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READING FOR ETHIOPIA'S ACHIEVEMENT DEVELOPED MONITORING AND EVALUATION (READ M&E)

Quarterly Report

2015 Quarter 4: October 1 to December 31, 2015

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Contract Number: AID-663-C-15-00001

Activity Start Date and End Date: January 1, 2015 to
December 31, 2019

COR: Marc Bonnenfant

Submitted by: Jordene Hale, Ed.D, Chief of Party
American Institutes for Research
1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007
jhale@air.org 251-9-2929-1976

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Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed
Monitoring and Evaluation (READ M&E)
Quarterly Report
2015 Quarter 4: October 1 to December 31, 2015

Submitted to:
U.S. Agency for International Development/Ethiopia
Marc Bonnenfant, COR

Prepared by:
American Institutes for Research
1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

Under Contract No. AID-663-C-15-00001

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1.DEC REQUIREMENTS

a.	USAID Award Number	Contract No. AID-663-C-15-00001
b.	USAID Objective Titles	<p>USAID/Ethiopia Country Development Cooperation Strategy Development Objective: Improved Learning Outcomes</p> <p>USAID/Ethiopia Education Strategy Intermediate Result 1: Increased achievement in basic education, particularly in reading</p> <p>USAID Global Education Strategy Objective 1: Improved reading skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015</p>
c.	USAID Project Title	USAID Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Monitoring and Evaluation (READ M&E)
d.	USAID Program Area and Program Element	<p>Education (program area 3.2)</p> <p>Basic Education (program element 3.2.1)</p>
e.	Descriptive Title	Quarterly Report 2015 Quarter 4: October 1 to December 31, 2015
f.	Author Names(s)	Jordene Hale
g.	Contractor Name	<p>American Institutes for Research</p> <p>1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW</p> <p>Washington, DC 20007</p>
h.	Sponsoring USAID Operating Unit and COR	<p>USAID/Ethiopia</p> <p>Marc Bonnenfant, COR</p>
i.	Date of Publication	March 14, 2016
j.	Language of Document	English

2. PROGRAM OVERVIEW/SUMMARY

Program Name:	USAID Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Monitoring and Evaluation (READ M&E)
Activity Start Date And End Date:	January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2019
Name of Prime Implementing Partner:	American Institutes for Research 1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW Washington, DC 20007
Contract Number:	Contract No. AID-663-C-15-00001
Reporting Period:	Year 1, Q4: 1 October-31 December 2015

2.1 Program/Activity Description/Introduction

The Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Monitoring and Evaluation (READ M&E) project is a 5-year U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-supported activity implemented by American Institutes for Research (AIR). READ M&E is one of four READ projects on early grade reading launched by USAID Ethiopia. READ M&E focuses on monitoring and evaluating early grade reading and writing as well as the M&E needs of the overall USAID READ program. The project works closely in partnership with the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE) and the National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency (NEAEA). The project also works in collaboration with regional state education bureaus (RSEBs) and city administration education bureaus (CAEBs).

READ M&E tracks progress and measures the performance and impact of key interventions supported by USAID through a) regular monitoring of READ projects to determine if implementation is on track and if outputs are leading to results and b) evaluating READ projects at defined intervals to gauge the results. These efforts inform USAID and other stakeholders, including the federal MOE, RSEBs, and NEAEA, how combined investments across the READ projects are producing the desired changes, and how implementation can be improved.

The objectives of READ M&E are to:

- a. Assess student learning progress by analyzing and synthesizing nationally representative EGRA data collected for seven local languages; collecting additional EGRA data annually to show reading skill gains for seven local languages; and collecting nationally representative EGRA baseline data for English
- b. Support NLAs at grades 4 and 8 for reading, comprehension, and writing aligned to the new national reading curriculum developed through the READ TA program
- c. Support continuous assessment in schools
- d. Monitor the performance of USAID's READ projects as well as other key projects related to the READ program, and conduct midterm and final evaluations of the three READ projects and of other projects that may take over or add to any of the major functions of these READ projects
- e. Conduct impact evaluations and research studies on issues aligned with USAID's global- and mission-level learning agendas that relate to the evolving needs of the READ program and related key projects

Summary of Results to Date-Quarterly Report

Standard Indicators	Baseline	Annual Target	Q1 FY16	Q2 FY16	Q3 FY16	Q4 FY16	Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%)	On Target Y/N
3.2.1 – 34 Number of standardized learning assessments supported by USG	N/A	1 (Early Grade Reading Assessment in 7 Mother Tongues in 5 regions)				1	100%	YES
3.2.1-3 Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support	N/A	N/A						

Note: The Results Performance Column depicts level of achievement expressed as a percentage of Actual versus Planned.

Summary of Results to Date-Annual Report

Standard Indicators	Baseline	Actual prior year (if applicable)	Annual Target	Annual Actual	Out-Year 1 Target	Out-Year 2 Target	Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%)	On Target Y/N
3.2.1 – 34 Number of standardized learning assessments supported by USG	N/A		1 (Early Grade Reading Assessment in 7 Mother Tongues in 5 regions)	1	1		100%	YES
3.2.1-3 Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support	N/A		N/A					

3. ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Progress Narrative

READ M&E continued to work on assessment activities, evaluations, and planning future activities. This includes a pilot EGRA in seven languages with over 2,500 children in grades 2 and 3, a final evaluation of the READ II program, a mid-term evaluation of the READ TA program, developing a scope of work with USAID and MOE to address formative continuous assessment and surveying the interests and needs of the MOE with the intention of formulating a plan for the READ M&E research study.

EGRA Pilot:

As part of a larger effort to assist the Ministry of Education assess the current literacy rates for students in grades 2 and 3, READ M&E administered a pilot Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) to 2,520 children across five regions in seven mother tongue languages: Amharic, Afan Oromo, Sidaamu Afoo, Somali, Hadiyissa, Tigrinya and Wolayitatto. This pilot assessment serves to gauge the feasibility of using electronic data collection methods through the use of Nexus 7 tablets and ensure the accuracy of the Tangerine software for EGRA data analysis. READ M&E technical staff led a five-day training workshop in Bishoftu for 39 data collectors. Most of the data collectors had previous EGRA administration experience using paper and pencil and as such they were fluent in the testing procedures. The training focused on helping them transfer this knowledge into tablet EGRA administration. The first day and a half of the training provided a review of EGRA test administration standards. Once the participants demonstrated proficiency in administering the assessment, READ M&E trainers assisted participants in becoming comfortable with the tablets. Data collectors practice administering the EGRA in pairs with one pair watching and giving feedback while the other performed. On Thursday and Friday, data collectors went to local schools in Bishoftu in small groups to practice with school children. Participants reported that this was invaluable and greatly helped them in adhering to the standards as they watched each other and provided real time feedback. At the end of the training, all data collectors reported that they were confident in their ability to administer the EGRA electronically. Indeed, field level supervision proved that there were no issues with the tablets or the Tangerine software during data collection.

Final Evaluation of READ II:

During this period, READ M&E completed the final evaluation of the Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Institutional Improvement (READ II) project. READ II was a one-year, up

to \$10 million basic education project, which sought to improve the reading outcomes of primary school students in Ethiopia in seven mother tongue languages, i.e. Amharic, Afan Oromo, Sidaamu Afoo, Somali, Hadiyissa, Tigrinya and Wolayitatto. The project worked directly with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and through the Federal Ministry of Education (MOE) in the Somali Region and the Regional State Education Bureaus (RSEBs) in Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, and Tigray to improve early grade reading classroom instruction in schools by providing in-service continuous professional development of teachers, school principals, supervisors, and teacher educators. The READ II project targeted over 60,000 primary school mother tongue teachers teaching students in grades 1-4. READ II activities were implemented from approximately August 2014 to March 2015. The Ministry of Education and RSEBs under a Fixed Amount Reimbursement Agreement (FARA) implemented the project.

READ M&E interviewed a total of 239 teachers, trainers, experts and national program leaders for the evaluation. The three overarching questions for the evaluation were:

1. How do parties involved rate their satisfaction with the government to government support?
2. Was the training organized as per agreed upon plan and schedule?
3. Was the training material aligned with the new READ TA materials?

The evaluation revealed that stakeholders, for the most part, were satisfied with the READ II program and that the program succeeded in meeting its core objectives. The government to government approach was effective and served its purpose.

The training was well organized and went according to plan. Although minor issues were observed during the training such as some of the teachers selected for training did not teach grades 1-4 or were not language teachers, for the most part the training was conducted as planned and achieved its stated goals.

Teachers reported that the content of the training and the manner in which it was conducted was highly inspiring. One unexpected and positive outcome of these trainings was that they helped keep the issue of early grade reading on the national agenda.

READ TA Mid-Term Evaluation:

READ M&E gathered data for a mid-term evaluation of the USAID-funded Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Technical Assistance (READ TA) led by RTI in partnership with Save the Children International (SCI), SIL LEAD, Florida State University (FSU), Invaneo, Whiz Kids Workshop (WKW), and African Development Corps. READ TA is a five-year, basic education

project (grades 1-8), to improve reading outcomes in seven mother tongue languages, i.e. Amharic, Afan Oromo, Tigrigna, Sidamu Afoo, Wolayittatto, Hadiyissa, and Af-Somali. READ TA assumes that the revision of the mother tongue curriculum and development of student books, teacher guides, and supplementary reading materials will lead to improved reading scores. READ TA provides in-service and pre-service continuous professional development of teachers, school principals, supervisors, and teacher educators. The project works directly with the Ministry of Education (MOE) through the Regional State Education Bureaus (RSEBs) in Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, Somali, and Tigray and College of Teacher Educations (CTE).

For the READ TA mid-term evaluation, READ M&E conducted 277 teacher interviews, 191 classroom observations, and 257 teachers' questionnaires. There were no significant challenges in gathering data and coding of results has begun. Final results are anticipated to be reported in April, 2016. More details are included in the Implementation status section.

Implementation Status

READ Intermediate Result: Improved reading achievement.

Sub-Intermediate Result 4: Monitoring and evaluation conducted to ensure that implementation are on track and results are achieved.

All READ M&E activities fall under sub-intermediate Result 4.

CLIN #1: EGRA and M&E

EGRA: From November 21 to December 1, 2015, READ M&E piloted the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) in grades 2 and 3 in seven mother tongues used as media of instruction in primary schools in five regions. Approximately 90% of Ethiopia speaks at least one of these seven languages: Afan Oromo, Af-Somali, Amharic, Tigrigna, Sidamo Afoo, Wolayittatto, and Hadiyissa. For the pilot, a total of 2,520 children were assessed.

Tool Development: READ M&E developed new comparable EGRA tools as the 2012 tools have been widely used. To develop the new tools, language experts developed multiple test items aligned to the new READ TA mother tongue curriculum. Teams of language and curriculum experts then validated the new EGRA test in each language. The agenda for the workshop is included in the annex for more information.

Data Collector Training: From November 16 to 20, 2015, READ M&E trained 39 data collectors to administer the EGRA on Nexus 7 tablets with installed Tangerine software.

Pilot EGRA: From November 21 to December 1, 2015, data collectors tested students in 20 schools at an average of 5 schools per each of the following five languages: Afan Oromo, Amharic, Wolayittatto, and Hadiyissa.

Mini-EGRA: In Sidamu Affu, Tigrinia, and Aff Somali languages, data collectors tested students in 15 schools per language/region for a total of 45 schools.

Number of students tested for the pilot EGRA by language and grade:

Language	Designed		Total	Achieved		Total
	Grade 2	Grade 3		Grade 2	Grade 3	
Afan Oromo	100	100	200	100	100	200
Aff Somali	300	300	600	268	251	519
Amharic	100	100	200	100	100	200
Haddiysa	100	100	200	100	100	200
Sidamu Affo	300	300	600	300	300	600
Tigrigna	300	300	600	300	300	600
Wolaitatto	100	100	200	100	100	200
Total	1300	1300	2600	1268	1251	2519

Note that the number of students assessed in the Somali region was lower than anticipated (519 instead of 600). Many of the children in that region have migrated to other regions due to a shortage of water and thus were not in attendance in the schools that remain open.

Results: READ M&E is currently analyzing the EGRA data. The final report will be presented in Quarter 1 of 2016.

READ II Evaluation:

The final evaluation of the READ II program involved data collection in five regions: Tigray, Amhara, Oromia, Somali, and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNP) in seven local languages. Data collection consisted of a total of 239 interviews with trainers, experts and national program leaders. Evaluation questions and data sources are outlined in the chart below:

No.	Evaluation Question	Data Type	Data Source	Data Gathering Instrument
1	How do parties involved rate their satisfaction with the government-to-government support program? a. What has worked? b. What could be improved upon?	Qualitative	FMOE RSEBs	Interview
2	Was the training organized as per the agreed upon plan and schedule? How many teachers were trained? How do teachers view and experience the training? The guide? What is the proportion of teachers who were satisfied with the training?	Qualitative & Quantitative	FMOE RSEBs CTEs Trainers	
3	Was the training aligned with the new READ TA materials?	Qualitative & Quantitative	Teachers	

The evaluation was completed and the report was disseminated to USAID and MoE officials in a written report and through a dissemination workshop held on February 4, 2016 in Addis Ababa. All MoE officials received the full report. The evaluation found that:

- The government – to – government approach implemented for the conduct of the training was largely effective and served its purpose
- Although minor problems were observed during the training it can be said that the training was conducted as planned with the satisfaction of all involved
- The content of the training and the way it was conducted made the training inspiring for the teacher trainees. Teachers who participated in the training were highly satisfied with the training offered

After reviewing the findings, READ M&E made the following recommendations:

1. Distribute textbooks and teacher guides to all schools as soon as possible and with the goal of a 1:1 ratio. In order for teachers to take full advantage of the READ training they need to have access to the new MT teacher guide and textbooks for their students.
2. Scale up teacher training to train a greater number of mother tongue language teachers. Trainings should:
 - a. Be coordinated with the receipt of the new textbooks.
 - b. Take place during school breaks and
 - c. Include only participants who meet the selection criteria.
3. Conduct separate training for school supervisors and school principals. Pay attention to:
 - a. The importance of early grade reading achievement and mother tongue literacy
 - b. The methodology behind the new curriculum and new textbooks and
 - c. How to observe the new methodology for teacher evaluation and support

4. Conduct refresher trainings for the teachers teaching mother tongue which will:
 - a. Enable teachers to share experiences and make recommendations to the textbook developers
 - b. Deepen teachers' knowledge of early grade reading and mother tongue instruction with theoretical and practical applications
 - c. Meet their current teaching needs. This can be done by surveying teachers prior to the training to find out their needs.

For more information, the READ II Executive Summary is included in the Annex.

READ TA Mid-Term Evaluation: The mid-term evaluation of the READ Technical Assistance project (READ TA) gauges the performance against its implementation plan. The key evaluation questions and data sources are identified in the table below:

	Evaluation Question	Data Type	Data Source ¹	Data Gathering Instrument
IR1: Reading and Writing Materials Appropriate for Primary Classrooms and Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Training Developed				
1.1	What is the status of the development of the new mother tongue curricula?	Qualitative	MOE/RSEBs READ TA staff Document Analysis	In-depth interview
1.2	How was the coordination between READ TA and the MOE and RSEBs for material development?	Qualitative	MOE RSEBs READ TA staff Document Analysis	In-depth interview
1.3	What is the level of alignment of the mother tongue syllabus, student's textbooks, and teacher's guide with the MLCs?	Qualitative Quantitative	Documents (syllabus, textbooks, teacher's guide and minimum learning competencies) Experts involved	Content Analysis Interview
1.4	What is the student to new textbook ratio? (Does not reflect on READ TA performance but valuable data to gather at this time)	Quantitative	Schools	Classroom observation
1.5	Are the students using the textbooks? (Does not reflect on READ TA performance but valuable data to gather at this time)	Qualitative and Quantitative	Schools Principals Teachers	Interview Classroom observation
1.6	What is the level of support provided by the READ TA to CTEs to train MT teachers and develop materials for pre-service training at CTEs?	Qualitative	CTE Staff RSEBs MOE	Interview
IR2: Language-Specific Teaching and Learning Methodologies and Strategies that Focus on Helping Students Learn to Read and Write Effectively are Applied				
2.1	How do teachers view student textbooks and teachers' guide prepared by READ TA?	Qualitative & Quantitative	Teachers	Interview Questionnaire
2.2	How do teachers view the content of the teachers' guide and students' textbooks in terms of the use of language - specific teaching and learning methodologies and strategies?	Quantitative	Teachers	Questionnaire

¹ READ TA documents and staff will be primary sources of data for most questions.

	a) What / how was the procedure used to select master trainers? b) How were the Master Trainers (MT) trained?	Qualitative	READ TA RSEBs MOE	Interview
IR3: Language Teaching and Learning Supported by Appropriate Technology and Teacher Aids				
3.1	What has been done on use of technology and teaching aids?	Qualitative	READ TA MOE RSEBs CTEs	Interview Document (if any)
IR4: Technical Support to RSEBs and MOE for the READ Institutional Improvement				
4.1	How was READ TA's support of the READ II program?	Qualitative	READ TA MOE RSEBs	Interview
4.2	How has READ TA affected the curriculum development capacity of the MOE, RSEBs, and CTEs?	Qualitative	MOE RSEBs ZEDs (in SNNP) READ TA CTEs	Interview Document (if any)
4.3	How has READ TA included gender sensitivity and disability inclusion in their program?	Qualitative	MOE RSEBs READ TA	Interview Document (if any)

READ TA Tool Development:

READ M&E developed 5 interview guides, 1 classroom observation checklist, and teacher questionnaire. READ M&E pilot tested and then revised the tools based on data obtained. AIR HQ reviewed the tools for their appropriateness for the intended purpose and for IRB ethical clearance. The IRB clearance caused the data collection to be delayed by more than a month.

READ TA Data Collector Training:

READ M&E trained 18 data collectors on December 19, 2015 to collect both qualitative and quantitative data.

READ TA Data Collection:

From December 20, 2015 to January 8, 2016, data collectors collected data in 53 schools across five regions at an average of 8 schools in each language. Data was both qualitative and quantitative.

READ TA Data Collection

Region	Zone	Teachers Interview Guide	College of Teacher Education	Classroom Observations	Teacher Questionnaire	Material Developers	Principals and Superintendents	Experts
Tigray	Central & Southern	6	2	24	26	2	7	6
Amhara	South Wollo	18	1	24	30	4	9	1
	North Gondar	12	2	16	20	2	7	6
Oromia	West Arsi	12	2	16	22	2	6	2
	East Shoa	12	1	16	21	2	8	3
Somali	Fafan & Siti	8	2	24	19	4	9	10
SNNP	Sidama	18	2	24	50	2	8	7
	Wolayta	18	2	23	37	2	11	3
	Hadiya	17	2	24	32	2	13	2
Total		121	16	191	257	22	78	40

In total 725 data sets – interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observations- were gathered.

READ TA Results: READ M&E is currently employing consultants to transcribe a total of 277 interviews conducted in seven languages. Data entry for 191 classroom observations and 257 teacher’s questionnaire is in progress. The final report will be presented in Quarter 1 of 2016.

CLIN 2: Learning Assessment

No activity

CLIN 3: Capacity-building

Fifty-two staff from MoE, Regional State Education Bureaus (RSEB), and National Education Assessment and Evaluation Agency attended the EGRA training to learn how to collect EGRA data using Nexus 7 tablets and Tangerine software.

CLIN 4: Technical Leadership

The registration of AIR and the READ M&E project with the Charities and Societies Administration (ChSA) remained a major focus of the project. The ChSA has not yet agreed to register the project

to operate in Ethiopia. The ChSA determined that the READ M&E budget violates the requirement that administrative labor costs not exceed 30% of the total budget. The ChSA reached this conclusion after determining that research, monitoring, and evaluation are “administrative” activities that do not provide special benefit or charitable work to the community (as stipulated by Ethiopian proclamation (621/2001 article 14(1)(2)(3)).

This non-registered status has ramifications on:

- **taxes** (the project must pay VAT)
- **financials** (the project cannot open a bank account)
- **staff** (all field staff are on a consulting agreement)
- **logistics** (the project must wire money to the field for payments to be made)

READ M&E continues to appeal to the ChSA to revise its decision and is seeking alternative methods for operating in Ethiopia.

Implementation challenges.

EGRA: There were no challenges in using the Nexus 7 tablets in the field for data collection. However, the Tangerine software did not accurately code the data collected. Specifically, the Tangerine software had errors when reporting student’s time on specific tasks. READ M&E is cleaning this error by hand and resolving other small issues. Additional temporary staff are needed to assist in cleaning and recoding the data. This will delay the EGRA pilot report.

READ TA Evaluation: Due to questions with the IRB, READ M&E had to delay data gathering by more than a month from the beginning of November to the end of December. This will delay the submission of the report until April, 2016

School Lists: For evaluations and EGRA, READ M&E requires accurate school lists. These school lists are not readily available and those lists that we do find are often inaccurate. This makes sampling an iterative process.

PMP Update

No PMP changes.

4. KEY ISSUE NARRATIVE – SEE ANNEX G FOR DEFINITIONS

READ M&E is providing quality assurance by monitoring activities of READ implementing partners. The Annual Data Assurance activity provides quality checks of data to ensure validity, reliability, precision, integrity and timeliness. READ M&E has conducted a final evaluation of READ II and is currently conducting a mid-term evaluation of READ TA. To conduct these evaluations, READ M&E works closely with the MoE, assisting the staff to become expert data collectors and evaluators.

The Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) is a valuable assessment tool to help policy makers, educators, and donors aware of the reading level of children in grades 1-4. READ M&E conducted a pilot of a new EGRA tool in December of 2015. This new tool was administered on Nexus 7 tablets installed with Tangerine software. The pilot administration allowed READ M&E to assess the new tool and the ability of assessors to test children using the Nexus 7 tablets. Happily, all data collectors report that they had no difficulties collecting data electronically.

However, the data analysis function of the Tangerine software is not performing as expected. To help with cleaning and sorting the data, READ M&E has temporarily engaged three part time statisticians. READ M&E will work with the programmers to ensure that the data analysis function is corrected prior to the May 2016 administration of the EGRA.

5. INTEGRATION OF CROSSCUTTING ISSUES AND USAID FORWARD PRIORITIES

Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

READ M&E actively recruited female data collectors for the EGRA data collection activity. The female assessors work side by side with their male counterparts and were highly successful. For the May 2016 EGRA data collection, READ M&E intends to push the recruitment of female assessors.

Two female monitoring and evaluation experts and the female Chief of Party are part of the technical team at READ M&E. All of the administrative staff except for the Deputy Chief of Party are females.

Local Capacity Development

READ M&E works closely with the Ministry of Education providing training, hiring staff as data collectors/enumerators, and working with key personnel to improve their skills in data cleaning, analysis, statistics, and training.

4.8 Science, Technology and Innovation Impacts

As noted above, READ M&E has administered the Early Grade Reading Assessment on Nexus 7 tablets using the Tangerine software for seven languages in Ethiopia for the first known time. Collecting data on tablets ensures a higher quality of data by preventing enumerator and data entry errors. For the December pilot, READ M&E trained fifty-two enumerators, mostly employees of the Ministry of Education on how to use the tablets. This built their capacity and provided a more cost effective manner of collecting data.

6. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT

READ M&E has been working in cooperation and collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Education and regional state education bureaus. During the last quarter experts from the MOE and RSEB have participated in trainings on data collection for Mini EGRA and the midterm performance evaluation of the READ TA project. The participation of the MOE during the last quarter extends to the level of approving proposals and tools for data collection and issuing letters of cooperation to the RSEBs for the data collection process. The READ M& E project continues to enjoy a smooth and positive working relationship with partners and stakeholders.

The following table summarizes the key meetings that have taken place with partners:

Date	READ M&E Representative	Client or partner	Topic of meeting	Key decisions/outcomes
October 1, 2015	Jordene	READ TA READ CO	Collaboration	Share manuals for training
October 6, 2015	Jordene	Mr. Bekure (Lawyer)	Registration	
October 9, 2016	Jordene	Marc Bonnenfant (COR)	EGRA; Modification; New Staff; Continuous Assessment	Placement of funds into categories instead of discrete line items. Meet with UNICEF re Continuous Assessment
October 12, 2015	Jordene, Mulatu, Solomon	Mr. Bekure (Lawyer)	Registration	Met with Ato Siraj, desk officer- advised us to resubmit project documents.
October 14, 2015	Jordene	Marc Bonnenfant	Deliverables; New Staff; TWG;	Calendar of events
October 21, 2015	Jordene and Solomon	Ato Eshetu (MoE)	1. EGRA adaptation and mini EGRA time frame 2. Research undertaking	Agreed on the plan submitted and for the mini EGRA. Also discussed about possible policy studies to be conducted related to reading and writing. Topics to be identified in consultation with the RSEBs.
October 29, 2015	Solomon	READ CO and NORC	Understanding READ M&E evaluation of READ CO	Understanding reached.
November 20, 2015	Jordene	Bekure	ChSA revision submitted	
November 23, 2015	Jordene	Marc & Martin	Registration; Continuous Assessment; Annual Data Assurance; EGRA	EGRA workshop was well received. MoE appreciated it. Possibility of working in Drought Relief. Look at the Dialogue model as possible Think Tank.
December 3, 2015	Jordene	Marc & Bef	Continuous Assessment	Move forward on plan
December 8, 2015	Jordene, Solomon	Ato Eshetu (MOE)	1. Update about the EGRA piloting 2. General strategy on FCA 3. Discussion on the upcoming READ TA data collection 4. Completion of the READ II evaluation	Agreement has been reached on the strategy of FCA
December 12, 2015	Jordene	USAID Lawyer, RTI lawyer, Martin, Marc	Experience shared	Continue to pursue

December 16, 2015	Jordene, Solomon and other technical staff	NORC	To discuss data collection	Experience shared
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7. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

All field staff in Ethiopia remain temporarily classified as consultants pending registration of the project in Ethiopia. READ M&E continues to engage a local attorney in Addis Ababa to assist with registration of the project with the Charities and Societies Agency (ChSA). In the third quarter, READ M&E revised and resubmitted our proposal and budget to the ChSA. As noted above, non-registered status poses serious challenges to the project in terms of payment of taxes, cost and difficulty of hiring logistics firms to arrange activities, and limitations of staff retained as consultants.

Staff Actions

Dr. Hale continues to lead a consistent team in the Addis office. In the fourth quarter, the project hired a driver, Mr. Tsigabu. He had previously worked for AED (BESO) for seven years and FHI 360 (IQPEP) for five years. Our vehicle, transferred from Pact, was serviced and is now in road-ready condition.

Consultants and Subcontractors

As noted above, all field staff located in Ethiopia remains temporarily classified as consultants pending registration of the project in Ethiopia.

In the fourth quarter, READ M&E continues to work with a local attorney in Addis Ababa to assist with registration of the project with the ChSA and to review the project's human resources manual in light of local law. Other individuals have been consulted on the registration process but to-date, all efforts have not been successful.

Logistics firms: READ M&E has used two logistical firms to handle hall rental, refreshments, paying of per-diem, etc. MBH Management and Conference PLC, a logistics firm, provided excellent service for our READ TA data collectors training and the subsequent payment of the data collectors upon completion of their work. Fromseas, another logistics firm, provided good service for the

EGRA data collection training and the EGRA validation workshop. Once we are registered, hiring subcontractors to provide logistics services will no longer be necessary.

International Travel

Amy Todd, AIR Researcher, visited the field office to help with the analysis planning and logistics of data collector training and data collection for the READ TA midterm program evaluation from November 4-10. Zarko Vukmirovic, AIR Principal Psychometrician, worked with the Addis based team from December 10-17, 2015. During this time, Zarko reviewed the EGRA pilot forms from the perspective on comparability with baseline and future administrations, analyzed the EGRA data collected during the pilot administration, and assisted the team in planning the next steps in the benchmarking process.

Travel during the previous quarter (October – December 2015)

Name	Beginning date	Ending date	Itinerary	Purpose
Amy Todd	November 4, 2015	November 10, 2015	Washington, DC to Addis Ababa	Help with the analysis planning and logistics of data collector training and data collection for the READ TA midterm program evaluation
Zarko Vukmirovic	December 10, 2015	December 17, 2015	Washington, DC to Addis Ababa	Review EGRA pilot forms from the perspective of comparability with baseline and future administrations, analyze EGRA data collected by pilot administration, and plan continuous assessment and its coordination with MOE and other projects

Travel during the upcoming quarter (January – March 2016)

Name	Beginning date	Ending date	Itinerary	Purpose
Rebecca Stone	January 20, 2016	January 28, 2016	Boston to Addis Ababa	Develop plans for the FCA intervention
Rahel Barnardo	March 3, 2016	March 14, 2016	Addis Ababa to Washington, DC	Financial management training
Rahel Mekuria	March 3, 2016	March 14, 2016	Addis Ababa to Washington, DC	Financial management training

Procurement

During the fourth quarter, READ M&E procured 163 Nexus 7 ASU tablets and one HP Elite book 840 laptop. The tablets were used to collect EGRA data and will be used for future data gathering. PACT through USAID also provided the program with a Toyota 2008 long base hard top capable of seating nine people.

Because of VAT complications, other equipment purchases such as a vehicle and additional office furniture is being delayed until registration is complete and tax-exempt status has been received.

8. LESSONS LEARNED

The table below presents the lessons learned by READ M&E during this quarter.

Category	Issue/Success	Description	Impact	Lesson Learned
Training of Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) Data collectors	Issue	<p>During the data collection training workshop the following issues were noted:</p> <p>data collectors having difficulties setting date and time on tablet</p> <p>setting username and passwords on tangerine software</p> <p>unfavorable gender ratio among data collectors</p> <p>insufficient demonstration</p> <p>size of trainees uncondusive to training</p>	Obstacle to accurate data collection	<p>Tablet date and time to be set by READ M&E staff prior to workshop</p> <p>Username and password to be set on tablet on the first day of training</p> <p>Recruit more female data collectors</p> <p>Incorporate demonstrates to better facilitate training</p> <p>Training in two rounds-decentralized regionally to avoid logistical issues – conduct training and data collection in two rounds</p>

EGRA Administration	Issue	<p>During supervision of data collection the following issues were observed:</p> <p>improper seating arrangements</p> <p>low morale of data collectors</p> <p>assessors reading instruction for a given section while time on the tablet was running- taking time away from student</p> <p>unnecessary verbal acknowledgment after each response-taking time away from student</p> <p>assessor repeatedly explaining directions preemptively discontinuing sections</p>	Obstacle to accurate data collection	<p>Emphasize seating arrangements</p> <p>Prepare data collectors to be disappointed - morale was low among the data collectors as the students' performance was generally poor</p> <p>Instruct assessor to not explain sections as the time on the tablet is running – as this inadvertently takes time away from assessee/student to identify letters/words</p> <p>Discourage instructors from giving verbal acknowledgment after each response from child- this prompts children to wait until acknowledgment before moving on to next letter/word</p> <p>Instruct assessor not to repeatedly explaining directions</p> <p>Give child time for whole line (before discontinuing) on letter identification section.</p>
	Success	Great model female data collector	Exemplary performance	During workshop demonstrated proper data collection

9. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER INCLUDING UPCOMING EVENTS

Activity	Start Date	End Date	Task
Formative Continuous Assessment	1/20/2016	1/28/2016	Dr. Rebecca Stone, Technical expert from HO Visit
READ TA	1/25/2016	2/19/2016	READ TA data cleaning, nodes and guidebook, and transcription
READ TA	2/11/2016	3/1/2016	READ TA coding complete
Annual Data Assurance	2/12/2016	2/16/2016	Provide written feedback for all IPs
Inclusive Education	2/12/2016	2/28/2016	Write concept paper for USAID approval
EGRA	2/19/2016	April	Fix Tangerine software
Inclusive Education	2/22/2016	3/30/2016	Needs Assessment: Data available in Ethiopia?
Formative Continuous Assessment	3/1/2016	3/30/2016	Teacher observations
PMP	3/1/2016	6/1/2016	Revise to fit Modification Work Plan & Addis suggestions
READ TA	3/11/2016	4/8/2016	READ TA Data analysis
Inclusive Education	3/15/2016	3/30/2016	Refine research questions: Develop tools
READ TA	3/21/2016	4/15/2016	READ TA Report completion
Inclusive Education	3/30/2016	4/10/2016	IRB
Inclusive Education	3/30/2016	4/15/2016	Program tablets for data collection

10. HOW IMPLEMENTING PARTNER HAS ADDRESSED A/COR COMMENTS FROM THE LAST QUARTERLY OR ANNUAL REPORT

No issues were raised.

11. ANNEX

READ M&E Midterm EGRA Piloting Assessors Training Workshop Timetable

Nov 16 – 20, 2015, Bishofttu

Day & Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<i>Daily Objectives</i> :	Understand purpose of EGRA Be able to apply administration and scoring rules on paper	Understand tablet functions and administration Be able to upload data	Improve test administration skills Become familiar with questionnaire administration	Polish EGRA administration skills and scoring accuracy	Supervisor training Team preparations
8:30-9:00 a.m.	Registration Welcome/introductions/Ground Rules Overview of EGRA:	Review of Day 1 Overview of basic tablet functions	School visit 1: EGRA practice	School visit 2: EGRA + questionnaires	Supervisor training Team preparations for data collection
9:00-10:30 a.m.	purpose, instrument content Purpose of EGRA in this context				
10:30-10:45 a.m.		<i>Break</i>			
10:45-12:30 p.m.	Instrument overview Demonstration and practice of sub-tasks	Practice EGRA on tablets (small groups)			Logistics
12:30-1:30 p.m.			<i>Lunch</i>		
1:30-3:30 p.m.	Continued demonstration and practice of sub-tasks Student questionnaire	Tablet functionality issues Uploading data	School visit debrief	School visit debrief Discuss IRR 2 results Practice EGRA on tablets in	Logistics
3:30-3:45 p.m.			<i>Break</i>		

3:45-5:30 p.m.	Continued whole and small-group practice and correction	EGRA SAMPLING PROCEDURES School visit logistics	Practice EGRA on tablets in pairs (key tasks/issues) PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (IRR) 1 Review school visit logistics	Performance Assessment (IRR) 2	Logistics
3:45-5:30 p.m.	Continued whole and small-group practice and correction	EGRA SAMPLING PROCEDURES School visit logistics	Practice EGRA on tablets in pairs (key tasks/issues) PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (IRR) 1 Review school visit logistics	Performance Assessment (IRR) 2	Logistics

Results of EGRA Training Participant Survey

Introduction

EGRA data collection training workshop was conducted at Bishoftu from November 16-20, 2015. A pre and Post training survey was conducted among 52 (6 Female, 46 Male) participants who were represented from different organizations (Universities, MoE, NEAEA, RSEBs, ZED, Preparatory schools and NGOs). The purpose of the survey was to pilot the revised EGRA tools and improve our upcoming EGRA activities.

11.1 In this brief survey 52 participants were given the questionnaire and 50(96%) of them completed and returned the questionnaire. The survey; its first part deals with the organizational aspect and suitability of facilities and equipment used during the workshop, the second section deals with contents, structure and

consistency of the contents developed for the workshop, the third section deals with the methodology used during the workshop; appropriateness and usefulness of tools and materials, the fourth section deals with the skills of the experts in charge of the workshop; interaction and level of involvement, the fifth section deals with the atmosphere in the work shop hall ; communication and interaction among participants and the last section deals with the general evaluation of the workshop; attractiveness and involvement of participants during discussions and reflections.

The information gathered was entered in to computer and the analysis reveals the following.

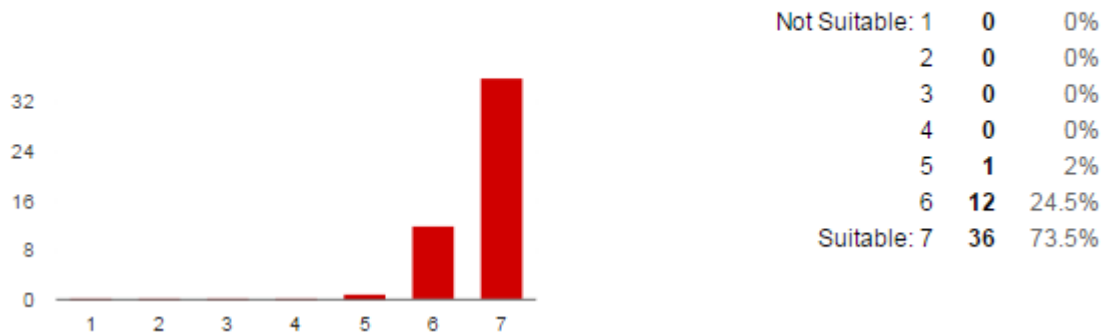
1.1 Organisation of the facilities used for the workshop was



From graph 1.1 one can see that 81.6% of the participants said the facilities used for the workshop are suitable while 16.3% of the participants said moderately suitable and the rest 2% said slightly suitable.

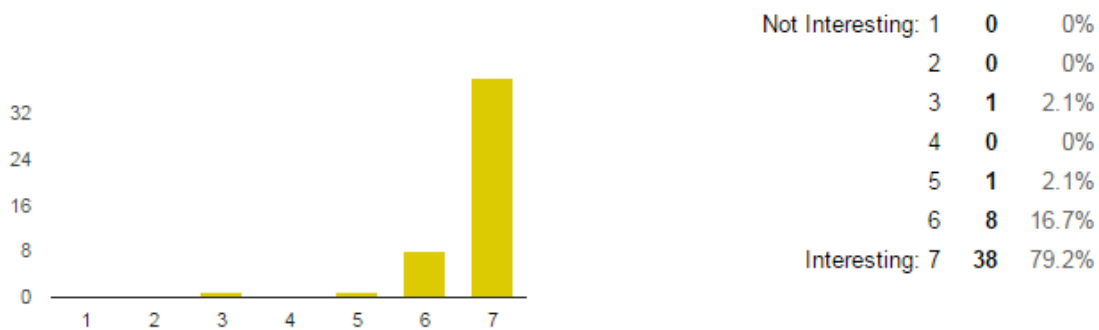
Chart 1.2 also reveals that, 73.5% of the participant said the technical equipment's used during the workshop are suitable, while 24.5% and 2% of the participants said moderately and slightly suitable respectively.

1.2 The technical equipment used during the workshop was



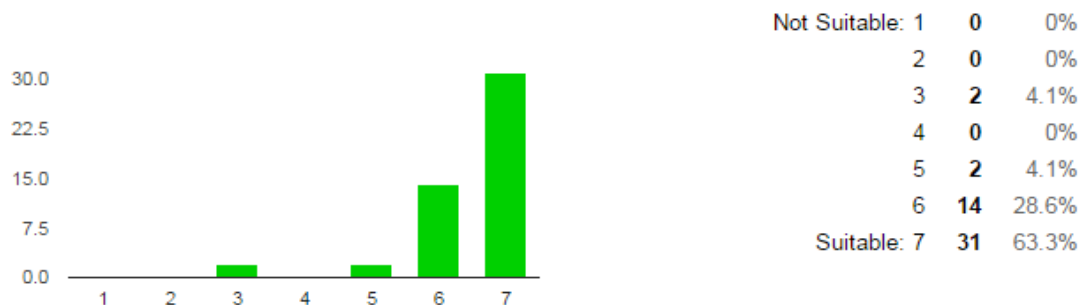
In the second section, 79.2% of the participants said the workshop's contents were suitable while 16.7% of the participants said moderately suitable, 2.1% of the participant said slightly suitable and the rest 2.1% said slightly not suitable.

2.1 The workshop's contents were



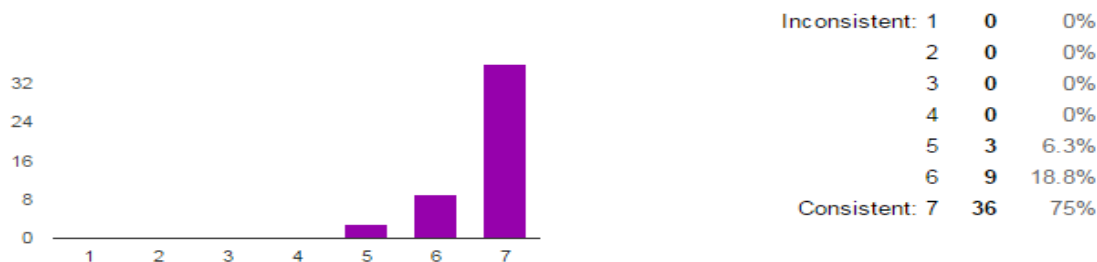
As depicted in Chart 2.2, 63.3% of participants claim that the structure of the workshop program was suitable while 28.6% and 4.1% participants said it was slightly and moderately suitable respectively. The other 4.1% said it was slightly not suitable.

2.2 The structure of the workshop programme was

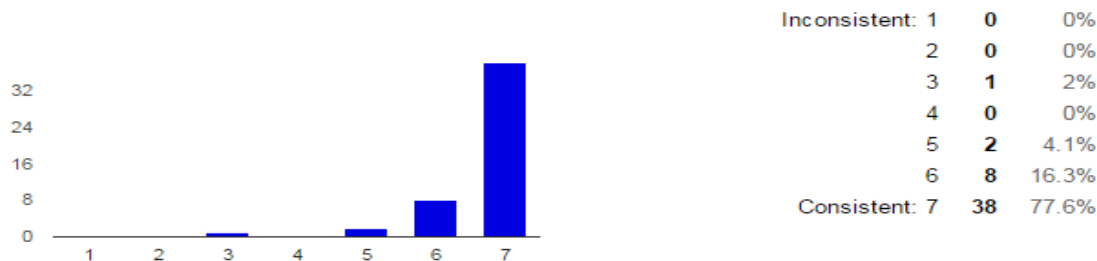


On other hand, for 75% of the participants workshop's contents were consistent with their expectation. While 18.8% and 6.3% participants said that it was moderately and slightly consistent with their expectations, respectively. Besides, 77.6% of the participants got the workshop's contents to be consistent with their need, 16.3% and 4.1% participants said that it was slightly and moderately consistent with their need respectively, while 2% of the participants said that it was slightly inconsistent with their need.

2.3 Were the workshop's contents consistent with your expectations?

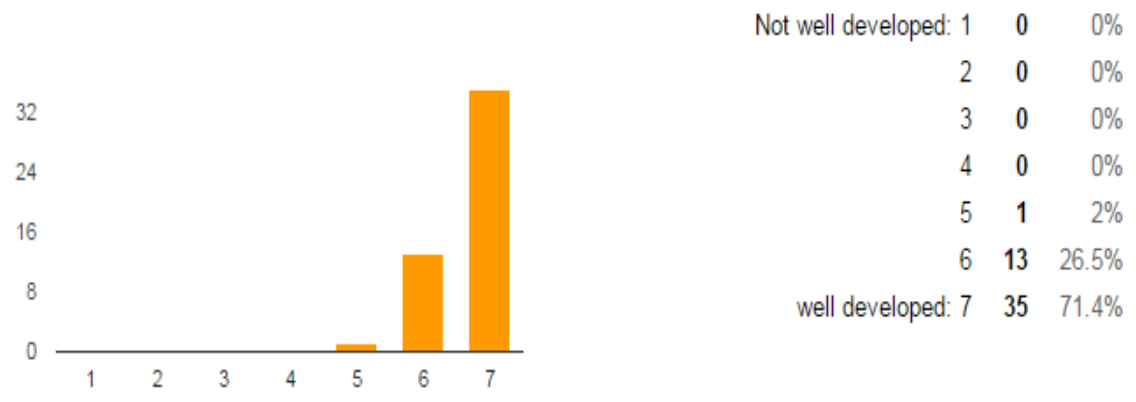


2.4 Were the Workshop's contents consistent with your needs?



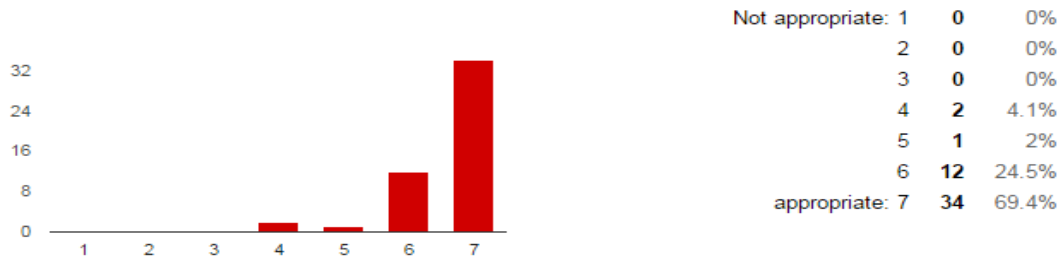
Regarding the workshop's contents, below in chart 2.5, 71.4% the participants claim that the workshop's contents were well developed. And the other 28.5% of the participants said the contents are moderately well developed.

2.5 Were the workshop's contents well developed?

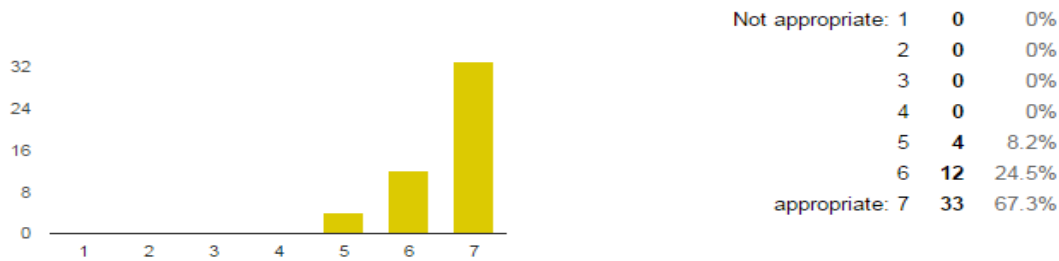


In the third section, 69.4% of the participants said that the tools and materials developed during the workshop were appropriate and 67.3% of the participants said that the methodologies used during the workshop were appropriate. Among the participants 4.1% said that the tools and the materials used were slightly not appropriate.

3.1 The tools and materials used during the workshop were

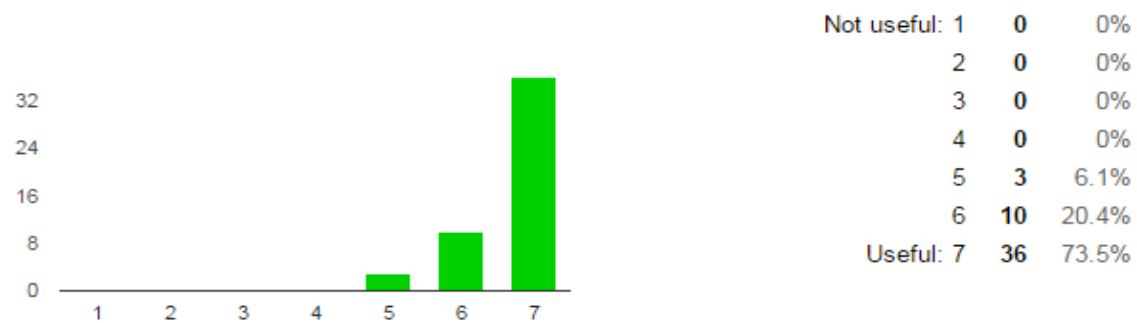


3.2 The methodologies used were



On the other hand, 73.5% of the participants said that the activities organized were useful.

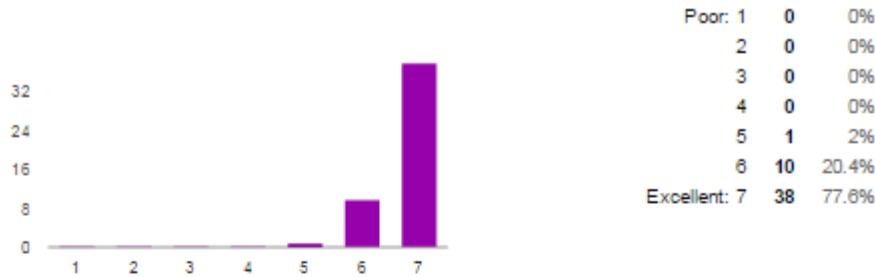
3.3 The activities organized were



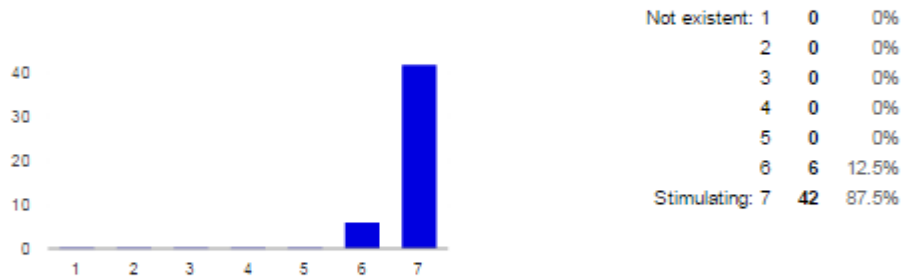
On the fourth section, most of the participants (77.6%) said that the capability of the experts in moderating the workshop was Excellent. And 87.5% of the participants said that the interaction among experts and participants was stimulating. Most of the participant's level of involvement and participation was high. Among all the participants 34.7% and

46.9% said that their level of involvement and active participation is high and very high, respectively.

4.1 Capability of moderating the workshop



4.2 The interaction between experts and participants was

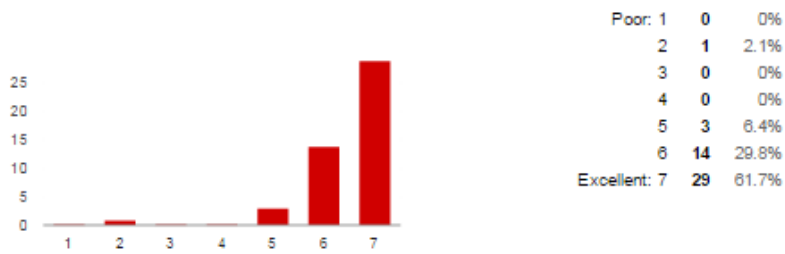


4.3 Your level of involvement and active participation was

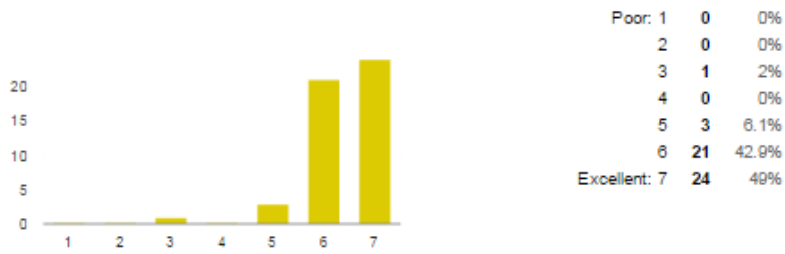


On the fifth section, 61.7% of the participants said that the communication inside the group was excellent. On other hand 2.1% of the participants said that it was moderately poor. On the other hand, regarding the interaction between the experts and participants, most participants said it was stimulating and the contacts they made with other workshop participants was beneficial for future collaboration.

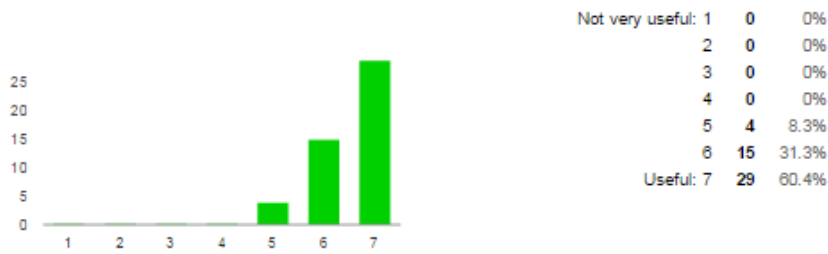
5.1 Communication inside the groups has been



5.2 Interaction between the workshop participants was

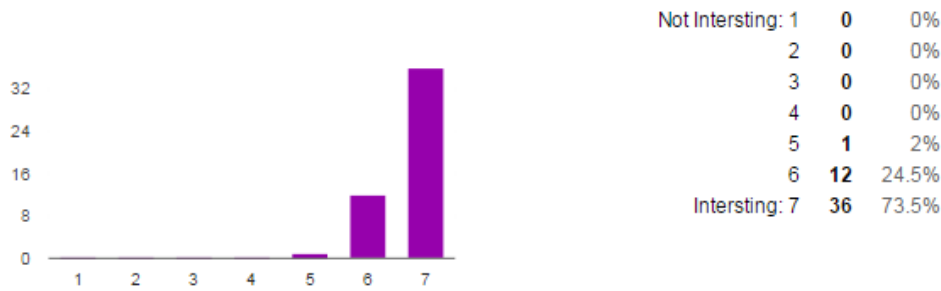


5.3 How useful do you feel that the contacts you made with the other workshop participants will be for future collaborations

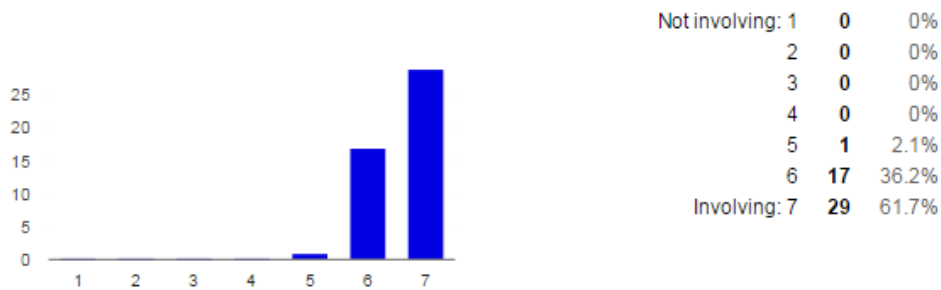


On the general evaluation part of the questionnaire, 73.5% and 61.7% of the participants said that the workshop program was interesting and involving respectively.

6.1 The workshop programme was



6.2 The workshop programme was



Some comments forwarded by the participants;

- The workshop was well organized and very attractive,
- The workshop was very interesting and value adding. Besides, the methodologies used by the organizers were friendly. The trainers were highly skillful and experienced. However, the time allocated for the training was not sufficient. They further suggested that between the beginning and end of the actual workshop days there should be at least a couple of days to make oneself stable and comfortable.
- They also thanked READ M&E project for introducing them with a new technology (The tablet)

Conclusion:

From what has been discussed above, one can safely conclude that the training workshop conducted at Bishoftu from Nov 16-20, 2015 was truly successful and achieved its mission in all aspects. The newly introduced data collection mechanism by using tablet, as witnessed by the participants, was exemplary.

EVALUATION OF EGRA ENUMERATORS TRAINING WORKSHOP

Name (optional)

Language Group:

Profession:

Qualification:

Affiliation:

Sex:

Male

Female

Dear participant of the EGRA enumerators training workshop, please provide us your feedback by filling this short survey. It will help us improve our upcoming activities. We at the READ M&E are very grateful for your cooperation and look forward to work with you.

1. ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS

1.1 Organisation of the facilities used for the workshop was...

Not suitable ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Suitable

1.2 The technical equipment used during the workshop was...

Not suitable ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Suitable

2. CONTENTS

2.1 The workshop's contents were...

Not Interesting ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Interesting

2.2 The structure of the workshop programme was...

Not Suitable ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Suitable

2.3 Were the workshop's contents consistent with your expectations?

Inconsistent ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Consistent

2.4 Were the workshop's contents consistent with your needs?

Inconsistent ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Consistent

2.5 Were the workshop's contents well developed?

Not well developed ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Well developed

3. METHODOLOGIES

3.1 The tools and materials used during the workshop were...

Not appropriate ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Appropriate

3.2 The methodologies used were...

Not appropriate ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Appropriate

3.3 The activities organized were...

Not useful

- ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Useful

4. SKILLS OF THE EXPERTS IN CHARGE OF THE WORKSHOP

4.1 Capability of moderating the workshop

Poor ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Excellent

4.2 The interaction between experts and participants was...

Non existent ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Stimulating

4.3 Your level of involvement and active participation was:

Very low ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Very high

5. ATMOSPHERE IN THE WORKSHOP ROOM

5.1 Communication inside the groups has been...

Poor ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Excellent

5.2 Interaction between the workshop participants was...

Poor ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Excellent

5.3 How useful do you feel that the contacts you made with the other workshop participants will be for future collaborations?

Not very useful ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Useful

6. GENERAL EVALUATION

6.1 The workshop programme was...

Not Interesting ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Interesting

6.2 The workshop programme was...

Not involving ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Involving

7. COMMENTS:

11.2 Agenda for READ TA Data Collection Training (Dec. 18, 2015)

Date	Time	Activity	Facilitator	Implementer
Saturday Dec 18, 2015	8:30-8:45	Registration	READ M&E	BMH
	8:45-8:50	Welcome and Introducing the purpose of the workshop and expected outcomes	Dr. Solomon	Dr. Jordene
	8:50-9:25	An overview of the READ projects (READ M&E and READ TA)	Ato Daniel	Dr. Solomon
	9:25 - 10:30	Presentation and discussion on the Interview Guides, Questionnaire and Observation Checklist	Dr. Solomon	Ato Daniel
	10:30- 10:50	TEA BREAK		Hotel
	10:50- 12:30	Continue - Presentation and discussion on the Interview Guides, Questionnaire and Observation Checklist	Dr. Solomon	Ato Daniel
	12:30-1:30	LUNCH		Hotel
	1:30 – 2:15	Brief description qualitative method	Ato Daniel	Dr. Solomon
	2:15 – 2:30	Roles and responsibilities of data collectors and supervisors	Dr. Solomon	Ato Daniel
	2:30-3:00	Practical exercise on interviewing on all instruments within the group (pairwise activity per language)	Dr. Solomon	Ato Daniel
	3:00-3:30	Presentation and discussion on the practice	Ato Daniel	Data collectors
	3:30-3:50	TEA BREAK		Hotel
	3:50-4:45	Sampling procedure, reporting and submission strategy	Ato Daniel	Dr. Solomon
	4:45-5:30	Assignment, financial issues and other administrative activities	READ M&E	BMH

Validation and Dissemination Workshop of the final performance evaluation of the READ II project

February 4, 2016

Time	Activity	Implementer
8:30-9:00	Registration	READ M&E
9:00-9:10	Welcoming note	Dr. Solomon
9:10- 9:25	Introductory remark	Dr. Jordene
9:25-9:40	Presentation of the evaluation background ,	Dr Solomon
9:40-:400	Presentation of the evaluation methodology and sampling procedure .	Ato Daniel
10:00- 10:20	Presentation of the evaluation findings –Part one	W/r Feben
10:20-10:35	TEA BREAK	HOTEL
10:35- 11:20	Presentation of the evaluation findings (part two) and conclusion	Dr Jordene
11:20-12:30	Discussion and way forward	Participants, Dr. Jordene and Ato Daniel
12:30-12:40	Closing remark	USAID representative
12:40-12:50		MOE representative
12:50-1:30	LUNCH	
HOTEL		

READ II Final Evaluation Executive Summary



USAID | **ETHIOPIA**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Performance Evaluation of Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Institutional Improvement (READ II) Executive Summary

Conducted by:

**AIR Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Monitoring and Evaluation
(READ M&E)**

March – November 2015

Submitted to

U.S. Agency for International Development/Ethiopia

Marc Bonnenfant, Contracting Officer's Representative (COR)

Prepared by:

American Institutes for Research

1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW

Washington, DC 20007

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the umbrella of the Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed (READ) projects, launched by USAID in collaboration with the Ethiopian Ministry of Education, the READ Monitoring and Evaluation (READ M&E) project provides external monitoring and evaluation services for the READ suite of projects.

The following performance evaluation, undertaken by READ M&E, is intended to provide external accountability for the direct implementing READ Institutional Improvement (READ II) project. This evaluation examines the major project outcomes, utilizing evaluation instruments developed collaboratively with USAID representatives and READ II project staff.

READ Institutional Improvement

The READ II project, a \$10 million basic education project implemented from August 2014 to March 2015, sought to improve the reading skills acquisition outcomes of public primary school students in five regions where the medium of instruction is one of the seven most widely spoken mother tongue languages, i.e. Amharic, Afan Oromo, Sidaamu Afoo, Somali, Hadiyissa, Tigrinya and Wolayitatto. The project worked directly with the Federal Ministry of Education (MoE) and through the Federal Ministry of Education (MoE) in the Somali Region and the Regional State Education Bureaus (RSEBs) in Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, and Tigray to improve early grade reading classroom instruction in primary schools by providing in-service professional development for teachers. The Ministry of Education and RSEBs under a Fixed Amount Reimbursement Agreement (FARA) implemented the project, targeting over 60,000 primary school mother tongue teachers teaching students in grades 1-4.

In order to effect large-scale change on the classroom level, READ II employed a cascade model of in-service teacher professional development training. To train teacher trainers, READ II utilized master trainers, materials, and a training guide, developed by READ Technical Assistance (READ TA), another project under the USAID suite of projects. Teacher trainers trained by READ II were in-turn assumed to return to their respective schools to train their colleagues.

Woreda and zone educational offices, RSEBs and the MoE in the five participating regions nominated the local teachers for the training. The training for each cohort took place regionally in multiple training group sessions and venues. READ II reported having trained 64,555 teachers.

PROCESS

The performance evaluation of READ II was participatory in nature and employed a qualitative research design that involved the collection of primary and secondary qualitative data through interviews and document review. Qualitative data collection was employed to facilitate the collection of rich data that would allow for fully capturing the experiences of those involved in the READ II trainings. READ M&E used four qualitative in-depth interview instruments: a) Interview Guide for Teachers (5 parts), b) Interview Guide for National Program Leaders (2 parts), c) Interview Guide for Experts from RSEBs, Zones and *Woreda* Education Offices (3 parts), and d) Interview Guide for Master and Teacher Trainers (5 parts). These instruments were then translated into Amharic, Tigrigna, Afaan Oromo, and Af-Somali. The instruments were further refined through

piloting to ensure readability and cultural appropriateness. Due to the lack of time and inability to find language experts in Sidaamu Afoo, Wolayitatto and Hadiyissa, READ M&E utilized the language of commerce, Amharic, for data collection in the areas where those languages are spoken.

A total of 243 teachers, trainers, experts and national program leaders participated in this performance evaluation. Respondents were 53% male, 47% female. The average age of respondents was 39, though they ranged from 20 to 60 years old. Respondents have an average of 19 years of experience.

As is customary of qualitative evaluations, READ M&E employed a purposive sampling strategy, a technique in which a sample is selected in a non-random fashion. Primary selection criteria for respondents at the zone level were the physical accessibility of zones and the concentration of teacher trainers and trainees. The presence of training venues in the Zone was a secondary criterion. USAID regional representative and READ M&E collectively selected the zones. Zone Education Office experts selected the *woredas*. Preference was given to areas with more teachers trained from urban *woredas*. Rural *woredas* within a 50 km radius from the selected urban *Woredas* were included in the sample. The sampling approach for respondent teachers considered the following: the distribution of trained teachers across regions; those experiences with training that may have differed based on the local context of language; and whether the teacher worked in an urban or rural school. The approach employed a stratum of zones, and *woredas* to sample schools divided into urban or rural categories. Stratification allows for targeted representation of teachers within each language group and urban and rural schools. A total of 148 teachers were interviewed.

Sampling of the experts from the MOE, RSEB, Zone and Woreda Education Office was entirely purposive and consisted of those individuals involved in the program, based on their availability. READ M&E interviewed experts until the point of saturation (when no new information came from the interviews). Although the sampling technique employed was purposive, attempts were made to capture the range of experience of those involved in the READ II training. Range of experience included those involved in decision-making, coordination, and supervision. A total of 38 experts were interviewed.

A combination of both simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were employed to select the Master and Teacher Trainers to be interviewed. READ TA supplied lists with 74 master trainers and 1,198 teacher trainers. This sampling frame, was used to randomly select respondents on the bases of language groups. However, in the field, when randomly selected respondents were unavailable, snowball sampling was used to replace respondents who were unavailable, resulting in interview of 22 Master Trainers and 33 Teacher Trainers.

READ M&E contracted eighteen experienced qualitative data collectors for each language. Data collectors were assigned to nine data collection sites- two data collectors per site in five regions. READ M&E staff conducted the interviews with national program leaders from USAID and MoE staff. Data collection spanned from the 13 – 27 June 2015.

Prior to the data collection, in a two-day intensive training, READ M&E trained data collectors on how to approach the respondents, use the data collection tools, record the data collected, keep

the privacy of the respondents, and transcribe the audio files based on the data collection protocol. An orientation on the activities of READ II and READ TA was given. This included the newly developed textbooks and training manual produced by READ TA.

To ensure data quality, the READ M&E staff supervised the data collection process. All individual and group interviews were audio recorded and the READ M&E staff randomly checked recorded interview from each language group with the corresponding transcription.

READ M&E adheres to strict data analysis principles, regardless of the type of data being collected. All qualitative data were coded and analyzed using NVivo software. The READ M&E team created a preliminary coding outline and structure based on the evaluation questions, interview protocols, and memos of ideas that emerged during data collection. This coding outline serves as the tool to organize and subsequently analyze the information gathered in the interviews and focus groups. The outline is a living document that may be modified as new themes and findings emerge during data analysis. A list of definitions for the codes accompanies the outline, so that coders categorize data using the same standards. The team subsequently codes the data into the structure using NVivo software.

Using this coded data, the qualitative team used grounded theory to identify themes, categories, and theories that emerge from the data and that confirm or refute the researchers' initial impressions. That is, rather than basing the analysis on a hypothesis, the researchers create concepts and categories based on the data, refining the concepts as they go along to eventually inform the overall findings. During this process of data reduction, researchers characterize the prevalence of responses, examine differences among groups, and identify key findings and themes related to the research questions.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation found that overall, satisfaction with the READ II program was high, the training went according to plan, and the experience of those involved in the training was positive. The government – to – government approach was largely effective and served its purpose. Although minor challenges were observed during the training, the training was conducted as planned with the satisfaction of all involved. The mode of presentation was participatory and appropriate for adult learners. The content of the training and the way it was conducted made the training inspiring for the teacher trainees' and teachers were highly satisfied. Those who started teaching immediately after the training were able to apply the knowledge they gained during the training and found it to be effective for teaching children to read in mother tongue language. Hence, it can be concluded that the training was effective and achieved its purpose.

There was strong alignment between the training offered and the training materials, student textbooks and teacher's guides. Because of the delay or lack of new textbooks and teacher's guides in the schools, the impact of the training on classrooms and student reading levels has yet to be observed. This goes beyond the lack of materials, but has implications for the involvement of teachers and administrator at the school-level. Respondents, particularly teachers, found that the lack of knowledge of administrators made it difficult for them to implement the new curriculum. Many respondents reported an unintended positive impact of the training: a reinforcement of the

importance of the language of instruction for reading being in mother tongue. Teachers took pride in using their respective mother tongue during the training and in the classroom.

Although not the responsibility of READ II, the evaluation found that teachers were very receptive to the new “I do, we do, you do” methodology. The training emphasized this methodology and provided teachers with the opportunity to practice. Many teachers reported that the new methodology was the most important aspect they learned from the training. Teachers report observing improvements in student reading skills after they changed to the new methodology. Trainers and trainees alike recommend that beyond scaling up through training remaining teachers, training cluster school supervisors and school principals is warranted. As one participant wrote, “Otherwise they would not initiate its implementation; nor support our [teachers’] attempt to put it into effect.” Moreover, education professionals in charge of assessing teachers’ performance, who were not exposed to the new training, will not be capable of accurately assessing actual teacher performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER ACTION

The following recommendations broadly address the needs of mother tongue language instruction and do not all stem directly from the READ II program’s activities. Though READ II was a successful project, the impact of the project on student reading outcomes is limited by the lack of availability of materials and the limited number of trained teachers. Therefore, distribution of textbooks and teacher’s guides to every school in order for teachers to make full use of the training is necessary.

Scaling-up teacher training to train greater number of mother tongue language teachers in order to realize meaningful benefits of teaching in mother tongue is currently underway. All mother tongue teachers need to be trained to effectively implement the new instructional methods uniformly within schools. Merely training two to three teachers from each school is not adequate and may not yield the desired improvements in reading and writing skills of students. During such training, attention to the following is recommended: coordination of the timing of the training with the receipt of the new textbooks, scheduling of trainings during school breaks as well as screen participants to ensure compliance with selection criteria.

Beyond scaling-up through training more mother tongue language teachers, involvement of cluster school supervisors and school principals is warranted. Education professionals in charge of assessing teachers’ performance, who were not exposed to the new training, are incapable of accurately assessing teacher performance, therefore, training for school supervisors, assessor and principals is necessary. Such training should focus on the following: the importance of early grade reading achievement and mother tongue literacy, the methodology behind the new curriculum and new textbooks, and how to observe the new methodology for teacher evaluation.

Moreover, refresher trainings to further increase the competency of mother tongue teachers is advisable. Such a training should focus of the following: enabling teachers to share experiences and make recommendations to the textbook developers; deepening teachers knowledge of early grade reading and mother tongue instruction with theoretical and practical applications; and prior

to the training, teachers should be surveyed to ensure that the training curriculum meets their needs.