



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

EARLY GRADE READING ACTIVITY

COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION HANDBOOK

MAY 2014

Contract No.: AID-612-C-13-00002

This report was prepared for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was submitted by RTI International.

Early Grade Reading Activity

Community Mobilization Handbook

Period of Performance:

June 17, 2013, through September 17, 2016

Prepared by Dezie Trigu, Community Mobilization Specialist



A Community Reading Fair in Group Village Headman Chitukula's area. Lilongwe. Photo: Dezie Trigu

Submitted under

Contract No.: AID-612-C-13-00002

by

RTI International

3040 Cornwallis Road

Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194

May, 2014

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	iii
Abbreviations.....	ix
A. Purposes of the Handbook.....	xi
B. Training Approach.....	xi
C. Symbols.....	xi
The Timetable.....	xii
Illustrative Training Program for DCMs.....	xii
Day 1.....	xii
Day 2.....	xiii
Day 3.....	xiii
Day 4.....	xiv
Day 5.....	xv
Materials and Resources.....	xvi
Session 1: EGRA Program and Community Mobilization.....	1
Impact Area and Duration.....	2
Activity 1: Training Expectations, Fears and Solutions.....	2
Activity 2: Understanding the Training Manual.....	3
Activity 3: DCM Roles and Responsibilities.....	3
Session 2: Why Reading Matters.....	5
Activity 4a: Midima Family Case Study.....	5
Activity 4b: Literacy Skills Impact on Children.....	6
Activity 4c: Emergent Literacy Skills.....	7
Session 3: Effective Early Grade Reading Interventions.....	8
Activity 5: Views on Reading Skills Status among Children in Malawi.....	8
The Malawian Educational Context.....	8
Activity 6: The Main Reading Skills.....	9

Activity 7: Reading Unknown Language.....	10
Activity 8: Defining and Understanding Key Reading Skills	12
Activity 9: Fluent Readers	17
(Suggested Time: 10 minutes)	17
Session 4: Community Mobilization: How It Can Contribute to Improving Literacy Outcomes for Children.....	18
Activity10: Defining Community Mobilization.....	18
Community Mobilization	18
The Importance of After-School Activities.....	19
How Communities Can Support Reading.....	20
Activity 11: How Communities Can Support Reading.....	20
Key Components/Steps in Community Mobilization (Best Practice Guidelines).....	22
Activity 12: Community Mobilization Steps.....	22
Activity 13 – Part 1: Prepare to Mobilize (after problem identification).....	23
Discussion Points on Community Mobilization – Part 1	24
Discussion Points on Community Mobilization – Part 2	25
Activity 13 – Part 2: Organize Community for Action	26
Discussion Points on Community Mobilization – Part 3	26
Activity 13 – Part 3: Explore Reading Issues and Set Priorities.....	27
Discussion Points on Community Mobilization – Part 4	28
Planning Together.....	29
Activity 13 – Part 4: CAP Preparation	29
Discussion Points on Community Mobilization – Part 5	30
Act, Monitor and Evaluate Together	31
Activity 13 – Part 5: Act, Monitor and Evaluate Together	31
Discussion Points on Community Mobilization –Part 6	32
Conclusion.....	33
Session 5: Whom to Work with in our Local Communities	34

Identifying Stakeholders and Their Roles	34
Activity 14: Stakeholder Identification.....	34
Community Stakeholders.....	35
Session 6: Roles and Responsibilities of Key Partners (DCMs/DCDOs, CDAs/PEAs) in Community Mobilization	38
Activity 15 – Part 1: Drawing DCM Roles Spider Diagrams.....	39
The Roles and Responsibilities of DCMs	39
Activity 15 – Part 2: Drawing DEM, DCDOs CDA, PEA Role Spider Diagrams	41
The Roles and Responsibilities of Primary Education Advisors	41
The Roles and Responsibilities of Community Development Assistants	42
The Roles and Responsibilities of District Education Managers	42
Session 7: Planning for Literacy-Focused Community Meetings	44
Activity 16: Mwalimu village and Mr. Majaila Case Studies	44
Logistics for Community Meetings	46
Activity 17: Examples of Community Meetings and Resources.....	47
Potential Challenges and Suggested Solutions	48
Session 8: Planning for Annual Reading Fairs	49
Things to Consider When Organizing a Reading Fair	49
Activity 18: Things to Consider When Organizing a Reading Fair	49
Reading Fair Definition.....	50
Activity 19: Organizing a Reading Fair.....	50
Work with Your Community Partners.....	51
Potential Challenges and Suggested Solutions	52
Session 9: Practical Strategies for Communities and Parents to Support Learner Reading (Out of School)	53
Guidelines for a Reading Club	53
Recruiting Reading Club Facilitators	54
Recruiting Club Members	54

Potential Challenges and Suggested Solutions	55
Activities, Resources, Gender, and Sustainability.....	56
Activity 20: Organizing Practical Activities to Support Learners’ Reading	56
Reading Activities That Can Be Done in the Community	56
1. Village or Community Reading Clubs	56
Activity 21: Benefits of Using the Youth as Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators.....	56
2. Establishing and Managing a Community/Village Library	57
3. Community/Village Reading Mentors.....	58
Activity 22: Roles of the Illiterate in Literacy Teaching.....	59
4. Storytelling	59
Potential Challenges and Suggested Solutions	60
Care for Books.....	61
Tips for Care of Books for Learners.....	61
Book Security	61
Activity 23: Mwadala Community Mobilizer Case Study	62
Sustainability Guidelines.....	62
Criteria for Selection	62
Training Requirement	62
Stakeholders	63
Rights-Based Approach	63
Conclusion.....	63
Session 10: Practical Strategies for Communities and Parents to Support Learner Reading (in School)	64
The Agenda for Change.....	64
Activity 24: Thazi Primary School Petition Case Study.....	65
Activities, Resources, Gender, and Sustainability.....	66
Activity 25: All Inclusive and Sustainable Activities	66
How Parents Can Help	67

Materials That May Be Required	67
Human Resources	67
The Venue	68
How to Sustain the Activities	68
Catering to the Needs of Learners with Special Needs and Those of OVC.....	68
Potential Challenges and Suggested Solutions	68
Session 11: Monitoring and Reporting on Community Involvement	70
Activity 26: Magweru Community Case Study.....	71
Activity 27: Monitoring	71
Definition of Monitoring and Why We Monitor	72
Areas of Monitoring and Reporting	72
Who Should Monitor	72
What Can Be Monitored and How Often.....	73
Possible Areas for Monitoring and Reporting on Community Involvement in Reading/Literacy for Children.....	73
Modalities for the Mobilizers and Communities to Monitor Together	73
Questions to Consider.....	74
Data Analysis.....	74
Share Information and Success Stories with the Community.....	74
Activity 28: Using the Appendices	75
Using the Handbook with the Community	75
Activity 29: Planning the Way Forward.....	76
Conclusion.....	76
Appendix 1: Storytelling Steps	77
Appendix 2: Community Book Bank Lending Register.....	78
Appendix 3: Community Reading Club Attendance and Content Sheet.....	79
Appendix 4: Community Story Time Sheet	81
Appendix 5: School Reader/Book Lending Register.....	83

Appendix 6: School Reading Class Attendance and Content Register.....	84
Appendix 7: Year 1 Work Plan (June 2013-September 2014).....	86
Appendix 8: Work Plan Template	89
Appendix 9: Activity Reporting Template	89
Appendix 10: Monitoring and Evaluation Instrument	90
Appendix: 11: The Impact Zones.....	96
Appendix 12: Applicability of Topics.....	102
Appendix 13: Community Action Planning Sheet	103

Abbreviations

AEC	Area Executive Committee
CAP	Community Action Plan
CBE	Complimentary Basic Education
CBO	community-based organization
CCI	Comprehensive Community Initiative
CDA	Community Development Assistant
CM	community mobilization
CMO	Community Mobilization Officer
CPD	continuous professional development
CRECCOM	Creative Centre for Community Mobilization
CRV	community reading volunteer
CSO	civil society organization
DC	Divisional Coordinator
DCM	District Community Mobilization Officer
DCDO	District Community Development Officer
DCSWO	District Community Social Welfare Officer
DEC	District Education Committee
DEM	District Education Manager
DEN	District Education Network
DEO	District Education Office
DERG	Disability Education Resource Guide
DIAS	Department of Inspection and Advisory Services
DME	District Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
DTC	District Training Coordinator
DTED	Department of Teacher Education and Development
ECD	early childhood development
EDM	Education Division Manager

EGRA	Early Grade Reading Activity
EMIS	education management information system
INSET	in-service education training
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MGCSW	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare
MOEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MTPDS	Malawi Teacher Professional Development and Support Program
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OVC	orphans and other vulnerable children
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSIP	Primary School Improvement Program
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PTA	parent-teacher association
SEMA	Senior Education Methods Advisor
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SMS	short messaging service
TA	Teaching Assistant
TLM	teaching and learning material
USAID	US Agency for International Development
TTC	Teacher Training College
USG	US Government
VCRF	Volunteer Community Reading Facilitator
VDC	Village Development Committee

A. Purposes of the Handbook

The Community Mobilization Handbook has three purposes:

1. It will be used to develop the capacity of Community Development Assistants (CDAs) and Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) to work with schools and communities to initiate, sustain, and monitor reading activities for lower primary school learners both in and out of school. The handbook has been structured as a training guide with key topics on community mobilization and reading, which can be used by the District Community Mobilizers (DCMs) for training workshops in their respective districts.
2. It will be used by the DCMs and their district government counterparts, the DCDOs CDAs and PEAs, as a resource bank for working with schools and communities to support early grade reading activities. The handbook includes explanatory sections on various topics, including why reading matters and what community mobilization means, as well as practical guidance on getting community members involved, guidance on planning and organizing community mobilization activities, and clear descriptions of reading activities that can be done at both the school and community levels. It also includes planning and monitoring templates that can be printed and used as needed.
3. It will be distributed to key stakeholders including head teachers, School Management Committee (SMC) chairpersons, Mother Group chairpersons and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) chairpersons, who can also use it as a resource bank for working with teachers, parents, and the community. This version of the handbook can be modified to remove the training elements that are unnecessary or inappropriate for different key stakeholder groups.

B. Training Approach

The manual uses various participatory approaches such as “brainstorming” and group activities to make the training very interactive and, at the same time, to generate ideas from the participants’ personal knowledge and experiences.

C. Symbols

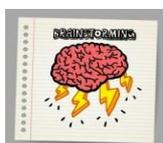
The following symbols have been used in the manual to represent various sections:



Objectives: Indicates the lessons to be learned in the section



Case Study: Describes a “real-life” situation related to the section’s theme



Brainstorm: Generating freewheeling ideas, views, or solutions



Consolidation: Reinforcing and bringing the participants' ideas together



Group Activity: Activities undertaken by participants working together



Individual Activity: Activities undertaken by participants on their own

The Timetable

The training has been designed to cover five days. If you are reading the handbook and not receiving training in its use, the following program will be a useful guide to key sections of each chapter.

Illustrative Training Program for DCMs

Day 1

Time	Planned Activities
8:00 – 8:30	Registration and Housekeeping Issues
8:30 – 9:30	Official Opening Introductions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purpose of the training• Workshop policies• Participant expectations
9:30 – 10:00	Early Grade Reading Activity (EGRA) Program and Community Mobilization <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aims and objectives• Key activities, time frames, and geographical locations
10:00 – 10:30	Roles and Responsibilities of the DCMs in the Malawi EGRA Program (general) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What you are expected to do• How your work fits in to the overall program
10:30 – 11:00	Tea
11:00 – 12:30	Introduction to the Handbook <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to use the handbook• Table of contents

Time	Planned Activities
12:30 – 1:30	Lunch
1:30 – 3:00	Why Reading Matters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why learning to read is important
3:00 – 3:30	Tea
3:30 – 4:55	Effective Early Grade Reading Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Malawian educational context • The main reading skills • Defining and understanding the key reading skills
4:55 – 5:00	Closing Day 1

Day 2

Time	Activity
8:25 – 8:30	Opening of Day 2 and Housekeeping Issues
8:30 – 9:00	Recap and Review of Day 1
9:00 – 10:30	Effective Early Grade Reading Interventions (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining and understanding the key reading skills
10:30 – 11:00	Tea
11:00 – 12:30	Community Mobilization and How It Can Contribute to Improving Children’s Literacy Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining community mobilization • Importance of after-school activities • How communities can support reading
12:30 – 1:30	Lunch
1:30 – 2:30	Key Components of Community Mobilization (best practice guidelines)
2:30 – 3:00	Tea
3:00 – 4:55	Key Components of Community Mobilization (best practice guidelines)
4:55 – 5:00	Closing Day 2

Day 3

Time	Activity
8:25 – 8:30	Opening of Day 3 and Housekeeping Issues
8:30 – 9:00	Recap and Review of Day 2
9:00 – 10:30	Identifying Community Stakeholders and Their Roles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the key stakeholders? • What can they contribute to supporting reading in the community?
10:30 – 11:00	Tea
11:00 – 12:30	Key Partners in Community Mobilization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of DCM responsibilities (more detailed than in Day 1)

Time	Activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of PEA responsibilities • Definition of CDA responsibilities • Definition of other stakeholders' responsibilities, including District Education Managers (DEMs), DCDOs SMCs, PTAs, head teachers, etc.
12:30 – 1:30	Lunch
1:30 – 3:00	Planning for Literacy-Focused Community Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What school/community meetings need to take place? • How often should community meetings take place (School Year 1, School Year 2, School Year 3)? • What purposes, messages, and information should be conveyed? • Materials and resources available for use (including handbook) • Who should be invited? • Logistics of community meetings • Potential challenges/difficulties and proposed solutions
3:00 – 3:30	Tea
3:30 – 4:55	Planning for Annual Reading Fairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should annual reading fairs look like? • Where should they take place? • What activities can be organized for annual reading fairs (e.g., spelling bees, word recognition games, reading competitions, awards presentations, reading advocacy messages)? • Who should be invited? • Logistics of reading fairs • Potential challenges/difficulties and proposed solutions
4:55 – 5:00	Closing Day 3

Day 4

Time	Activity
8:25 – 8:30	Opening of Day 4 and Housekeeping Issues
8:30 – 9:00	Recap and Review of Day 3
9:00 – 10:30	Practical Strategies for Communities and Parents to Support Learner Reading (out of school) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What activities can be included (practical guide to various options, including reading clubs, book clubs, reading camps, local preparation of decodable readers, etc.)? • What material resources will be required? • What human resources will be required? • Where can activities take place? • How to sustain the activities (after the program) • Management structures/processes to plan, manage, and monitor activities • Ensuring that the needs of learners with disabilities and those of orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) are accommodated,

Time	Activity
	<p>as well as trying to ensure gender balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care for books • Potential challenges/difficulties and proposed solutions
10:30 – 11:00	Tea
11:00 – 12:30	Practical Strategies for Communities and Parents to Support Learner Reading (out of school)—continued
12:30 – 1:30	Lunch
1:30 – 3:00	<p>Practical Mobilization Strategies for Communities to Work with Schools to Support Learner Reading (in schools)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agenda for change • What activities (practical guide to various options, including community reading volunteers, talking classrooms, local production of chalk slates, incorporation of reading focus in school improvement plans (SIPs), etc.)? • What material resources will be required? • What human resources will be required? • How to sustain the activities (after the program) • Management structures/processes to plan, oversee, and monitor these activities • Ensuring that the needs of learners with disabilities and those of OVC are provided for, as well as trying to ensure gender balance • Potential challenges/difficulties and proposed solutions
3:00 – 3:30	Tea
3:30 – 4:55	Practical Mobilization Strategies for Communities to Work with Schools to Support Learner Reading (in schools)—continued
4:55 – 5:00	Closing Day 4

Day 5

Time	Activity
8:25 – 8:30	Opening of Day 5 and Housekeeping Issues
8:30 – 9:00	Recap and Review of Day 4
9:30 – 10:30	<p>Monitoring and Reporting on Community Involvement in Reading/Literacy for Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Monitoring and Evaluation Officers (DMEs)/DCMs and DCDOs—what they should monitor and with what frequency • PEAs—what they should monitor and with what frequency • CDAs—what they should monitor and with what frequency • Other stakeholders—what they should monitor and with what frequency • Modalities of working together • Use of short messaging service (SMS) monitoring systems
10:30 – 11:00	Tea
11:00 – 12:00	Using the Appendices

Time	Activity
12:00 – 1:00	Using the Handbook with the Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the handbook can be distributed and used to work with and sensitize/train community members
1:00 – 2:00	Lunch
2:00 – 3:30	Planning the Way Forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to do next • Preparation of quarterly work plans and strategizing key activities
3:30 – 4:00	Tea
4:00 – 4:30	Conclusions
4:30 – 5:00	Official Closing of Training Session

Materials and Resources

To use this handbook in training others and in helping people to develop strategies that will increase reading opportunities for children in their communities, the following will also be needed:

- Appropriate venues for meeting and training purposes
- Sufficient copies of the handbook for distribution
- Markers, flip chart paper, notepads, and pens

Session I: Introduction



By the end of this session, you should be able to do the following:

- Outline the knowledge and skills that you expect to acquire
- Mention the challenges that you may experience in the course of executing your roles and responsibilities and possible solutions to these challenges
- State how this handbook will be used
- Discuss the general expectations, roles, and responsibilities of DCMs
- State how your work as a DCM fits into the overall EGRA program

The Early Grade Reading Activity (EGRA) is being implemented in Malawi by RTI International in partnership with the Creative Centre for Community Mobilization (CRECCOM).

EGRA Objectives

- Improve the capacity of Standard 1 to 3 teachers to provide quality reading instruction to learners
- Improve the learning outcomes of Standard 1 to 3 learners
- Increase parental and community engagement to support learner reading
- Reduce repetition and dropout rates in the early grades by providing a quality learning environment

Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS) project.

CRECCOM is a local Malawian NGO with vast experience in social empowerment and community mobilization on a variety of issues. CRECCOM advocates change through community involvement by mobilizing and empowering both individuals and communities so that their human rights are fulfilled.

The purpose of the Malawi EGRA program is to **improve educational outcomes related to reading in Standards 1–3.**

RTI is an independent and international nonprofit organization that offers innovative research, development, and multidisciplinary services. It is an international nongovernmental organization (NGO) that strives to improve education quality, relevance, access, and efficiency around the world at every level—from classroom instruction to national education policy—thereby supporting both schools and systems to enhance teaching and learning. RTI is implementing and has implemented other educational programs in a number of countries, including Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Senegal, and Uganda. In Malawi, RTI recently completed the

EGRA Key Result Areas

- Provision of quality reading instruction for early grades learners
- Provision of teaching and learning materials for reading
- Increasing parental and community engagement to support learners' reading
- Improvement of policy environment to support early grade reading

Activities toward this end include assessment of learners, training of teachers, provision of educational support, adaptation of the curriculum, development of reading materials, engagement of policy makers, and community mobilization to support reading activities, both in and outside school.

Special focus is also accorded to learning approaches that address gender issues and provide support to orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) and learners with special needs.

Increased parental and community engagement to support learner reading will be achieved through activities that include the following.

1. **Parental/caregiver and community support for reading**, which entails devising strategies for creating support for children whose parents are non-literate and continuously evaluating the chosen activities for improvement.
2. **Organization of annual reading fairs** where parents and communities play a major role and where teachers, parents, and other relevant stakeholders are recognized.
3. **Provision of classroom-level and community support for reading** by finding innovative ways for parents and the community in general to support school management, teachers' classroom and extra-curricular activities that support learners' reading.

Impact Area and Duration

EGRA will be implemented in the following educational districts: Balaka, Blantyre Rural, Lilongwe Rural East, Lilongwe Rural West, Machinga, Mzimba North, Ntcheu, Ntchisi, Salima, Thyolo, and Zomba Rural. It is a three-year program and will run up to October 2016 (see Appendix II for a complete list of program districts and zones for year one).

Activity 1: Training Expectations, Fears and Solutions

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; followed by a total 15 minutes plenary discussion)



Instructions: Form five groups, discuss, and then present in plenary on the following:

- The knowledge and skills that you expect to acquire
- The fears that you may have in the course of executing your roles and responsibilities
- Possible ways to address anticipated challenges

Some possible expectations and challenges may include the following. Compare your group's responses with these.

Table I-1. Participants' Expectations and Fears

Possible Fears	Some Suggested Solutions
Not being accepted by communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be in contact with communities through traditional leaders • Be humble and good listeners • Dress to suit the environment and the area • Learn and respect local customs
Resistance from some community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be in contact with communities through traditional leaders • Explain clearly the benefits of the intervention during sensitization meetings • Be persuasive • Hand over the stick to community members wherever possible
Division and conflict between RTI and CRECCOM officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize that both organizations are EGRA employees with one objective and under the supervision of a Divisional Coordinator
Conflicting messages from RTI and CRECCOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTI and CRECCOM should coordinate communication properly

Activity 2: Understanding the Training Manual

(Suggested Time: 15 minutes individual; 15 minutes plenary discussion)



Instructions: On your own, skim through the handbook and try to find the answers to these questions. Be prepared to share your answers in plenary:

- On what page does the suggested training schedule start?
- What are at least two topics in the training schedule?
- What are the three purposes of the handbook?
- What do the different symbols used in the handbook mean?

It is very important to fully familiarize yourself with the various sections of the handbook so that you can use it effectively to work with and train others.

Activity 3: DCM Roles and Responsibilities

(Suggested Time: 20 minutes)



Instructions: In plenary, brainstorm on the following questions:

- What do you think your general roles are?
- How do these roles fit into the overall project?

Table I-2. General DCM Roles and Responsibilities

General Roles of DCMs	How DCM Roles Fit into the Overall Program
Operationalizing the program's community mobilization strategy	DCMs will advocate for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading fairs • Parental/caregiver and community support for reading • Provision of classroom-level and school support for reading, in close coordination with District Training Coordinators (DTCs), DCDOs and DMEs
Training and providing coaching to Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare (MGCSW) District Community Development Officer (DCDOs), CDAs, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) officials, and communities in promoting community participation in reading education	The DCDOs, CDAs, communities, and MOEST officials will acquire knowledge of supporting sustainable and effective community reading techniques that will result in improved literacy.
Attending meetings and workshops at the community, school, and zonal levels	By promoting the ideals of the program in such fora and encouraging the formation of community reading clubs, inclusion of reading education in SIPs, and stakeholders' attention to OVC and special educational needs (SEN) learners during reading activities
Reporting to and accepting direction from District and Divisional Coordinators	Acknowledging and documenting the successes and challenges from the program implementation process and how the challenges can be addressed to achieve desired outcomes

Session 2: Why Reading Matters



By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Discuss factors that can prevent the development of literacy skills
- Mention age at which literacy skills should be learned
- Discuss consequences of children not having the opportunity to develop good literacy skills
- Discuss outcomes if children do have the opportunity to develop good literacy skills

Reading is a fundamental skill that is integral to the acquisition of functional literacy. Literacy implies the ability to read, view, write, design, speak, and listen in a way that allows a person to communicate effectively and to make sense of the world.

Activity 4a: Midima Family Case Study

(Suggested Time: 20 minutes)



Instructions: Individually read the case study below and write down your answers to the questions that follow.



Case Study 1. Read the following case study and complete the brainstorming activity below it.

The Midima family lives in Choyenda village in Mulanje district. They had 15 children, 5 of whom died of malnutrition. The Midima family accuse their neighbours, the Choles, of witchcraft. Their first born, Tawina, is 18 years old while the last born, Ukavu, is 1 year old. He is not a strong child and is often malnourished. Mr. and Mrs. Midima are illiterate and none of their children has been to school.

They are a very poor family and they do not always harvest enough because they spend a lot of time in the hospital with their children. For the better part of each year, they live on alms. Sometimes they survive on the piecemeal work that they do in other people's gardens and homes. Sometimes, they receive assistance from their son-in-law, who married their 12-year-old daughter,

Taziwona. One day, Mr. Midima, tired of living in poverty, decided to seek employment in Blantyre City, where his elder brother was also working. Upon arrival in Limbe, he immediately boarded what he thought was a connecting bus to Chilomoni, yet the bus was in fact going to Zomba. He found himself stranded at Zomba bus depot with no more money to return to Limbe.

- *In your opinion, why is the Midima family so very big?*
- *List the various problems that the Midima family is facing and what they could have done to avoid them.*
- *In your opinion, why is reading important?*

Literacy is vital to ensuring that children have the best chance to succeed in their schooling and everyday life. Also, literacy allows us to make sense of a range of written, visual, and spoken texts, including books, newspapers, magazines, timetables, DVDs, television and radio programs, signs, maps, conversations, and instructions.

It is worth noting that individuals with any impairment can and should engage in the same emergent literacy activities (e.g., listening repeatedly to stories and having access to writing tools) as their peers who have no disabilities. We cannot overemphasize the importance of intensive exposure to literacy materials in the early years.¹

Activity 4b: Literacy Skills Impact on Children



Instructions: In small groups of five, discuss the following questions and present your work in plenary:

- What may be the consequences if children do **not** have the opportunity to develop good literacy skills?
- What may be the consequences if children **do** have the opportunity to develop good literacy skills?



Refer to the information in Table 2.1 after your discussion and compare it with your points.

Table 2-1. Results of Learners' Opportunity to Develop Literacy Skills

If children do not have the opportunity to develop good literacy skills, it can lead to:	If children are given the opportunity to develop good literacy skills, it can lead to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High dropout rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced financial cost to the community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased self-confidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor educational outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better educational outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More health issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased anti-social behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive social behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher unemployment rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased chances for employment

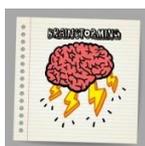
¹ Beukelman, D. R., & Mirenda, P. (1998). *Augmentative and alternative communication: Management of severe communication disorders in children and adults* (2nd ed.). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Literacy is the foundation for learning and success throughout life and is essential for living in today's complex world. Technology is changing the way business and our daily lives are conducted, requiring increased development of these literacy skills. For example, cell phones require literacy skills to read text messages and follow user instructions. We also need to be able to read, among other things, labels and instructions on medicine and agricultural products.

The early years (0–5 years) are the most critical stage for literacy development. The term *emergent literacy* is used to refer to literacy learning during these years. Emergent literacy encompasses vocabulary and speaking skills development, listening comprehension skills, early efforts at making meaning through drawing, and recognizing symbols and text in one's environment (labels on food, road signs, etc.). Children who commence school with poor emergent literacy skills are most at risk of ongoing literacy problems and at increased risk of leaving school early. Language and emergent literacy development are essential for future literacy success and opportunities. To develop literacy skills, the literacy skills acquisition process should begin long before children start school.

Activity 4c: Emergent Literacy Skills

(Suggested Time: 10 minutes)



Instructions: Think about your experience as a small child. Brainstorm the emergent literacy skills you developed.

- How did you develop them?
- Think about your own child in your family: How can you help him or her develop emergent literacy skills?

Emergent literacy skills develop during the prewriting phase and are an indication that a child is increasingly aware of his or her own ability to read or write. These emergent skills are demonstrated when a child attempts to write a description of a picture using nonsensical letters or tries in some way to tell a story about a picture, or when a child draws a picture to illustrate a story or idea or pretends to read a story from a book—even when the book is about something other than the child's story.

Write your notes here:

Session 3: Effective Early Grade Reading Interventions



By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- State the rationale for the EGRA intervention
- Discuss the extent to which young children’s exposure to books and reading can impact their future educational and life success
- Explain why it is important for children to learn these skills at an early age
- Discuss how reading skills can be practiced and applied for a child to become a proficient reader

Activity 5: Views on Reading Skills Status among Children in Malawi

(Suggested Time: 20 minutes)



Instructions: In plenary, brainstorm on the following questions:

- What do you think the reading and literacy skills of Malawian children are like?
- Why do you think the situation is like that?
- What can be done to remedy the situation?



The Malawian Educational Context

In Malawi, data from the early grade reading assessment administered at the start of the 2012–13 school year show that 67% of learners in Standard 2 could not name a single letter, and 93% could not read any words in Chichewa. These results suggest that learners in Standard 2 could certainly benefit from lessons designed for Standard 1. Learners in Standard 4 were better at naming letters but still struggled with phonemic awareness; for example, 73% could not identify the initial sound of a word in Chichewa. In other countries where similarly low levels of performance across the first three years of primary school have been found, grade 1 lesson plans have been successfully used to raise the foundational reading skills (and oral reading fluency and comprehension) of learners in all early grades.

The early grade reading assessment administered in 2012–13 in Malawi did not test learners in English, but the assumption is that since basic skills in Chichewa are poor, then English pre-literacy skills are probably even less developed.

Furthermore, research suggests that consistent exposure to literacy-rich experiences supports a child’s development of reading comprehension and overall reading proficiency.² Children spend only 4 hours per day in school (20 hours per week) and the vast majority of their time in their homes and communities. So while it is of paramount importance to improve reading instruction in school, capitalizing on resources outside the formal classroom to develop literacy is very important. Among other things, this approach situates learning in a child’s real-life context, making the learning more personal and relevant to that child.

This session introduces foundational skills that are essential in learning to read, such as letter knowledge, phonological awareness, syllable reading, and word reading, as well as listening and reading comprehension. The section also focuses on skills that will enable EGRA staff and various partners to assess learners’ performance in literacy using early grade learner reading assessment tools. The early grade reading assessment is a short, one-on-one test that has nine parts and takes about 15 minutes to complete with each learner. It assesses the learner’s ability to recognize the sounds in words (phonological awareness), to read letter sounds, to read simple words, and then to read a short selection of text and answer questions on it. Each part of the test is timed for one minute to determine learner’s reading fluency rates.

Activity 6: The Main Reading Skills

(Suggested Time: 20 minutes small groups, 10 minutes plenary discussion)



Instructions: In five groups, discuss the following and present your group’s conclusions in plenary:

- What do we have to do to read effectively? (Think about the skills we need.)
- Why are these skills important?

Table 3.1. The Main Reading Skills

	Reading Skill	Definition and Example
1	Phonological Awareness	<p>Definition: The ability to hear, identify, and manipulate sounds in spoken words.</p> <p>For example, being able to say the sounds in a word like ani; a-n-i and being able to manipulate the sounds in the words (for example, knowing that ani and aka both have the same beginning sounds)</p> <p>Being able to hear (without seeing the written form) that words are made up of syllables: Ani: a + ni Tiwani: Ti + wa + ni</p>

² Stanovich, K. E. (2000). Progress in understanding reading: Scientific Foundations and new frontiers. New York: The Guilford Press.

	Reading Skill	Definition and Example
		This skill has to be completely oral and taught without text.
2	Knowledge of the Alphabetic Principle	Definition: The ability to associate sounds with letters and to use those sounds to read and spell words. This skill is sometimes called “decoding” because it means that the reader knows all the sounds of the letters in words and uses this knowledge to decode when reading. For example, being able to hear the sound /k/ and write down the letter “k” or being able to read a new word by sounding it out (such as reading k-w-a and making /kwa/) or the ability to associate sounds with letters and to use that knowledge to read and spell the words
3	Fluency	Definition: Reading accurately, quickly, and with expression. For example, being able to identify common words rapidly and being able to use decoding skills to read sentences quickly, accurately, and with expression (automatically)
4	Vocabulary knowledge	Definition: Knowledge of words and word meanings in a language. For example, knowing the meaning of words and using that knowledge to increase reading fluency and comprehension; being able to say the correct definition of a word in a given language
5	Comprehension	Definition: The process of getting meaning from spoken language or from print For example, being able to answer questions about the text that has been read (i.e., understanding what one has read or heard)

Activity 7: Reading Unknown Language

(Suggested Time: 10 minutes [1 minute per person])



Instructions: To experience how difficult it is to learn reading, take turns in your groups trying to read the text in the box.

Timve και Tsala είναι μέσα στο κατάστημα.
Αγοράζουν πράγματα για τη μητέρα.

Αγοράζετε αγώνες;
Όχι, δεν είναι.
Δεν αγοράζουν αγώνες.

Αγοράζετε μπουκάλια;
Όχι, δεν είναι.
Δεν αγοράζουν μπουκάλια.

Αυτοί αγοράζουν κουτιά;
Όχι, δεν είναι.
Δεν αγοράζουν κουτιά.

Αγοράζουν ζάχαρη.
Αγοράζουν τσάι.
Αγοράζουν ζάχαρη και τσάι.
Αγοράζουν πράγματα για τη μητέρα.

Από: Αγγλικά στο Μαλάουι, αναθεωρημένη έκδοση μαθητών βιβλίο 3

How did it feel, trying to read the text? The text is written in Greek and here is what it says:

Timve and Tsala are inside the store.
They are buying things for mother.

Are they buying matches?
No, they are not.
They are not buying matches.

Are they buying bottles?
No, they are not.
They are not buying bottles.

Are they buying tins?
No, they are not.
They are not buying tins.

They are buying sugar.
They are buying tea.
They are buying sugar and tea.
They are buying things for mother.

From *English in Malawi*, Revised Edition, Pupil Book 3

It is really very hard to learn reading, and teaching reading is equally complex. Therefore there is need for a variety of techniques or methods for use both inside and outside school to help children achieve mastery and fluency.

Activity 8: Defining and Understanding Key Reading Skills

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small group discussion; 3 minutes plenary discussion per small group)



Instructions: Form five groups and name the groups:

1. Phonological Awareness,
2. Alphabetic Principle,
3. Fluency
4. Vocabulary
5. Comprehension

Each group should do the assigned reading skill, discuss the questions for the group, and present the work in plenary.

Group 1 Discussion Questions: Phonological Awareness:

1. Share your earliest memories of how you started to learn to read.
2. What sort of lessons and exercises did your teachers have you practice in order to master the skill of reading?
3. What do you think phonological awareness is?
4. Why do you think phonological awareness is important in reading?
5. Using the information below, each member of the group should identify a reading lesson or exercise he or she remembers learning, then act as the teacher showing the other group members how to perform the exercise. Check if there are any routines in the lesson. Routines are a set of activities that follow a certain pattern. For example, EGRA activities follow the I do, you do, and we do literacy routine.

Phonological Awareness

The awareness of sounds of a language is one of the earliest skills that learners can master.

- Learners need to know that words are made up of sounds so they can sound out, or decode, new words.
- Having phonological awareness allows a learner to (i) separate words into sounds, (ii) blend sounds into words, or (iii) manipulate sounds by adding or subtracting them from a word.

Importance to Reading:

- Learners need to understand that words can be broken apart into sounds. The next step is to learn the letters so that they are able to map the sounds to letters and acquire the alphabetic principle.

- The skills of segmentation (separating words into sounds) and blending (putting the sounds together to make words) are foundational for reading success.
- The following routines are practiced at this level: Sound recognition, sound identification, sound comparison, blending sounds to form words, and separating words into sound.

Group 2 Discussion Questions: Alphabetic Principle

1. What do the letters of the alphabet stand for?
2. What are they used for?
3. In your early school days, how did you learn that each letter has a different sound?
4. What were some of the activities that you were doing to master this skill?
5. Why do you think this principle is important to reading?
6. Using the information below, each member of the group should choose one of the activities of mastering letter sounds and teach the other group members to practice letter sound learning by doing that activity.

Alphabetic Principle

Letters are visual, symbolic representations of sounds, and they are used to write words. Skills to be acquired by learners focus on symbol recognition, identification of syllables (combinations of letters), and blending letters or syllables to make words.

Importance to Reading:

- Provides the foundation for later reading and spelling skills.
- Gives learners a means for decoding, reading, and spelling unknown words.

What learners need to do: Learners need plenty of practice to learn the letter-sounds and apply that knowledge to read and spell words.

The following activities are practiced at this level: Recognizing letters, identifying letter sounds, naming letters, syllable blending (blending letters to make syllables), and word blending (blending letters or syllables to make words).

Group 3 Discussion Questions: Fluency

1. What cycle or steps did you go through in language learning to achieve mastery of the language?
2. What does one have to do to be fluent in a given language?
3. In your opinion, what are the advantages of fluent reading?
4. Why do you think this component is important to reading?
5. What activities can help a person become fluent in a given language?
6. Using the information below, each member of the group should teach the other members using one of the fluency activities identified.

Fluency

If learners are able to practice the same skills or new content (such as letters or words) regularly over time, they are more likely to remember it later.

Importance to Reading:

- Learners are able to make meaning out of text.
- Learners are able to recognize letters and read words accurately and quickly.
- Learners are able to concentrate more of their time and effort on the meaning of words rather than the sound of each letter.

Teachers or parents should teach to achieve mastery and fluency in a given skill, including the following activities.

Introduce activities: Teach a new skill and move forward in developing abilities.

Practice activities: Provide practice/review with skills that learners have learned but still need additional practice in to develop automatic processing of information, such as the immediate recognition of letter-sound correspondences (seeing a letter and knowing what sound it makes).

Generalize activities: Provide opportunities for learners to apply mastered skills in new situations.

The following routine activities can be practiced at this level:

- Reviewing letters, syllables, and words every day, with more reviewing time allotted for Fridays or at home
- Fluency games, such as a sentence with a missing word, words with a missing letter, reading speed competitions, sentence building and reading from word cards, and rapid letter naming from the blackboard (1–2 minutes)
- Rapid letter-sound identification from the blackboard (1–2 minutes)
- Rapid identification of syllables (2–3 minutes), with the class reading aloud together, slowly blending letters into a word, blending the letters into a word several times, each time increasing the speed, ending with reading the whole word (3–4 minutes)
- The same as the bullet above but blending words into sentences

The final outcome of regular practice is fluency, which entails reading accurately, quickly, and with expression. Fluency is important because it helps learners read accurately enough to comprehend and enjoy reading.

Fluency is developed through practice. Once learners have built an initial understanding of a skill, they need plenty of opportunities to practice it. If they are able to practice reading frequently, they are more likely to develop good fluency over time in later classes.

Reading fluency is important for helping learners make meaning out of a given text. Learners need to recognize letters and read words accurately. They should quickly be able to use more of their time and effort concentrating on the meaning of words rather than on the sound of each letter.

It is therefore important that reading skills be regularly practiced and applied for a child to become a proficient reader, and the child should learn and acquire these skills at an early age.

Group 4 Discussion Questions: Vocabulary

1. Why do you think knowing a lot of words and their meaning is important?
2. What do you do when you have a sentence with a word that you do not know?
3. What should learners do to master this skill?
4. How can teachers or parents help children increase their vocabulary?
5. Using the information below, each member of the group should choose one of the literacy teaching lessons or methods to practice, with the other group members acting as learners.

Vocabulary

This component is **key** for learners to understand what they are reading. Learners who have limited vocabulary will have a difficult time making meaning even though they may learn to sound out words fluently.

Importance to Reading:

- Enhances comprehension of a text
- Brings about knowledge of how words are used in a sentence

What learners need to do:

- Know the meaning of various words
- Make a meaningful sentence with the words

The following activities are practiced at this level:

A lesson will consist of three parts:

1. Saying the word
2. Having students repeat the word
3. Asking whether learners know the meaning of the word, giving a definition if learners do not know the word and making a sentence with the word
 - Some days instead of teaching new words teachers can review the vocabulary words briefly, but ask learners to give a definition for each vocabulary word from the previous day and provide formative feedback when necessary.
 - Also a teacher could provide a long word and ask learners to make shorter words out of it (e.g., **masomphenya** yields **maso**, **eya**, **sonya**, **ona**, and **nyama**)

Group 5 Discussion Questions: Comprehension

1. Give reasons why comprehension is important to reading.
2. Mention the comprehension routines that you know.
3. What should learners do to master this skill?

4. What activities can teachers and parents give learners so that they master this skill?
5. Using the information below, each member of the group should choose one of the literacy teaching lessons or routines to practice, with the other group members acting as learners.

Comprehension

Comprehension is the main goal of reading. Reading is not complete unless learners are able to understand what they are reading.

Importance to Reading:

- Through comprehension, meaning is constructed, and learners begin to read to learn and to read for enjoyment.
- Comprehension instruction improves reading achievement and allows learners to learn from texts.
- Being able to read to learn will allow learners to learn all other subject areas, such as science, social studies, and history.

What learners need to do:

Have plenty of reading practice and check whether they have understood what they have read.

The following activities may be practiced at this level:

Day 1

- Teaching vocabulary
- Predicting, or using the title and/or pictures to guess what a story is about
- Reading the story and checking to see whether the predictions were right

Days 2 and 3

- Reviewing vocabulary
- Reading the story
- Answering questions based on the story

Day 4

- Reviewing vocabulary
- Reading the story
- Relating the story to their own experience

Activity 9: Fluent Readers

(Suggested Time: 10 minutes)



Instructions: Read the paragraph box below silently to yourself and see how fast you can read it. Afterwards, think about the following:

- How did it feel reading the paragraph?
- Were you able to read the misspelled words? Why?

When one reaches mastery whta matter most are the first and last letters. I cdnolt blveiee taht I cluod
aulacty uesdnatnrd what I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the human mind. Aoccdrnig to a
rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer what order the ltteers in a word are, the only
iprmoatnt thing is that the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you
can still raed it wouthit a porbelm. This is bcuseae the human mind deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef,
but the word as a wlohe. Amzanig, huh?

For learners to succeed in reading, each of these five reading components—phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—must be taught and mastered. Therefore each day teachers or facilitators should teach one lesson or method from each component and use this to make up a whole lesson. Daily repetition of these lessons or activities will ensure that the learners acquire the skills they need to read successfully and master with as many different types of texts as possible.

Review Questions

Look back at this chapter and indicate:

- One thing that you know now about literacy that you did not know before.
- One thing that you are going to try out with your child or a child in your family to encourage his or her literacy development.

Write your notes here:

Session 4: Community Mobilization: How It Can Contribute to Improving Literacy Outcomes for Children



By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Define community mobilization
- List key factors for effective community mobilization
- Discuss how community mobilization can contribute to improving literacy outcomes
- State the importance of out-of-school reading activities
- State the requirements of positive, successful community mobilization
- List key steps in effective community mobilization
- Explain how communities can support reading

Activity 10: *Defining Community Mobilization*

(Suggested Time: 15 minutes pairs; 20 minutes plenary discussion)



Instructions: In pairs discuss the following questions:

- What do you understand community mobilization to mean?
- Can you give any real-life examples of community mobilization activities in Malawi that you have seen or participated in?
- Why are after-school reading activities important?



Community Mobilization

Community mobilization is the process of engaging members of a community—whether it is a family, a school, a village, or a country—in working toward a common goal.

Community mobilization involves joining public awareness with public engagement of stakeholders. It is an ongoing process of problem solving to develop visions, goals, and strategies to achieve those goals. The community mobilization process, in conjunction with the community in question, takes a holistic, “big-picture” view of what is needed. This is a

cyclical process that includes assessing needs, implementing action, assessing results, re-evaluating strategies, and implementing action.³

Research has shown that literacy practices beyond formal schools provide additional opportunities for children to engage in and improve literacy learning or outcomes.⁴ Therefore EGRA plans to use a community mobilization approach that focuses on the literacy development of children by making use of community-based and family-based activities explicitly designed to do two things: (i) work in partnership with communities and in support of the school-based instructional improvements being promoted by EGRA, and (ii) increase access to literacy materials and activities outside of school and raise awareness of the importance of parental involvement in children’s reading.

Studies have also shown that in the home environment, for example, high achieving learners benefit from literate adults; homes with books, magazines, and journals; and the academic assistance and encouragement of older siblings and parents. In terms of community resources, the combination of local library use, mentoring and tutoring programs, peer-based study groups, Saturday and/or after-school academies, and participation in various folk and “high” cultural events and faith-based activities influence the development of proactive and engaged dispositions toward academic learning.

In addition, research has also shown that for students who are not naturally exposed to academically demanding environments, parents as well as educators will need to create high-performance learning communities (whether they are in the form of families, peer groups, classrooms, social groups, or institutions) where the pleasure and fun of reading are observed standards and high achievement is rewarded.⁵

Such systemic community mobilization efforts are termed the *Comprehensive Community Initiative (CCI)*. CCI has three defining characteristics:

1. Promotion of positive change in individual, family, and neighborhood circumstances
2. Working to improve physical, economic, and social conditions at the neighborhood level
3. Placing strong emphasis on community building and neighborhood survival skills.⁶

The Importance of After-School Activities

After-school programs employing a positive youth development approach can help to overcome critical barriers to learning and to support academic achievement and well-being, even of special needs learners and OVC, because these programs do the following:

1. **Support** the development of a range of non-academic competencies and characteristics that, in turn, support young people’s academic learning. For instance, the social and critical thinking skills that young people learn in a program-based, collaborative after-school learning experience help young people succeed during the school day.

³ Dombro, A. L., O’Donnell, N. S., Galinsky, E., Melcher, S. G., & Farber, A. (1996). *Community mobilization: Strategies*. New York: Families and Work Institute.

⁴ Justice, L. M., & Pullen, P. C. (2003). Promising interventions for promoting emergent literacy skills: Three evidence-based approaches. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 23*(3), 99–113.

⁵ Gordon, E. W. (1999). *Education and justice: A view from the back of the bus*. New York: Teachers College Press.

⁶ Hall, G., Yohalem, N., Tolman, J., & Wilson, A. (2003). *How afterschool programs can most effectively promote positive youth development as a support to academic achievement: A Report Commissioned by the Boston After-School for All Partnership*. National Institute on Out-of-School Time.

2. **Ensure** that young people have critical developmental inputs that help to ensure academic success, and ensure that young people are fully prepared and fully engaged. For instance, after-school programs put children and youth in frequent and close contact with caring and encouraging adults, an important precondition to learning.
3. **Create** a rich alternative to learners' in-school learning experiences. After-school programs provide opportunities for development and enrichment through activities that are often not available during the regular school day. Such programs also offer positive alternative choices for time spent outside of school.
4. **Help** to eliminate the consistent barriers to learning faced by special needs learners and OVC. Thus, after-school programs can offer a level of engagement and specific supports that may reach youth who have otherwise been unreachable because of disruptive behavior, lack of interest, poor sense of self, or repeated failure.

Successful community mobilization requires local stakeholders to create and carry out an overall agenda for change. This agenda incorporates the following:

- A shared vision and a common set of goals and objectives
- A commitment to long-range strategic planning
- Action plans based on assessments of local strengths and needs
- Viable implementation strategies⁷

How Communities Can Support Reading

Activity 11: How Communities Can Support Reading

(Suggested Time: 15 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



Instructions: Form five groups to discuss how communities can support reading to develop learners' reading skills. Be prepared to present your key points in plenary.



Through the following approaches, parents and communities can contribute to the development of their children's holistic reading skills.

- Encouraging children, in the home, by talking to them and showing an interest in what they are learning at school (This talk develops their vocabulary, listening and speaking skills)

⁷Aspen Institute. (1997). Voices from the field: Learning from the early work of comprehensive community initiatives. Retrieved from <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/Programt1.asp?i=83&bid=1249&i=83>

- Encouraging their children to correctly pronounce words and practice new words through repetition
- Providing books, magazines, and newspapers at home
- Encouraging their children to use a village library or community reading center if there is one
- Organizing reading competitions as part of school activities and holding community-organized reading fairs
- Reading aloud or telling children stories, and also encouraging the children to tell stories
- Modeling letters of the alphabet
- Creating letter, syllable, or word trees as teaching and learning resources
- Creating word, syllable, or letter cards to be used at the village library or school
- Volunteering to be reading club facilitators or mentors
- Helping their children write letters of the alphabet, syllables, and words with associated pictures on classroom walls
- Assisting children with reading comprehension tasks that teachers can assign them
- Listening to children read books or stories brought from school and asking questions to check that they have understood what they have read
- Telling stories or folktales and asking children some oral comprehension questions
- Asking the children to spell words from books that they have read at school or at home
- Assisting the school to label all objects found in and around the school
- Providing books in the home, community library, or at the school
- Donating materials and awards for reading fairs
- Organizing school- or community-level reading fairs
- Helping to identify children's reading needs and communicating them to their teachers
- Encouraging children to take part in after-school reading activities
- Giving children space to participate in school activities
- Attending to the needs of the reading center volunteer community reading facilitator

Key Components/Steps in Community Mobilization (Best Practice Guidelines)

Activity 12: Community Mobilization Steps

(Suggested Time: 10 minutes)

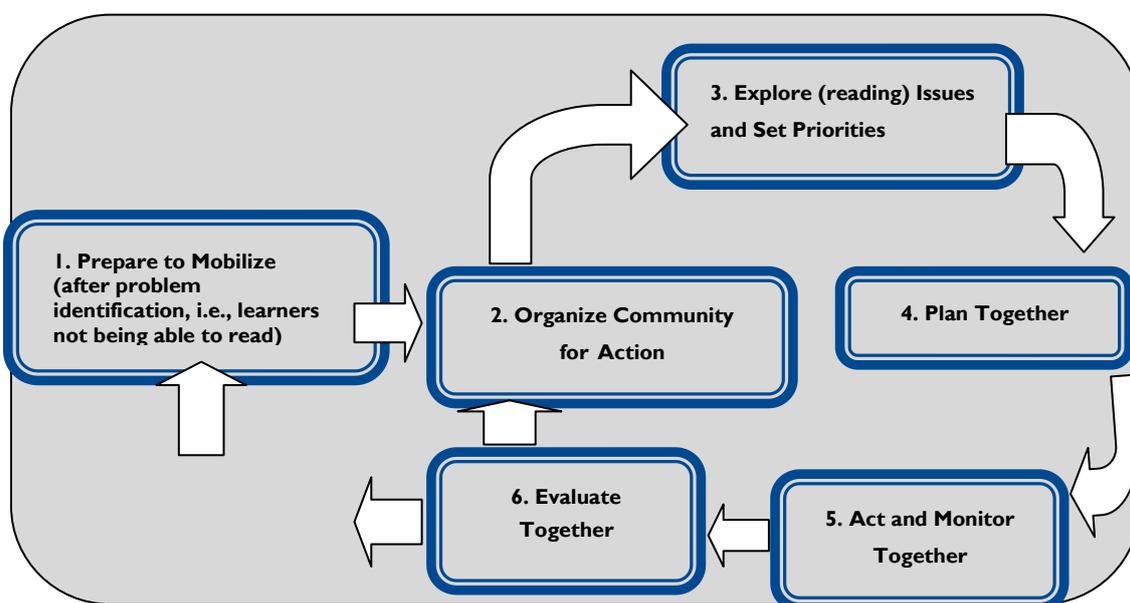


Instructions: In plenary, brainstorm the following questions:

- What steps were taken in your area by community members to carry out some development work?
- What steps are you going to take to mobilize communities?

The following is a diagram of the suggested steps that could be taken to engage in community mobilization to support reading in your community.

Figure 4.1 Suggested Steps in Community Mobilization



Activity 13 – Part 1: Prepare to Mobilize (after problem identification)

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small group discussion, 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



The parents in the community around Mango School are concerned that their children are not learning to read properly. They want to mobilize the community to help the school.

Instructions: Form five groups and conduct the activities below; then present your work in plenary. Consider the following as you work together: What do you think the parents should do at the first step shown in Figure 4.1 to effectively achieve their goal?

This stage includes the following important components:

1. Organizing and training Community Mobilization Teams
2. Understanding selected communities
3. Making contact with your communities
4. Gathering more information on communities
5. Assets and barriers
6. Community/District community mobilization plans

In your groups, discuss what can be done at each step.

Group 1: Organizing and training Community Mobilization Teams

- Who should be members of the team?
- How will they be organized and trained?

Group 2: Understanding selected communities

- How do we learn about and understand the communities we will work with?
- What sort of information would help us understand the communities better?

Group 3: Making contact with your communities

- What are the best ways to make contact with our communities?

Group 4: Gathering more information on the community and on assets and barriers

- How do we collect information about our communities?

Group 5: Community/district community mobilization plans

- What do we need to consider when drawing up community mobilization plans?

Discussion Points on Community Mobilization – Part I

Organizing and Training Community Mobilization Members

Key points to note are:

- Community Mobilization Officers (CMOs) will typically consist of Divisional Coordinators, District Community Mobilization Officers (DCMs), District Community Development Officers (DCDOs), District Monitoring and Evaluation Officers (DMEs), District Training Coordinators, CDAs, and any other resource persons assigned to support the CMOs within EGRA community mobilization partner organizations.
- Training and orientation is required for Community Mobilization Team members; one of the first steps should be to build a strong, capable team with a similar mission, vision, and skill set. Each member may be coming in with different experiences and skills. Even if contact with communities has already begun, orienting the community mobilization partner team may be beneficial.

Understanding Selected Communities

The communities surrounding schools will vary. Before making initial contact with selected communities, it is recommended to gather all the information available on this community beforehand (for instance, in terms of cultural beliefs, socioeconomic status, physical features, material resources, social amenities, and demographic composition, etc.). This process is called *community mapping*.

Another issue would be finding the literacy levels in the community and identifying those who would be interested and able to be community reading champions.

Making Contact with Your Communities

- First meetings and discussions should be with locally elected leaders such as traditional authorities, group village headmen, and village chiefs. The purpose of approaching these leaders is to introduce EGRA to them and seek their support for the work you will be doing. These leaders have also proven to offer good advice on whom to contact next.
- Strong relationships should be built with members of each community. These relationships should be built on trust and respect, which starts with the very first meeting in the community. As outsiders, Community Mobilization Teams may be closely scrutinized and observed by members of the community and, if these observations are negative, mobilization can be difficult.
- Community Mobilization Teams should bring the community to the school and the school to the community. In this case, at the first or second meeting, the school or PTA should be involved.

The purpose of such initial meetings with the community is to do the following:

1. Develop a common understanding, from the community's perspective, of the community's key issues in reading education
2. Increase motivation among community members to solve problems and take action
3. Make prioritizing easier
4. Serve as the first step in the awareness raising and behavior change process in the community

This can be referred to as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) or Participatory Learning and Action (PLA).

Therefore, when the **initial meetings** are held with communities, these should aim to do the following:

- Share a brief overview of EGRA, its organizational capabilities, and its goals
- Begin to establish a working relationship and determine how to best work with the community

- Share national literacy data to spark interest about the importance of the issue
- Establish support and participation from the community

Follow-up meetings should also take place and should include **community representatives**, especially with those who attended the initial meeting and those recommended by local leaders. The follow-up meetings should **ensure diverse representation**, including business people, religious leaders, and others leaders. You may need to ask the community to come up with innovative ways for their perspectives to be heard. The follow-up meetings should have **larger representation** (e.g., T/As, then village chiefs, PTA/SMCs then the entire village or community).

Discussion Points on Community Mobilization – Part 2

Gathering More Information on Communities
Once you have established relationships in the community and have some members who are interested in EGRA and have demonstrated leadership and commitment, you should begin gathering more information to map the community.
Assets and Barriers
It is important to consider constraints to community mobilization, including, for example, the possibility that key members of the community either may not be motivated to work on the issue or may have an interest in blocking the success of any initiatives. Other possible constraints include lack of training in certain areas among key people/staff, lack of time, lack of financial or other resources, or resistance from people who oppose EGRA efforts. Other barriers to participation may include distances to meeting sites, family commitments such as illness, time constraints, family members preventing participation, economic constraints, lack of interest, and participants' fear of express themselves when in a group. When these barriers surface, it is generally best not to force anyone's participation. The group will function best if all participants are involved of their own volition. If some persons resist involvement, look for some more interested members.
Community/District Mobilization Plans
The purpose of community/district mobilization plans is to define overall objectives and an overall process/approach. This process will differ from community to community. Writing down your plan will help all the other partners understand what steps are being taken to initiate community mobilization in each community as well. The community mobilization plan should start with the community mobilization objectives for each community. Sample objectives for your community mobilization plan might include the following. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase communication and alliances between different social networks within the community to generate a common goal and set of activities for improved reading • Increase the ability of community members to analyze and use information on reading issues to address identified problems • Increase the ability of community members to take action in resolving issues that they identify regarding reading issues in their areas • Create a Community Action Plan (CAP) in which a large segment of the community participates and implements
Community Participation Can Be Generated in Different Ways
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory exercises such as PRA or PLA to generate more information on reading issues in the community • Informal interviews/discussions with community members • Stakeholder meetings like Village Development Committee (VDC) and Area Executive Committee (AEC) meetings. These committees comprise education committees.

- Large community-wide meetings
- Community theater to explore issues on reading
- Community events for special holidays
- Household visits

Activity 13 – Part 2: Organize Community for Action

This stage includes the following important components:

1. Building relationships and trust
2. Encouraging community participation
3. Building a Reading Committee

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



The parents in the community around Mango School are starting to work together to build support for reading in the community.

Instructions: Form six groups and do the activities below; then present your work in plenary. Consider the following as you work together:



What do you think parents should do at the next step shown in Figure 4.1 to effectively achieve their goal?

Groups 1 and 2: Building relationships and trust

- What can be done to build community relationships and trust?

Groups 3 and 4: Encouraging community participation

- How can we encourage community participation?

Groups 5 and 6: Building a Reading Committee

- How should the Reading Committee be formed and who should the members be?

Discussion Points on Community Mobilization – Part 3

Building trust and rapport with the community is one of the most important steps to successful community mobilization. The following are some suggestions.

Building Relationships and Trust

- Listen to the needs of community members and respond with respect and appropriate action.
- Learn and respect local customs. Adopting social customs and other traditions is one way to demonstrate respect for and understanding of community members.
- Identify, support, and promote local leaders. The more that local leaders and members can take on active roles in the community mobilization process, the more likely the efforts will be successful and sustainable.

- Join an activity that is enjoyable to members of the community. Attending a community event or fair or working on a community project that is already underway are examples. Often, trust is built more easily through activities rather than meetings.
- Build on existing networks. Find out what these are and tap into those that are strong and as neutral as possible (without alienating other members of community).
- Conduct house-to-house visits. Visit people at their homes and meet their families wherever possible.
- Avoid lapses in trust. It is also important to make note of incidences where trust is broken with the group or community. If promises are not met or misunderstandings occur, it will be difficult to proceed. These incidences must be addressed and resolved effectively.

Encouraging Community Participation

- When selecting local leaders and change agents, pick candidates who are more neutral and will not cause divisions throughout the community.
- Arrange meetings at a time and place that is most convenient to the majority of participants. If there is no agreed-upon time for all participants, perhaps try rotating days or times so that interested community members can participate.
- Encourage community leaders to help build the sense of team work for the group. They can all contribute by taking notes, recapping meetings (building “group memory”), and even facilitating. They can also help notify community members of meeting times and places.
- Ask an interested community member to invite a friend. When one’s friends and neighbors are involved, there is increased motivation to stay involved. Look for “change agents”—people who are very active and respected in the community and also voluntarily interested in bringing positive social change to the community.

Building a Reading Committee

The Reading Committee should comprise members of the community who display leadership capabilities, show a strong interest in reading, command respect from others, and are interested in making a difference in their community. Representation should also be as diverse as possible, including men, women, local officials, those with special needs and others. Some villages have education committees. It is advisable to use such existing committees to avoid duplication of efforts.

- **Selecting members for the Reading Committee:** It is important that members of the community have a say in how the Reading Committee is run and who should be involved.
- **Reading Committee structure:** Recommended positions include Chairperson and Vice, Secretary and Vice, Treasurer, and at least five committee members.
- **Function of the Reading Committee:** The Reading Committee will explore what the community thinks are the key issues related to reading, prioritize reading areas for the community, develop a Community Action Plan (CAP), and implement the CAP together with the entire community. The committee should spend some time in the beginning building the team to generate group goals, a common vision, and procedures; to gain familiarity with one another; and to lightly explore the issues.
- **Meeting frequency:** The Reading Committee should meet regularly to plan activities and upcoming meetings. It should also assess activities that have already been held. Suggested times are weekly to bi-weekly. These committees should be at the village/community level, school level, and zonal level. They can also be established at the district level.
- **Meeting documentation and group memory:** Because it is important for the group to retain a collective memory of group meetings and decisions, taking notes is important. Committee members can volunteer to recount/summarize the key points from the last meeting. The Reading Committee should have explicit links with the school and vice versa, and committee activities should be coordinated and complementary.

Activity 13 – Part 3: Explore Reading Issues and Set Priorities

This stage includes the following important components:

- I. Exploring further reading issues with the Reading Committee

2. Analyzing the information further with the committee
3. Setting priorities for action

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



The parents in the community around Mango School have now set up their Reading Committee and want to explore the reading issues in their community and set priorities.

Instructions: Form six groups and do the activities below; then present your work in plenary. Consider the following as you work together:

What do you think parents should do at the next step shown in Figure 4.1 to effectively achieve their goal?

Groups 1 and 2: Further Exploring Reading Issues with the Reading Committee

- How can this be done?
- How should the Reading Committee get the necessary information?

Group 3 and 4: Further analyzing the information with the committee

- How should the Reading Committee members analyze the information they collect?

Group 5 and 6: Setting priorities for action

- Which priorities?
- How should the priorities be set?

Discussion Points on Community Mobilization – Part 4

The purpose of exploring reading issues with the Reading Committee is to gain a better understanding of the reading issues in the community.

Further Exploring Reading Issues with the Reading Committee

Before publicly sharing reading research findings, it is a good idea to do some participatory exercises to engage the community in the issues directly and get them to ask questions. If it is not possible to hold these sessions before findings are shared, then they can be held afterward. Topics to explore should include the following.

- Bringing in a learner to read so that you prove your point
- Personal experiences with child reading
- Members' descriptions of the performance of their children in school
- Discussions of why some children have always done well in school
- People's feelings toward the issues. How do the issues affect each member individually? And the community?
- Ideas on how reading challenges can be resolved

Also, collect stories from the field, especially about individuals, families, communities, schools, or villages that have good reading practices. These success stories should be promoted, built upon, and also

documented. Negative stories should also be noted.

Further Analyze the Information with the Committee

Collectively look at these issues and identify trends, common themes, and priority issues:

- Why do these issues and trends exist?
- What are the possible barriers and their solutions?
- What are the opportunities?

Setting Priorities for Action

It is important that the committee members stay focused and reach consensus about what is most feasible. It is also very important that the community members take ownership of the decisions made. Remember the following:

- If the community members feel like a predetermined agenda is being imposed on them, they will not participate in the long run, will be more willing to criticize the initiatives, and will be less willing to endorse the initiatives to others.
- It is important to consider community strengths and resources.
- Greater genuine participation and endorsement by the community members of the activities selected increases the likelihood of success.
- The group may have significant differences of opinions and preferences. If serious conflicts or differences arise, it is important to resolve them diplomatically and fairly, with consideration of all sides.
- Each member should have an equal voice in the decision-making process.

Planning Together

This stage includes the following important components:

1. Objectives of the planning process
2. Participants to be involved
3. Designing the planning session(s)
4. Conducting/facilitating the planning session(s) to create a Community Action Plan (CAP)

Activity 13 – Part 4: CAP Preparation

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



The parents in the community around Mango School are now ready to plan together to create a CAP.

Instructions: Form four groups and discuss in your groups the activities below; then present your work in plenary. Consider the following as you work together:

What do you think parents should do at the next step shown in Figure 4.1 to effectively achieve their goal?

Group 1: Objectives of the planning process

- What are the objectives of the planning process?

Group 2: Participants to be involved

- Who should be involved in the planning?

Group 3: Designing the planning session(s)

- How will the planning session(s) be organized?

Group 4: Conducting/facilitating the planning session(s) to create a CAP

- What do we need to consider when we conduct/facilitate the planning session(s)?

Discussion Points on Community Mobilization – Part 5

Objectives of the Planning Process
<p>The purpose of this step is to determine who in the community should be involved in the planning process, to come to a consensus on objectives, and to determine how planning will be conducted. By the end of this step, communities will have a strongly endorsed CAP with clearly defined objectives, strategies, activities, and roles and responsibilities. In terms of objectives, the Reading Committee should consider the following components for the CAP development process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What needs to be achieved? • How will it be achieved? • Who will be responsible for what? • What resources are available, and what will be needed? • When and where will the activities be implemented? • How will results/success be monitored? (See Appendix 13)
Participants to Be Involved
<p>Members of the Reading Committee should take a lead in facilitation. However, if members of the community have facilitation skills and are interested, their involvement may be beneficial. The following are skills and traits to consider when choosing lead facilitators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated facilitation skills (previous experience in this role) • Interpersonal skills • Reasonable skills in reading, group dynamics, and planning • Language and communication skills • Cultural sensitivity and understanding of the communities' values, beliefs, and perceptions • Gender sensitivity and understanding of the need for equity • Representation and inclusion skills (for example, the ability to engage participation of all members and not just cater to the most vocal) • Neutral position within the community
Designing the Planning Session(s)
<p>The CAP session(s) can be either covered in one long session or divided into consecutive sessions (over several days), as decided by the Reading Committee. The planning session should aim at helping participants do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know what is happening and why (the purpose of the meeting) • Feel safe and comfortable expressing themselves • Feel free to challenge assumptions and think creatively • Increase knowledge, experience, and skills in positive ways that are helpful to the group • Share and maximize the collective experience of the group

Conducting/Facilitating the Planning Session(s) to Create a Community Action Plan

The produced CAP should include the following:

- Agreed-upon program priorities, objectives, and desired results
- Clear objectives, strategies, needed resources, and responsibilities assigned (based on a good understanding of barriers/constraints)

Based on the feedback from the public forums as well as any other community meetings that are held to review the draft plan, members will revise and finalize the draft. Once it is finalized, the plan should be made official and posted in a public meeting place as well as disseminated to appropriate people. The document, however, is not permanent. It should be a “living document,” periodically reviewed and revised based on changing circumstances, lessons learned, and progress.

Act, Monitor and Evaluate Together

This stage includes the following important components:

1. Joint implementation
2. Joint monitoring

Activity 13 – Part 5: Act, Monitor and Evaluate Together

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



The parents in the community around Mango School are now ready to work together to implement and monitor the CAP.

Instructions: Form four groups and discuss in your groups the activities below; then present your work in plenary. Consider the following as you work together:

What do you think the parents and community should do at the next step shown in the diagram above to effectively achieve their goal?

Group 1: Joint implementation

- How can we work together to implement the CAP?

Group 2: Joint monitoring

- How should we conduct monitoring of the CAP and the reading activities?

Groups 3 and 4: Evaluation questions to consider

- What kinds of questions should we ask when evaluating the CAP implementation?

Discussion Points on Community Mobilization –Part 6

Joint Implementation (General Community and Mobilizers)
Joint implementation of the CAP should be undertaken such that each party is performing the assigned roles and following the agreed-upon activity implementation plan and strategies (Note: The needs of OVC and SEN learners should be considered and included in the CAP).
Joint Monitoring
Monitoring is a continuous check on the progress of an intervention implementation so that any problems can be corrected in time or necessary adjustments made to the implementation plan. Attention should be focused on the progress of activities and whether the outcomes in the plan are being achieved. If not, it is important to alert the key stakeholders in order to deal with any problems. Monitoring should help to do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refine implementation strategies to be more effective• Assist stakeholders to measure progress toward established benchmarks• Ensure that the initiative remains “high profile” in the community There is need to monitor the reading intervention’s progress throughout its implementation. Monitoring findings need to be documented and reported to provide accountability to the entire community and program funders.
Evaluation Questions to Consider
Evaluation is a structured process of assessing the success of an intervention in meeting its intended goals and to reflect on the lessons learned. The joint evaluation should answer the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are we doing what we said we would be doing?• How well are we doing it?• What difficulties or challenges have we faced?• What have we learned?• Are we working together well as a team?• How well is the committee working together with the community? In terms of evaluating outcomes, we can ask the following kinds of questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are we achieving our desired results in children’s reading?• Are we changing the children’s reading behavior?• Are reading fairs and Braille Cups organized at both the community and school levels?• Are we increasing awareness?• Are more communities getting involved in school and community reading activities?• Are reading clubs in place?• Are there any reading peers?• Have communities created village libraries?• Do communities contribute to SIPs?• Are we gaining local and traditional support for this program?

Conclusion

Good community mobilization is action that helps people recognize and develop their ability and potential and organize themselves to respond to their shared problems and needs. It supports the establishment of strong communities that control and use assets to promote social justice and help improve the quality of community life. It also enables community and public agencies to work together to improve the quality of government.

Community mobilization seeks to empower individuals and groups of people by providing them with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities. These skills are often created through the formation of large social groups working for a common agenda. Community Mobilizers must understand both how to work with individuals and how to affect communities' positions within the context of larger social institutions. Communities will need mobilization efforts to create conditions that encourage ALL stakeholders to launch and sustain implementation of the community strategies for any early grade education activity.

That is why it is very important to observe a rights-based approach that focuses on full **participation** of beneficiaries and stakeholders, **transparency** in all endeavors, **accountability** for actions, and **inclusiveness**.

Finally, community mobilization seeks to identify and define issues of public concern and influence public policy on those issues. Seeking to inform and influence public policy formulation in this way is in itself a value. Thus, community mobilizers are very important societal and policy change agents.

Session 5: Whom to Work with in our Local Communities



By the end of this session, you should be able to do the following:

- Identify school and community stakeholders
- State what each of the identified stakeholders can do to support reading for children
- Identify other community assets besides community stakeholders
- Explain how they can be used to support reading

Identifying Stakeholders and Their Roles

Activity 14: Stakeholder Identification

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 20 minutes plenary discussion)



Instructions: Form six groups and draw a map or picture of a school, including its community stakeholders, on flip chart paper. Discuss how the various stakeholders can help support reading in the community.

Be prepared to share your maps or other illustration in plenary. (Note: You can display the maps on the walls of the meeting venue.)



Group 1: Think about what community leaders/chiefs can do to support reading for children.

Group 2: Think about what the PTA/SMC can do to support reading for children.

Group 3: Think about what the Volunteer Community Reading Facilitator and School Teaching Assistant can do to support reading for children.

Group 4: Think about what the head teachers can do to support reading for children.

Group 5: Think about what teachers can do to support reading for children.

Group 6: Suggest how physical structures of the landscape can be used to support reading for children (and be realistic).

Community Stakeholders

The stakeholders that you have identified are part of what is termed community assets in community mapping. Community mapping is the process of identifying community assets. Community assets (or community resources) are things that can be used to improve the quality of community life. This means an asset can be a **person or group of people**. These can be parents, school heads, teachers, mothers' groups, SMCs, PTAs, village heads, other local leaders, religious leaders, government officials (PEAs, CDAs, DEMs), and children and young people.

The table below gives some of the roles of some of the community stakeholders.

Community Stakeholders and Their Roles

Community Leader (Village Heads)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing or providing community-based reading centers and ensuring regular attendance • Leading in community resource mobilization (human and material) • Leading the provision of incentives to learners at reading centers • Conducting regular meetings with community members to discuss reading and literacy activities (e.g., creation of study time for learners, supporting volunteers) • Developing plans together with volunteers on events (such as open days and reading fairs) to promote a culture of reading • Leading a change-of-attitude campaign toward reading culture • Enacting and enforcing reading bylaws • Supporting school stakeholders and community members to convey reading advocacy messages in local fora • Encouraging communities to initiate and sustain reading activities out of school • Participating in and supporting annual reading fairs at schools and elsewhere • Ensuring that EGRA activities are discussed during Village Development Committee meetings • Monitoring teacher and learner attendance during lessons • Ensure that their children attend day 5 of both PEA and Teacher training
Teaching Assistants	<p>Assisting teachers in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling learners • Ensuring that books and other reading materials are cared for • Facilitating after-school reading lessons • Creating literacy teaching and learning resources using locally available resources • Updating learner records and registers • Identifying learners' reading needs • Organizing school and community reading fairs and Braille Cups • Assessing learners' literacy levels • Understudying the teacher in lesson preparation, presentation, and assessment • Attending reading activities, meetings, and training sessions

<p style="text-align: center;">Volunteer Community Reading Facilitator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding innovative ways of ensuring that books and other reading materials are cared for • Guiding/facilitating after-school reading lessons • Creating literacy teaching and learning resources using locally available resources • Updating village reading center registers • Liaising with class teachers on learners’ reading needs • Incentivizing reading competitions • Taking part in organizing school and community reading fairs and Braille Cups • Assessing learners’ literacy levels • Managing village libraries
<p style="text-align: center;">Head Teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that agreed-upon EGRA reading activities are taking place in schools, are gender sensitive, and engage OVC and special needs learners • Monitoring and supervising school-based activities and providing necessary feedback • Providing coaching to teachers who require assistance in teaching reading • Supervising teaching assistants and giving them the necessary professional support in lesson planning, presentation, and assessment • Encouraging communities to incorporate literacy-related activities in SIPs • Ensuring that schools are community and literacy friendly and that parents feel free to interact with teachers • Supporting and advocating for community out-of-school reading activities • Assisting in organizing annual reading fairs and zonal competitions • Working with SMCs, PTAs, Mother Group members and the community to include reading activities within annual SIPs • Ensuring that schools run short courses or workshops for parents and caregivers so that the parents and the community at large can help their children with reading • Monitoring and supporting teaching and learning activities • Ensure that T/As attend EGRA and other professional development training activities
<p style="text-align: center;">Physical Structures or Places</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing an environment conducive to learning activities. Examples of physical structures or places include schools, hospitals, churches, libraries, recreation centers, and social clubs, and they may already belong to the community (e.g., a village community ground).
<p style="text-align: center;">Community Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making life better for some or all community members—these include services such as good public transportation, early childhood education center, community recycling facilities
<p style="text-align: center;">Private Businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These include local businesses that can provide jobs and support the local economy and community mobilization initiatives. Local businesses are good examples of private businesses that can provide support to public educational institutions to fulfill their social responsibility, fostering public-private partnerships (PPPs) or other initiatives.

School Teachers	<p>Create a learning environment where learners can learn to read effectively by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and teaching reading lessons • Organizing and participating in school, community, and zonal reading fairs • Maintaining and updating reading records • Mentoring and supervising Teaching Assistants • Assisting the head teacher to ensure that SMCs and PTAs exist • Ensuring that reading and other activities are being practiced for the efficiency and effectiveness of the school • Encouraging the communities in the school planning process to monitor and assess the current and future level of sustainable participation in school reading activities • Initiating regular meetings with stakeholders to inform them of community and school reading issues and initiatives and influencing their course of action through the head teacher, PTA, and SMC. • Organizing school-based reading In-Service Education and Trainings (INSETs) for teaching staff practice and professional development • Ensuring that special needs learners and OVC participate actively in reading lessons • Generating reading, teaching, and learning resources and games
-----------------	---

Write your notes here:

Session 6: Roles and Responsibilities of Key Partners (DCMs/DCDOs, CDAs/PEAs) in Community Mobilization



By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Define a reading fair
- Describe what annual reading fairs should look like
- Mention where annual reading fairs should take place
- Discuss activities that can be organized for annual reading fairs
- Mention who should be invited
- Outline logistics of reading fairs
- State potential challenges/difficulties and proposed solutions

Apart from the usual partners whose roles and responsibilities were highlighted in the earlier session, these will be key partners in the reading community mobilization work. Each intervention district will be under the charge of a District Community Mobilization Officer (DCM), who will also work together with Ministry of Gender Children and Social Welfare (MGCSW) official called District Community Development Officer (DCDO) and Community Development Assistants (CDAs).

DCDOs and CDAs are civil servants and experts in community development work. In the area of education, they are involved in Early Childhood Development (ECD), Adult Literacy, and Complimentary Basic Education (CBE) community programs. Thus they have little or no experience in regular basic education level literacy teaching and learning. Unlike Primary Education Advisors (PEAs), who are assigned a zone as a working area, CDAs are assigned to geographic areas known as “traditional authorities,” and they report to DCDOs who are based at the district headquarters office. As a consequence, DCDOs, DCMs, CDAs, and PEAs all work collaboratively.

The DCMs will be responsible for the following major activities:

1. Operationalize the program’s community mobilization strategy, which includes
(a) reading fairs (b) parental/caregiver and community support for reading, and
(c) classroom-level and school support for reading, in close coordination with DTCs and DMEs
2. Train district-level government counterparts from MGCSW and MOEST on effective techniques communities can use to support improved literacy

3. Provide coaching and technical guidance to MGCSW DCDOs and CDAs
4. In conjunction with DTCs, participate in annual community-level workshops to plan SIP grant application approaches
5. Report to and accept direction from Divisional Coordinators

Activity 15 – Part 1: Drawing DCM Roles Spider Diagrams

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 20 minutes plenary discussion)



Instructions: Form three groups and draw spider diagrams outlining and, more specifically, defining what you think will be the responsibilities of the DCMs described above.

Group 1: Discuss and list what the first role of the DCMs entails

Group 2: Discuss and list what the second and third roles of the DCMs entail

Group 3: Discuss and list what fourth and fifth roles of the DCMs entail

The Roles and Responsibilities of DCMs

DCM Roles I	
<p>Operationalize the program’s community mobilization strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading fairs • Parental/caregiver and community support for reading • Classroom-level and school support for reading, in close coordination with DTCs and DMEs 	<p>Ensure that school-level reading fairs take place annually in district schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize reading fairs that support and enhance reading opportunities for early grade learners in schools and communities • Support communities in setting up activities that encourage reading outside of school, including establishment of a reading club and school community library in each community, annual zonal literacy competitions, quizzes, annual reading camps in each community/school, development and distribution of copies of decodable books for use by learners outside of school, and assisting in making chalk slates (using locally available materials) for use by learners in and out of schools. • Sensitize local leadership to support literacy and reading through District Education Network (DEN) committee meetings, zonal meetings, cluster meetings (where possible), and school-level meetings (where possible) • Ensure that communities/schools consider and accommodate the needs of learners with disabilities and those of OVC and also address gender issues in literacy activities • Link/work with local CBOs that support learners with disabilities, OVC and address gender issues • Train CDAs on how they can form partnerships with local NGOs and other stakeholders to assist in literacy issues. • Support enhanced reading opportunities in schools by working with head teachers, teachers, and SMCs to initiate activities that may include recruiting Community Reading Volunteers (CRVs) to help teachers in lower primary literacy lessons, community members creating “talking classrooms” and stories for children, community

	members observing literacy lessons in conjunction with PEAs, and using community drama groups to convey reading advocacy messages to learners
--	---

DCM Roles 2	
Train district-level government counterparts from MGCSW (District Community Development Officers and District Social Welfare Officers) and MOEST on effective techniques communities can use to support improved literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify government stakeholders to be trained at the district level • Organize and deliver training to relevant stakeholders • Hold feedback and refresher sessions as required • Organize literacy campaign meetings with relevant stakeholders • Collect and compile success stories on reading from schools
Provide coaching and technical guidance to MGCSW Community Development Assistants (CDAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with CDAs to identify coaching and training needs • Provide ongoing coaching to CDAs as required • Provide technical guidance to CDAs as required • Develop plans of action for supporting the school/community to improve learning abilities of learners

DCM Roles 3	
In conjunction with District Training Coordinators (DTCs) and DCDOs participate in annual community-level workshops to plan SIP grant application approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with PEAs and CDAs at the zonal and school level to encourage schools to incorporate Primary School Improvement Program (PSIP)-funded early grade literacy priorities into their annual SIPs • Attend a selected number of community-level SIP workshops • Work with PEAs and CDAs to monitor and keep annual records of numbers of schools that include funded early grade literacy priorities in their SIPs
Report to and accept direction from Divisional Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend program meetings as required • Submit reports per program reporting requirements, including activity reports, monthly reports, quarterly reports, annual reports • Keep track of and provide success stories for regional and national level program purposes • Work with DMEs to collect, compile, and submit all monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data required to document program activities

Activity 15 – Part 2: Drawing DEM, DCDOs CDA, PEA Role Spider Diagrams

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 20 minutes plenary discussion)



Instructions: Form four groups and draw spider diagrams outlining and defining what you think the different responsibilities of the PEAs, CDAs, DCDOs and DEMs will be.

Group 1: What do you think are the specific roles of CDAs?

Group 2: What do you think are the specific roles of PEAs?

Group 3: What do you think are the specific roles of DEMs?

Group 4: What do you think are the specific roles of DCDOs

The Roles and Responsibilities of Primary Education Advisors

PEAs
<p>CRECCOM, in conjunction with EGRA, will ensure that these Department of Inspection and Advisory Services (DIAS) officials do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work closely with EGRA district M&E staff, the DCM, and CDA to monitor schools to ensure that agreed-upon EGRA literacy activities are taking place• Make use of agreed-upon templates and systems (including tablets equipped with Tangerine) to produce required data and reports• Assist with the selection of Teaching Assistants where applicable• Recommend qualified Teaching Assistants for admission to teacher training programs• Contribute success stories to the EGRA newsletter• Support schools in implementing EGRA literacy activities, including coaching and providing necessary feedback/counselling after lesson observations• Coordinate the annual reading fairs and zonal competitions with DCMs, schools, and community members• Encourage schools and their communities to incorporate a literacy focus in SIPs• Train and supervise community reading volunteers where applicable in conjunction with head teachers• Ensure that zonal reports to the DEM (which are eventually sent to DIAS and Divisional offices) include EGRA activities• Work with DIAS inspectors to conduct external evaluations of reading performance• Identify teachers who implemented the literacy initiative under MTPDS and enlist those with the skills and interest as “champions” and mentors within their schools and zones• Organize occasional peer-to-peer learning activities during continuous professional development (CPD)• Participate in the identification of best schools and local community-based literacy advocating NGOs eligible for grants where possible• Ensure that schools also update literacy-related school records• Ensure that MOUs/local agreements are implemented by schools’ SMCs and PTAs

The Roles and Responsibilities of Community Development Assistants

CDA's

CRECCOM, in conjunction with EGRA, will ensure that these MGCSW community-based officers do the following:

- Act as liaison between the program and schools/communities
- Work closely with EGRA district M&E staff and the DCM to monitor schools/communities to ensure that agreed-upon EGRA literacy activities are taking place
- Make use of agreed-upon templates and systems and produce required reports
- Support communities in implementing EGRA literacy activities
- Assist schools to organize and hold annual reading fairs and zonal competitions
- Encourage communities to sponsor reading fairs on a regular basis
- Advocate EGRA to Area Executive Committees (AECs)
- Contribute success stories to the EGRA newsletter
- Encourage communities to incorporate a literacy focus in SIPs through PTAs
- With PEAs' guidance, mobilize and support communities to make copies of decodable stories
- Introduce Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators
- Introduce SMCs where they do not exist and reactivate passive ones
- Assist communities in forming relationships with NGOs and other stakeholders to support reading activities
- Where possible, participate in the identification of the best schools and local, community-based, literacy-advocating NGOs eligible for grants
- Ensure that MOUs/local agreements are implemented by schools' SMCs and PTAs

The Roles and Responsibilities of District Education Managers

DEMs

- Provide office accommodation to DCMs, DTCs, and DMEs
- Ensure that district DIAS personnel (SEMs) include EGRA reading activities in their monitoring and supervision visits
- Work closely with EGRA district staff to ensure that agreed-upon EGRA literacy activities are taking place in the district
- Introduce EGRA to the District Executive Committee
- Ensure that EGRA is part of the District Education Network (DEN)
- Ensure that EGRA activities are part of the District Executive Committee discussions
- Ensure that MOUs/local agreements are implemented by themselves, schools, SMCs, and PTAs

The Roles and Responsibilities of District Community Development Officers

DCDOs

- Work closely with EGRA district staff (DCMs, DTCs, and DMEs) to ensure that agreed-upon EGRA literacy activities are taking place in the district
- Ensure that district MGCSW personnel include EGRA reading activities in their monitoring and supervision visits
- Ensure that EGRA is part of the Village Development Committee (VDC), AEC, and District Development Committee meetings
- Ensure that MOUs/local agreements are implemented by themselves, CDAs, local communities,

schools, SMCs, and PTAs

- Ensure that CBE, Adult Literacy, ECD, and EGRA literacy lessons are coordinated and integrate the same messages
- Ensure that MOUs/local agreements are implemented among schools, SMCs, and PTAs

Everyone else in the community can be considered a potential community asset who possesses skills or talents and who can provide knowledge about the community, connections to the people they know, and the support that is needed. Their role might be making phone calls, giving people information, or moving equipment/supplies. Everyone in the community can be a force for community improvement if their assets are identified and put to use.⁸

⁸ McKnight, J. L. (1992). *Mapping Community Capacity*. Chicago, IL: Northwestern University: Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research.

Session 7: Planning for Literacy-Focused Community Meetings

By the end of this session, you should be able to state the following:

- The importance of respecting and using the normal community communication channels to convene meetings
- The school/community meetings that need to take place
- How often community meetings should take place
- What purposes, messages, and information should be conveyed
- Materials and resources available for use (including handbooks)
- Who should be invited
- Logistics required for setting up community meetings
- Potential challenges for organizing the meetings and proposed solutions



Activity 16: Mwalimu village and Mr. Majaila Case Studies

(Suggested Time: 20 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



Instructions: Below are case studies (Case Study 2 and Case Study 3). Divide up into six groups.

Groups 1 to 3 should read Case Study 2 and discuss the questions that follow.

Groups 4 to 6 should read Case Study 3 and discuss the questions that follow.





Case Study 2. Read the following case study and complete the brainstorming activity below it.

A facilitator arrives in Mwalimu village and invites the villagers to a reading meeting. Many of them appear disinterested, and some of the participants just leave at will in the course of the meeting. The next day, the facilitator finds himself alone at the start of the meeting. He turns to his host, who advises him to go and see the village headman first as per the village's custom.

Accompanied by his host, the facilitator goes to visit the village headman and tells him his problem. He explains to village headman Mwalimu the advantages of community participation in children's literacy programs and requests the village headman's blessings for the meeting. The village headman admonishes him for organizing a meeting the previous day without his authority. He tells the facilitator that he had actually advised his subjects not to attend the meeting on that day. As a deterrent, the village headman fined the facilitator a white cock for trespassing into his village. After paying the fine, the village headman sent his messengers to immediately call for a village meeting at which he himself was present.

After this incident the subsequent meetings attracted a large crowd. The village headman was also always in attendance. Furthermore, the village headman contributed a goat, chickens, and three bags of maize as prizes during an annual reading fair.

- Why were the villagers deserting the facilitator on the first day of the meeting?
- How did the facilitator finally solve the problem? Thanks to whom?

It is very important to use existing community communication channels and protocols when convening a community meeting. Such meetings are organized through the local traditional leaders such as chiefs. Community meetings should be as inclusive as possible. Invite all villagers, and it is also important to include religious leaders, business people, and prominent people in the community.



Case Study 3. Read the following case study and complete the brainstorming activity below it.

Mr. Majaila is a literacy Community Mobilization Officer. His area of work comprises 10 villages. Nine out of the 10 villages are doing well in community literacy activities. For instance, the village headmen for these nine villages ensure that community literacy volunteer facilitators teach children after school hours. Each village has a reading club and a village library. The parents of the children also assist the learners with their literacy classwork and assist the community volunteer teacher with making literacy teaching and learning materials. The villagers in the nine villages occasionally visit the community school to see what their children are learning. They also suggest reading areas to be included in the School Improvement Plan. All the nine villages are also planning to hold a community-based reading fair at the end of the school year.

Mmanjamwada village, however, is different. The villagers do nothing to improve the reading of

their children, despite several sensitization meetings that the Community Mobilization Officer held. Mr. Majaila, the Community Mobilization Officer, requests that the headman of Mmanjamwada village convene a meeting. Some of the villagers go astray and report at the village school for the meeting. Others report at the village ground. Upon hearing this, the village headman sends his messengers to inform the villagers that the meeting is at his house.

Upon arrival, the villagers are heard asking each other what the meeting is all about. Others are overheard complaining that they had reported for the meeting at 9:00 a.m. when in essence the meeting was supposed to start at 1:00 p.m. At 1:30p.m. Mr. Majaila stands up and shouts at the villagers for being late and ungrateful to the government for bringing them such a nice program. The meeting ends abruptly because the villagers including the chief, felt insulted.

- *If this were you, what would you do to ensure that Mmanjamwada village was performing well like the rest of the villages?*
- *What do you think went wrong with the organization of the meeting?*

A lot of time and money is wasted in poorly managed meetings. Everyone has at some point attended a meeting that was overly long or did not seem relevant or where the meeting leader wandered off topic for long periods. These poorly run meetings are often the product of inadequate preparation and organization. You might have heard the saying, “failure to plan is planning to fail.” A meeting without a well-stated and well-publicized goal will not be well attended. Remember that time is precious to everyone, especially in small communities. Let community members know what to expect from the meeting and what will be expected of them. The meeting venue also should be easily accessible. Afternoons, when the people are back from their gardens, are the most appropriate times.

Logistics for Community Meetings

By bringing together a cross-section of viewpoints, a literacy-focused community meeting is the perfect setting to exchange ideas. There are several logistical issues that one needs to consider when organizing literacy-focused community meetings. To make sure that these meetings go well, you should do the following:

- **Plan early:** Start planning at least one month (or as early as possible) before the meeting.
- **Designate a planning committee:** Although a community meeting is a community-wide event, it is helpful to designate a separate committee to handle the planning or organization of the meeting.
- **Set a date, time, and place:** Avoid conflict with other regularly scheduled meetings.
- **Develop and set a goal:** Why are you holding the meeting? Establish a clear goal or objective for the meeting—for example, to discuss lack of participation in literacy activities, to solicit opinions from community members on strengths and weaknesses of literacy activities, or to discuss a reading fair activity.
- **Develop an agenda:** The agenda should naturally follow the stated goals. Think about the following:
 - Consider the audience when developing the program. What topics are likely to interest and involve everyone?

- The group should know what to expect before attending a meeting.
 - Be clear about what is being planned, how the meeting is going to be run, and who is going to play what role.
 - Make sure not to overload the agenda. Once the agenda is set make sure that the meeting starts and ends on time.
- **Invite participants:** Community meetings should be as inclusive as possible. Get ideas and information. In a successful meeting, a variety of active participants are brought together, information and opinions are shared, resources and volunteers are identified, and goals and action plans are established. Because many communities have ethnic, cultural, and social differences that need to be accommodated, one needs to be sensitive to their diversity. Minutes should be recorded, and those from the previous meeting should be read.

Activity 17: Examples of Community Meetings and Resources

(Suggested Time: 20 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



Instructions: Form five groups and discuss the following:

- What school/community meetings can/should take place
- The resources that can be required during such meetings
- Potential challenges for organizing the meetings and proposed solutions

It is advisable to have one community meeting per term: one meeting in the first term, a follow-up meeting in the second term, and a review meeting in the third term. This can vary depending on the actual situation on the ground (such as a large coverage area, a special activity being organized, unexpected problems that arise, etc.). However, some meetings can be generic.

Type of School/Community Meeting	Resources That Can Be Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial sensitization meeting • Exploring reading options and setting priorities • Planning for action • Planning for monitoring • Planning for reading fairs at both the school and community levels • Disseminating feedback or reading activities evaluation findings • Sharing success stories • Organizing and evaluating reading fairs • Creating teaching and reading resources • Discussion of reading activities to incorporate in the SIPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Mobilization Training Manual for reference • Meeting agenda • Minutes of the previous meeting • People to assist with the organization of the meeting • In some cases, a flip chart and markers • Visual aids in some cases

Sometimes problems can arise when organizing or conducting meetings. The following are some examples, along with suggested solutions.

Potential Challenges and Suggested Solutions

Challenges	Suggested Solutions
Language barriers	Use an interpreter
Poor attendance	Announce the meetings well in advance through the village headman and other influential personalities
Not completing the agenda and some participants speaking endlessly	Allot reasonable time to each agenda item and have a timekeeper
Some participants dominating the meeting	Encourage all people to participate by directing questions also to those who keep quiet
Members belittling others' views or making personal attacks	Set ground rules that all views have to be listened to and avoid personal attacks
Side conversations	Draw them in by directing a question to them
Vague statements	Probe for clarity
Repeaters or "parrots"	Refer to notes and confirm with group that the points have already been raised
Funeral in the village on the scheduled day	Postpone to a different date and communicate the new date

As a meeting facilitator it is important to do the following:

- Make everyone feel comfortable and valued
- Encourage participation
- Prevent and manage conflicts
- Listen and observe
- Guide the group
- Ensure quality decisions and ensure that an **ACTION PLAN IS WRITTEN**

Session 8: Planning for Annual Reading Fairs



By the end of this session, you should be able to state the following:

- Define a reading fair
- Describe what annual reading fairs should look like
- Mention where annual reading fairs should take place
- Discuss activities that can be organized for annual reading fairs
- Mention who should be invited
- Outline logistics of reading fairs
- Discuss potential challenges/difficulties and proposed solutions



Case Study 4. Read the following case study and complete the brainstorming activity below it.

Mandolo village is one of the beneficiaries of a reading program being supported by one of the Malawi government's cooperating partners through the Ministry of Education Science and Technology. The program has been running for almost two years now.

One day, officials from the funding agency made a fact-finding visit to the village. They were shown a demonstration reading class among the many activities that the hosts had prepared. Over a cup of tea, the visitors had an informal chat with some of the stakeholders about the impact of the project.

Twenty-five percent of the stakeholders that they had a chat with stated that they had heard about the intervention and that they were involved in some of the meetings. Some of them, including teachers, stated that they had stopped implementing the reading intervention because their efforts were neither appreciated nor recognized.

Things to Consider When Organizing a Reading Fair

Activity 18: Things to Consider When Organizing a Reading Fair

(Suggested Time: 20 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



Instructions: Divide into small groups and discuss the case study above. Talk about the following questions:

- In your opinion, what sort of activities should be performed to achieve full participation of the stakeholders and make them aware of the existence and benefits of the reading intervention?
- How best can you plan for a reading fair?
- What sort of activities can you include in a reading fair?

Reading Fair Definition

- A reading fair is a literacy event organized for learners to showcase their reading skills on the one hand and for teachers and community members to show case their contribution on the other. It can be conducted at school, community, or zonal levels.
- Reading fairs build a bridge of literacy between the school and community at large by connecting children and their families with the school.
- They enable both teachers and parents to see the fruits or positive impact of their efforts.
- The fairs, if well-advertised, enable all community members to participate and appreciate the reading activities that learners and teachers do.
- They are also the best fora to recognize learner, facilitator, community, and teacher achievements by rewarding them accordingly.
- They also offer an opportunity for business people in the area to contribute positively to the promotion of reading.
- If organized as an inter-school, community, or zonal activity reading fairs can result in very high learning gains because the schools, communities, and zones would compete with each other.
- Sustainability is assured if there is high community involvement in the organization of the fairs.

Activity 19: Organizing a Reading Fair

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



Instructions: In groups, discuss the following:

- Where should reading fairs take place?
- What activities can be organized for annual reading fairs?
- Who should be invited to the reading fair?
- What logistical arrangements are needed for organizing reading fairs?
- What are the potential challenges/difficulties and how can they be solved?

Work with Your Community Partners

Meet with other people and organizations in your community who are interested in supporting the event and form an organizing committee. Work together to plan the event.

- **Involve the whole community.** You may ask businesses and organizations to sponsor a category. They can donate money to buy books, craft materials, or prizes. Such businesses may wish to organize and run a booth at the fair. Draw up a list of who should be invited.
- **Decide the date.** Choose a date that will not clash with other community events. That way, more people can attend.
- **Find a location.** Find a convenient venue in terms of size and accessibility to hold the event. It can be a school ground or village ground.
- **Decide the reading fair activities to be performed.** These could include the following examples.
 - A display of some teaching and learning materials produced specifically for reading activities
 - A class with a lot of reading texts so that participants can randomly test learners' reading skills by getting them to read and answer comprehension questions and write on the chalkboard
 - A demonstration literacy class (school and village)
 - Storytelling class (fables) and oral comprehension questions
 - A competition/quiz between learners of two villages on language mastery (Questions can include sentences with missing words, words with a missing letter, reading a paragraph to measure reading speed, sentence building and reading from word cards, simple crossword puzzles, and other such questions.)
 - Publicly recognizing learners who perform well through certification or awards
- **Program.** Draw the program of activities for the day.
- **Guest of honor.** Identify an inspirational guest of honor and inform him or her in good time in writing with the program for the day attached.
- **Responsibilities outside the committee.** Share responsibilities for the various activities and needs outside the organizing committee. You can also have sub-

committees (e.g., a committee to source awards or a committee to oversee readiness of materials). It is a good idea to also involve learners in this.

- **Prepare materials for the activities and rehearse.**
 - Prepare all the materials and things you'll need for each of the activities ahead of time.
 - Check that you have everything, and then check again.
 - Rehearse the activities prior to the day.
- **Advertise.**
 - Send messages to communities through the village heads. Start at least three weeks ahead and then remind them two weeks ahead and then a week ahead of the event.
 - Put up posters around the community.
 - Where possible, advertise on the local community radio station and through churches.
 - Tell everyone about the event.
- **Invite the media.** Where possible, and where funds permit, invite the print or electronic media to attend and do a story about literacy day.
- **Have prizes.** Collect prize/award donations or purchase them in good time.
- **Take pictures.** Take pictures of the event, and these can be included in our success stories, quarterly reports and newsletter.
- **Report and evaluation.** Hold an evaluation meeting with the organizing committee and some community members. Write a report on the activity.

Potential Challenges and Suggested Solutions

Challenges	Possible Solutions
People not volunteering to be on the organizing committee	The village headman or head teacher can assist with identifying potential committee members.
Failure to have prize donations	Organize income-generating activities or consult prominent business people in the area.
Village funeral on the event date	Postpone the fair to a later date and attend the funeral for solidarity.
Disturbed by rain	Do not organize fairs to be held during rainy season.
Guest of honor not turning up	Have a backup plan (an alternative person) and inform the person that he or she is on standby and has to attend the event.

Write your notes here:

Session 9: Practical Strategies for Communities and Parents to Support Learner Reading (Out of School)



By the end of this session, you should be able to state the following:

- The activities that communities or parents can do to support learner reading
- The material resources that will be required
- The human resources that will be required
- The most convenient venue for the activities
- How to sustain the activities (after the project)
- How to ensure that the needs of learners with special needs and those of OVC are provided for
- How gender balance can be ensured
- Potential challenges/difficulties and proposed solutions
- How books can be taken care of

As discussed in the earlier sessions, the benefits of out-of-school-hours learning support programs are that they assist learners academically, socially, and personally. They also assist in learners' transition through education into work. In addition, these gains have been found to be greater for disadvantaged learners such as OVC and special needs learners because usually all their needs cannot be met in the mainstream schools. Therefore they are at risk of early school leaving, unemployment, and low skilled as well as insecure work.

Guidelines for a Reading Club

- The goal of a Community Reading Club is for children to **enjoy themselves and have fun** with reading.
- During each Reading Club, **a story can be read out loud.**
- **No more than 24 students** should be in a Reading Club at one time. The ideal ratio is 10 students for every Volunteer Community Reading Facilitator.
- Learners should not sit in rows, but rather in a large circle or small groups.
- Clubs may meet at the Volunteer Community Reading Facilitator's home, in a communal place in the village or under a tree.

Recruiting Reading Club Facilitators

- Through the village headman ask the community youth to attend the meeting. The meeting facilitators, with the assistance of the community, should identify volunteers to act as Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators.
- All youth who are interested are welcome to take part. The only requirements are that the youth should be literate and should be accepted by the community.
- Youth should be paired up in pairs of one female and one male to encourage gender balance.
- Facilitators should receive additional training in the activities/syllabus for the club.
- Club leaders decide what time is best to hold the clubs and commit to holding these sessions regularly, either after-school, on the weekends, or both.

Recruiting Club Members

- Club leaders and program staff should meet with head teachers and teachers, as well as parents, to explain the intervention and what is required of the learners and community.
- Tell the community that Standard 1, 2, and 3 learners are expected to attend the clubs.
- Once a list of the learners is written, the learners should be divided up equally among clubs.
- Participation in these clubs is voluntary and without charge.

Monitoring Requirements: Monitoring tools such as attendance forms, book lending/tracking forms should be used.

Materials Needed:

- Books, reading materials, writing materials, etc.
- Prior to each lesson, learners should be told the local materials that they will bring, such as scrap paper, cardboard, and flowers for ink.
- Slates and pieces of chalk

Potential Challenges and Suggested Solutions

Challenges	Solutions
Difficulties may arise in identifying individuals or setting a schedule	Request the community with their leaders to assist in appointing effective and committed individuals and jointly agree on the schedule
Farming commitments resulting in poor attendance	Schedule when they are free from home and garden work
Some parents perceiving themselves as illiterate and unqualified to participate	Assure them that all parents will have roles to play in specific activities
Lack of understanding of what the community roles are	Explain to them properly and provide guidance
Teachers not comfortable with parent-initiated activities and only ready to participate when ideas come from them (teachers)	Work with the head teacher and Community Mobilizer to encourage teachers to change their mindset



Case Study 5: Read the following case study and do the brainstorming activity below it.

Makaiko village is located in the rich alluvial soil valley of Namitambo River. Being a part of a Rural Growth Center, the assets of the village also include a well-staffed primary school, a health center, a market, a post office, a veterinary office, an IT center, and a police station.

Despite the village's having all these assets, very few children enroll at the school, and the school is characterized by high drop-out and failure rates because of the learners' inability to read even when they reach Standard 8. The rural growth center community does not take advantage of the social amenities such as the health center when they become sick and the IT center because they are mostly illiterate.

Although the area has very fertile soil and always receives good rainfall, the community has very lean harvests every year because most of the people are unable to interpret and implement agricultural instructions. Worse still, the community has a high death rate because it experiences a lot of preventable communicable diseases.

Owing to the situation above, the government has just acquired some funds to address adult literacy and to actively involve the Makaiko villagers in the reading activities of Standard 1, 2, and 3 learners of the village.

- *Brainstorm the sort of activities you would perform to achieve full participation of the general public and make it aware of the existence and benefits of the reading intervention.*

Activities, Resources, Gender, and Sustainability

Activity 20: *Organizing Practical Activities to Support Learners' Reading*

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



Instructions: Form five groups. In your groups, read through Case Study 5 above and then do the activities below. Be prepared to present your work in plenary.

You have been employed by the government as a Community Development Assistant for the Traditional Authority where the Makaiko village is located, and it is your job to organize practical activities to support learners' reading in Standards 1 to 3.

a. Make a plan for each of the activities that you and the community and parents in the village can organize. In addition think about the resources that would be required for each of these activities.

Activities could include the following:

- Setting up reading clubs
- Selecting and training volunteer community reading club facilitators
- Setting up a village library
- Selecting and training community reading mentors

b. Role play sensitizing community on selecting EGRA volunteers community reading club facilitators

Reading Activities That Can Be Done in the Community

A range of activities can be undertaken at the community level to give young learners the opportunity to read and develop their reading skills.

1. Village or Community Reading Clubs

- This activity gives children from Standards 1, 2, and 3 a fun place, outside of school, to engage in reading.
- Local youth Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators can be selected and should be coached on how to run a Reading Club
- Reading activities can be conducted on a weekly basis.
- Communities can also produce materials to support learners' development of letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, and other key reading skills. Local production of reading materials can solve the problem of a lack of reading resources.

Activity 21: *Benefits of Using the Youth as Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators*

(Suggested Time: 10 minutes)



Instructions: Brainstorm the benefits of using the youth as volunteer facilitators.

Benefits of this approach include the following:

- Volunteer Reading Club facilitators act as role models to the learners
- Because they are local youth, the volunteers can devote significant time and energy to the clubs (time that older individuals with families and greater responsibilities may not be able to devote)
- Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators will also gain an added sense of purpose and responsibility, as well as self-confidence, through mentoring of the learners
- They can build strong community relationships
- The learners can easily identify with their fellow youth

2. Establishing and Managing a Community/Village Library

Community or village libraries are collections of reading materials used by learners and community members.

- Literacy cannot be implemented without materials for learners to read. Libraries or Book Banks can really make a difference to learners' reading development.
- Some of the books can be in Chichewa and others in English.
- Children learn to read most effectively in their mother tongue.
- The library reading materials must be readily accessible to students and community members.
- The library may consist of materials that are written, illustrated, and published entirely locally.
- Parents and the school can contribute to written materials like magazines, newspapers, books, and decodable readers to the library.
- The books should be classified according to levels of difficulty. This will help in ensuring that learners read books of their level and in assessment of how many books learners have read at their level.
- Additional libraries or "literacy corners" should be available in schools as well.
- Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators may also put a sign at the site where the books are stored as a way to increase awareness about the library.

- The library should be centrally located in the community so that all members and physically challenged learners can easily visit it.
- Braille and large print literature should also be available for special needs learners.

Management of the Village Library

The library will need volunteers from the community to oversee its use, and the Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators would be the ideal persons to be responsible for maintaining the library if a community librarian does not already exist. The Community Reading Facilitators should do the following:

- They should record all the available literature in an inventory book.
- They should have a system of monitoring book use and return, and they should understand that it is better to have books that are torn and dirty from use than books that are perfectly neat. Often, neat books are books that have never been read! (See **Appendix 2** and **Appendix 5** for a sample book-lending register).
- If possible, the books can be covered with plastic paper covers.
- When not in use, books should be stored in a container in a dry area. Strong cartons or wooden boxes can be used. Plastic paper bags can also be used but should be replaced when they get damaged/destroyed.
- A poster chart may be set up to mark the frequency that a parent/child pair (or sibling pair, etc.) read a story. Gold stars recording books read and returned, or a similar system, can be used as motivation.
- If a book is not returned on an agreed date, make a follow-up date for return.

3. Community/Village Reading Mentors

This means pairing up younger learners with those who are older and in higher grades. The older primary school learners help younger learners with their reading skills. The older children are selected on the basis of high levels of fluency and comprehension. At regular intervals, the younger learner can select books from the community library and the older learner provides reading help and reads to the younger learner. The older learner may also help the younger with homework, school attendance, and other school-related activities. One or two teachers in each school should oversee the reading mentor program.

Reading Mentor Guidelines

- Books can be distributed/selected each week, when both the reading mentor and mentee are present.
- To begin, the mentee selects a book.
- When the pair has finished reading, the mentee takes the book to his or her home. The following week, he or she must bring it to select a new book and begin reading with his or her mentor.
- It can also be the role of mentors to walk to school with their mentee and help the mentee with his or her homework.
- To motivate them, mentors should be recognized, probably during reading fairs.

Guidelines for Organizing and Pairing Reading Mentors

- Identify the target communities and schools in which the mentorships will take place.
- Meet with the head teacher to explain the program.
- After headteacher training, headteachers should identify a teacher who can oversee and monitor the program—ideally a teacher who lives in the village and knows the students well.
- Explain the program to the learners in Standards 4, 5, 6, and 7 and ask if any of them would like to volunteer to be a reading mentor for a Standard 1, 2, or 3 learners.
- Confer with the class teacher to determine which of the volunteer students would make good mentors.
- Match Standards 1, 2, and 3 mentees with mentors who live close by. Mentors and mentees who live many miles apart are not ideal, as their interaction will be limited.
- Due to differing family dynamics, mentors should not be siblings or live in the same household.
- Train the mentors on how to read to their mentees (eg using the I do, You do and We do technique).
- Depending on the number of books and the number of learners, mentors should gather once every week or once every two weeks to collect new books. Alternatively, you can have any effective book lending arrangement.

Activity 22: Roles of the Illiterate in Literacy Teaching

(Suggested Time: 10 minutes)



Instructions: Brainstorm on the literacy activity that even the illiterate community members can effectively participate in.

- What steps can be followed in this activity?
- When can this activity take place and what materials might be needed?
- What would be the possible challenges and solutions?

4. Storytelling

Story Time is an activity that can take place anytime, anywhere, with anyone, including the illiterate members of the community. The essence of storytelling is to tell or read meaningful and curriculum-relevant stories to children. Storytelling may take place at home, in a communal village area, or at a shop. Stories can come from oral traditions, books, poems, history or be made up.*

Guidelines for Storytelling

- Do a brief survey of the community to find out who the best storytellers are, as well as anyone who would like to participate in the activity.
- Engage both literate and illiterate individuals to tell stories to children.
- Include parents, Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators, or anyone else from the community as storytellers.
- Brief those who are interested in how to go about storytelling (See **Appendix I**).
- Hold Story Time in a regular and easily accessible place in the community.
- Make it clear that this will be a fun experience helping learners, and that a commitment to be part of this for six months is highly appreciated.
- Set up a time at regular intervals, such as weekly, to conduct storytelling. Have a core group of storytellers to share stories and schedule the volunteers identified.

Timeframe

- Story Time should be held at weekly intervals for at least six months. The reason for this is that the first time learners attend Story Time, they may not be interested or know what they are supposed to do. However, each time they attend they will understand the activity better and listen with more and more attention.
- Volunteers read stories out loud or tell stories to children at least once a week and as often as every day.

Materials Needed

You may use books in the village libraries, folklore (from memory), and attendance forms.

Potential Challenges and Suggested Solutions

Challenges	Solutions
Difficulties arise in identifying individuals or setting a schedule	Request the community, with the assistance of the village headman, to assist in appointing effective and committed individuals and jointly agree on the schedule
Farming commitments resulting in poor attendance	Schedule the events at a time when participants are free from home and garden work
Some parents perceiving themselves as illiterate and unqualified to participate	Assure them that all parents will have roles to play in specific activities
Lack of understanding of what the community roles are	Explain the roles to them properly and guide them
Teachers not comfortable with parent-initiated activities and only ready to participate when ideas come from them (teachers)	Work with the head teacher and Community Mobilizer to encourage a change of mindset

*See the Appendix for guidelines on how to tell stories

Care for Books

Proper care for supplementary readers is critical to ensure that the materials last long. Most schools are hesitant to allow learners take books home due to a lack of knowledge of how to care for them. There is a need to instruct learners and parents in caring for books to enable teachers to release the books for literacy enhancement. Sometimes, for instance, early graders write on books. SMCs/PTAs should facilitate instruction in book-care strategies (e.g., use of wrappers), showing that books are not to be torn or allowed to get wet at home. Parents, Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators, Teaching Assistants, and teachers should ensure and monitor that strategies to care for books are carried out.

Tips for Care of Books for Learners

- Cover them
- Wash and dry hands before handling books
- Keep and carry books in carrier bags
- Eat and play away from books
- Turn pages carefully, without folding
- Do not throw books around
- Do not mark pages with big things like sticks
- Do not fold pages
- Do not write in the books
- Do not allow non-school going children to access the books
- Read books flat open without folding them

Book Security

PTAS/SMCs and Mothers' Groups must ensure that books are secure at the school premise. Security can involve ensuring classrooms have lockable doors, filing books in cabinets or shelves, keeping records on who has which book titles, and other things. They should also ensure that parents cover the books.



Case Study 6. Read the following case study and complete the brainstorming activity below it.

CRECCOM, an NGO specializing in community mobilization and literacy, sent a Community Mobilizer to the Mwadala community to start a literacy program. Among the main tasks of the mobilizer was to help the community gain ownership of the program. The mobilizer has been receiving all the support necessary from CRECCOM. She is now at the end of the second year of her mission and must return home. When she announces her plan to leave, the community is extremely surprised and a certain panic has begun to spread. The Mwadala community realizes that the literacy program will end upon the departure of the volunteer, as there is no one in the community capable of continuing the program once she has left.

Activity 23: Mwadala Community Mobilizer Case Study

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



Instructions: Form five groups, read the case study above, and discuss the questions below; then present your work in plenary.

- What is the main problem raised in the case study?
- Why is the community not in a position to continue the literacy activities after the departure of the volunteer?
- What should the volunteer have done right from the start?
- What steps should the community have taken to ensure the continuity of the activities?

The mobilizer must keep in mind that it is crucial that the community develop a sense of ownership of the reading activities/program.

Sustainability Guidelines

- The community must identify individuals residing in the village who have benefited from the program and who can work with the mobilizers. The aim is to build local capacity to continue the activities of the center.
- The roles of the counterpart or assistant are to assist the mobilizer in the following:
 - Carrying out sensitization, training, and other facilitation activities
 - Managing the community reading center
 - Implementing program activities
- Having a counterpart or assistant ensures the smooth replacement of the mobilizer, thus avoiding a vacuum when he or she leaves.

Criteria for Selection

The following criteria can be applied to the selection of a counterpart or assistant:

- Basic academic qualifications (preferably, eight years of schooling)
- Acceptance by the community
- Availability
- Voluntary commitment to serve the community
- Willingness to be trained
- Skills for assisting in leading and organizing reading activity
- Ability to initiate and sense of responsibility

These criteria should be seen as a guideline and not as an obligation, as the approach may vary from area to area.

Training Requirement

- It is up to the mobilizer to make sure that the counterpart receives proper training.

- By working closely with the mobilizer, the counterpart or assistant will be able to build her or his own capacity to work in a learning center (demonstration of lessons, practice teaching, observation of classes and organizing activities, keeping a library, managing documents).

Stakeholders

- Work with local stakeholders throughout the program cycle. These stakeholders include the following:
 - Local community, religious and political leaders
 - Local government officials
 - Local business people

Rights-Based Approach

- Remember to use the rights-based approach

Conclusion

It is very important to involve parents in all planning processes for these activities. It is advisable to hold meetings with parents at flexible times and easily accessible locations. There is great need to evaluate the effectiveness of parent involvement. It is also important to identify and address barriers to increased parental involvement (particularly for parents who are economically disadvantaged, who have limited English proficiency or limited literacy, who are of any racial or ethnic background, or who are physically challenged). Technology such as SMSs can be used to foster parental involvement. Effective reading practices integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, student learning, and development.

Establish contact with marginalized groups in this and any endeavor. It is also worthwhile to build relationships and confidence by getting to know each other. Literacy and/or training programs should be designed with consideration of a community’s special needs—for example, by changing the location of the center or changing the schedule of the classes to suit community needs. The use of existing structures when mobilizing communities enhances sustainability.

Write your notes here:

Session 10: Practical Strategies for Communities and Parents to Support Learner Reading (in School)



By the end of this session, you should be able to state the following:

- The activities that communities or parents can do to support learners' reading in the school
- The material resources that will be required
- The human resources that will be required
- The most convenient venue for the activities
- How to sustain the activities (after the project)
- How to ensure that the needs of learners with special needs and those of OVC are provided for
- How gender balance can be ensured
- Potential challenges/difficulties and proposed solutions

The Agenda for Change

To enhance parents' involvement in school reading activities, there is great need to create and carry out an overall agenda for change. This agenda for change means the community and school should have the following.

- A shared vision and common set of goals and objectives
- A commitment to long-range strategic planning from which short-term and medium-term plans can progressively be extracted
- Action plans based on assessments of local strengths and needs that lead to the development of SIPs that include reading activities
- Viable SIPs implementation strategies that also enhance reading.
- Implementation of action plans mostly by utilizing local resources

Activity 24: Thazi Primary School Petition Case Study

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



Instructions: Form five groups, read the case study, and discuss the questions below the case study; then present your work in plenary.

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups: 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



Case Study 7. Read the following case study and do the activity below it.

Thazi Primary School has well qualified teachers. It is headed by a well experienced head teacher. Unlike the neighboring Mwanyumbu School, Thazi School is well furnished and has adequate books. Being well experienced and qualified teachers, their grades range from PT2 to PT1. They are well paid! Hence they are the cream of the community, but there is a feeling among members of the community that sometimes the teachers look down upon them.

Despite having qualified teachers, for the past two years no learner has been selected to secondary school from Thazi Primary School. It seems that even after finishing three years of primary education, learners enter Standard 4 without being able to read or write. The parents have written a petition to the District Education Manager requesting him to transfer all the teachers.

In their petition, the parents have compared their school to Mwanyumbu School, which sends many learners to secondary school. The community members have noticed that Mwanyumbu School Standard 1 learners are able to read and write by the end of the first term regardless of the school's status. In the petition they also express their admiration for the excellent involvement of the Mwanyumbu community in school affairs, noting particularly that the school has after-school reading clubs and that Mwanyumbu School parents and community members are regularly involved in school activities.

- What is the main problem raised in the case study?
- What do you think would be the key to the success for the Thazi Primary School learners?
- Who was suffering because of the strife between the school and the community?
- What advice and strategies can you give to the Thazi Primary school head teacher and teachers so that community members can start feeling that they are being involved in the running of the school?

The following suggestions can transform school community relationships and lead to meaningful engagement and improvement of learner achievement.

- There is need to demonstrate that crossing the comfort zones of economics, language, and culture may be hard but worth the effort.
- Recognize that parental involvement is fundamental to learner success (including success in reading).
- Be clear and specific about the type of parental involvement required in learners' reading activities at school.
- Do not assume that the parents will not know what to do or that they are not interested. Some of them bring powerful reading skills and contributions.
- Identify those parents who share your vision for literacy change and engage them.
- Help them to understand what reading capabilities you expect of their children and help them see how these expectations are directly linked to a high standard of learning.
- Gain their confidence and trust.
- Know that just as with learners, every parent comes with a different level of readiness.
- Sometimes call them with good news, not just the bad.
- Ask them to be mentors for other parents who may not be inclined to be involved or know what to do.
- For those parents who are reluctant to come to school to see teachers, go to their homes or hold a group meeting at a neutral site in their neighborhood. While this may be a lot to ask for, without it parents will never get the message about how important their involvement in reading activities is.
- Involve more parents in planning at the school level, for instance in developing SIPs that include reading activities.
- Include them in decision making if they are to have confidence in the decisions.
- Do not stop at identifying the barriers to their involvement, but resolve them jointly.

Activities, Resources, Gender, and Sustainability

Activity 25: *All Inclusive and Sustainable Activities*

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)

Instructions: Form six groups and discuss the following. Be prepared to discuss in plenary.

Groups 1 and 2

- The activities that communities or parents can do to support learner reading in the school
- The material resources that will be required
- The human resources that will be required

Groups 3 and 4

- The most convenient venue for the activities
- How to sustain the activities (after the project)
- How to ensure that the needs of learners with disabilities and those of OVC are provided for

Groups 5 and 6

- How gender balance can be ensured
- Potential challenges/difficulties and proposed solutions

How Parents Can Help

Parents can do the following activities to support reading in the school:

- Creating “talking walls” by painting letters or words on walls of the schools
- Writing decodable text and stories
- Assisting with the identification of a paraprofessional teaching assistant
- Folk storytelling and listening comprehension questions
- Assisting with organizing school reading fairs and Braille Reading Cups
- Donating reading fair materials and prizes
- Reporting learner reading challenges to teachers for remedial lessons
- Ensuring that reading activities are part of SIPs
- Donating literature for the class libraries or reading corners
- Making writing slates
- Monitoring the school reading activities

Materials That May Be Required

- Paint (or colored clay), markers, chart paper for the talking walls, and decodable texts and stories
- Books and magazines for the class libraries
- Any other items for reading fair materials and prizes
- Slates and pieces of chalk

Human Resources

- Members to organize and manage the reading fairs
- Members to be on the Mother’s Group, PTA and SMC committees that advocate literacy issues in the school plans

- General community members to spearhead and monitor the reading activities in the school

The Venue

The most convenient venues for school literacy activities are as follows:

- The school ground for the reading fair
- The classroom for the talking walls
- The classrooms for storytelling
- The PTA meetings venue for contributions to SIPs
- The school premises for making of slates and decodable readers
- Class-based parent-teacher consultation meetings for parents and teachers to highlight a child's areas of weakness

How to Sustain the Activities

- Keeping in mind the different aspects of program ownership by the community by doing all the activities together
- Working with local traditional, religious, and political leaders and government structures
- Identifying a counterpart or assistant and building her or his capacity to support the mobilizer in his or her efforts
- Identifying people with leadership potential and training them to take over
- Using the rights-based approach

Catering the Needs of Learners with Special Needs and Those of OVC

- Assisting in organizing Braille Cups
- Donating materials and prizes for Braille Cups
- Foster parenting and assisting OVC with reading activities and making follow-up visits
- Providing OVC with their basic life and learning needs and encouraging them to go to school

Ensuring Gender Balance

This can be done by encouraging both men and women to participate and giving roles to both men and women.

Potential Challenges and Suggested Solutions

Challenges	Solutions
Difficulties in the acquisition of reading materials	Appeal for donations through local leaders and encourage the use local resources
Difficulties may arise in identifying community members to help with activities and setting an activity schedule	Request community leaders to assist in appointing effective and committed individuals and jointly agree on the schedule
Farming commitments resulting in poor	Schedule activities when they are free from home

Challenges	Solutions
participation	and garden work
Some parents perceiving themselves as illiterate and unqualified to participate	Assure them that all parents will have roles to play in specific activities and guide them
Lack of understanding of what the community roles are	Explain properly to them and guide them
Teachers not comfortable with parent-initiated activities and only ready to participate when ideas come from them (teachers)	Work with the head teacher and Community Mobilizer to encourage a change of mindset

School parental reading support programs may offer a broad range of benefits to learners. Significant benefits for learners include the following:

- High academic outcomes (school retention, improvement in grades, and/or engagement in learning)
- Improved social and personal development outcomes (improved confidence, self-esteem, language skills, and adjustment to the school environment)
- Increased family or community gains (improved relationships with parents' peers)

Session I I: Monitoring and Reporting on Community Involvement



By the end of this session, you should be able to do the following:

- Define monitoring
- Monitor and report on community involvement in reading/literacy for children
- State what DCMs, DCDOs, PEAs, CDAs and the rest of the stakeholders should monitor and how often
- State how the stakeholders can work together
- Write a Community Action Plan



Case Study 8. Read the following case study and complete the brainstorming activity below it.

The Magweru community has a reading intervention being implemented by an NGO. The Community Mobilizer, Mr. Sowani, informed the community about the project. They jointly identified priority areas and drew up a community action plan. Furthermore they implemented the action plan together.

One day, during a community meeting, the community expressed concern that they were not seeing the reason why they were being involved in the implementation of the project because they never knew the impact of the project. It required the village headman to convince the community to carry on with the project, and he promised that he and his elders would have a discussion with Mr. Sowani to share lessons from previous projects.

Activity 26: Magweru Community Case Study

(Suggested Time: 20 minutes)



Instructions: Brainstorm the responses to the questions below:

- What do you think Mr. Sowani needs to do to resolve the community's concern?
- What specific steps does Mr. Sowani need to take to achieve your response to the above question?



Many parents do not know how to support student learning in practical ways. One reason is that they do not receive enough information or do not understand what the information means. They need information, which can include data about how their children are performing and about how the school or program is performing. This is why monitoring needs to involve parents: the collected data can serve as a catalyst for home-school or school-home communication and motivate parents to engage more confidently and fully in their children's learning.

The information gathered through monitoring can provide the content that engages families to understand where their children are, where they need to go, and the options for reaching their goals. When monitoring involves parents in this way, it becomes meaningful; it gives parents a voice in the educational process and empowers them to partner with educators to promote their children's academic growth.

Activity 27: Monitoring

(Suggested Time: 25 minutes small groups; 5 minutes per group plenary discussion)



Instructions: Form six groups and discuss the following:

Groups 1 and 2: What does "monitoring" mean and why do we need to perform monitoring?

Groups 3 and 4: What are the possible areas for monitoring and reporting on community involvement in reading/literacy for children?

Group 5: What should DCMs monitor, how, and how often? What should DCDOs monitor, and how often? What should PEAS monitor, and how often? What should CDAs monitor, and how often?



Definition of Monitoring and Why We Monitor

Monitoring is an activity that involves collecting information in a planned, organized, and regular way to ensure that a program is implemented according to the plan. Monitoring is important because it does the following:

- Assists in checking progress toward achievement of intended outcomes
- Assists in identifying the successes and challenges of the program being implemented
- Helps in checking on the performance of program implementers
- Helps in identifying areas from which lessons can be drawn/learned
- Helps in ensuring accountability
- Helps in reducing waste by ensuring that only targeted activities are done
- Motivates implementers as they become aware of the kind of progress they are making

Areas of Monitoring and Reporting

In general terms, the areas for monitoring and reporting can be obtained from the comprehensive list of EGRA Community Mobilization M&E indicators and are as follows.

1. Number and dates of interactions on reading issues between the community and school, disaggregated by school and district and issues discussed
2. Number and dates of reading fairs in which the community took part and the activities performed
3. Training logs, disaggregated by gender, for SMC and PTA meetings and the reading issues discussed
4. The types of reading activities and proportion of children who spend at least two hours a week in out-of-school reading activities
5. Number of PTAs and SMCs advocating for increased reading (e.g., through inclusion of reading activities in SIPs)
6. Number of schools applying for grants through SIPs to support reading
7. Number of people participating in community reading activities and the activities performed
8. Proportion of schools advocating reading that have been awarded grants
9. Number of schools or communities that have organized one or more initiatives supporting reading among learners (e.g., reading clubs, book banks)

These activities can be performed once per term.

Who Should Monitor

The M&E Officers are at the center of the monitoring process, with the assistance of the rest of EGRA staff, MoEST and MGCSW staff. It should be remembered that—for the sake of sustainability and capacity building—community members must be part of the monitoring process.

What Can Be Monitored and How Often

There is need to have a connection between overall program M&E and community/parental M&E because parental/community M&E processes have to feed into the overall program M&E. These processes have to contribute to measuring program overall impact. The table below gives the general areas from which program indicators have been drawn.

Possible Areas for Monitoring and Reporting on Community Involvement in Reading/Literacy for Children

What Will Be Monitored	Frequency	Monitors
• Reading fairs in schools and communities	Once every term	DCMs DMEs DCDOs CDAs DTCs DCs Teachers Head Teachers CDAs PEAs DCSWOs PTAs/SMC Traditional Leaders Mother's Groups
• Reading clubs in schools and communities	Once every term	
• School and community libraries	Once every term	
• Annual zonal literacy competitions, quizzes	Once every year	
• Development and distribution of copies of decodable books for use by learners outside of school	Every term	
• Accommodation of gender, special needs learners, and OVC in reading activities	Once every term	
• Work of community reading volunteers	Three times a term	
• Incorporation of early grade literacy priorities in annual SIPs	Once a year	
• Maintenance of reading records	Three times a term	
• Monitor schools to ensure that agreed-upon Malawi EGRA literacy activities are taking place	Three times a term	
• Use of agreed-upon templates and systems (including tablets equipped with Papaya and Tangerine) to produce required data and reports	Three times a term	
• Observation of work undertaken by teaching assistants	Three times a term	
• Number of schools incorporating a literacy focus in SIPs	Once a year	
• Monitor peer-to-peer learning activities during CPD	Once a term	
• Monitor schools/communities to ensure that agreed-upon Malawi EGRA literacy activities are completed	Three times a term	

Modalities for the Mobilizers and Communities to Monitor Together

The following conditions are ideal for promoting cooperative monitoring between communities and mobilizers.

- There is a common vision between the community and mobilizers
- The action plan is drawn together with an indication of what needs to be achieved and also indicators that it has been achieved
- Activities to be done are clear to both parties
- Expected outcomes are shared
- The activities are implemented jointly
- Data collection tools are drawn and explained and understood by both parties

Questions to Consider

- What do we need to learn from the evaluation?
- What happened?
- What activities worked? What activities did not work?
- What were some of the successes? What were some of the failures?
- To what extent did we achieve our goals?
- How much did it cost?
- What would we have done differently?
- What still remains to be done?
- What is the community's vision for the future?
- How has the community's capacity to take action grown to foster sustainability?

Data Analysis

The monitoring team should analyze the information. Analysis tables, such as the one below, help the team organize the information, which comes from various sources but relates to the same question.

What is the desired result?	What was actually achieved?	What contributed to these results?	What are the lessons learned?	What are our recommendations?
e.g All learners should be able to read and write simple Chichewa words by the end of the first term.	e.g Only 80% of the learners were able to read and write simple Chichewa words.	e.g Among the learners, 20% have special needs.	e.g Special needs learners are slow to catch up.	e.g The special needs learners need more attention and remedial lessons.

Share Information and Success Stories with the Community

When the team has finished its analysis, it is important to feed the results back to the community in a way everyone can understand.

- When preparing to share feedback, the monitoring team should think about what they would like to achieve: Do they want to provide information? Seek community answers? Stimulate discussion? Advocate for some kind of action?
- The monitoring team should then decide how it will share information and achieve its other aims. Will they call a community meeting? Perform a drama? Draw a story in pictures?
- Celebrate success! Recognize efforts made by community members; it makes them feel appreciated, and they will be more likely to take action in the future.

It is worth noting that in community interventions, as in any other program activity, the monitoring process has to be participatory. Through participating in monitoring, the community can acquire in-depth understanding of the successes and challenges to which they might provide viable solutions. This involvement also encourages the transfer of knowledge and skills that results in sustainability.

Activity 28: *Using the Appendices*

(Suggested Time: 30 minutes)



Instructions: Individually, skim through the appendices and answer the following questions:

- On what page can one find the school reading class attendance register?
- On what page can one find guidance on how to tell a story?
- What is one data collection tool to be found in the appendices?
- On what page is the Community Action Planning table?

The documents in the appendices are very important in the implementation of the manual. They include data collection tools that can be used to assess the extent to which the indicators of the program—in the community participation component—have been met. The appendices also contain guides such as the Storytelling Guide (**Appendix 1**), as well as templates, such as the Community Book Lending Register (**Appendix 2**), Community Reading Club Attendance Register (**Appendix 3**), Story Time Sheet (**Appendix 4**), School Reading Corner Lending Register (**Appendix 5**), and School Reading Class Attendance Register (**Appendix 6**).

All of these documents can be photocopied for various administrative and data collection uses.

Using the Handbook with the Community

The handbook will be distributed to the major stakeholders, including DEMs, PEAs, District Community Mobilizers, DCDOs, Divisional Coordinators, head teachers, CDAs, Volunteer Community Reading Facilitators, and Community Reading Committees. Not all sections will

be applicable to the community members, but they can use it for reference, even upon the expiry of the program (See **Appendix 12**).

Activity 29: Planning the Way Forward

(Suggested Time: 40 minutes small groups; 20 minutes plenary discussion)

The activities indicated in the work plan are the most important because they address the EGRA deliverables (what the program needs to complete). Go through the activities and understand them. Most activities in the work plan will require sub-activities to be implemented thoroughly. Remember to co-plan together with stakeholders to enhance ownership and sustainability. When writing Community Action Plans with local communities, use **Appendix 13**.

Conclusion

This handbook has aimed to increase parental and community participation to support learners' reading. It is hoped that the contents of the manual, if covered properly, will enable all educational, local government stakeholders, and local communities in general to effectively support this endeavor through the various suggested activities in schools and outside schools or communities. Therefore, there is a need for concerted efforts. It should be noted that annual reading fairs are a must in the program implementation process.

The manual has also highlighted the various roles and responsibilities of the relevant stakeholders. For sustainability as well as capacity building, it is imperative that all the activities should be participatory. The steps in community mobilization are vital and should be understood. After full completion of the training, the DCMs should draw Community Action Plans for their respective areas. Although the manual might not be exhaustive in its contents, it is hoped that the users of the manual will find the several guidelines provided for the various activities useful even after the end of the program.

Appendix I: Storytelling Steps

Before telling the story:

- Introduce the Story: Say a little about the story to develop the learners' interest (e.g., "This is story is about two animals, a lion and a hare.").
- Ask some general questions to further develop the learners' interest and attention, such as What do you know about lions? Can you show me what a lion might sound like? What about hare? What are hares known to do? What do you think will happen when a lion sees a hare?

While telling the story, do the following:

- Ask the learners to repeat some short sentences.
- Ask questions to check whether they are paying attention.

After telling the story, you can do some or all of the following:

- Ask the learners oral comprehension questions based on the story. Remember to encourage them, even those who give wrong answers.
- Ask the learners to say what they think is the moral of this story. (Remember: not all stories have a moral or a message. They can be just for entertainment and enjoyment.)
- Ask individual learners to retell the story in their own words.
- Ask the learners to draw pictures of some of the main events, setting, or characters in the story.

Appendix 2: Community Book Bank Lending Register

FOR VOLUNTEER READING FACILITATOR

Village		Community Library Volunteer Name		M/F	
Zone		District		Division	
Class		Total number of learners in this class in the village			

	Date	Learner Name	Sex	School Name	Book Title	Book #	Return Date	Mentor Name	Learner Signature
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									

**Appendix 3: Community Reading Club Attendance and Content Sheet
FOR VOLUNTEER TEACHING FACILITATOR**

Village		Community Library Volunteer Name		M/F	
Zone		District		Division	
Class		Total number of learners in this class in the village			

	Learner Name	Sex	School Name	Session Dates					Total
				Date: Dur:	Date: Dur:	Date: Dur:	Date: Dur:	Date: Dur:	
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
12									

Appendix 4: Community Story Time Sheet

FOR VOLUNTEER TEACHING FACILITATOR

Village		Community Library Volunteer Name		M/F	
Zone		District		Division	
Class		Total number of learners in this class in the village			

	Date	Storyteller	Story	Number of children attended	
				Male	Female
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					

Appendix 5: School Reader/Book Lending Register

FOR CLASS TEACHER

School Reading Corner Register

School		Teacher's Name		M/F	
Zone		District		Division	
Class		Total number of learners in this class in the village			

	Date	Learner Name	Sex	Book Title	Book #	Return Date	Mentor Name	Learner Signature
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								

Appendix 6: School Reading Class Attendance and Content Register
FOR CLASS TEACHER

School		Teacher's Name		M/F	
Zone		District		Division	
Class		Total number of learners in this class in the village			

	Learner Name	Sex	Session Dates					Total
			Date: Dur:	Date: Dur:	Date: Dur:	Date: Dur:	Date: Dur:	
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								

Appendix 7: Year I Work Plan (June 2013-September 2014)

Component 3: Increasing Parental and Community Engagement to Support Reading

Consolidated Work Plan

Standards/Outcomes	Tasks and Sub-tasks Activities	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun-	Sept	
3.0.1 Development and deployment of EGRA program CM Handbooks	3.0.1.1 Consultant Barbara Harvey mobilized to assist CM Specialist in development of handbooks	9–12 July 2013														
	3.0.1.2 Completion of CM Handbooks	30 Aug														
	3.0.1.3 Training of program staff on use of CM Handbooks	23–27 September 2013														
	3.0.1.4 Training of PEAs, CDAs on use of CM Handbooks	7–11 October														
3.0.2 Deployment of DCMs to Districts	3.0.2.1 DCMs develop relationships with school staff, local community leaders, CDAs, MOEST District-level personnel	September 2013–September 2014														
3.1.0 DTCs, DCMs coordinate planning for community-driven reading fairs	3.1.0.1 Development of Reading Fair Planning Guide	16 Sept–4 th Oct														
	3.1.0.2 Development of Reading Fair schedule, agenda	1–20 Nov (1 st Term) 1–20 Feb (2nd Term) 1–15 May (3rd Term)														
	3.1.0.3 Procurement by school of necessary materials	1–20 Nov (1 st Term) 1–20 Feb (2nd Term) 15–30 May (3rd Term)														
3.1.1 School-based fairs held to showcase learner reading abilities (Teachers and learners recognized)		5 Nov–6 Dec (First Term) 24 Feb–7 Mar (Second Term) 1 Jun 2014 July 2014 (Third Term)														
3.1.2 Disability, Gender and Vulnerable Populations (DGVP) Specialist and Perkins International's local partners coordinate planning for, development of Braille Cup	3.1.2.1 Identification of available matching resources	October–December 2013														
	3.1.2.2 Development of Braille Cup (BC) outreach plan, participant scope	January–March 2014														
	3.1.2.3 Adaptation/Development of BC-specific testing materials	April–May 2014														
3.1.3 Braille Cup implemented	3.1.3.1 Matching resources for BC mobilized	March–May 2014														
	3.1.3.2 BC schedule, agenda set	April–May 2014														
	3.1.3.3 BC competition held	1 Jun 2013–July 2014 (Third Term)														
3.1.4 Evaluation of Year I Reading Fairs and Braille Cup	3.1.4.1 Consolidation of Reading Fair reports from field offices	15 June–Sept 2014														

Standards/Outcomes	Tasks and Sub-tasks Activities	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun-	Sept	
	3.1.4.2 Collaboration with Social Impact (external evaluator) to establish evaluation approach	Dec 2013–May 2014														
	3.1.4.3 Evaluation conducted	June–September 2014														
3.2.0 SMCs, PTAs and community leaders engaged through SMS Gateway messaging		September 2013–June 2014														
3.2.1 Communities mobilized to support young readers	3.2.1.1 Communities encouraged to send children to participate in Day 5 of PEAs' training of teachers (see also Task 1.2.2)	November 2013 and March 2014														
	3.2.1.2 Children attend Day 5 of PEAs' training of teachers	21–20 December 2013 21–25 April 2014														
	3.2.1.3 Community sensitization meetings held	September 20013–Sept 2014														
	3.2.1.4 Communities procure paint, paintbrushes to paint letter cards on walls of SI classrooms	January and February 2014														
	3.2.1.5 Community classroom painting days	March 2014														
3.2.2 Promising approaches to parental support investigated	3.2.2.1 Promising approaches to parental support by non-literate parents investigated	August 2013–June 2014														
3.2.3 Activities continuously monitored to allow for iterative improvement		August 2013–September 2014														
3.2.4 Communities mobilized to make copies of decodable readers provided under Component 2	3.2.4.1 Interested Communities take delivery of paper, writing utensils for copying	March–May 2014														
	3.2.4.2 Decodable Reader Duplication Day held	March–May 2014														
	3.2.4.3 CM staff and personnel report on successes/challenges of approach	March–September 2014														
3.2.5 Perkins International and local partner organizations conduct awareness-raising trainings and meetings around disability and reading		October 2013–September 2014														
3.2.6 Development of Disability Education Resource Guide (DERG)	3.2.6.1 Development of DERG	September 2013–January 2014														
	3.2.6.2 DERG submitted to MOEST for endorsement	February 2014														
	3.2.6.3 DERG submitted to USAID for clearance	February 2014														

Standards/Outcomes	Tasks and Sub-tasks Activities	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun-	Sept	
3.2.7 O'Brien and Associates International develops PPPs	3.2.7.1. Conduct initial desk study of available actors, plan possible alliance assessment and potential partnerships	August–November 2013														
	3.2.7.2 Develop partnership concepts/papers, negotiate roles/responsibilities for alliances	December 2013–September 2014														
	3.2.7.3 Finalize and sign MOUs/support implementation	May–June 2014														
3.3.1 In conjunction with MOEST/DEO, identify 1 school/zone in which use of a paraprofessional teaching assistant (TA) will be modeled	3.3.1.1 Model school identified	September 2013														
	3.3.1.2 Recruit TAs from local community	1 October–30 th November														
	3.3.1.3 TAs included in PEAs' teacher-training workshops	November 2013, March 2014														
	3.3.1.4 TAs engaged in school-based activities, providing classroom-level support	January 2014–July 2014														
3.3.2 Discussions held with MOEST/DTED regarding certification of paraprofessional TAs for lateral entry into teaching profession	Draft MOUs/Frameworks	September 2013–September 2014														

Appendix 8: Work Plan Template

Objective	Activity	Resources	Date	Outputs/Deliverables	Responsible Officers
Eg Set a reading Corner in EGRA classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make book shelves for the class library 	Money for materials and labour	4 th March 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 book shelves installed in the class library 	Mr.F. Chisale and Mrs Z. Phiri
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source books for the class Library 	Money for buying books and their covers	20 April 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 books sourced for the class library 	Mrs I. Banda and Mr K. Chikho

Appendix 9: Activity Reporting Template

Objective	Activity	Date	Status	Outputs/Deliverables	Responsible Officers
Eg Set a reading Corner in EGRA classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make book shelves for the class library 	4 th March 2014	Not made yet but materials bought. Funds were contributed late. To be made by 30 th March 2014	As above	As above
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source books for the class Library 	20 April 2014	100 books sourced		

Appendix 10: Monitoring and Evaluation Instrument

EARLY GRADE READING ACTIVITY

END-OF-TERM MONITORING AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENT (FOR DCMs, CDAs MEs/PEAs)

3.0 PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1. Community Mobilization Checklist

School Name: _____ Zone: _____ District: _____

Head Teacher (m / f): _____ Phone #: _____

Reading Fairs: (tick box if received by EGRA; leave blank if incomplete or not received.)

- Reading Fair report submitted by the school (use report template: should contain when, where, who organized, who participated, what activities (including those by community members), successes, challenges, and way forward)

Date of reading fair _____

Reading centres: (record the number in the blank space)

_____ Number of reading centre surveys collected from reading centres (attach surveys)

_____ Total number of reading centres serving school population

Household surveys: (tick box if all 10 surveys conducted; leave blank if incomplete.)

- Household surveys conducted in 10 households with children in Standards 1-3 within the school community, using EGRA template (attach household survey)

PSIP application status: (tick only ONE, leave blank if not yet started)

- Worked on Completed Submitted to DEM

MoU signed and collected by EGRA: (tick ALL that apply)

- School-Head SMC PTA

Community sensitization meetings: (tick box if available; leave blank if not available.)

- Attendance registers for all sensitization meetings are available
 Minutes for all sensitization meetings are available

List all sensitization meetings held during this term (date and types of participants):

Date *Groups of participants (SMC, PTA, mother group, community, teachers, etc.)*

2. Household Survey for Community Mobilization Checklist

Date: _____

Household survey to be conducted in 10 households that have a Standard 1-3 child who attends the school

School: _____ Village Name(s): _____
 Zone: _____ District: _____

Household Information:

Household	Standard child attends (1-3)	Did your Std 1-3 child bring home reading materials from school in the past week?		How often does your child read outside of school?	Does your child attend a reading centre in the community?		How often does your child attend a reading centre?	Who assists your child in reading outside of school? Relationship (Parent, sibling, uncle, etc.) Position (VCRF, teacher, classmate, etc.)
		Y	N	Days/week	Y	N	Days/week	
1								
2								
3								

4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
Total								

3. Reading Centre Survey

Date: _____

Complete a separate survey for each reading centre/club that serves the school community.

Community Reading Centre Name: _____

Village(s): _____ School: _____

Zone: _____ District: _____

Name of Facilitator(s) (m / f): _____

Reading centre/club documentation available at the community reading centre/club: (tick ALL that apply)

- Reading Centre attendance register available
- Attendance register filled in regularly by the Volunteer Community Reading Facilitator
- Volunteer(s) present at reading centre/club and facilitating sessions
- Reading materials available at the reading centre/club
- Book inventory available and up to date
- Book Lending Register available and being utilized

Frequency of reading centre/club sessions: (tick ONE only)

- daily once/week fortnightly Other: _____

What type(s) of activities take place at the visited reading centre/club? (Tick ALL that apply)

- Storytelling
- assisting learners with reading skills
- lending readers to learners

- developing local reading materials
- assisting learners with class work through mentors
- duplicating decodable readers
- engagement in SMS gateway messaging
- annual fair participation
- other (specify) _____

Reading centre/club enrollment:

Enrollment	Male	Female	Total
Standard 1 learners			
Standard 2 learners			
Standard 3 learners			
Total			

Appendix: I I: The Impact Zones

ZONES IN THE INTERVENTION DISTRICTS

District	Number of Zones	50% Selected	Names of Selected Zones
Mzimba North	21	10	Bulala
			Emswisweni
			Chanyama
			Emoneni
			Kafukule
			Lusangazi
			Kapando
			Mtende
			Mzalangwe
			Rukuru
Ntchisi	14	7	Mpherere
			Boma
			Makanda
			Chibweya
			Mvumo
			Malambo
			Kamsonga
Salima	10	5	Chitalala

District	Number of Zones	50% Selected	Names of Selected Zones
		(now 12)	Kanongola
		Additional zones shaded	Katelera
			Msalura
			Yambe
			Chipoka
			Kaphathenga
			Matenje
			Ngolowindo
			Thavite
			Ngozi
			Lifizi
Lilongwe Rural East	19	9	Thawale
		(now 12)	Chankhandwe
			Pimbiri
			Mitundu
			Kanjeza
			Chowo
			Malikha
			Mtentera
			Kang'oma
			Matapila

District	Number of Zones	50% Selected	Names of Selected Zones
			Nkhoma
			Ching'ombe
Lilongwe Rural West	20	10	Dzenza
			Njewa
			Likuni
			Mpingu
			Mzumazi
			Mteza
			Kalonga
			Kabuthu
			Kabudula
			Kasiya
Ntcheu	18	9	Bilila
			Gumbu
			Machereza
			Ntonda
			Nsipe
			Nsiyaludzu
			Senzani
			Sharpvale

District	Number of Zones	50% Selected	Names of Selected Zones
			Kambilonjo
Balaka	12		Utale
		(now 12)	Boma
			Chembera
			Mpilisi
			Chiendausiku
			Kankawo
			Maduwani
			Mmanga
			Mponda
			Nkhonde
			Ulongwe
			Phalula
Machinga	12	6	Ngokwe
		(now 7)	Chikweo
			Namandanje
			Nsanama
			Mpombe
			Boma

District	Number of Zones	50% Selected	Names of Selected Zones
			St Therese
Zomba	17	8	Chikala
			Namiwawa
			Ntungulutsi
			St Martins
			St Michaels
			St Pauls
			Chingale
			Namadidi
Blantyre Rural	13	6	Dziwe
			Dzunga
			Lunzu
			Mudi
			Naotcha
			Namwanje
Thyolo	16	8	Folopensi
			Khonjeni
			Masambanjati
			Molere

District	Number of Zones	50% Selected	Names of Selected Zones
			Mpinji
			Nansato
			Ntambanyama
			Gombe
Totals	172	101	

Appendix 12: Applicability of Topics

Topic	Stakeholders where topic is applicable			
	PTA/SMC	Heads	VCRF	CDAs
Introduction to the Malawi EGRA program				
Key objectives and result areas				
Impact areas and duration				
Roles and responsibilities of DCMs in the Malawi EGRA program				
Session 2: Why Reading Matters				
Malawian educational context				
Importance of after-school activities				
How communities can support reading				
Key components in Community Mobilization (best practice guidelines)				
Session 5: Who to work with in our local communities				
Planning for Literacy-focused community meetings				
Session 8: Planning for annual reading fairs				
Session 9: Practical strategies for communities and parents to support learner reading (out of schools)				
Session 10: Practical strategies for communities and parents to support learner reading (in schools)				
Session 11: Monitoring and reporting on community involvement				
Using Appendices				

References

- Academy for Educational Development, Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago (2003). *Vital voices: Building constituencies for public school reform*. Retrieved from <http://scs.aed.org/publications/vitalreport.pdf>.
- Administration for Children & Families, (n.d.). Positive youth development. Retrieved from <http://www.ncfy.com/ydfactsh.htm>.
- Allen, L., Almeida, C., & Steinberg, A. (2004, April). *From the prison track to the college track* (p. 4). Retrieved from <http://www.jff.org/jff/PDFDocuments/prisontrack.pdf>
- Allen, R. (2000). Before it's too late: Giving reading a last chance. *ASCD Newsletter Curriculum Update*. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org/trainingopportunities/video_demos/reading02/resources/reading1.html
- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2004, June). *Issue brief: Adolescent literacy policy update* (p. 1). Retrieved from <http://web.all4ed.org/publications/Adolescent20Literacy20Policy20Update.pdf>
- Alvermann, D. E. (2001, October). *Effective literacy instruction for adolescents* (Executive summary and paper). Chicago: National Reading Conference. Retrieved from <http://nrc.oakland.edu/documents/2001/alvershite2.PDF>
- Aspen Institute. (1997). *Voices from the field: Learning from the early work of comprehensive community initiatives*. Retrieved from <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/Programt1.asp?i=83&bid=1249&i=83>
- Ball, A. F. (1998). *Evaluating the writing of culturally and linguistically diverse students: The case of the African-American*
- Ball, A. F., & Farr, M. (2003). *Language varieties, culture and teaching the English language arts*. In J. Flood, D. Lapp, J.
- Beukelman, D. R., & Mirenda, P. (1998). Augmentative and alternative communication: Management of severe communication disorders in children and adults (2nd ed.). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes
- Bloome, D. (1987). Reading as a social process in a middle school classroom. In D. Bloome (Ed.), *Literacy and schooling* (pp.123-149). Norwood, NJ: Ablex. [ED307582]
- Central East Education Division, (2001) *Stakeholder Involvement in the Education of the Child*, CEED
- Connell, J. P., Gambone, M. A., & Smith, T. J. (2000). Youth development in community settings: challenges to our field and our approach. In P. J. Benson, & K. J. Pittman (Eds.)
- Development of the Topic/Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.zendergroup.org/education.htm>

- Dombro, A. L., O'Donnell, N. S., Galinsky, E., Melcher, S. G., & Farber, A. (1996). *Community mobilization: strategies*. Retrieved from <http://www.familiesandwork.org>
- Dubin, F., & Kuhlman, N. A. (1992). *The dimensions of cross-cultural literacy*. In F. Dubin & N. A. Kuhlman (Eds.), *Cross-cultural literacy: Global perspectives on reading and writing* (pp. v-x). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Regents/Prentice Hall.
- Eccles, J., & Gootman, J. (Eds.). (2001). *Community programs to promote youth development*. Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Retrieved from <http://www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=19883>
- Foley, B. E. (1994). *The development of literacy in individuals with severe congenital speech and motor impairments*. In K. G. Butler (Ed.), *Severe communication disorders: Intervention strategies* (pp. 183-199). Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen.
- Gordon, E.W. (1999). *Education and justice: A view from the back of the bus*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Guide to Community Mobilization for PAIMAN*. Retrieved from www.jhuccp.org/reserch
- Hall, G., Yohalem, N., Tolman, J., & Wilson, A. (2003). *How afterschool programs can most effectively promote*
- Hull, G. & Zacher, J. (2004). *What is after-school worth? Developing literacy and identity out of school*. *Voices in Urban Education*. Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform (No. 3, pp. 36-44).
- Justice, L.M., and Pullen, P.C. (2003). *Promising interventions for promoting emergent literacy skills: Three evidence-based approaches*. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 23(3), 99-113.
- Malawi Law Commission (1995) *The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi*, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
- Lund, L. (1997). *Comprehensive community development and family support: An HRFP report highlights central themes and common ground*. *The Evaluation Exchange*, 3(3/4), 13-14. Retrieved from the Harvard Family Research Project Website: <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/archives.html>
- Make Your Town Hall Meetings a Success*: Retrieved from gopher://UNLVM.UNL.EDU:/71/00/commdev/townhall.text
- Malawi Ministry of Education and Culture (1965) *The Education Act*
- Malawi Ministry of Education and Culture (2000) *A Handbook for School Inspectors*
- Malawi Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2002) *Baseline Study for the Secondary Education Project*, Education Development Management Unit
- Malawi Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2003) *National Strategy for Community Participation in School Management*

- Malawi Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2000) *Policy Investment Framework: Education Sector*
- McKnight, J. L. (1992). *Mapping Community Capacity*. Chicago, IL: Northwestern University: Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research.
- National Reading Panel. (2000, April). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*. Retrieved from <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/nrp/smallbook.htm>
- Parents for Public Schools. (2001, October). *No shortcut to accountability. Family & school partnerships: a parent's perspective*. Retrieved from Publications - Parents for Public Schools: Retrieved from Speeches: <http://www.parents4publicschools.com/publications.html>
- Public Education Network. (2002). *Using NCLB to improve student achievement: an action guide for community and parent leaders*. Available from Public Education Network Web site: Retrieved from <http://www.publiceducation.org/pdf/nclb/nclbbook.pdf>
- Foley, B. E. (1994). *The development of literacy in individuals with severe congenital speech and motor impairments*. In K. G. Butler (Ed.), *Severe communication disorders: Intervention*
- Safuli et al (1994) *Preparing Community Teachers*, UNICEF: Malawi Institute of Education strategies (pp. 183-199). Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen.
- Smith & Wohlstetter, (2009; Muller, 2009; Smith et al. 2007) *Factors that inhibit or challenge parent engagement*
- Squire, & J. Jenson (Eds.) *Handbook of research on teaching the English language arts*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 435–445.
- Trends In Youth Development*. Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers, and in Public/Private Ventures (Eds.) *Youth Development: Issues, Challenges and Directions*, September 2000, Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures. Retrieved from http://www.irre.org/pdf_files/connell.pdf
- UNESCO (2006) *Handbook for Literacy and Non Formal Education Facilitators in Africa*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
- USAID Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support program, *Effective Literacy Practices (Contract No.: EDH-I-00-05-00026-02; Task Order No.: EDH-I-04-05-00026-00)* in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) and the Government of Malawi through the Malawi Institute of Education.