	64.7	12.80%

10.0 CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND HEAD TEACHER INTERVIEW:

The table below shows information from lesson observations and head teachers.

Table 85: Lesson Observations and Head Teachers

Class	Learner / textbook ratio	Learner / teacher ratio	Reasons for no textbooks	Trainings Attended & organizations	Learner absenteeism rate	Learner involvement in reading	Support needed to increase reading scores
Std 2	2:01 To 276:01	48:01 to 272:01	Inadequate supply of Textbooks by MoEST. Little care to textbooks. No supply of textbooks by MoEST.	1 to 9 Trainings by WVI MTPDS Read MW	1-27%	Partially done due to large classes	Provision of textbooks. Refresher trainings of teachers. Provision of supplementary readers. Organise school based INSETs.
Std 3	01:01 To 120:01	48:01 to 319:01	Inadequate supply of textbooks by MoEST. Little care to textbooks. No supply of textbooks by MoEST.	1 to 9 Trainings by WVI MTPDS Read MW	1-46%	Partially done due to large classes.	Provision of textbooks. Refresher trainings of teachers. Provision of supplementary readers. Organise school based INSETs.

Comment:

In most of the schools visited, textbooks were not cared for. Books were not covered and the torn ones were not bound. Students were partially engaged in reading activities and games. It was also observed that teachers prepare inadequately for lessons and do not utilize the trainings organized by other organizations.

11.0 CRITICAL ISSUES PERTAINING TO READING:

1. Inadequate textbooks for both Chichewa and English e.g. Muonekera, Makande, Mtendere, Muloza LEA, Chilera, Mgumera and Nselema.
2. Inadequate teachers in many schools e.g. Makande and Chilera.
3. Large classes in schools e.g. Mgumera, Muloza LEA and Nselema.
4. Overcrowded classes due to teacher misallocation at Muloza LEA and Nselema e.g. an overcrowded class allocated with more than one teacher instead of splitting the class.
5. Most classrooms are not print rich (no display of teaching and learning materials) to promote independent.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

To the Head teachers and teachers:

1. Brief departmental heads on the outcome of the early grade reading assessment baseline survey findings.
2. Lower primary class teachers should teach letters of the alphabet in literacy subjects accompanied by phonological awareness skills on daily basis.
3. Standard 1 to 4 class teachers should depart from whole word approach to syllabic approach with emphasis on encoding and decoding words
4. Lower primary class teachers should train students and give them adequate practice in reading fluently.
5. Infant and junior primary class teachers should train students the comprehension skills such as discussion of the illustration as well as asking both high and low order questions to promote thinking in students.
6. Teachers should take care and make use of the available textbooks. If books are not available, reading passages should be written either on the chalkboard or chart paper
7. Lower primary class teachers should practice new reading words banking (displaying on walls of the classroom or chalkboard).
8. Head teachers should sustain the utilization of the skills acquired in any literacy trainings provided by cooperating partners.
9. Teachers should be properly allocated to classes to avoid learner congestion under several teachers taking turns in teaching.
10. Head teachers should encourage parents to assist their children practice reading at home
11. Head teachers should promote school based CPDs on literacy subjects.

To the Primary Education Advisor:

1. Brief head teachers on the outcome of the early grade reading assessment baseline survey findings.
2. Devise an instrument and utilize it in monitoring the teaching of languages and reading activities in particular.

To the District Education Manager:

1. Organize refresher courses on early grade reading for Stds 1 to 4 teachers as well as heads, deputy heads and departmental heads to improve the teaching of reading skills.
2. Plan for a follow up data collection activity towards the end of the school year to check progress.

13.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let me convey heartfelt thanks to the District Education Manager for Mulanje for taking a bold step in organizing the Mulanje Early Grade Reading Assessment activity. It has really given the picture of the reading competencies among our students. We are very thankful for the financial support which made the activity progress very smoothly. It is my sincere hope that remedial activities will be put in place to overturn the situation on reading in primary schools. I furthermore thank all the primary education advisors for job well done during the data collection. It was a tough going but you managed to carry out the data collection as expected. Special thanks should also go to the DEMs for Chiradzulu and Phalombe for allowing and releasing their officers to take part in the data collection activity. Finally, I thank all those who took part in this activity. Thank you.

ANNEX 11: POWERPOINT PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

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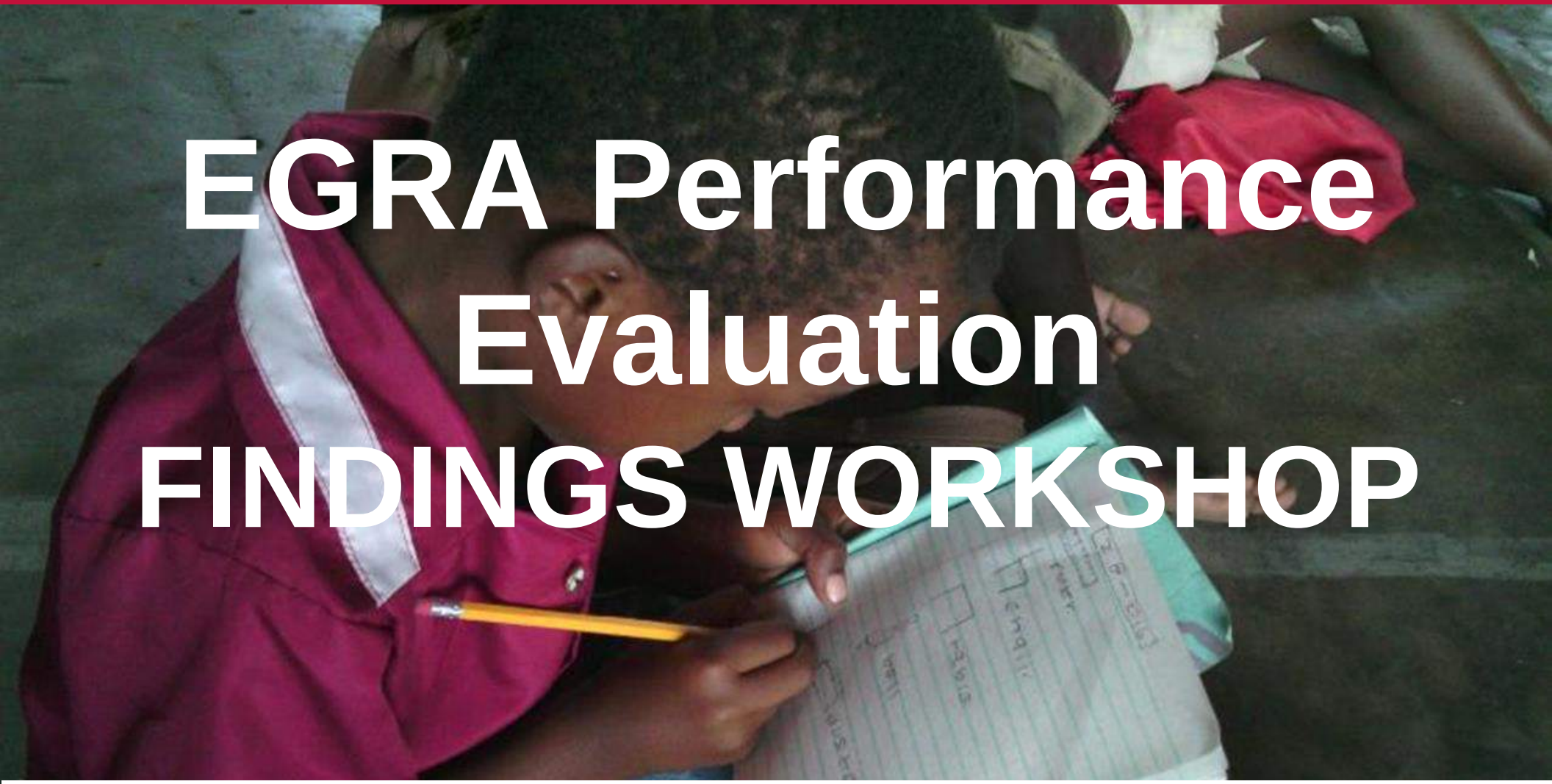

EGRA Performance Evaluation FINDINGS WORKSHOP

Peter Mbiko Jere and Sarah Bliss, Khulisa Management Services

February 19, 2015

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OUTLINE

- PURPOSE OF EVALUATION
- EVALUATION QUESTIONS
- FIELDWORK
- KEY FINDINGS
- CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS
- GROUP INTERACTION AND FEEDBACK SESSION

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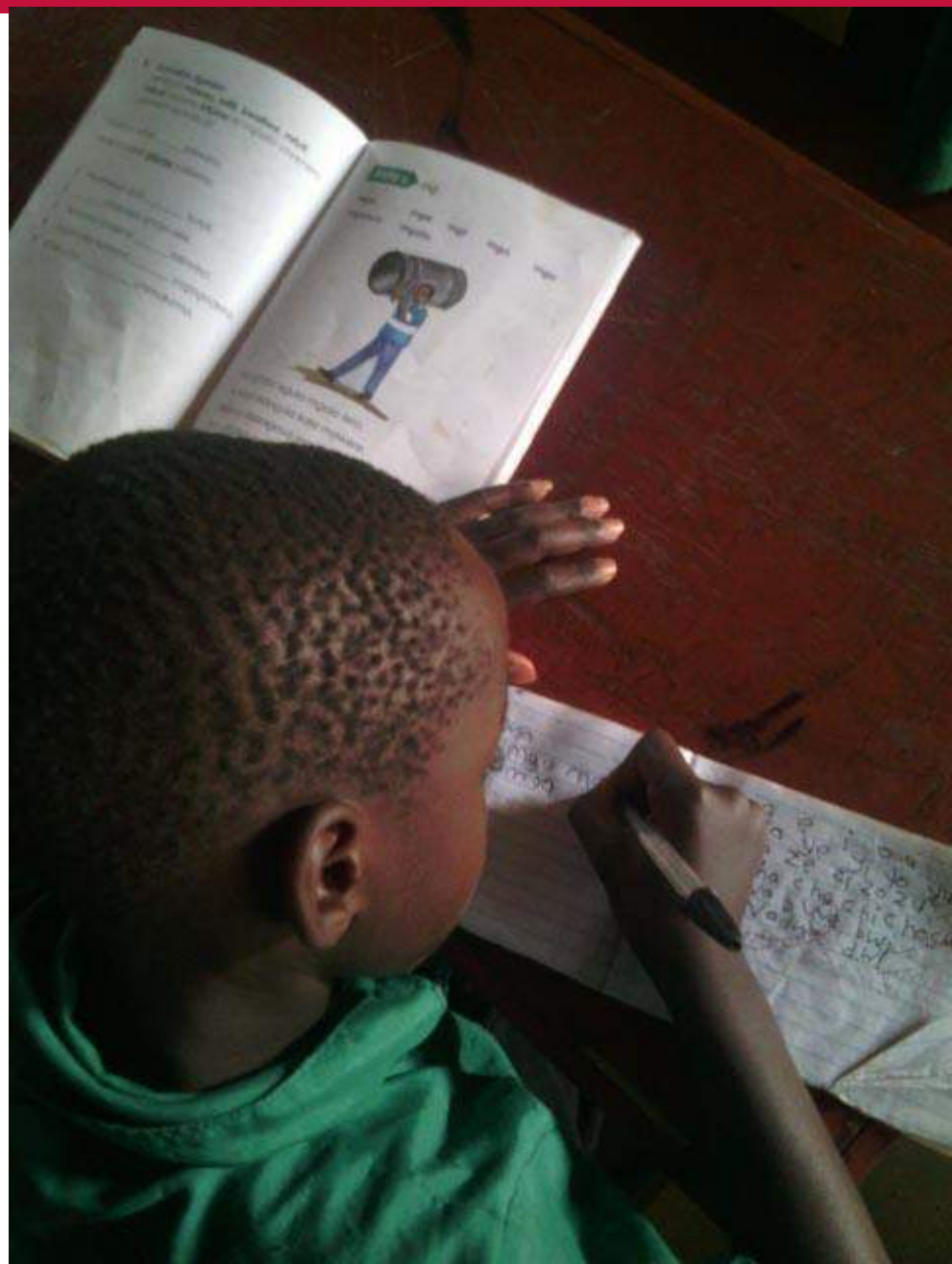
BACKGROUND TO EVALUATION

February 19, 2015



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PURPOSE

Examine process & performance of Early Grade Reading Activity (EGRA):

- Effectiveness: outputs, outcomes, program elements
- Recommendations for Malawian Government to take over
- Advice on course corrections
- Scale-up and sustainability

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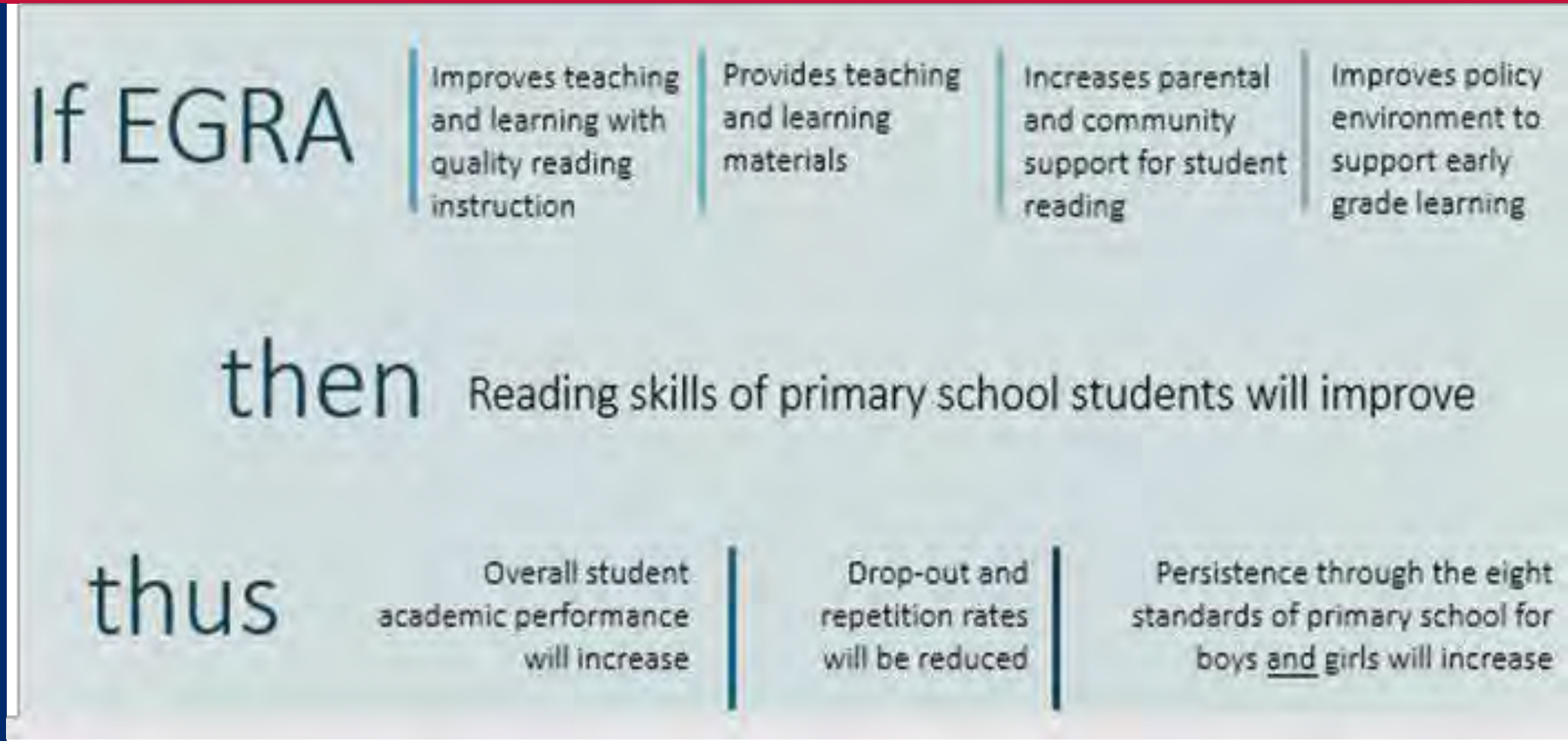


THEORY OF CHANGE

How effective is the EGRA's approach toward achieving the goal of increased reading skills of primary school students in Malawi?

EVALUATION QUESTION 1

EFFECTIVENESS

How can the EGRA design, management, and execution become more efficient toward achieving program goals?

EVALUATION QUESTION 2

EFFICIENCY

What are the key factors needed to take the EGRA to a national scale and ensure sustainability?

EVALUATION QUESTION 3

SCALE & SUSTAINABILITY

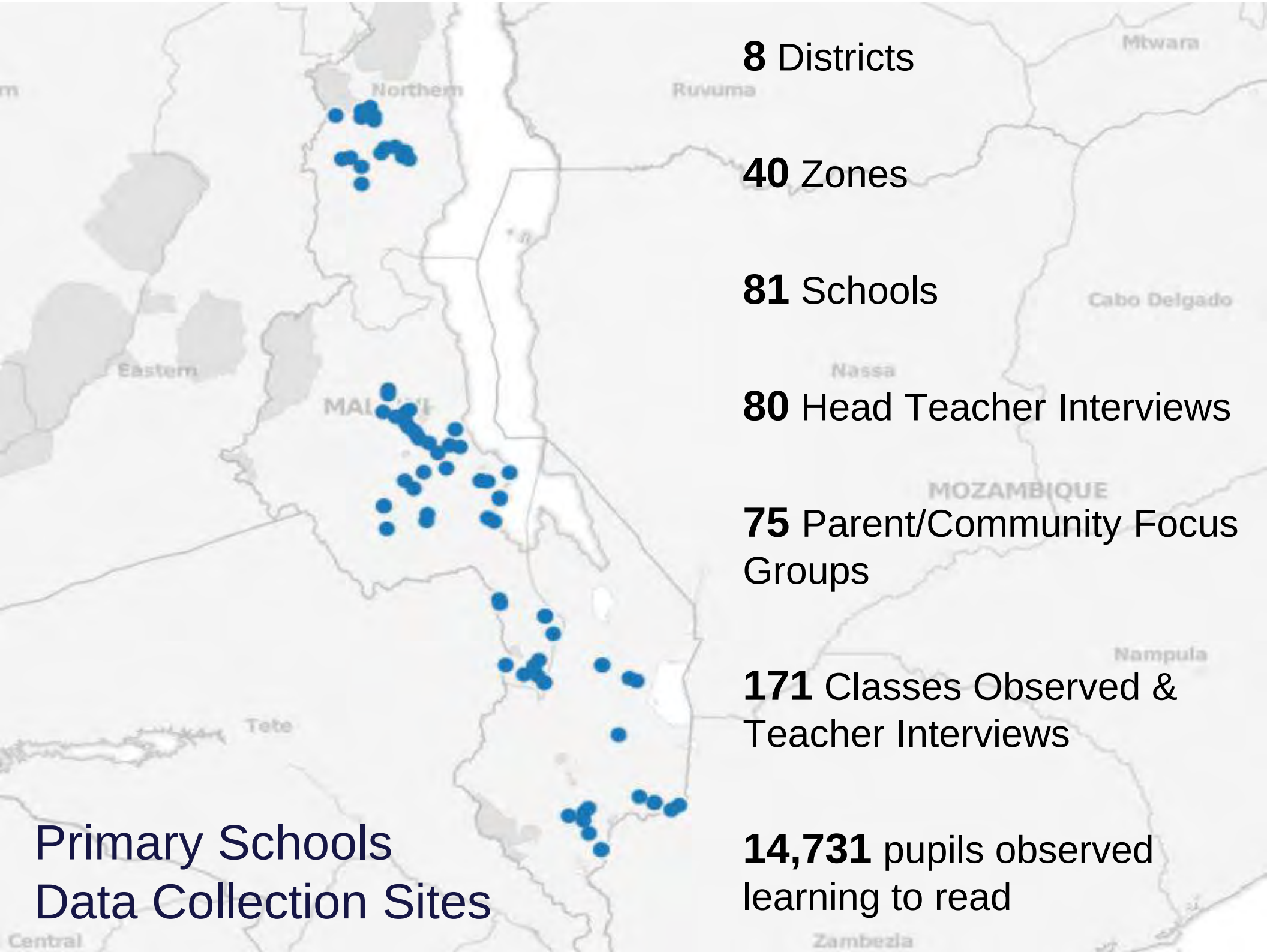
Where, how and to what extent have the EGRA's components been adopted/adapted without USAID assistance?

EVALUATION QUESTION 4

SPILL-OVER

QUESTION	COMPONENT	CROSSCUTTING ISSUE
Effectiveness	1. Quality Reading Instruction 2. Teaching and Learning Materials Delivery 3. Parent/Community Engagement 4. Improving Policy Environment	1. M&E 2. Local Capacity Development 3. Special Needs Education 4. Grants under Contracts 5. Geographic Coverage 6. PPP 7. Contribute to USAID Integration
Efficiency		
Scale-up & Sustainability		
Spill-over		

FIELDWORK



8 Districts

40 Zones

81 Schools

80 Head Teacher Interviews

75 Parent/Community Focus Groups

171 Classes Observed & Teacher Interviews

14,731 pupils observed learning to read

Primary Schools
Data Collection Sites

SAMPLE

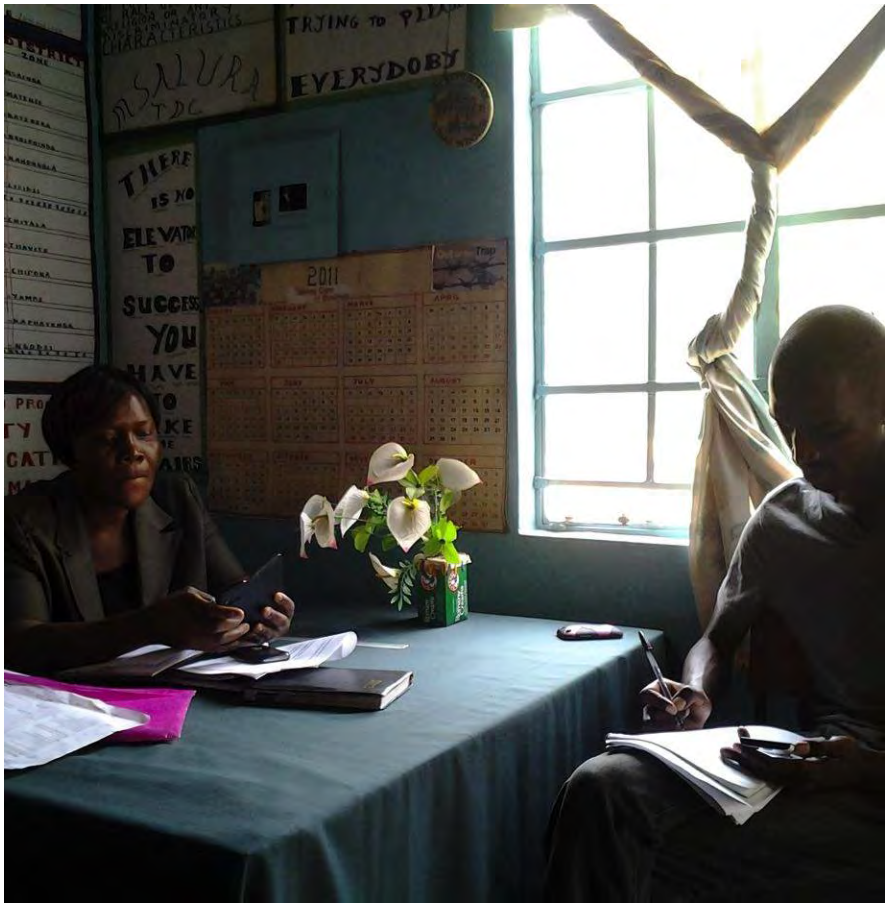
55 Treatment Schools

22 Control Schools

4 schools in Mulanje District

Urban | Rural | Remote Rural

Key Informant Interviews



Zone

28 PEAs

District

20 DEM, DCM, DME

Division

6 SEMA, DCM, DME, DTC

Key Informant Interviews

MoEST

- PS
- Planning, DIAS, DTED, DBE, DSHNA, DSNE
- MIE
- MANEB
- UNIMA

Implementing Partners

- Field Staff
- Central Office Staff
- Counterparts
- Sub-contractors

Development Partners

- DfID
- UNICEF
- GIZ
- WFP
- FAWEMA
- WB
- UNESCO

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KEY FINDINGS

February 19, 2015

EGRA has changed reading instruction in Standard 1-3 classes in Malawi.

TEACHERS TRAINED TO TEACH READING	
Treatment	**Control**
95%	**21%**

95% teachers trained to teach reading

EFFECTIVENESS

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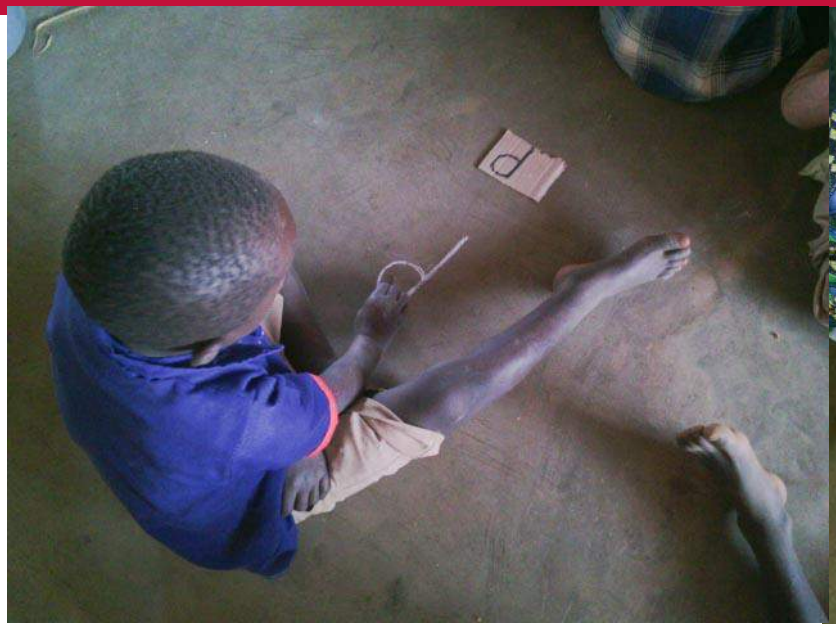
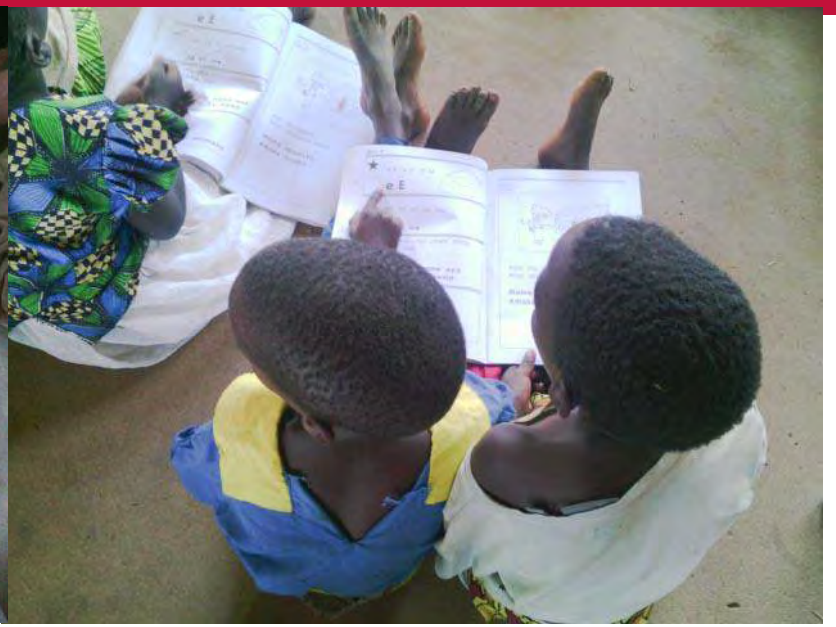
Use of Scripted Lessons

Schools	Scripted	Partial	None	Total
Treatment	70%	18%	12%	119
Control	20%	25%	55%	52

70% EGRA teachers use scripted lessons

- Improved reading outcomes
- Changed reading instruction practices Improved capacity of teachers
- Motivated students, teachers, parents
- Increased access to teaching and learning materials





“Before, Standard 3 pupils could barely read.”

EFFECTIVENESS

EFFICIENCY

- EGRA/ design includes systematic implementation of CPD in-service teacher training at district & zonal levels
- CPD is effectively managed and executed
- Strategies taught during CPD were observed in most Treatment Standard 1-3 classes, and in some control schools.

EFFICIENCY: REACH

	Male	Female	Total Students	Schools	Teachers/ Heads
Cohort A: **since 9/2013**	**294,309**	**279,343**	**573,652**	**1,188**	**10,811**
Cohort B: **since 9/2014**	**104,486**	**103,308**	**204,794**	**407**	**2,808**
Total	**398,795**	**382,651**	**778,446**	**1,595**	**13,619**

EFFICIENCY

- Shortage of reading material
- Delayed delivery of instructional materials and equipment
- Bottleneck in feedback loop for assessment data
- Inadequate training for reading center volunteers

Length of Lessons

Standard	Treatment average minutes	Control average minutes
1	**55**	**42**
2	38	39
3	44	38

COMPONENT 1

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Quality Reading Instruction		Reading instruction has improved and spread; implementation fidelity is uneven, but largely positive. EGRA, following on from the Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS), uses the extra hour added in intervention schools to demonstrate effective reading instruction.

COMPONENT 2

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Teaching and Learning Materials		Progress is slower than expected, but there is greater Malawian ownership of materials developed together with MIE and MoEST. The paper tax means that it is cheaper to print and ship materials from overseas, and this causes delays of several months.

Parent and Community Findings

- Community Mobilization Handbook Produced
- ~1 Reading Fair per year generates community excitement

Parent and Community Findings

- Inadequate training for volunteers is de-motivating
- Lack of reading materials at reading centers and home impedes reading outcomes.

COMPONENT 3

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Parental/ Community Engagement		Parental/community engagement is present, but not reaching its potential. Volunteers/parents are frustrated by the lack of training at the reading centers.

Policy Findings

- The syllabic approach is embedded at MoEST and MIE
- Policies such as teacher placement, classroom size affect success
- Paper tax a barrier to local publishing industry and print rich society

COMPONENT 4

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Improving Policy Environment		Overall, the Malawian government has adopted the EGRA approach in Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP) II and in the National Reading Strategy (NRS).

SCALE & SUSTAINABILITY

Irreversibility

Are the changes wrought by the project/program firmly entrenched? *YES*

Approach is now entrenched in ESIP II and 2014 MoEST approved NRS. Stakeholders are supportive

If USAID pulled out tomorrow, elements of the program would continue

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SUSTAINABILITY/SCALE

- Outcomes have improved
- Structures have changed
- Culture has changed

Criteria	EGRA Malawi
Momentum includes:	
Have Educational **outcomes** improved?	**Yes** both the LAT scores and teacher/community and parent perceptions support better reading.
Have bureaucratic **structures** changed?	**Partially** PEAs and DEMs in target districts and some other districts have adapted to fully embrace EGRA.
Has organizational **culture** changed?	**Partially** one of the tests of success will be the continued increase of contact time from the present average of 43 minutes to the required one hour as required under ESIP II.

SUSTAINABILITY / SCALE

SPILL-OVER: Mulanje Case Study

- District Council conducted preliminary study focused on EGRA
- MKw 4 million of district funds
- 44 randomly selected schools in September
- Implemented Reading Fairs
- Constraints:
  - Insufficient materials
  - Few books to practice reading

Mulanje Std 3 Reading results by Zone

Report by Alex B.C. Mbewe, the Senior Education Methods Advisor for SHED, MoEST October 2014

Zone	Average
Maveya	13%
Ntata	13%
Mathambi	14%
Chambe	14%
Namulenga	17%
Chitakale	17%
Ulongwe	17%
Namphungo	18%
Mombo	20%
Masubi	23%
Thuchira	23%
Limbuli	27%
Dyanyama	34%

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CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

February 19, 2015

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUE 1

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)		M&E systems are good, but only serve the EGRA intervention. EGRA needs to build feedback loops and improve the provision of LAT and other data to schools, districts and government.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUE 2

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Local Capacity Development		The lack of local capacity development of CRECCOM impacts on the parental/community engagement component and, more importantly, on the long term sustainability of EGRA. RTI is currently working with CRECCOM to build their organizational capacity to address this gap.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUE 3

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Students with SNE		All respondents indicated increased awareness and knowledge on how to serve students with SNE, but this is a first step on a long journey.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUE 4

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Grants under Contract (GUC)		GUCs are supposed to reward improved reading performance, but performance data is unavailable, thus GUCs are being used to reward schools that 1) can fill out the forms and 2) who have a good idea.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUE 5

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Gender Equity		Respondents stated, and observations showed, high levels of gender equity.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUE 6

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Geographic Coverage		EGRA is working in identified districts and has strong relationships with districts and zones. Co-location with other USAID programs is evident.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUE 7

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Public Private Partnerships (PPP)		While over 25 private sector enterprises have been identified and indicated willingness for more dialogue, any PPP successes are likely to be once off without any element of sustainability, as there is no Government of Malawi champion or process.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUE 8

Component	Rating	Evaluator Comments
Contribute to USAID Integration		The USAID integration process recently began and RTI has developed an integration workplan, for example using Malaria messages in EGRA supported materials and experimenting with mobile money to reimburse teachers for transport costs.

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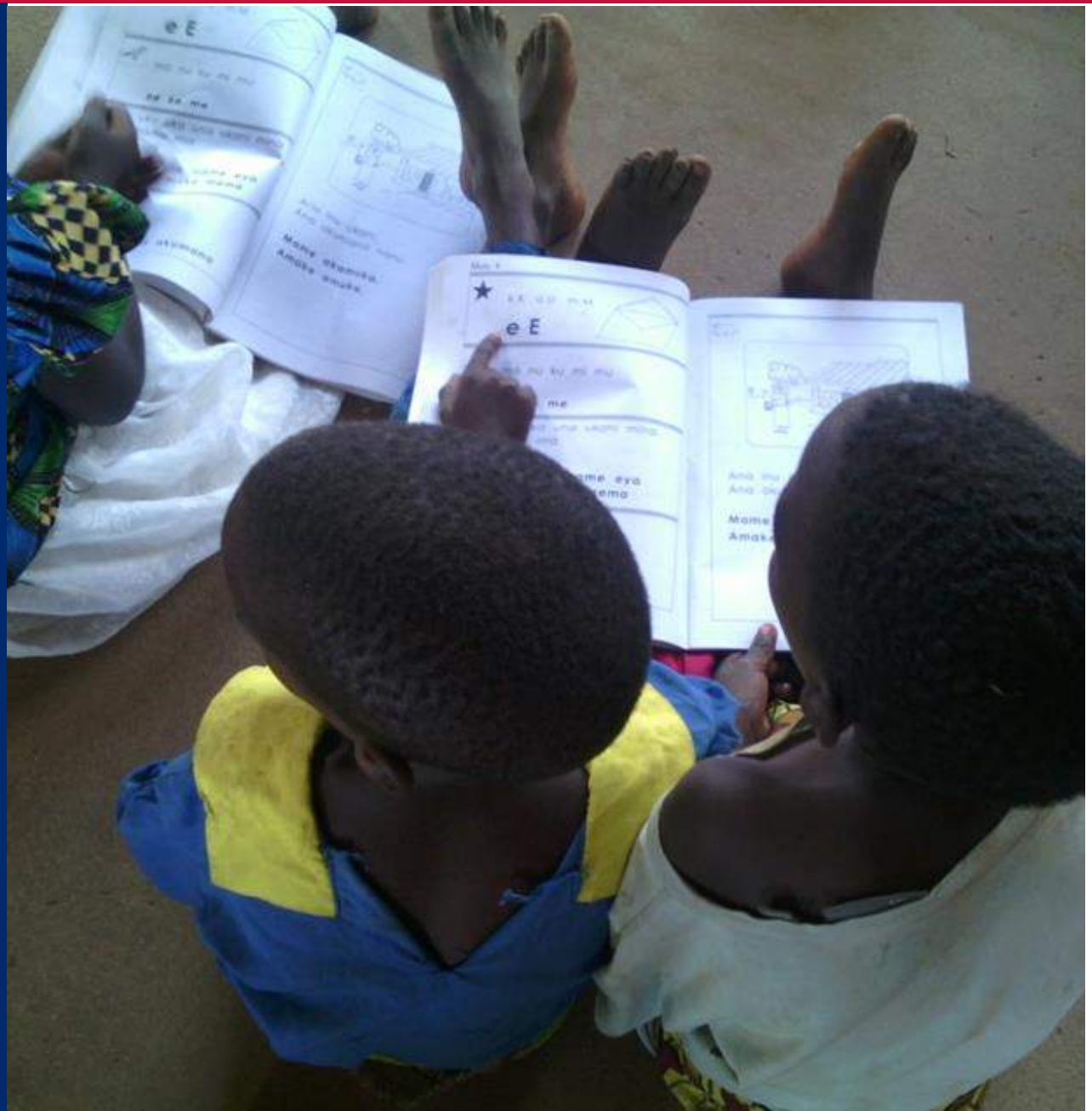
CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS



"The current EGRA intervention is a ***success story*** *but it is still in its experimental stage. We are now convinced the intervention works, it's time to 'roll it out' to all primary schools"*

Director of MIE

1. Effectiveness?

Conclusion	Recommendation
EGRA effectively improves reading fluency at an early age. Signs of increasing involvement of parents, but culture is still weak: • Low adult literacy levels viewed by parents themselves as a hindrance • Lack of free time • Low access to reading materials	Strengthen the parent/community component: • support VCRFs • Leverage reading fairs / reading centers • Encourage book- borrowing

2. Efficiency?

Conclusion	Recommendation
Systematic implementation through effective Continuous Professional Development (CPD)	Strengthen through: • Mentoring and coaching • Fostering reading culture by further capacitating VCRFs

"Keep the focus. Maintain the same procedures for introducing EGRA through MoEST"

Department of Planning Official

2. Efficiency? *cont.*

Conclusion	Recommendation
Assessment is central to EGRA model: • assessment results 3x/year not fed back in timely manner • inadequate class assessments after reading lessons	Feedback loop for assessment results: • guide implementation • improve class instruction • reward schools • provide feedback on acquired learning to teachers and parents

3. Scale & Sustainability?

Conclusion	Recommendation
EGRA approach is being institutionalized via ESIP II and 2014 MoEST NRS and implementing partners' activities	Institutionalization needs close monitoring: MoEST / USAID must closely monitor integrity of design, management and execution Support CPD efforts: CPD points for teachers Integration of EGRA approach into pre-service training

4. Spill-over?

Conclusion	Recommendation
Some evidence of spill-over	Support efforts to conduct CPD across the country at some point during the activity period.

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FEEDBACK SESSION

- Questions?
- What findings stand out for you?
- What other conclusions do you draw?
- Which recommendations do you agree with or not?
- Any other recommendations?
- How do you expect to proceed?

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THANK YOU

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