



USAID | EGYPT
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Education Data for Decision Making (EdData II):

Briefing to USAID Mission on Early Grade Reading Progress in Egypt

September 16, 2014

Prepared by Luis A. Crouch
RTI International, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, USA

About the Presentation

- This presentation was prepared for USAID/Egypt, Cairo, September 16, 2014, as part of the conclusion of the Second National EGRA for Egypt.
- The USAID EdData II project is led by RTI International. This EdData II task order was No. AID-263-BC-14-00002 (RTI Task 27).

Background – 1

- USAID Ed Sector Goal 1: improve reading for 100,000,000 children
 - Most important Goal in the ed sector
 - USAID most important donor in the world, in this respect
 - Only donor to accept the challenge of numerically, measurably improving education quality
- Egypt and the USAID Mission both:
 - gave faith that it could be done by piloting (other pilots too)
 - can help with the numbers

3

Background – 2

- USAID kick-started the effort with the MOE
- Pilot proved that vast improvements are possible
 - Doubling fluency scores
 - Halving number of non-readers
 - In approx 2 years, 2009-2011 (April)
- MoE (national and governorate and idara) saw results, scaled up nationally, essentially immediately

| | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 |
|-----------|---------|---------|------------|
| 2011/2012 | Green | Green | Light Blue |
| 2012/2013 | Green | Green | Light Blue |
| 2013/2014 | Green | Green | Green |

4

Background – 3

- Ministry scaled up and sustained the program, changing essentially nothing, through 3 changes in government
- Continued to train, print materials
- Were willing to be measured against a baseline and mid-lines as necessary
- Were willing to set benchmarks (only 2nd or 3rd developing country to do so, 1st Arabic-speaking one)
- Reading declared by President to be most important education goal, it is also most important in Sector Strategic Plan
- This has happened only 2-3 times in my lifetime so far

5

How were the benchmarks set?

Note that these slides are optional only.

Source 1: Statistical / scientific methods

1. Look at baseline data and its distribution¹
2. Look at what can happen with better teaching
 - Pilot experiences from Egypt, GILO/EGRP
3. Other countries, international standards
4. Study data from schools with better results but average children
5. Final aim: comprehension, so:
 - Pick comprehension level of 80%
 - See what fluency and accuracy are needed for that, using correlation analysis
 - See what earlier skills (letter sounds, pseudo words) are needed for better fluency
6. Fundamental research on brain science

6

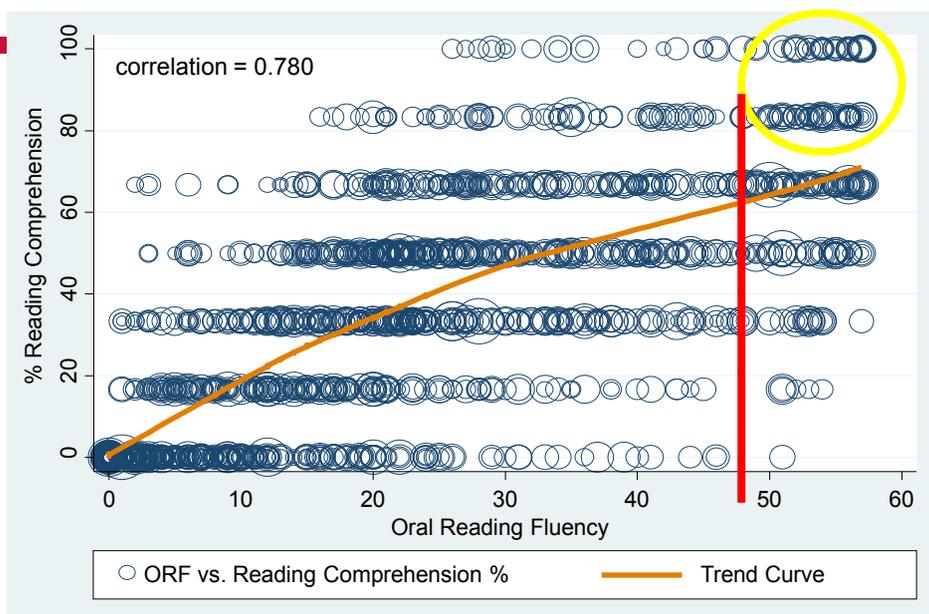
How were the benchmarks set?

❑ Source 2: Common sense and experience

- Use the experience of practitioners, coaches, teachers, experts
 - Instinct as to what is possible
- But be familiar with the ideas and numbers
- And experience coaching teachers using the metrics
 - For example, using the metric “correct words per minute”
- So: common sense and wisdom, but based on practice with the data and pilots.

7

Example: correlation fluency-comprehension



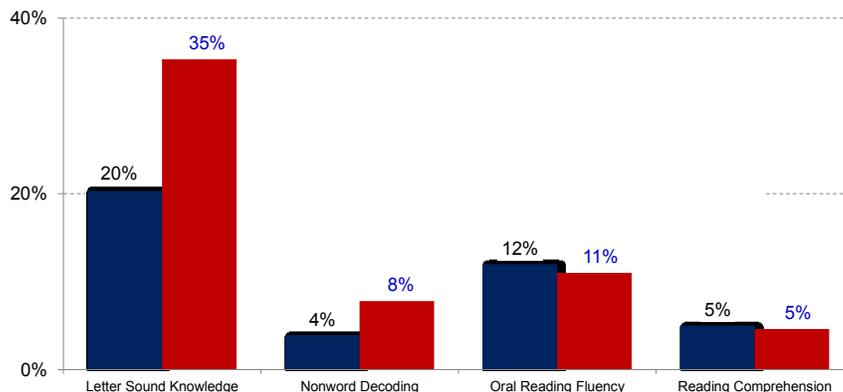
Results so far – 1

- Exactly what I would expect
- Even pilot projects, under totally controlled conditions, require the “wakeup” call from a midline to start showing improvements
- This has been true in just about every project and national campaign I’ve ever managed or studied
- The results are essentially flat overall, but:
 1. With interesting variations across sub-aspects of reading, that suggest the way forward
 2. With good results on processes of school support

9

Results so far – 2

Some key indicative results, 2013 and 2014: % of kids at 2018 benchmarks
What are the implications?



10

Results so far – 3

Some process indicators, from classroom observation study (additional to reading assessment)

- All observed classrooms had key materials
- 92% of teachers had received some training on teaching Grade 3 reading
- 75% of those who had received mastery monitoring training were applying it
- Nearly all teachers receiving various forms of ongoing support in reading
- 87% had the lesson plan and 71% were using it
- Applying the key procedures

11

So what are the issues and what remains to improve? – 1

- First, recall that mid-line, one year after baseline, almost always flat
- Most campaigns and projects need this “wake-up” call
- So what is the wake-up call?
 1. Time to apply the training: only 4 useful weeks in the whole school year in 2014!
 - Due to political turmoil
 2. Teachers a bit “stuck” with the Grade 1 and 2 skills: need to focus on fluency and comprehension
 - Letter sounds skills easy, innovative, fun, can turn into game
 - Need training and specific tips on how to improve fluency and comprehension that are practical, fun, innovative
 3. Line-up of curriculum, assessment, reading materials, and training, was not as good for Grade 3 as for Grades 1 and 2 under pilot
 - MoE is spontaneously improving this, but more support would be useful
 - Line up not perfect in Grades 1 and 2 either
 4. Ways to intensify quality of teacher coaching model should be found
 5. Quality of improvement varies a lot: bring up the average by supporting Upper Egypt more

12

So what are the issues and what remains to improve? – 2

6. Remediate children that are particularly behind
 - Group by specific ability rather than grade, provide special support, not expensive, many models exist
 - Test socio-cultural acceptability
7. Popularize and implement more goal-orientation using the benchmarks
8. Consider social marketing of what children sound like when they are reading well
9. Create incentives, use competition, for reading improvement, but with care
10. Do better overall planning and coordination