READING WITHIN REACH

Early Grade Reading Program Design and Implementation: Best Practices and Resources for Success

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Webinar series presented by Reading within REACH in collaboration with the Global Reading Network

November 2018

# Acknowledgments

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- It was prepared by Reading within REACH, which is implemented by University Research Co., LLC. (URC). Contract No. AID-OAA-M-14-00001, MOBIS#: GS-10F-0182T) for the Office of Education (E3/ED).

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# Welcome!

- This EGR professional development series was developed by the Reading within Reach (REACH) initiative, which is funded by USAID and implemented by University Research Co., LLC (URC)

- REACH supports the Global Reading Network (GRN) community of practice to develop and share research, innovations and resources related to EGR programming

- For more information about REACH and the GRN, visit www.globalreadingnetwork.net

## Webinar presenters

- Alison Pflepsen, REACH Reading Program Specialist (apflepsen@urc-chs.com)

- Amy Pallangyo, REACH Technical Advisor (aawbrey@gmail.com)

- Aristarick Lyimo, REACH Training & Curriculum Specialist: alyimo@urc-chs.com

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- Marion Fesmire, Florida State University (fesmirm@aol.com)

# Webinar series goal, content and approach

- The purpose of this professional development webinar series is to **provide participants with evidence-based information, guidance and resources to support the design and implementation of effective EGR initiatives**

- Each session is focused on a key technical topic and includes a summary of **research, experiences and best practices to date**

- **Cross-cutting issues** such as gender equity, ICT and inclusive education are integrated throughout the different webinars

- Issues related to EGR program **monitoring, evaluation, scale-up and sustainability** will be addressed as well

- **Opportunities for interaction and questions** will be provided throughout each webinar

# Webinar session topics and dates

- **Session 1** – Introduction to EGR improvement (Nov. 1)

- **Session 2** – Resources for teaching and learning EGR (Nov. 6)

- **Session 3** – Key EGR skills and strategies for effective instruction and assessment (Nov. 8)

- **Session 4** – Language considerations in EGR programs (Nov. 13)

- **Session 5** – Teacher professional development and coaching in EGR programs (Nov. 15)

- **Session 6** – From conception to scale: Program design, expansion and sustainability (Nov. 27)

## TO REGISTER, VISIT:

www.globalreadingnetwork.net/news-and-events/calendar

# Session 2: Resources for teaching and learning early grade reading

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"Early Grade Reading Program Design and Implementation: Best Practices and Resources for Success" Webinar Series

November 6, 2018

Presented by: Amy Pallangyo, REACH Technical Consultant &

Aristarick Lyimo, REACH Training Specialist

# To share your questions and comments

- We will provide time throughout the webinar to address your questions and comments

- Please submit them via the "Q&A" box in Zoom

# Webinar objectives

By the end of this webinar, participants will know and be able to apply learning about:

- Characteristics of effective resources for EGR instruction

- The materials development & use process, tools and best practices

- Making materials appropriate, inclusive and accessible for diverse learners
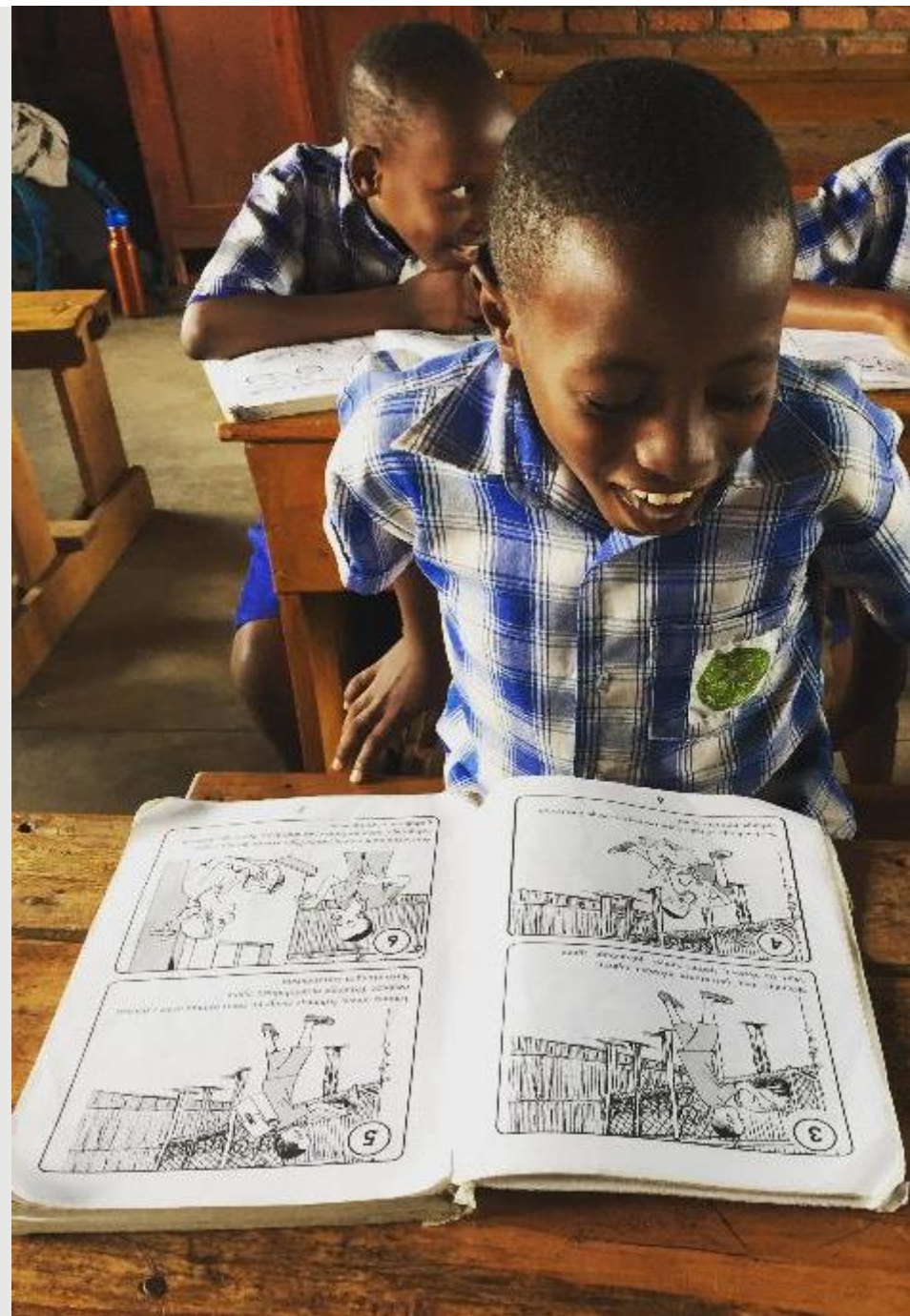
# ACTIVITY

**Zoom chat with us**

1. **What materials have been developed for the EGL programs you have supported?**

   – Why did you decide to develop these particular resources?

   – Share a challenge, success or other piece of wisdom about your materials development experience

# Why invest in early grade reading materials?

- Children need diverse and plentiful texts to learn to read

- In many low-income countries, books are too difficult, too few and not in languages children understand

- A recent survey of reading materials in 11 sub-Saharan African countries reviewed nearly 6,000 titles. The study found that only about 14% would be appropriate for a beginning reader (RTI, 2016)

*Photo: Creative Associates, Nigeria Northern Education Initiative Plus (USAID)*

# Resources for effective EGR instruction: What is needed?

Depends on:

- Goals of the program/curriculum
- Materials already available
- Time and budget available
- Scale up and sustainability considerations

## Teacher resources

- Teacher's guide
- Assessment tools
- Big books/story read aloud books

## Student resources

- Student reader/primer
- Decodable text
- Leveled text
- Assistive technologies for children with disabilities

## Classroom resources

- Flashcards with letters, words, pictures
- Manipulatives
- Posters and other text for walls
- Library or book box
- Story cards
- Technology

# Section 1: Characteristics of Effective EGR Resources

# EGL resources: Teacher's guide

- Designed to support teachers' instruction by providing guidance on what skills to teach, how to teach them and when they should be taught

- Content based on curriculum/scope and sequence

- Can include guidance on student assessment and adapting instruction

- **Amount of text (e.g., "scripting") should be carefully considered. See Handout 1: Guidance on the content and design of teachers guides for more detailed information on this topic**

**EGR teacher's guides generally include:**

- ✓ Lesson plans with objectives
- ✓ List of resources that teachers will need for a lesson
- ✓ Activity suggestions and descriptions for teaching specific reading skills
- ✓ Ideas for conducting formative assessment, and how to use it to inform and adapt instruction
- ✓ Ideas for extending a lesson or differentiating instruction
- ✓ Information on reading pedagogy, list of terms

# EGR resources: Student reader (pupil book, primer)

- The purpose of the student reader is to provide opportunities for children to practice reading *every day*

- The content of a student reader should be aligned with the teacher's guide and should visibly address all sub-domains of reading instruction

- Student readers commonly include letters, words and decodable and/or leveled text

- Student readers should ideally be provided to every child; they should also be durable so students can take them home to practice reading



*Photo: FHI 360, Rwanda MCOP (USAID)*

# Example student reader: Nigeria NEI+

Contents align with lesson objectives on letter sounds and blending

Students can practice writing the letters they are learning



| Mako Na 2 | Darasi Na 3 da Na 4 |
|---|---|

■  Y y    I i
●  yin  yau   ra
♥  yin  yara   yawo
★ Yau ma ana yin yawon sallah.

yin  yin  yin
yau  yau  yau
ra  ra  ra

yin  yin  yin
yau  yau  yau
ra  ra  ra

| Mako Na 3 | Darasi Na 1 da Na 2 |
|---|---|

Amina na wasa da ulu.
Nana na karatun littafi.
Suna zaune a lambun makaranta.
Suna zaune cikin lumana.

Decodable text based on the week's lesson helps students develop fluency skills

# EGR resources: Decodable text

- Text that a child can decode, or "sound out," independently based on the symbols and sounds they have learned

- Helps children to develop confidence and interest in reading very early on because only familiar letters and sounds are used in the text

- Provides children with an opportunity to practice gaining *automaticity* in their reading (Davidson, 2013)

- Can include a simple sentence or a short fictional story

- Can be included in a student reader or as separate books or other resources (e.g., laminated story cards)

चम्पा र रम्भा रुखमा चढे।

*Source: Room to Read, Nepal Early Grade Reading Program (USAID), "Guava" decodable story*

**Handout 2:**
**Guidance on decodable and leveled text**

# EGR resources: Leveled text

- Provides beginning readers with opportunities to read independently (or with some support) to practice the skills they have learned, without becoming frustrated by text that is too difficult for them

- Leveled text is designed to match a student's reading ability—NOT a particular lesson

**Handout 3: Leveled Text Matrices**

**Content of leveled text**

✓ Text in leveled books increases in difficulty in terms of language, sentence structure and content

✓ Leveled text can be linked to subject content for the grade level to support content learning, as well as to provide children with an opportunity to build their vocabulary and practice fluency

✓ Leveled text usually comes in the form of short fictional stories or non-fiction passages, referred to as leveled books or leveled readers

# Narrative and expository text

- The purpose of a **narrative text** is to tell a story

- An **expository text** is intended to explain or describe

- Both types of text can be fiction or non-fiction

- Early grade reading programs should include both types of text

- See Pinto, C. (2018) for a useful summary of best practices and design considerations when developing expository text



A GRN Interest Group on this topic meets regularly! Contact Christabel Pinto (Christabel.Pinto@roomtoread.org) or Emily Miksic for more information (emiksic@fhi360.org)

# EGR Resources: Big books and Read Alouds

- Big books are large versions of children's books meant to be read aloud by a teacher

- Big books are usually used with beginning readers to help them learn concepts of print, build oral language skills, and teach vocabulary and early comprehension strategies

- Words and sentence structure in big books can be more complex than in decodable or leveled texts since children's oral language skills are stronger than their beginning reading skills



*Photo: RTI International, Indonesia PRIORITAS (USAID)*

In contexts where it is not feasible to produce big books, regular sized read aloud books can be used instead. Alternatively, a teacher's guide can include a story to be read aloud, with pictures provided in the student reader

# EGR resources: Other materials

- Flashcards with letters (for letter/sound practice and for making words)

- Flash cards with sight words (to build automaticity in recognition)

- Flashcards with pictures and definitions (for building vocabulary)

- Flashcards with pictures (for phonological awareness and phonics activities)



*Photo: EDC, Philippines Basa Pilipinas (USAID)*

- Manipulatives, such as cardboard letters

- Posters and other displays of print (to build concepts of print and other skills)

# EGR resources: Other materials



**KARATU TARE** ⑤

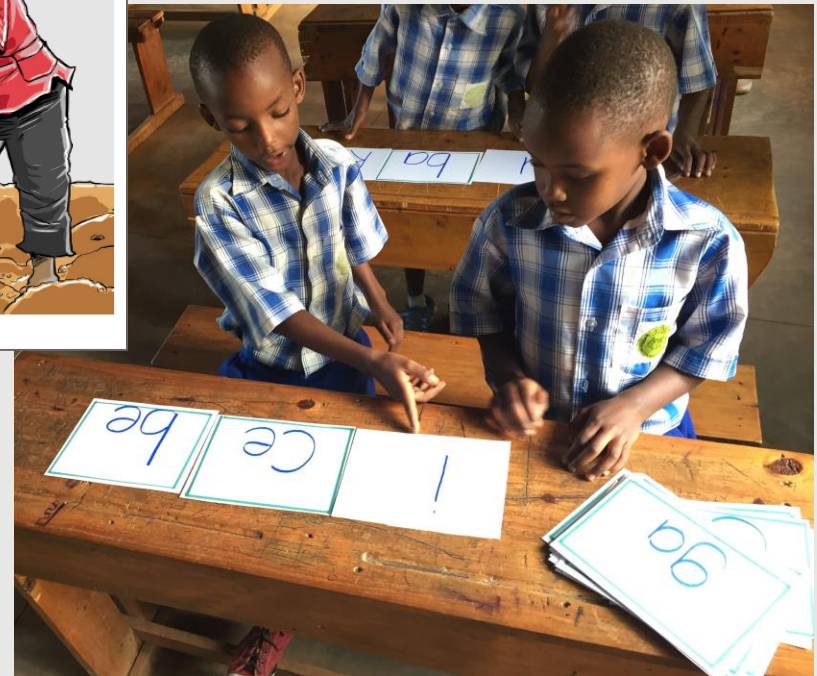Baba yana zuwa aiki. Idan ya taso daga aiki yana zuwa gona. Baba yana noma kayan abinci. Yana noma don ya samu kuɗi. Yana noma don ya kula da iyalinsa. Yana noma domin ya biya kuɗin makarantar 'ya'yansa.

*Above: Leveled text poster used in the Nigeria Reading and Numeracy Activity (RANA) project, FHI 360 (UNICEF/DFID)*

*Below: Children in Rwanda using flashcards (FHI 360, MCOP project, USAID)*

# EGR resources: Other materials
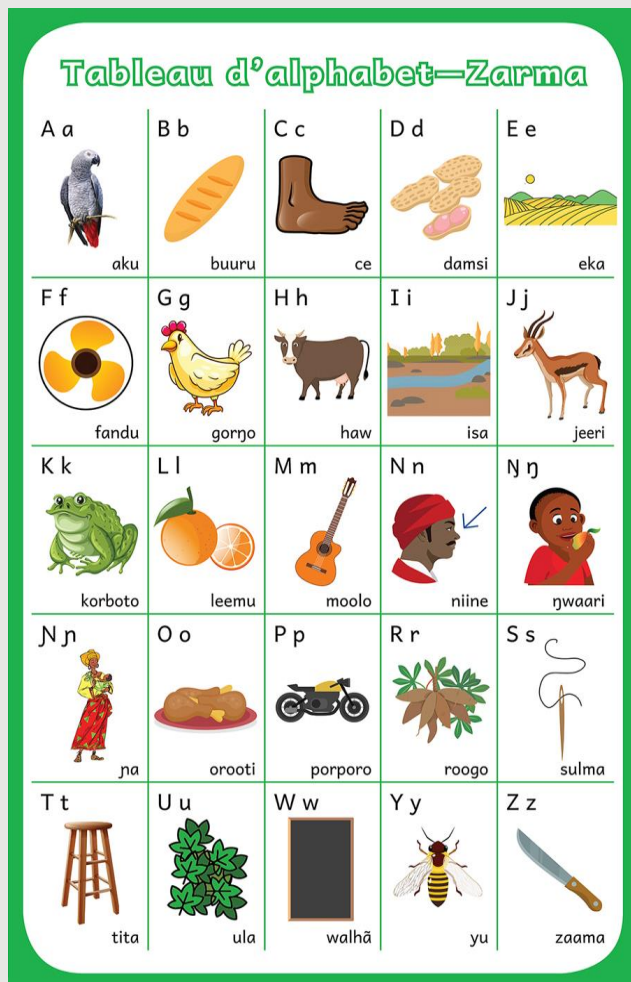




**Handout 4:
Additional Resource
Examples**

*Sources (clockwise left to right): STS International, Niger Education and Community Strengthening Plus Project (NECS+) (USAID);
Room to Read, Cambodia; RTI International, Malawi MTPDS (USAID)*

# "Beyond books": Technology as a resource

- **To provide children with access to reading materials**

  - Reading material on tablets

- **To provide training and ongoing professional development to teachers**

  - Videos of exemplary instruction to model best practices (produced for EGR programs in Ethiopia, Liberia, Nigeria and Rwanda, among other countries)

- **To support teacher instruction, including assessment**

  - Interactive Audio Instruction (IAI)

  - SMS to teachers

  - Software (such Papaya, Stepping Stone, Tangerine Class)

# Technology resources in EGL programs

- **To track and trace materials**
  - Hardware and software designed to reduce waste in the supply chain

- **To assist coaches in monitoring and supporting teachers**
  - Coaches record lesson observations onto a tablet, which can then suggest items for feedback; information then uploaded for analysis

- **To identify and support children with learning impairments**
  - Apps (such as HearScreen, which helps identify learners with visual and auditory impairments)
  - Assistive technology

**Cost-effectiveness of technology to support EGR improvement: The case of Kenya**

A randomized controlled trial (RCT) conducted in Kenya compared the cost-effectiveness of providing tablets for coaches, teachers or students, as well as providing no tablets. The study did not find significantly better student outcomes in treatment groups provided with tablets compared to the control group. Tablets for coaches were found to be more cost-effective than for teachers or students (Piper et al., 2016)

REACH is developing a resource titled "Analysis of Assistive Technologies to Support Learners with Disabilities"

# ACTIVITY

- Reflecting your own program and its resources to support teaching and learning in early grade reading:

    - What is missing in your program and how would you address it?

    - What challenges did you experience in the development of those resources?

    - How did you go through those challenges?

- Share your thoughts in the Zoom Chat Box

# Section 2: Developing & Using Effective EGR Resources

**READING WITHIN REACH**

# Developing effective and appropriate early grade reading resources: Steps to take

The following steps are designed to guide resource development and production. Some steps are sequential, while others may take place at the same time. Some may be repeated throughout the program cycle.

**Handout 5: EGR resources development and use:
Key activities, questions and considerations**

# Developing EGR resources: Steps to take

- **Engage all relevant stakeholders early and often**
    - Reading and language experts
    - Ministry of education
    - Teachers
    - Children
    - Community members
- **Form a materials development team**
    - Your development team should be diverse and appropriate to the context in terms of technical skills, language, ethnicity, religions, age and role

# Developing EGR resources: Steps to take

**Conduct Research**

- Analyze student assessment data

- Review reading curriculum and/or scope and sequence for the language

- Verify "language readiness"

- Become knowledgeable about language structure

- Learn more about local publishers and printers, and the education sector materials procurement process.

- Examine existing materials to see what is needed

- Assess and consider teacher knowledge and skills

**Handout 6: Research to guide materials development**

# Developing EGR resources: Steps to take

## Obtain stakeholder agreement on copyright & licensing

- Copyright and licensing affect future use and availability of materials

- **Open licensing** grants permission to reproduce, adapt, distribute and use material; the trend globally is toward open licensing

- Agreement on how materials will be copyrighted and licensed should be obtained *prior* to materials being developed

**REACH is currently developing a guidance resource on copyright and open licensing for EGR stakeholders**

**In the meantime, check out this 2017 GRN webinar on the topic:** Guidance and Best Practices on Using Creative Commons Licensing for Early Grade Reading Program Resources:

https://globalreadingnetwork.net/resources/creative-commons-workshop-training

# Developing EGR resources: Steps to take

**Draft a plan for materials production**

- Based on the background research conducted, develop or update a plan that includes:
    - A list of resources you will develop
    - The time/budget/expertise you will seek
    - A reasonable schedule for printing and procurement
    - Any technology you will use to assist in the process
    - A back-mapped calendar for delivery to schools

- Consider developing materials over time, in repeated cycles, providing foundational materials on a tight schedule, and supplementing them gradually

- Build in time to field test and revise materials

**Handout 7:
Materials development process map**

# Developing EGR resources: Steps to take
## Develop resources

- Identify number of lessons needed
- Design lesson plan structure
- Use scope and sequence to guide content
- Establish guidelines for lesson content
- Consider design elements
- Ensure alignment between student and teacher materials
- Identify topics and story ideas that are engaging to learners
- Develop content appropriate for context and learners, addressing inclusion issues



*Writers at the Andika Rwanda story writing event. Photo: EDC, Rwanda Literacy, Language and Learning (L3) Initiative (USAID)*

***Check out the Enabling Writers and Bloom resources listed in the resources and references document for this session***

# Conduct quality control

- Provide guidance, resources and training on quality aspects

- Monitor quality during development

  - Verify text difficulty, readability & complexity

  - Pay attention to design elements

  - Review for inclusion, including access and adaptations for students with disabilities

  - Provide structured planning resources for teachers to ensure fidelity in planning and implementation



*Photo: Creative Associates,*
*Yemen Early Grade Reading Approach*

**Handouts**
**8, 9, 10, 11, & 12**

# Developing EGR resources: Steps to take

## Field test materials

- Field testing prototypes provides information on

  – Level of text difficulty

  – Student interest & engagement

  – Ability of teachers to effectively use resources

  – Appropriateness within the specific context

  – Inclusivity of materials

  – Readability and design elements



*Decodable books are field tested in Indonesia as part of the Enabling Writers Workshop Program implemented under REACH*

**Handout 13: Guidance on Field Testing**

# Developing EGR resources: Steps to take

**Print & distribute: From warehouse to school**

- Make a plan for your printing, distribution and storage

- Guide schools on materials management and used

- Verify through monitoring

**Handout 14: Planning for materials printing, distribution and storage**

**Monitor & evaluate use of resources**

- Ask teachers, students and coaches for feedback

- Monitor how resource use

- Evaluate materials' effectiveness in terms of their impact on various elements of instruction and performance

# Activity

**Reflect and Zoom Chat**

- Consider all of the recommended steps for materials development and monitoring of use

- Which steps do you think are most important and why?

- Where do you find the most difficulty in your development work?

- What advice do you have for others who are taking on EGR resource development?

# Section 3: Developing Resources for All Learners

READING WITHIN REACH

# Developing resources for multiple languages simultaneously, for "at scale" implementation: The case of Ghana

- Developing materials in one language is tough work – developing materials in 11 languages is a Herculean feat!

- Requires:

  - careful planning

  - quality control processes and tools

  - clearly defined roles & responsibilities

  - attention to quality and detail

  - sufficient human and technological resources

For more information on the Ghana experience, see Boakye-Yiadom, F. et al. (2018) CIES presentations
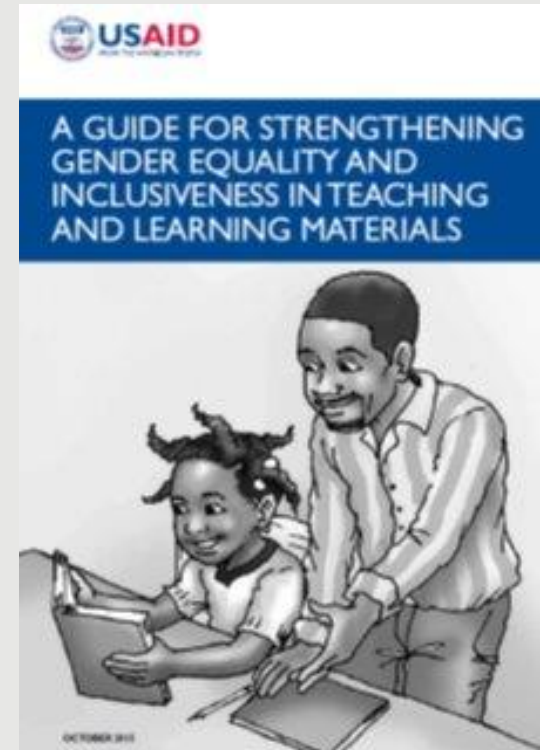


*Photo: FHI 360, Ghana Learning (USAID)*

**Handout 15:
Developing materials in 11 languages – The case of Ghana**

# Best practices for developing materials content

- **Resources should be developed for the specific context** in which they will be used – appropriate adaptation from other countries, contexts or languages is possible in some cases

- **Content should be directly linked to the curriculum**, scope and sequence, student learning goals and assessment

- Content should be **developmentally appropriate** for learners' age, grade and/or skill level

- **Stories, topics and activities should be engaging** to young learners and relevant to their language and culture; for beginning readers, include familiar contexts and stories so that they can focus on decoding and other skills, and not comprehension of unfamiliar themes or places. Learn more about creating engaging texts in **"The Magic of KTTM: Kids To Text Match - Writing Books That Children Can & Will Read** (Prouty, 2017)

# Best practices for developing materials content

- **Be attentive to text difficulty, readability and complexity.** Children's ability to read depends on text difficulty, complexity and readability.

- **Consider design elements,** as they affect the accessibility and readability of content. Font type, size, spacing and organization of text are critical. Consult the following resources for more information:
  - **Best Practices for Developing Supplementary Reading Materials** (blueTree Group/JBS International, 2014)

- **Content should include positive and equitable representations (**gender, ethnicity, religion, (dis)ability, and other characteristics)

- **Develop materials that meet the needs of children with various abilities**



USAID

A GUIDE FOR STRENGTHENING GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

**Handouts 16, 17, & 18: Materials Development Supporting Resources**

# ACTIVITY

- **Return to Handout 5 Planning for materials development and use: Key activities, questions and considerations to guide planning** and the materials quality control handouts

- Reflect

  - When thinking about your existing program materials, what are the gaps you now think you may need to address?

  - How might you go about that process?

- Chat

  - Where are the gaps in your resource development & use process?

  - How can you use suggestions from today's webinar to close those gaps?

# Key takeaways

- Development of high-quality accessible materials is important
- It requires careful and detailed planning of a usually large-scale process
- There is a common understanding of characteristics of quality materials
- There is a systematic process for development
- Engaging local actors in the development process builds, and creates materials that are more grounded in authentic context
- When children read books that are written specifically for them, they engage more often, more actively, and benefit more from improved reading habits
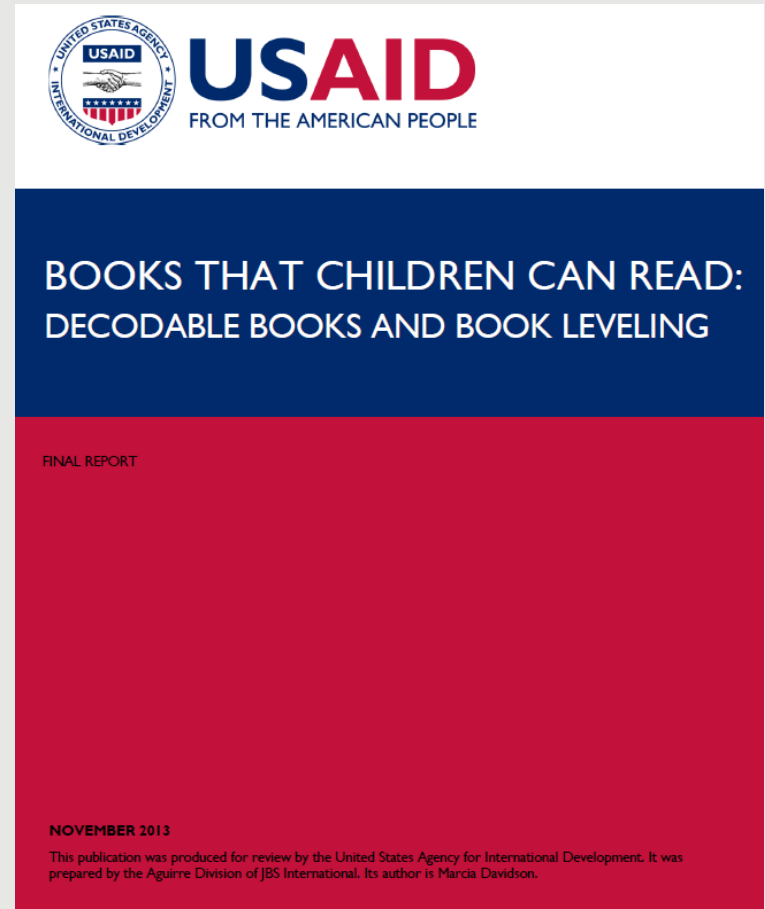
# For more information

Check out this resource on the GRN website, and others listed in the "Resources and References" document for this session

**Books that children CAN read: Decodable books and book leveling**

Download at:

https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/publications-and-research/books-children-can-read-decodable-books-and-book-leveling



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

BOOKS THAT CHILDREN CAN READ:
DECODABLE BOOKS AND BOOK LEVELING

FINAL REPORT

NOVEMBER 2013

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by the Aguirre Division of JBS International. Its author is Marcia Davidson.

**Session 2: Resources for teaching and learning early grade reading**

**Resources and References**

**This list was compiled by Reading within REACH, in collaboration with the Global Reading Network. It accompanies the webinar delivered on November 1, 2018.**

- blueTree Group. (2014). *Best practices for developing supplementary reading materials*. JBS International. Available at  https://globalreadingnetwork.net/publications-and-research/best-practices-developing-supplementary-reading-materials

- Bloom Library. Software and guidance for developing decodable and leveled books. Available at https://bloomlibrary.org/landing

- Bloom training materials. Comprehensive guides on how to use Bloom software. Available in English, French and Spanish. https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/resources/bloom-training-resources

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- Readability Analyzer. Estimates the readability of a passage of text using the Flesch Reading Ease, Fog Scale Level, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, and other metrics. Available at https://datayze.com/readability-analyzer.php

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**Copyright and Open Licensing**

- REACH/the GRN is currently developing a guidance document on copyright and licensing that will be released in late November 2018

- Global Reading Network (2017). Guidance and Best Practices on Using Creative Commons Licensing for Early Grade Reading Program Resources. Presentations from seminar delivered December 11, 2017. Available at https://globalreadingnetwork.net/resources/creative-commons-workshop-training

- Copyright.gov – Frequently asked questions about copyright https://www.copyright.gov/help/faq/

- Creative Commons - https://creativecommons.org/

- OER Commons – Information about open educational resources https://www.oercommons.org/