Teachers' Guide on School Based Assessment

April, 2014 (Revised December 2016)

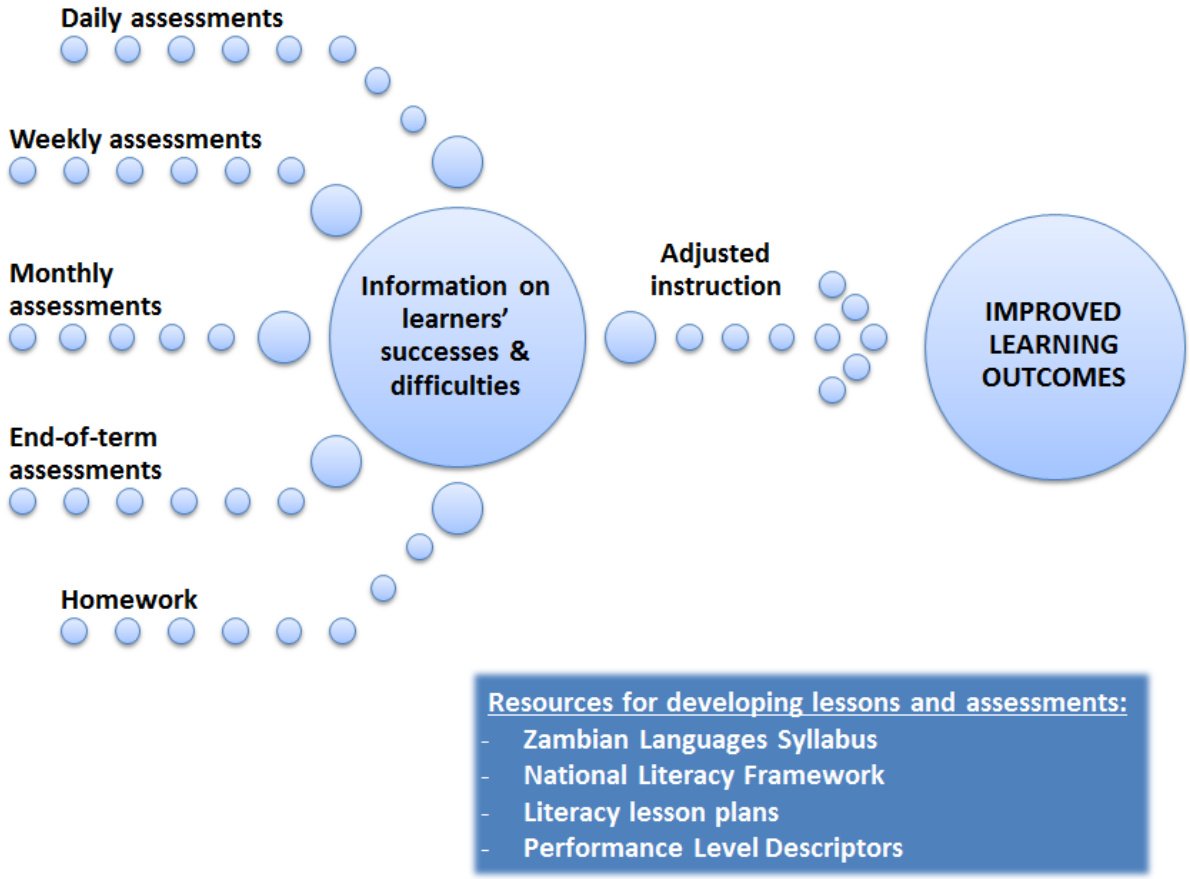
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This booklet is about School Based Assessment written in a simplified way for community school teachers, most of whom have no formal training in teaching. It is a guide to improve teaching and learning in community schools. Through this booklet, teachers will understand the importance of assessing learners to improve learning and conduct targeted remedial teaching so that no learner is left behind. Head teachers and classroom teachers will use this booklet as reference material.

We wish to thank the USAID funded Read to Succeed Project for facilitating the development of the *Teachers' Guide: Implementation of School Based Assessment (2014)* which is now one of the Ministry of General Education's policy documents on integrating teaching, learning and assessment. Time to Learn worked with Read to Succeed, the Ministry of General Education and other partners to develop the policy document from which this booklet was partly adapted and simplified for use by community school teachers.

TEACHERS' GUIDE ON SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT

In this guide, we will discuss a variety of tools that are designed to help you organize instruction and assess your learners on an ongoing basis in order to improve learning outcomes. These tools consist of four types of assessments – daily, weekly, monthly, and end-of-term – as well as homework. The following diagram summarizes these tools and how they are intended to work together to provide information that will help you understand the types of difficulties your learners face. This information will give you clues concerning how to adjust or adapt your instructional approach so that all learners have a greater chance to succeed. The box at the bottom summarizes the resources available to you when you develop your lessons and assessment tools.



(Source: *Teachers' Guide: Implementation of School Based Assessment, MESVTEE/Read to Succeed, 2014)*

1. What is assessment?

Assessment is a collection of information about:

- How well learners are achieving the intended learning outcomes.
- How effective teachers are in presenting their lessons
- Re-defining teaching strategies as part of self –reflection.
- Identifying specific learner needs for instruction

2. Why should I assess learners?

- To find out whether learners are achieving the intended learning outcomes
- To identify learners' strengths and weaknesses
- To determine gaps in the instructional process
- To plan for revision, remediation and enrichment

3. When should I assess learners?

You will conduct assessment at four levels

- Daily assessment
- Weekly semi-formal assessments
- Fifth week or monthly assessment
- End of term assessment

1.1 Daily Assessments

What are daily assessments?

Daily assessments are the many things you do as a teacher during instruction to determine whether your children are learning. They may consist of questioning, observation, and the organization of small tasks that show whether your learners are learning or not. Daily assessments are called "informal" because they might or might not be planned – you may simply think of them while you are teaching. Moreover, they are not scored. They are called formative because they provide information about how learners are doing *during* instruction, rather than waiting until the end of a unit or term, as summative assessments do.

Why do we do daily assessments?

We do daily assessments in order to understand *as we are teaching*. For some learners, it may be too late if we wait until the end of a day, a week, or a unit to assess them. They may be having difficulties today, so daily assessments help us identify these learners and, if possible, diagnose the nature of their difficulties. Through daily assessments, we can also learn what kinds of activities help our learners learn best, which pace is best for most learners, and which teaching styles work best with which lessons. Once we learn these things, we can change our lesson delivery so our children can learn better.

How do we do daily assessments?

Here are some examples:

Questions: Think about the learning objective for a lesson: what do you want the learners to be able to do by the end of the lesson? Here are some ways you can find out during the lesson:

- ✓ *Diagnostic assessment*: Ask your learners a question at the beginning of the lesson to find out what they already know about the subject.
- ✓ *Checking for understanding*: When you introduce a new concept, or when you finish a lesson, ask the learner a question to determine whether they understand.
- ✓ *Decoding questions*: If learners cannot read a word, break it into smaller parts. For example, if a child cannot read "mama," point to the m and ask "what sound is this?" Then point to the other letters one at a time, asking them to name the sound. Then ask the learner to say the sounds together.

Tips for asking questions:

- ✓ *Ask a variety of questions*, not just ones limited to knowledge, so pupils' thinking can grow. For example, for every story, ask at least two literal questions and one inferential question (see box, previous page).
- ✓ *Encourage learners to help one another* (don't always answer the question yourself). For example, if a child doesn't know how to read a word, say "Can anyone help her?"
- ✓ *Ask all children*: Don't only ask the most vocal or willing children, or the ones in the front of the class. The ones who are struggling will usually be quieter, and will often sit in the back of the classroom. Over the course of a lesson, give as many children as possible an opportunity to respond.
- ✓ *Ask learners to ask question*s: This reinforces their understanding of the lesson content, and builds critical thinking skills and confidence.

Literal and inferential questions

Consider this sentence: "When the girl fell down, she cried."

A literal question might be, "When the girl fell down, what did she do?" (She cried.) Answers to literal questions are stated explicitly in the text.

- ✓ An inferential question might be: "Why did the girl cry?" The reader can infer that she cried because she got hurt when she fell down. Answers to inferential questions are not stated explicitly in the text, so the reader must *infer or guess* the answer based on what is stated. Importantly, the learner must be able to support her answer with evidence from the text and her own reasoning. In order to know if the answer is correct, the teacher must ensure that evidence is being used, and must judge whether the learner's reasoning is sound.
- ✓ A literal question can also be described as one where learners can find the answer directly in the text. They need to read the text very carefully and find the exact words that tell them what the question is asking
- ✓ An inferential question is one where the text does not tell the learner the exact answer, but the learner can work out the answer by considering the clues in the text in the light of the understanding of the comprehension passage and the knowledge that the learner has. Learners need to read the passage carefully and be able to draw conclusions of their own from the clues in the passage.

Observation: You probably already do this naturally – for example, when you ask children to come to the blackboard and observe them. In addition to board work, many types of activities can be observed. Here are some examples:

- ✓ *Oral reading*: when one learner at a time reads a word or passage
- ✓ *Role plays*: when learners act out a dialogue or story they just read
- ✓ *Seat work*: While learners are writing letters in their exercise books, move around and observe whether they are doing it correctly.

Tips for observing learners:

- ✓ *Vary the types of observed activities*: Blackboard is one way to actively involve readers, but learning is more interesting when the activities vary.
- ✓ *Focus your observation:* Choose one key skill to look for. For example, if you are listening to oral reading, which particular aspect will you highlight? Is it speed? Correct pronunciation? Fluency (correct intonation)? Pick one, and help learners identify and improve it. Remember: It is impossible to observe everything, and we learn best when we focus on one or two things at a time.
- ✓ *Encourage self-assessment:* Sometimes, instead of providing feedback yourself, ask the learners to assess their own performance. For example, in a role play, ask learners to focus on the personality of each character. After the role play, ask the learners whether they felt they represented the character the way he/she was portrayed in the story. Like questioning, self-assessment promotes critical thinking and self-confidence.
- ✓ *Give learners feedback:* Based on your observations, let learners know when they are doing things correctly. Instead of saying "good," say "that's correct," and when they do not provide the correct answer, gently guide them to find it or ask other learners to help them. Immediate, clear feedback is one of the most powerful tools of learning because it helps us know when we understand correctly.

Writing: As soon as children can hold a pencil, they can demonstrate what they know through writing. Developing writing skills helps children develop reading skills, because writing is "what we say in print." So if they can say it, they can write it, and if they can write it, they can read it. Moreover, writing helps us learn to think: whenever we are writing, we are thinking about forming letters, choosing words to express ourselves, and developing ideas. We can use many types of writing exercises during or after the lesson to engage our learners and to provide us feedback on what they are learning. Here are some examples:

- ✓ *Do now*: Write three questions on the blackboard before class. When learners arrive, ask them to quietly take their seats and write the answers to the questions in their exercise books. When they are finished, ask them to read their answers out loud and discuss.
- ✓ *Composition*: Write three words on the blackboard and ask the learners to make sentences or a story with them. If children are younger, this exercise can start orally, then become a written exercise later in the year.
- ✓ *Comprehension questions*: While the learner are reading a story, write 2-3 comprehension questions on the black board (see *literal and inferential questions* above), then ask the learners to write their responses in their exercise books. When they are finished, ask them to read their answers, or collect their exercise books and quickly read their responses, noting when they are correct or incorrect.

Tips for writing exercises

- ✓ *Focus on targeted objectives*. As discussed above, determine which aspect you wish to focus on - e.g., writing legibly, capitalization, spelling – then focus on this aspect of when reviewing learners' writing.
- ✓ *Remain positive*: In focusing on targeted objectives, encourage learners when they have performed the task correctly, and guide them when they need to be corrected. Focus on what they have done well, and do not try to correct every aspect of their writing at once. In particular, research shows that children learn to spell over time, so it is counterproductive to constantly correct their spelling, especially in the early years, and it discourages creative thinking.

- ✓ *Self-assessment*: Encourage learners to assess their own writing or that of their friends.
- ✓ Completing a checklist of learner outcomes
- ✓ Track questions to insure that all learners participate
- ✓ Take daily attendance, to track learner presence in the classroom (and therefore learner opportunities for learning)
- ✓ Daily and weekly assessment booklets distributed to all community schools should be used to record and track progress

1.2 Weekly Assessments

What are weekly assessments?
These are assessments we conduct at the end of each week, except for the weeks when we conduct monthly and end-of-term assessments.
Like daily assessments, weekly assessments are "informal" and "formative." They are "group administered," which means you conduct the assessment with the whole class at one time (rather than with each student individually).

Why do we do weekly assessments? Weekly assessments help us understand how our learners are doing over the period of a week. Of course, a lot can happen in a week, so we want to be sure we are capturing the key learning – the most important skills for that week – before moving on to the next week. This will enable us to capture especially the learners struggling most before it is too late, and to adjust our instruction so they can get the help they need.
Because they are formative in nature, these assessments are recorded for your own use, and are not to be included in the pupil's end-of-term or end-of-year grade.

How do we do weekly assessments?
Once a week, we conduct weekly assessments with the entire class. The assessments should cover various literacy aspects such as phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding words, fluency, writing, listening, knowledge of syllables and comprehension.

- Phonemic awareness: Ability to listen and identify letter sounds
- Phonological awareness: Ability to hear, identify and reproduce blends and syllables e.g., ba, be
- Phonics: Ability to match the sound with the grapheme or written version of the sound(s)
- Ability to read simple words and nonsense words with syllables
- Ability to write simple words with syllables
- Ability to decode (take apart) or make words with syllables
- Ability to answer listening and reading comprehension questions correctly
- Ability to read simple words and sentences

The teacher may record the results in the record table below for the class as well as in the booklet provided by Time to Learn:

Weekly Assessment

Were the learners able to:	80% - 100% Outstanding	60% - 79% Desirable	40% - 59% Minimum	0% - 39% Below Minimum
Listen and identify the sound 'b' and 'd'?				
Produce The sounds 'b' and 'n'?				
Read the syllables 'ba be bi bo bu; na, ne, ni, no nu'?				
Read words with ba be bi bob u and na ne ni no nu?				
Write words with syllables ba be bi bo bu and na ne ni no nu?				
Decode/Encode words				
Answer listening comprehension questions with accuracy				
Answer reading comprehension questions with accuracy				
reads one syllable words				
Reads two syllable words				
Reads three syllable words				

- ✓ *Content*: In order to determine key content, refer to the National Literacy Framework and the literacy teaching guides.

1.3 Fifth week or Monthly assessment

They will be administered every five weeks -- Week 5, Week 10, etc. after approximately 20 lessons. There will be approximately 6 of these assessments during the school year.

Assessment tasks and recording sheets will be provided to the teacher, who will record the results of these assessments for each child in the class.

After scoring the total scores for each pupil, place the pupils into the following Reading Groups based on performance:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Below Minimum			Minimum		Desirable		Outstanding		
Not yet started			Getting started "Breaking through"		Moving along		Showing results		
1 – 6			7 - 14		15 - 20				
Red Level Low Performers			Yellow level Average Performers		Green Level Good Performers				

In addition to scoring, the teacher will review which areas of the test require re-teaching. When more than 50% of the class fails a week 5 assessments, the teacher is required to re-teach the skill until at least 75% of the class acquire proficiency. Re-teaching should take the form of

- ✓ New activities addressing the same objectives
- ✓ Increased practice time for learners.

The teacher will record the results by total for each pupil in the classroom monthly and termly assessment booklet provided by Time to Learn. This assessment will be done during the last two days of every fifth week or month.

The assessment will be based on approximately twenty-two lessons taught in about five weeks.

1.4 End-of-term Assessments

What are end-of-term assessments?
These are assessments we give our learners at the end of each term – three per year. Like the monthly assessments, end-of-term assessments are formal because each learner receives a score based on his/her performance on the assessment. Unlike the monthly assessments, the end-of-term assessment is a "group administered test," which means that you will administer the test to the entire class, like the weekly assessments, though in this case, you will collect their exercise books and score each learner's work individually.

Why do we do end-of-term assessments?
As with the monthly assessments, we do end-of-term assessments for two reasons: to learn about our learners' progress and difficulties so we can help them improve their learning, and to inform others, especially the school administration and learners' parents, so they can also be aware of how their learners are progressing. Additionally, we do end-of-term

assessments to measure *our own* success by asking: have we been able to help most of our learners succeed in each of the following skill area?

- ✓ Phonics: sounds, words, non-words
- ✓ Vocabulary
- ✓ Comprehension: listening and reading
- ✓ Writing: mechanics and expression

Each end-of-term assessment will be mini-EGRA-type assessments (Teacher's EGRA) administered to all pupils by their head teachers or teachers. There will be 3 of these assessments during the school year, i.e., 1 per term, including at the end of the year, which will be a cumulative assessment. The mini-EGRA-type assessment will consist of the following subtasks:

- Sounds
- Words
- Nonsense words
- Listening comprehension
- Reading fluency
- Reading comprehension
- Writing

The recording booklets have been distributed to all community schools by Time to Learn through the DRCC and additional assessment tools will be provided to the teachers. Teachers are encouraged to prepare their own assessment items and to record the results of these assessments for each child in the class.

Administration of the mini-EGRA Phonics (Letter Sound):

Before administering the mini-EGRA test to learners, they should have multiple opportunities with timed practice producing letter sounds. Practice with several learners each day (but not all). This practice is particularly suited to having an older learner or two conduct the practice tests. Train the older learner to learn the sounds of the alphabet, and then teach them over a series of 2 or 3 days to take the test. Show them how to time the learner. Either use a watch, a phone or have a second learner count silently with his/her back to the testing pair, by counting "1, one thousand, 2, one thousand, etc." so as to put the correct intervals between the seconds. They should count to 60 seconds for the one minute test and then signal the end of the minute.

The teacher presents a child with a sheet having letters in the alphabet of the language. The teacher asks the pupil to tell him/her the SOUNDS of as many letters as he or she can; not the NAMES of the letters, but the SOUNDS.

For example, the teacher points to 'A' as an example and asks the learner to give the sound

Do you understand what you are to do?

When I say “Begin,” please sound out the letters as quickly and carefully as you can. Tell me the sound of the letters, starting here and continuing this way. *[Point to the first letter on the row, after the example and draw your finger across the first line].* If you come to a letter sound you do not know, I will tell it to you. If not, I will keep quiet and listen to you. Ready? Begin

Teacher should use a different sheet or protocol to mark any incorrect letters with a slash (/) and mark the final letter read with a bracket ( ]). Record the number of correct letters sounded correctly and the time taken to do the reading within 60 seconds. *Indicate at the end of the test if the exercise gets discontinued because the child gives no correct answers in the first line. A letter should be circled if the learner self corrects and counted as right*

Administration of the mini EGRA Familiar Words: The teacher presents the child with a list of about 50 familiar words and asks the learner to start reading from the list from the top left. The teachers monitor the time by starting the time clock and put a slash on the words that the learner reads wrongly. The teacher puts a bracket at the end of the last word that the pupil is able to read. The teacher should discontinue the exercise and proceed to the next task if the pupil fails to read any of the familiar words in the first line. The teacher should record the total number of familiar words that are read by the pupil.

Administration of the mini EGRA Listening Comprehension: The teacher reads a short text to the learner to which the learner listens attentively. After reading the text, the teacher asks the learner three questions to assess listening comprehension or understanding. The tasks are not timed. The teacher gives a mark for the correct answers.

Administration of the mini EGRA Reading Fluency: The teacher presents the child with stimuli having a short text and asks the learner to read the text aloud from the beginning. The teacher puts a slash on the words read wrongly and a bracket at the end of the last words that the learner is able to read. The teacher monitors the time by starting the time clock when the learner begins reading. The teacher should discontinue the exercise and proceed to the next task if the pupil fails to read any of the words in the first sentence. The teacher should record the total number of words that are read correctly by the pupil.

Administration of the mini EGRA Reading Comprehension: Based on the text read in the task for Reading Fluency, the teacher asks the pupil three questions based on the text. The learner is marked either correct or incorrect for the answers he or she provides.

Recording Assessment

There will be three assessments every term. Two assessments will be administered after every five weeks. There will be two fifth weekly assessments in a term. The end of term assessment will be a mini EGRA assessment.

The teacher should record the learners' ability on different skills based on the assessment given at the end of the first fifth week which will cover 10 sounds and 10 syllables. The assessment should consist of 20 questions highlighting the learners' ability to produce the 10 sounds.

Based on what the learners score out of the total 20 items, they will be graded into Red level from 1 to 6; Yellow (average performance) from 7 to 14 and the Green level for Good Performers from 15 to 20.

4. How will I use assessment results?

Assessment results should be used by the teacher to improve or inform both the teaching and learning processes. Using assessment results, the teacher can achieve the following:

- Identify the reading skills in which the learners are having difficulties so that instruction can be modified and appropriate learning materials resourced for the learners.
- Establish each learner's progress and institute relevant remedial reading intervention by re-teaching, revision, homework and individualized learning.
- Inform the teachers how successful their teaching methods have been so that the teacher can re-plan and refocus the lessons.

The assessment will help teachers to determine the gap which will be there between the learning targets and the instruction strategies and actual changes in the learners in terms of reading competencies.

Use of the Data

Perhaps the most challenging part of assessment is to use the results. The main idea in using data is to address problems that pupils are having in learning the content. This can either result from issues in teaching or learning, or both. The assessment data will be used as follows:

1. **1. Daily informal assessments** – This data will be used immediately by the teacher to address problems that pupils are having in learning the content presented that day, or content that the pupil has not learned up to that point. The teacher can spend an extra minute or two with individual students or stop the lesson when he/she sees that a majority of the class is having difficulty and re-teach or re-direct that part of the lesson.
2. **Weekly assessments** – This data will be used through lesson planning for the following week to address problems that children are having with the content for the week or from previous weeks. The teacher can reteach a lesson or part of a lesson, or can provide additional resources. Some ways of achieving this is through remediation tutoring by an older learner who has mastered the content, extra classroom practice or targeted homework.

3. **Five-week or monthly assessments** – Similar to weekly assessments, five week assessments provide information for unit planning and/or lesson planning for the following month. Again, the teacher can reteach a lesson or provide individual remediation assistance, including additional homework. Teachers should communicate with parents or the PCSC, on the global results from classrooms. Head teachers should further support communicating this information with parents by establishing an evening or afternoon of parent meetings and open days where parents may discuss their child's performance with the teacher. Further, grade level teacher meetings or teacher learning circles are ways in which teachers can support one another by strategising solutions to improve students' results

4. **End-of-term assessments** – These will be used to target class-level performance on EGRA-type tasks and/or individual strengths and weaknesses on those tasks. Since the assessments will be standardized, the results may also be aggregated across classes and schools. This is the perfect opportunity for the zone, district, province, or outside project to sample the results from schools and analyze them to find out whether children are acquiring basic skills and knowledge. Results should also be communicated to parents.

HOMEWORK

What is homework? Homework is any kind of task we assign our learners to be carried out after school has ended. Though homework usually consists of written tasks, it can also consist of activities such as interviewing community members, building a model, or conducting a scientific experiment.

Why do we give homework? We give homework for three reasons:
1. It is required: The National Education Policy calls for the use of homework as part of the teaching/learning process.

2. It helps learners learn better: Much of what we teach our learners in the classroom requires practice or extension exercises in order to fully learn a concept or skill well, yet there is often not enough time in the day for them to practice while at school. It is therefore important to organize additional learning time outside of school in the form of homework.

3. It helps us assess learner progress (hence our discussion of homework in this teachers' guide): When learners present their homework to us, we can see how they are progressing, provide them with feedback, and consider additional teaching strategies to incorporate in our classroom instruction to reinforce their learning.

How should homework be administered? The MOGE (formerly MESVTEE) has recently produced the following guidelines for the administration of homework. These guidelines are to be followed by teachers in all Zambian primary schools.

Guidelines for the administration of homework
1. Homework should be administered daily in each class.

2. For lower grades, homework in literacy should be administered every day in addition to another subject.

3. A schedule for giving homework in different subjects should be provided with a subject per day in each school
4. The quantity of homework should vary from grade to grade, increasing progressively in terms of time and number of tasks.

5. Homework should consist of a variety of activities and not only written tasks.

6. Teachers should create a homework log-book where homework tasks are to be recorded.

7. Teachers should occasionally review homework and provide learners with feedback, either by noting comments in their exercise books or providing verbal feedback.

Annex 1: Additional Notes on Improved School Based Assessment in Community Schools

In April 2014, the ***Teachers' Guide on School Based Assessment and Homework*** was produced and distributed to all community schools for use in the training of community school teachers by ZICs and DRCCs and also to remain as reference materials for teachers. Power point slides were also distributed to make presentations easier during training and increase fidelity to the training especially at resource centers where they had LCD projectors. A section on "Homework Guidelines" was included to guide teachers on definition of homework, how often it should be given and roles of different actors in the administration of homework.

The ***Teachers' Guide on School Based Assessment and Homework*** has assisted community school teachers to understand and conduct school based assessment and be able to submit results to the DEBS office which is a requirement for all schools for the 5th and 10th week and end of term assessments. In the past, community school head teachers had challenges in submitting assessment results. With the training the assessment materials now available, community school teachers should be able to conduct daily, weekly, monthly and termly assessments and submit the required assessment results to the DEBS office. The assessment results submitted to the DEBS are used to analyse the reading levels of learners at each school in the following categories below minimum (0-39%), minimum (40-59%), desirable (60-79%) and outstanding (80-100%). Reports of the analysis are sent to schools to be followed with monitoring visits by standards officers to ensure that measures are put in place to improve learner performance based on the assessment results. Time to Learn recommends that DRCC, Zonal Heads and ZICs who are closer to the community schools take a leading role in monitoring teaching and learning to improve performance of learners. Monitoring visits should look for evidence of learners' challenges, revealed by school based assessment school, being addressed through specific reading interventions.

eEGRA Instruct for School Based Assessment

In 2014, Time to Learn followed up the initial school based assessment training by introducing assessment of learners in community schools using eEGRA Instruct administered with laptops. The training of PRCCs, SESOs, ESOs and DRCCs was conducted in Eastern Province in October, 2014, Muchinga Province September, 2014, Lusaka Province November, 2014, Copperbelt Province November, 2014, Central Province February 2015 and Southern Province February, 2015. In Luapula Province, training was conducted in June 2015 as part of the roll out to other provinces. The officers trained in eEGRA Instruct went in the various districts to train ZICs using Ministry of General Education resources. TTL distributed 2 laptops at each provincial center and 2 laptops for every district for use in the assessment of learners. After ZICs or any MOGE official assesses a learner, the teacher would then receive immediate feedback regarding performance of learners in the various literacy components. The tool produces an analysis of results and generates instructions for the teacher regarding remedial action required in the various literacy components to improve reading performance of learners. This helps the teacher to understand where children are having difficulties and how to help address the skill gaps. Instructions and topics are given to the teacher regarding areas to concentrate on where children are having challenges. The Time to Learn project has further developed the ***Activity Literacy Hand book for Teachers*** to be used in conjunction with the eEGRA Instruct in order to guide the teacher regarding activities which they can use during lessons to improve reading performance of the children to support them to progress to higher grades.

Recommendations

1. Since the majority of community school teachers are not trained and schools experience high turnover of volunteer teachers, the training in school based assessment should be a continuous process.
2. School based assessment should be included in the continuous professional development (CPD) at zonal level.
3. Since DRCCs, Zonal Heads and ZICs have been trained in school based assessment by TTL, they should act as resource persons for schools and teachers.
4. Refresher trainings on the use of school based assessment and eEGRA Instruct to improve reading for DRCCs could be conducted regularly by the Ministry of General Education officials such as SESO (ODL) and PRCC at provincial level and then DRCCs should facilitate refresher training in school based assessment for Zonal Heads and ZICs at the district level to better support teachers in the classroom.
5. Monitoring plans and budgets for DRCCs, Zonal Heads and ZICs to visit schools should be included in the overall plans and budgets at the DEBS office. This will make it easier for the Ministry of General Education to ensure that community school teachers conduct school based assessment as well as understand how to use the results to improve reading performance.

Resource materials for training have been produced by TTL and distributed to all provinces. *These include* ***Teachers' Guide on School Based Assessment*** and the ***Education Leadership and Management Training Manual***.

GUIDANCE NOTES ON HOME WORK

WHAT IS HOMEWORK?

Homework is any task or activity assigned to pupils to be completed after class hours

Homework should be designed to help children continue learning outside the class

Homework is part of:

- The instructional process: It gives the child more time to learn
- The formative assessment process: It gives the teacher and parents information on the child's progress

Homework is a requirement in all Zambian schools according to the Homework Policy of the MEVTEE.

HOW SHOULD HOMEWORK BE DONE?

- Homework should be scheduled across different learning outcomes or areas and subjects.
- Homework should be linked to the pupils' lessons

Frequency and quantity of homework

- Homework should be commensurate with the level of student attention span; hence the size and durations for the work differ from grades 1 to 4:
- Kindergarten, Grade 1: 10 minutes per day
- Grade 2: 20 minutes per day
- Grade 3: 30 minutes per day
- Grade 4: 40 minutes per day

Checking of homework

- Homework should always be checked, either
- Verbally: Asking individuals or the class specific questions related to their homework
- In writing: Reviewing written homework and giving written feedback

WHY IS HOMEWORK IMPORTANT?

Homework provides an opportunity:

- For the teacher to gauge leaners' difficulties and address them by changing instruction
- For the learner to engage in additional practice, to reinforce recently-learnt concepts or skills, and to go beyond what was taught in the classroom
- For the parents to engage in the pupils' work, to help their child, and to follow his or her progress.

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HOMEWORK?

- Grade1: Drawing and tracing letters at home
- Grade 2: Writing words that use letters, combinations or blends introduced in class
- Grade 3: Reading stories at to family members at home and discussing their meaning
- Grade 4: Writing sentences and short stories
- Others? (to be generated by workshop participants)

ROLES OF DIFFERENT ACTORS IN DEVELOPING AND USING HOMEWOK

ROLE OF MESVTEE

•Develop a policy on homework and standardized guidelines for its implementation in all Zambian schools

•Sensitize actors at the district and school level to the homework policy and Guidelines

ROLE OF PARENTS

•Check their children's homework.

•Sign in the homework book

•Meet with the teacher about their children's progress

ROLE OF DISTRICT OFFICE

•Sensitize Head Teachers and class teachers on the importance of homework

•Monitor homework in schools

•Ensure that the guidelines for implementing homework are posted

ROLE OF TEACHERS

•Teachers should check homework as soon as soon as it is brought back.

•Teachers should have a record of the homework tasks given every week which can be a reference material for monitoring by Head-teachers and Standards Officers; for the teacher the records can help to ensure balance of homework coverage across learning areas

•Teacher's homework feedback should be specific and actionable.

•Teacher should check parent's signature in the learner's homework book.

•Hold regular meetings with parents to discuss pupils' work

ROLE OF HEAD TEACHER

•With teachers and parents, develop a school-based homework policy

•Monitor the implementation of the homework policy in his/her school

•Display the school schedule or guidelines for implementing homework

•Ensure teachers and parents understand the importance of homework and their roles in its use

ROLE OF LEARNERS

•Do their homework as instructed by their teacher

•Pupil peer monitoring: Pupils exchange books and check their work with teachers

•Each child can check or mark their own work with teacher's guidance