



SIERRA LEONE McGovern-Dole
International Food for Education and Child
Nutrition Project

Midterm Evaluation

8/31/2021

MIDLINE EVALUATION REPORT FOR PHASE IV OF THE ALL PIKIN FOR LEARN PROJECT IN SIERRA LEONE

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Evaluation Authored by: SCHOOL-TO-SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL

Anne Laesecke

Drew Schmenner

Crystal Chiglinsky

Erica Wang

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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Term
<i>APFL</i>	All Pikin for Learn Project
<i>APFL IV</i>	Phase IV of the All Pikin for Learn Project
<i>CRS</i>	Catholic Relief Services
<i>CTA</i>	Community Teacher Association
<i>Dalan</i>	Dalan Development Consultants
<i>DTM</i>	Diagnostic Teaching Methodologies
<i>FGD</i>	Focus Group Discussions
<i>FQSP</i>	Free Quality School Program
<i>GoSL</i>	Government of Sierra Leone
<i>HTC</i>	Higher Teacher Certificate
<i>IR</i>	Intermediate Result
<i>IYCF</i>	Infant and Young Child Feeding
<i>KII</i>	Key Informant Interviews
<i>M&E</i>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<i>MBSSE</i>	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
<i>MGD</i>	McGovern-Dole
<i>MoHS</i>	Ministry of Health and Sanitation
<i>MSG</i>	Mothers Support Group
<i>PMP</i>	Performance Monitoring Plan
<i>SILC</i>	Savings and Internal Lending Communities
<i>SMC</i>	School Management Committee
<i>SO</i>	Strategic Objective
<i>STS</i>	School-to-School International
<i>TALLE</i>	The Association of Language and Literacy Education
<i>TC</i>	Teacher Certificate
<i>TEC</i>	Teacher Elementary Certificate
<i>TOC</i>	Theory of Change
<i>USDA</i>	United States Department of Agriculture
<i>WASSCE</i>	West African Senior School Certificate Examination

Executive Summary

Project Background and Purpose

The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) has committed to increasing its investment in the education sector. In alignment with these priorities, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) continues to implement the All Pikin for Learn (APFL) project in northern Sierra Leone. Funded by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) McGovern-Dole Food for Education program, APFL strives to reduce hunger and improve literacy and primary education. APFL provides nutritional support to communities in Sierra Leone's Koinadugu and Falaba districts through nutritious meals at intervention schools each school day, as well as take-home rations to pupils who demonstrate high academic performance and to teachers who support APFL's after-school activities, such as health and reading clubs. In March 2020, CRS adapted its activities to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, including distributing take-home rations and solar-powered radios to pupils, as well as building handwashing stations with appropriate training in how to use them.

This midline performance evaluation is a key tool for the program funder and other development partners to understand what progress Phase IV of the APFL (APFL IV) program has made, especially during a tumultuous year due to the global pandemic. Partners within the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) may use the results to inform their national policies, programs, and practices. At the community level, results around pupils' performance can be used in discussions with the school management committees (SMCs), community teacher associations (CTAs), mothers support groups (MSGs), and parents to reinforce the need for community support around pupils' education and reading.

Evaluation Questions, Design, Methods and Limitations

This report outlines the results of the 2021 midline evaluation, which assesses whether APFL IV is on track to meet its objectives. The evaluation responds to five evaluation questions to gauge the project's progress against its indicators—relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. This study compares changes with results from the APFL IV baseline and reviews how the APFL IV's theory of change has held up.

Utilizing mixed methods, the non-experimental midline performance evaluation measures the project's progress toward meeting its performance indicators. Data were collected from a clustered sample of the 310 APFL IV intervention schools in June 2021 using a literacy assessment, surveys, observation tools, and qualitative interviews and focus group discussions. Diverse groups of stakeholders were included to provide broad perspectives for the project, including pupils, teachers, head teachers, SMC chairpersons, CTA chairpersons, school food preparers, the heads of the MSGs, community members, and staff from government partners as well as community members.

The following limitations should be considered when reviewing the findings of the APFL IV midline. First, there was a notable interruption in schooling for primary school pupils due to the COVID19 pandemic, an important consideration in reviewing literacy outcomes. In addition, tools from previous APFL phases were used, and these tools were not fully aligned with the most recent recommendations from literacy research. The study also attained 75% of the desired response rate for the teacher survey, leading to a

slight reduction in statistical power for this data. Finally, there is inherent bias in sampling pupils present on the assessment day.

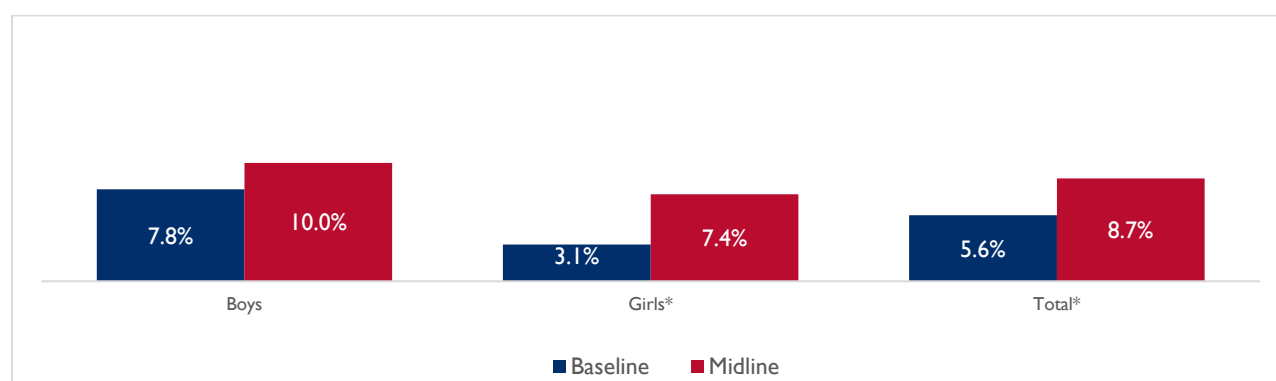
Findings and Recommendations

The APFL IV project addresses the two USDA MGD project strategic objectives (SOs): SO 1: Improved literacy of school-aged children; and SO 2: Increased use of health and dietary practices of school-aged children. Findings around these SOs as well as evaluation questions are presented here.

SO1: Improved literacy of school-aged children

Midline results show that the majority of pupils still cannot read and understand the meaning of grade-level text. Overall, of the 678 pupils assessed at midline, 91.3 percent did not correctly answer at least four reading comprehension questions, as shown in the figure below. However, comprehension has improved since baseline, where only 5.6 percent met the threshold. Fewer girls (7.4 percent) met the threshold at midline than boys (10.0 percent), mirroring the trend at baseline of more boys (7.8 percent) meeting the threshold than girls (3.1 percent).

Proportion of pupils meeting reading threshold at baseline and midline, by sex



Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

While reading levels increased only slightly, there were changes in the number of classroom resources, the number of teachers trained, the proportion of pupils reporting they were not being hungry in schools, and pupil dropout rates.

Classroom resources for pupils increased between baseline and midline. At midline, 68.6 percent of classrooms met the GoSL's ideal ratio of at least one textbook per two pupils while only 23.5 percent of baseline classrooms met this ratio. This indicates APFL has been effective in distributing learning materials to schools in the program. The program is also effectively training more teachers. Of the 151 teachers interviewed at midline, a statistically significantly higher proportion had participated in a diagnostic teaching methodologies (DTM) training during the academic year at midline (64.6 percent) than baseline (35.6 percent).

A statistically significantly higher proportion of pupils reported not being hungry at all at midline (91.4 percent) than baseline (0.6 percent). Given that school feeding programs had not yet started at baseline, this increase is not unexpected. These results indicate that schools are providing sufficient food to pupils throughout the day, and that the program is making progress against its targets. Dropout rates decreased

between baseline and midline. The average dropout rate across all classes and both sexes was 4.1 percent at midline compared with 4.4 percent at baseline, much lower than the year 3 target rate of 3.64 percent.

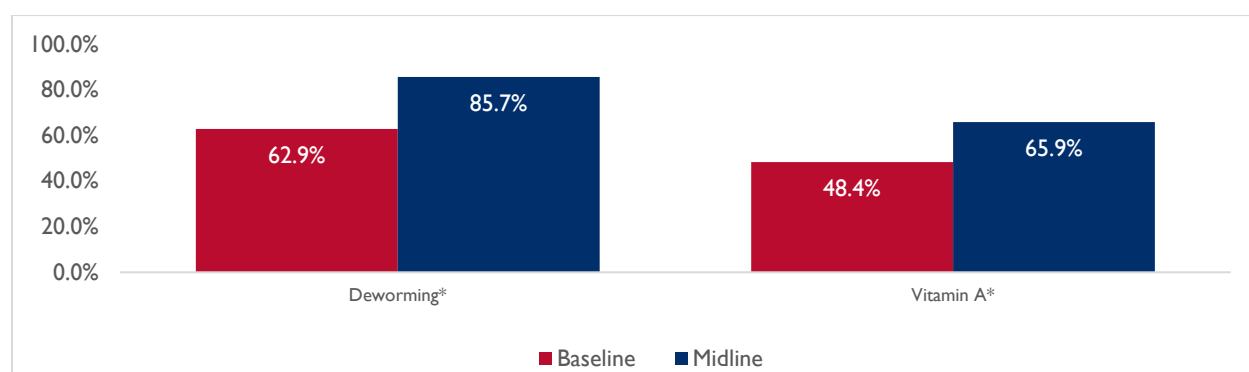
SO2: Increased use of health and dietary practices of school-aged children

At midline, there were increases in knowledge and behaviors around infant and young child feeding (ICYF), health and hygiene, and safe food preparation practices. In addition, there was statistically significant improvement in school infrastructure, distribution of medication, and the proportion of pupils who were not hungry during the school day.

Of MSG participants interviewed at midline, 100.0 percent indicated that they practiced ICYF behaviors. This exceeds the program's life-of-project target of having 80 percent of participants practicing ICYF behaviors. At midline, 54.5 percent of pupils achieved a passing score in good health and hygiene practices. While this represents a statistically significant increase from the proportion at baseline (42.7 percent), it is much lower than the year 3 program target of 70.0 percent for this indicator. This indicates that although pupils are improving in practices, the program should continue focusing on building their knowledge. Similarly, at midline, 48.4 percent of food preparers achieved a passing score in safe food preparation practices, a much lower percentage than the year 3 target of 80.0 percent. However, the midline proportion was higher than the 37.3 percent who passed at baseline, although this increase was not statistically significant. Results showed that the proportion of pupils passing the health and hygiene test and food preparers passing the safe food preparation test was much higher among continuing schools. Thus, program participants may be benefitting from extended exposure to program interventions in these areas.

Results indicate that the program is making progress in the distribution of materials and construction at schools. At midline, 95.4 percent of schools had a kitchen, a statistically significant increase from only 51.1 percent at baseline. In addition, 85.7 percent of pupils reported receiving deworming medication, compared with 62.9 percent at baseline. The overall proportion of pupils who reported receiving a vitamin A capsule increased from 48.4 percent at baseline to 65.9 percent at midline. At midline, 62.2 percent of pupils consumed the minimal acceptable diet, which was statistically significantly higher than baseline (55.3 percent). Deeper analysis shows that the proportion of pupils consuming the minimal acceptable diet was significantly higher in continuing schools compared with new schools at both baseline and midline, again supporting the idea that continued engagement in the APFL program leads to improved outcomes.

Proportion of pupils receiving medications at baseline and midline



Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

Evaluation Questions

Main take-aways in relation to the five evaluation questions are presented below.

Relevance	•Program activities are relevant to the goals and objectives of the program. The program meets some of the community and government's priorities, though communities are very much concerned about livelihood development. Overall, stakeholders seem satisfied with the program thus far. Adjustments during COVID-19 were seen as relevant to community members.
Effectiveness	•The program is effectively meeting targets in activities related to outputs and materials distribution, but is behind in meeting outcome targets (such as reading at grade level and knowledge of health and hygiene practices.)
Efficiency	•The program is delivering inputs in a timely manner, though head teachers indicated that the pandemic affected the efficiency of commodity management.
Impact	•In addition to progress towards intended outputs and outcomes, there have been several unintended outcomes of the program. This includes higher rates of primary school completion; an increase in enrollment leading to a shortage of learning materials in schools; and a reduction in children working on family farms. There is some data from this study indicating that some components of the Theory of Change (TOC) are in place, but others are not. Thus, the study confirms some aspects of the TOC around improving literacy and benefitting from nutritious meals, but cannot substantiate or refute other elements.
Sustainability	•Community and government stakeholders are invested and see value in the program, collaborating effectively with CRS to achieve the program's goals. However, government partners seem to lack the capacity to take on implementation of a school feeding program themselves, and community partners at the local level prioritize livelihood activities over supporting schools.

Recommendations

The findings pointed to specific recommendations that the program should focus on in the areas of literacy, teacher quality, and sustainability.

Literacy: As the program continues, it should increase focus on literacy instruction, especially with boys in Koinadugu. The program might also consider distributing reading materials at home to enable further practice. Results also indicated that teachers need support in teaching specific reading skills, such as decoding. The program could provide additional support to teachers in these areas.

Teacher quality: Beyond supporting teachers in literacy instruction, qualitative findings point to concerns over teacher turnover after participating in distance education. The program should monitor teacher turnover and find ways to integrate informal peer support networks into teacher trainings, as this was found to be a motivating factor for teachers.

Sustainability: Many interviewed stakeholders voiced concerns over the sustainability of the program. To mitigate some of the factors impeding sustainability, the program should consider holding trainings for government officials on how to implement components of the school feeding process and ways to support to families for livelihood development so they can prioritize contributing to schools.

1. Introduction and Purpose

1.1. Project Context

The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) declared basic education “free and compulsory” with the Education Act of 2004. While school enrollment has increased in recent years, Sierra Leone faces high dropout rates and low literacy rates. According to the 2019 Demographics and Health Survey, only 32 percent of males over the age of six and 31 percent of females over the age of six have attended at least some primary school.¹ Furthermore, Sierra Leone’s education system was devastated by the 2014–15 Ebola outbreak, with schools closing for more than nine months.

Despite these challenges, the GoSL has committed to increasing its investment in the education sector. In August 2018, it allocated 21 percent of the national budget to support the launch of the GoSL’s Free Education Program, which provides free education from pre-primary to secondary school and strengthens school infrastructure, supply chains, and services. The Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education’s (MBSSE) 2018–20 Education Strategy aims to increase access, equity, and completion rates; improve the quality and relevance of pupils’ education; and strengthen the education system.² Key interventions of this robust strategy include bolstering the national school feeding program, improving teaching and learning materials in the classroom, investing in teachers’ skills and motivation, and upgrading school infrastructure through maintenance or construction.

1.2. All Pikin for Learn Project Description

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has implemented the All Pikin for Learn (APFL) project in northern Sierra Leone since 2008. Funded by the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) McGovern-Dole Food for Education program, APFL strives to reduce hunger and improve literacy and primary education. McGovern-Dole (MGD) projects around the world provide school meals, teacher training, and other support activities to boost school enrollment and academic performance.

APFL provides nutritional support to communities in Sierra Leone’s Koinadugu and Falaba districts. This support includes providing nutritious meals to pupils, teachers, and food preparers at intervention schools³ each school day, as well as take-home rations to pupils who demonstrate high academic performance and to teachers who support APFL’s after-school activities, including health and reading clubs. APFL seeks to improve pupils’ educational outcomes through the provision of teaching and learning

¹ Statistics Sierra Leone Stats SL and ICF. 2020. Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey 2019. Freetown, Sierra Leone, and Rockville, Maryland, USA: Stats SL and ICF.

² Sierra Leone Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, “2018–20 Education Sector Plan,” 2017.

³ APFL supports three types of schools. The first are government approved schools that receive support from the government in the form of subsidies, infrastructure, school supplies, and teachers. The program supports 134 approved schools receiving support. The second is government approved schools who have yet to receive support, as there is a slow process to access support. The program supports 50 schools that are approved but have not yet received government support. Finally, the program supports non-approved schools that cannot access support because they have not yet completed the approval process. The program supports 126 non-approved schools.

materials; the creation of after-school reading clubs; literacy training and coaching for teachers⁴ and school administrators; and school infrastructure improvements, including the creation of school gardens as a touchstone for community contribution and engagement. In addition, the project works with local communities to create and strengthen school management committees (SMCs), community teacher associations (CTAs), mothers support groups (MSGs), and savings and internal lending communities (SILC).

APFL went through three project phases from 2008 to 2018. Phase I targeted the four most food-insecure chiefdoms in Koinadugu with critical food distribution via daily school meals and take-home rations to more than 5,000 girls in upper primary classes. CRS also trained SMCs, provided schools with teaching and learning materials, and supported key infrastructure improvements. In Phase II, the project expanded to a fifth chiefdom and 75 more schools. The project added in-service teacher training on diagnostic teaching methods to improve literacy instruction in schools. CRS also established SILCs to improve households' financial stability. For Phase III, CRS supported the rebuilding of schools after the Ebola crisis. CRS hired 25 literacy coaches to provide training and coaching to teachers and created after-school reading clubs to support pupils' interest in reading. Phase III ended on June 30, 2019.

Now, CRS is implementing the fourth phase of the project (APFL IV), which began in September 2018 and will close in September 2022. Under this \$25 million phase, CRS is intervening in 310 primary schools in 15 chiefdoms in the Koinadugu and Falaba districts and supporting 52,286 pupils (to date). Building on the progress from the first three phases, APFL IV is relaunching its

CRS Saving and Internal Lending (SILC)

SILC groups (15–25 members) are user-owned, self-managed savings and credit groups that are accessible, transparent and flexible. There are SILC groups operating in 174 communities within this project.

The SILC model offers poor households safe and frequent opportunities to save in the convenience of their own community. It helps members build lump sums that become available at a pre-determined time, and allows them easy access to small, flexible loans or emergency grants.

To ensure sustainability, CRS developed the Private Service Provider (PSP) model, which prepares agents to become independent service providers operating on a market-led basis. In this model, agents are recruited, but the project only pays them for a limited period of time. After 9 months of operation, agents undergo an examination process to assess the quality of their work and readiness to work independently from the project. Successful agents are certified as PSPs, and from that moment, offer their training and support services to communities at a fee.

Table 1: Timeline of All Pikin for Learn Project Phases

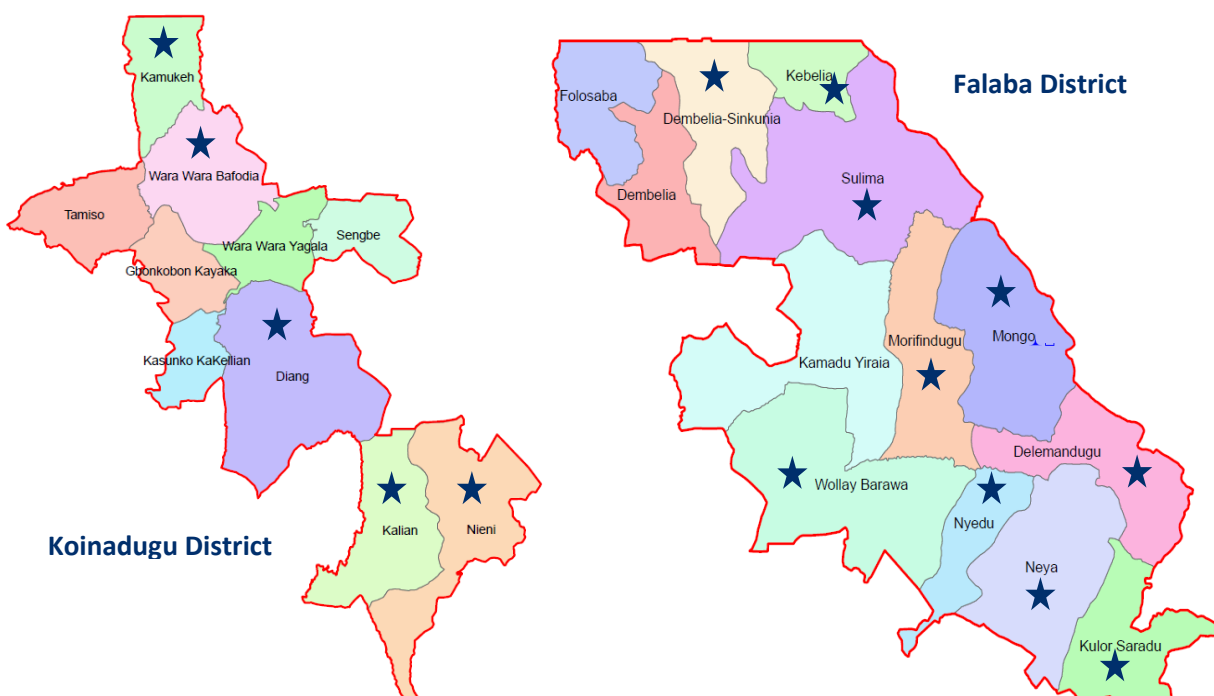
APFL Phases	Timeline	Geographic Area	Pupils Reached (to date)
I	2008–2011	4 chiefdoms	25,128
II	2011–2014	5 chiefdoms	28,585
III	2014–2018	5 chiefdoms	32,684
IV	2018–2022	15 chiefdoms	52,286

⁴ Teachers at APFL-supported schools fall into two categories: government-paid teachers and community-paid teachers. Government teachers are trained, qualified, and certified by recognized teacher training colleges and are on the government payroll. Community teachers are supported by the communities rather than being paid the government of Sierra Leone. Community teachers are found both in approved and unapproved schools.

core project activities, adding new support activities, and intensifying advocacy efforts to achieve sustainability at the local, district, and national levels. CRS is partnering with the MBSSE, the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS), CARITAS Makeni, Ernest Bai Koroma University, the Association of Language and Literacy Education (TALLE), District Councils, and World Hope International. These partnerships are critical to the project's sustainability, as CRS aims to transition support of the schools' feeding programs successfully to the GoSL's national school feeding program by the time the project ends in 2022.

In March 2020, CRS adapted its activities due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced schools to close for eight months. Applying lessons learned from the Ebola crisis, CRS organized a radio teaching program. In addition, the project halted its school feeding program and instead distributed take-home rations to program participants in two phases in April and May 2020. During distribution, CRS educated program participants about COVID-19, focusing on how reading clubs could meet safely. Reading clubs also received solar-powered radios with SD cards preloaded with six weeks of radio learning content.

Figure 1: Intervention Chiefdoms within the Koinadugu and Falaba Districts



Note: Stars indicate APFL IV intervention chiefdoms within the Koinadugu and Falaba districts.

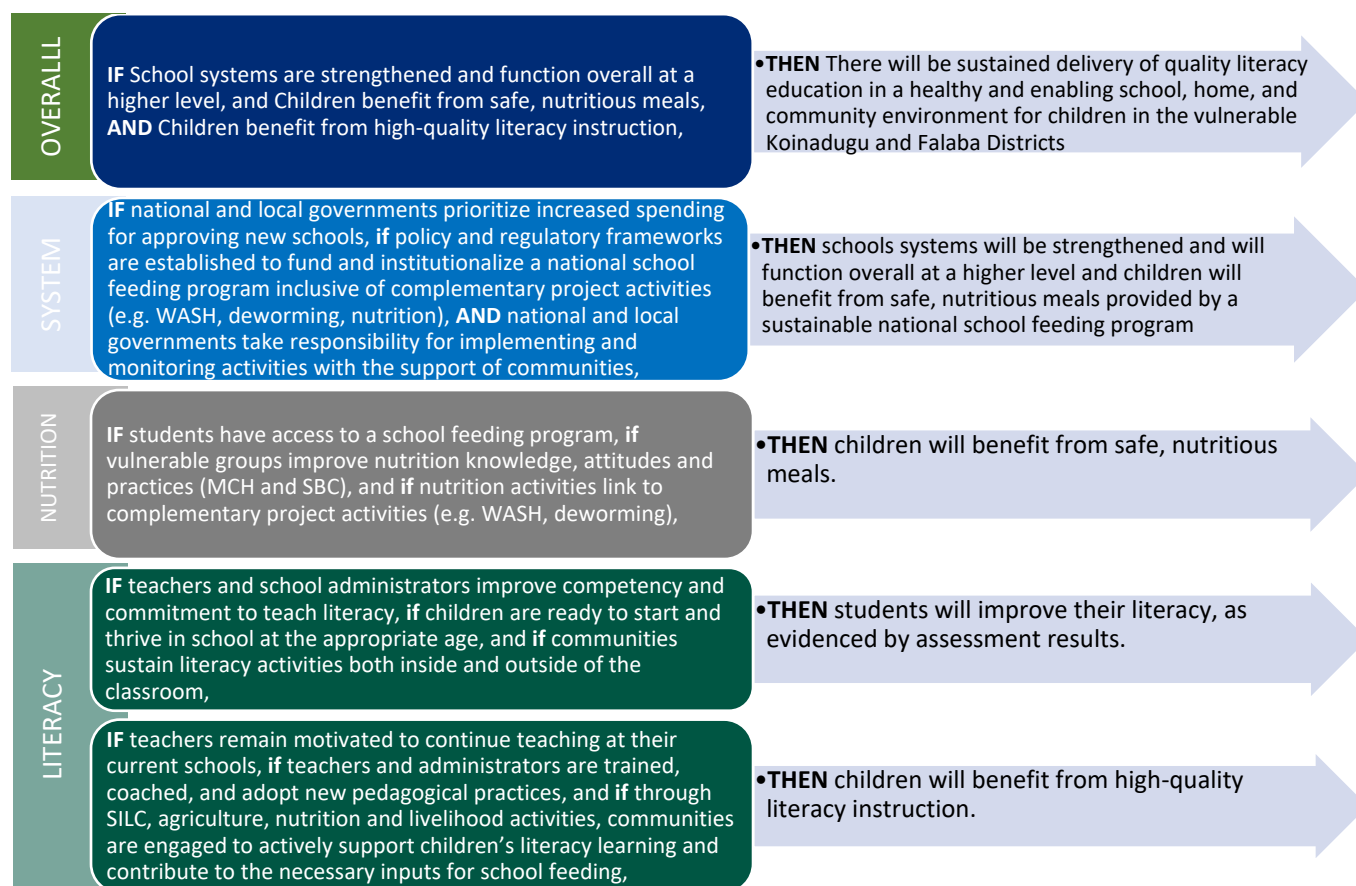
1.3. Results Framework

Intervention Logic and Theory of Change

Since launching in 2008, the APFL project's school feeding program has aimed to improve children's education and nutrition outcomes. Due to the poor state of education in the intervention districts, CRS has focused its resources on improving literacy. In addition, after the Ebola crisis, the project intensified

efforts to reinforce positive health and dietary practices in pupils and communities. The APFL IV Theory of Change (TOC) is outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2: APFL IV Theory of Change



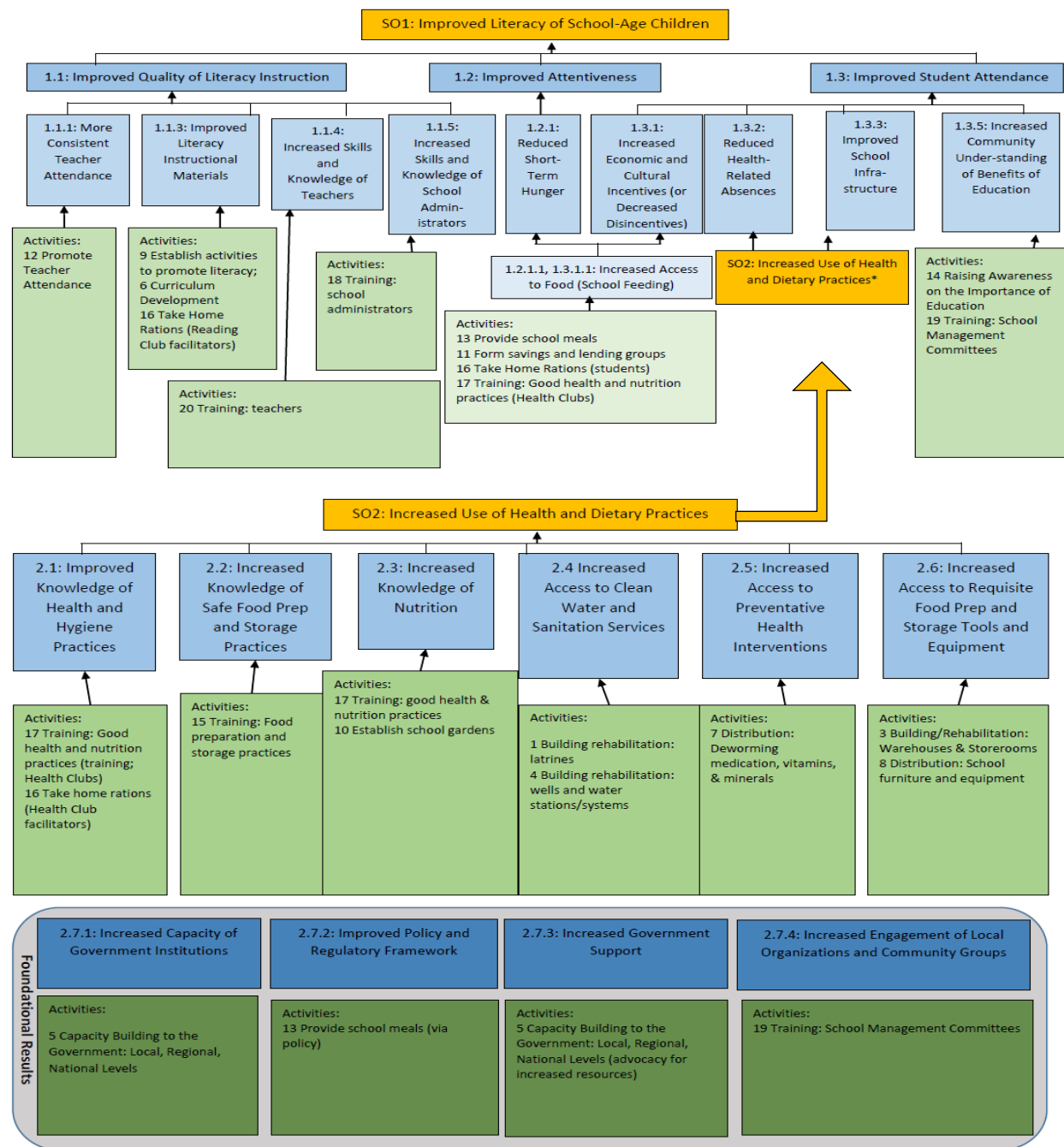
Strategic Objectives

The APFL IV project addresses the two USDA MGD project strategic objectives (SOs):

- SO 1: Improved literacy of school-aged children; and
- SO 2: Increased use of health and dietary practices of school-aged children.

Both SOs are supported as outlined in the APFL IV Project Results Framework, as displayed in Figure 3.

Figure 3. AFPL IV Project Results Framework



For the project's first SO, APFL IV is implementing several school-based activities in 310 schools to improve pupils' literacy. Recognizing teachers' critical role in pupils' learning, CRS is focusing on teachers' professional development through training, coaching, and performance incentives. With an emphasis on sustainability through the GoSL, CRS is conducting a two-year, distance-education certification program to support teachers with a Teacher Certificate (TC) Lower credential in attaining a TC general credential. CRS is also supporting existing qualified teachers in the enrollment process.

APFL IV is also supporting pupils directly with numerous activities. At the heart of the MGD program, CRS is providing daily school meals at all intervention schools—in collaboration with the MBSSE at all government-supported schools and independently at non-government schools—to encourage pupils' attendance and attentiveness. During an annual ceremony, the top-performing boy and girl in each class level receive take-home rations as a reward for their attendance and participation. Teachers who facilitate after-school activities also receive quarterly rations. The project is also establishing 117 new after-school reading clubs that promote a culture of reading, in turn improving the overall literacy of pupils.

The project's second SO seeks to increase the use of health and dietary practices by promoting health, nutrition, and personal hygiene initiatives in schools and communities. CRS is expanding and reinforcing health clubs for pupils. These clubs expose pupils to health and hygiene knowledge and practices as well as sanitation issues. Food preparers, school administrators, SMC chairpersons, and local leaders are receiving training on proper food preparation, storage, and sanitation practices. MSG members are receiving training on maternal and child health and nutrition. With support from the Ministry of Agriculture, APFL IV is establishing 50 school gardens to provide hands-on learning opportunities for both pupils and community members. Food generated from these gardens are often contributed as complements to the school rations. In some cases, garden produce is sold and the income is used to pay school garden focal points and procure other necessary items to sustain the garden.

CRS is also improving school water and sanitation facilities, which will enable pupils to put proper health behaviors into practice. In consultation with the GoSL, the project is building and repairing gender-segregated latrines in accordance with national standards and constructing 10 new wells at schools without access to running water. To further mitigate the effects of poor sanitation, CRS is also collaborating with the MoHS in school-based deworming efforts as part of the national Neglected Tropical Disease Program.

To achieve these goals and move toward local and national sustainability by the end of the project, the APFL IV project team is constantly working alongside local communities; organization partners; and GoSL ministries, departments, and agencies, including the MBSSE, MoHS, National School Feeding Secretariat, and Ministry of Water Resources. CRS is interweaving national advocacy efforts throughout Phase IV to promote teacher professional development and incentives, share best practices with the national school feeding program, and inform and reinforce national priorities around child health, nutrition, and sanitation.

1.4. Purpose of the Evaluation

CRS contracted School-to-School International (STS) as the independent external evaluator for the APFL IV project. STS is conducting three evaluations for APFL IV, including a baseline data collection in June 2019, a midline evaluation in June 2021, and an endline evaluation in June 2022.

This report outlines the results of the 2021 midline evaluation, which assesses if APFL IV is on track to meet its objectives. The evaluation uses five criteria to gauge the project's progress against its indicators—relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact—and only compares changes with results from the APFL IV baseline. Considering the context of project implementation, the evaluation reviews how the APFL IV's theory of change has held up and suggests any necessary mid-course corrections.

This performance evaluation is a key tool for the program funder and other development partners to understand what progress the program has made, especially during a tumultuous year due to the global Covid-19 pandemic. Partners within the MBSSE may also use the results to inform their national policies, programs, and practices. For example, the National School Feeding Secretariat may adopt the best practices demonstrated during APFL IV, or members of the MBSSE focused on early grade reading may better understand contextual factors underlying pupils’ literacy performance. At the community level, pupils’ performance can be used in discussions with the SMCs, CTAs, MSGs, and parents to reinforce the need for community support around pupils’ education and reading.

2.Evaluation Design and Methodology

2.1. Evaluation Questions

To support the previously stated purposes, this midline evaluation report answers the following questions in the findings, conclusions, and recommendations sections. Sub-questions within each evaluation question are summarized in Annex D.

Figure 4. Summary of Midline Evaluation Questions

Relevance	•Relevance is defined by the extent to which project activities meet the priorities of the target group recipients, aligned with government policies and donor requirements. Relevance should also address the extent to which the project has integrated the economic, cultural, and political context with existing relevant project activities.
Effectiveness	•Effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which project activities attain their objectives.
Efficiency	•Efficiency measures both qualitative and quantitative outputs in relation to inputs. It assesses the extent to which the project uses valuable resources to achieve the desired results.
Impact	•Impact measures the total effect of a project intervention, both intended and unintended.
Sustainability	•The midterm evaluation assesses whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn and the extent to which the project has developed local ownership and sustainable partnerships.

2.2. Evaluation Design

Utilizing mixed methods, the non-experimental midline performance evaluation measures the APFL IV project’s progress toward meeting its performance indicators by comparing midline results with baseline data. The study also provides information for evidence-based decision-making regarding the project’s design and assumptions.

Data were collected from a clustered sample of the 310 APFL IV intervention schools in June 2021 using a set of quantitative and qualitative tools. Diverse groups of stakeholders were included to provide broad perspectives for the project, including pupils, teachers, head teachers, SMC chairpersons, CTA chairpersons, school food preparers, the heads of the MSGs, and staff from government partners as well as community members. Pupils' enrollment and attendance rates, literacy and attentiveness levels, and knowledge and use of health, hygiene, and dietary practices were measured. Similarly, enumerators collected data on teachers' attendance, motivation, and knowledge and use of teaching practices.

2.3. Sampling Methods

For the midline evaluation, enumerators visited the same schools that were sampled at baseline. The baseline sample was drawn using a two-stage cluster sampling approach. This approach was used to account for attributes such as district location and APFL status—continuing versus new. First, schools were randomly selected as clusters within continuing or new schools in the Koinadugu or Falaba districts (four clusters total). At each sampled school, enumerators conducted interviews with the head teacher, the SMC chairperson, the CTA chairperson, the head of the MSG, and two food preparers. For the second stage of sampling, STS randomly selected 10 pupils from those present in class 2 to participate in the literacy assessment and pupil survey, as well as up to three teachers representing classes 2, 3, and 4 to participate in the teacher survey and classroom observation. Replacement schools were also selected in case the original sampled schools were unavailable or difficult for enumerators to reach, although no replacement schools were visited at midline.

The resulting target sample size was 70 schools overall and 10 pupils per school—five girls and five boys—for a total of 700 pupils. Enumerators also aimed to survey the head teacher, SMC chairperson, CTA chairperson, and MSG head at each school. The project also sought to survey two food preparers and one teacher each in class 2, 3, and 4 at each school, resulting in a maximum of 140 food preparers and 210 teachers in the sample. A more detailed description of the sampling approach can be found in Annex A. Sample targets and responses are outlined in Table 4. Sample Targets and Response Rates.

2.4. Data Collection Methods

This section describes midline operational data collection, including evaluation tools, enumerator training, data collection, and data management and analysis.

Evaluation Tools

The APFL IV midline utilized the same evaluation tools as used in the baseline. Taken from previous phases of the APFL project, the tools included a literacy assessment and pupil survey; classroom and school observation checklists; school-based stakeholder surveys; community focus group discussion (FGD) questionnaires; and government and partner key informant interview (KII) questionnaires. STS and CRS reviewed the tools prior to data collection and made specific revisions to ensure terminology was consistent with the APFL project. Researchers also added questions concerning COVID-19 and the project's pandemic-related activities to the head teacher survey.

Literacy Assessment

At midline, STS administered the same literacy assessment to class 2 pupils as at baseline to measure their core early grade reading skills. Adapted from a national literacy assessment tool that UNICEF originally

developed, the assessment contains seven untimed subtasks administered in English—alphabet naming, phonemic awareness, familiar word reading, invented word reading, reading passage, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension. Enumerators administered the literacy assessment on tablets using Tangerine®, an electronic data collection software. Table 2 provides a summary of the seven subtasks. No subtasks were timed.

Table 2. Literacy Assessment Subtasks

Subtask	Core Reading Skill	Subtask Description
Alphabet naming	Alphabet knowledge	Provide the name of 51 letters presented in both uppercase and lowercase in a random order.
Phonemic awareness	Phonemic awareness	Identify the words represented by 10 pictures and give the sound of the first letter of each word represented.
Familiar word reading	Word recognition	Read aloud 40 familiar words that are randomly ordered and drawn from a list of frequent words.
Invented word reading	Decoding	Make letter-sound correspondences through the reading aloud of 25 simple nonsense words.
Reading passage	Decoding and reading	Read aloud a short, grade-appropriate passage of 36 words with accuracy and little effort.
Reading comprehension	Reading comprehension	Verbally respond correctly to five questions, including four literal questions and one inferential question, about the passage read in the previous subtask.
Listening comprehension	Listening comprehension and oral language	Listen to a text the enumerator reads aloud, and respond correctly to four questions, including three literal questions and one inferential question, about the text.

School-based Surveys and Observation Checklists

For a comprehensive picture of a sampled school’s environment, enumerators collected numerous data points at each school level by administering seven surveys and completing two observation checklists. Table 3 provides a summary of the surveys and observation checklists.

Table 3. Midline School-Based Tools

Tool	Types of information collected
Pupil Survey	Availability of teaching and learning materials and activities; frequency and sufficiency of meals at home and school; and knowledge of and demonstration of good health and hygiene practices.
Teacher Survey	Levels of teacher certification; in-service training and coaching; knowledge and use of teaching techniques; motivating factors; and satisfaction with the APFL project.
Head Teacher Survey	MBSSE status; enrollment and attendance data; teacher training, attendance, and retention information; school infrastructure details; teaching and learning materials available; school activities and support structures; and COVID-19 pandemic-related program adaptations.
Food Preparer Survey	Training received; knowledge of safe food preparation and storage practices; and challenges in role.
SMC Chairperson Survey	Trainings received; committee operations; and role in school feeding program.
CTA Chairperson Survey	Association operations and school engagement.
MSG Head Survey	Group operations and activities; and knowledge of and use of nutrition, health, and sanitation practices.
Classroom Observation Checklist	Physical attributes of the classroom; presence and use of teaching and learning materials in the classroom; and evidence of pupil attentiveness.
School Observation Checklist	Physical attributes of the school, including those overall and with classrooms, sanitation facilities, food preparation and storage areas, and other spaces; and inventory of teaching and learning materials in the classrooms.

Community Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews

In addition to the surveys and observation checklists, enumerators conducted FGDs with community members and in-depth KIs with government officials. The interview guides for FGDs and KIs can be found in Annex J.

Recruitment and Training of Enumerators

STS contracted Dalan Development Consultants (Dalan), a local data collection firm, to conduct the midline data collection in June 2021. Dalan recruited 53 enumerators and qualitative facilitators for the data collection from its pool of data collectors, 29 of whom had prior experience collecting data for the APFL project at baseline.

STS and Dalan personnel trained enumerators from June 14 to 18, 2021. The five-day training in Kabala, the capital of the Koinadugu District, covered the contents of the literacy assessment and school-based surveys; use of tablets and data collection software; ethical considerations; and the responsibilities of enumerators and supervisors during data collection. Enumerators also practiced administering tools one morning in non-sampled schools near Kabala. Enumerators were divided into three sub-groups based on which instruments they would administer during data collection: 1) the literacy assessment, 2) school-based surveys and observation checklists, or 3) FGDs and KIIs.

School-based Data Collection

Fifteen teams of enumerators collected data in the Koinadugu and Falaba districts from June 21 to 25, 2021. Each team included three enumerators—two who administered the literacy assessment and pupil survey and one who conducted the school-based surveys. One of the three enumerators also served as the supervisor responsible for introducing the team to the school director and conducting the classroom and pupil sampling. All assessment participants were asked to give consent before participating in the assessment and had the opportunity to opt-out at any time. Enumerators were trained in research ethics before the assessment began, including minimizing risk of harm; obtaining informed consent; protecting anonymity and confidentiality; and applying child protection principles.

Enumerators visited all 70 sampled schools during the data collection and encountered many multi-grade classrooms, which limited response rates for the classroom observations and teacher surveys.

Table 4. Sample Targets and Response Rates

Group	Target sample number	Actual number of responses	Response rate
Schools	70	70	100.00%
Pupils	700	678	96.7%
Teachers*	210	151	71.9%
Classroom observation	210	158	75.2%
School Observations	70	69	98.6%
Head Teachers	70	70	100.0%
Food Preparers	140	133	95.0%
SMC Chairpersons	70	70	100.0%
CTA Chairpersons	70	59	84.3%
MSG Representatives	70	70	100.0%

Note: Many schools had multi-grade classrooms and teachers, so it was often not possible to interview three teachers at a school. In addition, one school only had one teacher, the head teacher. However, at least one teacher and classroom were observed in every sampled school. Thus, results are generalizable at the school level.

Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews

During data collection, two teams of enumerators facilitated one all-male FGD and one all-female FGD in six communities for a total of 12 FGDs. The team from CRS and STS conducted a purposeful sample of communities from both districts and from communities with continuing and new schools to ensure the qualitative data represented a range of geographic and programmatic experiences. Once teams arrived in each community, they sought the community chief's approval to conduct FGDs. CRS provided a letter of introduction to support this process. If the community chief granted approval, the team leader then helped mobilize participants by drawing from parents or caregivers of pupils in classes 1 through 6, teachers, youth leaders, religious leaders, members of the SILCs, and school representatives. Participants of the school-based surveys could not participate in FGDs. To avoid any undue bias or influence, the community chief also could not take part in FGDs.

While facilitating the training in Kabala, STS conducted in-person KIIs with a deputy district education official and a district nutritionist. A member of Dalan's team conducted KIIs with an MoHS official and the National Coordinator of the Free Quality School Education in Freetown.

Enumerators recorded the FGDs and KIIs using portable microphones and then transcribed them.

COVID-19 Precautions

During data collection, several precautions were taken to mitigate risk COVID-19 for both enumerators and study participants. During the enumerator training, participants were briefed on the symptoms and transmission of the disease. During data collection, enumerator team supervisors were to ensure that teams had disposable tissues and access to safe disposal, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, disinfectant for student materials and tablets, and face masks and/or gloves. Enumerators were also trained to practice frequent hand hygiene while administering the assessment tools and practice social distancing; disinfect student stimuli and desks between every student assessment; clean tablets frequently; and remove themselves if they became sick or in close contact with someone who was sick.

Data Monitoring and Quality Assurance

Every day during data collection, Dalan's field coordinator and STS's research coordinator monitored incoming data. Dalan's field coordinator visited multiple schools in person to conduct on-site spot checks and troubleshoot any issues that teams encountered. Dalan and STS communicated with team supervisors in a WhatsApp® group, which enabled responsive action if issues arose. Many enumerator teams could not upload data electronically every day, however, due to lack of connectivity in communities. In some cases, teams could not upload data until returning to Freetown. These delays impeded the real-time data tracking activities of Dalan's field coordinator and STS's research coordinator.

Dalan's staff ensured enumerator teams followed data collection procedures and submitted a field report that logged any discrepancies between the number and type of data collected and the targeted number of surveys. STS later cross-referenced these reports against the uploaded data and applied disposition codes to the data to categorize any issues. The coding and flagging procedures ensured any nuances in the data collected at each school were sufficiently cataloged and considered during data cleaning, analysis, and reporting.

2.5. Data Analysis Methods

Sample Weighting

STS used sampling weights to calculate more representative estimates in the sample of pupils. Random sampling does not account for the fact that some pupils have a lower probability of being selected if they represent smaller subgroups in the population. For example, on average more boys are enrolled in class 2 than girls, thus the probability of selecting a girl to participate in the study is lower. Therefore, analysts use sampling weights to account for these differences in probabilities.

STS calculated the weights using background data available from each school in the sample population, including the number of class 2 classrooms at the school, the number of pupils in each classroom, and the number of class 2 pupils enrolled. Enumerators collected this information in the head teacher survey. STS applied weights in the analysis of the literacy assessment and survey results. Each pupil received a combined school and pupil weight, while each school in the school-based surveys received a school weight.

Generation of Findings

In July 2021, STS generated the following descriptive statistics from the midline data:

- **Mean scores:** Average number of items answered correctly on a subtask;
- **Zero scores:** Proportion of pupils who did not answer a single item correctly on a subtask;
- **Proportions:** Proportion of respondents who replied in a specific way to an item; and
- **Means:** Average score on a survey item.

Analysts determined differences in performance between girls and boys by calculating inferential statistics on subtask mean scores. Any measured statistically significant differences are noted in tables. Differences between baseline and midline scores were conducted using t-tests or ANOVA for means and proportions, while chi-square analysis was used to analyze zero scores. Statistical significance tests were also performed to analyze the difference in mean scores between boys and girls between baseline and midline; statistically significant differences are noted under each table.

2.6. Evaluation Limitations

The following limitations should be considered when reviewing the findings of the APFL IV midline.

Tools from previous APFL phases were used. While STS and CRS reviewed and updated the tools, they were not fully aligned with the most recent recommendations from literacy research.⁵ For example, the literacy assessment subtasks were untimed. Therefore, STS could calculate pupils' accuracy—scored as the average number of items correct—but not their fluency—scored as words correct per minute—which is a critical component of pupils' literacy. Furthermore, the alphabet naming subtask included 51 letters, not 100, as recommended⁶. Lastly, although not recommended, a picture stimulus was used for the phonemic awareness subtask.

⁵ <https://www.edu-links.org/resources/early-grade-reading-assessment-egra-toolkit>

⁶ Ibid.

Additionally, because the evaluation team relied on prior pilots of the surveys, STS was unable to examine the extent of any potential social desirability bias inherent in the tools, as well as their cultural relevance and appropriateness. STS believes no additional bias was introduced as a result of the training, and Dalan recruited the enumerators in a manner that ensured they had no inherent interest in the study's outcomes.

Lastly, the instructions for the data collection were in English.⁷ Based on the results of the listening comprehension subtask, it is likely that many pupils struggle with listening comprehension and, therefore, may not have understood the subtasks. While instructions for the literacy assessment were provided only in English, the pupil survey was administered in Krio. Enumerators spent time during a training session agreeing on phrases to use in cases where questions could be translated in many ways.

Enumerators were delayed in uploading data. Although data were stored securely on tablets, enumerators could not upload data daily due to the lack of connectivity in certain remote communities. These delays limited the ability of Dalan's field coordinator and STS's research coordinator to monitor the data properly and resolve any problems in real time. Despite these challenges, the quality of the data was strong thanks to redundant data quality processes that addressed this challenge.

Response rates were lower than anticipated for school surveys. At each school, enumerators aimed to survey three teachers and observe three classrooms—one each in classes 2, 3, and 4. However, enumerators administered fewer than three surveys and observations at some schools due to the existence of multi-grade classrooms.

Inherent bias in sampling pupils present on day of assessment. Pupils' literacy assessment results may be biased toward the types of pupils who attend school regularly and may exclude those pupils who are enrolled but do not attend regularly. However, this random method of sampling on the day of the assessment is preferable to sampling pupils in advance, which gives school officials the opportunity for manipulation by having only high performers participate. This sampling approach will remain consistent across all evaluation timepoints, ensuring comparison will be valid.

Interruption in schooling for primary school pupils. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, pupils lost several months of instructional time between March and October 2020. This study does not attempt to estimate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on pupils' learning loss. It is possible that pupils' learning levels captured at baseline may be lower than they would have been had pupils not experienced such disruption in instruction. The unquantified amount of learning loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic should be considered when comparing baseline results to the midline evaluation data.

Lack of standardized translations for school-based surveys. Enumerators pointed out during training that many of the school-based surveys should be administered in Krio or other local languages due to respondents' lack of fluency in English. However, these tools did not include any standardized translations as part of the programming on the tablets. Therefore, enumerators may have translated the tools on their

⁷ English is the official language and medium of instruction in Sierra Leone, though the most commonly spoken language is Krio. Krio is an English-based creole that exists in many forms, sometimes resulting in the use of the acrolect variety of Krio (the variety closest to English) as a symbol of status or education. These parallel forms (broad vs. proper Krio) symbolize class, education, and upbringing.
<https://www.hawaii.edu/satocenter/langnet/definitions/krio.html>

own into Krio or other local languages, which may have led to inconsistencies in survey administration and resulted in differences in responses.

3. Findings

The findings presented here correspond to the APFL IV project’s results framework, SOs, and Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) indicators. Definitions of indicator calculations, as well as comparison of baseline and midline values to targets, can be found in Annex C. Updated Modified Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT). Differences at midline that are statistically significant are referred to as “significantly” higher or lower than baseline values.

To respond to the evaluation question on effectiveness—*to what extent are the project results and the yearly benchmark indicators achieved/ likely to be achieved?*—this section presents a comparison with program targets, where possible. In addition, to answer the evaluation question on impact—*has the theory of change (TOC) improved school education outcomes through increased literacy of school-aged children and increased use of health and dietary practices of school-aged children combining with different foundational results held?*—this section includes interpretations of the extent to which results confirm the logic behind the TOC.

SO1: Improved Literacy of School-Aged Children

The first SO of the APFL IV project is the improved literacy of school-aged children. This is the key result in the program’s TOC around literacy. According to the TOC, the components needed to achieve improved literacy are improved competency and commitment in teachers and school administrators; the readiness of children to start and thrive in school; and communities supporting and sustaining literacy activities. This section will examine changes in pupils’ literacy levels as well as the components needed to achieve this SO.

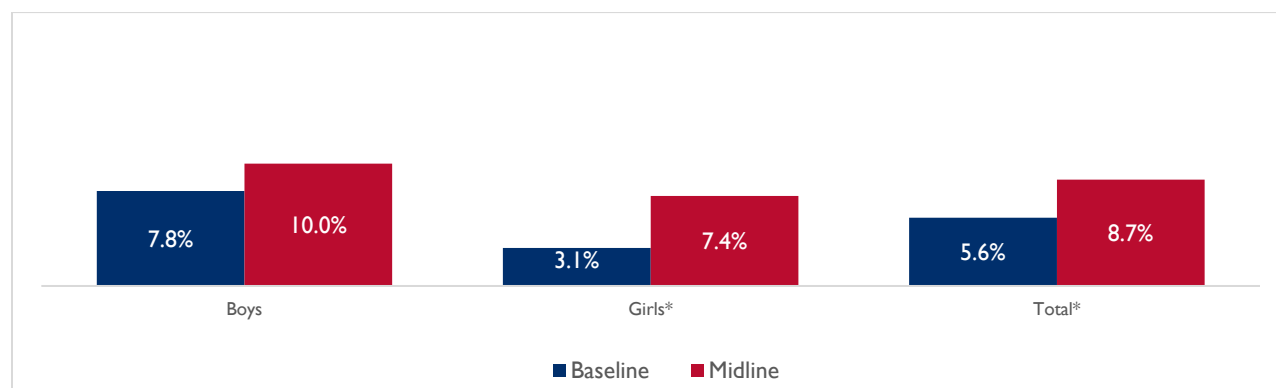
Achievement of this SO is measured through indicator 1.0.0.1: *Percentage of pupils who, by the end of two grades of schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text (McGovern-Dole Indicator #1)*. The APFL IV literacy assessment, described in section 2.4 Data Collection Methods Literacy Assessment, was administered to boys and girls at the end of class 2 to capture midline values for indicator 1.0.0.1, calculated as answering at least four of five reading comprehension questions correctly.

The majority of pupils still cannot read and understand the meaning of grade-level text, but comprehension has improved. Overall, of the 678 pupils assessed at midline, 91.3 percent did not correctly answer at least four reading comprehension questions, as presented in Figure 5. In other words, at midline, 8.7 percent of pupils met the grade-level threshold, which is statistically significantly higher than the baseline proportion of 5.6 percent. However, this figure is significantly lower than the program’s Year 3 target of 24.5 percent. Given that pupils were out of school for several months in 2020 due to school closures, it is not surprising that there were not greater gains in reading scores.

Results by sex. Fewer girls (7.4 percent) met the threshold at midline than did boys (10.0 percent), mirroring the trend at baseline of more boys (7.8 percent) meeting the threshold than girls (3.1 percent). However, differences between boys’ and girls’ scores were statistically significant at baseline but not at

midline, indicating that the gap in the proportion of boys and girls meeting the reading threshold may be closing.

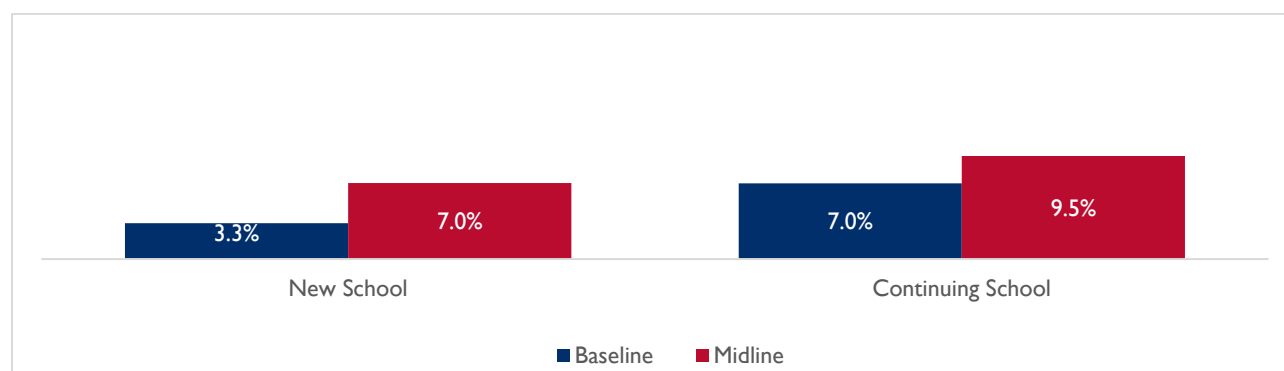
Figure 5. Proportion of pupils meeting reading threshold at baseline and midline, by sex



Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

Results by school status. Deeper analysis explored if there were differences by school status, specifically schools that were continuing from APFL III or new schools in the program. These results are presented in Figure 6. The proportion of pupils reading at grade level at baseline was statistically significantly higher in schools that were continuing from APFL III (7.0 percent compared with 3.3 percent). However, at midline, there were no significant differences between the proportion of pupils meeting the threshold in continuing versus new schools (9.5 percent compared with 7.0 percent, respectively.)

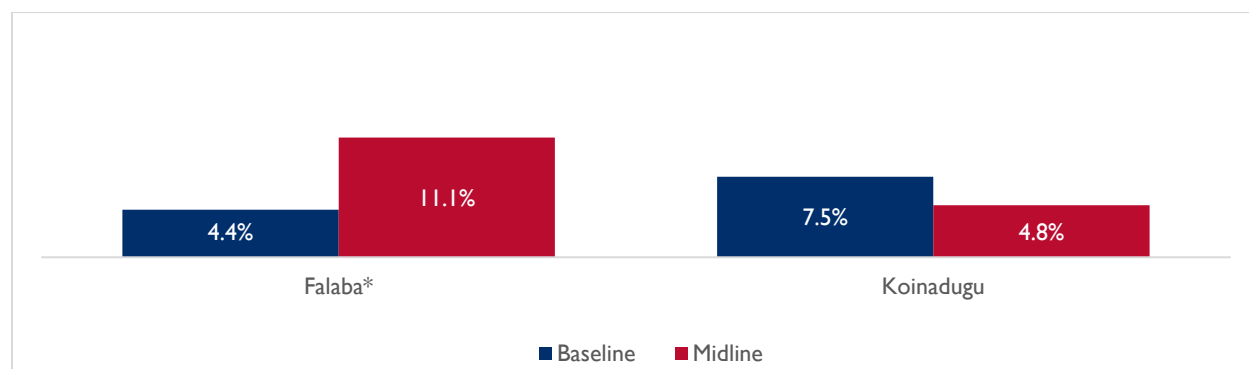
Figure 6. Proportion of pupils meeting reading threshold at baseline and midline, by school status



Results by district. Examining the change in score by district shows that there was a **statistically significant increase in the proportion of pupils who could read at grade level in Falaba at midline**, shown in Figure 7. At baseline, 4.4 percent of pupils met the threshold in this district, compared with 11.1 percent at midline. In Koinadugu, the proportion of pupils reading at grade level decreased slightly (although not significantly) between baseline and midline. At baseline, 7.5 percent of pupils met the threshold while 4.8 percent did at midline. At baseline, the difference in proportions between districts was not significant, but at midline, a statistically significantly higher proportion of pupils in Falaba (11.1 percent) met the threshold compared with Koinadugu (4.8 percent). Program staff hypothesized that this difference could

be because of a higher prevalence of mining, business, other social activities that pull the focus of parents and teachers in Koinadugu away from education.

Figure 7. Proportion of pupils meeting reading threshold at baseline and midline, by district



Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

The analysis also looked at differences between boys and girls within district, shown in Table 5. In Falaba, both boys and girls showed statistically significant increases between baseline and midline. In Koinadugu, the drop in boys' scores was statistically significant, while girls remained mostly the same. **This indicates that the overall increase in proportion of pupils meeting the reading threshold is driven predominately by pupils (of both sexes) in Falaba, and that boys in Koinadugu are falling behind.** One hypothesis to explain this is that perhaps boys in Koinadugu are tapped by parents to assist with economic activities more than their peers in other districts are, although more research is needed to understand this phenomenon. Moving forward, the program should focus literacy instruction efforts on boys in Koinadugu, perhaps through catch-up clubs or one-on-one tutoring.

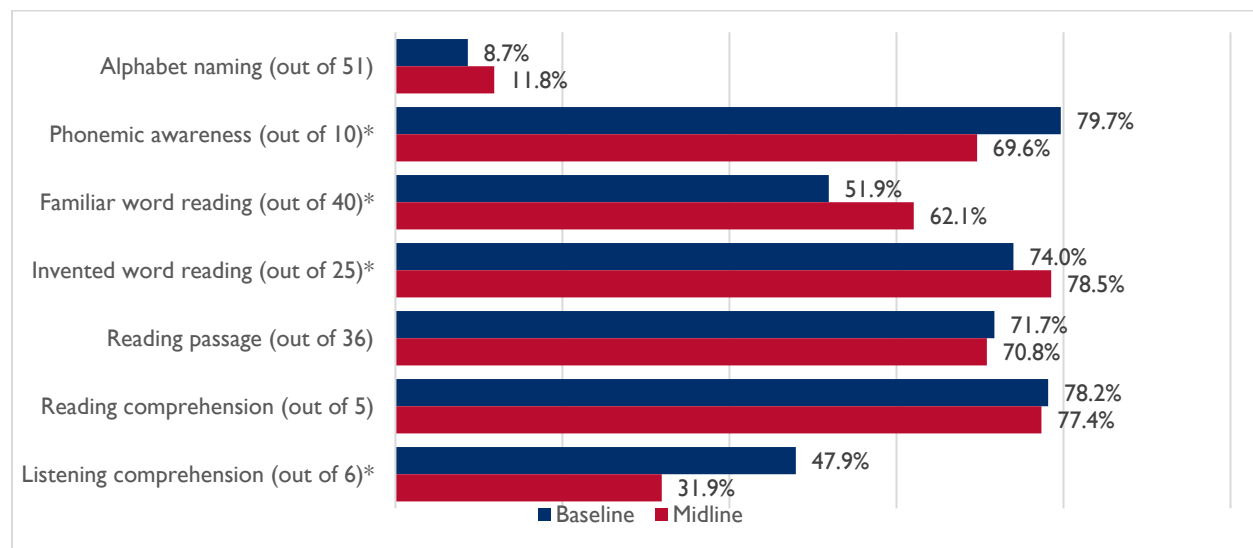
Table 5. Proportion of pupils meeting reading threshold at baseline and midline, by district and sex

		Baseline		Midline		Sig
		n	%	n	%	
Falaba	Boys	13	5.8%	26	13.3%	*
	Girls	6	2.6%	18	8.8%	*
Koinadugu	Boys	16	11.2%	5	4.6%	*
	Girls	8	3.8%	6	5.0%	

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

The proportion of pupils who did not answer a single item correctly on each subtask—known as a zero score—is presented in Figure 8. At midline compared with baseline, a statistically significantly lower proportion of pupils received zero scores in phonemic awareness (69.6 percent compared with 79.7 percent at baseline) and listening comprehension (31.9 percent compared with 47.9 percent at baseline). However, a statistically significantly higher proportion of pupils received zero scores at midline in familiar word reading (62.1 percent compared with 51.9 percent at baseline) and invented word reading (78.5 percent compared with 74.0 percent at baseline).

Figure 8: Percentage of Pupils Receiving Zero Scores



Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

To provide a more detailed picture of pupils' reading performance, mean scores for each literacy assessment subtask are presented in the following section. Histograms with the distributions of scores for each subtask can be found in Annex B. Supplementary Findings.

Alphabet Naming: Pupils' ability to recognize letters decreased overall

Learning to name and recognize letters is a key milestone in learning to read. For the alphabet naming subtask, enumerators presented pupils with a grid of 51 uppercase and lowercase letters and asked pupils to say the name of each letter.⁸

As Table 6 shows, on average, pupils named 29.7 letters correctly at midline, a statistically significant decrease from the 36.6 letters identified correctly at baseline. Boys had statistically significantly higher mean scores than did girls at both baseline and midline; boys, on average, named more than three more letters than girls at both time points.

Table 6. Alphabet Naming Mean Scores by Sex (Correct out of 51)

Sex	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	N	Mean Score	N	Mean Score	
Boys	348	38.8	334	31.2	*
Girls	334	34.1	344	28.1	*
Total	682	36.6	678	29.7	*

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

⁸ This subtask was modified from the APFL III literacy assessment, which contained 26 letters in a diamond-shape. The number of items was increased for the APFL IV literacy assessment to ensure that nearly every letter appeared both in its lowercase and uppercase forms.

Phonemic Awareness: Phonemic awareness remains low

Phonemic awareness—or a child’s ability to identify the smallest unit of sound made by a letter or group of letters, called a phoneme—is another important building block in learning to read. Baseline and midline results for the phonemic awareness subtask are presented in Table 7. Out of a total of 10 possible items, pupils correctly identified the initial sound of 1.6 items on average at midline, which is a low score but a statistically significant increase from the baseline average of 1.1 items. There were no statistically significant differences between girls’ and boys’ scores at baseline and midline, but both boys’ and girls’ scores increased statistically significantly from baseline to midline.

Table 7. Phonemic Awareness Mean Scores by Sex (Correct out of 10)

Sex	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	N	Mean Score	N	Mean Score	
Boys	348	1.2	334	1.7	*
Girls	334	0.9	344	1.4	*
Total	682	1.1	678	1.6	*

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

Familiar Word Reading: Familiar word reading decreased, and gender inequities persisted

Familiar word reading measures pupils’ sight-word recognition and decoding skills. Pupils’ ability to recognize a familiar word helps them read with greater speed and facilitates comprehension. Presented with a grid of 40 familiar words for the subtask, pupils were asked to read out loud as many words as they could.⁹

At midline, pupils correctly read an average of 9.3 familiar words, which was a statistically significant decrease from the baseline average of 11.6 words. On average, boys at midline read more than four more words correctly than girls—11.1 familiar words and 7.6 familiar words, respectively. The difference between girls’ and boys’ mean scores was statistically significant.

Table 8: Familiar Word Reading Mean Scores by Sex (Correct out of 40)

Sex	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	N	Mean Score	N	Mean Score	
Boys	348	15.0	334	11.1	*
Girls	334	7.8	344	7.6	
Total	682	11.6	678	9.3	*

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

Invented Word Reading: Decoding skills are low for boys and girls

Invented word reading measures pupils’ decoding skills. Decoding is the process of automatically matching a letter or combination of letters—or graphemes—to their sounds—or phonemes. Children

⁹ The items included in the familiar word subtask were consistent across the APFL III and IV literacy assessments. The familiar words on the APFL IV assessment were rerandomized within lines. One item—“play”—appeared twice in the grid.

must learn to decode to be able to read new or unfamiliar words. For the invented word reading subtask, pupils were presented with a grid of 25 made-up words that follow English’s phonological and spelling rules. Enumerators asked pupils to read aloud as many invented words as they could.¹⁰

Baseline and midline results are presented in Table 9. Although the average number of invented words that pupils read declined from baseline to midline, the change was not statistically significant. Out of 25 items, pupils read 2.5 invented words on average at midline, compared with 3.3 at baseline. Outperforming girls once again, boys read 3.5 invented words correctly at midline on average, compared with 1.5 for girls. This difference was statistically significant. However, boys’ scores decreased significantly from an average of 4.9 invented words at baseline to 3.5 at midline, while girls’ mean scores stayed approximately the same.

Table 9: Invented Word Reading Mean Scores by Sex (Correct out of 25)

Sex	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	N	Mean Score	N	Mean Score	
Boys	348	4.9	334	3.5	*
Girls	334	1.5	344	1.5	
Total	682	3.3	678	2.5	

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

Reading Passage and Reading Comprehension: Most pupils cannot understand written text

Reading comprehension, or understanding the meaning of written text, is the main goal of learning to read. Pupils who have not mastered lower-level reading skills, such as letter recognition or phonemic awareness, are unlikely to demonstrate reading comprehension. For the reading passage subtask, enumerators presented pupils with a short story of 41 words and asked them to read as much of the story out loud as they could. For the reading comprehension subtask, after pupils finished the passage, enumerators read five comprehension questions—four direct and one inferential—out loud to pupils to test their understanding of the story’s content.¹¹ These two subtasks measure decoding and reading comprehension.

Baseline and midline results for the reading passage subtask are presented in Table 10. Pupils’ scores remained relatively unchanged from baseline—7.6 words correct on average—to midline—7.2 words correct. Boys statistically significantly outperformed girls at baseline and midline, but the trends for each sex differed. While boys’ scores statistically significantly decreased from 10.9 correct words at baseline to 8.3 at midline, girls’ scores statistically significantly increased from 3.9 correct words at baseline to 6.1 at midline.

¹⁰ Several updates were made to this subtask from APFL III to APFL IV. Four invented words that were homophones of either familiar words or proper nouns were modified by changing one letter. All invented words were presented in lowercase letters.

¹¹ Three words in the reading passage were updated from the APFL III to the APFL IV literacy assessment. All five comprehension questions were also updated to better align with the story and with common early grade literacy assessment guidance.

Table 10: Reading Passage Mean Scores by Sex (Correct out of 41)

Sex	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	N	Mean Score	N	Mean Score	
Boys	348	10.9	334	8.3	*
Girls	334	3.9	344	6.1	*
Total	682	7.6	678	7.2	

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

Baseline and midline mean scores for the reading comprehension subtask are presented in Table 11. Overall, pupils answered less than one reading comprehension question correctly at both time points. While boys outperformed girls at baseline, no statistically significant difference was detected between the two groups at midline. Girls' scores statistically significantly increased from 0.3 questions correct at baseline to 0.7 questions at midline.

Table 11. Reading Comprehension Mean Scores by Sex (Correct out of 5)

Sex	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	N	Mean Score	N	Mean Score	
Boys	348	0.9	334	0.8	
Girls	334	0.3	344	0.5	*
Total	682	0.6	678	0.7	

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

Listening Comprehension: English language comprehension and vocabulary is low for all pupils

Listening comprehension measures pupils' overall oral language comprehension and vocabulary. Complementing the reading passage and comprehension subtasks, the listening comprehension subtask enables a better understanding of whether pupils' comprehension difficulties are a result of reading skills or overall language comprehension.

Baseline and midline results are presented in Table 12. Out of a possible four questions, pupils correctly answered 1.5 questions on average at midline, which was statistically significantly higher than the average of 1.1 questions at baseline. Boys outperformed girls at midline, with a statistically significantly higher mean score of 1.6 compared with the girls' score of 1.4. Boys' and girls' scores both increased statistically significantly from baseline to midline.

Table 12. Listening Comprehension Mean Scores by Sex (Correct out of 4)

Sex	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	N	Mean Score	N	Mean Score	
Boys	348	1.1	334	1.6	*
Girls	334	1.0	344	1.4	*

Total	682	1.1	678	1.5	*
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Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

IR1.1 Improved Quality of Literacy Instruction: Materials for instruction are available at schools

Improved quality of literacy instruction is the first intermediate result (IR) under SO1. They are a necessary input for literacy and learning, and thus a change component in the program's TOC for pupils' improved literacy. Four outputs are associated with this IR:¹²

- 1.1.1 More consistent teacher attendance
- 1.1.3 Improved literacy instructional materials
- 1.1.4 Increased skills and knowledge of teachers
- 1.1.5 Increased skills and knowledge of school administrators

1.1.1 More Consistent Teacher Attendance: Teacher attendance decreased slightly

Teacher attendance is a way to measure the TOC component of improved teacher competency and commitment to teach literacy. Head teachers were asked a series of questions about teacher attendance and documentation of teacher attendance at the school level. Enumerators also reviewed time books for recording daily teacher attendance, when available. On the day of the midline interviews, 82.3 percent of teachers were present, including 75.7 percent of female teachers and 85.9 percent of male teachers. These figures are slightly lower than the percentage of teachers present on the day of baseline interviews, shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Teacher Attendance Rates, Baseline to Midline

Teacher Attendance	Baseline				Midline			
	N	Present (Mean)	Total (Mean)	Percent Attendance (Mean)	N	Present (Mean)	Total (Mean)	Percent Attendance (Mean)
Male	67	3.9	4.4	88.0%	69	3.6	4.2	85.9%
Female		0.9	1.1	88.7%		1.0	1.3	75.7%
Total		4.8	5.4	88.2%		4.6	5.6	82.3%

1.1.3 Improved Literacy Instructional Materials: Classrooms have more resources for pupils

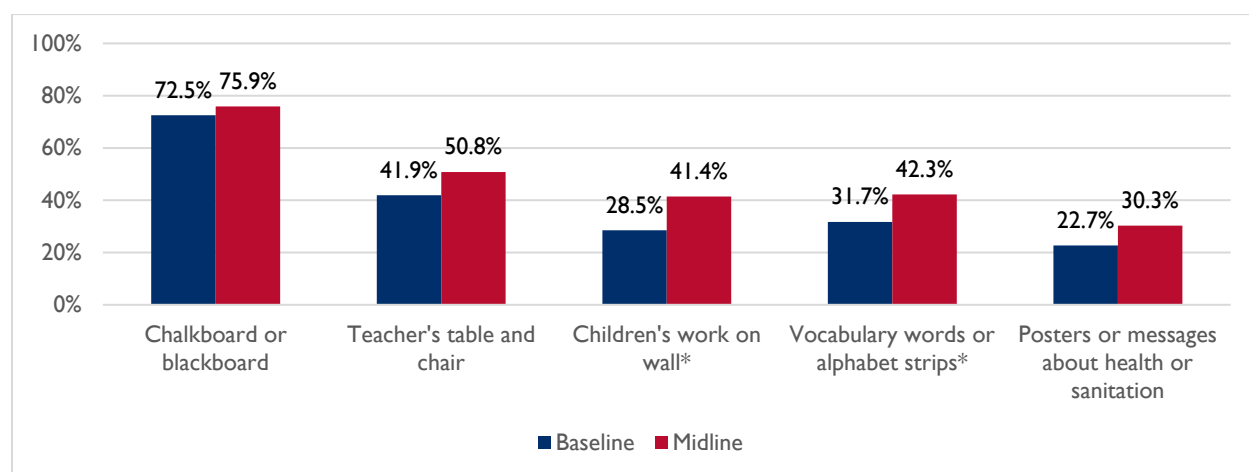
Providing pupils with appropriate and adequate learning materials in schools is key to ensuring the quality of learning improves. Items such as chalkboards, alphabet strips, and other materials are important in supporting literacy acquisition, particularly when pupils live in environments with limited access to books and other printed materials. To understand the availability of resources in schools, enumerators conducted an inventory of classroom resources and furniture.

In the 158 classrooms observed at midline, more resources of all categories were present compared with baseline (see Figure 9). Roughly three in four classrooms (75.9 percent) had a chalkboard or a blackboard at midline, compared with 72.5 percent at baseline. The percentage of classrooms with pupils' work on the wall increased statistically significantly from baseline (28.5 percent) to midline (41.4 percent), as well

¹² Note that the APFL Results Framework does not include an output 1.1.2. See Figure 3. AFPL IV Project Results Framework.

as the proportion of classrooms with vocabulary words or alphabet strips (42.3 percent at midline, compared with 31.7 percent at baseline).

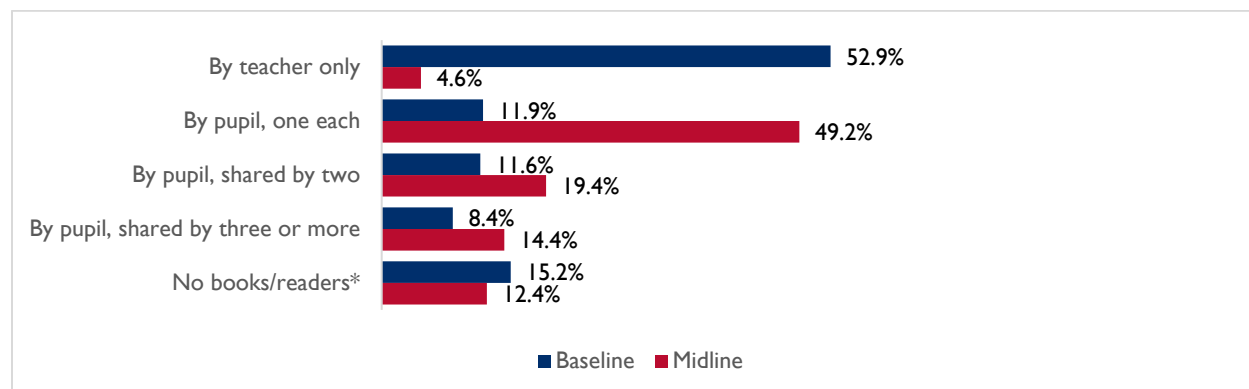
Figure 9. Classroom Resources, Baseline to Midline



Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

Enumerators also recorded the presence and prevalence of textbooks or readers in classrooms (Figure 10). **More textbooks were available to pupils at baseline compared with midline.** Each pupil had a textbook in approximately half of the classrooms at midline (49.2 percent), compared with only 11.9 percent at baseline. When pupils shared textbooks at midline, it was more common that two pupils shared one book (19.4 percent) than that three or more did (14.5 percent). Given that the GoSL's ideal textbook to pupil ratio is one to two, this indicates that 68.6 percent of classrooms at midline met the ideal ratio.¹³ Pupils did not have textbooks or readers in 12.4 percent of classrooms at midline, which was a statistically significant decrease from baseline (15.5 percent). Only the teacher had a textbook in 4.6 percent of classrooms at midline, compared with 52.9 percent at baseline.

Figure 10. Presence of Books or Readers in the Classroom, Baseline to Midline



Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

¹³ 2019 Annual Schools Census Report and Statistical Abstract. Republic of Sierra Leone, Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education.

Qualitative data corroborate these findings. In FGDs, parents frequently indicated their children now had learning materials in school because the program had provided them. CRS should continue, however, to monitor the number of learning materials in classrooms. Many parents shared that enrollment in APFL schools was increasing due to the presence of school feeding programs, thereby increasing demand for learning materials. As one parent in Falaba requested, “Let CRS help us with more learning materials because the ones here are not enough anymore due to the high number of [pupils enrolling].”

1.1.4 Increased Skills and Knowledge of Teachers: More teachers participated in training

Teacher knowledge and skills are also key to pupils’ learning outcomes. While teachers’ actual knowledge and skills were not assessed in this study, contextual information about teachers’ credentials, participation in APFL IV trainings, and motivations is presented in this section.

At midline, enumerators interviewed 151 classroom teachers—54 from class 2, 46 from class 3, 47 from class 4, and 4 from multi-grade classrooms—to gain an understanding of their credentials; their knowledge of good instructional practices and teaching techniques; the type of support they receive from coaches, head teachers, and MBSSE supervisors; and their teaching motivations.

At midline, approximately four of five teachers (78.8 percent) interviewed were male, a comparable proportion to baseline.¹⁴ About two of five teachers (40.3 percent) reported having some kind of teaching certificate at midline, and a statistically significantly higher proportion of teachers in continuing schools had a teaching certificate (49.6 percent) compared with teachers in new schools (21.4 percent). Table 14 provides a summary of teachers’ educational characteristics. Of those individuals with a teaching certificate, most at midline had a Teacher Certificate (TC) Lower certificate (43.1 percent) or TC (43.2 percent), compared with 34.0 percent and 57.9 percent at baseline, respectively. Mirroring the baseline results, the majority of teachers at midline (53.6 percent) reported that their highest qualification completed was a West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE).

Table 14. Teaching Certification Rates and Types of Certifications, Baseline to Midline

	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	n	%	n	%	
Has teaching certificate	68	46.2%	63	40.3%	
New schools	15	36.5%	9	21.4%	
Continuing schools	53	50.9%	54	49.6%	
Type of teaching certificate					
Teacher Elementary Certificate (TEC)	4	6.3%	3	5.3%	
Teacher Certificate Lower	24	34.0%	27	43.1%	
Teacher Certificate	39	57.9%	28	43.2%	
Higher Teacher Certificate (HTC)	1	1.5%	4	6.7%	
Other	2	3.6%	3	5.0%	
Highest qualification					

¹⁴ At baseline, 119 of 145 teachers (82.1 percent) were male.

Basic Education Certification Examination (BECE)	29	19.7%	27	17.2%	
WASSCE	88	61.2%	78	53.6%	
O'LEVEL	27	18.4%	8	4.9%	*
Other	1	0.7%	38	24.3%	*

Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

According to monitoring data, 1,295 teachers have been trained between October 2020 and March 2021. This represents 61.4 percent of the program's overall target of training 1,438 teachers. At midline, teachers also answered questions about their participation in the APFL IV project and other types of trainings, (see Table 15). Of the 151 teachers interviewed at midline, **a statistically significantly higher proportion had participated in a diagnostic teaching methodologies (DTM) training during the academic year at midline (64.6 percent) than baseline (35.6 percent)**. Among those teachers, a statistically significantly higher proportion of teachers from continuing schools (72.0 percent) participated in DTM trainings compared with teachers from new schools (49.8 percent).

Although the proportion of teachers who reported they had engaged in distance education increased slightly from baseline (21.1 percent) to midline (24.9 percent), the change was not statistically significant. A statistically significantly higher proportion of teachers responded that at least one teacher at the school had been trained in life skills areas at midline (51.0 percent) than baseline (29.9 percent).

Table 15. Teacher Rates of Participation in APFL Trainings, Baseline to Midline

	Baseline		Midline		Sig
	n	%	n	%	
Trained in DTM this year	54	35.6%	99	64.6%	*
New schools	4	9.2%	22	49.8%	
Continuing schools*	50	48.7%	77	72.0%	
Engaged in distance education course	32	21.1%	39	24.9%	
Teachers in school trained in life skills areas	46	29.9%	78	51.0%	*

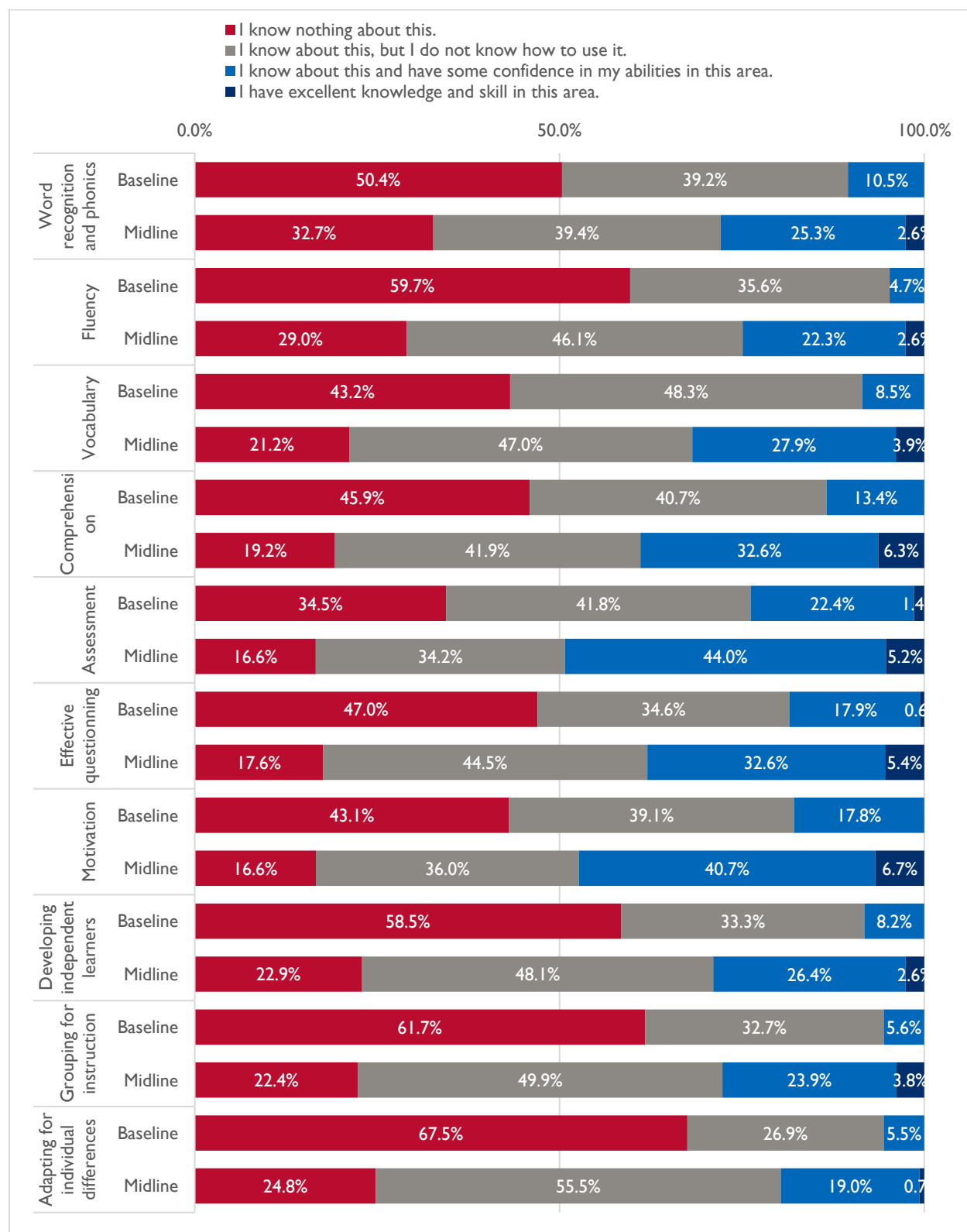
Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$ and between teachers in new schools vs. continuing schools at $p < 0.05$.

During qualitative FGDs, many parents shared that CRS's teacher training was directly contributing to their children's education. In addition, a district education official from Koinadugu stated that CRS's interventions were enabling untrained teachers to continue their work in the classroom while participating in trainings, thus mitigating gaps in teacher coverage. However, parents indicated that teachers who finished distance education courses then moved to bigger towns, which may partly explain why the rates of teacher participating in distance education remained unchanged from baseline to midline. As one member from a male focus group in Koinadugu shared, "We don't have any teacher currently receiving sponsorship from CRS to pursue higher teachers' certificate. Those that have earlier graduated from the Distance Learning Program have left for another school in Telekoro. So, because of that we have only one teacher." Given these findings, the program should monitor teacher retention after

completion of DTM and distance education modules to better understand the prevalence of this phenomenon.

Enumerators also asked teachers about their level of knowledge of teaching techniques critical to the APFL IV program. Results are presented in Figure 11. In all areas, the percentage of teachers who reported knowing nothing about the topic decreased statistically significantly from baseline to midline, while the increase in the percentage who reported having some knowledge and confidence in their abilities was statistically significant. The highest proportions of teachers who reported excellent knowledge and skill at midline were in comprehension (6.3 percent), assessment (5.2 percent), effective questioning (5.4 percent), and motivation (6.7 percent). **The skills in which the greatest proportion of teachers reported knowing nothing about the topic at midline included word recognition/phonics (32.7 percent), fluency (29.0 percent), adapting for individual differences (24.8 percent), developing independent learners (22.9 percent), grouping for instruction (22.4 percent), and vocabulary (21.2 percent).** In addition, the lowest proportion of teachers who were “very satisfied” with the training they received from the program was in training on literacy instruction (see Table 29). These data align with trends seen in SO1: Improved Literacy of School-Aged Children—decreases in scores on subtasks measuring phonemic awareness and decoding, and an increase in reading comprehension. Teachers’ higher levels of confidence in comprehension might explain why reading comprehension scores increased but scores in phonemic awareness and decoding decrease. This data contributes some evidence to the TOC’s component that if teachers improve competency and commitment to teaching literacy, pupils will improve their literacy.

Figure 11. Teacher Knowledge and Skills, Baseline to Midline



Analysis of teachers' knowledge and skills in new and continuing schools revealed that **more teachers at continuing schools generally rated their knowledge higher than teachers at new schools**. These results are shown in Table 16. In the skills of effective questioning, motivation, developing independent learners, grouping for instruction, and adapting for individual differences, a statistically significantly higher proportion of teachers at continuing schools reported having knowledge and confidence in these techniques at midline compared with teachers at new schools. In contrast, a statistically significantly higher proportion of teachers at new schools reported having knowledge of these skills but not knowing how to use them.

Table 16. Teacher Knowledge and Skills by School Status, Midline

Teaching Technique		Midline				Sig.
		New		Continuing		
		N	%	N	%	
Effective questioning	Know nothing	8	18.6%	19	17.1%	
	Know about, do not know how to use	27	61.9%	37	35.8%	*
	Know about and have some confidence in abilities	7	15.0%	45	41.3%	*
	Excellent knowledge and skill	2	4.5%	6	5.8%	
Motivation	Know nothing	10	23.1%	15	13.4%	
	Know about, do not know how to use	23	52.2%	29	28.0%	*
	Know about and have some confidence in abilities	9	20.3%	55	50.7%	*
	Excellent knowledge and skill	2	4.5%	8	7.8%	
Developing independent learners	Know nothing	10	23.1%	25	22.9%	
	Know about, do not know how to use	30	68.0%	40	38.3%	*
	Know about and have some confidence in abilities	4	8.9%	38	35.0%	*
	Excellent knowledge and skill	0	0.0%	4	3.8%	
Grouping instruction for	Know nothing	12	27.1%	22	20.1%	
	Know about, do not know how to use	28	64.7%	45	42.6%	*
	Know about and have some confidence in abilities	3	6.1%	35	32.7%	*
	Excellent knowledge and skill	1	2.0%	5	4.6%	
Adapting individual differences for	Know nothing	11	25.1%	27	24.7%	
	Know about, do not know how to use	30	68.8%	52	48.9%	*
	Know about and have some confidence in abilities	3	6.1%	27	25.4%	*
	Excellent knowledge and skill	0	0.0%	1	1.0%	

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$ and between teachers in new schools vs. continuing schools at $p < 0.05$.*

These quantitative data show that there have been some increases in teachers' participation in trainings and confidence in specific pedagogy. Qualitative data from parents indicate that they perceive learning improvement in their children, and attribute this to teacher training as well. As participants in Falaba said:

"P1: What I will say is that, CRS has done a great job for us; they have trained our teachers all the way in Kabala. Our children's education now is quite different as compared with the time when CRS wasn't here.

P3: [A]s a parent, I am seeing [...] there is a great difference in terms of our children's education. Before now, we used to pay others to translate the Creole language us because even the Creole language, we cannot speak it here. They will teach us like this, sun, sun, moon, moon then we pay for teaching. [...] Then came CRS to our aid, and that happens to be the turning point for us. CRS has trained one, two teachers in this community and it remains two more to be trained. They have done so many other good things, we will just say thanks for all the good things they have done."

Table 17 reports on teachers' responses about the frequency of coaching and mentoring sessions during the past month and the previous academic year. More than three in four teachers (77.5 percent) said a CRS literacy coach had observed or mentored them during the past month, which was a statistically significant increase from baseline (50.9 percent). Like baseline, almost all teachers (97.3 percent) at midline said they had been observed or mentored by their head teacher during the previous academic year. However, at midline, only about three of four teachers (75.8 percent) said they were observed or mentored more than twice during the year, which was a statistically significant decrease from baseline. The proportion of teachers who reported being observed or mentored by MBSSE inspectors did not change significantly from baseline (56.4 percent) to midline (57.9 percent). However, of those teachers who reported that inspectors had mentored or observed them, the proportion who said it occurred more than twice decreased statistically significantly from baseline (40.2 percent) to baseline (23.3 percent). School closures related to COVID-19 likely explain why teachers reported less frequent observations from head teachers and MBSSE inspectors, but more research is needed to understand this trend.

Table 17. Frequency of Teacher Observation, Baseline to Midline

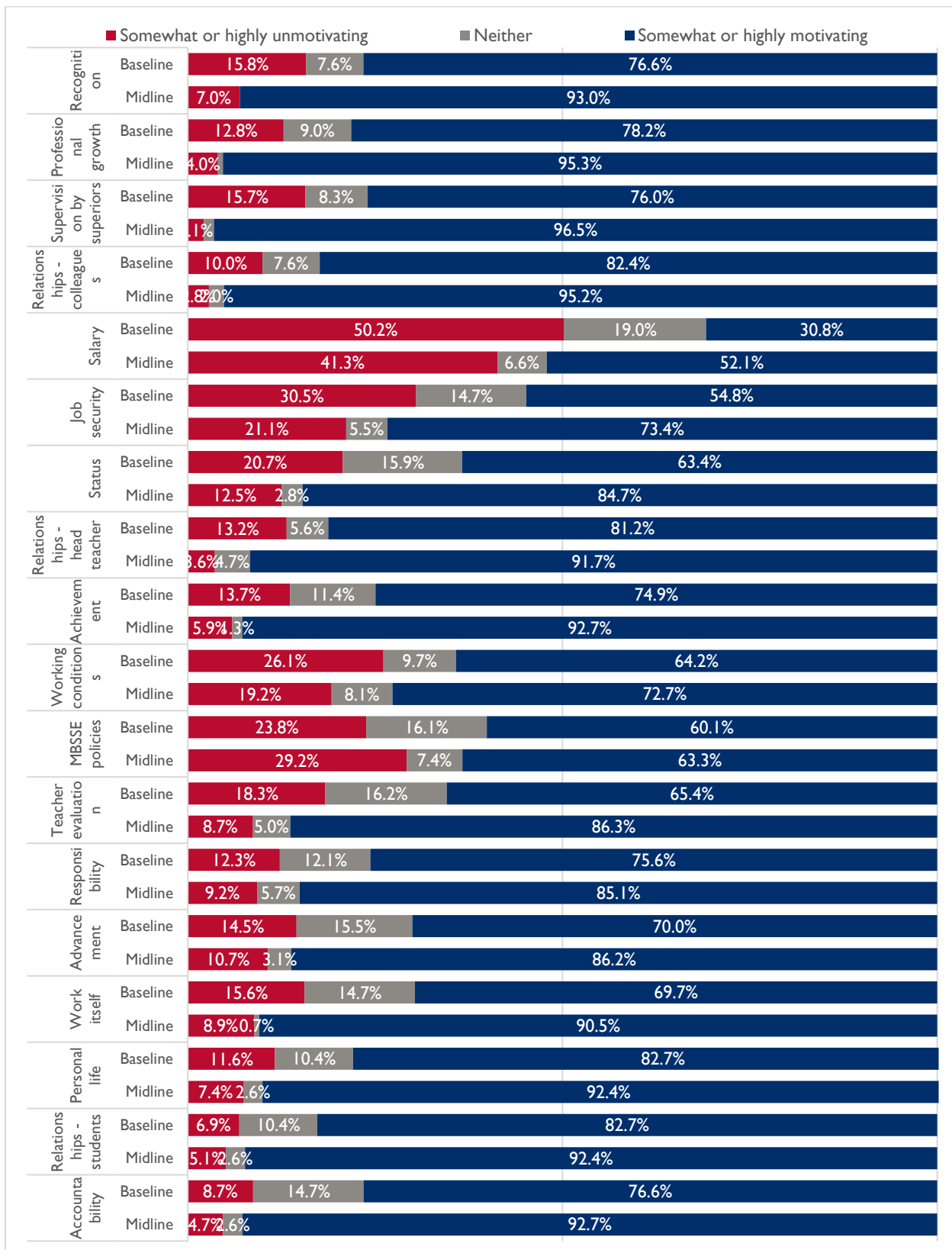
	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	N	Percent	N	Percent	
Observed/mentored by CRS literacy coach in past month	78	50.9%	117	77.5%	*
Number of times observed/mentored by CRS literacy coach					
Once in the month	38	47.0%	33	28.8%	*
Twice in the month	18	24.1%	42	34.7%	
More than twice in the month	22	28.9%	42	36.6%	
Observed/mentored by head teacher this year	138	94.8%	147	97.3%	
Number of times observed/mentored by head teacher					
Once in the year	11	7.3%	11	7.3%	
Twice in the year	8	5.5%	24	16.9%	*
More than twice in the year	119	87.2%	112	75.8%	*
Observed/mentored by MBSSE inspector this year	80	56.4%	90	57.9%	
Number of times observed/mentored by MBSSE inspector					
Once in the year	20	23.6%	42	47.3%	*
Twice in the year	28	36.2%	27	29.4%	
More than twice in the year	32	40.2%	21	23.3%	*

Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

Finally, teachers answered questions about what aspects of their job they find motivating. Results are presented in Figure 12. Out of 18 categories, interpersonal relationships with colleagues was the factor

that the highest proportion of teachers reported as somewhat or highly motivating at midline (95.2 percent). In contrast, roughly two of five teachers (41.3 percent) said they were somewhat or highly unmotivated by salary at midline, and about one of five (21.14 percent) said they were somewhat or highly unmotivated by job security. These two factors were also the ones most commonly cited as somewhat or highly unmotivating at baseline, but the proportions significantly decreased from baseline to midline (50.2 percent and 30.5 percent, respectively, at baseline).

Figure 12. Teacher Motivations, Baseline to Midline



These findings indicate that teachers are adopting new pedagogical practices and are being trained and coached at higher rates—key components of the TOC. It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which these changes contribute to the increase in literacy, but these findings indicate that the logical steps in the TOC are in place.

1.1.5 Increased Skills and Knowledge of School Administrators: Better monitoring systems in place

School administrators' skills and knowledge also contribute to pupil learning outcomes, as a stronger school system is key to accountability and delivery of quality education. According to CRS monitoring data, the number of administrators and officials trained between October 2020 and March 2021 was 310, 50.2 percent of the program's life-of-project goal of training 618 school administrators. Head teachers were asked about the type of training they had received during the school year, and enumerators noted specific improved tools or techniques that head teachers employed. Out of the 70 head teachers interviewed at midline, 60 (85.0 percent) reported that they benefited from CRS or TALLE training in diagnostic teaching methodologies in the past 12 months, which was a statistically significant increase from 55.4 percent at baseline.

Enumerators also noted if specific techniques and tools were visible in head teachers' offices, with findings presented in Table 18. Of the six techniques and tools, enumerators most frequently observed a timebook for teacher attendance (95.7 percent). A statistically significantly higher proportion of head teacher offices had logbooks available at midline (92.6 percent) than baseline (72.0 percent). **This increase indicates that resources for systems of monitoring teacher attendance and delivery of instruction are improving.**

Table 18. Tools Observed in Head Teacher Offices, Baseline to Midline

	Baseline		Midline		Sig
	n	%	n	%	
Time book for teacher attendance	63	92.1%	67	95.7%	
Logbook available	50	72.0%	65	92.6%	*
Teaching master timetable displayed	36	51.7%	39	53.0%	
Teacher duty roster displayed	35	50.4%	44	61.3%	
Visual teaching and learning materials displayed	42	60.2%	46	64.5%	
Inventory book/school records organized	44	63.1%	48	67.9%	

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

IR1.2 Improved Attentiveness: Pupils as attentive at midline as at baseline

Pupil attentiveness is key component to the program's TOC, serving a proxy measure for what pupils may be absorbing, as well as the quality of instruction and teachers' skills in classroom management. Enumerators observed pupils' attentiveness during class and evaluated it on a three-point scale, with little, moderate, or extensive evidence of pupils following the teacher's instructions during the class period. This measure included observations of pupils listening and working without distraction, pupils' participation in lessons, and pupils asking questions or seeking help. Boys and girls were evaluated separately. On average, at midline, enumerators reported about 59.2 percent of girls and 62.2 percent of boys as attentive to instructions, which was comparable to the rates observed at baseline—64.2 percent and 62.9 percent, respectively.

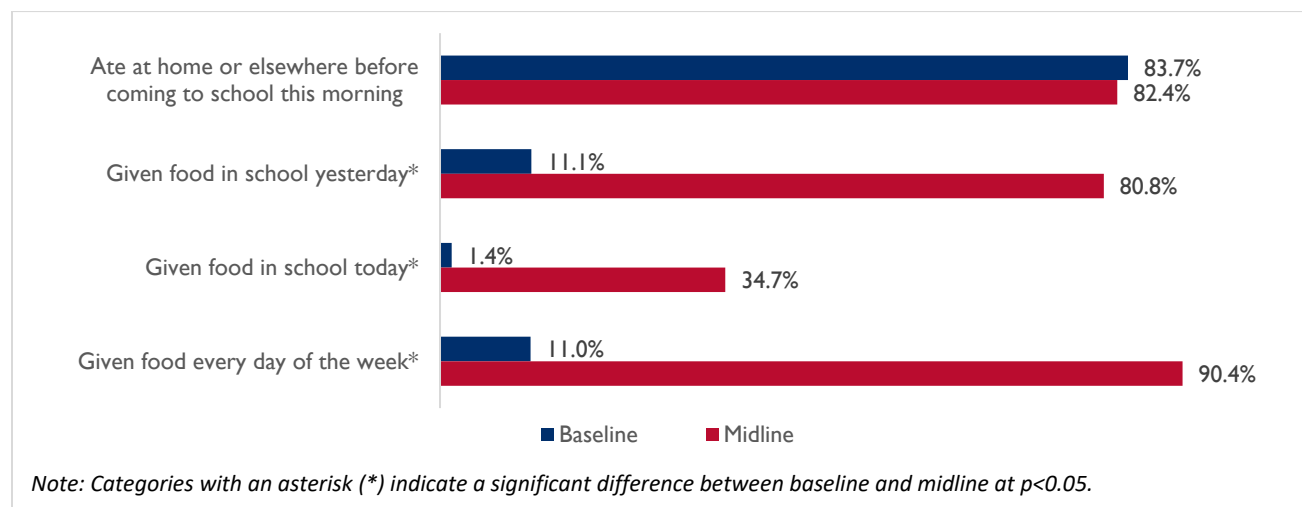
Additionally, two outputs are associated with this IR:

- 1.2.1 Reduced short-term hunger
- 1.2.2 Increased access to food (school feeding)

1.2.1 Reduced Short-term Hunger: Pupils are receiving meals and report lower hunger levels

Hunger can considerably distract pupils in the classroom, thus eliminating or mitigating pupils' attentiveness and, therefore, learning outcomes. Enumerators asked pupils about their access to food and feeding both at home and school throughout the week (see Figure 13). While access to food and feeding at home seem to be unchanged from baseline to midline, significant changes were found in feeding at school. At both baseline and midline, about four in five pupils reported that they had eaten at home or elsewhere before coming to school. **However, at midline, 80.8 percent of pupils indicated they had been given food in school the day before, which was a statistically significant increase from baseline (11.1 percent). Similarly, a statistically significantly larger proportion of pupils at midline (90.4 percent) than at baseline (11.0 percent) reported that they were given food at school every day of the week. A statistically significantly larger proportion of pupils at midline (34.7 percent) than at baseline (1.4 percent) also reported having been given food in school on the day of the interview.**

Figure 13. Pupils' Access to Food, Baseline to Midline



Pupils who reported having received food at school on the day of the assessment were asked about their level of hunger after eating to respond to indicator 1.2.1.1 *Percentage of pupils in target schools who indicate that they are hungry or very hungry during the school days*. These results are presented in Table 19. Pupil Hunger Level, Baseline to Midline **A statistically significantly higher proportion of pupils reported not being hungry at all at midline (91.4 percent) than at baseline (0.6 percent). Given that school feeding programs had not yet started at baseline, this increase is not unexpected.** These results indicate that schools are providing sufficient food to pupils throughout the day, and that the program is making progress against its targets. In year 3, the program projected that 13 percent of pupils would report being hungry or very hungry during the school day. Midline results show that only 8.6 percent indicated being hungry.

Table 19. Pupil Hunger Level, Baseline to Midline

	Baseline (n=10)	Midline (n=222)	Sig .
Missing/didn't receive food on day of assessment	98.6%	0.0%	
Very hungry	0.0%	0.0%	
Somewhat hungry (had some food but not enough)	0.8%	8.6%	*
Not hungry at all (had enough food)	0.6%	91.4%	*

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

Responses in FGDs corroborated findings that school feeding programs are serving pupils daily, as parents emphasized that pupils were receiving enough to eat. As one mother in Koinadugu shared:

"[CRS has] given zeal for our children to go to school. Because of the feeding in school, trust me, every child goes to school now. Children do not follow parents to farm. The reason why children were following parents to farms was because food was prepared [there] and not in school. But presently with the school feeding, children have stopped going to farms. Trust me, as the morning comes the child will be the first person to tell her parents that they are leaving for school. And indeed, we have visited the school we have confirmed that the foods being provided for children are being given to them because children are eating well and when they come home you can see that they have eaten well."

The program's TOC hypothesizes that if pupils have access to a school feeding program, they will benefit from safe, nutritious meals. Results under IR1.2.1 do show that pupils are benefiting from the meals they are receiving as a result of the school feeding program, thus supporting this component of the TOC.

IR1.3 Improved Pupil Attendance: More pupils attending school

Pupil attendance is important to learning outcomes, serving as a proxy measure of exposure to educational content. According to CRS's midline monitoring data across the 310 intervention schools, the overall attendance rate is 94.8 percent for pupils—94.7 percent for boys and 94.9 percent for girls. This represents an increase in 17.8 percent from the last reporting period and slightly exceeding the annual target of 94 percent. For this monitoring data, head count attendance data were collected and averages were taken.

At midline, enumerators asked head teachers to report school enrollment and attendance figures by class and sex in sample schools. Attendance rates, calculated as the number of pupils attending divided by the number of pupils enrolled, are presented in Table 20. The average school-level attendance rate increased from 69.3 percent at baseline to 77.1 percent at midline, with girls attending at a rate of 76.8 percent and boys at a rate of 78.9 percent. Changes in attendance rate were not statistically significant.

Table 20. Average Pupil Attendance Rate, Baseline to Midline

	Baseline			Midline		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Class 1 attendance rate (%)	67.0%	66.3%	66.7%	79.3%	78.1%	78.7%
Class 2 attendance rate (%)	69.9%	67.6%	68.8%	76.7%	74.8%	75.7%

Class 3 attendance rate (%)	71.9%	67.5%	69.9%	75.9%	78.7%	77.2%
Class 4 attendance rate (%)	72.0%	73.0%	72.4%	78.6%	76.4%	77.6%
Class 5 attendance rate (%)	73.3%	69.8%	71.7%	73.8%	78.2%	75.9%
Class 6 attendance rate (%)	76.7%	64.1%	71.3%	72.8%	68.9%	70.9%
Total attendance rate (%)	70.6%	67.8%	69.3%	78.9%	76.8%	77.1%

While these rates are lower than rates collected from monitoring, qualitative data from FGDs indicate that the school feeding program is contributing to increased enrollment and attendance. One male participant from Falaba shared a sentiment that was echoed in nearly every FGD:

“[When] our children come to school they are getting the best education and what encouraged them in school is the school meal. School feeding is what encourages the child to come to school [...]. [Parents] that don’t have the means to provide lunch for their children have not to worry anymore because the children will still have lunch in school. The school feeding has encouraged more children now to come to school and now there are more enrollments in school.”

Three additional outputs are associated with this IR:

- 1.3.3 Improved school infrastructure
- 1.3.4 Increased pupil enrollment
- 1.3.5 Increased community understanding of the benefits of education

1.3.3 Improved school infrastructure

Between baseline and midline, CRS constructed and rehabilitated school in all districts. According to CRS monitoring data, the number of educational facilities rehabilitated or constructed between October 2020 and March 2021 was 61, or 21.9 percent of the program’s life-of-project goal of training 279 school administrators. As at baseline, enumerators observed the physical infrastructure of the sampled schools. As shown in Table 21, a significantly higher proportion of sample schools had kitchens available for cooking (95.4 percent) and storerooms (100.0 percent) at midline compared with baseline (51.1 percent and 62.8 percent, respectively). Overall, the schools themselves were very similar in structure at midline compared with baseline—see Annex B. Supplementary Findings for further details.

Table 21. Characteristics of Schools, Baseline to Midline

Characteristic	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	n	% of Total	n	% of Total	
Kitchen available for cooking food	36	51.1%	66	95.4%	*
Storeroom or storage facility in school	45	62.8%	69	100.0%	*

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

1.3.4 Increased pupil enrollment

Tracking pupil enrollment serves as a proxy for understanding how many pupils could be benefitting from other school-based interventions, thus giving a sense of the reach of the program. Indicator 1.3.4.1—*Number of pupils enrolled in schools receiving USDA assistance*—is calculated using the number of pupils

formally enrolled in APFL IV schools. Across the 310 APFL IV intervention schools, the total enrollment at midline was 52,287 pupils—27,551 boys and 24,836 girls—according to the CRS monitoring data.

While the data are representative of the overall monitoring data on attendance collected by CRS across all project schools, the study was able to collect more detailed information on the sampled schools. Analysis of the data from sampled schools only is included below.

For sampled schools only, enumerators asked head teachers at sample schools to provide the total number of enrolled pupils by class and sex. At the sample schools at midline, the overall average enrollment per school (classes 1 through 6) was 178.7 pupils; the average school enrollment was 86.6 girls and 92.1 boys. These average enrollment figures are slightly lower than baseline, although not significantly different. At baseline, an average of 196.4 pupils were enrolled: 91.2 girls and 105.2 boys. While average enrollment rates dipped slightly, the fact that attendance rates increased slightly is an encouraging sign that when pupils do enroll, they are more likely to attend school now than compared with baseline. This is especially notable in light of the fact that many children, especially girls, are likely to remain out of school after extended school closures, such as those for COVID in 2020.¹⁵

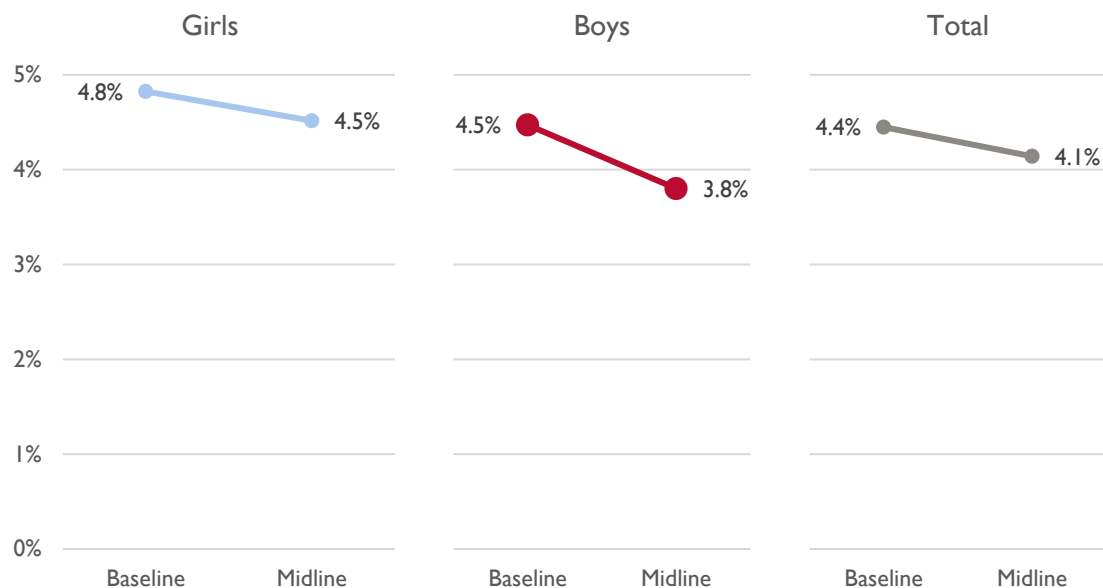
1.3.5 Increased community understanding of the benefits of education

Dropout rates by class and sex were calculated to respond to *indicator 1.3.5.3: Percentage of pupils in classes 3 through 6 who dropped out of school at the end of the school year*. Head teachers provided the total number of enrolled pupils by class and sex and the total number of dropouts; the dropout rate is calculated as the total dropouts divided by the total enrollment.

Dropout rates decreased between baseline and midline, presented in Figure 14. The average dropout rate across all classes and both sexes was 4.1 percent at midline compared with 4.4 percent at baseline, much lower than the year 3 target dropout rate of 14.0 percent. Dropout rates decreased for pupils of both sexes as well: 3.8 percent for boys (compared with 4.5 percent at baseline); and 4.5 percent for girls (compared with 4.8 percent). These findings support the idea that while enrollment numbers may be slightly lower in sample schools, the pupils who do attend are there more consistently.

¹⁵ “Addressing the Gender Dimensions of COVID-Related School Closures”. UNESCO issue note 3.1, August 2020. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373379>

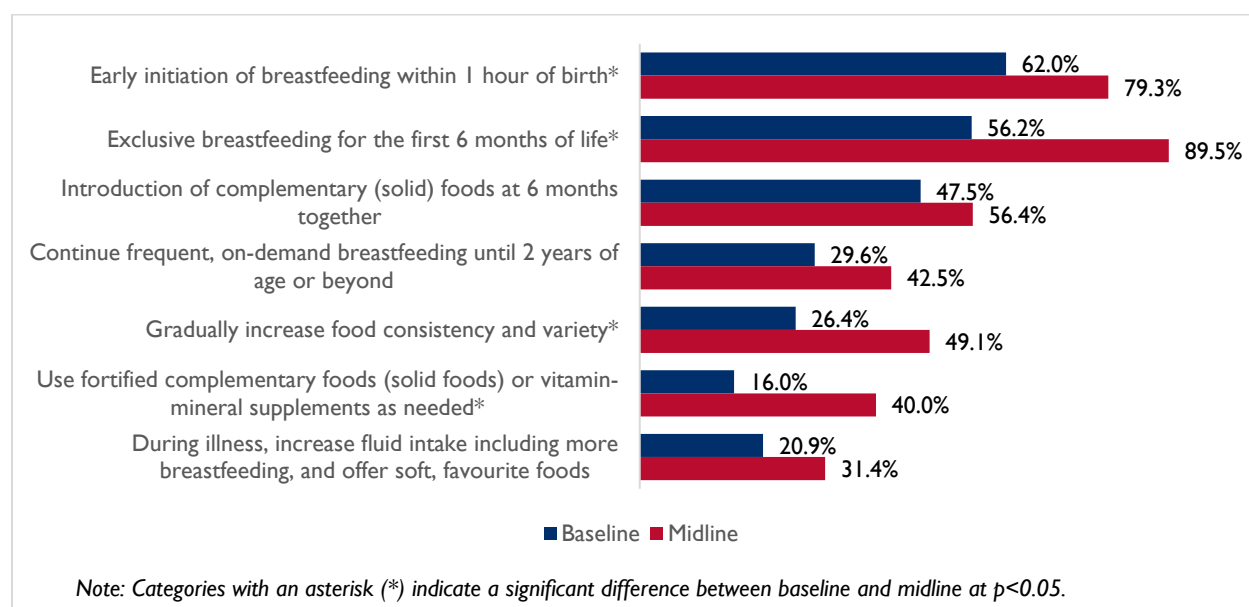
Figure 14. Dropout Rate by Sex, Baseline to Midline



SO2: Increased use of good health and dietary practices

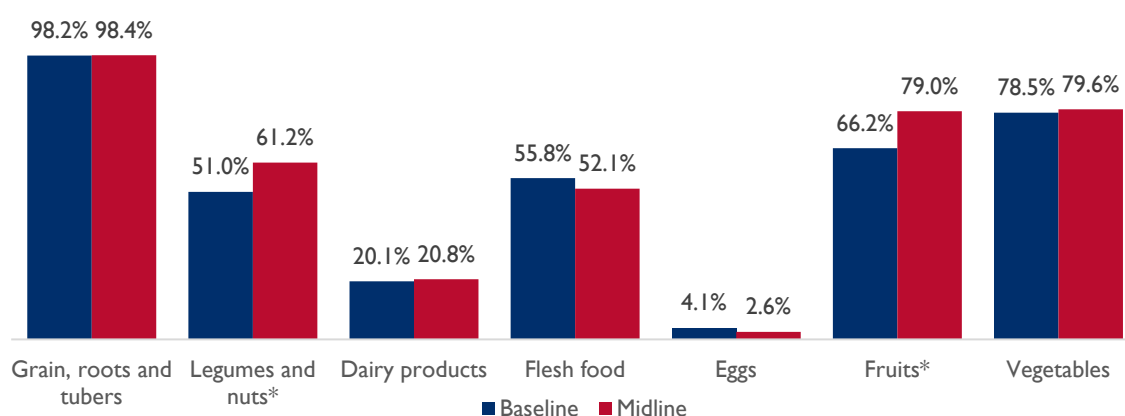
Pupils' increased use of good health and dietary practices leads to better health outcomes for them and improved attendance. Their exposure to these practices lays an important foundation for these outcomes later in life. Beginning with early childhood practices, enumerators asked heads of MSGs to name things that mothers can do to support good IYCF practices (Figure 15). The increase in the proportion of respondents who mentioned early initiation of breastfeeding was statistically significant from baseline to midline (62.0 percent to 79.3 percent), as was the proportion who mentioned breastfeeding for the first six months of life (56.2 percent to 89.5 percent), gradually increasing food consistency and variety (26.6 percent to 49.1 percent) and using fortified complementary foods (16.0 percent to 40.0 percent). **At baseline, 98.3 percent of MSG participants practiced IYCF behaviors, while at midline 100.0 percent did. This exceeds the program's life-of-project target of having 80 percent of participants practicing IYCF behaviors.**

Figure 15. Knowledge of Infant and Young Child Feeding Behaviors, Baseline to Midline



To better understand pupils' dietary intake and the types of foods consumed, enumerators asked class 2 boys and girls about the types of foods that they ate the previous day (see Figure 16). At midline, a statistically significantly higher proportion of pupils consumed legumes and nuts (61.2 percent, compared with 51.0 percent at baseline) and fruits (79.0 percent, compared with 66.2 percent at baseline). These increases may be due to the makeup of the rations and school meals provided by CRS, not pupils' changed eating habits.

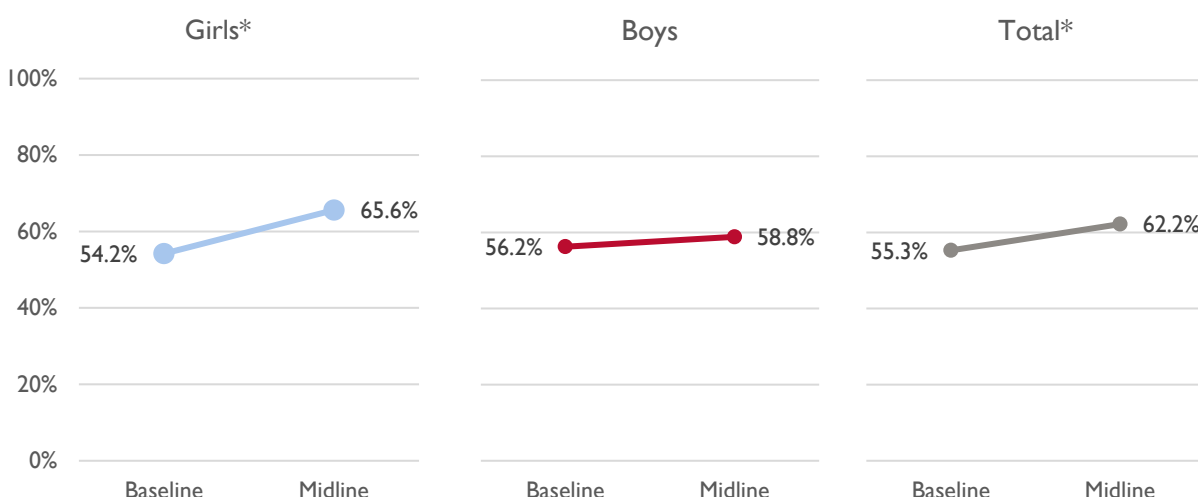
Figure 16. Percentage of Pupils Consuming Selected Food Groups, Baseline to Midline



Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

These results were used to identify pupils receiving a minimum acceptable diet—defined as consuming four of the seven food groups in the previous day (see Figure 17).^{16,17,18} **At midline, 62.2 percent of pupils consumed the minimal acceptable diet, which was statistically significantly higher than baseline (55.3 percent).** The proportion of girls consuming the minimal acceptable diet also statistically significantly increased from 54.4 percent at baseline to 65.6 percent at midline.

Figure 17. Percentage of Pupils Consuming a Minimum Acceptable Diet (Four of Seven Food Groups) by Sex, Baseline to Midline



Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

Deeper analysis shows that the proportion of pupils consuming the minimal acceptable diet was statistically significantly higher in continuing schools compared with new schools at both baseline and midline (see Table 22). In addition, the proportion of pupils in continuing schools increased statistically significantly between baseline and midline (60.2 percent compared with 70.2 percent, respectively), while the proportion of pupils in new schools decreased slightly, though not significantly (47.5 percent compared with 46.7 percent, respectively). This might be because these schools have had longer experience providing pupils with meal rations and supplying food for balanced, nutritious meals.

¹⁶ CRS has based this definition on the World Health Organization's (WHO) guidelines for minimum dietary diversity for infants and young children. This definition was also used for the APFL Phase III endline evaluation.

¹⁷ "Data Sources and Inclusion Criteria." World Health Organization. World Health Organization, December 23, 2013. https://www.who.int/nutrition/databases/infantfeeding/data_source_inclusion_criteria/en/.

¹⁸ The seven food groups were grain, roots, and tubers; legumes and nuts; dairy products; flesh foods; eggs; fruits; and vegetables. The "other foods eaten" category was not considered in the indicator calculation.

Table 22. Percentage of Pupils Consuming a Minimum Acceptable Diet (Four of Seven Food Groups) by School Status, Baseline to Midline

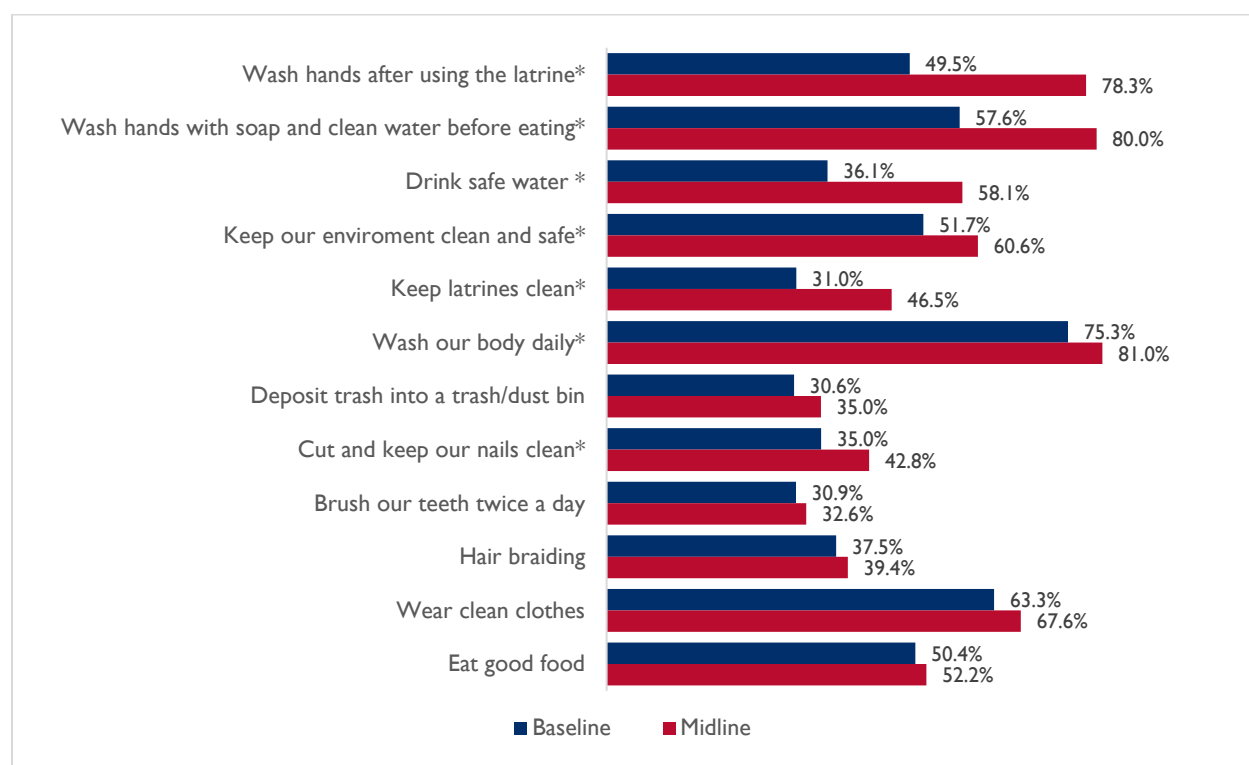
	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	n	% of Total	n	% of Total	
New schools	104	47.5%	104	46.7%	
Continuing schools	270	60.2%	314	70.2%	*
Sig.	*		*		

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$ and between new and continuing schools at $p < 0.05$.*

IR2.1 Improved Knowledge of Health and Hygiene Practices: Half of pupils pass in health and hygiene

Knowledge of good health and hygiene practices is necessary before said practices can be improved. Pupils were asked to name things they can do to have good health and hygiene to measure indicator 2.1.1 *Percentage of students in target schools who achieve a passing score on a test of good health and hygiene practices*. Enumerators coded their responses based on a set of 12 possible good practices (see Figure 18). A statistically significantly higher proportion of pupils at midline than at baseline identified washing hands after using the latrine, washing hands before eating, drinking safe water, keeping the environment clean and safe, keeping latrines clean, washing our body daily, and cutting and keeping nails clean.

Figure 18. Percentage of Pupils Naming Good Health and Hygiene Practices, Baseline to Midline



Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

At midline, 54.5 percent of pupils achieved a passing score for good health and hygiene practices.¹⁹ At midline, boys and girls achieved passing scores at similar rates—54.6 percent and 54.5 percent, respectively. While this represents a significant increase from the proportion at baseline (42.7 percent), it is much lower than the year 3 program target of 70.0 percent for this indicator.

More nuanced analysis showed that the midline gains in pupils attaining passing scores were mainly in continuing schools, where 61.6 percent of pupils in continuing schools passed compared with only 40.8 percent in new schools (see Table 23). Additionally, the proportion of pupils in continuing schools who passed increased significantly from baseline (61.6 percent compared with 42.9 percent). This may be because continuing schools had earlier knowledge of these health and hygiene behaviors, more practice teaching them, and more materials to share with pupils.

Table 23. Percentage of Pupils Achieving Passing Scores in Health and Hygiene Practices, by school status

	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	n	% of Total	n	% of Total	
Percentage of pupils who pass	278	42.7%	363	54.5	*
Boys	142	42.0%	187	54.6%	

¹⁹ Passing is defined as identifying at least six of 12 practices.

	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	n	% of Total	n	% of Total	
Girls	145	43.5%	176	54.5%	
New schools	85	42.4%	90	40.8%	
Continuing schools	202	42.9%	273	61.6%	*
Sig.			*		

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a significant difference between baseline and midline at $p<0.05$ and between new and continuing schools at midline at $p<0.05$.*

IR2.2 Increased Knowledge of Safe Food Preparation and Storage Practices: Less than half of food preparers pass in food preparation practices

To ensure good health, hygiene, and nutrition, school staff must be aware of safe food preparation and storage practices. Enumerators interviewed food preparers to gauge their knowledge of safe food preparation and storage. Enumerators also observed kitchen and storage facilities at each school.

As reported in Table 24, **95.4 percent of schools had a kitchen at midline, which is a statistically significant increase from only 51.1 percent of schools at baseline.** Characteristics of those school kitchens are presented in Table 24. A majority (61.9 percent) of school kitchens had thatch roofs, a statistically significant shift from the 59.3 percent of kitchens at baseline with corrugated metal sheets. This change may be due to community contributions to school kitchen construction; in FGDs, parents frequently described building thatch roofs by cutting bush and carrying stone to the buildings.

Table 24. Sample School Kitchen Characteristics, Baseline to Midline

Characteristic	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	n	%	n	%	
Has a kitchen available for cooking food	36	51.1%	66	95.4%	*
Material of roof of kitchen					
Corrugated metal sheets (zinc)	21	59.3%	22	32.9%	*
Asbestos	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Concrete	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Thatch	15	40.7%	41	61.9%	*
Tarpaulin (plastic sheet)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Material of wall of kitchen					
Concrete polished wall	4	11.0%	4	6.1%	
Mud polished	3	8.6%	1	1.5%	
Concrete unpolished wall	7	20.1%	0	0.0%	
Mud unpolished	1	2.9%	2	3.0%	
Metal sheets (pan body)	0	0.0%	1	1.3%	
Thatch	2	5.3%	5	6.8%	
Tarpaulin (plastic sheet)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	

No wall	0	0.0%	3	4.6%	*
Material of floor of kitchen					
Concrete floor	9	25.9%	8	12.1%	
Earth floor	27	74.1%	58	87.9%	
Wooden floor	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Has spoon and plate shelves	25	69.9%	51	78.2%	
Has rack/pallet for drying plates and spoons	11	30.1%	15	21.8%	

Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p<0.05$.

As reported in Table 25, **100.0 percent of the schools observed at midline had a storeroom or storage facility, which was a statistically significant increase from 62.8 percent at baseline.** All storerooms and storage facilities had a door with a lock and all had ventilation blocks. All storerooms and storage facilities had roofs of corrugated metal sheets made of zinc at midline, and almost all (96.8 percent) had polished concrete walls.

Table 25. Sample School Storeroom or Storage Facility Characteristics, Baseline to Midline

Characteristic	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	n	%	n	%	
Has storeroom or storage facility	45	62.8%	69	100.0%	*
Has door with lock	41	100.0%	69	100.0%	
Has ventilation blocks					
Yes, with mesh	29	70.8%	65	93.9%	*
Yes, without mesh	12	29.2%	4	6.1%	*
No ventilation blocks at all	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Material of roof					
Corrugated metal sheets (zinc)	40	97.4%	69	100.0%	
Asbestos	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Concrete	1	2.6%	0	0.0%	
Thatch	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Tarpaulin (plastic sheet)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Material of wall					
Concrete polished wall	38	92.3%	67	96.8%	
Mud polished	3	7.7%	0	0.0%	
Concrete unpolished wall	0	0.0%	2	3.2%	
Mud unpolished	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Metal sheets (pan body)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Thatch	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Tarpaulin (plastic sheet)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	

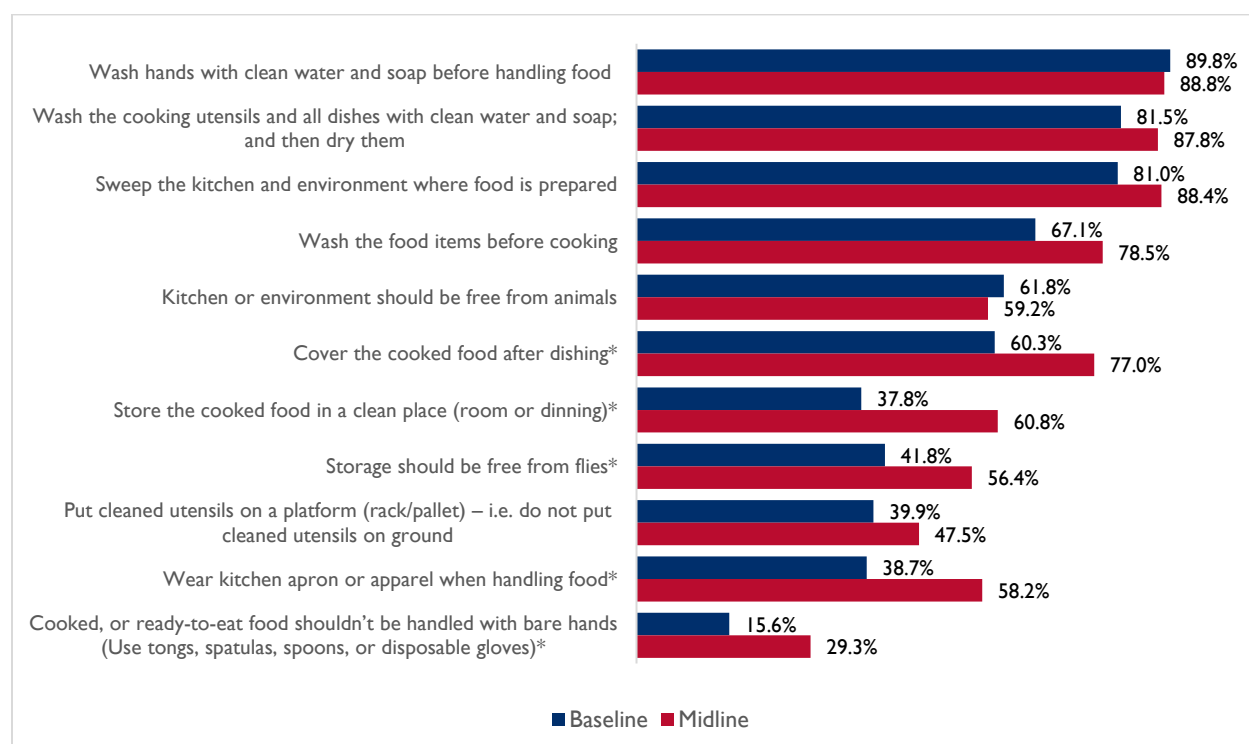
Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p<0.05$.

To calculate results for indicator 2.2.1 *Percentage of food preparers at target schools who achieve a passing score on a test of safe food preparation and storage*, enumerators asked food preparers to name practices for safe food preparation and storage. A respondent received a passing score by naming at least

eight of 11 monitored practices. At midline, 48.4 achieved a passing score, a much lower percentage than the year 3 target of 80.0 percent. However, the midline proportion was higher than the 37.3 percent who passed at baseline. This increase was not statistically significant, however. At baseline, 100.0 percent of food preparers who passed came from continuing schools. At midline, a statistically significantly higher proportion of food preparers from continuing schools received passing scores (57.8 percent, compared with 33.4 percent of food preparers at new schools). This indicates that food preparers from continuing schools may be benefitting from more exposure and practice with safe food preparation, but food preparers from new schools are slowly catching up.

The specific practices that food preparers identified are detailed in Figure 19. The proportion of food preparers naming the following practices increased significantly from baseline to midline—covering the cooked food after dishing, storing the cooked food in a clean place, storage should be free from flies, wearing kitchen apron or apparel when handling food, and not handling ready-to-eat food with bare hands. Focus group participants also frequently commented on the food preparers’ safe preparation practices. As one female participant from Koinadugu commented, “CRS has trained us to handle food safely: that we should wear our cooking gown, wash our hands clean, and trained us to prepare food safely and deliciously.”

Figure 19. Knowledge of Safe Food Preparation and Storage Practices, Baseline to Midline



IR2.4 Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services: Infrastructure is available in about half of schools

The fourth IR under SO2 is increased access to clean water and sanitation services. **About half of sampled schools at midline had a functional drinking water facility, and more than three –fourths had a**

functioning toilet or latrine. The life-of-project targets for construction or rehabilitation of drinking water facilities and toilets or latrines are 16 and 21, respectively.

At midline, 55.4 percent of sampled schools had a functional drinking water facility (see Table 26), of which 53.8 percent were chlorinated. For those schools without a functional water facility, 21.7 percent had a broken facility, 24.7 percent had no water, and 53.6 percent had facilities that were not functioning for other reasons. Changes from baseline to midline were not statistically significant. Qualitative data also indicate the need for better water infrastructure at schools, as many parents requested that the program support the construction of clean water facilities at schools.

Table 26. Sample School Water Facility Characteristics, Baseline to Midline

Characteristic	Baseline		Midline	
	n	Percentage of total	n	Percentage of total
Functional drinking water facility at school	28	40.0%	39	55.4%
Main water facility is chlorinated	19	66.9%	21	52.3%
Type of water facility				
Tap/pipe borne water	1	3.7%	0	0.0%
Hand pump well	19	68.1%	27	66.9%
Borehole with pump	4	12.8%	6	15.8%
Ordinary well (protected)	1	3.7%	0	0.0%
Ordinary well (unprotected)	1	4.4%	0	0.0%
Others	2	7.3%	6	17.2%
Reason for water facility not functioning				
Broken down	12	28.6%	7	21.7%
No water/dried	10	25.6%	7	24.7%
Other	18	45.8%	16	53.6%

Out of the 70 schools observed at midline, 78.5 percent had a functioning toilet or latrine; of those, 92.7 percent were separated by sex. About three in every four schools (72.2 percent) had toilets or latrines with all rooms cleaned. **At midline, 85.2 percent of schools with toilets or latrines had a place for handwashing, which was a statistically significant increase from only 57.1 percent at baseline.**

Table 27. Sample School Sanitation Facility Characteristics, Baseline to Midline

Characteristic	Baseline		Midline		Sig.
	n	Percentage of total	n	Percentage of total	
Functioning toilet/latrine in school	51	74.3%	55	78.5%	
Latrines/toilets separated by sex	45	86.9%	51	91.9%	
Pupils and teachers have separate toilets/latrines	37	72.1%	45	80.1%	

Cleanliness of toilets/latrines					
All rooms are clean	32	61.1%	40	72.2%	
Some rooms are clean	14	27.9%	10	18.9%	
No rooms are clean	5	11.1%	5	8.9%	
Place for handwashing	30	57.1%	47	85.2%	*
Availability of water and soap at handwashing facility					
Water and soap available	10	33.5%	27	55.7%	
Water available only	20	66.5%	17	37.4%	*
Soap available only	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
No water and soap available	0	0.0%	3	6.9%	

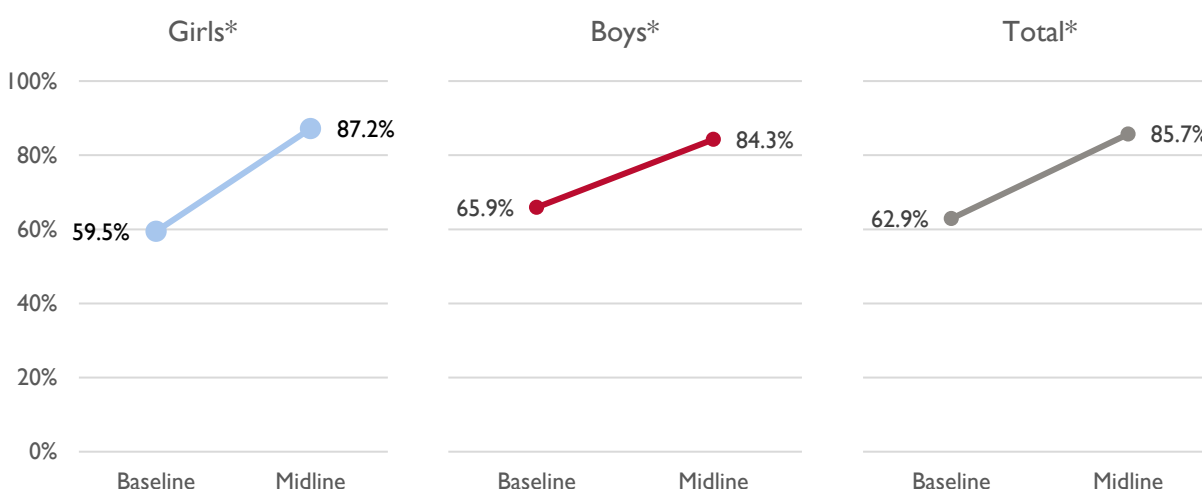
Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

IR2.5 Increased Access to Preventative Health Services: Pupils receiving medications increased

According to monitoring data, 37,340 pupils have received deworming medication, 57.5 percent of the year 3 target of 64,987 pupils. To respond to this IR, enumerators asked pupils and head teachers if they had received deworming medication, as well as vitamin A capsules, during the school year.

The proportion of pupils who had received a dose of deworming medication statistically significantly increased from baseline to midline, as well as the proportion of boys and girls receiving medication. At midline, 85.7 percent of pupils reported receiving deworming medication, compared with 62.9 percent at baseline, as illustrated in Figure 20.

Figure 20. Percentage of Pupils Receiving Deworming Medication, Baseline to Midline

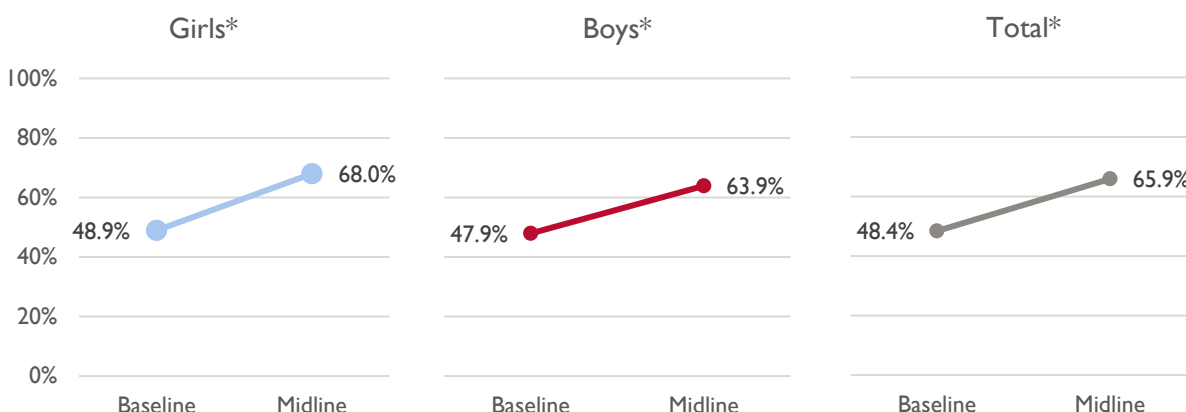


Note: Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

As for vitamin A capsules, **the increase in the proportion of pupils receiving them during the school year was significant from baseline to endline, as well as the increase in the percentage of boys and girls.** The

overall proportion of pupils who reported receiving a vitamin A capsule increased from 48.4 percent at baseline to 65.9 percent at midline, as shown in Figure 21.

Figure 21. Percentage of Pupils Receiving a Vitamin A Capsule, Baseline to Midline



Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

To triangulate these findings, head teachers were also asked if pupils had received deworming medication and vitamin A capsules during the school year and, if so, how frequently. Of the 70 head teachers interviewed, 83.7 percent reported that pupils had received deworming medicines during the year—an average of 1.3 times during the academic year. Nearly two of three head teachers (60.3 percent) reported that pupils had received vitamin A capsules during the year—1.2 times, on average, during the academic year.

IR2.6. Increased Access to Requisite Food Preparation and Storage Tools and Equipment: More equipment available

Enumerators took an inventory of the tools and equipment used for food preparation and storage at each school (see also Table 24 and Table 28.) The average number of scooping spoons, buckets, towels, cups, and big bowls for cooked food increased significantly from baseline to midline.

Table 28. Presence of Kitchen Equipment and Tools, Baseline to Midline

Tool	Baseline Average	Midline Average	Sig.
Big pots	1.8	1.9	
Big bowls for cooked food	1.8	1.9	*
Big bowls for sauce	1.0	1.5	
Wooden spoon	0.8	0.9	
Scooping spoon	1.3	1.2	*
Serving plates	2.0	1.2	
Spoons	14.3	11.7	
Buckets	14.3	6.8	*
Towels	2.7	1.1	*

Tool	Baseline Average	Midline Average	Sig.
Cups	2.5	1.5	*
Knives	12.8	3.6	
Mortar	0.6	0.7	
Mortar pestle	0.4	0.5	

Note: Baseline Total (N=68), Midline Total (N=69). Categories with an asterisk (*) indicate a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

Evaluation Questions

The findings from FGDs and KIIs, as well as quantitative data, inform evaluation questions and are summarized in the following sections. It is important to note that qualitative findings should not be considered representative of the entire population but only of the communities sampled.

Relevance

Participants in FGDs and stakeholder KIIs provided their opinions on the relevance of the APFL IV project, and quantitative data on progress toward desired results also inform the evaluation of the project interventions' relevance.

Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the overall goal, objectives, and intermediate objectives?

Parents and government officials consistently commented on the importance of the school feeding program, teacher training activities, and provision of water sources at schools in improving pupils' education, thus **indicating that the project's activities and outputs are consistent with the overall goal, SOs, and intermediate results of APFL IV's results framework**. Specifically, parents frequently explained how the school feeding program has increased enrollment and attendance. In addition, midline data show statistically significant increases in the proportion of pupils attaining the reading threshold, as well as improved health and dietary practices, further corroborating the project design's relevance.

Does the project meet community and government priorities?

As school feeding is a major component of the government's Free Quality School Program (FQSP), the objectives of APFL align quite closely with those of the FQSP. **Parents' and government officials' feedback suggests that project activities are meeting some community priorities**. Nearly all FGD participants mentioned the most immediate community priority of feeding children, explaining how the school feeding program has met a major community need by relieving parental pressure to provide a meal for their children. As a male FGD participant in Koinadugu said:

"The basic need for every living thing is food. The saying goes that if someone is hungry, he might have [a] hot temper. Children need food even at home, they pressurize parents for food even at home. For the fact that food is being provided in the school, that is the first need that CRS has met. It lessens the burden on parents, it increases enrollment of children, and keeps children in school. It has met one of their pressing needs."

However, **livelihoods remain a key community concern**. Parents frequently explained that although increased school attendance was a positive development, they now had fewer children to help with farm

work. FGD participants often requested some sort of support—either with land or equipment—for their farming activities. (See the Sustainability section for more detail.) In general, it seems that communities are still most concerned with meeting basic needs—such as sustenance for themselves and their children—thus, other components of the program—such as improving the quality of teaching—were viewed as extra benefits but not immediate priorities.

Are stakeholders (school management committee, parents, teachers, and local authorities) satisfied with their participation in the project? Why or why not?

FGD participants said they were highly satisfied with their participation in the project and its results. Specifically, participants mentioned their satisfaction with the school meals and rations provided by CRS, higher pupil rates of attendance, the provision of various learning materials, and their own participation in school management. Parents mentioned they were motivated to send their children to school through their engagement with the project, including assisting in the construction of school buildings through cutting of brush and carrying materials, monitoring of food preparers, and other activities. One district-level government official also noted that parents were now actively involved in quarterly stakeholder meetings and that it was clear parents felt they had a voice in matters of education.

Some respondents, however, were not satisfied with teachers and teacher training. Several issues were mentioned by parents, including the lack teachers overall, the lack of trained teachers, and the need for parents to pay the allowance of community teachers in some schools. As one male FGD participant from Koinadugu said:

“As for me, I’m not totally satisfied. Much thanks to CRS for all the support we have been getting except in the area of teachers. We have only two approved trained and qualified teachers. They can’t teach the pupils from class one to six. That is why [while some are teaching in] one of the classes, pupils are playing and making noise in other classes where there is no teacher to teach them. So, we are appealing to CRS to train and help us to approve more teachers.”

Teacher satisfaction with APFL trainings is presented in Table 29. The proportion of teachers indicating they were “very satisfied” in all categories increased significantly from baseline to midline. **However, at midline, training on literacy instruction was the category with the lowest proportion of teachers reporting they were “very satisfied.”** This finding is consistent with results of teachers’ self-reported skill levels (see Figure 11).

Table 29. Teacher Rates of Satisfaction with Program Activities, Baseline to Midline

		Time of data collection				Sig.
		Baseline		Midline		
		N	%	N	%	
Training on literacy instruction	Not Satisfied	3	3.4%	10	7.0%	
	Somewhat satisfied	20	25.1%	28	19.8%	
	Very satisfied	35	44.5%	103	66.9%	*
	Not applicable	17	27.0%	10	6.4%	*
Coaching by literacy coaches	Not Satisfied	3	3.6%	5	3.4%	
	Somewhat satisfied	21	26.2%	29	19.8%	
	Very satisfied	35	44.5%	106	70.1%	*
	Not applicable	16	25.6%	11	6.8%	
School feeding	Not Satisfied	5	5.9%	1	0.6%	*
	Somewhat satisfied	18	22.3%	3	1.8%	*
	Very satisfied	36	46.1%	134	89.2%	*
	Not applicable	16	25.6%	13	8.5%	*
Provision of teaching and learning resources	Not Satisfied	4	5.2%	10	6.9%	
	Somewhat satisfied	22	27.2%	27	18.7%	
	Very satisfied	33	42.0%	106	69.3%	*
	Not applicable	16	25.6%	8	5.1%	*
Support from head teacher	Not Satisfied	1	1.1%	3	2.3%	
	Somewhat satisfied	12	14.6%	18	12.0%	
	Very satisfied	46	58.9%	122	80.6%	*
	Not applicable	16	25.4%	8	5.1%	*
Reading clubs	Not Satisfied	3	3.9%	3	2.3%	
	Somewhat satisfied	20	24.6%	18	11.7%	*
	Very satisfied	35	44.5%	120	79.8%	*
	Not applicable	17	26.9%	10	6.2%	*
Life skills programming	Not Satisfied	10	13.3%	11	7.4%	
	Somewhat satisfied	19	23.3%	19	12.8%	*
	Very satisfied	29	36.5%	98	65.4%	*
	Not applicable	17	26.9%	23	14.5%	*

Note: Categories with an asterisk () indicate a significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.*

How well does the project complement and link to activities of other donors at the local level?

Parents, community members, and government officials did not mention other ongoing projects at the local levels. Thus, this study cannot evaluate the project's coordination with other interventions.

Are there any interventions or results that are not included but should be?

Building on the APFL project's holistic approach, parents recommended several interventions that fit in with a systems-level perspective to sustaining education, health, and dietary outcomes.

- **Health interventions.** Many parents requested health centers in remote communities, as sickness is still a concern in many places. A KII with a Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) official also highlighted this concern, and suggested that the MBSSE reintroduce mobile clinics in remote

areas. CRS could coordinate the re-introduction of this activity and also might consider including sexual and reproductive health education as a component in teacher training. Parents were concerned about their daughters getting pregnant, with some mothers asking the project to provide birth control pills so their daughters would not get pregnant from “love affairs.”

- **Transportation and roads.** Both district officials interviewed mentioned the importance of transport, both for themselves to monitor remote schools as well as for children to get to school if they live far away. Parents also mentioned how roads would help children living far from school, as well as sick children needing to access remote health centers. Improved transport and roads would also mitigate parents’ concern for the safety of girls traveling to other communities for secondary school.
- **School infrastructure.** Many participants requested new or repaired infrastructure at school compounds. Several respondents indicated that some of the buildings constructed at the start of the program were not holding up and deteriorating. Some communities also requested additional primary classrooms for higher grade levels or a secondary school in their community. Some respondents said they would prefer having a secondary school in their own community due to concerns about girls becoming pregnant by attending secondary school elsewhere.
- **Farming support:** Parents commented that they needed help with their agricultural work now that their children were going to school and requested farming equipment, such as tractors. Rather than providing equipment outright, the project may consider including trainings or guidance on how to use the SILC to save more and purchase communal farm equipment.

[Have the project’s adjustments to implementation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic been relevant to the project’s initial design and aligned with USDA and government priorities?](#)

Enumerators asked head teachers if the project had provided their schools with specific supplies and interventions designed to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. These results are presented in Table 30. While the majority of head teachers reported receiving take-home rations for pupils equaling 10 weeks of school feeding meals (86.3 percent), handwashing stations provided to schools (96.6 percent), and training in proper use of the handwashing stations at the schools (95.4 percent), only about one of three head teachers (35.0 percent) said they received solar-powered radios for pupils to listen to distance learning modules. The vast majority of head teachers (87.1 percent) indicated that each of these interventions was highly relevant.

Table 30. Provision and Relevance of COVID-19 Adaptation Interventions

COVID-19 intervention adaptations	Provided		Relevant		
	n	%	Not at all relevant	Somewhat relevant	Highly relevant
Take-home rations equaling 10 weeks of school feeding meals	61	86.3%	9.6%	3.3%	87.1%
Handwashing stations (Veronica buckets)	68	96.6%	8.6%	1.5%	89.9%
Training in handwashing station proper use	67	95.4%	8.7%	1.5%	89.8%
Solar-powered radios	23	35.0%	4.1%	0.0%	95.9%

FGD participants echoed these sentiments about the relevance of the project's COVID-19-related interventions, as it provided pupils with a means to continue learning via radio. Most rated the distribution of solar-powered radios as highly relevant and in direct alignment with government priorities. The MBSSE broadcasted educational content as well as social and behavior change communication during the COVID-19 school closures. District-level government officials also spoke highly of these interventions, explaining how well they suited the population's needs and how enthusiastic communities were about them.

Effectiveness

A comparison of results against the program's targets throughout this report inform the evaluation of the program's effectiveness, triangulated by FGD and KII participants' perspectives on attaining desired results.

To what extent are the project results and the yearly benchmark indicators achieved/ likely to be achieved? As outlined at the beginning of the Findings section, midline results were compared against year 3 targets or life-of-project targets (as applicable). Where applicable, monitoring data was also included.

Overall, monitoring data show that the program is on track in targets related to outputs, and midline data confirms this. For example, in year 3, the program set a target of 13 percent of pupils reporting being hungry or very hungry during the school day. Midline results show that only 8.6 percent indicated being hungry, much lower than the target rate. Similarly, nearly all schools at midline had kitchens and storerooms. This indicates that pupils are receiving meals at schools, and the program is effectively delivering materials and resources.

However, midline data indicates that targets have not yet been attained for at the outcome level. For example, 8.7 percent of pupils met the grade-level reading benchmark at midline, while the year 3 program target was 24.5 percent. Similarly, 54.5 percent of pupils achieved a passing score in knowledge of good health and hygiene practices, and 48.4 of food preparers achieved a passing score in safe food preparation and storage practices. These both are much lower than the year 3 targets of 70.0 percent and 80.0 percent, respectively.

Have the implementation strategies been relevant and effective enough to improve literacy; enrollment; health and nutrition practices; community participation and engagement; and the capacity of the national school feeding program? How have the changes in the implementation strategy affected the effectiveness of the program?

Results in the Findings section outline specific results of the program, and FGD data provide insight into how implementation strategies have improved literacy, enrollment, health and nutrition practices, and community participation and engagement. The midline study did not include a capacity assessment of the national school feeding program, so it is not possible to review its effectiveness. No clear alternate implementation strategies emerged through this study.

Literacy. Although parents frequently referenced their children's improved level of education, they did not often specifically mention their children's literacy. One parent from Falaba commented, *"If you see as small as a seven-years-old child reading and writing here in this village, it is because of CRS. Most of our children have learned and gone to Gberia to further their education."* Quantitative results indicate that literacy instruction still needs improvement. Teachers do not feel confident in their abilities to teach

foundational literacy skills, and only 8.7 percent of pupils read at grade level compared with the program target of 24.5 percent.

Enrollment. FGD members unanimously agreed that the school feeding program has increased enrollment at their schools. One mother in Koinadugu said, *“The FFE project has increased school attendance and drastically curtailed skipping of classes by pupils.”* Another parent shared, *“I have one of my children who was attending another school. At the time of [the school meal], he would escape from his school and come to eat the food here. So, because of that, I have enrolled him in this school.”*

Health and nutrition practices. In addition to increased enrollment, parents also believed that the school feeding program had improved their children’s health. Many respondents commented that children were visibly healthier due to receiving meals at school. No parents commented on their children’s health and hygiene practices at home or school, but quantitative data suggest pupils are learning about and practicing improved hygiene and sanitation practices and eating more nutritiously. (See SO2: Increased use of good health and dietary practices.)

Community participation and engagement. FGD members vociferously shared that they had helped with the construction of school kitchens, provided condiments for sauces for school meals, and assisted with the maintenance of the school garden. Many respondents also noted how SMCs had affected community engagement, specifically how parents enforce SMC bylaws to ensure that contribution and participation was equitable. Parents also noted their role in project monitoring. One male FGD participant from Koinadugu said, *“Everyone is involved in the supervision and monitoring of things being supplied until they put it in the store. Every morning, we would monitor them measuring the rice to be cooked for the children.”*

Are there other strategies that would work better and have more impact?

No clear alternate implementation strategies emerged through this study.

Are there some internal and/or external factors that are hindering the efficient implementation of project activities?

Parents noted that teacher shortages are impeding implementation of literacy work. Certain communities do not have enough teachers, and some communities have addressed this issue by hiring teachers and paying them directly. In these circumstances, however, pupils are not allowed to attend school if parents cannot contribute their portion of the teacher’s salary. As one male FGD participant in Koinadugu said, *“Payment of fees for community teachers is sometimes preventing parents to send their children to school. Some pupils are driven from school when their parents cannot afford to pay contributions for their pupils in school. This has been a serious problem for parents who cannot pay for their children.”* As the project continues, finding solutions to teacher shortages will be key to ensuring that pupils have instructors who can provide them with quality education.

Is the management system effective? Has program implementation been effectively monitored? How well has the monitoring and evaluation mechanism facilitated project implementation?

A review of program monitoring reports indicates that implementation, specifically the distribution of commodities, is effectively monitored and accounts for actual distributions as well as losses.

How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the effectiveness of the project, and what alternative strategies have been employed?

The COVID-19 pandemic has hindered efficient program implementation during the past year. While it is difficult to make direct links between the pandemic and pupil performance, drops in mean scores in foundational reading skills (see SO1: Improved Literacy of School-Aged Children) indicate that school closures may have impacted learning. In addition, the project's pandemic-related interventions, including the provision of meals at home and technology to sustain learning, may have helped to mitigate learning loss. More research is needed on COVID-19's effect on pupils' learning outcomes.

Efficiency

This section evaluates the efficiency of program implementation based on monitoring and financial data provided by the program. However, this study cannot assess if the project is being implemented in the most efficient way due to the lack of a counterfactual.

Have activities been cost efficient?

As a proxy for cost efficiency, the program analyzed its burn rate for specific program activities, presented in Table 31. The burn rate is the total expenditure of the program at a particular period expressed as a percentage of the allocated budget. It gives an indication of project budget performance which helps project managers make decision on what actions need to be taken to ensure budget execution is on track with meeting program objectives. The activities with the highest burn rate are building and rehabilitation (for latrines, warehouses, and storerooms). The activities with the lowest burn rate are around training. This is likely because of social distancing and COVID-19 closures in the past year. Overall, these burn rates match the focus of program activities and the progress seen in results from this evaluation.

Table 31. Program Burn Rate

Activity	Burn Rates
Building/Rehabilitation ²⁰ : Latrines	83.52%
Building/Rehabilitation: Schools	72.09%
Building/Rehabilitation: Warehouses and Storerooms	94.88%
Capacity Building: Local, regional, national level	51.81%
Establish activities to promote literacy	59.72%
Training: Food preparation and storage practices	49.41%
Training: Good health and nutrition practices	47.63%

²⁰ Regarding building/rehabilitation budget items: When construction work is done, CRS hold a percentage of the payment as warranty for the construction done for a period of three months. When this period elapses, the CRS construction officer issues a Certificate of Service Completion upon inspection of the work done to certifies that the job has been done satisfactorily before the retention fees are released to the respective contractor. This action is taken to manage the risk of poor construction and ensure contractors are penalized in situation where the job is poorly done.

What is the cost of anti-fraud measures relative to the value of being able to bring services to Sierra Leone? It is difficult to address this question as the study did not include a value-for-money component. However, comments from a KII with an MBSSE official provide some context to how the government is working to address issues of fraud:

“We have engaged with the anti-corruption office on examination malpractices and what the consequences will be if a teacher is caught in a fraud-related matter. We have also put measures in place to restrain teachers from extorting monies from parents, especially when issuing annual reports cards. We have named and shame teachers caught in fraudulent behaviors, and we have also call meetings to admonish them to refrain from such indecent acts. We have instances where teachers were asked to repay whatever they may have extorted from parents. This is a gradual process, and it seems to be working. We have reported some to the police and disciplinary actions have been taken just to curb fraud in schools. In fact, there is a teacher’s code of conduct that has been developed by the teaching services commission that seeks to eliminate fraud in schools for the betterment of the nation.”

Are results achieved on time?

As detailed in the previous section (To what extent are the project results and the yearly benchmark indicators achieved/ likely to be achieved?), APFL IV is behind in meeting midline outcome targets, partly due to lower baseline levels than anticipated, as well as pandemic-related delays in program implementation. However, the program has achieved many targets related to outputs.

Were the COVID-related changes made by the project been efficient?

Of the 70 head teachers interviewed at midline, 48.9 percent indicated that the pandemic affected the efficiency of commodity management and food. More research is needed to understand how COVID-19 affected the efficiency of commodity management.

Impact

This section summarizes the project’s overall impact, notably interrelated, unforeseen positive and negative consequences of increased school enrollment and attendance. Earlier sections have explained the project’s intended impacts.

What are the unintended positive and negative effects of the intervention on children, communities, and institutions? How does the intervention affect the well-being of different groups of stakeholders, including more vulnerable, at-risk youth?

As mentioned earlier, parents in almost every FGD noted the positive impact of school feeding—increased enrollment. However, **increased enrollment has led to a shortage of learning materials** because the number of distributed materials was based on baseline enrollment numbers. This conflicts with midline findings that 68.6 percent of classrooms at midline met the government ideal ratio of one textbook per two pupils, although parents did not specify how many materials they consider enough. Some parents also noted that increased enrollment had also resulted in a shortage of classrooms.

Thanks to increased enrollment and attendance, **more pupils are completing primary school**, but some pupils face challenges continuing their education due to the long distance between their communities and secondary school. Transportation infrastructure between communities is often lacking, and parents

expressed hesitation about girls going to different communities for secondary school, voicing concerns about pregnancy and “deflowering.”

Increased attendance has also impacted the labor supply for families’ agricultural work. Previously, children would work on farms, partly because meals were available there. One mother from Koinadugu explained, *“Now that all the children have gone to school because of CRS food for education program, there is no one to help in our farms. Our children have been supporting us in our farms. So, we are appealing to CRS to provide us farming machines like tractors or power tillers to plough our farmland.”* Parents also shared that the lack of help has affected how much they are able to harvest.

Finally, parents noted the trend of **teacher turnover after participation in distance education training.** As one male participant from Koinadugu reported, *“We don’t have any teacher currently receiving sponsorship from CRS to pursue the higher teachers’ certificate. Those that have earlier graduated from the Distance Learning Program have left for another school in Telekoro, so, because of that, we have only one teacher.”*

What do program participants and other stakeholders affected by the intervention perceive to be the effects of the intervention on themselves?

Overall, FGD and KII participants reported how the interventions have positively impacted themselves. Parents reported feeling engaged by the project, as well as relieved that the APFL IV has removed some of the burden of feeding their children. As one male participant from Falaba explained:

“We thank God for this project, when the entire community would be busy with their farm work, we don’t even have time to look after our children wellbeing, which is giving them food before going to school in the morning we don’t have time for that. CRS school feeding has increased attendance greatly. Before the attendance was very poor, but right now it has improved, which is why we are grateful to CRS.”

In communities where the project has established SILCs, parents discussed their benefits, including the ability to cover their children’s unforeseen education expenses when necessary. A female participant from Koinadugu said, *“Every week [we contribute] Le,1000. Le,1000 is meant for ‘problem money’ (urgent issues). [With] the Le,1000 we contribute, [if a] member or her child gets sick, it is from the problem money we take some and give it to the individual member.”*

To what extent has ownership among stakeholders increased (monitoring of teacher performance, care to prevent fraud, protect infrastructure and supplies, enforcement of educational bylaws)?

Parents also reported taking a more active role in preventing fraud, contributing to school infrastructure, and enforcing educational bylaws. FGD data made clear that parents are engaging with schools because they see the returns in their children’s education. One male FGD participant from Falaba shared:

“We are interested in supporting and strengthening children’s education because, in terms of any kinds of contributions we are ready and willing to respond. We are interested because we are seeing much improvement in our children’s education; especially some are now in other towns to further their education (Secondary school).”

The in-kind support provided by parents and community members illustrates their feeling of ownership. Mothers sew uniforms for their children, families provide condiments for the sauce in the school meal, and parents provide local construction materials and labor for school buildings.

Many parents described how they enforce bylaws by fining parents if they do not send their children to school or miss a commitment. In fact, during an FGD in one community, a participant said that he would go fine several parents who had decided not to participate in the FGD while the women's focus group was in session.

Several respondents also noted how the project has fostered a stronger sense of accountability. For instance, many people monitor the food stores and distribute rations. A father from Koinadugu stated:

"You can also see that like the store is not controlled by one person, it has three keys, each key is allocated to one person out of three people—the SMC, the head teacher, and the data collector. If anything goes wrong those three will be held responsible. It is difficult for one to take a decision without consulting each other."

Respondents noted that the monitoring of teaching quality could be strengthened. Although many communities pay teachers through contributions, they rarely monitor and observe the work of the teachers they hire. As a participant in a Koinadugu FGD explained:

P4: *Our stakeholders lack the capacity [to monitor teachers]. If such tasks are done by us alone, we don't have the capability as stakeholders to effectively and efficiently do all these tasks. It will be difficult for us to monitor teachers' performances.*

Interviewer: *Why?*

P4: *In the first place, we can't even pay contributions for community teachers, let alone for other provisions such as food.*

[To what extent can identified changes be attributed to the intervention?](#)

Without a counterfactual, it is not possible to attribute any changes in educational and health outcomes to the project. However, trends outlined in the Findings section show the differences between pupils in schools that have continued from APFL and new schools—namely higher literacy scores in continuing schools, more pupils getting the minimum acceptable diet, and higher passing rates on a health and hygiene test. These differences imply that continuity in the program may be supporting the attainment of desired outcomes. Qualitative data indicate the project's role in foundational outcomes, including how parents clearly attribute increases in enrollment and attendance rates to the school feeding program.

[Has the theory of change to improve school education outcomes through increased literacy of school-aged children and increased use of health and dietary practices of school-aged children combining with different foundational results held?](#)

The program's TOC (see Figure 2) outlines a pathway for attaining the program's goal of sustained delivery of quality literacy education in a healthy and enabling school, home, and community environment for children in the vulnerable Koinadugu and Falaba Districts. The results of this midline provide some data on the existence of components needed to attain this goal as well as progress, and the Findings section elaborates on some of the causal links between components and outcomes.

Overall, it is unclear how well the program theory has held after two years of project implementation. Increases in the percentage of pupils who report not being hungry during the school day, pupil attendance,

and a lower drop-out rate all suggest that pupils do benefit from safe, nutritious meals and attend school at higher rates. However, there was effectively no change in pupil attentiveness, and while the percentage of pupils reading at grade level did increase, the proportion was still less than 10 percent indicating a very minor improvement in literacy. Therefore, the results of this midline do not provide strong evidence to support the causal logic between program components and outcomes. Indeed, data on other program components, such teachers' improved competence and commitment to teach literacy, does not show that there has been a substantial increase since baseline, and thus does not provide any further insight into how well the TOC holds (see 1.1.4 Increased Skills and Knowledge of Teachers: More teachers participated in training).

In this study, little evidence has been provided to indicate that national and local governments are investing in new schools, policies, and monitoring activities, and no assessment can be made about the change in school systems and the sustainability of the school feeding program. Therefore, it is not possible to test the overall TOC.

What effect has the COVID-19 pandemic had on the overall impact of the program?

It seems that pupils suffered some learning loss in foundational reading skills based on the decline in mean scores in familiar word reading, invented word reading, and the reading passage from baseline to midline. There could be many reasons for this, including the lack of teachers' confidence in teaching these skills seen in Figure 11. Another possible explanation is that the skills of familiar word reading, invented word reading, and out-loud reading practice were not emphasized in the radio learning curriculum broadcast by the MBSSE during school shutdowns for COVID-19. In contrast, midline results show pupils' nutrition, hygiene, and sanitation outcomes improved. These gains may be an unintended effect of extra training in these areas due to the pandemic.

Sustainability

Stakeholders participating in KIIs and FGDs provided insight into the project's sustainability, with findings summarized in this section and recommendations detailed in a subsequent section. Due to the lack of provided data, this sustainability analysis does not consider the management and ownership of the school feeding policy and government implementation, including its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, or exit strategies the project has incorporated and implemented so far.

What activities and/or outcomes (both expected and unexpected) of the program are likely to be sustained? What are the major factors that can influence the achievement or non-achievement of project sustainability? What exit strategies were incorporated into program design and what strategies were implemented?

A major program component around sustainability are the SILCs, and this is likely to be a component sustained by many communities. In communities where SILCs—or “the box”—has been established, participants enthusiastically reported its benefits, while those respondents in communities without one expressed strong interest in establishing an SILC. As one female FGD participant in Koinadugu said, *“The first foundation for me I have seen that CRS has done for us, they have taught us about how to save money, how to loan among ourselves. We are not going out to take a loan anymore, but with the box, if you have a challenge with supporting your children you can go to the box and take loan.”* Despite respondents' enthusiasm for sustaining SILCs, the project should consider increasing training on how to use the system,

as well as ways to ensure it continues. In one FGD, a respondent said the community's SILC had ceased operating. It is unclear why.

Beyond SILCs, there was little evidence from FGDs and KIIs that other program components could be sustained, specifically the school gardens, the school feeding program, and teacher training. While many FGD participants discussed ways in which they currently contribute to school gardens, few of them made any indication that they would continue to do so if the program ended. Pertaining to the school feeding program, one district-level government official noted that the government was creating policy around school feeding, but lacked expertise in implementation. In addition, some FGD participants who serve as school cooks said that because they are not paid, they are not motivated to volunteer their time. One female participant from Koinadugu shared the critical role that CRS plays in continuing this motivation:

"I am the chairlady [of the SMC]. I take part in cooking in school, and it takes one, two or three days. I'm not get paid, and that stops me from taking part in the cooking in school. But the CRS Field Monitor is the one that normally encourages me. I have seven children in school, I don't have anyone to help me. I sometimes stop taking part in the cooking, but the CRS staff would come and talk to me."

From her experience, it is clear that there are several factors that would impede her sustained engagement in the school cooking, namely lack of compensation for effort and lack of time.

Communities voiced concern in paying for the allowances of community teachers, hoping that teachers could quickly become government approved and on government payroll. Thus, while gains have been made, it is clear from respondents' comments a main driver of non-achievement of project sustainability is the capacity of local government officials, as well higher-level government officials. As one FGD participant shared, *"[As for] future potential barriers to supporting children's education in this community, we are asking God for CRS not to stop this project now. The future potential barrier is when CRS stops helping and that will automatically kill the education in this community. We don't even to think of it, that CRS will stop someday."*

Has the School Feeding policy framework been improved? Is the School Feeding program funded by the government? Are the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) and MoHS effectively collaborating with MBSSE?

District-level government official indicated that there has been some advancement in the creation of a school feeding policy, but implementation by the government is spotty. Based on a document review, it seems that these stakeholders are engaged in the program and contributing when asked. According to the FY21 APFL IV Bi-Annual Report, stakeholders attend monthly sector meetings. Comments from government officials in the MBSSE and MoHS confirm this collaboration. One official from the MBSSE shared several salient details about these collaborations and the advancement of the school feeding model.

"CRS and our ministry and our ministry have been collaborating for a long period of time on educational projects across the country. The result of this collaborating has led us to engage the ministry of health on a home-grown school feeding model. This is a strategy where we buy food from the communities when the schools are based and feed the children with the food which is produced within their communities. This simply means farmers will produce food which is used to

feed the children within communities and CRS is empowering these local farmers in diverse ways. We expect with proper engagement government will continue to empower these farmers and at the same time buy food from them to improve the local economy within communities. We are also collaborating with the ministry of agriculture to ensure farmers are equipped by giving them seeds and other inputs that will increase their yield so that we as a ministry will end up buy their produce will be used in preparing food for education ration. We have assured the farmers that with the school feeding program at hand we are ready to buy the food from them and this to some extent has brought happiness in the faces of farmers. Of course, CRS has been engaging stakeholders in meetings and I am sure if CRS exits the ministry will be able to build in the relationship and continue the project amicably.”

How effective is their M&E system?

Because the national school feeding program has not yet been rolled out by the government, it is not possible to assess their M&E system. However, KIs shared some information about their current monitoring practices. A respondent from the MoH said,

“What we normally do is to collect information about these children age 5-9 years old on nutrition and analysis the result. It is these results that we take to government or partners for actions to be taken if we want to keep these girls in school. In one of our reports, we found that Falaba has some statistics that are not good for malnutrition. Now that we have these figures, we are presently making more visits to Falaba to close the gap of malnutrition.”

An official from the MBSSE shared more details in that ministry’s approach to monitoring.

“The ministry has just recruited over 60 inspectors of schools, and we also recruited quality assurance officers. They have been placed in all the districts and even deployed to chiefdoms for a real monitoring of teachers’ performance in schools to ensure they are always in schools and teaches in accordance with the syllabus introduced by government. We have district coordinators for the school quality of education who are involved in classroom management and distribution of free quality learning materials. Over the past few years, we have the Leh Wi Lan project, which has school support officers providing real time information through the Tangerine app.²¹ That information is shared to us, and we use that to monitor the attendance and performance of teachers in classrooms.”

District-level MBSSE KIs also shared that there has been a significant increase in the number of district-level inspectors hired by the government. These inspectors are trained to engage the teachers, not police them. This has been an important step in meeting the need for better monitoring, but the interviewee indicated that there still remains quite a bit to be done in terms of monitoring.

Are teachers motivated to stay? To what extent are high performing teachers taking over for Literacy Advisors? What evidence is there to suggest this?

Sustaining interventions related to classroom literacy instruction may be difficult as well due to challenges with teaching turnover. No data on teachers’ motivations to stay at their current schools were collected, although this study found that teachers seem to be motivated by professional relationships and

²¹ The Leh Wi Lan project is an initiative of the GoSL to improve outcomes in English and Maths. It is aligned with the Free Quality School Education Program. <https://mbsse.gov.sl/leh-wi-lan/>.

assessment methods (see Figure 12). However, FGD participants reported that once teachers had completed distance education, they sometimes moved on to other schools, indicating that teachers may view this program as a way to bolster their credentials and move schools. FGD participants also explained how parents frequently pay teachers' salaries, not the government. One female participant from Koinadugu said, *"We are calling on CRS to prevail on the government to approve our teachers who are not on the payroll. We only have one approved teacher. The rest are community teachers. It is a huge burden for us to keep those teachers here. In fact, all of them have left the school because they are not getting allowances from us."* Another father from Falaba explained the situation in his community, *"We have five teachers in this community, two of them are receiving salary but the rest are not being paid by the government, so sometimes we the parents go to their farms and work for them on their farm as a means of support."*

Unfortunately, there was no evidence collected indicating that high performing teachers are taking over for Literacy Advisors. As mentioned before, it seems that retention of high performing teachers, or at least those trained through distance education, is an issue the program should continue to monitor.

How do the government's capacities, policies, procedures, and priorities contribute to sustainability?

Interviews with government officials at the national and district levels provided differing pictures of the government's capacity.

At the national level, officials were positive about the role of the government and its success in implementing interventions similar to those of APFL, citing the success of the FQSP. An official from the MOHS shared,

"At the national level, the MoE is really working hard to improve the level of education in the country and I think it is improving. For now, I see the ministry is building more classrooms, more girls are going to school as a result of the policies put in place by the government, and I see an increase in attendance across the country. The driving force for this is the introduction of the Free Quality of Education Program three years ago by government. [...] With the coming of the Free Quality of Education Program and the intervention of government in providing basic hygiene, I am seeing a rise in enrollment. Now parents do not need to pay for public exams for their children, as that burden is now shifted to government."

At the district level, FGD and district-level KII participants expressed concern at the government's capacity to contribute to the program's sustainability. The district-level nutritionist indicated that the government is not poised to take ownership of the school feeding program, saying explicitly that CRS needs to continue running the school feeding. Without it, according to the nutritionist, pupil turnout will be impacted, and the government will have to provide rations. The nutritionist cited a lack of resources in the ministry for monitoring, including outdated vehicles and high petrol costs preventing officials from visiting and monitoring schools.

In addition, there was some concern expressed at the district level about the capacity of their superiors in the central government. While they noted that the central level was providing policy, they had no experience in implementing school feeding and nutrition. In FGDs, parents shared that they were not optimistic about the government's ability to take over program implementation. One male participant from Koinadugu made it very clear, stating, *"There will be delay in the provision of food and other materials*

for the school if the government took over from what CRS is presently doing. Food and learning materials will not be available at the time the pupils need them most. There is always delay and unfulfilled promises by government.” This sentiment was echoed by a national level MBSSE official, who said explicitly, “[A] challenge is that when CRS exits, it will be difficult for the government to take up the mantle of responsibility. I am afraid for sustainability once CRS exits.”

What strategies should be used to obtain long-lasting support from communities and local/central administration that goes beyond the time of the project?

Parents clearly support the program. Finding ways to support their farming, as shared earlier, would further alleviate some of their burden and potentially allow them to contribute more to the schools and their children’s education. Parents were vocal about needing farming support in order to increase income to pay school fees and produce more to contribute to school gardens. This type of support might include purchase of land or equipment for farming, but it is unclear if this type of support is in the program’s scope.

It is unclear what strategies would cultivate long-lasting support from local and central government officials. The government indicates it supports the program, but it is unclear to what degree officials are willing to take on the responsibility of implementing and monitoring activities. Community engagement may be sustained, however, because parents see their efforts paying off through their children’s increased enthusiasm to learn and attend school. Respondents in multiple FGDs also shared that they would continue to contribute ingredients to the school feeding sauce, as well as work in the school garden (if present in the community).

4. Conclusions

Overall, results from this APFL IV midline evaluation show that improvements in key SOs have been achieved despite challenges brought on by global pandemic. Like at baseline, the study's findings provide both encouraging signs and room for improvement for CRS. Clear progress has been made with the provision of certain inputs, including food rations, learning materials, handwashing stations, and medication. However, the delivery of more complex infrastructure, such as water facilities, has proved more challenging, and growth in pupils' knowledge, skills, and behaviors has been limited.

Respondents in FGDs expressed enthusiastic support for the project and emphasized the positive impact it has produced so far in their schools and communities. Respondents said they would like project activities to continue. It is clear from qualitative data, however, that sustainability may be difficult because the government is not ready to take ownership of project activities clearly operated by CRS.

Findings from *SO1: Improved Literacy* show that while more pupils have access to learning materials, little progress has been made with higher level outcomes. Although pupils' literacy outcomes did significantly increase from baseline to midline, they still remain low. For instance, fewer than one in 10 pupils achieved the reading comprehension benchmark, with boys outperforming girls in meeting the benchmark as they did at baseline. Pupils in continuing schools outperformed pupils in new schools, as they did at baseline, indicating extended participation in APFL contributes to improved learning outcomes. Pupils in Falaba similarly outperformed pupils in Koinadugu, a sign that program efforts should focus primarily on schools in this district. Pupils' mean scores improved on some literacy assessment subtasks, including phonemic awareness and reading comprehension (the most basic and the most complex reading skills, respectively), but decreased on others, including alphabet naming, familiar words, and invented words. The conflict between these gains and declines might be explained by the higher prevalence of learning materials at midline than baseline. The lack of guidance in how to use these materials—due to COVID-19 closures and teacher turnover—thus may have resulted in pupils acquiring stronger foundational skills but struggling with advanced skills such as decoding. This conflict is also reflected with teachers' self-reported level of knowledge in certain skill areas and lower satisfaction rates with literacy trainings. At midline, the skill areas that the most teachers reported knowing nothing about were word recognition, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary, while the most teachers reported higher skill levels in teaching comprehension relative to the other skill areas. Alternatively, it is possible that teachers spent a greater portion of instructional time teaching comprehension because they had higher levels of comfort in teaching the skill. This greater focus on teaching comprehension may have produced the minor improvement in comprehension outcomes, even if the quality of instruction was subpar, while scores in foundational skills decreased.

By multiple measures, teacher quality seems to be improving, but new challenges have emerged. While rates of teacher training increased from baseline to midline, teacher attendance decreased slightly. Although data show that teachers' knowledge improved in foundational literacy skills such as phonics, fluency, and vocabulary from baseline to midline, these skills remain the areas in which the highest number of teachers said they need support. Qualitative data indicate that teacher training has improved the quality of education that pupils receive; however, teachers who have participated in APFL trainings may move to other schools after receiving training, though it is unclear why. A higher proportion of teachers reported that they were motivated by recognition, professional growth opportunities, supervision by supervisors, and relationships with colleagues at midline than baseline. These increases

may have resulted from teachers' training opportunities and increased community support for their work. Given the findings regarding teacher turnover, these motivational factors will be important to monitor as a way to ensure high-quality teachers stay at their current schools.

As with findings from SO1, results from *SO2: Increased use of good health and dietary practices* showed that pupils' and schools' access to food, medicine, and other resources improved from baseline to midline, but pupils' knowledge of health practices only improved marginally. The importance of the school feeding program was evident in quantitative data and FGDs. A significantly higher proportion of pupils consumed the minimal acceptable diet at school at midline, and nearly all schools (95.4 percent) had a school kitchen at midline, compared with only about half at baseline. Parents indicated that school feeding has resulted in higher enrollment and attendance and visible health improvements. The school feeding program has also served as a cornerstone for increased community engagement, with parents contributing to the school meal and helping to construct school kitchens and stores. Quantitative data also indicate the program has been efficient in setting up systems to deliver sufficient rations and learning materials quickly. Nevertheless, these positive intended outcomes have also had unforeseen consequences that the project should consider. Although the number of classroom resources has increased, with nearly half of pupils at midline with their own textbook, parents in FGDs shared that higher rates of attendance have led to some pupils not obtaining learning materials. In addition, with more pupils completing primary school due to increased attendance, communities now see a need to provide secondary schooling locally so that pupils do not need to travel to other communities to continue their education.

At midline, 54.5 percent of pupils achieved a passing score for good health and hygiene practices, which was significantly higher than baseline. However, this proportion is still rather low. Similarly, only 48.4 percent of food preparers had a passing score for safe food preparation and storage practices. These low scores indicate a need to emphasize improving pupils' and food preparers' knowledge in health, hygiene, and safe food preparation as the project continues.

In FGDs and KIIs, parents and project stakeholders expressed their enthusiastic support for the APFL IV project and a desire to see it succeed. Participants said they have seen evidence of the project's impact through their children, who are healthier and more motivated to go to school. However, many of the project's intended outcomes centered on knowledge acquisition, such as teachers' knowledge of foundational literacy skills, have not seen gains that will lead to higher quality instruction. Moving forward, APFL should focus on these higher-level outcomes, as well as community and government engagement, to ensure that these outcomes are attained and project interventions are sustained.

Finally, the midline provides some information about how well the TOC holds up, though overall the picture is incomplete. Data show that several foundational components for change are present, such as pupils reporting reduced hunger, increased presence of classroom materials, and improvements in school infrastructure. However, data does not indicate the presence of improved teacher quality, improved pupil attentiveness, among other components. Thus, while there has been progress towards expected changes such as improved literacy, improved knowledge of food preparation, and improved health and hygiene knowledge, it is not possible to substantiate the causal links between every element of the TOC from this midline.

5. Recommendations

Findings from quantitative and qualitative results point to specific recommendations for strengthening the project. These recommendations focus on pupils' literacy outcomes, teacher quality, girls' education, and program sustainability. Recommendations are outlined in the following section.

Literacy

CRS should consider strengthening the quality and intensity of literacy instruction, and specifically focus these efforts on reaching boys in Koinadugu. While some comprehension results improved from baseline to midline, the majority of pupils cannot read at grade level, and some scores related to foundational reading skills decreased. Boys in Koinadugu were the lowest performing group. Thus, the program might consider catch-up clubs for boys or one-on-one tutoring for boys in this region. As suggested at baseline, the project might want to consider more targeted research into the quality of teaching, as well as the skill of teachers in teaching English. To conduct this research, the project could use classroom observation tools tailored to observe the quantity and quality of instruction in foundational reading skills.

While the quantity of learning materials available to pupils has increased significantly since baseline, parents suggested that increased enrollment has led to some pupils not having enough materials. The project should continue to monitor school enrollment and ensure that the number of learning materials keeps pace with this growth. Additionally, because the project has been so successful in distributing textbooks at schools, APFL should also consider distributing children's books so pupils can practice reading both at school and home.

Teacher quality

Foundational teaching skills—such as letter recognition, phonemic awareness, and decoding—remain weak points based on data of teachers' self-reported knowledge of teaching areas. Similarly, teachers reported lower satisfaction with APFL literacy trainings. Given the downward trend in pupils' scores in key skills such as decoding, the project should place greater emphasis on the instruction of these early skills. APFL should also revisit the training curriculum in these skills, as well as collect more qualitative information from teachers about how the training curriculum could be improved. As noted earlier, the project could learn about the ongoing improvements and challenges in teaching these foundational skills by using classroom observation tools to monitor instruction of these specific components.

Teacher turnover is another factor affecting teacher quality and the project's sustainability. Nearly all teachers (95.2 percent) reported that interpersonal relationships with colleagues motivated them. Therefore, the project should consider integrating networking and community-building activities into their distance learning modules by creating informal peer support networks on WhatsApp, or something similar. In addition, the program should invest in research to learn more about why teachers leave after completing distance education and what factors might entice them to stay.

Support for girls

Girls are falling behind boys in several individual subtasks, based on literacy assessment data. This trend continued from baseline and warrants more research as to why it has persisted. In addition, the project might consider targeting girls with specific interventions to prevent inequality. Instituting girls-only catch-up clubs for those pupils who need extra support is one option. The project might also consider integrating

training modules on gender-sensitive instruction practices to ensure that teachers—the majority of whom were male at sample schools—are creating girl-friendly learning spaces in the classroom.

Parents also frequently raised concerns about the increased risk of pregnancy when girls go to other communities for secondary school. Although it is not part of APFL’s scope, the project should consider interventions that prepare girls and families for a safe transition to secondary school. These interventions might include community awareness-raising sessions for both parents and girls on safe travel practices and what they might expect in different communities that have secondary schools, as well as life skills activities to link girls to youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services.

Sustainability

In FGDs and KIIs, community members and government officials made it clear that much work needs to be done before the government can take over the school feeding program, including delivery of rations, teacher payment, and monitoring of school feeding programs. APFL should begin to integrate and implement clear transitions and phase-out approaches so that stakeholders and partners have enough time to learn about all aspects of the feeding program before the project ends. One government official noted specifically that the program should include capacity building trainings on how to run the project activities.

Beyond the government’s capacity to implement activities, the program should focus on building community investment in the program through livelihood support. Parents frequently mentioned that they are happy with the program and supportive of their children’s education. However, they cited barriers to sustained contribution to school gardens and the school feeding program that included needing to spend time working on the farm or other income generating activities. Parents requested support in the form of land purchase and equipment to assist with farming. The program could experiment with conditional provision of such equipment provided a portion of the harvest went to the school. The program might also consider piloting a program where schools use part of their budget for rations to purchase parents’ farm harvest for school meals, possibly done in one or two communities where the SMC and SILC are strong to ensure proper accountability and monitoring.

Annexes

Annex A. Sampling Approach

The midline evaluation sampled the same schools sampled at baseline and used the same approach to select pupils, teachers, and food preparers.

For the baseline evaluation, a *two-stage cluster* sampling approach was used to select pupils, teachers, and food preparers. First, schools were randomly selected as clusters; then pupils, cooks, and teachers within schools were selected at the second stage. The sample size for the sampling units was computed using the indicator “Percentage of pupils who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of the grade-level text.” The outcome is binary—taking the value 1 if a pupil can read grade-level text and 0 otherwise. The pupil’s sex was further used as a covariate to gain additional explanatory power.

The evaluation used the equation in McConnell and Vera-Hernandez²² to calculate sample sizes for a binary outcome with a binary covariate.

$$\text{Sample size} = 2m * k = (\mathbf{gM}^{-1}\mathbf{g}') \frac{(z_{\beta} + z_{\alpha/2})^2}{(p_1 - p_0)^2} (1 + (m - 1)\rho_x)$$

where $m = 10$, the number of pupils sampled per school; k = the number of schools sampled; $\mathbf{g}$ and $\mathbf{M}$ are defined in equation of McConnell and Vera-Hernandez.²³ Based on APFL Phase III endline results and assumptions about baseline values for the new schools entering in APFL IV, analysts assume a pass rate for boys at baseline of 39.4 percent and 41.5 percent for girls, with 53 percent of the sample being boys. The project targeted an endline pass rate of 58 percent for both boys and girls.

z_{β} = One-tailed value of the normal distribution at $(1-0.80)$, which is the sample’s power. Analysts have a 20.00 percent probability of not finding an effect from intervention, despite there being a genuine effect—Type II error. z_{α} = Two-tailed value of the normal distribution at 0.05, which is our significance level. Analysts have a 5.00 percent chance of rejecting the null hypothesis when it should not—Type I error. In this case, the null hypothesis is there is no difference between reading scores from baseline to endline. $\rho_x = 0.52$, or the conditional intracluster correlation (ICC) from the APFL Phase III endline.²⁴

22 McConnell, Brendon, and Marcos Vera-Hernandez. “Going beyond Simple Sample Size Calculations: a Practitioner’s Guide.” IFS. Institute for Fiscal Studies, September 28, 2015. <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/7844>.

23 McConnell, Brendon, and Marcos Vera-Hernandez. “Going beyond Simple Sample Size Calculations: a Practitioner’s Guide.” IFS. Institute for Fiscal Studies, September 28, 2015. <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/7844>.

24 An ICC value of 1.00 would mean that all the variation in the data could be explained by differences between the schools, thus we would need to visit many schools, but only one pupil per school. An ICC of 0.00 would mean that all the data variation could be explained by differences between the pupils, thus researchers could visit fewer schools, but more pupils in each. See McConnell and Vera-Hernandez on calculating the ICC and conditional ICC.

Annex B. Supplementary Findings

Table B.1: Baseline and Midline Literacy Assessment Mean Scores for Pupils, by Sex

Subtask	Total Possible Items Correct	Baseline				Midline					
		Boys		Girls		Boys			Girls		
		N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	Significance	N	Mean	Significance
Letter Name	51	348	1.2	334	0.9	334	1.7	*	344	1.4	*
Phonemic Awareness	10	348	38.8	334	34.1	334	31.2	*	344	28.1	*
Familiar Word	40	348	15.0	7.8	10.77	334	11.1	*	344	7.6	*
Invented Word	25	348	4.9	334	1.5	334	3.5	*	344	1.5	
Reading Passage	41	348	10.9	334	3.9	334	8.3	*	344	6.1	*
Reading Comprehension	5	348	0.9	334	0.3	334	0.8		344	0.5	*
Listening Comprehension	4	348	1.1	334	1.0	334	1.6	*	344	1.4	*

Note: One asterisk (*) denotes a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

Figure 22. Distribution of Alphabet Naming (Letter Naming) Scores

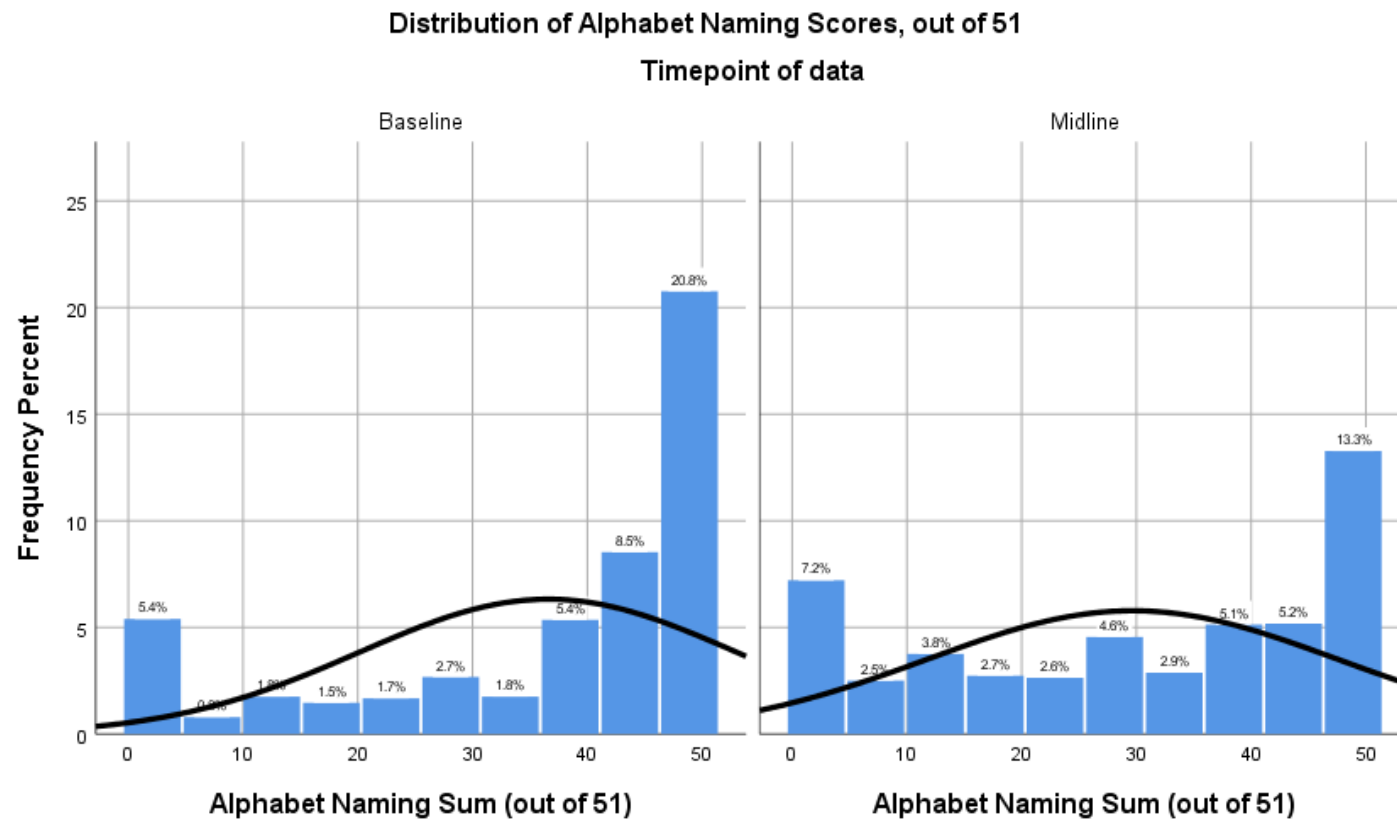


Figure 23. Distribution of Phonemic Awareness Scores

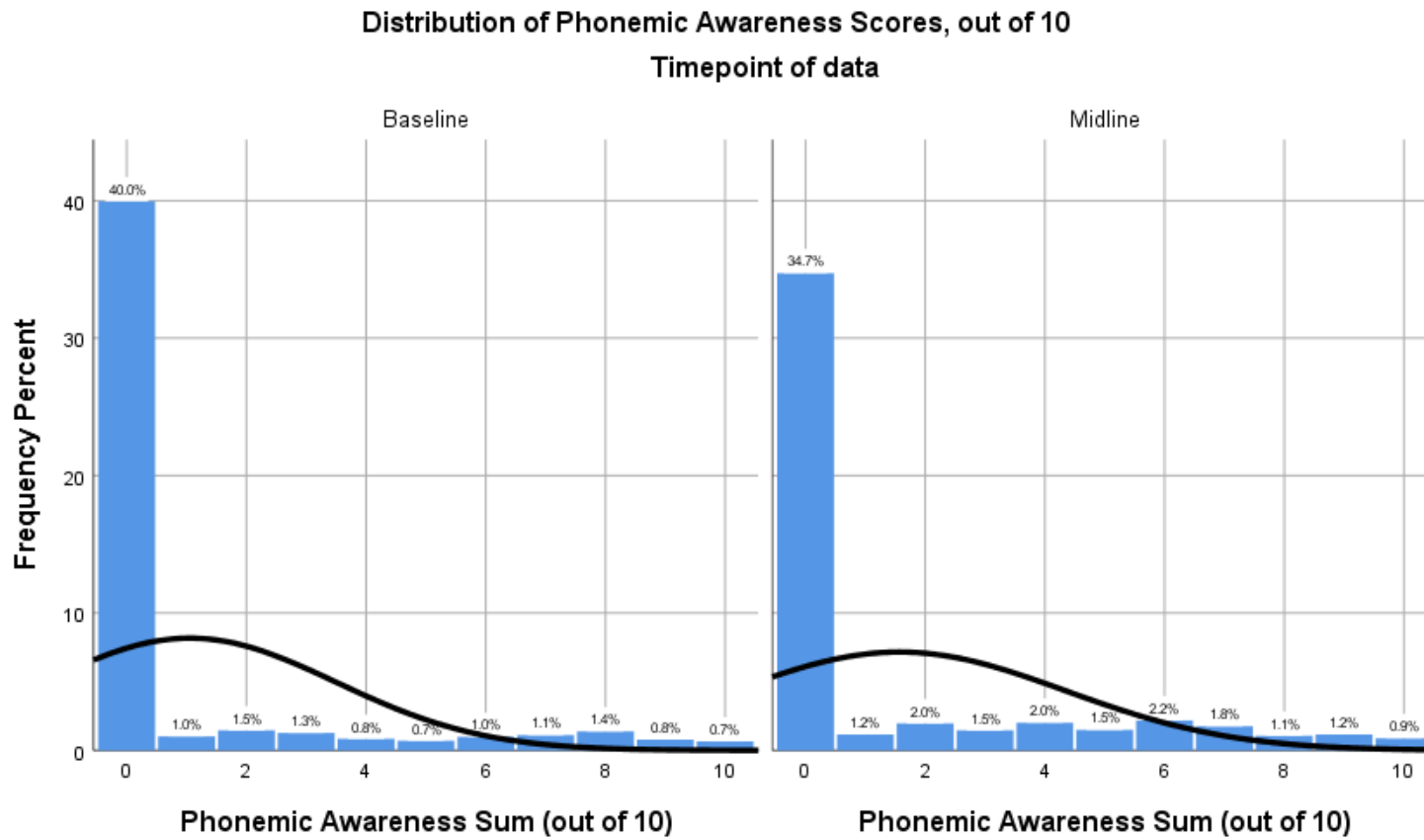


Figure 24. Distribution of Invented Word Scores, out of 25

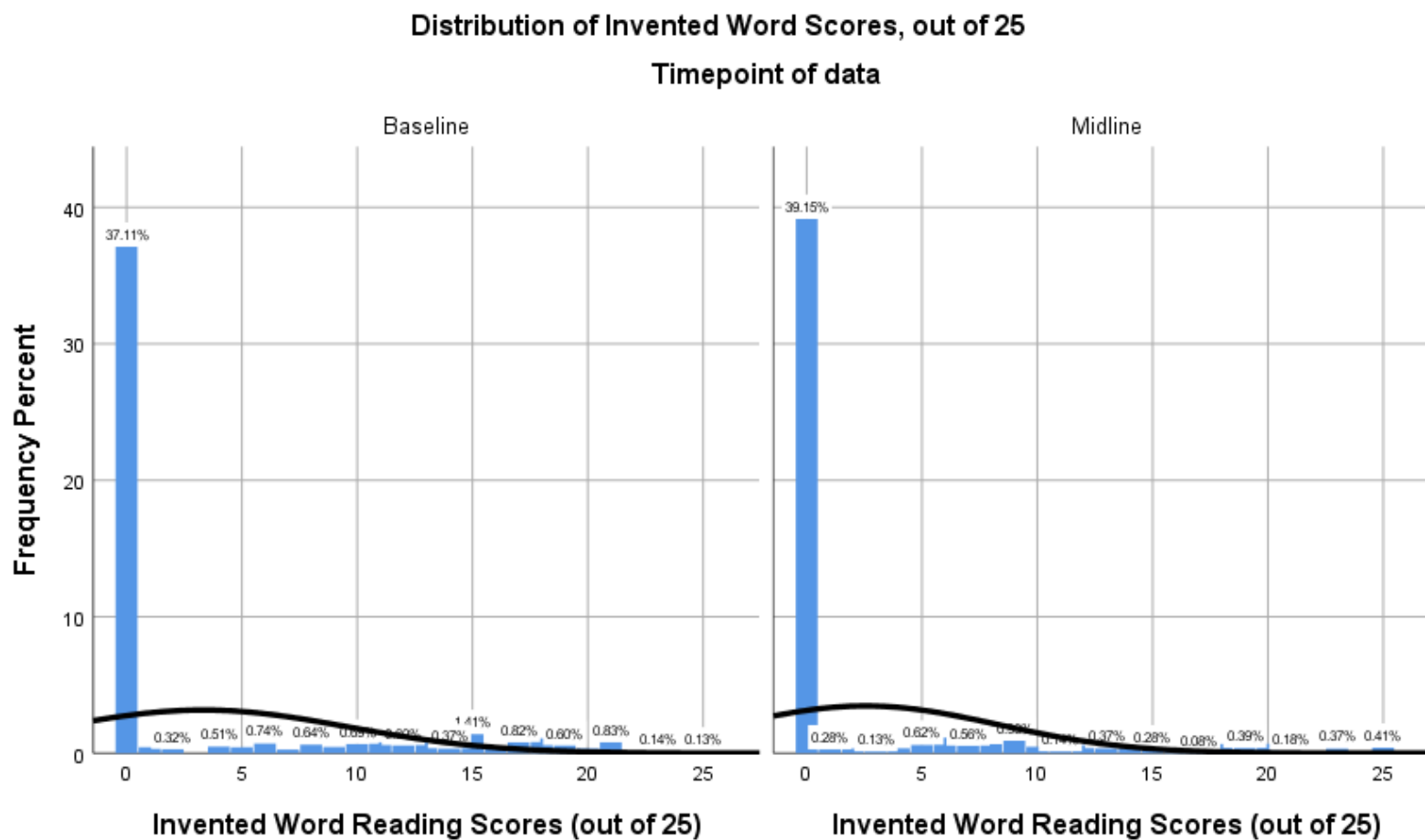


Figure 25. Distribution of Familiar Word Scores

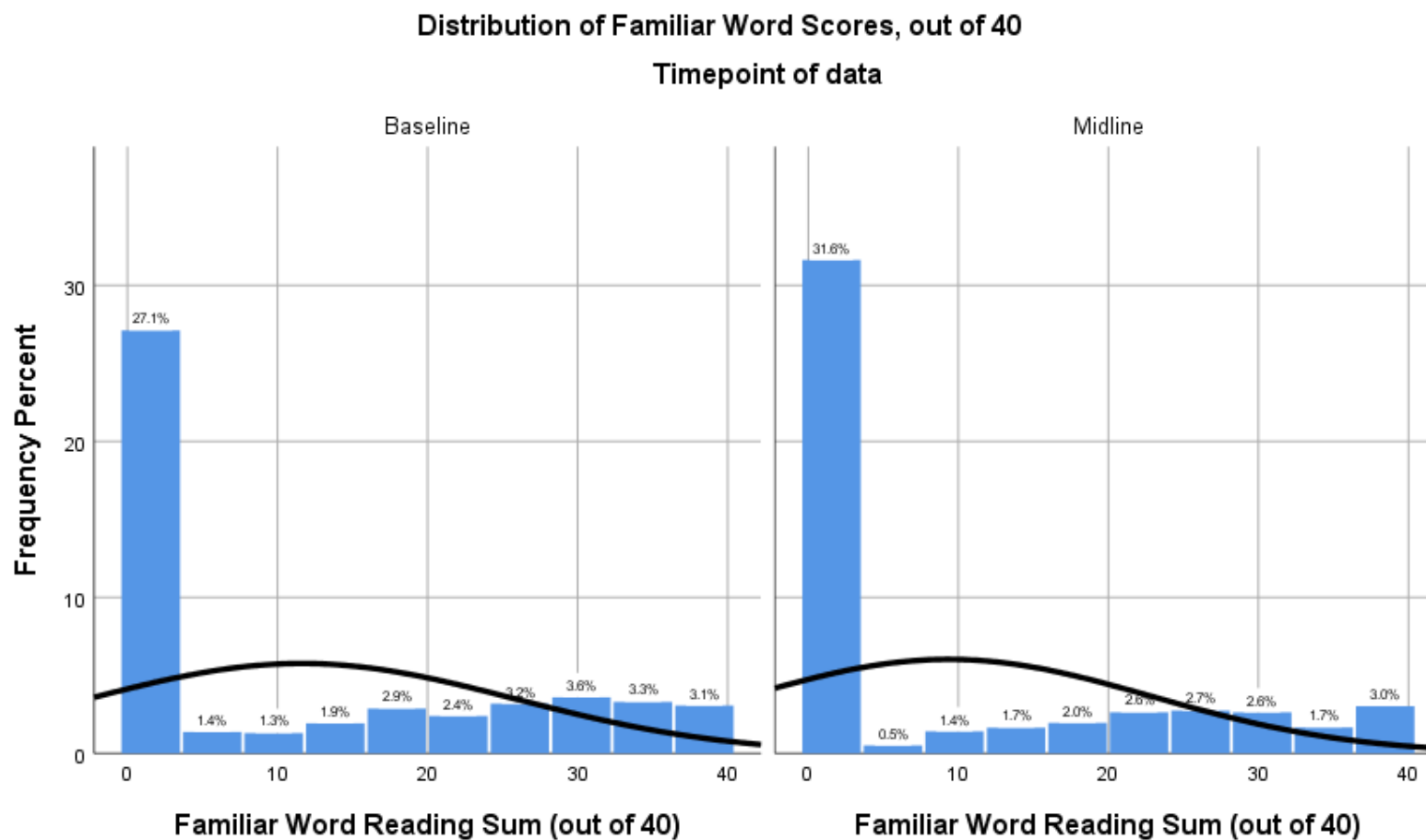


Figure 26. Distribution of Reading Passage Scores

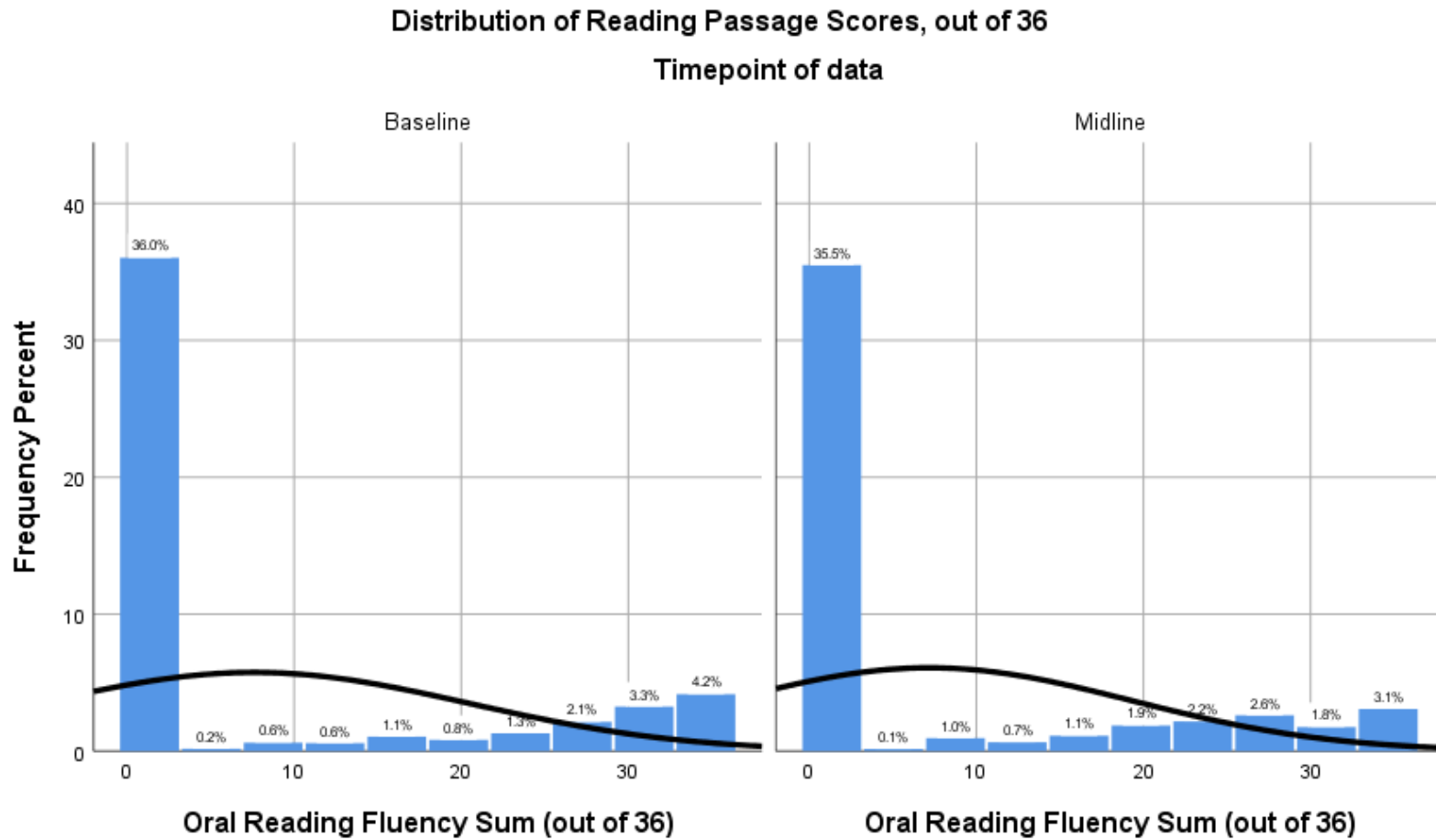


Figure 27. Distribution of Reading Comprehension Scores

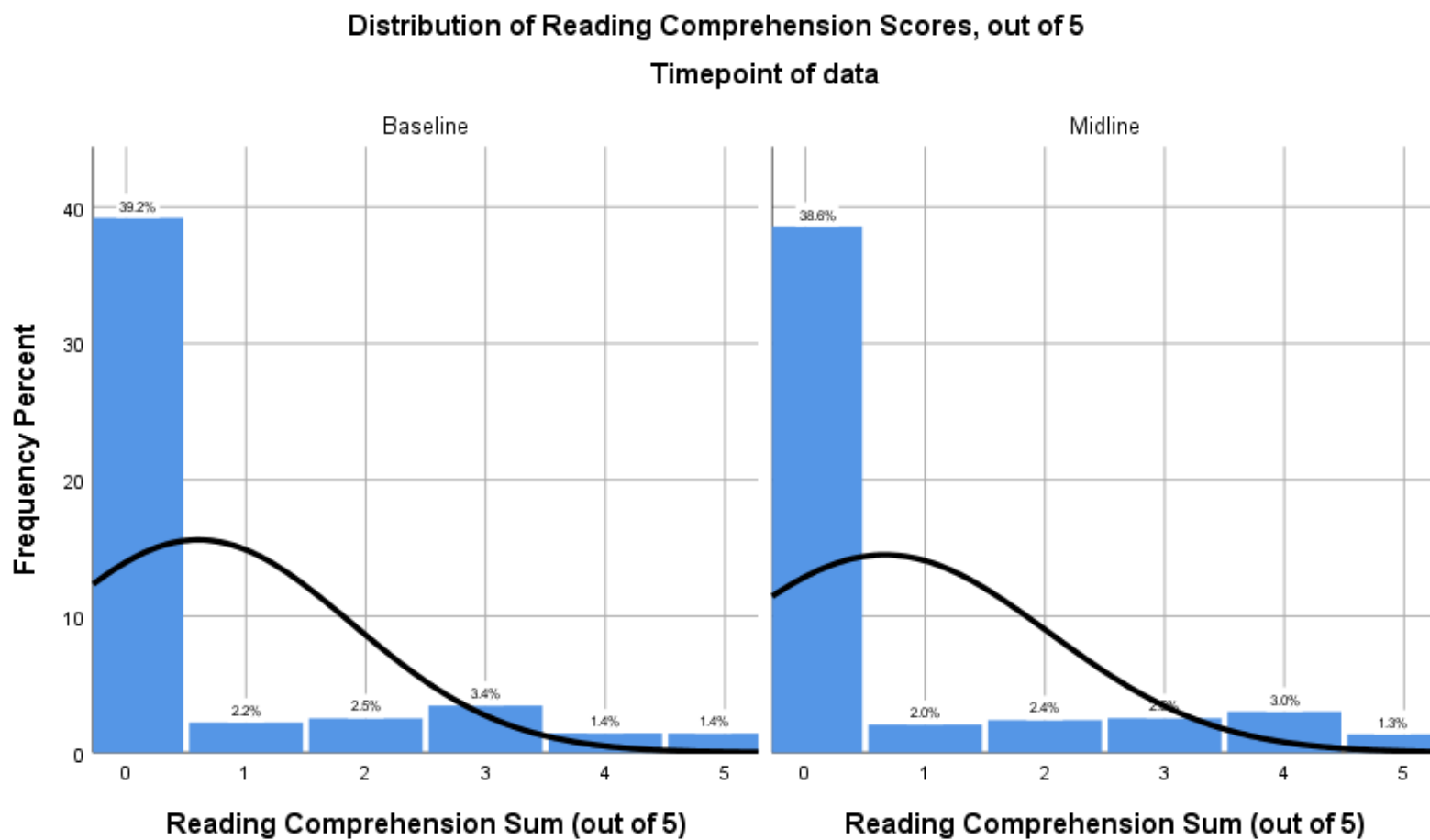


Figure 28. Distribution of Listening Comprehension Scores

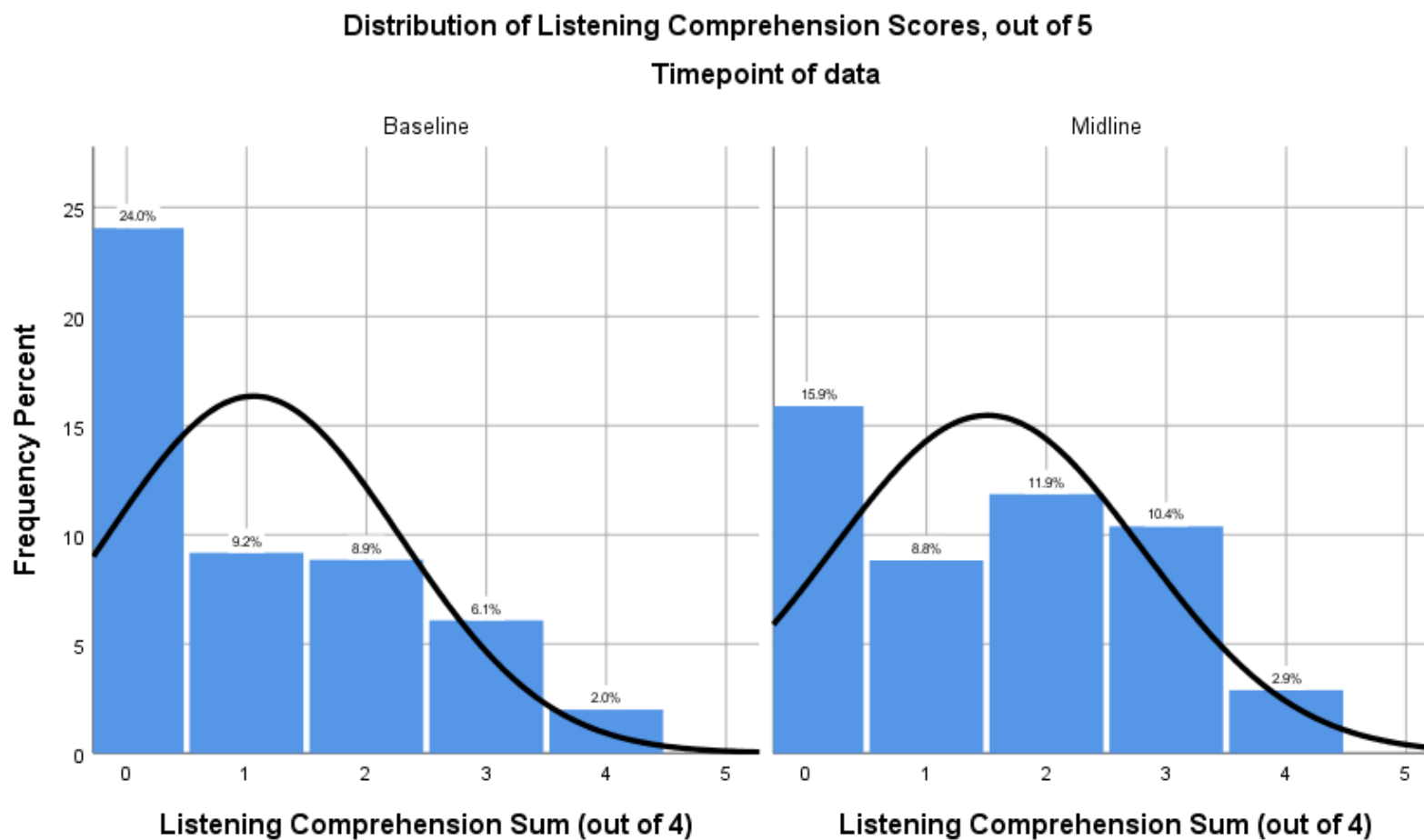


Table B.2: Distribution of Reading Comprehension Scores for Pupils between Baseline and Midline

	Zero Correct		One Correct		Two Correct		Three Correct		Four Correct*		Five Correct		Total Meeting Benchmark of 4+ Correct*	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Baseline	538	78.2%	28	4.4%	30	5.0%	43	6.9%	24	2.8%	19	2.8%	43	5.6%
Midline	523	77.4%	31	4.1%	32	4.8%	37	5.1%	36	6.0%	19	2.7%	55	8.7%

Note: One asterisk (*) denotes a statistically significant difference between baseline and midline at $p < 0.05$.

Table B.3: Head Teacher Supplementary Findings

Item	Baseline				Midline			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Does the school have a time book for recording daily teacher attendance?	63	92.1%	5	7.9%	67	95.7%	3	4.3%
Is there a logbook (visitor book) in the head teacher's office?	50	72.0%	18	28.0%	65	92.6%	5	7.4%
Is there a teaching master-timetable displayed in the head teacher's office?	36	51.7%	32	48.3%	39	53.0%	31	47.0%
Is there a teacher duty roster clearly displayed in the head teacher's office?	35	50.4%	33	49.6%	44	61.3%	26	38.7%
Are there visual teaching and learning materials displayed in the head teacher's office?	42	60.2%	26	39.8%	46	64.5%	24	35.5%
Are inventory book or other school records properly organized and updated in the head teacher's office?	44	63.2%	24	36.9%	48	67.9%	22	32.1%

	Baseline				Midline			
Item	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Has the head teacher benefited from training in diagnostic teaching methods?	39	55.4%	29	44.6%	60	85.1%	10	15.0%

Table B.4: Teacher and Classroom Observation Supplementary Findings

		Baseline		Midline	
Item	Response Options	n	%	n	%
Do you have a lesson plan or note for the class you just conducted?	Yes, in head teacher's office	110	76.0%	118	76.8%
	No	35	24.0%	33	23.2%
Do you have access to a teacher's guide?	Yes, in head teacher's office	94	65.3%	68	44.6%
	Yes, in classroom	30	19.8%	52	34.0%
	No	21	15.0%	31	21.4%
Pupils follow instructions	Little evidence	46	24.6%	38	24.5%
	Moderate evidence	79	43.6%	61	37.2%
	Extensive evidence	56	31.8%	61	38.3%

Table B.5: Pupil Attention Supplementary Findings

	Baseline		Midline	
Item	n	Mean	n	Mean
Number of boys in class	179	13.1	158	12.1
Number of girls in class	179	11.6	158	12.0
Number of boys attentive to instructions	179	8.3	158	7.5
Number of girls attentive to instructions	179	7.5	158	7.1

Table B.6: Head Teacher School Feeding Response Supplementary Findings

		Baseline		Midline	
Item	Response Option	n	%	n	%
Have or will pupils in this school receive/be served meal/food provided by CRS today?	Yes	5	6.1%	69	98.6%
	No	47	67.1%	1	1.4%
	Do not know/Not applicable	16	26.8%	0	0.0%
When was meal/food served to pupils today?	Morning (before 11:30 am)	5	100.0%	22	34.0%
	At lunch time (exactly at 11:30–12:30 pm)	1	20.0%	46	64.6%

		Baseline		Midline	
Item	Response Option	n	%	n	%
	Afternoon (after 12:30 pm)	0	0.0%	2	2.6%
Why have pupils in this school not been served meal/food today?	No feeding program yet established at school	21	36.4%	0	0.0%
	Food supplies run out	40	60.5%	0	0.0%
	No condiments for cooking	3	4.8%	0	0.0%
	No fuel (firewood) to cook food	0	0.00%	0	0.0%
	No food preparer available	1	1.9%	0	0.00%
	No cooking utensils (pot)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	No access to store	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Other	3	4.7%	1	0.0%
Are the community people supporting this school with stipulated level of food contribution for cooking materials (such as condiments, firewood, vegetables, etc.) to the school feeding program?	Yes	46	64.4%	70	100.0%
	No	6	8.8%	0	0.00%

		Baseline		Midline	
Item	Response Option	n	%	n	%
	Do not know/Not applicable	16	26.8%	0	0.00%
Are teachers of this school currently receiving meals (school feeding program)?	Yes	23	32.1%	70	100.0%
	No	29	41.0%	0	0.0%
	Do not know/Not applicable	16	26.8%	0	0.0%

Table B.7: School Observation Enrollment, Attendance, and Dropouts

Item	Baseline				Midline			
	N	Girls (mean)	Boys (mean)	Total (mean)	N	Girls (mean)	Boys (mean)	Total (mean)
Class 1 enrolled	68	30.6	34	64.6	69	33.5	35.1	68.6
Class 1 attending	68	20.3	22.8	43.1	69	26.2	27.8	54.0
Class 1 attendance rate (%)	68	66.3%	67.0%	66.7%	69	78.1%	79.3%	78.7%
Class 1 dropouts	68	1.4	1.8	3.2	69	1.5	1.7	3.2
Class 2 enrolled	68	18.2	19.5	37.8	69	16.9	17.2	34.1
Class 2 attending	68	12.3	13.7	26.0	69	12.7	13.2	25.8
Class 2 attendance rate (%)	68	67.6%	69.9%	68.8%	69	74.8%	76.7%	75.7%

Item	Baseline				Midline			
	N	Girls (mean)	Boys (mean)	Total (mean)	N	Girls (mean)	Boys (mean)	Total (mean)
Class 2 dropouts	68	0.9	0.6	1.6	69	.5	.8	1.3
Class 3 enrolled	68	13.9	16.	30.7	69	13.2	14.5	27.7
Class 3 attending	68	9.4	12.0	21.4	69	10.4	11.0	21.4
Class 3 attendance rate (%)	68	67.5%	71.9%	69.9%	69	78.7%	75.9%	77.2%
Class 3 dropouts	68	0.8	0.6	1.4	69	0.8	0.6	1.4
Class 4 enrolled	68	11.6	14.1	25.7	69	9.9	11.2	21.1
Class 4 attending	68	8.5	10.2	18.6	69	7.6	8.8	16.4
Class 4 attendance rate (%)	68	73.0%	72.0%	72.5%	69	76.4%	78.6%	77.6%
Class 4 dropouts	68	0.5	0.6	1.1	69	0.4	0.4	0.8
Class 5 enrolled	68	9.2	10.6	19.9	69	8.0	8.6	16.6
Class 5 attending	68	6.4	7.8	14.2	69	6.3	6.4	12.7
Class 5 attendance rate (%)	68	69.8%	73.3%	71.7%	69	78.2%	73.8%	75.9%
Class 5 dropouts	68	0.5	0.6	1.1	69	0.5	0.4	0.9
Class 6 enrolled	68	7.7	10.2	17.9	69	5.0	5.5	10.5
Class 6 attending	68	4.9	7.8	12.7	69	3.4	4.0	7.5
Class 6 attendance rate (%)	68	64.1%	76.7%	71.3%	69	68.9%	72.79%	71.0%
Class 6 dropouts	68	0.4	0.3	0.7	69	0.2	0.2	0.5

Item	Baseline				Midline			
	N	Girls (mean)	Boys (mean)	Total (mean)	N	Girls (mean)	Boys (mean)	Total (mean)
Total enrolled	68	91.2	105.2	19.4	69	86.6	92.1	178.1
Total attending	68	61.8	74.2	136.1	69	66.5	72.7	137.7
Total attendance rate (%)	68	67.8%	70.6%	69.3%	69	76.8%	78.9%	77.1%
Total dropouts	68	4.0	5.1	9.0	69	3.9	4.2	8.1

Table B.8: Classroom Observation Headcounts

Item	Baseline				Midline			
	N	Girls (average)	Boys (average)	Total (average)	N	Girls (average)	Boys (average)	Total (average)
Class 2 attending	62	14	16	30	62	13	13	27
Class 3 attending	62	10	13	24	50	11	12	24
Class 4 attending	58	10	10	21	48	11	10	21

Table B.9: School Garden Findings

		Baseline		Midline	
Item	Response Options	n	%	n	%
Does the school have a school garden?	Yes	22	30.6%	50	72.6%
	No	46	69.4%	19	27.4%
What types of vegetables are grown?	Green beans	5	24.3%	16	32.1%
	Potatoes	12	51.9%	31	67.9%
	Peppers	10	45.8%	32	64.2%
	Tomatoes	4	17.7%	14	27.3%
	Cassava leaves	16	72.1%	34	69.8%
	Pumpkin	1	5.8%	4	7.3%
	Lettuce	2	8.0%	6	11.7%
	Spinach	0	0.0%	1	2.0%
	Other	4	19.2%	19	37.7%

Table B.10: Head Teacher Preventative Health Services Supplementary Findings

		Baseline		Midline	
Item	Response Options	n	%	n	%
Have pupils in this school received de-worming medicine/worm medicine during this school year (since September 2018)?	Yes	48	69.9%	59	83.7%
	No	20	30.1%	11	16.3%
	Number of times (average)	68	1.4	70	1.3
Have pupils in this school received vitamin A supplementation during this school year (since September 2018)?	Yes	38	54.5%	42	60.3%
	No	30	45.5%	28	39.7%
	Number of times (average)	68	22.3	70	1.2

Annex C. Updated Modified Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT)

Table C.1: Updated Modified Indicator Performance Tracking Table

Updated MGD 4 Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT) – August 2021.

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Outcomes (Data available only for Baseline, Midterm, and Final Evaluation years)					
Percent 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 ²⁵	MGD # 1	5.58%%	5.58%	24.5%	8.7%
Percent 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 (Male)	MGD # 1	7.77%	7.77%	26.6%	10.0%
Percent 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 (Female)	MGD # 1	3.11%	3.11%	21.9%	7.4%
Percent of participants of community-level nutrition interventions who practice promoted infant and young child feeding behaviors ²⁶	MGD # 21	50%	98.27%	65%	100%

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Percentage of students in target schools who achieve a passing score on a test of good health and hygiene practices ²⁷	CRS Custom Indicator #10	42.74%	42.7%	70%	54.4%
Outcomes (Data available only at baseline and annually)					
Average student attendance rate in USDA supported classrooms/schools	MGD # 2	68.1%	68.1%	76.10%	94.78%
Average student attendance rate in USDA supported classrooms/schools (Male)	MGD # 2	68.5%	70.9%	76.5%	94.68%
Average student attendance rate in USDA supported classrooms/schools (Female)	MGD # 2	67.7%	52.7%	75.7%	94.89%
Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 4	0	0	1049	423
Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance (Male)	MGD # 4	0	0	944	378
Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality	MGD # 4	0	0	105	45

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance (Female)					
Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 6	0	0	464	118
Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance (Male)	MGD # 6	0	0	455	114
Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance (Female)	MGD # 6	0	0	9	4
Number of students enrolled in schools receiving USDA assistance (Primary School)	MGD # 9	44511	44,511	64,987	52,287
Number of students enrolled in schools receiving USDA assistance (Male)	MGD # 9	23,356	23,356	33,793	25,568
Number of students enrolled in schools receiving USDA assistance (Female)	MGD # 9	21,155	21,155	31,194	23,731
Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 19	0	0	9,208	0

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance (Male)	MGD # 19	0	0	2,762	0
Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance (Female)	MGD # 19	0	0	6,446	0
Number of Individuals who demonstrate use of new safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance ²⁸	MGD # 20	0	0	1,391	1,550
Number of Individuals who demonstrate use of new safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance (Male)	MGD # 20	0	0	556	620
Number of Individuals who demonstrate use of new safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance (Female)	MGD # 20	0	0	835	930
Output (Data available only at Baseline and Annually)					
Number of policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 10	0	0	Stages 3:3	5

²⁸ Calculated as the number of individuals who can name at least eight of 11 safe food practices.

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Number of policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance Education	MGD # 10	0	0	Stage 3.2	2
Number of policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance Child Health and Nutrition	MGD # 10	0	0	Stages 3.1	3
Value of new USG commitments, and new public and private sector investments leveraged by USDA to support food security and nutrition	MGD # 11	0	42,000	0	162178
Number of children under five (0-59 months) reached with nutrition-specific interventions through USG-supported programs	MGD # 24	0	0	897	80
Number of children under five (0-59 months) reached with nutrition-specific interventions through USG-supported programs (Male)	MGD # 24	0	0	359	49
Number of children under five (0-59 months) reached with nutrition-specific interventions through USG-supported programs (Female)	MGD # 24	0	0	538	31
Number of children under two (0-23 months) reached with community-level nutrition interventions through USG-supported programs	MGD # 25	0	0	347	40

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Number of children under two (0-23 months) reached with community-level nutrition interventions through USG-supported programs (Male)	MGD # 25	0	0	114	24
Number of children under two (0-23 months) reached with community-level nutrition interventions through USG-supported programs (Female)	MGD # 25	0	0	208	16
Number of pregnant women reached with nutrition-specific interventions through USG-supported programs.	MGD # 26	0	0	321	60
Number of pregnant women reached with nutrition-specific interventions through USG-supported programs. (<19 years of age)	MGD # 26	0	0	74	0
Number of pregnant women reached with nutrition-specific interventions through USG-supported programs. (≥19 years of age)	MGD # 26	0	0	247	0
Number of individuals participating in USDA food security programs	MGD # 30	0	57649	81,071	66105
Number of individuals participating in USDA food security programs (Male)	MGD # 30	0	31,450	37,210	34,463
Number of individuals participating in USDA food security programs (Female)	MGD # 30	0	26,199	43,861	31,642

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Number of individuals benefiting indirectly from USDA-funded interventions	MGD # 31	0	63553	98,644	76216
Output (Data available only at baseline and Biannually)					
Number of teaching and learning materials provided as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 3	0	0	1,100	70,060
Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 5	1321	0	1,398	1441
Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance (Male)	MGD # 5	1202	0	1,272	1,215
Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance (Female)	MGD # 5	119	0	126	226
Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 7	618	0	234	310
Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance (Male)	MGD # 7	606	0	229	300
Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance (Female)	MGD # 7	12	0	5	10
Number of educational facilities (i.e. school buildings, classrooms, improved water sources and latrines) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 8	0	191	0	62

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Number of educational facilities (classrooms) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 8	0	104	0	48
Number of educational facilities (improved water sources) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 8	0	40	0	0
Number of educational facilities (latrines) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 8	0	62	0	21
Number of educational facilities (Kitchens, cook areas) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 8	0	310	0	310
Number of educational facilities (Other school grounds or building (storerooms) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 8	0	192	0	118
Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 12	0	0	0	1
Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USDA assistance (Education)	MGD # 12	0	2	0	1
Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USDA assistance (Health)	MGD # 12	0	0	0	0
Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USDA assistance (Nutrition)	MGD # 12	0	0	0	0

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USDA assistance (Multi Focus)	MGD # 12	0	2	0	1
Number of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) or similar "school" governance structures supported as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 13	0	0	310	310
Quantity of take home rations provided (in metric tons) as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 14	0	0	300	1,027.65
Quantity of take home rations provided (in metric tons) as a result of USDA assistance (Rice)	MGD # 14	0	0	261.2	730.58
Quantity of take home rations provided (in metric tons) as a result of USDA assistance (Vegetable Cooking Oil)	MGD # 14	0	0	14.0	112.919
Quantity of take home rations provided (in metric tons) as a result of USDA assistance (Lentils)	MGD # 14	0	0	25.0	71.59
Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 15	0	0	9019	64395
Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance (New)	MGD # 15	0	0	3887	0

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance (Continuing)	MGD # 15	0	0	5132	0
Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance (Male students)	MGD # 15	0	0	1978	57,186
Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance (Female students)	MGD # 15	0	0	1754	7,209
Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance (Pregnant and Lactating Women)	MGD # 15	0	0	0	0
Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance (Others)	MGD # 15	0	0	5287	0
Number of daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) provided to school-age children as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 16	0	251405	9453657	6,965,073
Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 17	0	29,703	64987	52287
Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (Male)	MGD # 17	0	15237	33,793	26659

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (Female)	MGD # 17	0	14466	31,194	25628
Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (New)	MGD # 17	0	29703	4,421	0
Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (Continuing)	MGD # 17	0	0	60,566	0
Number of individuals trained in safe food preparation and storage as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 22	0	0	1,545	1541
Number of individuals trained in safe food preparation and storage as a result of USDA assistance (Male)	MGD # 22	0	0	618	611
Number of individuals trained in safe food preparation and storage as a result of USDA assistance (Female)	MGD # 22	0	0	927	930
Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 23	0	0	10,232	5067
Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance (Male)	MGD # 23	0	0	5,577	0

Performance Indicator	Standard MGD Indicator Number	Baseline Target	Baseline Actual	Midline Target	Midline Actual
Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance (Female)	MGD # 23	0	0	4,655	5,067
Number of schools using an improved water source	MGD # 27	46	161	184	184
Number of schools with improved sanitation facilities	MGD # 28	169	228	171	162
Number of students receiving deworming medication(s)	MGD # 29	0	0	64,987	37,340
Number of schools reached as a result of USDA assistance	MGD # 32	0	310	310	310

Annex D. Scope of Work and Research Questions

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Midterm Evaluation for the McGovern Dole IV – 2018 Award

Purpose:

The purpose of these Terms of Reference (TOR) is to outline the conditions and responsibilities of the consultant(s) who will undertake the baseline, midterm evaluation and final evaluation of the McGovern-Dole project, Phase IV.

Background:

CRS Sierra Leone is implementing the fourth phase of the McGovern-Dole (MGD) 'All Pikin for Learn' (APFL) project in 15 chiefdoms in Koinadugu and Falaba districts. This has been in line with the Government of Sierra Leone's Education strategy to improve quality and relevance of education, encourage the completion of primary education for vulnerable and marginalized children, especially girls, and increase community involvement in education. Phase I was between October 2008 and 2012; Phase II ran from October 2012 to February 2016; and Phase III ran from December 2016 to September 2018. During Phase III, CRS took several steps to ensure sustainability of the project, including helping schools through the formal approval process that qualifies them to receive government support. With the new Free Quality Education program that was launched on 20th August 2018, the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) will provide tuition-free education, textbooks and uniforms for students, and expand the national school feeding program. Schools that are not approved will not be eligible for support from government. However, government is making efforts to approve as many schools as possible. A key strategy for sustainability in Phase IV will be to intensify advocacy efforts to get these schools approved and government-supported. In this phase, CRS will work with government to transition school feeding from USDA funding to national ownership and funding. Therefore, GoSL support to school feeding programs is critical to continue the gains made in phases I-IV.

In September 2018, the 'All Pikin for Learn' project was approved for another four years, with a coverage expansion. Phase IV will operate in 5 chiefdoms (Kamukeh, Wara Wara Bafodia, Diang, Kalian, Nieni) of Koinadugu district and 10 chiefdoms (Dembelia-Sinkunia, Kebelia, Sulima, Wollay Barawa, Morifindugu, Mongo, Nyedu, Neya, Delemandugu, and Kulor Saradu) of Falaba district, in the north of Sierra Leone; see chiefdom maps in Annex I. During this period, the project will seek to achieve two strategic objectives: **increased literacy of school aged children**; and **increased use of health and dietary practices of school aged children in 309 schools**. See details of program activities, Annex IX. Phase IV will have a baseline, midterm, and final evaluation. This scope of work will serve as the guide for all three events.

Retention of the consultant(s) to proceed with the midterm review and/or final evaluation, however, is dependent upon their satisfactory performance of the baseline. CRS would relaunch the selection process for the midterm review and final evaluation where the baseline consultant does not meet expectations. The baseline evaluator met the performance criteria and will be retained to conduct the midterm Evaluation. Please note that all evaluation reports will be reviewed in line with an internal checklist (Annex II). Having satisfactorily completed the baseline and interim evaluations, CRS has elected to retain the same consultant (s) to carry out the final evaluation.

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APFL IV will target a total number of 88,696 direct beneficiaries including 69,731 pupils²⁹ in 309 schools across 15 chiefdoms in Koinadugu and Falaba districts. CRS provides a mid-morning nutritious daily meal which consists of fortified rice, lentils, and vegetable oil to pupils, teachers and cooks in all the intervention schools, for every school day during the school year for four years. This is consistent with the Government of Sierra Leone's draft National School Feeding Plan. The project also works with local communities, strengthening School Management Committees, Mothers' Support Groups, and Saving and Internal Lending Communities.

The project works with the MBSSE both in Freetown and in Koinadugu and Falaba Districts, the Association of Language and Literacy Educators (TALLE) and will engaged a reputable teacher training institute for the training of teachers. Additionally, the project may contract a partner to implement health and nutrition related activities. The implementation of the project has been affected by The World Health Organization declaration of a public health emergency of international concern in January of 2020 after a respiratory disease was discovered in December of 2019. This disease is still an ongoing health concern and has resulted in the death of over two Million four hundred people worldwide. In March of 2020, Sierra Leone reported its index case and this was followed by a second in April of the same year. The government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Health and Sanitation reactivated the emergency response unit which was initially formed during the Ebola crisis. This body is charged with the responsibility of managing the emergency response and ensuring that the country recovers from this pandemic. In a bid to curb the spread of the COVID disease several measures including inter- district lock down, curfew, enforcement of the use of face mask, ban on social activities and social gathering were put in place. Churches, Mosques and School were closed for about eight months with the resulting negative effect on student learning as contact time between teacher and pupils was lost and staff movement was hampered due to the lock down and consequently, School Feeding was brought to a halt. However, during this period, the Program conducted Take Home Ration (THR) distribution for beneficiaries. This distribution was done in two (2) phases ;first phase was conducted in April, targeting 1520 Teachers and 49,938 students from approximately 16,646 Households and the second phase which was conducted in May targeted 1,577 Teachers, 930 Cooks and 51,849 students from approximately 17,283. The Government supported by partners took steps based on lessons learnt from the Ebola crisis to organize a radio teaching Programme to support student learning during the period when schools were closed. The Food for education program organized General COVID-19 sensitization and messaging during THR distribution focusing on safe meeting procedures for reading clubs. Two transmitters were bought to support the transmission of Radio lessons and life skills within Falaba and Koinadugu districts. Additionally solar-powered radio/lights with SD cards were provided pre-loaded with 6 weeks of radio learning content to the reading clubs while the Savings and internal lending Communities (SILC) groups were also sensitized on safe meeting guidelines The current number of cumulative cases as at February 15th from the situation report is Three thousand eight hundred and twenty-three (3823) with seventy-nine (79) death, Zero new cases and Two thousand five hundred and seventy- eight (2578) recoveries. In the current climate of reduced cases, the project implementation is ongoing, and the program staff are conducting awareness session to keep communities knowledgeable and alert of the dangers of the disease. During meetings steps are taken to ensure that the guidelines provided by the government on social distancing, handwashing

²⁹ In the Sierra Leonean context, children attending primary school are referred to as "pupils", whereas children attending secondary school are referred to as "students".

and wearing of face mask is enforced. It is within this context that the mid-term evaluation will be conducted with the precaution taken to ensure participants and evaluation team is not exposed.

Evaluation Plan:

The Evaluation Plan (See Annex III) will guide all actions that would be taken by CRS and the successful consultant(s) to conduct the baseline, final evaluation and midterm review. Therefore, this TOR will be contingent on the APFL IV Evaluation plan and it is subject to changes as deemed fit by USDA. CRS and the consultant(s) may also suggest changes to the evaluation plan for the approval of USDA, which would then allow for changes to be made to this TOR.

The Evaluation Plan will facilitate accountability, learning and decision making for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MBSSE), CRS, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and participating communities by collecting quality data, analyzing it, and making it available to stakeholders. The project's Theory of Change (Annex IV) articulates how component parts of the project will contribute to the expected goal and the assumptions the theory makes to permit evaluators to test its validity in achieving project outcomes.

The Evaluation Plan provides more details about how project activities and results will be achieved, how the project aligns with MGD learning agenda, how the project intends to build government capacity and gives an account of yearly targeted project direct beneficiaries. The Evaluation Plan also provides the overall evaluation design, sampling methodology, key evaluation questions, evaluation timelines and evaluation management and dissemination strategy of the baseline, midline and final evaluations.

McGovern-Dole Project Results Framework

The APFL IV Project Results Framework, also found in the Evaluation Plan, aligns to USDA's Program Level Frameworks. It outlines a hierarchy of interventions and outcomes that lead to the overall strategic objectives of the project -increased literacy levels of school aged children and increased use of health and dietary practices through the following;

- Improved Quality of Literacy Instruction
- Improved Pupil Attentiveness
- Improved Pupil Attendance
- Improved Use of Health and Dietary Practices
- Increased Capacity of Government Institutions
- Increased Engagement of Local Organizations and Community Groups

Evaluation Objectives

The objective of all three evaluations is to conduct a comprehensive and independent evaluation that will assess progress made against the two strategic objectives of the APFL IV:

- SO1: Improved literacy of school age children and
- SO2: Increased use of health and dietary practices of school aged children in 309 schools in the 15 project intervention chiefdoms.

Objectives of the Midterm Evaluation

The objective of the midterm evaluation is to critically assess whether the project is on track to meet its objectives. It will assess the progress of the program's implementation of activities using the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability using sampling design and methodology described in the approved evaluation plan.

The midterm evaluation will compare baseline to monitoring data to date and using various methods specified in the evaluation plan, will identify early indications of the progress during the project intervention. The midterm evaluation will also provide lessons learned and proffer

recommendations focused on overcoming any potential issues or challenges identified, or other suggestions for improving program design and implementation.

APFL IV Evaluation Design

APFL IV will use a performance evaluation to measure the outcomes of the program from baseline to midterm evaluation to final evaluation. Pupil outcomes include literacy, attentiveness, attendance, enrollment, and health, hygiene and dietary practices. Teacher outcomes measure knowledge of teaching practices and attendance. Outcomes related to parents, SMC members, and other community stakeholders will also be assessed.

- a. The consultant(s) will collect survey data at baseline, interim and end line about literacy outcomes, teaching practices, pupil perceptions, health and nutrition behaviors of pupils, teachers and school cooks. The consultant(s) will also collect survey data pertaining to the effect of the program on school stakeholders, teachers, administrators, directors, and members of the SMCs.
- b. School attendance data: CRS will provide the consultant(s) with data collected by the schools about pupils' attendance, but the consultant(s) will also need to conduct a headcount at baseline. Ideally those data will be organized and formatted in a way that it can be easily used for analysis. If pupils can be tracked across years, these data will be very useful. The consultant(s) will advise CRS on the collection of these data and provide analysis. These data will be collected through the period of project implementation and its analysis will be incorporated in all three reports at baseline, midterm evaluation and end line.
- c. The consultant(s) will collect qualitative data through in-depth interviews with school stakeholders, teachers, administrators, directors, and members of the SMCs to understand what components of the program are more and less effective and why. Potential questions may include: How have your teaching techniques changed since you were matched with your literacy coach? For pupils: Have you noticed a change in your classroom performance? If yes, what are the main reasons behind this change?

The consultant will be guided by evaluation criteria and key questions for each of the surveys; Baseline, Midline and End line, presented in the Evaluation Plan, Annex III. The consultant should reference the evaluation questions presented in the Evaluation Plan, Annex III

Evaluation Methodology

The baseline, midterm evaluation and final evaluation will use both quantitative and qualitative methods. During the baseline, interim and final evaluation, a pupil survey and literacy assessment will be carried out with a representative number of pupils in the intervention zone. Observations will take place to assess how well teachers and administrators already use literacy teaching techniques, current levels of teacher attendance and the extent to which pupils wash their hands before meals. The study will also include knowledge assessments of cooks, document review to capturing enrollment number of pupils' and teachers' attendance data. Sampling design and methodology for all three evaluations will follow the approved evaluation plan as described in Annex III. Further discussion on the details of the sampling design and methodology will be possible with the consultant(s) and the sampling strategy can be improved on should the consultancy firm deems necessary. However, significant modifications to the evaluation plan will require advance approval of CRS and USDA.

The evaluation team will work closely with CRS field staff, who know the implementation area. Based on the evaluation design and questions described in the Evaluation Plan (Annex III), the consultant will adopt APFL phase III qualitative and quantitative tools as well as develop new tools where necessary and submit draft evaluation tools to CRS for validation. The validated tools will be developed into the

digital data collection platform, CommCare software by CRS staff. CRS will make available to the consultant tools from APFL phase III for the evaluation only. CRS has acquired CommCare software license and will provide the appropriate digital devices to the consultant for data collection only.

Quantitative tools: Multiple tools will collect quantitative baseline, midline and final evaluation data, including the following (please note that proposed and key information to be collected and sampling will be finalized with the final retained consultant / firm): The Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP), Annex XI, categorizes tools that will be used by evaluators and project staff for measuring performance indicators, both MGD standard and CRS Custom indicators throughout the project life cycle. Table 1 below presents list of indicators for which data will be collected by evaluators at baseline, midline and endline. Performance indicators that may have a non-zero at baseline or should be reported at any of the evaluation periods but should be collected at project level will be provided to the evaluator.

Table 1. Quantitative Tools

Quantitative tools	Key indicator for which tool will be used	Respondent	Sample strategy
Observation checklist	Percent of participants of community-level nutrition interventions who practice promoted infant and young child feeding behaviors (MDG Indicator 21)	MSG members with children under 2	Simple random sample (of mothers)
Pupil Survey	Percent of students in target schools who indicate that they are hungry or very hungry during the school days (CRS Custom Indicator #3) Percent of students in target schools who achieve a passing score on a test of good health and hygiene practices (CRS Custom Indicator 10)	Pupils disaggregated by gender, selected from classrooms (#3) and school health clubs (#10)	Cluster Sampling
School attendance tracker and school admission register	Percentage of students grades 3 to 6 who dropped out of school at the end of the school year (CRS Custom Indicator 9)	School administrator	Simple random sample (of schools)
Food preparers survey	Percent of food preparers at target schools who achieve a passing score on a test of safe food preparation and storage (CRS Custom Indicator 12)	Food preparers	Cluster Sampling

Reading Assessment	Percent of students who, by the end of two grades of schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text (MGD Indicator 1)	Pupils disaggregated by gender for all reading sub tasks	Cluster Sampling
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Table 2. Qualitative Tools

Qualitative Tool	Application	Respondents
Focus group discussion (FGD)	Open discussions on education beliefs, school infrastructure/ learning environment, reading, gender issues and parent/community involvement. FGD will be facilitated by one moderator and one note taker and one translator (as needed). Facilitators will be the same sex as the group that they are facilitating.	Pupils, Parents (beneficiary), Community members (non-beneficiary) 10-12 individuals: same age group and sex for each FGD
Key informant interviews	Key respondents will be interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire to assess perceptions about education, community involvement, learning environment and whether the program has successfully addressed the barriers to education.	School directors, teachers, local leaders, SMC chairman, MSGs & GoSL representatives

Through a stakeholders' validation workshop, the consultant will present preliminary results to CRS and project stakeholders to highlight areas of interest that will be valuable to understand better for project strategy and may provide additional context to the consultant. The collected data will be used to set and/or revise realistic targets for the indicators within the Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT) (Annex V); which is supported by the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) (Annex VI) and serve as a benchmark for comparison against monitoring and endline data to determine project impact.

Midterm evaluation report

The purpose of the midterm evaluation is to critically assess whether the project is on track to meet its objectives. It will be undertaken in a sample of the 309 project schools in the 15 project chiefdoms. It will assess the progress of the program's implementation of project activities using the DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability using sampling design and methodology described in the approved evaluation plan (Annex iii). The midterm evaluation will compare baseline to midterm evaluation and monitoring data to date and using various methods specified in the evaluation plan, will identify early indications of the progress during the project intervention. The midterm evaluation will also provide lessons learned and proffer recommendations focused on overcoming any potential issues or challenges identified, or other suggestions for improving program design.

The midterm evaluation will also document lessons learned, and recommend changes to activities or implementation strategies as needed. CRS will ensure that all key project staff and key stakeholders participate in the review process in order to bring together a range of viewpoints to inform the process, the overall assessment and recommendations. The midterm evaluation will also follow the

structure of the report described below and it will be shared widely to promote greater ownership of the project and sharing of lessons learned.

Based on satisfactory performance, the baseline consultant (s) will conduct the midterm evaluation as described in the approved evaluation plan scheduled to place in May of 2021.

The project's evaluation plan (Annex III) provides list of questions to be addressed during the Midterm evaluation, but these may be complemented by additional evaluation questions based on discussions held with the consultants, MBSSE and other stakeholders. During the process of the evaluation the Corona Virus guidelines provided by the Government of Sierra Leone will be observed to avoid making the process a spreader event. The use of mask, Social distancing, handwashing will be adhered to by data collectors and respondents.

Audience and Key Stakeholders

At the national and district level, CRS will work directly with the MSBBE Directorate of School Feeding, the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry, Ministry of Water Resources, and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs. CRS will also work with the Association of Language and Literacy Educators on the literacy activities and with Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science and Technology, Makeni University College (EBKUST/MUC) on the Distance Education Program.

At the local level, CRS will engage religious leaders, community health workers, Savings and Internal Lending Communities, school support officers, local authorities, reading clubs, Mothers' Support Groups, School Management Committees, school administrators, teachers, and Community Teachers' Associations.

Table 5. Midterm evaluation timeline

December 2020:	Midterm draft evaluation ToR submitted to USDA for review and approval
March 2021:	Midterm evaluation team identified and contractual agreement
March 2021	Prep workshop will take place to finalize the mid-term evaluation plan, methodology, assign roles and responsibilities and tools development.
June 2021	Consultant will speak with M&E Staff of USDA as a Key informant prior to data collection. Tools development and pre-testing
June 2021	Training of data collectors and electronic data collection
August 6, 2021	Data analysis and evaluation draft report written
August 31, 2021	First draft of Mid-term Evaluation report submitted to USDA
Sept 2021	Consultant and CRS address USDA comments and submit final report to USDA
Sept 2021	Develop action plan for responding to recommendations and submit to USDA for approval Analysis and dissemination workshop held with stakeholders

Midline Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Questions: Evaluation criteria and key questions to consider are as follows. These are phrased as they might be for the final evaluation as well, recognizing that progress measured at midterm will continue until activities end ahead of the final evaluation. The proposed methodologies will be elaborated further with evaluators.

Relevance: Relevance is defined by the extent to which project activities meet the priorities of the target group recipients, aligned with Government policies and donor requirements. Relevance should also address the extent to which the project has integrated the economic, cultural, and political context and existing relevant project activities.

Key questions to address:

- Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the overall goal, objectives and intermediate objectives?
- Does the program meet community and government priorities?
- Are stakeholders (school management committee, parents, teachers, local authorities) satisfied with their participation in the program? Why or why not?
- How well does the project complement and link to activities of other donors at the local level?
- Are there any interventions or results that are not included but should be?

- Were the project's adjustments to implementation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic relevant to the project's initial design and aligned with USDA and government priorities?

Methods: Document review; Focus group discussions with diverse stakeholder groups; Key informant interviews; Stakeholder Validation Workshop

Effectiveness: Effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which project activities attain their objectives.

Key questions to address:

- To what extent are the project results and the yearly benchmark indicators achieved/ likely to be achieved?
- Have the implementation strategies been relevant and effective enough to improve:
 - pupil's literacy level?
 - enrollment and attendance among pupils, particularly girls?
 - health and nutrition practices?
 - community participation and engagement?
 - the capacity of national school feeding program?
- How have the changes in the implementation strategy affected the effectiveness of the program to increase:
 - pupil's literacy level?
 - enrollment and attendance among pupils, particularly girls?
 - health and nutrition practices?
 - community participation and engagement?
 - the capacity of the national school feeding program?
- Are there other strategies that would work better and have more impact?
- Are there some internal and/or external factors that are hindering the efficient implementation of project activities?
- Is the management system effective?
- Has program implementation been effectively monitored? How well has the monitoring and evaluation mechanism facilitated project implementation?

- How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect the effectiveness of the program and what alternative strategies were employed?

Methods Document review: Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP)/ Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT), Regular reports, Annual reading assessments, Available monitoring data (Enrollment, Attendance), Data from community interventions (SMC functionality, Food contributions, School project progress); Representative pupil survey and reading assessment; Focus group discussions with diverse stakeholder groups in schools including teachers, administrators, pupils, parents, teaching faculty, project staff, central and local authorities, school management committees, etc.; Key Informant Interviews; Classroom observation; Stakeholder Validation Workshop

Efficiency: Efficiency measures both qualitative and quantitative outputs in relation to inputs. It assesses the extent to which the project uses valuable resources in order to achieve the desired results.

Key questions to address:

- Have activities been cost efficient?
- Are results achieved on time?
- Is the project being implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?
- What is the cost of anti-fraud measures relative to the value of being able to bring services to Sierra Leone?
- Were the COVID related changes made by the project efficient?

Impact: This measures the total effect of a project intervention, both intended and unintended.

Key questions to address:

- What were the intended and unintended positive and negative effects of the intervention on children, communities, and institutions? How does the intervention affect the well-being of different groups of stakeholders, including more vulnerable, at-risk youth?
- What do beneficiaries and other stakeholders affected by the intervention perceive to be the effects of the intervention on themselves?
- To what extent has ownership among stakeholders increased (monitoring teacher performance, care to prevent fraud, protect infrastructures, supplies, enforce educational bylaws?)
- To what extent can identified changes be attributed to the intervention?
- Did the theory of change to improve school education outcomes through increase literacy of school aged children; and increased use of health and dietary practices of school aged children combining with different foundational results hold? Why or why not?

- What effect did the COVID-19 pandemic have on the overall impact of the program?

Methods: Document review (DIP, IPTT, Budget, Regular reports), Representative pupil survey and reading assessment, focus group discussions with diverse stakeholder groups including teachers, administrators, pupils, parents, teaching faculty, project staff, central and local authorities, school management committees, etc. Key informant Interviews: Finance and Project managers, Classroom observation, critical reflection and thinking on program theory of change, Stakeholder Validation Workshop,

Sustainability: The midterm evaluation will assess whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn and the extent to which the project has developed local ownership and sustainable partnerships.

Key questions to address:

- What activities and/or outcomes (both expected and unexpected) of the program are likely to be sustained?
- Has the School Feeding policy framework been improved?
- Is the SF program funded from the government?
- Are Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) and Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MOHS) effectively collaborating with MBSSE?
- How effective is their M&E system?
- Are teachers motivated to stay?
- To what extent are high performing teachers taking over for Literacy Advisors?
- What evidence is there to suggest this?
- What are the major factors that can influence the achievement or non-achievement of project sustainability?
- How do the government's capacities, policies, procedures, and priorities contribute to sustainability?
- What strategies should be used to obtain long lasting support from communities and local/central administration that goes beyond the time of the project?
- What exit strategies were incorporated into program design and what strategies were implemented?

Methods: Document review (Government policies, procedures and priority documents, DIP, IPTT, Budget, Regular reports, Cross-national literature review of successful sustainability strategies, focus group discussions with diverse stakeholder groups including teachers, administrators, pupils, parents, teaching faculty, project staff, central and local authorities, school management committees, etc. Key informant Interviews: Finance and Project managers, critical reflection and thinking on program exit strategy, Stakeholder Validation Workshop

Table 32: Key sustainability questions

These may be complemented by additional evaluation questions based on discussions held with MBSSE, USDA, the evaluator, and other stakeholders. In addition, the midterm evaluation will document lessons learned, and recommend changes to activities or implementation strategies as needed. The midterm evaluation will also collect data to inform progress on the project's research questions.

READING ASSESSMENT – ENGLISH

All Pikin for Learn IV

Class 2

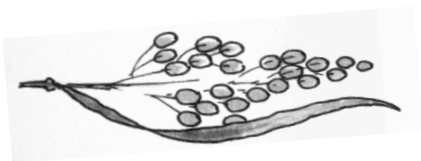
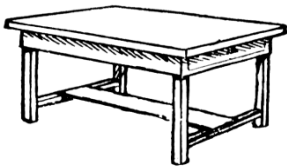
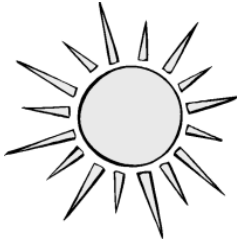
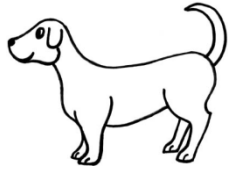
June 2021

Letter Name Identification

R

B	y	s	i	t	h	M	A	r	L
j	k	C	z	G	v	x	P	e	O
n	f	W	d	C	Q	K	l	q	U
V	J	S	u	F	o	X	E	Z	p
b	W	T	H	a	g	I	m	D	N
Y									

Initial Sound Identification



Familiar Word Identification

tin

play	at	go	me	see
here	can	run	and	look
big	ball	boy	come	it
he	that	this	spoon	man
is	goat	you	cup	table
leg	head	are	all	like
the	from	number	play	into
does	yes	green	not	red

Nonword Reading

sut	fid	mab
-----	-----	-----

fim	vob	hif	dop	lum
zeg	jal	pes	fik	neb
wis	jol	mef	tos	daf
shab	meb	dap	yot	pog
mip	mof	de	reb	nuk

Oral Reading Fluency

The girl has three fish. The fish are fat. The girl puts the fish in a basket. She runs home. The girl's mother is there. Her mother will cook the fish. The girl will be happy.

Annex F. Pupil Survey

PUPIL SURVEY

Introduction & Informed Consent

Consent included in reading assessment for students.

Instructions

Administer the pupil questionnaire to each student G2 pupils selected for the reading assessment.

A. General Information

B. PUPIL'S INFORMATION

1. Sex of pupil: Boy ----- 0 Girl ----- 1 |__|
2. Age (in years) of pupil as at last birthday. |__| |__|
3. Are you provided with textbooks to read during class time in this school?
 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |__|
4. Have you ever been provided with a slate this school year?
 Yes ----- 1 No, not at all ----- 0 |__|
5. Are you a member of the school Reading Club?
 Yes ----- 1
 No ----- 0 |__|
 School has no reading club -- 99

C. SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME

6. Did you eat at home or elsewhere before coming to school this morning?
 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |__|
- 7A. Have you been given/served food/meal in school yesterday?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

7B. Have you been given/served food/meal in school today?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 If No, **Skip to Qu. 11 (and skip Q. 12)**
|____|

8. When were you given food in school today? That is, were you given food in the morning or afternoon?

Morning (before 11:30 am) ----- 1
At lunch time (exactly 11:30-12:15 pm) -- 2
Afternoon (after 12:15 pm) ----- 3
Don't know----- 4 |____|

9. After eating food, would you say you are not at all hungry, somewhat hungry or very hungry now?

Not at all hungry (had enough food) ----- 1 >>> **Skip to Qu. 11**
Somewhat hungry (had some food but not enough) ---- 2 |____|
Very hungry ----- 3

10. If hungry, why?

Food not enough ----- 1
Shared food with outsider (parent/other children at home) ----- 2 |____|
Other (Specify) _____ ----- 3

11. Are you given/served food/meal every day in the week?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

12. How satisfied are you with the food/meal that you receive in school today?(only asked if answer to Have you been given/served food/meal in school today? is yes)

Very satisfied----- 1
Somewhat satisfied ----- 2
Dissatisfied ----- 3
Very dissatisfied ----- 4 |____|

D. HEALTH, DIETARY & HYGIENE PRACTICES

13. Now I would like to ask you about the type of foods that you ate yesterday during the day and the night. Please tell me all the food that you ate yesterday during the day and the night.

Enumerator: Categorize the food list (as mentioned by child) into the various food type using the table below.

Child ate (.....) yesterday	I = Yes 0 = No
a. Grain, roots and tubers (e.g. rice, cassava, gari, yam, bulgur, potato, funday, plaintain coco yam, etc.)	☐
b. Legumes and Nuts (e.g. ground nut, beans, cashew etc.)	☐
c. Dairy products (milk, yogurt, cheese, cow milk, etc.)	☐
d. Flesh food (meat, fish, chicken, liver/organ meat)	☐
e. Eggs	☐
f. Fruits (e.g. banana, mango, plum, orange, avocado pear, lemon, etc.)	☐
g. Vegetables (e.g. Cassava leaves, potato leaves, okra, cucumber, carrot, tomatoes, etc.)	☐
h. Other foods you ate: please list_____	☐

14. **Enumerator:** Ask the pupil to tell you his/her knowledge on good health and hygiene practices. The list of good health and hygiene practices is provided below; select 'yes' if the pupil mention the practice and 'no' if he/she does not mention the practice at all. **Do not read the list to the pupil.**

Say "Now I would like to know your knowledge on good health and hygiene practices".

Ask: What are the things that you can do for you to have good health and hygiene. (do not read out the list)

Child knows (.....)	I – Yes 0 - No
a. Wash hands with soap and clean water after using the latrine	☐
b. Wash hands with soap and clean water before eating	☐
c. Drink safe water that has been treated, stored and retrieved properly	☐
d. Keep our environment clean and safe	☐
e. Keep latrines clean	☐

Child knows (.....)	I – Yes 0 - No
f. Wash our body daily	__
g. Deposit trash into a trash/dust bin	__
h. Cut and keep our nails clean	__
i. Brush our teeth twice a day	__
j. Hair braiding	__
k. Wear clean clothes	__
l. Eat good food	__

E. ACCESS TO PREVENTATIVE HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

15. Have received a de-worming medicine (i.e. worm medicine) in this school year (since September 2020)?

Yes ----- I No ----- 0 Don't know -----777 |__|

16. Have you received a vitamin A capsule in this school year (since September 2020)?

Yes ----- I No ----- 0 Don't know -----777 |__|

E. LIFE SKILLS

17. Have you ever attended any life skills session in this school? (hint: [Mention life skills such as coping with stress & emotion, self-awareness & empathy, communication & interpersonal relationships, critical & creative thinking; and decision making & problem solving])

Yes ----- I No ----- 0 Skip to end

18. What skills have you learned/ developed as a result of a life skill session?

End of interview! Thank pupil for participation.

Annex G. Teacher Survey and Classroom Observation Tool

TEACHER & CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOOL

Instructions: Please administer to three teachers of Classes 2, 3 and 4 (separately and one after the other), teaching Language Arts or English. Observe one full class period. Fill out one form per observation

Observation Start time		ID05: Subject	
ID01: School Name		ID06: Date of Observation	
ID02: School village/town		ID08: Enumerator Name	
ID03: Chiefdom		ID09: School number	
ID04: Class Level		Observation End time	
Section Observed (Select A if there is only one section in the class level/grade)			

My name is _____. We are collecting data on behalf of Catholic Relief Services-SL (CRS/SL) for the midline evaluation of the Food for Education Phase 4 (FFE 4) project. We would like to ask you a few questions about your school and the education services in this school. Be sure that the information you provide will be strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose of this survey only and will not serve as penalty for anyone. It will take about 30 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

Can you give me some of your time for me to talk to you and ask you few questions?

Consent given (tick as appropriate):

Yes ☐ —————→ **Start Interview**

No ☐ —————→ **Go to Next Teacher**

Section A: GENERAL CLASSROOM OBERVATION

1a. No. of Boys in Class: _ _ _ _ Enter "0" if there are none. Enter "777" if don't know/no response. 2. Type of Classroom: (Select one option) 1. Permanent (eg. Concrete with CI sheet) 2. Semi-Permanent (e.g. hut, makeshift) _ _ 3. Temporary (e.g. under a tree, outside)	1b. No. of Girls in Class _ _ _ _ Enter "0" if there are none. Enter "777" if don't know/no response. 3. Seating of children: (Select one option only) 1. Each child has own desk/bench 2. Two children share a desk/bench 3. Three children share a desk/bench _ _ 4. More than 3 children share a desk/bench 5. There are no desks/benches
4. How many pupils are without desks? That is, pupils have no desk to put their books to write or read. (Note: The standard is three children per desk) No. of pupils without desks _ _ _ _ Enter "0" if there are none. Enter "777" if don't know/no response.	5. How many pupils are without benches/chairs? That is, pupils have no benches/chairs to sit; sit on stone or timber log. (Note: The standard is three children per bench) No. of pupils without benches/chairs _ _ _ _ Enter "0" if there are none. Enter "777" if don't know/no response.
6. Does the classroom have the following items? Record if seen in the classroom or not seen in the classroom. a. A separate chalkboard or blackboard (1=seen, 0=not seen) _ b. A teacher's table and chair (1=seen, 0=not seen) _ c. Children's work posted on the wall (1=seen, 0=not seen) _ d. List of vocabulary words or alphabet strip/chart on the wall (1=seen, 0=not seen) _ e. Posters or messages about health or sanitation (1=seen, 0=not seen) _ 	7. Are textbooks or readers being used? (Select One option) a. By the teacher only b. By the children, one each c. By the children, shared by two _ _ d. By the children, shared by three or more e. There are no books or readers

Section B: USE OF LEARNING MATERIALS IN CLASS

Enumerator Instruction: For the following questions, observe and count how many pupils in the class use the following literacy materials. Enter "0" if there are none.

Literacy materials	Number of pupils using:	
8. Alphabet cards	a. Boys _ _ _ _	b. Girls _ _ _ _
9. Alphabet strips	a. Boys _ _ _ _	b. Girls _ _ _ _
10. Exercise book	a. Boys _ _ _ _	b. Girls _ _ _ _
11. Slates	a. Boys _ _ _ _	b. Girls _ _ _ _
12. Chalk	a. Boys _ _ _ _	b. Girls _ _ _ _

Section B: STUDENT ATTENTIVENESS

Enumerator Instructions: Evaluate student attentiveness during teaching/class session.

- 1 Little evidence of engagement means less than one-third of the students are engaged;
- 2 Moderate evidence means approximately half of students are engaged;
- 3 Extensive evidence means more than half of students are engaged.

Student Attentiveness Criteria	a	b	
	1. Little Evidence 2. Moderate Evidence 3. Extensive Evidence	Number of pupils attentive	
13. Students follow instructions.	_ _ _ _	a. Boys _ _ _ _	b. Girls _ _ _ _

		Enter "0" if there are none. Enter "777" if don't know/no response.	Enter "0" if there are none. Enter "777" if don't know/no response.
14. Students listen and work without distraction.		a. Boys 	b. Girls
15. Students are participating in the lesson (read passages, contribute to discussion, note taking).		a. Boys 	b. Girls
16. Students ask questions and/or seek help with learning.		a. Boys 	b. Girls
General Comments:			

End of observation. At the end of the class, please thank the teacher for allowing you to sit in his/her lesson. Ask for their time to answer a few more questions. Use the teacher form to administer the teacher interview.

Section C: TEACHER INTERVIEW

Select the district where the school is located.		Class level observed:	
Select the chiefdom where the school is located.		Section observed:	
Select the village/community where the school is located.		Subject observed:	
Select the name of the school.			

My name is _____. We are collecting data on behalf of Catholic Relief Services-SL (CRS/SL) for the midline evaluation of the Food for Education Phase 4 (FFE 4) project. We would like to ask you a few questions about your school and the education services in this school. Be sure that the information you provide will be strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose of this survey only; and will not serve as penalty for anyone. It will take about 30 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

Can you give me some of your time for me to talk to you and ask you few questions?

Yes ☐ —————> **Start Interview**

No ☐ —————> **Go to Next Teacher**

Administer the following questions to the teacher whose class you just observed.

1- Sex of teacher: Male -----1 Female -----2 ☐

2- Do you have a teaching certificate (such as TEC, TC Lower, TC or HTC)?

Yes -----1 No -----2 —————> **If No, Go to Q6** ☐

3- Which teaching certificate do you have?

TEC ----- 1

HTC ----- 4

TC Lower ----- 2

Other ----- 5 _____ |____|

TC ----- 3

4- For the [INSERT TYPE OF CERTIFICATE], from where did you get support to pursue your certification?

CRS distance learning/teacher training programme -----1

Other support -----2

5- What is the highest certificate you've completed?

BECE ----- 1

O'LEVEL ----- 3

WASSCE ----- 2

Other (specify) ----- 555 _____ |____|

6- Are you currently engaged in a distance education course that will lead to a teaching certificate?

Yes -----1

No -----2

|____|

7- In this school year (2020/21), have you ever attended a training in DTM (Diagnostic Teaching Methodologies) in this school?

Yes -----1

No -----2

|____|

8- Have you or any other teacher ever been trained in life skills areas in this school?

Enumerator: Mention life skills such as coping with stress & emotion, self-awareness & empathy, communication & interpersonal relationships, critical & creative thinking; and decision making & problem solving

Yes ----- 1

No ----- 2

9- In the past month, have you ever been visited or observed or mentored in your classroom ?

Yes -----1

No -----2

If No, Go to Qu. 11

|____|

10- If yes, how many times were you visited or observed or mentored last month (June 2019) by the

Once in the month ----- 1

Twice in the month ----- 2

More than twice in the month----- 3

11- During this school year (2020/21), have you ever been observed or mentored in your classroom by your **Head Teacher**?

Yes -----1

No -----2

If No, Go to Qu. 13

|____|

12- How many times have you been visited or observed or mentored in this school year by the **Head Teacher**?

Once in the year ----- 1

Twice in the year ----- 2

More than twice in the year ----- 3

13- During this school year (2020/21), have you ever been observed or mentored in your classroom by your **MBSSE Inspector/Supervisor**?

Yes -----1

No -----2

If No, Go to Qu. 15

|____|

14- How many times have you been visited or observed or mentored this school year by the **MBSSE Inspector/Supervisor**?

Once in the year ----- 1

Twice in the year ----- 2

More twice in the year ----- 3

Section D: IMPROVED EARLY GRADE LITERACY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

15- Do you have a lesson plan/note for the class you just conducted? *Ask to see the lesson plan.*

Yes, in Head Teacher's Office -----1

|____|

No -----0

If No, Go to Q18

16- **Enumerator:** Check to see whether the teacher used the following literacy instructional materials during teaching?

a. Alphabet cards	1= Yes	____
b. Literacy teacher's guide	2= No	____

17- Do you have access to a teacher's guide?

Yes, in Head Teacher's Office -----1

Yes, in the classroom -----2

No -----0

Section E: DEMONSTRATION OF NEW TEACHING TECHNIQUES

We would like to understand what the teachers know about teaching techniques in a number of different areas. Use the following scale to indicate their knowledge about each area.

1= I know nothing about it.

2= I know about this, but I do not know how to use it.

3= I know about this and have some confidence in my abilities in this area.

4= I have excellent knowledge and skill in it.

If 1 or 2, do not ask for column 'b' (Teaching Technique/skills)

Area	a. The teacher's level of confidence and ability				b. Teaching Technique/skills you could use for [...] (REQUIRED COLUMN)
18. Word Recognition and Phonics	1	2	3	4	
19. Fluency	1	2	3	4	
20. Vocabulary	1	2	3	4	
21. Comprehension	1	2	3	4	
22. Assessment	1	2	3	4	
23. Effective Questioning	1	2	3	4	
24. Motivation	1	2	3	4	
25. Developing Independent Learners	1	2	3	4	

26. Grouping for Instruction	1	2	3	4	
27. Adapting for Individual Differences	1	2	3	4	

Section F: TEACHER MOTIVATION

On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being not-motivating and 5 being highly motivating, indicate the degree to which each of the following serve as a motivating factor for teachers.

Motivating factor	1 Highly unmotivating	2 Somewhat unmotivating	3 Neither	4 Somewhat Motivating	5 Highly motivating
28. recognition (e.g., receiving praise from administrators, parents, students, or others)					
29. potential for professional growth (e.g., possibility of improving one's own professional skills)					
30. supervision by superiors (e.g., head teachers, coaches, etc.)					
31. interpersonal relationships with colleagues (e.g., interaction with other teachers)					
32. salary (e.g., salary and benefits)					
33. job security					
34. status (e.g., professional status of teaching)					
35. interpersonal relationships with head teacher					
36. sense of achievement (e.g., experiencing success)					
37. working conditions (e.g., building conditions, amount of work, facilities available)					

Motivating factor	1 Highly unmotivating	2 Somewhat unmotivating	3 Neither	4 Somewhat Motivating	5 Highly motivating
38. MBSSE policies (e.g., overall effects of the Ministry Of Basic And Senior Secondary Education as an organization)					
39. teacher evaluation (e.g., appraisal of classroom instruction by coaches or others)					
40. responsibility (e.g., autonomy, authority and responsibility for own work)					
41. potential for advancement (e.g., possibility of assuming different positions in the profession)					
42. work itself (e.g., aspects associated with the tasks of teaching)					
43. factors in personal life (e.g., effects of teaching on one's personal life)					
44. interpersonal relationships with students (e.g., interaction with students)					
45. sense of accountability (e.g., being held directly responsible for student)					

Section G: Satisfaction with the Program

On a scale of **1-3** with 1 being NOT satisfied and 3 being VERY satisfied, indicate the degree of satisfaction with the various areas of the FFE program motivating factor for teachers.

Area	1 NOT Satisfied	2 Somewhat satisfied	3 VERY Satisfied	9 Not applicable
46. Training on Literacy Instruction				
47. Coaching by Literacy Coaches				
48. School feeding				
49. Provision of teaching and learning resources				

Area	1 NOT Satisfied	2 Somewhat satisfied	3 VERY Satisfied	9 Not applicable
50. Support from head teacher				
51. Reading clubs				
52. Life skills programming				

Any additional comments?

Annex H. School-Based Surveys

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

HEAD TEACHERS, SMC, CTA, MOTHERS CLUB

Introduction & Informed Consent

“My name is _____. We are collecting data on behalf of Catholic Relief Services-SL (CRS/SL) for the midline evaluation of the Food for Education Phase 4 (FFE 4) project. We would like to ask you few questions about your school and the education services in this school. Be sure that the information you provide will be strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose of this survey only; and will not serve as penalty for anyone. It will take about 30 minutes to complete this questionnaire.”

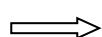
Can you give me some of your time for me to talk to you and ask you few questions?

Consent given (tick as appropriate):

Yes ☐

Start Interview

No ☐



Go to Next School

Instructions

The respondents for this questionnaire are Head Teacher, SMC Chairperson, CTA Chairperson and Mothers Club head. Conduct the interview with respondents one after the other. Whilst you are talking to the head teacher, ask him/her to call for the other respondents. In case the respondents are not available, you talk to their deputies or senior members as appropriate.

General Information

Enumerator: _____

Date interview completed (dd/mm/yyyy) : / /

School Name: _____

School Number:

Location of school (Village/Town): _____

Chiefdom: _____

Section: _____

Time Interview started (GMT) (hh:mm): :

A. INTERVIEW WITH THE HEAD TEACHER

I. SCHOOL INFORMATION, ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE

7. Has this school been approved by MBSSE?

Yes ----- 1

No ----- 2 → **If Not approved, Go to Qu. 3**

8. What is the PIN Code?

_____ >>> **Go to Qu. 6**

9. Has the school ever submitted school certification application to MBSSE?

Yes ----- 1

No ----- 2 → **If No, Go to Qu.5**

10. When did the school submit school certification application to MBSSE? *Record month and year.*

11. Why has the school not applied for school certification to MBSSE?

12. Has the school received subsidy from the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) in this academic year (2020/21)?

Yes ----- 1 → **If Yes, Go to Qu. 8**

No ----- 2

13. If the school is **not** receiving subsidy, what are the reasons for that?

14. Did any MBSSE inspector come to check the school during this school year, since September 2020?

Yes ----- 1

No ----- 2

15. How many different classes/grades does this school have? *That is, the standard level of education that the pupils attend. Choose all that apply.*

Number of different classes/grades in school ----- |____|

- a. How many sections of Class 1 does this school have? ----- |____|
- b. How many sections of Class 2 does this school have? ----- |____|
- c. How many sections of Class 3 does this school have? ----- |____|
- d. How many sections of Class 4 does this school have? ----- |____|
- e. How many sections of Class 5 does this school have? ----- |____|
- f. How many sections of Class 6 does this school have? ----- |____|

16. How many pupils are enrolled in this school for the 2020/21 school year? **Confirm with school enrolment records.**

Sex	1. Class 1	2. Class 2	3. Class 3	4. Class 4	5. Class 5	6. Class 6	Total
a. Boys							
b. Girls							
c. Total							

17. How many pupils have dropped out of school for the 2020/21 school year?

Sex	1. Class 1	2. Class 2	3. Class 3	4. Class 4	5. Class 5	6. Class 6	7. Total
a. Boys							
b. Girls							
c. Total							

18. What are the primary reasons for student dropout?

19. Does the school have a CRS register for recording students' daily attendance for all classes?

Ask to see the register.

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

20. Does the school have a MBSSE register for recording students' daily attendance for all classes?

Ask to see the register.

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

21. **Attendance of pupils on the day of survey:** Of the students currently enrolled in this school for 2020/21, how many attended school **today** according to CRS attendance register or other form of register (MBSSE register) for attendance?

Sex	1. Class 1	2. Class 2	3. Class 3	4. Class 4	5. Class 5	6. Class 6	Total

a. Boys							
b. Girls							
c. Total							

22. Did this school benefit from any rehabilitation work or new construction from CRS such as classroom, water well, toilet/latrine, etc.?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 **If No, Go to Qu.20** |____|

23. How many classrooms were rehabilitated or newly constructed by CRS?

a. No. of classrooms were rehabilitated: _____

b. No. of classrooms were newly constructed: _____

24. How many water wells were rehabilitated or newly constructed by CRS?

a. No. of water wells were rehabilitated: _____

b. No. of water wells were newly constructed: _____

25. How many toilets/latrines (separate rooms/drop holes) were rehabilitated or newly constructed by CRS?

a. No. of toilets/latrines were rehabilitated: _____

b. No. of toilets/latrines were newly constructed: _____

26. Does the school have a garden?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 **If No, Go to Qu.24** |____|

27. Do you have a school garden guideline or manual?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

28. Is the garden seasonal or year-round?

Seasonal ----- 1 Year-round ----- 2 |____|

29. What is the purpose of the garden?(Select all that apply)

a. Pedagogy

b. Supplementary school feeding

c. Donation to teachers

d. Sale for schools

e. Others

|____|

II. TEACHERS

30. In total, how many teachers are in this school; whether present in school or not in school today?
How many are males? How many are females?

a. Male	b. Female	c. Total

31. Of the teachers in this school, how many teachers are on payroll? |_|_|_|

32. Of the teachers in this school, how many are trained and qualified? How many are untrained and unqualified?

a. No. of trained and qualified (holding TEC, TC, TC-Lower, HTC) ----- |_|_|_|

b. No. of untrained and unqualified (holding none) ----- |_|_|_|

33. Of the trained and qualified teachers, how many have acquired their certificate through CRS supported distance learning programme?

No. of trained & qualified thru CRS supported distance learning programme |_|_|_|

34. Of the untrained and unqualified teachers, how many are currently attending distance learning programme supported by CRS? Even if they have left the school?

No. of untrained & unqualified attending distance learning programme supported by CRS _____

35. In total, how many teachers in this school have ever been certified (i.e. trained and qualified) through CRS supported distance learning programme?

No. of teachers certified thru through CRS supported distance learning programme |_|_|_|

36. Of the teachers certified through CRS supported distance learning programme:

a. How many teachers are currently still in school? ----- |_|_|_|

b. How many teachers have left the school? ----- |_|_|_|

37. What are the reasons for teachers certified thru CRS supported distance learning leaving the school?

Teacher **not** on payroll ----- 1

Teacher got job elsewhere ----- 2

Teacher transferred to other CRS school ----- 3

Teacher transferred to other school elsewhere ----- 4

Teacher left for unwarranted behaviour ----- 5

Others (specify) ----- 555 _____

38. Does the school have a time book for recording daily teacher attendance such as a daily time book?
Ask to see records for teacher attendance.

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

39. **Attendance of teachers on the day of survey:** Of the teachers in this school for 2020/21 academic year, how many attended school **today**.

Enumerator: confirm teacher attendance by physically counting all teachers present in school on the day survey.

a. Male	b. Female	Total

40. Have you (the head teacher) benefited from training in DTM (Diagnostic Teaching Methodologies) by CRS or TALLE (Early Grade Literacy Teaching) in the past 12 months?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 → **If No, Go to Qu.36** |____|

41. How has the training in DTM helped you perform your duty as head teacher/school administrator?

42. In your opinion, what do you think can be done to **further** improve quality of literacy instruction?

43. Observe the head teacher's office during the visit to verify demonstration of new techniques/tools.
Record '1' if tool is seen; otherwise record '0' if tool is not seen.

Is tool (.....) seen?	1= Seen 0= Not seen
a. Log book (visitor book) available	
b. Teaching master-timetable is displayed	
c. Teacher Duty Roster is clearly displayed	
d. Visual teaching & learning materials are displayed	
e. Inventory Book or other school records are properly organized & updated	

44. Has any other teacher (other than the head teacher) benefited from training in DTM (Diagnostic Teaching Methodologies) by CRS or TALLE (Early Grade Literacy Teaching) in the past 12 months?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 → **If No, Go to Q40** |____|

45. How many teachers (other than the head teacher) have benefited from training in DTM (Diagnostic Teaching Methodologies) by CRS or TALLE (Early Grade Literacy Teaching) in the past 12 months?

Number of teachers trained in DTM by CRS/TALLE ----- |____|____|

46. Has any teacher, including the head teacher, ever been trained in any life skills in this school by CRS? (*Mention life skills such as coping with stress & emotion, self-awareness & empathy, communication & interpersonal relationships, critical & creative thinking; and decision making & problem solving*).

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 **If No, Go to Qu.38** |____|

47. If yes, how many teachers have been trained in life skills? How many are male? How many are female?

a. No. of male teachers trained in life skills ----- |____|

b. No. of female teachers trained in life skills ----- |____|

48. Does the school have a reading club?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

III. SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME

49. Does the school have sufficient food commodities (rice, lentils & vegetable oil) supplied by CRS today? If yes, is the food stock sufficient for the next one week (from today)?

Food commodities	a. Sufficient food commodities available today? (1= Yes 2= No)	b. Sufficient for the next week (from today)? (1= Yes 2= No)
a. Rice		
b. Lentils		
c. Vegetable oil		

50. Have or will pupils in this school receive/be served meal/food provided by CRS today?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 Don't know/Not applicable ----- 777

(**If No or Don't know/Not applicable, Go to Qu. 46**) |____|

51. When was or will meal/food be served to the pupils today?

Choose all that apply

Morning (before 11:30 am) ----- 1
At lunch time (exactly at 11:30-12:30 pm) – 2 |____|
Afternoon (after 12:30 pm) ----- 3

52. Why have pupils in this school **not** been served meal/food today?

Choose ALL that apply

Food supplies run out ----- 1
No condiments for cooking ----- 2
No fuel (fire wood) to cook food -- 3
No cook available ----- 4 |____|
No cooking utensils (pot) ----- 5
No access to store ----- 6
Others (specify) ----- 7 _____
No feeding programme yet established at this school----- 0

53. Are the community people supporting this school with stipulated level of food contribution for cooking materials (such as condiments, fire wood, vegetables, etc.) to the school feeding programme?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 Don't know/Not applicable ----- 777

54. Are teachers of this school currently receiving meals (school feeding programme)?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 Don't know/Not applicable ----- 777

(If No or Don't know/Not applicable, Go to Question 50) |____|

55. How many teachers are currently receiving meals/food?

No. of teachers receiving meals/food ----- |____| |____|

56. Does the school have a **child health and nutrition guide** provided by MOHS available?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

57. Are there established by-laws to promote education in this community? That is, laws to enforce school enrolment for all school-age children, abolish early marriage, stop FMG practice during school days, provision of stipulated condiments, compulsory membership of upper grade pupils in reading clubs, etc.

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

IV. ADAPTATIONS TO COVID

COVID1. Did your school receive any of the following programme adaptations during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Adaptations	Received (1= Yes 0= No)	Was the adaptation relevant to the needs of your community? (0-Not at all relevant 1- Somewhat relevant 2- Highly relevant)
a. Take-home rations equaling 10 weeks of school feeding meals		
b. Handwashing stations		
c. Training in handwashing station proper use		
d. Solar-powered radios		

COVID2. Has the COVID Pandemic affected the efficiency of commodity management and food distribution?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 *(If Yes, Go to COVID3. If no, go to Q. 52)*

COVID3. How has the COVID Pandemic affected commodity management and food distribution? How has it impacted the programme?

V. SCHOOL FURNITURE, TEACHING & LEARNING MATERIALS

58. Does the school occupy its own permanent structure, public building, private building or temporary structure?

Own permanent structure ----- 1

Public building (barray, community centre, mosque, church, etc.) --- 2

Private building ----- 3

Temporary structure (makeshift, wattle & mud, etc.) ----- 4

59. Are there teachers' guides or **MBSSE formulated lesson plans** available for the core subjects (English, Mathematics, Social Studies & Science) for teaching in this school?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 **If No, Go to Q55** |___|

60. For which of the core subjects are teachers' guides available?

Core subjects	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6
	<i>1 = Available 0 = Not Available</i>					
a. English						
b. Mathematics						
c. Science						
d. Social Studies						

61. Has this school been provided with pupils' textbooks from CRS?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |___|

62. Does the school have a cupboard?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |___|

VI. INCREASED USE OF HEALTH AND DIETARY PRACTICES

63. Is there a School Health/WASH club in this school?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 **(If No, Go to Qu.61)** |___|

64. In total, how many teachers and pupils are there in the School Health/WASH club?

a. No. of teachers	b. No. of pupils	c. Total

65. Have teachers of the School Health/WASH club been trained on sanitation and hygiene practices by CRS in the past year (*since July 2020*)?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 |___|

66. Have pupils of the School Health/WASH club been trained on sanitation and hygiene practices by CRS in the past year (*since July 2020*)?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

67. Have pupils in this school received de-worming medicine/worm medicine in this school year (2020/2021)?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 → **(If No, Go to Qu.63)** |____|

68. How many times in this school year have pupils received de-worming medicine-i.e. worm medicine (2020/2021)?

No. of times de-worming medicine received ----- |____|

69. Have pupils in this school received vitamin A Supplementation in this school year (2020/2021)?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 **If No, Go Qu.65** |____|

70. How many times during this school year have pupils received vitamin A supplementation?

No. of times vitamin A Supplementations received ----- |____|

71. Does this school have a School Management Committee (SMC)?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 |____|

72. Is there a Community Teachers' Association (CTA) formed in this community?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 |____|

73. Is there a Mothers Support Group/Mothers' Club formed and supported by CRS in this community?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 |____|

74. How satisfied are you with the FFE 4 programme?

Very satisfied----- 3

Somewhat satisfied ----- 2

Dissatisfied ----- 1

Very dissatisfied ----- 0

Have not yet participated in programme --- 888

Don't know -----777 **If 1 & 0, Go to Qu.69**

75. If dissatisfied with the FFE programme, what are the reasons for that?

<<End Interview with head teacher>>

B. INTERVIEW WITH SMC Chairperson

Introduction and Informed Consent

[NOTE: The respondent for this questionnaire is the SMC chairperson.]

“My name is _____. We are collecting data on behalf of Catholic Relief Services-SL (CRS/SL) for the midline evaluation of the Food for Education Phase 4 (FFE 4) project. We would like to ask you a few questions about your school and the education services in this school. Be sure that the information you provide will be strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose of this survey only; and will not serve as penalty for anyone. It will take about 10 minutes to complete this questionnaire.”

Can you give me some of your time for me to talk to you and ask you few questions?

Consent given (tick as appropriate):

Yes ☐

Start Interview

No ☐ $\Rightarrow$

Go to Next School

1. How many members are male and female in the SMC?

a. SMC members (Male)	b. SMC members (Female)	c. Total

2. Did the SMC members receive training in school management supported by CRS since September 2020?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0

3. Did the SMC meet to discuss issues of managing this school this school year(2020/2021)? **Ask to see minutes of last meeting(s) to confirm response**

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 **(If No, Go to Q6)**

4. How frequently did the SMC meet in this school year (2020/21)?

Monthly (every month) ----- 1
Quarterly (every 3 months) ----- 2
Every 6 months ----- 3
Once in the school year ----- 4

5. When was the last time the SMC met?

Last time of meeting (month & year): _____

6. Is the SMC actively involved in the school feeding programme?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 → **(If No, Go to Q8)** |__|

7. How is the SMC involved in the school feeding programme in this school?

8. Has the SMC ever been trained by CRS in safe food preparation practices, food storage practices and/or child health & nutrition?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 → **(If No, Go to Q12)** |__|

9. How many members of SMC have been trained in food preparation by CRS?

No. of SMC members trained in safe food preparation practices ----- |__|__|

10. How many members of SMC have been trained in food storage practices by CRS?

No. of SMC members trained in food storage practices ----- |__|__|

11. How many members of SMC have been trained in child health & nutrition by CRS?

No. of SMC members trained in child health & nutrition ----- |__|__|

12. Are there established by-laws to promote education in this community? That is, laws to enforce school enrolment for all school-age children, abolish early marriage, , provision of stipulated condiments, compulsory membership of upper grade pupils in reading clubs, etc.

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |__|

<< End Interview with SMC Chairperson >>

C. INTERVIEW WITH CTA Chairperson

“My name is _____. We are collecting data on behalf of Catholic Relief Services-SL (CRS/SL) for the midline evaluation of the Food for Education Phase 4 (FFE 4) project. We would like to ask you a few questions about your school and the education services in this school. Be sure that the information you provide will be strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose of this survey only and will not serve as penalty for anyone. It will take about 5 minutes to complete this questionnaire.”

Can you give me some of your time for me to talk to you and ask you few questions?

Consent given (tick as appropriate):

Yes ☐

Start Interview

No ☐ $\Rightarrow$

Go to Next School

1. How many teachers are members of the CTA **executive**? How many Parents/Community members belong to the CTA **executive**?

	i. No. of male members	ii. No. of female members
a. No of Teachers		
b. No of Parents/Community members		

2. Is the CTA chairperson member of the SMC?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 ☐

3. Has the CTA ever met this school year (2020/21)?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 $\rightarrow$ (If No, Skip to Q5) ☐

4. How frequently has the CTA met in this school year (2020/21)?

Monthly (every month) ----- 1
 Quarterly (every 3 months) ----- 2
 Half yearly (every 6 months) ----- 3
 Once in the school year ----- 4 ☐

5. Did the CTA executive/members engage in managing this school during this school year (2020/21)?

Yes ----- 1
 No ----- 2 $\rightarrow$ (If No, End interview with CTA Chair) ☐

6. In what way(s) has the CTA been engaged in managing this school?

<< End interview with CTA Chair >>

D. MOTHERS' CLUB (Mothers club head)

"My name is _____. We are collecting data on behalf of Catholic Relief Services-SL (CRS/SL) for the midline evaluation of the Food for Education Phase 4 (FFE 4) project. We would like to ask you a few questions about your school and the education services in this school. Be sure that the information you provide will be strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose of this survey only; and will not serve as penalty for anyone. It will take about 10 minutes to complete this questionnaire."

Can you give me some of your time for me to talk to you and ask you few questions?
Consent given (tick as appropriate):

Yes ☐

Start Interview

No ☐ $\Rightarrow$

Go to Next School

1. How many members are there in the Mothers Club?

No. of members in Mothers Club -----|||

2. Did the Mothers Club receive any training supported by CRS during this school year (2020/21)?

Yes ----- | No ----- 0 $\rightarrow$ **(If No, Skip to 91)** ☐

3. Which form of training has the Mothers Club received? **Choose all that apply**

Advocacy ----- |

Awareness raising on importance of education (general sensitisation) ----- 2

Community mobilization (support school feeding, school gardens)-----

---- 3

Child health & nutrition (WASH, food preparation, family planning) -----

----- 4

Other _____ -- 555

4. Has the Mothers' Club visited this CRS supported school during this school year (2020/21) (such as checking on pupils' attendance, etc.)?
 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____| (If No, Skip to Q6)

5. How frequently has the Mothers' Club visited this school during this school year (2020/21)?
 Monthly (every month) ----- 1
 Quarterly (every 3 months) ----- 2
 Half yearly (every 6 months) ----- 3
 Once in the school year ----- 4 |____|

6. Did the Mothers' Club complete any home visitations to sensitise parents on the importance of education?
 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

7. In what ways has the Mothers' Club been active during the past school year?

8. Do you have any children?
 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____| (If No, Skip to Q11)

9. How many children do you have? |____|

10. Are any of your children currently less than 5 years old?
 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 0 |____|

11. Now I would like to ask you about the type of foods your child or children ate yesterday during the day and the night at home. Please tell me all the food that your child or children ate yesterday during the day and the night at home

Enumerator: Categorize the food list (as mentioned by caregiver) into the various food type using the table below.

Child ate (.....) yesterday	1 = Yes 0 = No
a. Grain, roots and tubers (e.g. rice, cassava, gari, yam, bulgur, potato, funday, etc.)	____
b. Legumes and Nuts (e.g. ground nut, beans, cashew etc.)	____
c. Dairy products (milk, yogurt, cheese, cow milk, etc.)	____

d. Flesh food (meat, fish, chicken, liver/organ meat)	__
e. Eggs	__
f. Fruits (e.g. banana, mango, plum, orange, avocado pear, lemon, etc.)	__
g. Vegetables (e.g. Cassava leaves, potato leaves, okra, cucumber, etc.)	__
h. Other foods you ate: please list_____	__

12. Now I would like to know your knowledge on infant and young child feeding practices. *Do not read the list. In the list of good infant and young child feeding practices below, mark if the individual mentions the practice.*

Now ask “what are the things you can do to support good infant and young child feeding practices?”

Interviewee mention (.....)	I = Yes 0 = No
a. Early initiation of breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth	
b. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life	
c. Introduction of complementary (solid) foods at 6 months together	
d. Continue frequent, on-demand breastfeeding until 2 years of age or beyond	
e. Gradually increase food consistency and variety	
f. Use fortified complementary foods (solid foods) or vitamin-mineral supplements as needed	
g. During illness, increase fluid intake including more breastfeeding, and offer soft, favourite foods	
h. None of the above mentioned	

13. Now I would like to know your knowledge on safe food preparation and storage practices. *Do not read the list. In the list of safe food preparation and storage practices below, mark if the individual mentions the practice.*

Now ask “what are the things you can do to prepare and store food safely?”

Interviewee mention (.....)	I = Yes 0 = No
a. Wash hands with clean water and soap before handling food	
b. Wash the cooking utensils and all dishes with clean water and soap; and then dry them	
c. Sweep the kitchen and environment where food is prepared	
d. Wash the food items before cooking	
e. Kitchen or environment should be free from animals	
f. Cover the cooked food after dishing	
g. Store the cooked food in a clean place (room or dining)	
h. Storage should be free from flies	
i. Put cleaned utensils on a platform (rack/pallet) – i.e. do not put cleaned utensils on ground	

j.	Wear kitchen apron or apparel when handling food	
k.	Cooked, or ready-to-eat food shouldn't be handled with bare hands (Use tongs, spatulas, spoons, or disposable gloves)	
l.	None of the above mentioned	

END INTERVIEW! THANK THE RESPONDENTS

Annex I. School Observation Tool

SCHOOL OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Do physical observation of infrastructures and facilities in all survey schools and record exactly what you would see.
- On arriving at the school, make a quick tour of the school environment to ascertain information on school building(s).
- Do an assessment of the WASH facilities (water points, toilets/latrine, hand washing points) and kitchen; where available.
- In the classrooms, do the tour unnoticed by teachers and pupils (surprise visits).
- Subsequently, fill this checklist as you go around.
- You may follow-up with school authorities (head teachers/teachers/cooks or food preparers) if you need clarification.
- Please take pictures of the school buildings, WASH facilities and kitchen. These will be saved automatically.
- Proceed with the key informant interview with the head teacher immediately after the tour and observation.

General Information

Enumerator: _____

Date interview completed (dd/mm/yyyy): |__|__|/|__|__|/|__|__|__|__|

School Name: _____

School Number: |__|__|__||__|__|

Location of school (Village/Town): _____

Chiefdom: _____

Section: _____

Time observation started (GMT) (hh:mm): |__|__|:|__|__|

D. SCHOOL BUILDINGS

(Take pictures of buildings)

76. What is the main material the **roof** of the school building is made of?

- Corrugated metal sheets (zinc) ----- 1
Asbestos ----- 2
Concrete ----- 3 |____|
Thatch ----- 4
Tarpaulin (plastic sheet) ----- 5
Others (specify) ----- 6 _____

77. What is the main material the **wall** of the school building is made of?

- Concrete polished wall ----- 1
Mud polished ----- 2
Concrete unpolished wall ----- 3
Mud unpolished ----- 4 |____|
Metal sheets (pan body) ----- 5
Thatch ----- 6
Tarpaulin (plastic sheet) ----- 7
Others (specify) ----- 8 _____

78. What is the main material the **floor** of the school building is made of?

- Concrete floor ----- 1
Earth floor ----- 2 |____|
Wooden floor ----- 3
Others (specify) ----- 4 _____

79. How many permanent buildings are there in the school?

No. of permanent school buildings ----- |____|

80. How many separate classrooms has the school got?

No. of classrooms the school has ----- |____|

81. How many non-permanent (makeshift structures) are there in the school?

No. of makeshift structures ----- |____|

E. Classroom Resources

82. How many *pupils'* textbooks are available for pupils in the core subjects (English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science) for each class? **Take inventory in the head teacher's office and the classrooms.**

Core Subjects	Write down the number of textbooks available for pupils					
	1 Class 1	2 Class 2	3 Class 3	4 Class 4	5 Class 5	6 Class 6
a. English						
b. Mathematics						
c. Science						
d. Social studies						

83. How many **desks, benches, and blackboards** are available for pupils in each class? **Count to ascertain the number of desks, benches, and blackboards available?**

Core Subjects	Write down the number of desks, benches, and blackboards available for pupils					
	1 Class 1	2 Class 2	3 Class 3	4 Class 4	5 Class 5	6 Class 6
a. Desks						
b. Benches						
c. Blackboard						

84. Are there the following improved early grade literacy instructional materials in the classrooms?
Check these for classes 1, 2, and 3

Material		Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
a. Alphabet cards	Yes --- 1 No --- 2			
b. Alphabet strips				
c. Slates				
d. Supplementary readers (e.g. Konki & Tinker, Big fight, etc.				
e. Vanguarders (A4 size)				
f. Chalk				

85. Is there a literacy corner to display improved early grade literacy instructional materials including drawings & painting in the classrooms? Check these for classes 1, 2, and 3.

GRADE 1 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 |___|

GRADE 2 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 |___|

GRADE 3 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 |___|

F. WATER, SANITATION and HYGIENE (WASH) FACILITIES

86. Does the school have a functional drinking/potable water facility (working and water flowing) on school compound/premise?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 → **(If No, Go to Q14)**

87. What is the **main** type of water facility for the school? (if Q11 is YES)

Tap/Pipe borne water ----- 1
Hand pump well ----- 2
Borehole with pump ----- 3
Ordinary well (protected) ----- 4
Ordinary well (unprotected) ----- 5
Others (specify) ----- 6 _____

88. Is the **main** water facility/point functioning (*working and water flowing*) at the time of visit? (if 11 is YES)

Yes (*working and water flowing*) ----- 1 → **If Yes, Go to Q15**
No, faulty ----- 2

89. Why is the water facility/point not functioning? (if Q11 or Q13 is NO)

Broken down ----- 1
No water/Dried ----- 2
Others (specify) ----- 3 _____

90. Is the main water facility/point chlorinated at the time of visit?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2

91. Is there a **functioning** toilet/latrine in this school?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 → **If No, Go to Qu23**

92. Are the latrine/toilet separated:

a. Are the latrines/toilets separated by sex?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 → **If No, Go to Qu19**

b. Do students and teachers have separate latrines/toilets?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 → **If No, Go to Qu19**

93. How many separate rooms/drop holes are there? Enter "0" if there are none. (if Q17 is YES)

a. No. of separate rooms/drop holes for **boys only** -----

b. No. of separate rooms/drop holes for **girls only** -----

- c. No. of rooms/drop holes for **male teachers only** ---- |__|__|
 d. No. of rooms/drop holes for **female teachers only** - |__|__|

94. How many shared rooms/drop holes are there? Enter "0" if there are none. (if Q17 is NO)

- e. No. of shared rooms/drop holes (**boys & girls**) ----- |__|__|
 f. No. of shared rooms/drop holes (**male & female teachers**) -- |__|__|

95. Are toilet/latrine rooms cleaned?

- Yes, all rooms are cleaned ----- 1
 Yes, some rooms are cleaned ----- 2
 No, none is cleaned at all ----- 3 |__|

96. Is there a place for hand washing (such as wash hand basin, bowl, Tippy tap, etc.) at the school?

- Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 **If No, Go to Qu.23** |__|

97. Is there water and soap/detergent available at hand washing facility at time of visit/survey?

- Water and soap available ----- 1
 Water available only ----- 2
 Soap available only ----- 3 |__|
 No water and soap available ----- 4

G. STORAGE FACILITY FOR FOOD

(Take pictures of storage facility)

98. Does the school have a storeroom or storage facility used for storing food?

- Yes, at the school ----- 1
 Yes, away from the school ----- 2 |__|
 No ----- 3 **If No, Go to Qu.32**

99. Does the storeroom have a metal/steel door with a lock?

- Yes, with lock ----- 1
 No ----- 2 |__|

100. Does the storeroom have ventilation blocks?

- Yes, with mesh ----- 1
 Yes, without mesh ----- 2 |__|
 No ventilation blocks at all ---- 3

101. What is the main material the **roof** of the storeroom is made of?

- Corrugated metal sheets (zinc) ----- 1
 Asbestos ----- 2

Concrete ----- 3 ☐

Thatch ----- 4

Tarpaulin (plastic sheet) ----- 5

Other (specify) ----- 6 _____

I02. What is the main material the **wall** of the storeroom is made of?

Concrete polished wall ----- 1

Mud polished ----- 2

Concrete unpolished wall ----- 3

Mud unpolished ----- 4 ☐

Metal sheets (pan body) ----- 5

Thatch ----- 6

Tarpaulin ----- 7

Others (specify) ----- 8 _____

I03. What is the main material the **floor** of the storeroom is made of?

Concrete floor ----- 1

Earth floor ----- 2 ☐

Wooden floor ----- 3

Other (specify) ----- 4 _____

I04. Is the food stacked on pallet?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 ☐

I05. Is the food store clean?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 ☐

I06. Has the food store ever been fumigated in the last 6 months (*since December 2018*)?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 ☐

H. KITCHEN FACILITY (*Take pictures of storage facility*)

I07. Does the school have a kitchen available for cooking food?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 **If No, Go to Qu.34** ☐

I08. What material is the **roof** of the Kitchen made of?

Corrugated metal sheets (zinc) ----- 1

Asbestos ----- 2

Concrete ----- 3 ☐

Thatch ----- 4
 Tarpaulin (plastic sheet) ----- 5
 Others (specify) ----- 6 _____

109. What material is the **wall** of the Kitchen made of?

Concrete polished wall ----- 1
 Mud polished ----- 2
 Concrete unpolished wall ----- 3
 Mud unpolished ----- 4 ☐
 Metal sheets (pan body) ----- 5
 Thatch ----- 6
 Tarpaulin ----- 7
 Others (specify) ----- 8 _____
 No wall ----- 0

110. What material is the **floor** of the kitchen made of?

Concrete floor ----- 1
 Earth floor ----- 2 ☐
 Wooden floor ----- 3
 Others (specify) ----- 4 _____

111. Does the kitchen have spoon and plate shelves?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 ☐

112. Does the kitchen have rack/pallet for drying plates and spoons?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 ☐

113. Is there handwashing facility or place around kitchen or cooking area?

Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 **If No, Go to Q38** ☐

114. Is there water and soap available at the handwashing facility/place?

Water & soap available ----- 1
 Water available only ----- 2
 Soap available only ----- 3 ☐
 No, neither water nor soap available – 4

115. If there is no handwashing facility, is there soap available for handwashing? **Ask to see soap.**
 Yes, soap available (seen) ----- 1
 Yes, soap available (not seen) ----- 2
 No, not at all ----- 3

116. Are there aprons available for cooks/food preparers?
 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 | |

117. Does the school have cooking utensils? How many are there? **If none, write '0'**

- a. Big Pots ----- | |
- b. Big Bowl for storing cooked food ----- | |
- c. Big Bowl for storing sauce ----- | |
- d. Cooking (wooden) spoons ----- | |
- e. Serving/scooping Spoons ----- | |
- f. Serving Plates ----- | | |
- g. Spoons for pupils ----- | | |
- h. Buckets ----- | |
- i. Towels ----- | |
- j. Cups ----- | | |
- k. Knives ----- | |
- l. Mortar ----- | |
- m. Mortar pestle ----- | |

I. SCHOOL GARDEN (*Take pictures of garden*)

118. Does the school have a school garden?
 Yes ----- 1 No ----- 2 **If No, Go to Qu.34** | |

119. What types of vegetables are grown?

- Green beans ----- 1
- Potatoes ----- 2
- Peppers ----- 3
- Tomatoes ----- 4
- Cassava Leaves ----- 5 | |
- Pumpkin ----- 6
- Lettuce ----- 7
- Spinach ----- 8
- Others (specify) ----- 9 _____

Annex J. Focus Group Discussion Guide

Qualitative Instrument: CRS All Pikin for Learn (APFL) Phase 4 Midline

A note about this tool:

Population Group: Parents/Community Members

Number of Participants: 6 to 10

Time Limit: Approximately 1 – 1.5 hours

Purpose: This guide will enable you to gather information from parents and community members from new All Pikin For Learn (APFL) McGovern Dole (MGD) International Food For Education (FFE) Phase 4 Program Schools. The objective is to gain insights from parents and community members about their perceptions of quality and access to education in their community, parental/community involvement in schools, and perceptions of the FFE Phase 4 program.

Recommended sources: Separate focus groups should be conducted for **men** and **women**. The focus groups should include parents of children in grades 1 – 6 as well as community stakeholders, such as community and traditional authority (chiefs, religious leaders, etc.), headmen, women and youth leaders, and Saving and Internal Lending Communities (**SILC**) representatives. Note others community members such as SMC, CTA, Mother's Club members, and cooks may also be included, but **ONLY** if they have **NOT** already participated in a key informant interview.

Demographic information

1. Type of FGD: _____
2. Name of School: _____
3. Chiefdom: _____
4. Facilitator name: _____
5. Note taker name: _____
6. Total number of participants: _____
7. Date: _____
8. Start Time: _____

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Parents/Community Members

Introduction and Consent

Hello, my name is _____ and my colleague assisting me is _____. We're collecting data on behalf of CRS, who is supporting education of children in Koinadugu and Falaba districts. As you may know, CRS has been active in supporting children's education, health and nutrition in Sierra Leone for many years. We are gathering information to better understand the education and nutrition situation of boys and girls in your community to help ensure the project will meet their needs appropriately.

However, we cannot guarantee any additional aid, services, or project action will take place in your community as a result of your participation in this focus group. We also cannot offer you any compensation for your participation. The discussion should take about an hour to an hour and a half. There are no right or wrong answers, and you are free to ask for clarification any time if you do not understand the questions. Your answers will be private. We will not share your answers with anyone, except those people working directly with CRS on this project. But in order to better keep track of all of the information provided today, and to help me focus on facilitating this discussion, we will be recording this discussion. Please be assured that your identity will remain confidential at all times. Nobody will be able to link your responses to your name. Your name will never be used in connection with any of the information you tell. We thank you for your participation.

Do you have any questions about any of the things that I just mentioned?

- *If YES, answer all participants' questions and continue.*
- *If NO, continue.*

Do we have your permission to record the interview on our audio-recorder?

- *If YES, continue.*
- *If NO, acknowledge that you will not record the conversation and proceed without turning on the recorder.*

Do we have your agreement to participate voluntarily in this Focus Group Discussion?

- *If YES, continue.*
- *If NO, thank them for their time, note on the registration form they did not want to participant and left.*

****IMPORTANT NOTE**:**

Begin audio-recording after consent received.

A. Perceptions of Education and School Engagement

1. How do you see the quality of education for the children in this community (perception of quality education in community)?

2. In your opinion, what do you think are barriers to school enrollment and attendance in this community? That is, things that stop children from going and attending school? Do these barriers differ for girls and boys? If yes, how so?

3. What have you done (or doing) as parents and community people towards promoting education of children in this community? What about promoting education for girls?

4. What strategies can you suggest to further improve the quality of education for children in this community? What about for supporting or improving girls' education specifically?

5. In this community, do parents and community members engage in managing school activities - such as enrolment, attendance, construction works, etc.? If yes, how so? (for example, what types of activities do they engage in, which community members engage, how often, etc.)

6. In your opinion, what do you think are some of the barriers or constraints that prevent **parents and community members** from engaging or supporting school activities? Do these barriers differ for women and men? If yes, how so?

-
-
7. Do you have any recommendations on how to overcome or reduce these barriers or obstacles that prevent parents and community members from engaging in school activities and/or supporting children's education more broadly?

B. Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILCs)

8. Within your community, are there any active Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILCs), also known as "the box"? If yes, could you please tell me about them (for example, how is it supported, who is involved, how are the proceeds used, do they contribute to or help children's education)?

C. Perceptions of FFE 4 Project Implementation

9. What can you tell me about CRS's FFE program? *[FACILITATOR: Allow participants to give open-ended responses first, but if they do not know about the program, give a short orientation on FFE's main activities and approach to improving student learning outcomes, attentiveness in the classroom and attendance in school.]*

10. What positive things do you think FFE has achieved in your school and community?

11. Have any of the following things happened as a result of FFE programming? *[FACILITATOR: Read the list below and ask participants to raise their hands if they believe it has happened. After reading the list, ask for specifics (12) about what happened.]*

- a. Stealing of food or other supplies by food preparers, teachers, and others;
- b. Poor food preparation at school leading to sickness;
- c. Pupils skipping afternoon lessons after receiving their meal;
- d. Pupils eating too much and being sleepy and unable to pay attention to the lessons in the afternoon;
- e. Children from nearby communities are abandoning their schools in favor of enrolling in APFL-supported schools, which could also contribute to potential safety issues for children on the way to and from the schools due to the distance; and
- f. Donor dependency or fatigue especially when considering the sustainability of the schools after the APFL program ends.

12. If any of the above situations occurred, please share more details. _____

13. Do you have any specific concerns related to the project? If so, please describe.

D. RELEVANCE

14. FFE phase 4 project has different activities which include:

- a. school feeding,
- b. storage & handling of food,
- c. supply of teaching and learning materials,
- d. supporting distance learning (teacher training),
- e. training of SMCs,
- f. coaching & mentoring of teachers,
- g. construction of school infrastructures (WASH facilities and food stores),
- h. supporting construction of kitchens for schools,
- i. supporting Private Service Providers (PSPs) for establishing Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) & training SILC members
- j. training of cooks on safe food preparation and child health & nutrition/dietary practices.
- k. school gardens,
- l. formation and training of reading clubs,
- m. formation and training of school health clubs,
- n. social and behavioral change (SBC) through radio jingles, radio discussions, etc. on child health & nutrition including WASH and menstrual hygiene,
- o. construction of latrines and school blocks and training of MSGs

Which of these activities do you think are most important to this community and school?

Why are the activities important? *[Facilitator: share the flipchart paper with the list of activities and associated visuals as a reference]*

15. To what extent do these FFE project activities meet the needs of the community?

16. How satisfied are you with your participation in the program? Would you say “satisfied”, “somewhat satisfied”, or “dissatisfied”? Why or why not?

E. EFFECTIVENESS

17. In your opinion, which activities do you think will be most effective to improve children’s learning, attentiveness in the classroom and attendance in school? Why? *[Facilitator: share the flipchart paper with the list of activities and associated visuals as a reference]*

- a. school feeding,
- b. storage & handling of food,
- c. supply of teaching and learning materials,
- d. supporting distance learning (teacher training),
- e. training of SMCs,
- f. coaching & mentoring of teachers,
- g. construction of school infrastructures (WASH facilities and food stores),
- h. supporting construction of kitchens for schools,
- i. supporting Private Service Providers (PSPs) for establishing Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) & training SILC members
- j. training of cooks on safe food preparation and child health & nutrition/dietary practices.
- k. school gardens,
- l. formation and training of reading clubs,
- m. formation and training of school health clubs,
- n. social and behavioral change (SBC) through radio jingles, radio discussions, etc. on child health & nutrition including WASH and menstrual hygiene,
- o. construction of latrines and school blocks and training of MSGs

18. How did the program adjust in response to the COVID-19 pandemic? Were these changes relevant to your community's needs? How effective were the changes?

F. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

19. How interested are members of your community in supporting and strengthening children's education (health and nutrition)? Would you say, "very interested", "somewhat interested" or "not interested"? How/why?

20. Other than the FFE project, what types of activities are there in your community that support children's education, health and nutrition? What types of support have been particularly effective? Why?

21. (Optional) What, if any, are the **future** potential barriers to supporting children's education (health and nutrition) in your community?

22. How has ownership of the program changed? For example, how involved are stakeholders in monitoring teacher performance, preventing fraud, protecting infrastructures, supplies, or enforcing educational bylaws?

23. What strategies should be used to obtain long lasting support from communities and local/central administration that goes beyond the time of the project?

Closing Those are all of my questions. Do you have anything you would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

Summary and Conclusion. Thank you for your time. Your help in this research is very important. As I mentioned, the results of the report will be used to help CRS FFE understand education, health and nutrition issues for children in Koinadugu and Falaba districts in Sierra Leone. The final results of our research project will be published in a report in the coming months. We will do our best to ensure that these results are communicated back to the ministry.

End Time: _____

Total length: _____ Hours _____ Minutes

POST-FOCUS GROUP NOTES:

Please comment on

- *Any factors that may have affected the truthfulness of the responses given and the willingness of the interview subject to participate,*
- *If more than one respondent participated, the different perspectives that emerged through disagreements in the interviews,*
- *Any additional insights or comments that should be noted.*

Focus Group Registration Form

Date:

School Name:

Chiefdom:

Focus Group Type/Subgroup:

Facilitator Name:

Notetaker Name:

Total Number of Participants:

First Name	Sex (M/F)	Age	Position/Role in Community <i>(i.e., parent, mothers' group member, community leader, etc.)</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			