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READ II

Year II - Annual Progress Report

Period: October 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019



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Cooperative Agreement Number: 72066318CA00004
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Submission Details

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Acronyms

ADA	Amhara Development Association
APS	Annual Program Statement
ARRA	Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs
BESO	Basic Education System Overhaul
bTG	blue Tree Group
CBO	Community Based Organization
CC	Cross-Cutting
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting
CLLs	Community Literacy Leaders
CM	Crisis Modifier
CO	Community Outreach
CTE	Center of Excellence
CRA	Community Reading Activity
CRCs	Cluster Resource Centers
CS	Cluster Supervisor
CTE	College of Teachers Education
CVDA	Common Vision for Development Association
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
EDA	Emmanuel Development Association
EDC	Education Development Center
EE	Effectiveness Evaluation
EGR/W	Early Grade Reading and Writing
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EiE	Education in Emergencies
EKTTS	Ethiopian Knowledge and Technology Transfer Society
EPD	Enhanced Professional Development
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
EWG	Early Warning System
FCA	Formative Continuous Assessment
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FY	Fiscal Year
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HQ	Headquarters
IAI	Interactive Audio Instruction
IC	Institutional Capacity

ICA	Institutional Capacity Assessment
IC-Team	Institutional Capacity Team
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ISP	Institutional Strengthening Plan
ID	Internally Displaced
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
IR	Intermediate Result
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IWD	International Women's Day
KA	Kebele Administration
KETB	Kebele Education and Training Board
KII	Key Informant Interview
LEMA	Local Education Monitoring Approach
LIP	Local Implementing Partner
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
ME&L	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MEDAL	Monitoring Evaluation Database Adaptive Learning
MOE	Ministry of Education
MT	Mother Tongue
MTL	Mother Tongue Language
NEAEA	National Education Assessment and Examination Agency
NEC	National Education Cluster
NGO	Non-Government Organization
ODA	Oromia Development Association
OWDA	Organization for Welfare and Development in Action
PAW	Parent Awareness Workshop
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheet
PRM	Planning Resource Mobilization
PSS	Psychosocial Support
PST	Per-Service Training
PTSA	Parent Teacher Student Association
RDQA	Routine Data Quality Assessment
READ	Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed
READ CO	Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Community Outreach

READ M&E	Reading for Ethiopia’s Achievement Developed Monitoring and Evaluation
READ TA	Reading for Ethiopia’s Achievement Developed Technical Assistance
REBs	Regional Education Bureaus
RICT	Regional Institutional Capacity Team
SDs	School Directors
SEL	Social and Emotional Learning
SG	Savings Groups
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SOW	Scope of work
SMS	Short Message Service
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region
SRGBV	School-related Gender-based Violence
SRMs	Supplementary Reading Materials
SSST	Student Success and Support Toolkit
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
TDA	Tigray Development Association
TDP	Teacher Development Program
TELDD	Teaching and Education Leaders Development Directorate
TICCWG	Teachers in Crisis Context Working Group
TLM	Teaching and Learning Materials
T&T	Trace and Trace
TOR	Term of Reference
ToTs	Trainers of Trainers
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TVET	Technical, Vocational, Education and Training
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNICEF	United Nation International Children Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WEOs	Woreda Education Offices
WVI	World Vision International
ZED	Zonal Education Department

I.0 Executive Summary

Building on the momentum created during the first project year, the USAID/Ethiopia READ II project continues to consolidate its support to the Ministry of Education (MOE) in its efforts to improve the reading and writing skills of GI-8 students in the target regions of Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR, Somali and Tigray. This performance progress report covers the period October 2018 through September 2019 and highlights major accomplishments achieved and challenges encountered. A summary of major accomplishments is highlighted below by intermediate result.

IRI: Improved classroom reading and writing instruction

The first intermediate result (IR) is designed to improve classroom reading and writing instruction. During the reporting period, READ II developed a 2-year enhanced professional development model which integrates: i) short-term trainings (five-day initial training, three-day refresher training), ii) school-based mentoring with one-to-one mentor-mentee support, iii) monthly teacher study group reflective meetings and cluster-based experience sharing, and iv) College of Teacher Education-led (CTE) professional development and support to schools and teachers.

The five-day initial training has been fully rolled out covering over 19,000 GI-8 mother tongue (MT) teachers across all six target regions. Training materials were organized around critical gaps identified through a series of rapid assessments. Major findings of the rapid assessments included: gaps in knowledge of reading components and lack of pedagogical skills to teach and assess reading and writing, inadequate utilization of instructional materials, failure to allocate adequate time for critical content, overreliance on whole language teaching, and inadequate attention to learners with diverse or special needs. These findings informed the development of training guides, professional readings, and Quick Tools to guide teacher training and subsequent mentoring activities.

Building on the work of READ TA and in readiness for school-based mentoring and coaching support in project year three, READ II also supported the Ministry of Education (MOE) to develop a mentoring framework as a roadmap to guide the design and development of mentoring guidelines and tools. Experts from the MOE and Regional Education Bureaus (REBs) reviewed, enriched, and validated mentoring materials before they were translated into the seven MT languages and field-tested in selected schools. Feedback from the pilot-testing was used to revise and finalize the materials. Rollout mentoring program is planned for October 2019 to coincide with the beginning of the new school year. Moreover, master trainers were trained in preparation for the three-day teacher refresher training. In most cases, master trainers were MT instructors from the CTEs.

Another area of accomplishment during the reporting period was the provision of supplementary reading materials (SRMs). Over 1.5M SRMs were delivered to target woredas and reading amps in the seven languages for use by children and teachers. All SRMs printed and distributed were from the pool of already-developed SRMs available in the local market, most of them being the ones developed by previous USAID-funded projects. New sets of over 900 titles have been identified for reprint.

READ II's collaboration with Books for Africa is another way the project has used to increase the availability of books in school libraries and reading and writing clubs. READ II conducted a workshop to review, select and validate children's books in English from Books for Africa for distribution in SNNPR. Among the 345 English SRMs from Books for Africa, 333 were validated and approved by the MOE and SNNPR REB English and Curriculum experts. The English SRMs have been distributed to target woredas in SNNPR (Sidama, Wolaytta and Hadiya zones). READ II is procuring additional English SRMs for the other target regions, and the same procedure of review, validation and approval process will take place prior to distribution.

READ II carried out a study on best practices for cost-efficient book production. In the interest of building country capacity in book production, READ II, using technical expertise from the blueTree Group (bTG) developed a best practice report on cost-efficient book production and distribution. The project also conducted needs assessment and developed a capacity building plan for book chain development for the MOE and other stakeholders. READ II's Track and Trace (T&T) pilot testing generated strong interest from the Ministry of Education and World Bank to pursue the platform. Thus, READ II was requested to expand the beta testing to a larger number of schools.

READ II also initiated partnership development between the Ministry of Education and private children's book publishers. The project engaged the private sector and the MOE to review and revise existing SRM guidelines. The private sector believed the existing guidelines to be too restrictive. In a workshop organized by READ II, the MOE and private publishers reviewed and amended the guidelines. Endorsement of the amended guidelines motivated the private sector to increase their participation.

READ II also started to work with the Printers and Publishers Association. The project made a presentation focused on cost-effective approaches to printing and publishing by building the local capacity of printing firms. In year three, READ II will hold a print, procurement, and distribution/stock management workshop with working groups to build book chain capacity and will continue its multi-faceted support to the MOE and the private publishers.

IR 2: Strengthened community engagement in educational activities

Community, youth and parent engagement in education is central to improving reading outcomes which is the main area of focus for the second intermediate result. Under this IR in this reporting year, the finalization of community outreach program design and the selection and capacity building of local implementing partners were among the key accomplishments.

To build the capacity of actors in community engagement, READ II trained more than 1,378 volunteers community literacy leaders (CLL), Kebele Education Training Boards (KETBs), Parent Teacher Student Associations (PTSAs), parents, directors and teachers on their role in transforming community attitudes and behaviors around improving children's reading skills. It involved an intensive community mobilization process that served to galvanize community resources for reading camps and mobilized youth and adults to volunteer to lead those reading camps. READ II conducted a few other noteworthy activities in direct implementation¹ woredas

¹ Direct implementation target woredas are those woredas in which READ II (led by World Vision) directly implements community outreach activities without involving local implementing partners

this year. The project worked to change some reading camps from makeshift ones, such as parents' homes, to more permanent structures constructed using locally donated materials.

The project also conducted a book launch and reading camp visits to mobilize communities and parents to send their children to reading camps and to familiarize them with the book-borrowing process available through reading camps. REB, Zonal Education Department (ZED), Woreda Education Office (WEO), Kebele Chairpersons, school directors and community members participated in these events. On September 8th, READ II celebrated a colorful International Literacy Day with the theme "Literacy and Multilingualism" in Addis Ababa. USAID, the MOE, renowned artists, volunteer Community Literacy Leaders (CLLs), teachers, parents, and children attended the ceremony.

READ II provided training on the development and utilization of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) from locally available materials to a total of 1,027 MT teachers and school directors in schools in direct implementation woredas. To date these trainees created 565 print-rich classrooms, fostered 8,750 reading buddies, and trained 688 additional teachers in their schools from their own resources. In this reporting year, 700 reading camps and 175 reading and writing clubs were established.

IR 3: Education administrators' capacity increased

READ II strives to establish strong instructional leadership practices to improve learner performance in reading and writing. The literature is clear that evidence-based instructional leadership is critical to improve learner performance. READ II sets out to equip school directors, cluster supervisors and woreda education officers with the tools and skills to "diagnose" weaknesses in the teaching of reading and writing, and to work with teachers to develop and implement approaches that will improve student performance.

Key achievements under this IR include: i) the establishment of institutional capacity teams (IC-Teams) at both national and regional levels and READ II support teams at the woreda level, ii) the development of instructional leadership training modules based on findings from a training needs assessment, iii) the training of school directors and cluster supervisors in instructional leadership, iv) support for woreda level reflection meetings, v) field testing of the Local Education Monitoring Approach (LEMA) to improve monitoring practices at woreda and school levels; vi) support to eight COEs (centers of excellence) to conduct institutional capacity self-assessments, vii) the assessment of English skills among teacher trainees, and viii) support for increased use of research to inform decision making.

The project has made significant progress in all major activities under this IR. A total of 3,173 education managers received training to become strong instructional leaders. A series of reflection meetings were held to share experiences among school directors, woreda education officers and cluster supervisors. The annual work planning process served as another aspect of capacity building (building by doing), and regional project staff initiated periodic joint monitoring with their key government counterparts which will be expanded in Year Three.

READ II has established the project MEL system during the reporting period which includes both the data management and reporting system of the project at all levels and defined the project key outcome targets. Moreover, the MEL team conducted review of existing data on early grade

reading which included detailed analysis of the 2018 EGRA data. More importantly, the project undertook an internal effectiveness evaluation and fidelity of implementation. The findings of these studies informed annual work planning. The adoption/adaptation of local education monitoring approach (LEMA) is another important accomplishment during the reporting period which needs to be expanded in the remaining period of the project.

Cross-Cutting D: Prepare vulnerable and at-risk populations to succeed

Based on findings of the rapid assessment, READ II developed Student Support and Success Toolkit to train school directors, PTAs and cluster supervisors so that they in turn support at-risk students. The team developed a detailed rollout plan and provided hands-on support to school directors, supervisors and PTAs to promote child friendly schools that can provide the necessary psychosocial support to at-risk children.

Cross-Cutting E: Support to adolescent girls through a structured gender approach

READ II's Rapid Assessment final report was approved by USAID on November 29, 2018 and was used to inform READ II's Gender Strategy and key activities. The report has been shared with the MOE and REBs, and discussions on key findings were held in Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray region in December 2018 and January 2019.

Gender as a cross-cutting component is integrated in all IR activities; training workshops and materials, including a Quick Tool on gender-sensitive pedagogy, the SSST, PAW sessions, and teacher training and instructional leadership workshops. For all training workshops, READ II also provided childcare so that participants are not absent or distracted during training workshops. In Year II, 769 participants (737 women and 32 men) benefitted from childcare.

READ II also conducted a Gender Audit on female leadership of REBs and WEOs, in collaboration with the Women and Children's Affairs and TELDD Directorates. The report was finalized and will be sent to the MOE early next quarter.

Two tools were created and pretested in 60 schools: *The Gender Equity School Self-Assessment Scorecard* and the *Gender Equity in the Classroom Observation Tool*. These tools will be introduced to school administrators during training workshops to assist schools in monitoring classroom instruction and the school environment

Production of a radio drama on gender has been underway since February 2019 and will be broadcasted in schools and community radio beginning in January 2020. The scripts are being translated into seven languages. Schools' gender clubs will use the drama to discuss gender issues in the story and their own lives.

Finally, READ II collaborated with REBs to celebrate the International Day of the Girls Child and International Women's Day (IWD), both resulting in increased awareness of women and girls' strength and value, as well as their persistent challenges.

IRF: Crisis Modifier

READ II plays an active role in the National Education Cluster (NEC) forum. The project takes part in a monthly NEC meeting and shares updates on READ II's Education in Emergencies (EiE) response interventions implemented in conflict and drought-affected woredas in Oromia, Somali, SNNPR and Amhara regions. READ II's accomplishments span three areas: i) the

provision of scholastic and recreational materials to internally displaced (IDP) children, where over 147,000 IDP children benefited, ii) the training of teachers in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in IDP camps in Somali, iii) and periodical assessments and tracking of crisis-related situations to inform project plans and interventions.

Table I below presents READ II performance progress in meeting project year two targets on key performance indicators.

Table I: READ II Progress on Key Performance Indicators During Year II

S.No	Performance Indicators	Sex	LOP Target	YEAR 2 Target	Year 2 Q1 Q2 & Q3 Actual	Year 2 Q4 Actual ²	Total Q1, Q2 Q3 & Q4	Y2 %
1	% of learners who demonstrate reading fluency and comprehension of grade level text at the end of G2 with USG assistance ³	F						
		M						
		T						
2	# of learners reached in reading programs at the primary level with USG assistance	F	7,800,000	750,000	883,319	0	883,319	118%
		M	7,800,000	750,000	955,933	0	955,933	127%
		T	15,600,000	1,500,000	1,839,252	0	1,839,252	123%
3	No of primary school educators who successfully completed professional development activities on evidence-based reading instruction with USG assistance	F	82,000	9,000	8,797	0	8,797	106%
		M	82,000	10,000	10,602	0	10,602	153%
		T	164,000	19,000	19,399	0	19,399	127%
4	Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with USG assistance	N/A	4,300,000	1,300,000	155,390	1,412,004	1,567,394	121%
5	Number of PTSAs or community governance structures engaged in primary education supported by USG assistance	N/A	3000	1,200	175	2787	2,962	247%
6	# of education administrators and officials (SD, CS, WEO, RSEBs and ZEDs) who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	F	1210	431	59	294	353	82% ⁴
		M	9790	3269	451	2369	2,820	86%
		T	11,000	3,700	510	2,663	3,173	86%
7	Number of at-risk students reached in education support activities with USG assistance	F	TBD	TBD	72,388	0	72,388	
		M	TBD	TBD	75,343	0	75,343	
		T	TBD	100,000	147,731	0	147,731	148%

Challenges Encountered

- READ II relied on the product of former USAID funded projects and other local sources to obtain SRMs. While the SRMs in all other languages were available in soft copy, it was impossible to obtain softcopy of the SRMs for Afaan Oromo language.
- Civil unrest and violence in parts of Oromia, SNNPR, Somali and Amhara significantly affected movement and access to the project sites and constrained normal operation of the project.

² Q4 accomplishments only

³ This indicator will be populated from National EGRA findings in 2020

⁴ This indicators is met below annual target. All SDs and CSs

- Given that the MoE is conducting a comprehensive general curriculum review with the support of Cambridge University, READ II was advised to hold off some of its planned activities such as the planned Pre-Service English Curriculum Review activity that would have identified gaps requiring development of supplementary materials. READ II will explore other options to support the CTEs without interfering with the MOE's agenda.
- Government's decisions to restructuring woredas, particularly in SNNPR and Addis Ababa affected READ II operations. READ II target woredas in SNNPR and Addis Ababa have been divided to form new woredas. Even though the number of target schools has not increased, the number of woredas has increased the management units for READ II. This has resulted in an increase in the number of target woredas by 20% from the original plan that has called for additional cost.

Actions Taken and Lessons Learned

- To provide SRMs in Afaan Oromo, in Oromia and Addis Ababa, READ II had to use the hard copies to reproduce the SRMs in Afaan Oromo. Obtaining the SRMs relevant for Addis Ababa was also difficult. READ II negotiated with the Addis Ababa City Administration REB to use the SRMs produced by the Amhara region for Addis Ababa schools.
- The project made its operations flexible to adjust to the prevailing conditions. To the greatest extent possible, READ II continues to closely monitor the security situation and adapts to and/or manages the changing (and challenging) context through: (i) closely working with government counterparts and maintaining positive relationships, ii) accelerating activity implementation in woredas that were affected by the unrest /incidents; and (iii) prioritizing activities that do not require travel to schools and districts.
- To align READ II plans with MOE's new reform agenda, series of consultation were held. This process will continue as the development of curriculum framework starts. READ II will identify relevant roles to pay and support the MOE as the detailed plan of curriculum reform is made available.

Introduction

This report comprises READ II activities accomplished for the period covering October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019 under each intermediate result. The report incorporates all activities accomplished in the reporting period.

Program Description

The Ethiopian Ministry of Education is committed to improving early grade reading outcomes. Building on the successful partnership to improve academic performance and reading achievement, the Government of Ethiopia and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) launched a new initiative to raise the reading proficiency of 15 million children by 2022. The five-year, USAID-funded READ II project is intended to boost the quality of literacy instruction and student support, reaching out to children at risk of failure and dropout caused by cognitive, emotional and the physical effects of hunger, violence, and displacement. READ II supports the Government of Ethiopia's Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP) V plan to improve educational quality by providing learning-supportive environments for Grades 1-8 students in MT and English classes, while the MOE plays a key guiding role. READ II's capacity building activities target the MOE, REBs, zones, and woredas. READ II's activities are concentrated in six target regions – where Amharic, Afaan Oromo, Af Somali, Hadiyyisa, Sidaamu Afoo, Wolayttatto, and Tigrigna languages predominate. In order to improve students' reading and writing skills, students must be immersed in a reading and writing-supportive environment at school, in the community, and at home. READ II targets its efforts at the school, community and family level via its focused intermediate results.

2.0 Major Accomplishments by Intermediate Result

Improving learner performance in reading and writing requires systemic changes in how schools are managed and supported. It also requires the creation of incentives and accountability structures that ensure delivery of quality education. READ II strives to improve student learning (raising assessment scores in reading and writing) while simultaneously strengthening Ethiopian primary schools and support systems so that learning improvements are sustained beyond the five-year life of the project.

To improve reading skills among early grade learners, READ II takes a whole woreda, whole school, whole teacher, whole child approach which views schools as centers of learning, care and support, and addresses five key elements common to the school effectiveness model: learning, teaching, management, parental/community participation and responsiveness to children's needs.

In the sections that follow, this report highlights the major accomplishments of the project over the last year by intermediate result and sub-results. It also documents challenges encountered and lessons learned.

IR I: Improved Classroom Reading and Writing Instruction

READ II believes that an effective teacher is a crucial ingredient to all efforts aimed at improving classroom instruction. Accordingly, project efforts emphasize improving teachers' capacity to implement evidence-based effective instructional practices in their classrooms. For this to happen, the project team worked closely with the MOE to develop a two-year enhanced professional development model which integrates i) short-term face-to-face trainings (five-day initial training, three-day refresher training), ii) school-based mentoring with one-to-one mentor-mentee support, iii) monthly teacher study group reflective meetings, and cluster-based experience sharing and iv) CTE-led professional development.

In line with this understanding, the IRI team accomplished the following: i) identified hard spots and gaps in teaching reading and writing in MT through a rapid assessment; ii) develop quick tools in preparation for training and guiding teachers, iii) provided an initial five-day training to over 19,000 grades 1-8 MT, iv) revised and adapted the existing mentoring framework and prepared mentoring guidelines (both of which were developed by READ TA), v) trained master trainers to help rollout the mentoring program in year three, vi) identified, reproduced and distributed over 1.5 million supplementary reading materials to reading camps, vii) introduced cost-effective book chain management practices and initiated capacity building of the MOE and other stakeholders in Track and Trace (T&T), viii) provided capacity building support to private publishers, and ix) introduced the provision of childcare services at training venues to teachers with children. The details are presented in the sections that follow.

IR I.1: Utilization of textbooks, teachers guide, and training manuals improved

IRI.1.1: Prepare standardized package addressing hard spots and gaps

Review and analysis of G5-8 MT and G1-8 English Materials

READ II conducted a rapid assessment in year one to identify the hard spots and gaps in teaching G1-4 MT reading and writing. A similar assessment was conducted focusing on G5-8 MT and Grades 1-8 English. The rapid assessment included two major tasks: a desk study and field study.

In the case of the rapid assessment for Grades 1-4, REB experts and READ II regional staff carried out the field data collection. Field study team members gathered data through interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with teachers and students and conducted classroom observations in selected schools across the six regions in the seven mother tongue languages (MTLs). The regional teams provided summaries of the field data which was then compiled, analyzed and interpreted to produce a report that combined the desk and field study process and outcomes. Some of the key findings were knowledge and skill gaps in the key reading components and how to teach and assess them, inadequate utilization of instructional materials, inadequate time allocation for critical lesson contents (e.g. reading comprehension, expressive writing), not finishing lesson contents, overreliance on whole class sessions (instead of pairs or small groups), and inadequate attention to learners with diverse or special needs.

Similarly, the rapid assessment demonstrated critical gaps that had to be addressed to improve G5-8 MT instructional practices. Experts from the MOE, REBs, and G5-8 teachers reviewed the

report and unanimously agreed that findings clearly captured the major challenges faced in the implementation of the curriculum and shared ideas on what needed to be done to address these challenges. These recommendations informed the preparation of training materials for G5-8 MT teachers.

In preparation for forthcoming English language teacher development program, READ II initiated a desk review of the current set of instructional and training materials and findings from related research studies. Findings will be used to inform refinement of teacher and mentoring trainings and materials to align with the enhanced teacher professional development model described above.

IRI.1.2: Create teacher training manuals and quick tools

In the reporting period, READ II finalized G1-4 (started in Year 1) and G5-8 Quick Tools to be used by teachers, mentors, school directors, and cluster supervisors to support teachers to improve classroom instruction. READ II's gender team has also produced a Quick Tool on gender-responsive pedagogy, and community outreach activities are the focus of another tool. The tools are reflection-oriented, relevant and user friendly. Each tool follows a common pattern that includes: 1) reflection on current classroom practices, 2) professional readings to build new understanding, 3) modeling strategies to demonstrate how to use additional classroom strategies and conduct continuous assessment, and 4) action planning. Experts from the MOE and REBs reviewed, enriched and validated the Quick Tools. A team of experts from the MOE, REBs/zones, CTEs and READ II staff adapted the Quick Tools into the seven MTs (summary of the contents of the Quick Tools is presented in Text Box 1).

Text Box 1: Quick Tools include modules organized to provide:

- Background reading on key elements of reading and writing instruction; good classroom practices; teacher-generated material development, classroom management, inclusive and supportive classrooms, and community support
- Facilitated reflective sessions for teacher study groups
- Strategies teachers will learn how to do and use in their classrooms; and
- Planning processes to help teachers plan for strategy implementation that supports literacy instruction.

Validation of the G5-8 MT teacher training manual

Another achievement in year two was the customization of G5-8 teacher training materials. The materials considered key challenges in G5-8 MT curriculum implementation identified in the rapid assessment. Special attention was given to help teachers understand the connections between the transition from G1-4 to G5-8 curriculum contents and instruction so that G5-8 MT teachers clearly understand the continuum and properly support students who might struggle in upper primary.

READ II ensured that gender was integrated into the G1-4 and G5-8 MT teacher training, as well as the mentoring training. Both the training sessions and the Quick Tools oriented teacher trainers to gender-responsive pedagogy.

IRI.1.3: Create EPD support materials

Explore use of ICT for cluster-level training

Reading technical leads in the central office and region-based reading specialists supported content development for the mobile hotspot program, which was piloted in year two. The IRI team also collaborated in preparation for the pilot, introducing and modeling the program in the training of master trainers for the mentoring field testing. Summary of brief explanation on mobile hotspot Program is presented in Text Box 2.

Text Box 2: Mobile Hotspot Program

The mobile-based hotline support is designed to help users listen to audio tips/key messages on different aspects of teaching reading. The users can be teachers, mentors, school principals and cluster supervisors. Users can use any mobile phone and dial to an inbound telephone number to access audio tips/key messages at their convenience. The key messages are in the seven MTs. When they dial, users are asked to follow instruction that will guide them to select their role (teacher, mentor, school director, cluster supervisor), choose MT language (the seven MTs), grade level (grades 1-4 or grades 5-8), reading component that they want to listen to by pressing associated numbers. After they listen the key message, users can have the option to rate their user experience.

Review of mentoring manual and designing mentoring tools

In year two, READ II reviewed the mentoring manual, mentoring framework, and mentoring pilot report developed under the READ TA project and revised the mentoring materials for READ II. Prior to the regional review, the MOE MT and English Language Development Directorate collaborated with READ II to organize a one-day consultative meeting with REB leaders and MOE directors and experts to discuss the mentoring program and the framework. In that meeting, leaders agreed to take the mentoring framework to their respective REBs for thorough review. The regional teams reviewed the framework and provided feedback primarily on the mentor-mentee ratio and incentive scheme. After the READ II team finalized the mentoring manual and framework, thirty-six experts from the MOE and REBs attended a three-day consultative meeting to review, enrich and validate the mentoring materials. Review of the mentoring framework was also conducted at the regional level with representatives selected from the REBs and with a focus on aligning the framework to regional contexts.

Later, mentoring materials were adapted from English into the seven MTs in a six-day workshop. CTE instructors and REB experts from the six regions (Addis Ababa – 3, Amhara - 3, Oromia - 6, SNNPR - 9, Somali - 3, and Tigray - 3, MOE experts - 3), READ II central and regional technical staff (10), and typists (6) participated in the adaptation workshop. Regional Institutional Capacity Teams validated the adapted versions of the mentoring materials.

Following the translation of the tools, READ II field tested the mentoring materials in three schools in each region (except Tigray) for three weeks. Tigray REB felt the time was not the right time as it was the end of the school year. The field test was conducted for a short time because of delays in the approval of the mentoring framework by REBs. READ II wanted to introduce the entire package at the beginning of the next academic year instead of starting it for a short period

and interrupting it during the summer break, so a brief field testing to fine tune materials was deemed appropriate. Two mentors from each school were trained by trained master trainers (13 CTE faculty members, 3 university lecturers, and 2 REB staff participated in the five-day training). READ II reading specialists provided orientation about the mentoring program field testing, and monitored and supported the field testing, while gathering evidence on the implementation process, participants' perspectives, and areas for improvement. In the last week of the field test, a team of MOE (4 experts), REB, and READ II experts visited schools and collected data on the experiences of mentors, mentees and school directors. The data was analyzed, and a report was produced.

Based on field test results, READ II revised the mentoring template to reduce the number of reporting items in the mentoring manual and provided more hands-on modeling and practice activities in the facilitator guide.

IR 1.2: Support system for teachers enhanced

IR 1.2.1 Develop and test cost-effective enhanced professional development (EPD) model

In year two, READ II accomplished program design, developed materials and tools to be used in the different components. designed a five-day MT teacher training manual for GI-4 and G5-8 teachers, and a mentoring manual and framework. Teacher trainings were conducted, and mentoring materials were field tested. A full rollout of the mentoring program is planned as of the beginning of the next school year (refer to previous sections for details).

IRI.2.2: Implement enhanced CPD program

In year two, READ II trained 524 training of trainers (TOTs) for GI-4 MT teacher training. The trained TOTs then trained 12,914 GI-4 MT teachers. Similarly, the project trained 23 master

Table 2: # of MT grades 1-8 teachers trained by readion and Langaue										
Region	Languages	# of teachers received training								
		Grades 1-4			Grades 5-8			Total		
		F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T
Addis Ababa	Amharic	784	245	1029	355	159	514	1139	404	1543
	Afaan Oromoo	31	19	50	10	5	15	41	24	65
Amhara	Amharic	2300	2107	4407	626	1121	1747	2926	3228	6154
	Afaan Oromoo	33	51	84	13	40	53	46	91	137
Oromia	Afaan Oromoo	1699	1316	3015	618	1467	2085	2317	2783	5100
Tigray	Tigrigna	1080	774	1854	146	309	455	1226	1083	2309
Somali	Af-soomaali	77	305	382	20	134	154	97	439	536
SNNP	Hadiyyisa	222	533	755	114	299	413	340	563	903
	Sidaamu Afoo	232	616	848	104	397	501	336	1013	1349
	Wolayttatto	226	264	490	107	441	548	329	974	1303
Total		6684	6230	12914	2113	4372	6485	8797	10602	19399



Bethlehem Workalemahu is an Amharic Language teacher at Biruh Tesfa primary school, a public school in Addis Ababa. She has been teaching Amharic language for the past seven years. But the training she received from the USAID funded READ II project has changed the way she teaches and helps her students to read and write. Now, she is providing better support to her students and is very happy about the way her students are improving. Her students participate actively in the classroom

trainers, who trained 284 TOTs for G5-8 MT teacher training. The TOTs trained 6,485 G5-8 MT teachers across the six regions (Table 2 presents the number of teachers who received training by region and language). During teacher trainings, in both grade levels, master trainers provided on-site technical support

to TOTs. All training events were monitored by READ II staff, as well as REBs, using standard checklists.

Childcare provision for trainees

READ II's Rapid Assessment on Gender and At-Risk/Vulnerable Children revealed that female teachers do not always receive the same professional development opportunities as male teachers, and when they do, some cannot benefit from opportunities because they do not have access to childcare. This is especially the case when women are breastfeeding, as they cannot be separated from their child. A significant achievement in year two was the introduction of childcare services at each training site to ensure that participants, especially women, do not miss professional development opportunities due to lack of childcare. Building on the piloting of childcare provision, each target region worked with the REB to develop region-specific Childcare Provision Guidelines. READ II purchased basic childcare materials for each training site (i.e., mats, mattresses, books, toys, first aid kit, etc.).

At each training site, a childcare room is arranged with childcare providers, snacks, and basic childcare materials for each training site. Breastfeeding mothers or those with infants may opt to bring their own childcare provider for one-on-one care. During the reporting period, a total of 769 training participants benefitted from this service.

Several REB officials across the regions have lauded READ II's childcare initiative and expressed intentions to expand childcare provision not only for all trainings, but within regular business spaces. One REB deputy said, "We all should demonstrate our commitment and dedication to expand this service to other places and create awareness in the organizations where we all work." In SNNPR the Hadiyya Media Network aired READ II's childcare provision on both television and radio programs.

IR 1.2.3: Implement basic CPD program

The design of the basic model was planned for year two. This was planned with the assumption that all components of the enhanced model could be implemented in year two, and lessons learned from EPD model implementation could be gathered to inform the design of the basic

model. But because not all READ II components were adequately rolled out in year two, it was not possible to document the required best practices from the EPD model implementation. This forced READ II to push the design of the basic model into year three.

IR 1.2.4: Introduce CTE-led teacher professional development in Oromia, Amhara, and Tigray

With the Teachers and Educational Leaders Development Directorate (TELDD), READ II began planning to introduce CTE-led enhanced professional development (EPD program in Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray regions). The aim of the program is to strengthen the linkages between the CTEs and primary schools and for CTEs to develop and strengthen their ability to provide ongoing support to teachers in primary schools. READ II's pre-service team in collaboration with TELDD developed selection criteria for identifying two CTEs each from the three regions that will be part of the pilot. Further development of this component will take place in year three.

In Quarter 4 of year two, READ II worked closely with the Teacher Professional Development Directorate (TPD) in the MOE to develop CTE selection criteria. Based on the above criteria, regions will select two CTEs each and notify READ II of their selection in the next quarter. Upon approval, the selected CTEs will choose 4-5 MT and 2-3 English instructors to participate. Female instructors will be prioritized. Selection of primary schools and orientation will take place in the first quarter of year three. Details of the activities are described in the year three workplan.

IR 1.3: Access to supplementary reading and writing materials improved

IR 1.3.1: Review, select, and distribute existing SRMs

In year two, READ II concentrated on the following activities: i) procurement and distribution of SRMs for reading camps, ii) updating SRM guidelines to increase the availability of MOE- and REB-approved children's books, and iii) validation of children's books in English, local languages, and bilingual books (English and local language) using the new SRM guidelines.

The project planned to provide SRMs to an estimated number of 3,000 schools and 6,350 Reading Camps in phases in year 2. From the 600+ open source books available in the seven READ II target languages on the Global Digital Library, a joint review consisting of MOE and REB project experts selected 441 titles for use in reading camps in all target regions except Oromia. The Oromia region's approval was delayed because SRMs developed by former USAID-funded project (READ CO) were not available in soft copy at the time as part of the approved set of SRMs READ II obtained from READ CO. Hence, after the selection workshop, two sets of children's books for reading camps were still needed to be identified: children's books for Afaan Oromo speakers and Amharic Level 3 books for Addis Ababa. READ II identified 106 books from private publishers as well as books produced by World Vision and other organizations to fill these gaps in Oromia.

READ II reprinted a total of 1,508,441 books from the first lot of books for the six regions. Of these, 151,760 have been distributed to Reading Camps established directly by the project, and 1,221,290 are at 37 Woreda Education Offices in SNNPR, Tigray, Amhara, Somali, and five sub-cities of Addis Ababa, ready for the time when Local Implementing Partners (LIPs) have established Reading Camps. Given the delay in procurement of children's books in Afaan Oromo,

READ II distributed 39,984 locally procured books for reading camps that had already been established in Oromia, and the project procured an additional 977,900 books for reading camps that will be established by LIPs, as well as Level 3 SRMs for Addis Ababa reading camps.

Review of SRM guidelines

One of the most important successes of the project in year two, was the revision of the MOE's SRM guidelines. As a follow up to a request by the MOE and private publishers, READ II supported a two-day workshop for five Ethiopian children's book publishers and technical experts from the Curriculum Development Directorate and Directorate of Mother Tongue and English to revise the SRM guidelines. Private publishers used to criticize the MOE SRM guidelines because they were limiting their full participation in the sector. Changes to the guidelines include: i) the provision that SRMs can be both curriculum and non-curriculum aligned, ii) clarification of terminology, and iii) revisions to guidance on font size and other letter-related content, making them language-specific. The new provisions in the updated SRM Guidelines paved the way for READ II to work with private publishers to increase the number of MOE and REB-validated children's books available in local languages for purchase.

For example, recently READ II, MOE and REB representatives reviewed 1,195 children's books available in Ethiopian publishers' stock and 88 bilingual (English and Amharic, Tigrigna or Afaan Oromo) books from the Ready Set Go series. Of the 1,195 local language children's books, reviewers selected 867 titles and 45 bilingual books. These books were brought to the attention of MOE and were approved with the condition that slight revisions would be made. Some of these books have Afaan Oromo and Tigrigna versions. READ II is now working on the procurement of the copyrights of the validated books in readiness for printing and distribution to schools and reading camps, along with translation of the 45 bilingual books into the other local languages.

Provision of additional books to schools and reading camps

READ II's collaboration with Books for Africa is another way that READ II has been working to increase the availability of books in school libraries and for use in reading and writing clubs. In the fourth quarter, READ II conducted workshops to review, select and validate children's books in English from Books for Africa. Among the 345 English SRMs from Books for Africa; planned for distribution to schools in SNNPR, 333 were validated and approved by the MOE and SNNPR REB English and Curriculum experts. The English SRMs have been distributed to target woredas in SNNPR (Sidama, Wolaytta and Hadiya zones). Similar English SRMs for the other target zones are being shipped into the country.

In this reporting year, READ II discussed preliminary activities with the MOE around book policy and development of policy briefs on SRM-related issues. The actual activity will be cascaded in year three.

IR 1.3.2: Conduct study on best practices for cost-efficient book production

READ II developed a best practice report on book production and distribution. The report highlighted book production techniques based on best practices for cost-effective printing, e-

book publishing and procurement with an emphasis on development of bidding documents, evaluation of bid documents, price points and quality control. The report was based on desktop research on international best practices, the country assessment conducted in year one and technical support provided by blueTree Group. More details of this activity are also described below (IR 1.3.4).

IR 1.3.3: Conduct needs assessment and develop capacity building plan for book chain development

Track and Trace (T&T) scoping mission and feasibility study

The T&T scoping mission was conducted in quarter I, where T&T experts conducted interviews with a variety of stakeholders to understand the available monitoring and tracking software, regulatory framework, and identify the specific challenges that T&T could work to solve. A report was shared that presented the user requirements, gap analysis, and sustainability assessment of existing platforms.

In addition, the T&T project team streamlined the distribution process and offered a capacity building workshop to MOE representatives. The country assessment noted that most books were not properly packaged in the country, and the T&T team developed and shared packaging guidelines to reference while preparing the Request for Quotations (RFQ) technical specifications. The development of a support model that considers local needs and builds on existing systems is proposed for year three.

IR 1.3.4: Establishing a working group with selected printers and distributors

In order to support publishers and printers and strengthen their capacity, READ II conducted a series of meetings with publishers to create partnerships and foster collaborative efforts in book production. A team of experts visited some of the larger printing companies in Addis Ababa and in regions and assessed their capacity in order to provide them with cost effective book production strategies. The project worked to strengthen the Ethiopian Printers and Publishers Association which was not as active as expected. In year two, READ II presented a paper at the Printers and Publishers Association Conference held in Addis Ababa. The presentation focused on cost-effective approaches in printing and publishing by building the local capacity of firms. In year three, READ II will host a working group to conduct policy assessment and support consultations. Moreover, READ II will hold a print, procurement, and distribution/stock management workshop with the working group to build book chain capacity.

IR 2: Strengthened community engagement in educational activities

Community, youth, and parent engagement is central to improving and sustaining education and reading outcomes. Likewise, community members play a vital role in removing barriers to quality education, mobilizing resources, and increasing school accountability. The READ II community outreach intervention is designed to enhance parental engagement in their children's learning and increase children's access to and engagement with learning materials.

IR 2.1: Parent, youth, and school collaboration increased

IR 2.1.1: Develop outreach program and build capacity of local implementing partners

Development of overall community outreach program

This year, the project finalized the development of a comprehensive manual entitled, “Community Mobilization, Facilitation Skills, Child Protection and Integration of Cross-Cutting Themes Manual” (the Community Mobilization manual in short). READ II outlined the basic aspects and components of the community outreach intervention and selected local implementing partners to support the intervention.

While READ II oversees and provides technical leadership to the project’s community outreach component, community-based organizations referred to as Local Implementing Partners (LIPs) carry out about 90% of the community-level implementation. READ II directly implements community outreach activities in 10 woredas across three regions and one city administration, (Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR). LIPs carry out community outreach in the remaining woredas and sub-cities.

As part of the activity to strengthen and engage stakeholders in the community outreach intervention, READ II signed grant agreements with eight LIPs that are now responsible for implementing community outreach activities on behalf of READ II in the six target regions. These eight selected partners are Pro Pride and Amhara Development Association (ADA) for the Amhara region; Oromia Development Association (ODA) and HUNDEE Oromo Grassroots Initiative for the Oromia region; Emmanuel Development Association (EDA) and Common Vision for Development Association (CVDA) for the SNNPR regional state; Tigray Development Association (TDA) for Tigray; and Organization for Welfare and Development Association (OWDA) for the Somali region. Pro Pride was also selected to work in Addis Ababa.

Exposure visits for LIPs

After finalizing subaward agreements, READ II conducted a national level kick-off workshop for LIPs in March in order to help them internalize the broader goals of the project. Forty-eight LIP staff attended this training. After the national level workshop, READ II held two-day regional kick-off workshops for LIPs with 475 attendees. These regional workshops included exposure visits to observe community outreach work in practice and opportunities to lobby and engage with government partners (REBs, ZED, WEOs, Woreda Administrations) to support LIP implementation.

Moreover, in year two, READ II organized a two-day quarterly review meeting and more exposure visits with REBs, ZEDs and WEOs in each region to better understand LIP’s implementation progress and challenges. A total of 189 participants attended. The feedback the LIPs received during the review meetings helped them to speed up identifying reading camp sites and volunteers. At the end of the reporting period, a total of 4,392 reading camp sites were identified and 9,009 volunteer community Literacy Leaders (CLLs) were selected.

Train LIPs in READ II outreach methodology and implementation approach

After the community outreach kickoff workshops, READ II trained 79 LIP technical staff for twelve days in July to become Master Trainers for the six READ II community outreach methodologies in their respective regions. The methodologies included: (1) community mobilization, facilitation, child protection and gender, (2) community-based reading camps (3) Teaching and Learning Materials (TLM), (4) Parental Awareness Workshops (PAW), (5) Read-a-thon, reading buddies and community story-telling and (6) Youth Savings Groups (SG). Following the training, LIPs then trained 317 Woreda level TOTs on these six methodologies who in turn trained and mentored volunteer CLLs, parents, and teachers to support community mobilization and resource mapping efforts.

IR 2.1.2: Establish learning hubs

Development of learning hub operational plans defining schedule of activities, roles and responsibilities

Learning hubs are designed to practically showcase the READ II community outreach activities at the grassroots level to LIPs and local stakeholders. During this year, READ II developed selection criteria for learning hubs.

These criteria basically describe three essential elements that comprise a fully functioning learning hub: i) a model school, ii) reading camps, and iii) households with reading corners.

Selection of learning hubs

Following the development of learning hub selection criteria, project staff brought 175 participants from REBs, ZEDs, WEOs, KETBs, and selected schools together into learning hub selection workshops that took place in each of the direct implementation regions. Exemplary learning hubs are comprised of a school, four reading camps, and twelve reading corners. So far, READ II has established 32 learning hubs across the ten direct implementation woredas.

Monthly meetings with LIPs, MOE, REB, woredas, and learning hub personnel to document lessons

Region	Woreda	Number of schools	Number of reading camps
Amhara	North Mecha	12	48
	Bahir Dar Zuria		
	Bassona waranna		
Addis Ababa	Kolfe	8	32
	Yeka		
SNNPR	Humbo	8	32
	Aleta Wendo		
Oromia	Bako Tibe	4	16
Total		32	128

These learning hubs are now sharing their experience and learning with LIPs and government stakeholders through meetings to document lessons learned. Larger scale meetings are held twice a year and smaller scale meetings between local stakeholders are held monthly. This is to improve functionality of learning hubs through joint monitoring visits by staff from LIPs, REBs, ZEDs, and WEOs, KETBs, and school directors, among others.

IR 2.1.3: Mobilize communities to support reading

Training of CLLs on community mobilization, facilitation, and child protection skills

The primary purpose of community mobilization is to inspire parents, families, local leaders and other community stakeholders to play a leading role in transforming community attitudes and behaviors around improving children’s reading skills. It involves an intensive community mobilization process that will determine the implementation of READ II’s community outreach. When carried out effectively, it serves to galvanize community resources for reading camps and mobilizes youth and adults to volunteer to lead those reading camps.

Following the finalization of the community outreach (CO) model in READ II’s direct implementation woredas, the project trained a total of 1,378 participants on the community mobilization manual, and participants followed the requirements to become volunteer CLLs. Later in the year, the project delivered refresher trainings on reading camp sessions and facilitation skills to 969 CLLs in READ II implementation woredas. In woredas where LIPs implement, READ II and LIPs used the training cascade approach to conduct a series of woreda level community mobilization workshops that reached a total of 4,242⁵ participants. These participants included Kebele Administration (KA) chairpersons, PTSA/KETB heads, and influential community members. These participants, in turn, conducted community sensitization and mobilization activities in their respective school and kebele catchment communities. This resulted in over 112,320 community members (about 38 per school) reached, 4,392 reading camps secured, and 9,009 volunteer CLLs selected in LIP implementation areas. The full functionality of reading camps and CLLs will be materialized in year three.

READ II conducted a few other noteworthy activities in direct implementation woredas this year. The project worked to change several reading camps from makeshift ones such as parents’ homes, to more permanent structures constructed using locally donated materials. Project staff conducted review meetings on at least a bi-annual basis in these woredas with 1,298⁶ government stakeholders and community-based institutions in attendance.

The project also conducted a book launch and reading camp visit to mobilize communities and parents to send their children to reading camps and to familiarize them with the book-borrowing available through reading camps. REBs, ZEDs, WEOs, Kebele Chairpersons, school directors and community members all participated in these events. On September 8th, READ II celebrated a colorful International Literacy Day with the theme “Literacy and Multilingualism” in Addis Ababa. USAID, the MOE, renowned



Community Literacy Leaders preparing children to read books in a newly established reading camp in Fonko village, Anlemo district of Hadiya Zone, SNNPR (left). A community literacy leader at the International Literacy day celebration showing visitors a model reading camp in Addis Ababa (right)

⁵ According to LIPs report

⁶ According to Woredas report

artists, volunteer CLLs, teachers, parents, the media, and children attended the event.

IR 2.1.4: Support parents and home-based reading

Contextualization of training modules and materials for community dialogue and Parental Awareness Workshops

READ II's community outreach component seeks to boost parents' and caregivers' engagement in their children's literacy development and academic performance. This year, project staff developed the Parental Awareness Workshop (PAW) training manual, which includes nine different modules. Once fully implemented, these trainings lead to monthly sessions between volunteer CLLs and parents/caregivers where both literate and non-literate parents/caregivers understand their roles in supporting children's skills, school readiness, and supporting children's reading appetite. Two of the nine PAW sessions focus specifically on gender and inclusion. Following finalization of the PAW manual, PAW trainings started with 14 regional level Master Trainers, followed by woreda level TOTs comprised of 414 woreda experts from 97 direct implementation sites and 317 from direct implementation woredas. Woreda TOTs trained 1,372 volunteer CLLs on all PAW modules for four days.

Monthly parental awareness workshops

Since the training of CLLs in July, several woredas have now conducted the first two PAW sessions with parents, reaching 2,897 parents. The first two sessions covered are: *Child Language and Literacy Development* and *Everyday Activities for Reading Readiness*. Subsequently, parents have created a total of 119 print rich environments at home where parents and children interact with print. As a result of parent's increased involvement, project staff have shared anecdotal evidence that more children are attending and maintaining consistent involvement in reading camps.

Exploring ICT use for community and parent engagement

This year, through its partnership with Viamo, READ II piloted SMS messaging to parents. By using this mobile technology, the project experimented with a different method of engaging parents to support their children in literacy and reading. As READ II is a large project, it is often difficult to reach parents and other stakeholders with regular face-to-face activities. These SMS messages provide an alternative way to reach many parents quickly and easily with targeted messaging. Thirty total parents, 15 from an urban environment (Kolfe) and 15 from a rural environment (Bahir Dar Zuria) participated in this pilot. Based on the findings of the pilot-testing, this approach will be scaled up to all READ II target woredas next year.

IR 2.1.5: Support school-based reading activities

READ II supports both school and community-based reading through training teachers and CLLs to create TLMs from locally available resources. This training includes topics such as educational games and make and takes (educational materials that students can take with them when they leave the reading camp). The training helps schoolteachers to create print rich classroom environments from locally available resources, to establish reading and writing clubs, and to develop synergy between schools and reading camps.

Woreda level trainings on TLMs

In this second project year, READ II finalized the development of the TLM training manual. Using this manual, the READ II team followed the previously mentioned cascade training model to create 14 regional Master Trainers who trained 414 woreda level TOTs comprised of WEO experts and cluster supervisors, 97 from READ II direct implementation woredas and 317 from LIPs target woredas. Woreda TOTs in turn cascaded TLMs to a total of 1,027 MT teachers and school directors in direct implementation woredas. They were also guided to oversee reading camps in their communities and ensure synergy between school and reading camp activities. 1,369 CLLs from direct implementation woredas also received the training so that they can produce TLMs from locally available materials and make their reading camps print rich.



Establishing reading and writing clubs and reading corners

As a result of the TLM training, MT teachers and school directors linked their 175 schools with 700 nearby reading camps; established 175 reading and writing clubs in schools, created 565 print-rich classrooms, formed 8,750⁷ reading buddies, and trained 688 additional teachers in their schools from their own resources. These teachers also monitor and support reading camp CLLs, send students to reading camps to borrow books, review CLLs weekly reading camp session plans, promote reading camps and encourage students to attend them, and distribute TLMs, SRMs, and stationery materials to reading camps.

Yezinaw Alemu, 12, is a 4th grader in Kera Primary school in Humbo district of the Wolayita Zone, SNNPR. He borrows books from the newly established reading camp near his village and reads books both at home and wherever he goes. He is reading a book written in his mother tongue, Wolaytatto, in a very quiet place in his family's backyard. He says, the stories are interesting, written in his own language and seem like they happened in his own village.



Genet Kebiso, 9, is a second grader in Fonko Primary School in Anlemo woreda of Hadiya Zone, SNNPR. She and her friends in her village are now practicing reading at the reading camp established recently with the help of READ II, a USAID funded project that is working to improve the reading proficiency of children. The project works in five regions and Addis Ababa City administration.

IR 2.1.6: Support community-based reading activities

Community-based reading manual and materials

Reading camps are the primary method of supporting community-based reading activities, led by volunteer CLLs to give children access to 2-6 hours of weekly reading camp sessions outside of regular school activities in order to improve their reading skills. The training methodology, referred to as community reading activities (CRA) focuses on community reading activities: reading camps, reading buddies, read-a-thons, and community storytelling. This approach engages

⁷ Secondary data sources

parents to tell stories to children to foster a love of reading and because it promotes collaborative learning.

Establishing reading camps

The activities of 2.1.6 are closely related to the activities of IR 2.1.3. Based on the mobilization and remobilization efforts conducted in year two, the project secured 5,092 reading camp sites (4,392 from LIPs target woredas and 700 from LIP woredas) and selected 10,409 volunteer CLLs to lead those camps (5,009 from LIP target woredas and 1,400 from direct implementation woredas). Just as READ II trains teachers and school directors on how to support reading camps, CLLs are also trained on how to work closely with schools so that their work complements each other.

LIPs	Number of reading camps	Number of CLLs		
		M	F	T
ADA	462	474	392	866
Pro Pride Amhara	738	708	996	1704
Propride A.A	56	34	81	115
ODA	857	1090	740	1830
HUNDE	762	755	891	1646
CVDA	300	487	388	875
EDA	539	434	393	827
TDA	582	533	421	954
OWDA	96	133	59	192
TOTAL	4,392	4,648	4,361	9,009

Training CLLs on reading camps

This year, the READ II team followed the cascade training model to create 14 regional Master Trainers in the CRA methodology. They then trained 414 woreda level TOTs -- 97 from READ II direct implementation woredas and 313 from LIP target woredas. Woreda TOTs then cascaded CRA to a total of 2,205 CLLs. 1,378 of those CLLs are from direct implementation woredas, and 827 are from LIP woredas. In the fourth quarter, the project conducted a refresher training on these same TOTs (417) and CLLs (1,372) to further increase school and community-based activities that offer opportunities for children to learn to read.

Establishing reading buddies, read-a-thon, community storytelling and school clubs

In quarter four, READ II trained 103 woreda experts for three days to serve as TOTs in four regions (26 from Addis Ababa, 32 from Amhara, 25 from Oromia, and 20 from SNNPR) on reading buddies, read -a- thons and community storytelling. Besides, this training would help to strengthen the synergy between schools and reading camp community storytelling and school clubs.

Preparing CLLs to support reading buddies, read-a-thons, community storytelling

In this reporting year, woreda level TOTs delivered three days of training to a total of 1,372 volunteer CLLs in the 10 direct implementation woredas on reading buddies, read-a-thons and community storytelling.

IR 2.1.7: Implement skills-building for youth volunteers to support reading

Volunteer motivation is a key part of successful implementation of the community engagement activities under IR 2. To incentivize youth to volunteer as CLLs, READ II supports these volunteers by complementing skills training with economic empowerment opportunities. Such training allows CLLs opportunities to find formal employment, continue education, join savings groups, or connect to microfinance institutions. The project offers such opportunities to CLLs by closely working with REBs, Technical, Vocational, Education and Training Institutions (TVET), CTEs, and microfinance institutions to diversify CLL incentive schemes.

Support savings groups for youth volunteers

The first workshop on savings groups was held at the end of the first project year, resulting in nine master trainers. Following that, the project trained 45 regional Master Trainers comprised of project staff and REB experts from the six regional bureaus for two days. These regional TOTs then cascaded the savings group methodology to 392 woreda level TOTs.

After that, a total of 191 volunteer CLLs were supported to form 17 savings groups. Members of these groups have started depositing their monthly savings to the group since July and have so far reached a total savings of 16,199.60 Birr.

Creating Economic opportunities (employment, education and entrepreneurship) for youth volunteers

The challenge of using volunteers is the lack of an incentive scheme to retain them. Volunteers are mobile unless they are provided with some sort of incentive. READ II conducted regional level consultative workshops on volunteer incentives in January and August with a total of 112 participants in attendance from REBs, ZEDs, WEOs across the six target regions. The workshop mapped diversified region and context specific incentive schemes within the government and community structures that can motivate CLLs to continue volunteering with the READ II project. As a result, a total of 16 (5 female, 11 male) volunteer CLLs have found employment opportunities. In total, the project helped 207 youth access education and economic opportunities in year two.

In the year two workplan, much of our efforts under IR 2.1.7 focused on establishing specific targets of savings groups and youth that have access to those groups. However, over the course of year two, we shifted the focus of IR 2.1.7 to offer diversified skills building, education, employment, and savings opportunities to youth who serve as CLLs based on the opportunities identified by the consultative workshops this year. This sub-IR has adjusted its activities in year three to foster broader based incentives for youth including but not limited to savings groups.

IR 3: Improved leadership, management, and delivery capacity at each administrative level

READ II strives to establish a strong instructional leadership system and practice to improve learner performance in reading and writing. The literature is clear that evidence-based instructional leadership is critical for improving learner performance. READ II sets out to equip school directors, cluster supervisors and woreda education officers with the tools and skills to “diagnose” weaknesses in the teaching and learning of reading and writing, and to work with

teachers to develop and implement “treatments” that will lead to learners’ improved performance. Details of accomplishments are presented in the sections that follow.

IR 3.1: Education administrators’ capacity increased

IR3.1.1: Deliver instructional leadership training to CSs SDs and WEOs

Establish Institutional Capacity Building Teams

During the reporting period, the major achievement of the project is the establishment of the Institutional Capacity Building Teams (IC-Teams) at national, regional, zonal and woreda levels. Since the focus of READ II is woreda and below, READ II supported the Regional ICBTs to develop TORs and create woreda-level support teams with defined roles and responsibilities. In SNNPR, this action was taken a step further. Among the notable achievements carried out by SNNPR was the creation of clear and explicitly defined roles and responsibilities of REB, ZED, WEO and schools. The TORs were duly signed and sealed by the respective offices. The SNNPR REB then shared the document with all stakeholders from the REB to school levels.

Capacity/training needs assessment

The IC-Teams played key roles in the rapid assessment and implementation of activities, while serving as points of contact for project efforts. The IC-Teams were involved in the training needs assessment conducted to gather information from school directors, cluster supervisors, woreda education officers, and MT and English teachers. The training needs assessment uncovered critical gaps and weaknesses including lack of knowledge about key reading components, reading pedagogy, less concerned about teaching and learning, more focus on school administration, etc.

Packaging capacity building interventions for SDs, cluster supervisors and WEOs

The project team carefully studied the findings from the capacity and training needs assessment, reviewed relevant national and international literature, consulted project technical teams, and engaged STTA to define a capacity building strategy and instructional leadership training contents relevant to the roles and responsibilities of education managers. This led to the development of the READ II capacity building strategy that served as a roadmap for further development of instructional leadership training modules. The modules were validated and adapted to regional contexts.

Orientation to education managers on instructional leadership

READ II supports both school and community-based reading through training teachers and CLLs to create TLMs from locally available resources. This training includes topics such as educational games and make and takes (educational materials that students can take with them when they leave the reading camp). The training helps schoolteachers to create print rich classroom environments from locally available resources, to establish reading and writing clubs, and to develop synergy between schools and reading camps

As a quick means of response to the critical weaknesses identified through the capacity and training assessment, READ II provided an extensive orientation to representatives from targeted



READ II provided training to school directors and supervisors to strengthen their support to MT and English language teachers. They were provided training on Literacy Instruction Approaches and Instructional Leadership Skills. The pictures show school instructional training participants in Addis Ababa and Somali regions.

REBs, ZEDs and WEOs. The main purpose of the training was to enable the education leaders to support school directors and cluster supervisors to improve their instructional leadership. The workshop was also used to validate the training contents identified earlier.

Following the validation workshop, the project team trained national facilitators drawn from the MOE and REBs. The initial training was further rolled out to a combination group of participants from REBs, ZEDs, and WEOs, deputy heads, directors, team leaders and experts starting with a total of 420 (49 female, 371 male) education leaders and experts. The training focused on equipping education leaders with knowledge and skills to manage MT and English language

instruction, and approaches to supporting school directors, deputy school directors, and cluster supervisors.

Table 5: SDs and CSs trained in School Instructional Leadership (SD Region and Languages

Region	Languages	Actual Training		
		School Directors, Vis & CS		
		F	M	T
Addis Ababa	Amharic	49	133	182
	Afaan Oromoo	5	13	18
Amhara	Amharic	45	729	774
	Afaan Oromoo	2	59	61
Oromia	Afaan Oromoo	0	0	0
Tigray	Tigrigna	39	248	287
Somali	Af-soomaali	9	136	145
SNNP	Hadiyyisa	27	215	242
	Sidaamu Afoo	56	502	558
	Wolayttatto	15	297	312
Total		247	2,332	2,579

Capacity building training for instructional leadership

Based on the initial training workshop for a limited number of education managers, the instructional leadership training package was revised and repackaged as “Leadership Packets” and “Facilitator’s Guide”. Training on the leadership packets was then offered to a total of 18 Master Trainers (12 female, 16 male) drawn from the six regions. The Master Trainers trained 109 TOTs (8 female, 101 male) at the regional level. In Somali, the Master Trainers also served as TOTs. Following the training of TOTs, training for cluster supervisors,

school directors, and deputy school directors was conducted to serve the role of instructional leader in their respective schools or cluster of schools. During the reporting period, over 2,000 school directors, cluster supervisors and education officers received training instructional leadership from five of the six target regions. In Oromia, the project was advised to delay the training until the REB completes assignments of new school directors and cluster supervisors.

IR 3.1.2: Deliver targeted coordination and mentoring training

During the reporting period, the project incorporated relevant monitoring tools in the project monitoring manual for Woreda READ II Support Teams, SDs, and CSs, and defined their roles and responsibilities in the training packet of instructional leadership. READ II is exploring various options including technologies to improve reporting and feedback mechanisms between schools and WEOs.

IR 3.1.3: Conduct annual and quarterly reflective meetings at national, regional and woreda levels

Joint review and reflective meetings

Effective year one, READ II has been working within the existing the education system at all levels to build system capacity to support Grades 1-8 MT and English language instruction. The MOE and REBs have played leading roles in the implementation of READ II interventions through the MOE and Regional Institutional Capacity Teams established in Year I. The teams played key roles in aligning the year two workplan with the MOE and REB plans, as well as monitoring and providing technical support to CTEs, WEOs, schools and communities.

READ II's year two implementation review and year three planning meetings were held at the national and regional levels. At the three-day review meetings, each REB reviewed READ II's major achievements, challenges and lessons learned and presented recommendations for year three. Following the year two implementation review meetings, regions conducted year three planning meetings. Participants, who included REB heads and deputies, REB directorate directors, and team leaders, reflected on year three regional plans and discussed collaboration and sustainability issues.

The Regional Institutional Capacity Teams and READ II conducted joint supportive supervision visit in target regions. For instance, in Amhara, the 4 REB IC-Team members (1 female) and two READ II technical staff conducted field visits at four target schools. The team provided feedback to the WEOs, schools, and reading camps after observing their achievements and challenges. The findings by joint monitoring informed project year three planning.

IR 3.2: Regular monitoring, evaluation, and assessments conducted

IR 3.2.1: Institutionalize effective woreda school monitoring practices

Introducing Local Education Monitoring Approach

In this reporting period, READ II introduced the Local Education Monitoring Approach (LEMA) to the MOE and all regions. READ II leveraged RTI's investment from 2016 in Tigray and Amhara. READ II conducted consultative meetings with the MOE about the LEMA approach, checklists, and methods.

Review training modules and materials for LEMA methodology

Following the consultative meetings with the MOE, READ II adopted and started to implement activities to strengthen the education monitoring system through the LEMA approach. This approach is designed to produce information needed to improve education program fidelity and effectiveness by avoiding cumbersome and lengthy procedures. LEMA produces disaggregated and actionable results at local levels which can be sustained and maintained by local stakeholders. The approach also facilitates increased interactions between schools and woredas as the schools and woredas share performance data resulted in the LEMA exercise.

READ II initiated LEMA in two phases: design and scale up. The first phase (design) was conducted with representatives from the MOE, REBs, and project staff. Four LEMA tools were prepared for teachers, directors, classrooms and students, and 11 indicators were prepared, reviewed and finalized.

READ II mapped all available LEMA resources and conducted bottleneck analyses before embarking on field testing. Lessons from both READ TA and other countries indicated that simplicity of tools and indicators in the system are key factors for LEMA scale up. READ II prepared a road map for LEMA implementation that includes tools, indicators and related checklists. The draft roadmap along with the tools was presented to REBs and MOE for finalization.

Preparing woreda support teams in the use of LEMA

In this reporting period, READ II implemented the LEMA scale up phase in Tigray, Amhara and SNNPR regions. A total of 126 (7 female, 119 male) stakeholders representing REBs, WEOs, and ZEDs participated in the LEMA scale up training and supported field data collection. Woreda education experts working on education quality and cluster supervisors were among the participants, cascading training that lasted for three days. They engaged in field data collection for five days. The training focused mainly on the basic components of LEMA approaches, tools, indicators, classification rules, sampling and preparation of plans. LEMA data was collected from a total of 18 READ II intervention districts (4 in Tigray, 8 in Amhara, and 6 in SNNPR) covering 332 schools and more than 6,000 students.

In this year implementation period, READ II conduct sensitization workshops for participants from Oromia, Somali, and Addis Ababa for four days. The purpose of the LEMA sensitization

workshop was to create awareness among the regional participants on the LEMA approach and use as well as to create a means to incorporate important aspects of the checklist into woreda and cluster supervision checklists. Participants were introduced to the four LEMA tools designed: student, director, teacher and classroom observation.

Analyzing LEMA data to inform decision-making on school performance

READ II conducted an analysis workshop for three days using data collected from the three regions. Participants were REB and MOE staff. The objective of the analysis workshop was to further strengthen the importance of LEMA and capacity building. The workshop also allowed READ II staff to improve interpretation of findings according to the local context.

IR 3.2.2: Improve teacher ability to use formative assessments

To improve the quality of literacy instruction and monitor learners' progress and provide appropriate support, formative continuous assessment was integrated into initial MT teacher training packages, mentoring program materials and refresher trainings outlines. READ II conducted different preliminary and preparatory activities in the second year of the project. Activities included: i) consultative meeting with READ M&E and the MOE to understand developments thus far, ii) organization of formative continuous assessment (FCA) documents from different partners working in education in Ethiopia and iii) preliminary review of the materials. In READ II's year three plan, formative continuous assessment is to be thoroughly implemented to positively impact teacher's ability to use formative assessment in a sustained way.

IR 3.2.3: Build school and cluster capacity to evaluate teacher instructional practices

This activity will take place in year three after READ M&E and the MOE develop a teacher competency framework and standards for MT and English teachers. READ II, in consultation with the MOE and REBs, will review the teacher competency framework and standards and determine follow up actions.

IR 3.2.4: Improve EGR standard and benchmarks

For year two, READ II planned to conduct a workshop to refine benchmarks by grade level set for the seven READ II-supported languages. Due to an unanticipated delay in the public release of the 2018 EGRA data, this activity is now proposed for year three.

IR 3.2.5: Increase use of research to inform policy decisions

Establishing Learning Agenda

In this reporting year, READ II prepared learning agenda priority guidelines. The guidelines revolve around the process of a learning agenda prioritization, integration of a learning agenda in the Collaborative Learning and Adapting (CLA) process. Most importantly, READ II conducted an inventory of available research studies in reading to identify gaps. In the upcoming year, READ II will further enrich the inventory of the learning agenda, map key stakeholders, and prepare a learning agenda priority workshop. Terms of reference/guidelines will be developed for a national

research symposium on literacy. READ II plans for an annual research symposium to bring together researchers and academicians for a high-level discussion on research findings in the areas of reading and writing.

Effectiveness Evaluation

In year two, READ II conducted an in-house effectiveness evaluation (EE) of target children in reading comprised of surveys with schoolteachers, school directors or assistant directors, REBs, WEOs, Community Literacy Leader volunteers, parents and students. The effectiveness evaluation was designed to inform MEL indicators and to better inform children's reading skills, and teachers' and directors' capacity and understanding of key aspects of the MT reading curriculum.

For the purpose, six different tools were designed and adopted from the standard EGRA tool and from different effectiveness evaluation tools available from similar interventions in different contexts. A total of 96 data collectors and supervisors were trained for five days, and data collection was undertaken in 224 sampled schools from the eight READ II intervention languages⁸. Due to the contextual differences in Addis Ababa and Amhara, READ II separately categorized and analyzed the Amharic language assessment. The tools were designed in consultation with READ II stakeholders, to increase utilization of evidence generated from the assessment.

Currently, data analysis and interpretation is still progressing. Further data interpretation and validation will be carried out in the following quarter. Key indicators are computed and are being reviewed by technical teams for project use.

IR 3.3: Systems for early grade reading and writing increased

IR3.3.1: Build REB and CTE capacity for PT curriculum development

Activities will take place after READ II has received guidance from the MOE on the participation of READ II in the curriculum reform

IR 3.3.2: Position CTEs for continuous development of MT teacher educators

Train master facilitators on CTE institutional capacity assessment tools

To build the capacity of the MT and English Departments of CTEs, READ II started with the conduct of Institutional Capacity Self-assessments as the first step in the process. ICA was conducted with eight CTEs considered centers of excellence (Tier I). Preparations to conduct the ICA with the additional 24 CTEs has started in this reporting period. In order to provide information about READ II's support to the remaining 24 CTEs, the READ II Pre-service team and the MOE MT Directorate held a two-day orientation and consultative meeting from June 7-8, 2019 for CTE /COE representatives. The workshop created a shared understanding and fostered collaboration around READ II's pre-service activities. During this meeting, a total of 60 (12 female, 48 male) CTE representatives from 28 CTEs attended. These training played a strategic role in supporting key government stakeholders to plan, manage, monitor and evaluate

⁸ Afaan Oromoo, Tigrigna, Af soomaali, Sidaamu Afoo, Hadiyissa, Wolayttatto, Amhara region -Amharic, Addis Ababa-Amharic

the sustainability and scale-up of MT and English language instruction in the early grades. The training was supported included manual validation with participants represented from the six REBs and the MOE. Following the validation workshop, the project team trained national facilitators from March 18-22, 2019. Twenty-four facilitators were drawn from the MOE and REBs with 72 representatives from 32 CTEs. The orientation workshop was both informative and successful.

The pre-service team planned group activities after each presentation to enhance discussion and reflection and enable participants to develop an action plan for the Institutional Capacity Assessment Tier 2⁹. Participants also received a questionnaire regarding the availability of ICT equipment at their respective CTEs. Twenty-four CTEs completed the survey. Results have been summarized.

Support CTEs to conduct self- assessments

High quality pre-service teacher education is a critical component in creating a teaching force that can positively affect the quality of learning for students in government primary schools. Ethiopian CTEs including the REB-selected COEs strive to provide essential teacher preparation to support positive student outcomes in primary schools. While these pre-service institutions have the dimensions of quality to undertake this mission, there are still challenges. To support this mission, READ II is assisting CTEs in the target areas to conduct ICAs to gain additional information of gaps in knowledge and skills in order to support them in “filling in the gaps” in the preparation of pre-service teachers. Different tools were prepared by the pre-service team for this purpose with a focus on capacity gap identification.

As a follow-on to the above activity, READ II organized and delivered a four-day data collection training at Debre Berhan CTE for facilitators drawn from 8 CTEs January 21-24, 2019. The aim of the training was to equip facilitators with the basics of data collection, research ethics, techniques of qualitative data collection, especially focus group discussions and key informant interviews (KII) and supporting facilitators’ comprehension of the ICA tools and administration protocols. The whole purpose of the training was to facilitators’ capacity to properly administer ICA tools.

The final ICA tools consisted of both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools ready for administration with 44 KIIs (with instructors and leaders) and 17 FGDs (with graduate and pre-service students (also referred to as PSTs) completed across the 8 CTEs. Questionnaires were also administered in all 8 CTEs, targeting CTE leadership and staff, G2 and G3 students, and MT instructors. The data collection was finalized in 8 CTEs.

Sharing ICA results (Tier I) and development of institutional strengthening plans

The results of the ICA -Tier-I) were shared with the CTEs, REBs, and the MOE through an ICA sharing workshop held in September 18-20, 2019, in Adama. The goal of the sharing workshop

⁹ In Tier one, READ II worked with 8 CTEs know as centers of excellence. In the second Tier READ II is expanding its support to additional 24 CTEs.

was to present the findings of the ICA and introduce institutional strengthening plans. The workshop also introduced the institutional strengthening plan (ISP) template to support CTEs in reviewing their individual ICA results and begin the action planning process to strengthen MT Departments. While the ISP development process began at the workshop, participants are continuing the process at their respective CTEs and with key stakeholders in their communities to ground-truth goals and objectives and develop a feasible strengthening plan.

During the ICA sharing workshop, the Dean or Assistant Vice Dean, MT Department Head, and one MT instructor from the 8 COE/CTEs, MOE representatives from MT, TDP, Planning and Resource Mobilization (PRM), and Gender Directorates, one representative each from the target REBs, and lead ICA facilitators from each COE/CTEs were invited to participate in the workshop. A total of 40 (6 female) participants took part in the workshop.

In general, all respondents tended to score all topics in the somewhat positive to positive range. Respondents' positivity scores were highest on three topics: 1) CTE Organization, Systems, and Structure; 2) CTE Practicum Structure and Support; and 3) Course Quality of Teaching. Positivity scores were lowest in relation to 1) Graduating Student Capacity (optimism that students would have the capacity to teach after graduation); 2) the degree of CTE's Innovation and Research, and 3) the quality of the CTE's Resources and Facilities.

CTE leadership, management, and support of instructors and students appears to be the most critical factor in courses being seen to have strong curriculum and quality instruction. A CTE with higher positivity scores on Organization, Systems, and Structure is moderately to strongly correlated with higher positivity scores on Course Curriculum and Course Quality.

The workshop was structured with a cycle of presentations followed by breakout sessions. During the breakout sessions, participants sat with their respective colleagues, discussed on the findings, and prioritized the findings as high, medium, and low. From the high priority areas identified, each CTE selected 8-10 top priority areas to develop a strengthening plan and implement the plan between October 2019 - December 2020 to strengthen MT departments' capacity to prepare future teacher educators to enhance early grade reading outcomes in the primary schools.

Aligning pre-service and in-service teacher training

After discussing with MOE, this activity will be conducted by the MOE directly. READ II is supporting the MOE as requested.

As the result of the introduction of the new education road map by the MOE, this activity is postponed to year three with slight modifications after a consultative discussion with MOE.

Review current multimedia supplementary MT resources to improve resources

READ II conducted an ICT inventory this year. Data from 24 of the 32 facilities has been analyzed and potential areas and gaps identified. READ II is in the process of holding discussions with the MOE and REBs to integrate the support CTEs require.

IR 3.3.3: Strengthen English departments in CTEs

Survey of English Language Skills at CTEs

READ II is working alongside CTEs to support the upgrading of English language speaking and listening skills for pre-service students. To support this process, READ II implemented a collaborative information gathering process to survey the current English language skills of pre-service students within the English department. The goals of this information gathering process were: (1) to formally gauge the English proficiency skill levels of CTE students and (2) to inform the design of appropriate audiovisual and other supplementary materials to improve speaking and listening skills

Subsequently, READ II developed a suite of four survey tools (Listening, Oral Communication, Grammar/Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension surveys), which were piloted in Kotebe Metropolitan University, Addis Ababa in February 2019. Tools were further refined after the pilot activity. The full implementation of the English Skills Survey took place in 3 CTEs: Gondar CTE in Amhara, Abiy-Adi CTE in Tigray, and Jimma CTE in Oromia between April 7-17, 2019.

The data gathered were analyzed and the results of the survey were shared with representatives from MOE, REB, and the three CTEs. Using the findings of the English Skills Survey as a baseline, READ II conducted a Interactive Audio Instruction (IAI) design and development workshop from June 19-20, 2019 with the support of STTA, MOE, and REB experts, as well as senior CTE English instructors' input to finalize the scope and sequence of IAI lessons. Lessons were aligned based on key scriptwriter ideas, and twenty IAI scripts were developed and finalized. The IAI lessons are expected to enhance the speaking and listening skills of pre-service students.

The READ II pre-service team held a Master Plan and Preliminary Script Validation Workshop from September 30 – October 1, 2019, during which Ministry, REB, and READ II staff met to review and revise them.

Cross Cutting Activities

IR D: Cross-Cutting: Prepare Vulnerable and At-risk Populations to Succeed

IR D1 Develop student success support toolkit (SSST)

In year two, READ II prepared an English version of a Student Success and Support Toolkit (SSST) and carried out extensive internal reviews. The SSST is designed for schools and school communities to support at-risk and vulnerable students in and out of primary schools, as well as internally displaced school children. The strategies and activities presented in SSST may also be used in some refugee camps after READ II receives permission from the Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) Offices to work in the refugee camps.

SSST Modules

1. Early Warning System
2. First Grade Screener
3. Back-to-School Campaign
4. Child Friendly School Environments
5. Positive Discipline and School Code of Conduct
6. Social Emotional Learning
7. Inclusive Education
8. Gender Equitable Schools

The SSST is intended to serve as a capacity building and training reference guide for schools and school communities to create safe and conducive learning environments and ultimately promote student success. Each module in the SSST addresses the critical gaps identified in a rapid assessment of READ II target schools conducted in 2018. The SSST aims to help schools and communities: i) prevent dropout; ii) help teachers understand GI students' reading and math skills; iii) increase enrollment; and iv) promote inclusive

education, positive discipline, social and emotional learning (SEL), and gender equitable school environments. The contents of the SSST are organized in eight modules as indicated in the text box above.

The English version of the SSST was adapted into the seven READ II-supported languages. The translation was carefully managed in terms of language simplicity, meaningfulness, contextualization to regional specific conditions, gender sensitivity, culture and religion. In each region, the Regional IC-Teams organized validation workshops to review the materials for appropriateness to their respective contexts. In these workshops, Regional IC-Team members and MT experts from universities and CTEs enriched the modules. The first draft of the enriched module was reviewed at a national validation workshop in collaboration with the MOE, REB, Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and READ II specialists. READ II integrated feedback and finalized the modules following the workshop.

Under the leadership of the Regional IC-Teams, Regional Directorate and Department Heads and Senior Experts reviewed the adapted versions for content, language, clarity, contextualization, gender sensitivity, inclusiveness and appropriateness for use by the target audiences to meet the needs of at-risk and vulnerable students. These target audiences include READ II-supported WEOs, Cluster Resource Centers (CRCs), schools, internally displaced (ID) centers, and refugee camp schools. The five Regional Education Bureaus of Addis Ababa, Tigray, Oromia and Somali and the three Zonal Education Departments in SNNPR Region approved the re-validated SSST modules for printing, production, and distribution. READ II printed 11,120 copies of the SSST in the seven languages for use in the trainings that will be conducted in quarter I of year three and also as a reference material for REBs, ZEDs, WEOs, CRCs, schools, ID schools and for some refugee camps.

#	Types of Modules	Quantity
1	SSST- Amharic Version (Addis Ababa and Amhara Region)	3,950
2	SSST- Afan Oromo Version (Oromia Region, Addis Ababa and Artuma in Amhara Region)	3,450
3	SSST- Tigregeana Version (Tigray Region)	1,100
4	SSST- Afe-Somali Version (Tigray Region)	900
5	SSST- Sidamu -Afu Version (Sidama Zone)	760
6	SSST- Wolayetato Version (Wolayeta Zone)	500
7	SSST- Hadeysa Version (Hadiya Zone)	460
	Grand Total	11,120

These training modules will be circulated in the first quarter of year three to the MOE, REBs, ZEDs, WEOs, CRCs, IDP schools and refugee sites for use as instruments of training and capacity building purposes.

Following the finalization of the SSST, READ II prepared a Facilitator's Guide and Participant's Packet. Moreover, School Improvement Planning and School Grant applications guidelines are also integrated into the facilitator's guides. The Facilitator's Guide and Participant's Packet were first produced in English, then adapted into the seven READ II-supported languages and validated in each region.

IR D.2 Introduce student success and support package and school-community improvement plans

In year two, READ II prepared guidelines for management of the implementation of School Improvement Plans (SIP), linking READ II school level activities and the SSST to SIP activities. READ II developed a training plan to provide orientation and subsequent rollout of the SIP. The guidelines include clarifying roles and responsibilities of various actors, including school directors, PTAs, cluster supervisors, WEOs, REBs, and the MOE. READ II's SSST, Gender Club priorities and other related activities that enhance the teaching and learning of reading and writing will be the focus of SIPs. As proposed, READ II will transfer SIP funds to schools through WEOs. READ II school grants are not meant to replace existing funding structures provided to schools by the government, other partners, parents and the community, but to complement all efforts that exist to improve classroom instruction. The SIP funding is an additional contribution to allow schools to improve the teaching and learning environment and student support services.

IR D.3 Implement student success and support package interventions

READ II will support schools to implement Student Success and Support Toolkit interventions in year three. Necessary preparations, including tools and training plans were completed in year two.

IR D.4 Support refugee students

In year two, READ II worked with ARRA to identify where primary school-age refugee children attend refugee camp schools. READ II faced challenges in obtaining data on the locations and number of students by grade level from ARRA given the security-related nature of the data. Given the lack of access to refugee camp schools, READ II found it difficult to identify potential interventions and to organize its support. accordingly. As situations permit, READ II is keen to introduce the SSST as well as the SEL) training developed under the Crisis Modifier in refugee schools.

IR E: Support to adolescent girls through a structured gender approach

In addition to integrating gender into all IR components, materials, and trainings, READ II has supported the MOE Women and Children's Affairs Directorate (formally the Gender Directorate) in its goals to promote female leadership, strengthen gender clubs and increase awareness of gender and gender-based violence.

READ II's Rapid Assessment final report was approved by USAID on November 29, 2018 and has been used to inform READ II's Gender Strategy and key activities. The report has been shared with the MOE and REBs, and presentations on key findings were held in Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray region in December 2018 and January 2019. Among the participants were the Institutional Capacity teams, the REB Head or Deputy Head, Gender Experts, Curriculum Experts, and Special Needs Experts. READ II also presented the results to the USAID Gender Champion Network meeting in February 2019.

READ II also conducted a Gender Audit on female leadership of REBs and WEOs, in collaboration with the Women and Children's Affairs and TELDD Directorates. The report was finalized and will be sent to the MOE early next quarter.

Production of a radio drama on gender has been underway since February 2019 and will be broadcast in schools and on community radio stations beginning in January 2020. The scripts are being translated into seven languages. Schools' gender clubs will use the drama to discuss gender issues in the story and their own lives.

READ II has contributed to technical reviews of the drafts of the MOE Gender Club Guidelines, which was completed in July 2019. The Guidelines were translated into seven languages and READ II will provide two copies per target school in their language of instruction. Preparations are in place to cascade training of Gender Club Coordinators to be conducted next quarter.

IRE I: Introduce social messaging materials

Producing Radio Drama Series in seven MTLs

In February 2018, READ II selected, through a competitive and transparent procurement process, *Zeleman Communications, Advertising and Production PLC* to produce a 13-episode radio drama on gender. Drawing from the rapid assessment, the overall goal of the radio drama is to address social challenges to adolescents in order to increase school retention.

A Radio Drama Key Messaging and Storyboarding Workshop was led by READ II Communications and Scriptwriting Specialist and Sound Design Specialist February 25 – March 5, 2019 with 16 participants (6 female, 10 male) representing the MOE and six REBs, Zeleman scriptwriters and producers, and the READ II cross-cutting team. There were some regional differences, but the following themes were decided for the drama: (1) Girls and Boys Education (importance of staying in school) (2) Gender Norms (Equitable domestic chores, classroom interactions,, hypermasculinity, gaps in classroom attendance), (3) Female Leadership, and (4) Gender-Based Violence (verbal and sexual harassment, child marriage, and FGM).

Broadcast the series on community radio and the education radio stations

At the end of this reporting period, all 13 scripts have been finalized in English, the first six scripts have been translated into seven languages, and production is underway in two languages and will be underway in the other five languages in October 2019. In September 2019, READ II held validation workshops on the translation and content of the first six scripts with REBs and ZEDs representing all MTLs. Validation of the final seven scripts will occur in November. It is expected that broadcasting will begin at the end of January 2020.

Celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child and International Women’s Day

The International Day of the Girl Child was celebrated with six REBs in October 2018, the theme of which was “A Skilled Girlforce”. Attendees numbered from 80 to 427 in each region and surpassed 900 total attendees. Among the attendees were students, parents, NGOs, and REB officials, including the Lead Gender Experts in every region, Amhara’s Head of the Women and Child Affairs Bureau, Amhara Transformation Directorate Director, Tigray Curriculum Directorate Director, Somali Acting Head of the Education Administration Office, Somali Gender Department Head, SNNPR TPD Directorate Director. In four regions, this was the first time this event was celebrated in the region, and it was only the second time in the other two regions.

International Women’s Day (IWD) was celebrated with three REBs this year: Addis Ababa, Oromia, and Tigray. The theme was “Balance for Better”, intending to promote gender balance across the world. The purpose of the activity was to work with REBs to design and implement events to celebrate the successes of women and to highlight the areas that need concerted effort to improve. The events held in Oromia and Tigray were very successful with 50 to more than 100 people at each event, including the Bureau Head or the Deputy Bureau Head. Notable women and girls were recognized for their leadership.

Unfortunately, events were not held in Somali and SNNPR regions. In SNNPR, insecurity in the region made holding the event very difficult. Somali region did not hold the event due to conflicting REB activities. In the case of Amhara, the REB already had a large budget and held the event in a school outside of Bahir Dar. READ II was invited to the event but did not provide financial or technical contributions.

IR E 2: Support safe school procedures

READ II’s Rapid Assessment revealed that students regularly experience or witness school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), which was also corroborated by UNICEF’s report on SRGBV. Both reports also called for a revision of the SRGBV Code of Conduct, indicating that it lacks certain provisions to protect students at school, namely the lack of rules against romantic or sexual relations between students and teachers and corporal punishment, as well as indicating the inappropriateness or harshness of punishments. It was also noted that the Code contains heavy legal language and is not user-friendly. Over the past year, READ II has engaged with the Women’s and Children’s Affairs Directorate on the possibility of revising the SRGBV Code of Conduct; but this was finally rejected. READ II also decided that contributing to the translation and printing of the Code, per the year two work plan, would not be a priority when there are so many concerns.

There have been several discussions with the Directorate on how READ II can help make schools safer and prevent SRGBV. To date, discussions are underway. However, READ II has integrated SRGBV into a few activities, namely the SSST, the Gender Club Coordinator Training Manual, and it is anticipated that activities to improve school safety will be included in school grants.

Fundamental to addressing SRGBV is addressing harmful gender norms and unequal power relations, which are at the root of GBV. To measure how gender equitable schools and classrooms are, READ II developed two tools: The *Gender Equity School Self-Assessment Scorecard* and the *Gender Equity in the Classroom Observation Tool*. The Gender Equity School Self-Assessment Scorecard is meant to allow School Directors to self-assess areas in which their schools can be more gender equitable, in order to take practical steps to improve gender equity. Many of the

proposed improvements can be included in the SIP.

The Gender Equity in the Classroom Observation Tool is meant to assess whether teachers use (intentionally or unintentionally) gender-biased teaching practices. This tool allows School Directors and Cluster Supervisors to help teachers use practical, gender-equitable teaching practices.

Both tools were pre-tested in a total of 60 schools, or 10 schools per region, and then revised. School directors and cluster supervisors will be trained in both tools during the SSST training workshops.

IRE 3: Support Girls' Clubs

Translate the *Gender Club Guidelines* into six languages

READ II has contributed technical reviews of drafts of the MOE Gender Club Guidelines, which was completed in July 2019. The MOE Gender Club Guidelines were translated into Hadiyyisa, Sidaamu Afoo, and Wolayttatto by REB translators, and then validated by REBs. Translation into Amharic, Tigrigna, Afaan Oromoo and Af Somaali was undertaken by UNICEF and REBs, but only Amharic has been shared to date. TREAD II will provide two copies of the Guidelines to each school in the language of instruction next quarter as well as conduct a two and a half-day training for Gender Club Coordinators in all targeted schools, which will be held in conjunction with the SSST training workshop to be conducted next quarter.

IRE 4: Increase female role models available to girls

In collaboration with the MOE Women and Children's Affairs and TELDD Directorates, READ II conducted a Gender Audit of REBs, ZEDs, and WEOs. Specifically, the Gender Audit aims to: (1) assess the written policies and practices regarding the promotion and retention of female leadership and within REBs and WEOs (2) assess the working environment and fostering of gender equitable environment within selected REBs and WEOs and (3) define strategic recommendations (roadmaps) on appropriate measures on female leadership promotion and fostering of gender-equitable working environment.

Sharing findings and recommendations for Gender Audit

Preliminary results were shared internally, with the two MOE directorates, and then with the Road Map and Strategic Planning Director. Some key quantitative and qualitative results include:

Political Will

- Leaders and decision makers acknowledge the need to continue improving the situation for female workers and female leaders, such as relevant plans and actions designed to improve the working conditions of women, including provision of childcare facilities.
- 63% of female respondents and 65% of male respondents reported that the organization does not have enough written gender responsive policies, regulations or guidelines.
- Problems arise not only from insufficient policies, but also poor implementation of existing policies and unclear leadership and direction; and, there is confusion on the distribution of responsibilities of implementing policies as well as a lack of accountability.

Accountability

- There is a lack of individual accountability mechanisms despite some policies in place:
- 64% of female and 68% of male respondents believe that when a staff member does not implement or follow gender-related guidelines, he or she will not be held fully accountable.
- Respondents reported that if a staff violates a code of conduct or an internal regulation against the integrity of a woman, he will not be held accountable.

Organizational Culture

In general, respondents have the perception that there is a good team spirit at the offices and that women and men have good working relationships with each other, with the exception of Amhara and Somali regions.

- Female workers are not equally considered for leadership positions as their men colleagues and even sometimes they are undermined or discouraged.
- In some regions like Addis Ababa and Tigray, it has been reported that male colleagues are against or reluctant to accept the implementation of affirmative actions that benefit women.
- Women respondents feel that their voices are not equally heard, and their decisions are not taken as seriously as men. Most (62%) of female respondents feel that decision-making by women is not as seriously considered as that of men.

Technical Capacity

Fortunately, a good proportion of decision-makers interviewed at the REB level have attended a gender-related training. However, this was not the case at WEO level. Informants generally stressed the need of reinforcing existing gender units and strengthening the capacities and resources given to gender focal points.

The areas in that informants reported that staff, especially leadership and Gender Focal Points, need capacity building are: Gender-sensitivity, leadership on implementing of a gender equality plan, awareness on affirmative actions (especially in Addis Ababa and Tigray), gender implementation, leadership skills for female leaders and leaders-to-be

READ II recently finalized the Gender Audit report and will send to the Women and Children's Affairs and the TELD Directorates in early October. Once the Directorates approve the report, READ II plans to hold a validation workshop at the national level, and possibly regional levels

Developing and updating database on female role models

Early in year two, READ II developed six databases containing female role models, which will be shared with Gender Club Coordinators in all target schools during the Gender Club Coordinator training workshop to be held early next quarter. READ II plans to hold a one-day orientation workshop next quarter with female role models interested in visiting schools. READ II will support and encourage, per the provisional Gender Club Guidelines, to invite role models to schools to discuss their challenges and successes with girls and boys. Next year, READ II plans to start hold a conference on female leadership.

IR F: Crisis modifier and coordination of emergency response planning

The Crisis Modifier is intended to protect the project's investments through provision of services that help with enrollment, re-enrollment and retention of students who are unexpectedly confronted by the effects of conflict or other emergency-related events. Since the launch of the first Crisis Modifier in April 2018, various activities have been implemented that contributed to the realization of the intervention objectives.

IRF I: Coordinate with EiE Cluster

Participation in the national education cluster meetings

In year two, READ II participated in eight Ethiopian National Education Cluster (NEC) forums and supported coordination efforts at the national level. The monthly forums serve as a platform for obtaining up-to-date information on cluster members' interventions and geographic coverage. In addition to this, the cluster also regularly shares its response plan and priority intervention areas in new and unfolding crises; these updates help READ II align its Crisis Modifier response plan and coordinate with other cluster members. READ II, on its part shared progress updates, best practices, and lessons drawn from its crisis modifier EiE interventions implemented in Oromia, Somali, SNNPR and Amhara regions. As part of its collaborative efforts with the Education Cluster, READ II also contributed to the improvement of the EiE assessment tool that the cluster uses to conduct bi-annual national EiE rapid assessments.

Close engagement with the National Education Cluster improved the coordination and synergy of READ II in EiE activities as well as to align its support to avoid duplication of efforts. In addition, the coordination ensured effective distribution of scholastic and recreational materials to affected children in targeted woredas.

IR F 2: Identify and assess crises

READ II conducted a rapid assessment in IDP-hosting primary schools in Babile and Tullu Guled woredas of Somali region. The aim was to identify the need for catch-up classes and SEL and psychosocial support (PSS) services and assess the capacity of teachers in those IDP schools.

Considering the large number of internally displaced children and deteriorating situation in IDP sites in Somali Region, the assessment purposefully targeted students, teachers, school directors, supervisors and PTSAs at Qoloji (01 and 02) IDP sites and Tulu Guled woreda IDP schools. Three school directors, three teachers, three students, and three PTSA members were randomly selected from each school and interviewed. In addition, READ II conducted FGDs with WEO heads and education experts, cluster supervisors and school directors. At the regional level, READ II and the REB Head and Deputy Head discussed the capacity of teachers in the IDP schools, the status of catch-up classes, and the implementation of SEL.

Key findings from the assessment were (1) all teachers in the assessed primary schools in both woredas lack the basic knowledge, understanding and skills to provide SEL and PSS services to their students and (2) Out of the 56 primary school teachers represented from primary schools, 91% did not have the primary school teaching qualifications. Moreover, assessed teachers never received basic on-the-job training that would help them acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be a teacher.

As per the findings of the assessment, considering the importance of pedagogy and SEL skills for teachers, READ II provided a ten-day capacity building training on SEL/PSS and basic pedagogical concepts for target teachers, cluster supervisors and school directors represented from Qoloji I and II IDP schools in this reporting period. This training built the capacity of participant IDP teachers in the areas of SEL/PSS and basic pedagogical concepts and was supported by evidence on gaps assessment conducted prior to the intervention.

Using hotspot mapping to identify priority woredas for EiE funding

Apart from implementing the already activated CM funding, READ II continued tracking crisis-related situation updates released by the MIE, the National Education Cluster, and other external sources, including rapid assessment reports from the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), periodically released by the International Organization on Migration (IOM). Data obtained from the various sources was compiled to initiate the request for the activation of the 2nd round of crisis modifier funding.

Below is the latest data on crisis affected children READ II obtained from the National Education Cluster and DTM for the activation of the second Crisis Modifier funding.

National Education Cluster IDP Population Data for 2019/2020 Academic Year

Age Group Regions	School age children (Preprimary and primary School) Total In need	Data Source	Data Release Date
Addis Ababa	1,946	DTM Round 16	10-Jun-19
Afar	12,612	DTM Round 16	10-Jun-19
Amhara	209,269	NEC	22-May-19
Benishangul Gumz	23,855	NEC	22-May-19
Dire Dawa	1,7268	DTM Round 16	10-Jun-19
Gambella	5,613	DTM Round 16	10-Jun-19
Harari	756	DTM Round 16	10-Jun-19
Oromia	1,325,505	NEC	22-May-19
SNNP	149,498	NEC	22-May-19
Somali	721,265	NEC	22-May-19
Tigray	48,110	NEC	22-May-19
Grand Total	2,515,697		

READ II used the above data and set the following criteria to determine priority regions for year three CM interventions:

- Regions that are supported by other READ II interventions (READ II target regions)
- Availability of adequate project management and support structures to provide technical assistance and leadership
- Regions that were targeted for READ II CM interventions during year two (continuity)
- The most affected regions with high number of IDPs
- More accessible for provision of services to ensure project investment bears returns
- Woredas with lesser concentration of other NGOs' support

Using these criteria, 416,737(229,205 G1-4) and (187,532 G5-8) crisis-affected children were identified in four regions (Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR and Somali). READ II's proposal to USAID

for activation of a second round of crisis modifier funding was approved by USAID on August 26, 2019.

IRF 3: Select and monitor CM sub-grants and grantees

Due to time and budgetary reasons, READ II directly implemented the first round of CM activities. The project has continued to implement the second round of CM interventions directly. For example, procurement, delivery and monitoring of the scholastic and recreation materials will be directly managed by READ II central and regional team members. Accordingly, the activities planned under IRF3 which were designed with a focus on crisis modifier sub-grantees have not been implemented as planned.

IRF 4: Coordinate and train stakeholders in crisis response

No training on crisis response was implemented during this period under this sub task; however, READ II provided on-the-job support to WEO heads, READ II focal persons, and school directors on materials distribution and utilization.

To assess the effectiveness and timeliness of materials delivery described in section F.5 below, READ II conducted internal monitoring and supportive supervision visits to 20 target woredas. During the internal monitoring visits, technical support and orientation on the various aspects of material distribution and utilization has been provided to WEO heads, READ II focal persons and school directors.

IRF 5: Manage crisis response

Manage the crisis response based on early warning system, cluster, and field reports

Another major activity implemented during the reporting period was provision of SEL/PSS and pedagogy training for primary school teachers in Qoloji IDP sites in Babile Woreda of Somali Region. The training was organized to respond to the gaps and needs identified during the rapid assessment READ II conducted from April 22-26, 2019 at Qoloji and Tulu Gulled IDP sites of Fafan Zone in Somali Region. Training was provided for 61 (16 female, 45 male) primary school teachers, WEO experts, cluster supervisors and REB experts from August 31 – September 9, 2019 in Jigjiga.

To provide both trainings – an open source SEL training manual called “Safe Healing Learning Space (SHLS)” developed by the IRC and a pedagogy training manual called “Training for Primary School Teachers in Crisis Contexts” developed by the Teachers in Crisis Context Working Group (TICCWG) were adapted and used as resource materials. These materials were contextualized by education experts drawn from Somali REB and Dr. Abdulmjid Hussein College of Teachers Education and endorsed by the REB. The training on SEL covered basic concepts of SEL and the five competencies: brain building, emotional regulation, positive social skills, conflict resolution and perseverance and strategies that will help teachers to infuse these skills and competencies into day-to-day teaching learning activities in the classroom. The training on basic pedagogy covered five basic areas of foundational competencies (knowledge and skills) essential for teachers in crisis setting: Teacher’s Role and Wellbeing, Child Protection, Well-being and Inclusion, Pedagogy, Curriculum and Planning and Subject Knowledge.

Both trainings were facilitated by teacher educators drawn from Dr. Abdulmjid Hussein College of Teachers Education and two IRC education and protection field staff with SEL implementation

experience were co-facilitators on the SEL training sessions. Given the educational background and experience, the facilitators from the CTE directly cascaded the pedagogy training without taking a TOT training. However, due to the relative newness of the concept of SEL, the facilitators were provided with five-day TOT training facilitated by READ II.

Monitoring visits and progress review meetings

In addition to the internal monitoring visit, a joint field monitoring and supervision visit with representatives from the MOE, Somali and SNNPR REBs was conducted from March 4-8, 2019. From the field monitoring and supervision visits to target schools in Somali and SNNPR, the team confirmed that all the learning materials distributed to the schools were delivered to the internally displaced target beneficiary children as planned. The team also verified that the support provided was instrumental in helping parents send their children back to school and continue their education. This is the key purpose of the crisis modifier and READ II has successfully achieved its goal. The team also realized that, apart from helping target schools to attain and even exceed their enrollment/re-enrollment targets for the academic year, the support helped to enhance regular attendance and reduce dropouts in the visited schools. Moreover, both the provision of learning and recreational materials played a key role in creating a sense of normalcy in the school and outside the school environment. The joint monitoring and supervision visit report from both regions was submitted to the respective REBs and MOE to document lessons learned, as well as for their follow up and further actions.

3.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

READ II believes in evidence-based planning and management, which mainly builds on a cyclical process that follows the practice of felt needs and gaps identification, mitigation planning and follow up implementation. For the purpose, READ II developed and updated different routine tools, guidelines and manuals to support the activity planning and implementation tracking process.

In this reporting year, the project MEL plan and PIRS were revised to reflect key aspects of the READ II intervention. Through this revision; currently, READ II has 15 key outcome indicators to be tracked and reported periodically to partners. MEDAL is the platform established to support internal monitoring and management. The platform supports activity tracking in the output level and READ II plans to use this platform to track implementation progress at regional and national levels against the established implementation timeline. In this reporting period start-up training on MEDAL was cascaded for all READ II staff.

In addition, the project conducted data collection and analysis to track implementation progress; some of the activities included the school profile data collection for enhanced model intervention schools and output level result analysis for GI-4 MT teachers and TOT training participants. For instance, READ II teams analyzed the pre and post evaluation of GI-4 MT teachers to understand the changes in reading component skills during training.

Routine Data Analysis, Progress review & Reporting

Fidelity of Implementation

In this reporting year, manual and checklist were prepared for Fidelity of Implementation (FOI). The guide was developed with the purpose of ensuring accountability, effectiveness, sustainability and consistence in project intervention implementation supervision, review, and feedback procedures. This FOI guide will assist in establishing standard and consistent procedures for READ II activity supervision in the field.

READ II toolkit and operation guide

READ II finalized a toolkit and operational guide to facilitate the implementation of the MEL plan. This is key since READ II has multiple stakeholders. Hence, in this reporting year, the review of tools and guideline finalized by the READ II adjusted, reviewed, and finalized MELs.

Revision of the READ II MEL Plan

During the preparation of the year three work plan and reporting lessons in year two, READ II revised the MEL plan. The revised MEL plan has 15 indicators designed to establish results-based assessment for the project outcomes and outputs. The MEL plan captures the performance indicator sheets along with realistic targets for each indicator, and data management, tools, process and responsibilities.

Routine Data Quality Assessment (RDQA)

In this reporting year, READ II prepared DQA guidelines and checklists. The manual identifies key purposes and intentions of the DQA exercise as well as stipulates the standard procedures and processes established for the internal DQA exercise per USAID data quality standards.

In addition, USAID conducted a DQA using four indicators in Amhara in the reporting year. Issues and mitigation strategies were planned and discussed.

Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA)

READ II started brownbag sessions to discuss CLA. READ II major assessment findings, training pre and post assessment key findings are discussed on a monthly basis and will feed into quarterly pause and reflect sessions. Moreover, READ II prepared an outline to prioritize learning agenda topics. READ II also conducted an inventory of available research in reading that will be useful to prioritize for the following year.

Development of learning agenda

READ II established the process of carrying out a learning agenda. READ II established a phased approach to prioritize learning agenda topics. READ II mapped key stakeholders for the learning agenda prioritization workshop. Moreover, READ II conducted an inventory of available research in reading, and this will be strengthened with further inventory of grey literature.

4.0 COLLABORATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

From project start-up READ II has worked closely with all actors in the education sector. READ II works closely with READ CO, READ M&E, World Bank, UNICEF, DFID and other local and international NGOs active in the education sector. For example, consultation

meetings were held, and mechanisms of collaboration discussed with World Bank on T&T. READ II has also been collaborating with READ M&E, on the common agenda of FCA, EGRA, and the benchmarking exercise. This consultation and close working relationship will continue as READ II develops its learning agenda and CLA system.

In this reporting period, READ II participated in the USAID-MOE organized TWG meeting for key stakeholders. The TWG meeting was held May 10-11 in Bahir Dar. The meeting was facilitated and organized by READ II. The meeting included participants from the MOE, National Education Assessment and Examination Agency (NEAEA), REBs, WEOs, USAID, USAID implementing partners, READ M&E as well as representatives from schools and clusters. The meeting was led by the Director of the PRM Directorate and the USAID education team. It was hosted by the Amhara REB. The meeting helped to establish a common understanding of project activities for better collaboration and partnership.

5:0 Project Management and Operations

Staffing

During the reporting year, READ II recruited a total of 59 project personnel to fill vacant positions. The number of staff at the end of September 2019 is 132 (30% female).

Location	Number of Staff						Grand Total
	Technical		Admin & Support		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Central Office	15	7	15	12	30	19	49
Oromia	9	1	4	2	13	3	16
SNNPR	9	1	4	2	13	3	16
Somali	5	-	4	1	9	1	10
Addis Ababa	6	2	2	3	8	5	13
Amhara	7	2	6	1	13	3	16
Tigray	4	2	3	3	7	5	12
Total	55	15	38	24	93	39	132

Logistics

The logistics unit provided ongoing logistic support to various workshops, trainings, and other events to make sure all planned activities were implemented as per the agreed upon timeframe. Due to the volume of workload on the logistics unit, project logistic needs were analyzed, and additional logistics support was created to provide direct support to training, workshop and other public events. The current logistics support unit will focus mainly on the day-to-day office operations at the national and regional levels.

Grants

During the reporting year, the READ II grant team finalized, shortlisted, selected and awarded community outreach grants to eight LIPs. The grantees have since rolled out community outreach activities. The LIPs started project implementation as of March 1, 2019. READ II conducted a kickoff meeting and orientation workshops for all awarded LIP's March 29-31, 2019. The LIPs were represented by their senior managers.

The grant unit has also developed detailed guidelines to manage SIP grants. A Request for Application has been developed, reviewed and finalized. Next quarter it will be released to target woredas for formal application.

Procurement

During the reporting period, the major procurement actions were the following:

- Procurement of reading camp furnishing materials and stationery items for 700 reading camps in four regions for community outreach activities.
- Procurement of more than 1.5 million SRMs printed and distributed.
- Printing and delivery services for more than 900,000 supplementary reading materials for 1,882 reading camps in Oromia, Addis Ababa and Oromia region currently at customs clearance in Djibouti.
- Procurement of school supplies for IDP students for SNNPR, Oromia, Amhara and Somali regions using the second round CM funding
- Procurement of additional project vehicles

Finance

In this reporting period, the finance unit has been closely working with staff to:

- Handle financial matters of trainings conducted in all regions.
- Conduct annual book closing exercises for the fiscal year.
- Conduct compliance review of LIPs reports and process cost reimbursements.
- Provide technical support to regional offices in light of establishing and maintaining sound financial management practices in each region.
- Carry out regular (monthly and annual) closing of books.
- Work to ensure compliance of financial transactions to rules and regulations.

Security

READ II's security unit is closely working to support smooth implementation of program activities. Some of the key achievements in this reporting year are:

- Production of security risk assessment document, security plan with its standard operating procedures (SOPs), crisis response plan, and information security plan.
- Safety and security training organized for READ II project office staff.
- A security risk assessment and situation monitoring assessment conducted daily.

- Weekly security situation reports provided to project leadership and department heads.
- READ II telephone tree revised and updated.

In this reporting year, public unrest mainly affected READ II implementation.

This year READ II activities were by conflict (Somali, Amhara, and Oromia), political events (Somali and SNNPR), and a teachers’ strike (Amhara) at different points in time and locales. In Somali, community outreach activities were delayed by six months, and learning and recreational materials transport and, subsequently, distribution, to IDP children in conflict-affected woredas experienced delays. There were further delays in READ II programming generally due to the conflict in Jijiga, the closure of the REB office during that time, and REB staff turnover afterwards.

Distribution of SRMs to 16 reading camps in North Mecha woreda, Central Gondar zone, Chilga district, West Gondar zone, Metema district, North Shewa zone Ataye, Efirata and Gidem districts, Oromia special zone were delayed due to security challenges. Planned trainings for school directors, cluster coordinators and mentors on instructional leadership and mentoring respectively were delayed due to the security situation in these target zones.

SNNPR observed delays in the implementation of community outreach and other scheduled trainings as the result of civil unrest and violent attacks that happened in the Sidama zone including Hawassa town following the Sidama’s zone demand to obtain regional status.

6.0 Planned Activities for the Next Quarter (October-December 2019)

Result	Key Activities Planned	Time frame
IR I: Improved classroom reading and writing instruction	Review and analysis of G1-4 English materials (1 international and 1 local consultant)	Nov
	Review and analysis of G5-8 English materials (1 international and 1 local consultant)	Nov
	Conduct field study on G1-8 English teaching practices	Nov
	Workshop to review findings of G1-4 English assessment	Dec
	Workshop to review findings of G5-8 English assessment	Dec
	Teacher training material development/customization for G1-4 English (1 international and 1 local consultant)	Dec
	Teacher training material development/customization for G5-8 English (1 international and 1 local consultant)	Dec
	Develop Quick Tools for G1-4 and G5-8 English (1 international and 1 local consultant)	Dec
	Validate Quick Tools for G1-4 and G5-8 English	Nov
	Provide technical support on ICT use interventions for cluster-level training, school-based mentoring and basic EGR techniques, addressing hard spots	Oct – Dec
	Develop materials/tools (reflective tools, classroom observation tools, monitoring tools, reporting templates) for use by the CTE-woreda teacher support team (1 international and 1 local consultants will support this)	Nov

	Validate the materials/tools for CTE-woreda teacher support team	Nov
	Adapt materials/tools into the seven MTs	Nov
	Determine selection criteria for selection of CTEs, CTE instructors, woreda and cluster level experts	Oct
	Select CTE, and Provide orientation to and capacity building for CTE-Woreda team	Nov-Dec
	Refresher training for Grades 1-8 MT teachers	Oct- Nov
	Train mentors	Oct
	Implement MT teachers mentoring	Oct – Nov
IR2: Strengthened community engagement in educational activities	Facilitate exposure visits for LIPs to direct implementation sites	Nov-Dec
	Conduct quarterly monitoring and program review meeting in LIP implementation sites	Nov-Dec
	Conduct quarterly Regional IC-Team Reflective meetings and document lessons learnt	Nov-Dec
	Support REBs to scale up the READ II community outreach practices	Nov-Dec
	Adapt/ translate community mobilization, facilitation skills and child protection manual.	Nov-Dec
	Translate/validate PAW manual	Nov-Dec
	Conduct woreda level refresher TOT Workshop on PAW	Nov-Dec
	Train school employee/s and KA chairperson on PAW	Nov-Dec
	Conduct monthly parental awareness workshops	Nov-Dec
	PAW trainers conduct home visits	Nov-Dec
	TLM Manual translated/validated in 7 languages	Nov-Dec
	Conduct TLM refresher training for Woreda level TOTs	Nov-Dec
	MT teachers/school principals train remaining MT teachers	Nov-Dec
	Create print-rich classrooms	Nov-Dec
	Woreda IC team conduct quarterly monitoring on schools' TLM activities	Nov-Dec
	Conduct woreda level reading camp refresher training for TOTs	Nov-Dec
	Conduct refresher training for volunteer CLLs on reading camps	Nov-Dec
	Conduct weekly reading camp sessions	Nov-Dec
Furnish materials to reading camps	Nov-Dec	
IR3: Education administrators' capacity increased	Conduct a two-day training on change management for MOE, REB, ZED/WEOs	Nov- Dec
	Monitor the training of 3000 Deputy School Directors on instructional leadership in collaboration with MEL and Regional READ II staff	Nov- Dec

IR: Cross cutting	Finalize printing of SSST in seven regional languages	September
	Conduct SSST Regional/Zonal Level TOT Training	Oct
Prepare vulnerable and at-risk populations to succeed	Conduct woreda level SSST trainings integrated to SIPs	Nov
	School identification for the first round SIP funding award	Nov-Dec
	Conduct regional/woreda level pre-orientation workshop	Dec
	Follow-up school level SIP planning	Dec
	Release first round SIP Funding	Dec
	Conduct field level monitoring and supervision	Dec
	Celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child	Oct
	Continue with production of gender radio drama in seven languages	Oct-Dec
Support to adolescent girls through a structured gender approach	Produce a Gender Club Facilitator's Guide and Student Books to be used in gender clubs	Oct-Dec
	Conduct Master Training, Training of Trainers, and training of Gender Club Coordinators on MOE Gender Club Guidelines, gender, and life skills	Oct-Nov
	Conduct orientation of Female Role Models	Nov
	Hold validation workshops of the Gender Audit	Nov
	Host validation workshops for each of seven languages of the last seven (of 13) radio drama scripts	Nov
	Hold events in recognition of the 16 Days of Activism	Nov-Dec
	Hold Female Leadership Conferences for a selection of GEQIP-trained female leaders in each region	Nov-Dec
	Facilitate Orientation for CM Target Region and woreda READ II Focal Persons on the Distribution and Reporting of Learning and Recreational Materials Support to Crisis Affected Children	Oct-Nov
	Monitoring of transportation and delivery of Learning and recreational materials to target woredas and students	Oct-Dec
	Monitoring of Implementation of SEL skills in Primary Schools in Qoloji IDP Camps of Somali Region	Nov-Dec
Monitoring and Evaluation	Improve the culture of data use (LEMA)	Nov
	LIPs orientation on READ II MEL process and procedure	Nov
	Developing CLA framework for READ II	Dec
	Analysis workshop of EE data with Staff and Ministry	Dec
	Enhanced LEMA training for school cluster supervisors and WEOs	Dec
	Year III school profile mapping/data collection	Dec
Crisis Modifier		

7.0 Annex One Success Story

Female reading camp leader provides inspiration for girls while helping all children learn to read

At age 19 Bethelehem Yonas is igniting girls' and boys' desire to read in the playful and colorful reading camp where she volunteers as a Community Literacy Leader (CLL). She is one of over 11,000 CLLs that lead reading camps across six regions in Ethiopia. The intentional recruitment of female CLLs to balance gender dynamics is a well-noted achievement of the READ II project.



Bethelehem helping children to read and write at Tereko Reading Camp, Addis Ababa

Learning can be fun!

Bethelehem and her fellow

Community Literacy Leader serve in the Tereko Reading Camp, a community-constructed space in the urban center of Addis Ababa. While Bethelehem has not taught formally she says, "Supporting children is my passion since my primary school age."

It is her heart for young children and serving her community that peaked her interest to accept the challenge of becoming a CLL. Bethelehem explains, "I was nominated because I was always with kids. It's not difficult to manage kids because I have experience from home – [for example] with singing and writing."

Singing and play are key characteristics of the teaching and learning experience for children at the reading camp. "They are very interested in coming to sing and read books," says Bethelehem. When the reading camp first began, she and her co-facilitator spent time assessing the reading proficiency of children in grades 1-3. It became clear that many children were struggling to read letters, words and paragraphs. Reading camps provide an opportunity for girls and boys to have additional time outside of school to interact with their friends and practice their reading in a structured, fun and playful space with the guidance of a CLL.

The Tereko Reading Camp has generated a great deal of excitement in the community, which has increased the enrollment in the reading camp. To maintain a child to facilitator ratio of 25:1, the reading camp functions in two shifts. Some of the core activities that have created the enthusiasm about reading camps are drawing pictures, 'make and take' crafts that children can bring home and share with their families, and the ability for children to borrow culturally-appropriate reading materials from the reading camp's library.

More than an after-school program

Bethelehem has found the training to be a CLL very beneficial. She really enjoyed delving into the technical aspects of the seven session activities within the reading camp and learning how to consider language issues.

There is evidenced-based technical rigor in each part of the reading camp to engage girls and boys in the process of learning to read in a vibrant, joyful, stimulating, and colorful way. Bethelehem recognizes that and appreciates the excitement that reading camp activity time and ‘make and take’ activities bring to children in the reading camp.

It is evident that Bethelehem enjoys her work and takes it seriously. She applies her learning to her facilitation, and she has even started organizing community-wide initiatives to expand opportunities to read.



Pomi Bruk, 7, a first grader and her friends are practicing reading in a reading camp in Addis Ababa. The Volunteer CLL helps them to read and write at the reading camp near their village, Addis Ababa

“We organize frequent read-a-thon events which can give opportunity for children to learn to read in a fun and competitive approach. Our reading buddies’ methodology is a good example of collaborative learning for struggling children by better performing ones.”

Her beliefs and actions affirm that the reading camp setting should be different than the formal school. They should always be - a safe and comfortable place where children can experience joy and play in a colorful print-rich environment to engage in the process of reading.

Seeing girls’ literacy skills transformed

After just months of being a Community Literacy Leader, Bethelehem is encouraged by the transformation she is seeing in children. She has seen, “Three reading camp girls at the age of 7 and 8 who haven’t been to the formal school attend reading camp sessions and now read letters and words properly.” This is a gratifying and motivating experience for her as a CLL.

Being a CLL does not come without challenges. One of the ongoing challenges is around parent engagement. Parents have begun Parent Awareness Workshops to support reading and will need continued support to understand how best to allow time and space for reading at home.

As a CLL, Bethelehem sees that parents should do more to keep the reading camp space clean for children to be safe and play. Local leadership has an important role in sensitizing the community on these matters to widen ownership of the reading camps as joyful and playful learning spaces.

For those parents who are skeptical about allowing girls to attend, reading camps are also positively addressing girls' attendance through the presence of female facilitators, which has motivated parents to allow girls to participate.

It was noted in the *READ II Rapid Assessment: Gender and At-Risk/Vulnerable Children* that in schools there is a 'paucity of female leadership and opportunities.' Bethelehem, together with her fellow CLL are defying the odds and demonstrating what it means to be a female leader in their community.

"I am a role model for the girls in my community for I am currently studying accounting in a private university to fulfil and live my dream. Again, I am volunteering in the READ II project to support children's education. I usually tell girls in the neighborhood and Tereko Reading Camp my primary school experiences to succeed in my education. I feel this motivates them to stay in school and follow my footsteps."

On this International Day of the Girl Child we celebrate girls everywhere – including Bethelehem – as they inspire, break boundaries and create the future. We must continue to identify, encourage and support pathways for young women and girls to unleash their gifts and make lasting contributions to their communities.

By Alisa Philips, Senior Education Advisor, World Vision USA