



LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION COUNTRY PROFILE

Ethiopia

PREPARED FOR

Bureau for Africa

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ABBREVIATIONS

CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CTE	College of Teacher Education
DFID	U.K. Department for International Development
EGIDS	Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale
EGR	Early Grade Reading
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ESDP	Education Sector Development Plan
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
L1	First Language
L2	Second (or additional) Language
LOI	Language of Instruction
MoE	Ministry of Education
READ II	Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed II
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
REEP-A	Research for Effective Education Programming– Africa
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

INTRODUCTION

Enhancing reading skills in the early grades is a key education priority for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Despite some improvements in access and learning in sub-Saharan Africa, literacy levels in the early grades remain low, and progress has been slow. Efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the early grades have led to an increased focus on the role of the language of instruction (LOI). Recent research has demonstrated that mismatches between the LOI and the language that students and teachers speak and understand best, can hamper effective teaching and learning (University Research Co., 2019). Thus, it is critical to understand the LOI policy and linguistic context of a country when trying to design programs to improve literacy and learning outcomes.

Currently, USAID supports **Early Grade Reading (EGR) initiatives in 19 countries across sub-Saharan Africa**. Many policies in these countries have recently shifted toward adopting the mother tongue as the language for initial literacy acquisition, and then transitioning to a second or additional language, such as a regional, national, or international language, as the subsequent LOI.

Government policies and strategies related to teachers and LOI reflect country priorities, approaches, and objectives for early grade literacy. During the design-phase of donor-funded reading programs, decisions are made regarding the manner and extent to which national policies are incorporated into project design, and when alternative approaches or additional elements need to be considered. However, government policies on LOI, and other information relevant for informing design, are often difficult to find and are not easily accessible.

The LOI country profiles aim to address this need. The profiles will allow the USAID Africa Bureau, USAID Missions, and partner organizations to quickly understand the country's linguistic and policy context in order to design an approach that most effectively helps improve EGR outcomes. These profiles, designed for 18 of the countries with current or upcoming USAID EGR initiatives, aim to clearly and succinctly describe and illustrate the country's linguistic landscape and official LOI policy. This country profile in particular provides information on language policy and practice in Ethiopia.



LINGUISTIC CONTEXT

According to SIL International's *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, there are 90 living languages spoken in Ethiopia, including 86 indigenous languages and four nonindigenous languages. Of the indigenous languages, almost half are categorized as institutional (42), 14 are developing, 17 are vigorous, 11 are in trouble and the remaining six are dying (Eberhard, Simons, & Fennig, 2020). For more information on how languages are categorized on the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS), please see Table 1.

As outlined within Article 5 of the 1994 Constitution, the national language of Ethiopia is Amharic, which is spoken by over half of the total population of 108 million. Of the 56.9 million speakers of Amharic, 31.8 million speak it as their first language (L1), while 25.1 million speak it as their second language (L2) (Eberhard et al., 2020). In addition to Amharic, there are four provincial languages, including Afar (1.84 million L1 speakers), West Central Oromo (19.1 million speakers), Somali (6.72 million L1 speakers), and Tigrigna (6.39 million L1 speakers). Given the linguistic diversity of Ethiopia, two languages, Sudanese spoken Arabic and Wolaytta, are sometimes used for wider communication (Eberhard et al., 2020).

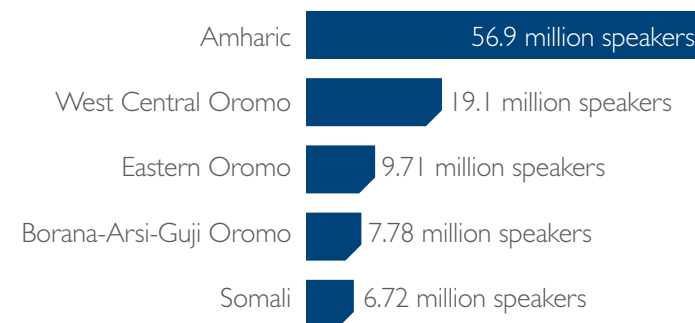
Other local languages that are primarily spoken as an L1 and in some regions are also used as the LOI to teach early grade literacy include: Gamo (1.63 million L1 speakers), Gedeo (1.41 million L1 speakers), Hadiyya (1.84 million L1 speakers), Kafa (1.19 million L1 speakers), Sidamo (4.34 million L1 speakers), Borana-Arsi-Guji Oromo (7.78 million speakers), Eastern Oromo (9.71 million speakers), and Sebat Bet Gurage (2.17 million speakers). The government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) also estimates that there are approximately 250,000 speakers of Ethiopian Sign Language across the country (as cited by Eberhard et al., 2020). For more information on the geographic dispersion of indigenous languages spoken across Ethiopia, please see Figure 2.

Table 1. Assessing Language Vitality: EGIDS Scale

Institutional	The language is used by institutions beyond the home and community
Developing	The language is in vigorous use and with literature in a standardized form
Vigorous	The language is not standardized but it is used among all generations
In Trouble	Intergenerational transmission is breaking down
Dying	Only fluent users, if any, are middle-aged or older
Extinct	The language is not used

Source: SIL International, n.d. For more information, please see: www.ethnologue.com/about/language-info

Most widely-spoken languages in Ethiopia

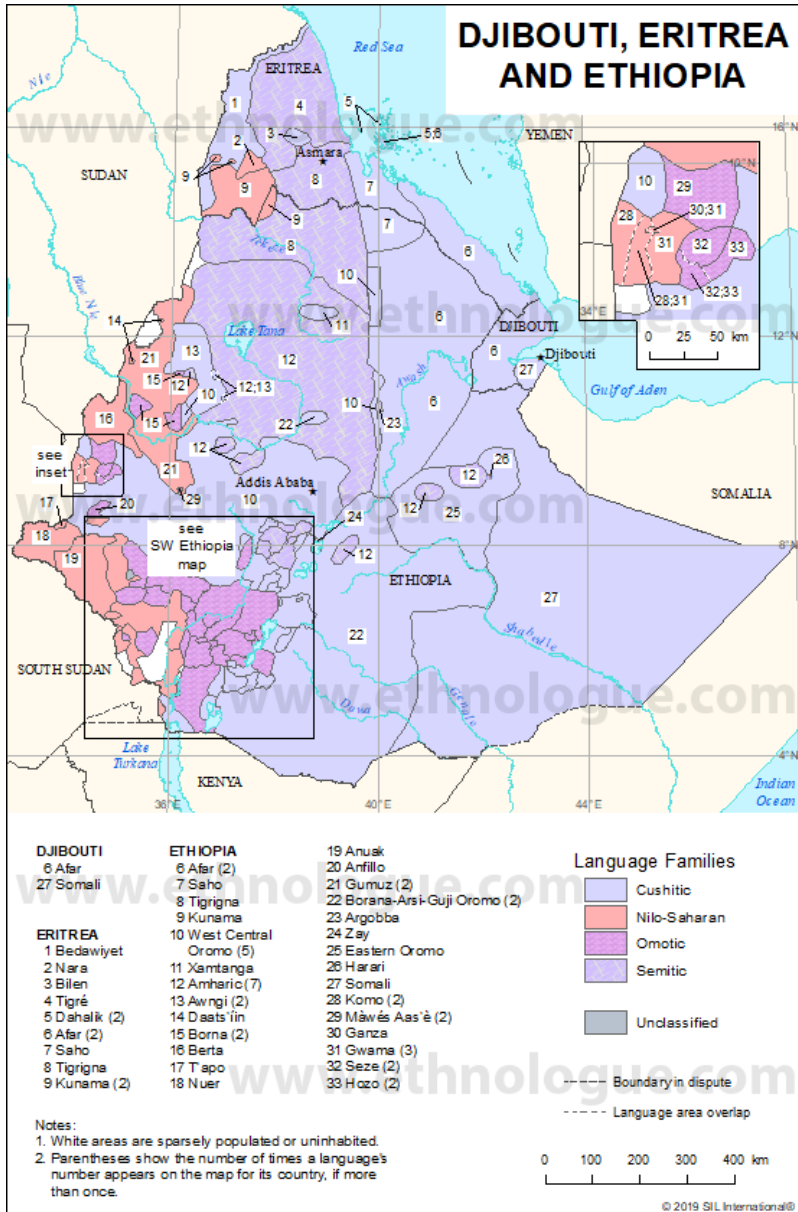


Source: Eberhard et al., 2020

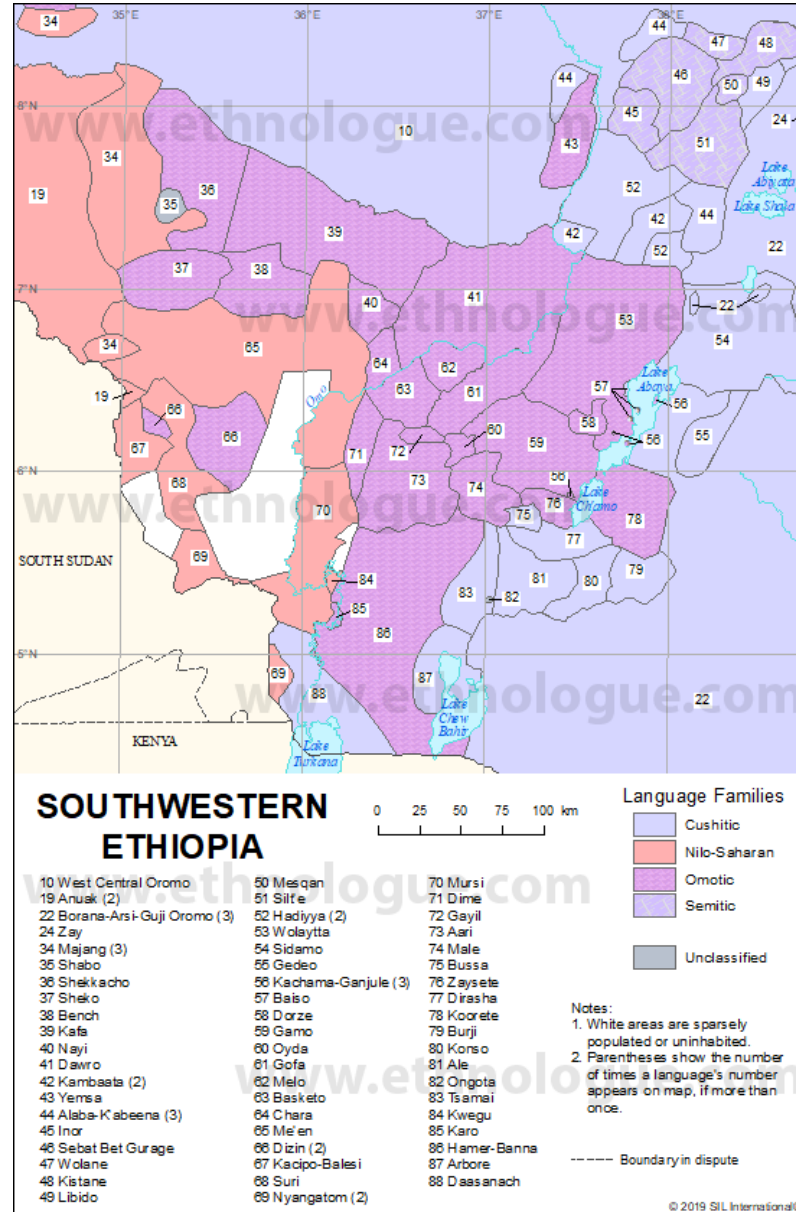
Figure 1. Map of Ethiopia



Figure 2. Mapping of Indigenous Languages in Ethiopia
 3/11/2020 Country Map of Djibouti, Eritrea and Ethiopia | Ethnologue



3/11/2020 Country Map of Southwestern Ethiopia | Ethnologue



Source: Eberhard, David M., Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig (eds.). (2020). *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*. Twenty-third edition. Dallas, Texas: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com>.

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OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION POLICY

According to Article 5 of the FDRE's Constitution of 1994, Amharic is the official working language of the Federal Government. However, all Ethiopian languages are equally recognized, and individual states can determine their own official languages (as translated and cited by Elkins, Melton, & Ginsburg, 2021). In alignment with the constitution, the Ministry of Education (MoE) outlined a progressive LOI policy within the 1994 *Education and Training Policy* that emphasizes the importance of mother tongue instruction to support early learning outcomes (FDRE, 1994). Under this policy, any language that is the mother tongue of all children in an area can become the LOI. Furthermore, national languages are to be used as the LOI for the duration of primary school or from pre-primary through Grade 8. English is introduced as a subject starting in Grade 1, while Amharic is introduced in Grade 3 (FDRE, 1994). Under these policies, the MoE implements a late exit trilingual model, whereby learners develop proficiency in their L1, as well as Amharic and English during their primary school years, after which the LOI switches to English in Grade 9 and is sustained throughout secondary and tertiary education (Maniates, 2018).

In 2006, the MoE commissioned a study to examine the implementation of the LOI policy across Ethiopia. Over the course of two months, researchers conducted field visits, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions with education officials, Colleges of Teacher Education (CTE), and school-level staff in addition to conducting over 100 classroom observations (Heugh, Benson, Bogale, & Yohannes, 2007). Table 2 below outlines the LOI that the researchers found to be in use in the primary grades, organized by geographic region and also for two major cities, Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. For Grades 7-8, subject-specific differences in the LOI are noted in the final column.

While the official LOI policy stipulates mother tongue instruction should be used in Grades 1-8, in practice, various implementation models are used (Heugh et al., 2007).¹ Currently, more than 20 local languages are used as the LOI in primary schools across Ethiopia. Some regions more closely adhere to the MoE's LOI policy, while others switch to English in Grade 5, 7, or 9 for some or all subject areas. Given the linguistic diversity in Ethiopia, the MoE has faced challenges in implementing the LOI policy, including a lack of access to reading materials in local languages, inadequate training of teachers on literacy techniques, and teacher shortages in some regions (Barnes, Zuilkowski, Mekonnen, & Ramos-Mattoussi, 2017).

¹ For more detailed information on the study's results and recommendations, please see: http://repository.hsra.ac.za/bitstream/handle/20.500.11910/6273/4379_Heugh_Studyonmediumofinstruction.pdf?sequence=1

Table 2. Languages of Instruction used in Ethiopia's Primary Schools

Regional state	LOI in Grades 1-4	LOI in Grades 5-6	LOI in Grades 7 – 8	
Addis Ababa (City)	Amharic	Amharic	English	All content subjects
Dire Dawa (City)	Amharic Af. Oromo Somali	Amharic Af. Oromo Somali	English	All subjects except Civics
			Amharic Af. Oromo Somali	Civics
Afar	Amharic	Amharic	English	All content subjects
Amhara	Amharic Awingi Hamittena	Amharic Awingi Hamittena	English	Science & Math
			Amharic Awingi Hamittena	All subjects except Science & Math
	Af. Oromo	Af. Oromo	Af. Oromo	All content subjects
Benishangul Gumuz	Amharic	Amharic	English	All content subjects
Gambella	Nuer Anguak Meshenger	English	English	All content subjects
Harari	Harari Af. Oromo Amharic	Harari Af. Oromo Amharic	English	Science & Math
			Harari Af. Oromo Amharic	All other subject areas

Regional state	LOI in Grades 1-4	LOI in Grades 5-6	LOI in Grades 7 – 8	
Oromiya	Af. Oromo Amharic	Af. Oromo Amharic	Af. Oromo Amharic	All content subjects
Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR)	Amharic, Dawro Gamo, Gedeo, Gofa Hadiya, Kembata, Kafinono, Kontinga Korete, Sidama, Silti, Wolaita	English	English	All content subjects
Somali	Somali	Somali	Somali	All content subjects
	Amharic	Amharic	English	Science & Math
			Amharic	All other subjects
Tigray	Tigrinya	Tigrinya	Tigrinya	All content subjects

Source: Heugh et al., 2007

The LOI policy does not include any specific provisions to address the language needs of students with disabilities. However, under the MoE's *Master Plan for Special Needs Education – Inclusive Education in Ethiopia (2016 – 2025)*, one of its strategic policy objectives is to enact a new education law that requires that sign language be the LOI for students who are deaf or hard of hearing (MoE, 2016).² It is unclear whether such a law has been enacted yet or is still being developed.

CLASSTIME

According to the MoE's *Curriculum Framework for Ethiopian Education*, the structure of the education system includes: 1) kindergarten which includes stage 1 for learners ages 4-5 and stage 2 for learners ages 5-6; 2) primary school, which includes Grades 1–8; 3) secondary school which includes Grades 9–12; followed by 4) tertiary education (MoE, 2009). More recently, the new education and training system in Ethiopia has divided the primary grades into two levels, with the new primary level including Grades 1–6, and a new middle level introduced for Grades 7–8. Prior to starting Grade 7, students must pass the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination (MoE, 2020).

The academic school year at the primary level lasts 39 weeks, 34 of which are dedicated to instruction while the remaining five are set aside for examinations and other schoolwide activities. Primary students' schedule consists of thirty 40-minute periods per week, with school lasting four hours per day (MoE, 2009). Table 3 outlines the allocation of periods for the primary grades.

Across Grades 1-4, learners receive five dedicated periods a week to developing literacy skills in mother tongue languages. Learners also receive six periods a week dedicated to English in Grades 1–2 and five in Grades 3-4. Furthermore, the Curriculum Framework stipulates that each lesson should include an introduction, starter activity, main activity, and plenary, and active teaching and learning strategies should be employed to motivate and support student engagement (MoE, 2009).

Table 3. Number of periods allocated by subject in Grades 1–4

Subject	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Amharic			3	3
Arts and Physical Education	6	6	4	4
English	6	6	5	5
Environmental Science	7	7	7	7
Mathematics	6	6	6	6
Mother Tongue	5	5	5	5
Total Periods per week	30	30	30	30

Source: MoE, 2009

² For more information on this plan, please see: <http://www.moe.gov.et/PoliciesStrategies>

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING CURRICULUM FOR LITERACY

Across Ethiopia, 39 CTEs prepare prospective primary school teachers for the classroom through a three-year program that is offered both on a regular full-time basis as well as through flexible summer, evening, and weekend programs (MoE, 2020). In contrast, secondary school teachers are prepared in universities. To enroll in a CTE, prospective teachers must have completed Grade 10 with a score of 2.00 on the Grade 10 examination. As a result, most prospective primary school teachers do not meet the academic requirements for Grade 11 and cannot gain entry to university programs (Barnes et al., 2017).

The pre-service teacher training curriculum includes 13 courses dedicated to mother tongue instruction, focused on the languages used within the geographic region surrounding the CTE. Additional courses focus on general pedagogy and assessment, science, math, and English instruction. In addition to coursework, all prospective teachers complete a practicum in local primary schools (Barnes et al., 2017).

According to the 1994 *Education and Training Policy*, pre-service teacher training at the pre-primary and primary levels (Grades 1–8) should be conducted in national languages (FDRE, 1994). However, Heugh et al. (2007) found varying degrees of adherence at CTEs across Ethiopia. While most regions used national languages for teacher training for the first cycle covering Grades 1–4, almost all programs for the second cycle covering Grades 5–8, switched to English, despite the fact that the LOI in these grades should also be national languages. Table 4 outlines the LOI found to be in use in CTEs in various regions as well as two major cities, Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa.

Most CTE lecturers were trained primarily in Amharic and English, which prior to 1994, were the official LOI at the primary and secondary level, respectively. As such, many have not received training in mother tongue instruction themselves and lack access to professional development opportunities to upgrade their knowledge and skills (Barnes et al., 2017).

To address this need, the five-year (2012–2018) Reading for Ethiopia’s Achievement Developed Technical Assistance (READ-TA) project, funded by USAID, provided technical assistance to the CTEs to revise the pre-service teacher training syllabi and to develop seven new full-semester courses which aligned to the new primary school curriculum. These courses aim to strengthen prospective teachers’ knowledge of cognitive development, literacy acquisition, and evidence-based pedagogical techniques to support reading

Table 4. LOI used in Ethiopian CTEs

Region	Teacher Training for Grades 1 – 4	Teacher Training for Grades 5 – 8
Addis Ababa (City)	English	English
Dire Dawa (City)	Amharic	English
Amhara	Amharic, Awingi	English
Benishangul Gumuz	Amharic	English
Gambella	Nuer, Anguak, Messenger	English
Harari	Harari, Af. Oromo, Amharic	English
Oromiya	Af. Oromo, Amharic	Af. Oromo, Amharic
SNNPR	Amharic, Dawro, Gamo, Gedeo, Gofa, Hadiya, Kembata, Kafinono, Kontinga, Korete, Sidama, Silti, Wolaita	English
Somali	Somali, Amharic	English
Tigray	Tigrinya	English

Source: Heugh et al., 2007

and writing in local languages (Barnes et al., 2017; RTI International, n.d.).³ The revised pre-service syllabi and new modules were first developed in English and then adapted to seven local languages, namely Amharic, Tigrinya, Af-Somali, Afaan Oromo, Wolayttatto, Hadiyyisa, and Siamu Afoo (Barnes et al., 2017).⁴ Prior to the roll-out of these courses across the CTEs, the READ-TA project trained more than 220 teacher educators on how to implement the course content using active, participatory methods as well as how to leverage the new information and communication technology equipment provided by READ-TA such as document cameras, projectors and tablets to support instruction (RTI International, n.d.).

The current USAID-funded, READ II project also supported pre-service teacher training at CTEs in the six regions in which it works. Activities focused on training CTE staff, specifically mother tongue language departments, to conduct internal capacity assessments to identify their own strengths and gaps and use the resulting data to develop institutional strengthening plans. Due to a change in scope as a result of COVID-19, the pre-service component of the project ended in late 2020 (Creative Associates, 2020).

TEACHER LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY/LANGUAGE SPECIFIC TRAINING

The MoE laid out an ambitious plan to improve both access, quality, and equity within the education system in its *Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP) V (2015 – 2020)*. Recognizing the implications that LOI has for learning outcomes, the MoE outlined three primary strategies to support teachers' language proficiency in the LOI. These include: 1) prioritizing local recruitment of primary school teachers to teach in national languages in order to ensure that they are fully proficient in the LOI; 2) providing additional pre-service language training to support teachers who are not from the region in which

³ For more information on the pre-service component of READ-TA, please see: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322864277_Improving_teacher_training_in_Ethiopia_Shifting_the_content_and_approach_of_pre-service_teacher_education

⁴ The spelling of some Ethiopian languages in English varied across references, and the research team elected to utilize the spelling used within the particular reference that is cited.

they teach; and 3) utilizing the MoE's Teacher Management Information System to support the effective recruitment and deployment of teachers with prior knowledge of less-common languages to meet critical demand (MoE, 2015). No additional information on the government's implementation of these strategies was found as of the date of publication, and the follow-on ESDPVI has not yet been publicly released.

To better understand primary school teachers' pedagogical and language skills, the USAID-funded READ Monitoring and Evaluation (READ M&E) project conducted the Mother Tongue Teachers' Competencies Assessment in 2019. Specifically, it assessed teachers' reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar skills in one of the seven LOIs in use in the regions in which it works (Amhara, Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), Somali, and Tigray regions). The results indicated that teachers' overall performance tended to be low, however, there were significant variations in performance across languages, with teachers of Amharic, Afaan Oromo, and Tigrigna performing better in comparison to teachers of Hadiyyisa, Sidamu Afoo, and Wolayttatto. Teachers of Af Somali performed lowest with an average score of 40% (American Institutes for Research, 2020). Furthermore, the researchers found that students from schools with teachers who had higher performance levels also scored better on an Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) (American Institutes for Research, 2020). These results underscore the importance of strengthening teachers' literacy skills in the LOI in order to improve early learning outcomes.

TEACHER IN-SERVICE

Once teachers graduate from a CTE and are assigned to schools, they are mandated to continue their training through a two-year induction program conducted within the MoE's school cluster system (Barnes et al., 2017). In addition, all primary and secondary teachers must complete 60 hours of in-service continuous professional development (CPD) per school year, organized as school-based groups that work through course materials (Save the Children, 2014). However, an assessment of in-service support conducted by Save the Children in 2014 found the following limitations to the existing

CPD model: 1) it emphasizes general pedagogical skills, rather than content knowledge; 2) it lacks an entity with the mandate to properly monitor its implementation leading to significant variation in activities across schools and regions; and most importantly 3) it has not translated into an improvement in teachers' knowledge of foundational reading concepts (Save the Children, 2014).

In the ESDPV (2015-2020) the MoE states that it will provide in-service CPD support that emphasizes reflective approaches to improve teachers' knowledge and skills. Specifically, CPD will be delivered to teachers at three levels: first with support from master trainers or external experts; second, within school clusters through workshops and meetings, and third at the school level through teacher-led study groups (MoE, 2015). Training will include courses that focus on 1) pedagogy including gender-responsive instruction; 2) foundational language, literacy and numeracy skills with a focus on mother tongue instruction; and 3) how to design and use formative assessments to monitor student learning (MoE, 2015). Where there is a specific need, the MoE also intends to develop a short-term course dedicated to mother tongue instruction that aligns with new curriculum materials as they are developed (MoE, 2015). As of publication, no additional information from the MoE on the implementation of this CPD model was found.

Donor-funded projects have also supported in-service teacher training focused on the LOI. Under the READ-TA project, RTI International conducted training workshops focused on mother tongue instruction for teachers working in Grades 1-8. According to their final report, the project trained over 100 master trainers and 2,474 teacher trainers in seven local languages, in addition to supporting the training of over 176,000 primary teachers. The training strengthened teachers' content knowledge and methods to support the use of new reading and writing curriculum materials (RTI International, 2018). Furthermore, in order to support teachers to put the new curriculum into practice, the project worked in close collaboration with the MoE to develop a mother tongue teacher mentoring framework and accompanying manual. In the project's final implementation year, the mentoring model was pilot tested with 125 sample schools

and was found to have promising initial results (RTI International, 2018). Under the Current READ II project, Creative Associates along with its implementers continue to support in-service teacher training focused on mother tongue instruction (Creative Associates, n.d.).

Results from the 2018 endline EGRA conducted by the American Institutes for Research under the READ M&E project highlight the importance of increasing access to regular, high-quality in-service training opportunities for Ethiopian primary school teachers. The assessment found that teachers who had received trainings of more than 10 sessions on mother tongue instruction were positively associated with higher student performance in reading. In addition, teachers with access to mother tongue instructional guides and those that reported confidence in being able to use them were also positively associated with better student learning outcomes (American Institutes for Research, 2019).

USAID READING PROGRAM APPROACH AND ONGOING PROGRAMS

In alignment with the U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education, USAID's programming in Ethiopia aims to support the needs and priorities of the partner country to ensure that gains from the programming are sustained.

Building from the work completed under the previous suite of READ projects (READ TA, READ M&E and READ - Community Outreach), USAID launched the five-year (2018 – 2023) **READ II project** in November 2018. The project, which is implemented by Creative Associates, Education Development Center, Inc., and World Vision, is expected to reach more than 15 million Ethiopian students in Grades 1-8, with a particular focus on supporting girls and at-risk learners (Creative Associates, n.d.). READ II works in close collaboration with the MoE and the Regional States Education Bureaus of Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia, Sidama, SNNPR, Somali, and Tigray to address poor literacy skills among primary school learners through targeted interventions at the school, community, and household levels (Creative Associates, 2020).

Read II project interventions aim to achieve four intermediate results, which include:

- 1. Improved reading and writing instruction** through the provision of in-service training workshops for primary school teachers, school-based mentoring, monthly reflective study groups and CPD led by local CTE in addition to the development and distribution of supplementary reading materials in the LOI and English.
- 2. Strengthened community engagement** which is discussed in further detail in the subsequent section, *Community Engagement within USAID Projects*.
- 3. Improved leadership, management, and delivery capacity** at each administrative level through the provision of targeted training on school instructional leadership and change management, biannual joint monitoring and reflective meetings, and support to implement actions in response to COVID-19.
- 4. Crosscutting support to reach girls and at-risk populations** through additional training to cluster supervisors, school directors and staff on how to establish safe and inclusive learning environments and provide psychosocial support to learners. In addition, READ II helps to establish school gender clubs, disseminate social messages to address gender issues and provide school grants to create safe and equitable learning environments (Creative Associates, 2020).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN USAID PROJECTS

To continue the work conducted under the READ – Community Outreach project, one of READ II's primary objectives is to strengthen community support for improved literacy outcomes. READ II's community engagement work is led by local implementation partners who conduct activities at the school, community, and household levels to create a supportive environment for learners to develop literacy skills. Specifically, the project trains Community Literacy Leaders to conduct reading camps and also established a mobile hotline to provide guidance to volunteers, parents, and the community on strategies to support distance learning during school closures (Creative Associates, 2020). In addition, the project trained school directors to conduct

parental awareness workshops to encourage parents to support children's reading and writing skills development. By the end of its third implementation year, the project had supported over 11,000 Community Literacy Leaders to conduct almost 6,000 reading camps with early grade learners and enabled over 38,000 parents to complete seven parental awareness sessions (Creative Associates, 2020).

OTHER DONOR FUNDED READING PROGRAMS

Alongside USAID, several other organizations are involved in implementing projects to address literacy and language issues across Ethiopia, which are described below.

The World Bank's General Education Quality Improvement Programme for Equity (GEQIP-E)⁵

Building on the two previous World Bank-funded projects, GEQIP-I and GEQIP-II, the four-year (2018-2022) GEQIP-E project uses a results-based financing approach to drive improvements in the delivery of quality education to children and youth. Financed by the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Bank, United Kingdom's Department for International Development, and the Government of Finland, this project provides technical assistance to the MoE and other key stakeholders in order to support implementation of its ESDPV (World Bank, 2017). Specifically, it aims to achieve four results; 1) improve internal efficiency within the system by reducing repetition and drop-out in the early grades; 2) increased equity in enrollment and achievement at the pre-primary level, for girls, refugees and students with disabilities; 3) improve learning outcomes in EGR, English, and math; and 4) improve skills and competencies of school-level management staff to collect, analyze, and use student performance data to support instruction and also to support low-performing schools to identify appropriate solutions (World Bank, 2017).

⁵ For more information, please see: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/128401513911659858/ethiopia-general-education-quality-improvement-program-for-equity-project>

SIL Ethiopia's Multilingual Education and Literacy Programs

SIL Ethiopia works in close collaboration with government ministries to support mother tongue instruction projects. With funding from the Norwegian Missionary Society and the European Union, SIL Ethiopia has been working to strengthen the capacity of local language experts to produce national curriculum materials as well as supplemental reading materials such as books, stories, and leveled readers. It also conducts other complementary community engagement activities (SIL Ethiopia, n.d.). Through these projects, SIL Ethiopia aims to improve children's learning outcomes, improve literacy among women and the community to encourage their active participation in their children's education, and to support communities to sustainably develop their own languages (SIL Ethiopia, n.d.).

The World Bank's Ethiopia COVID-19 Response Project⁶

The World Bank awarded a \$15 million grant to the MoE to support the implementation of its COVID-19 Response Project in July 2020. The grant aims to support continuity in learning during COVID-19 school closures and also to support the resiliency and recovery of the education system afterwards (Global Partnership for Education, 2020). Specifically, the MoE will conduct the following activities to achieve these objectives: 1) create educational content for radio and TV broadcast; 2) support rural, at-risk learners access to education through the provision of radio and learning packets; 3) design and implement a back-to-school campaign to disseminate information about the safe reopening of schools to parents, learners and communities; 4) install portable handwashing stations, with disinfectant supplies and other health materials to primary and secondary schools to reduce germ transmission once schools reopen; and 5) support teachers and schools to deliver remedial interventions to enable learners to catch up from the learning loss during the prolonged school closures (Global Partnership for Education, n.d.).

⁶ For more information, please see: <https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/document/file/2020%2008%20COVID-19%20AFF%20Request%20Ethiopia%20-%20Verified.pdf>

World Vision's Unlock Literacy Program

In order to support increased access to local language reading materials, World Vision Australia works in collaboration with Ethiopian universities and printers to publish story books in local languages. According to its website, over one million copies of these storybooks have been distributed to children across Ethiopia through reading camps. In addition, the project has trained 45,000 teachers in addition to 9,000 youth volunteers to support community-based literacy activities (World Vision Australia, n.d.). The project has four primary components, which include:

- reading assessments to regularly examine students' reading skills and track their progress
- teacher training to equip them with foundational skills to support students' reading skills and motivation to learn
- community engagement activities such as reading camps to encourage parental involvement
- design and distribution of contextually-relevant and grade appropriate reading materials to encourage children to frequently practice and enjoy reading (World Vision Australia, n.d.).

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