Webinar 4: Handout 15

EGR program planning tool

LANGUAGE: Key activities, questions and considerations

Purpose of this tool:

The purpose of this worksheet is to assist early grade reading teams as they plan and implement their programs. Designed to guide initial discussions and decisions about program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, the worksheet includes a list of key activities, questions and considerations related to a specific topic. EGR teams are encouraged to complete the worksheet as a team, so all stakeholders' and collaborators' ideas can be considered. More detailed planning related to each topic and key activity would then follow.

How to use this tool:

1. Review the list of key activities at different stages of the program cycle.
2. Read and review the key considerations that will guide your planning.
3. In the "Your program experience and plans" column, for each key activity:
    a. identify steps or tasks that your team will undertake to carry out the activity. Identify key collaborators and people responsible.
       If you have already undertaken a particular activity:
          i. identify lessons learned or guidance that may inform scale up of the program, or that could be shared with others in a similar context (either within the same country or in another country)
          ii. identify how you might need to modify an approach if you have encountered challenges during initial implementation, or if monitoring and evaluation has indicated the approach has not been effective
          iii. identify how your approach might need to be modified when the program is scaled up
    b. Identify specific challenges with respect to each activity or key consideration. What actions need to be taken and what strategies may need to be undertaken to address them?

LANGUAGE ISSUES		
Key activities	**Questions & considerations to guide planning**	**Your program experience & plans**
1. **Conduct a language mapping exercise**	• What languages are spoken in the geographic area, communities, and schools? • What dialects are used in different areas? To what degree are dialects of the same language similar or different, and may require different reading materials? • Are the communities mainly monolingual, bilingual or linguistically heterogenous, and in which languages? • How do individuals from communities that use different languages communicate (for the purposes of trade, etc.)? • What languages do students and teachers speak? What are their proficiency levels? What is the degree of "student-teacher" match with respect to language? What is the degree of student and teacher "match" with the assigned language of instruction (LOI) for the school?	
2. **Become familiar with/conduct research on language-specific issues, policies, and practices that are already in place**	• What is the national policy or guidance on language of instruction (LOI)? • What are LOI *practices* with respect to language and reading instruction? How are these similar to or different from official language policy or guidance? • What are the national and local goals of language acquisition? • Do current policies and/or practices reflect evidence-based best practices for instruction (i.e., learning to read in a language already spoken fluently)? • Is time allocated for reading/literacy instruction? For L2/Lx language learning? Is language learning in a separate time block from reading instruction? • At what age are students expected to transition to L2/Lx for instruction? • What languages are teachers expected to teach? What is teachers' skill level with respect to the languages they are expected to teach?	
3. **Evaluate attitudes, beliefs, and power dynamics associated with the language(s) used for instruction**	• Who speaks the language(s) used for instruction? What is the status of these groups within the community, region or country? • What attitudes and beliefs do people hold about the different languages of instruction and people who speak them? How might these affect whether languages are taught or used for instruction?	

LANGUAGE ISSUES		
Key activities	**Questions & considerations to guide planning**	**Your program experience & plans**
	• What attitudes and beliefs do people hold with respect to teaching children to read in familiar or indigenous languages? How might these affect whether these languages are taught or used for instruction? • Are policy makers open to including additional languages of instruction or adjusting the age of transition to a second or other language?	
4. **Assess language orthographies for standardization and "readiness"**	• Has the orthography, or writing system, of the languages that may be used for instruction been analyzed and reviewed to verify whether it is "ready" to be used for instruction? (See Orthography Assessment Tool for guidance.) • Which languages' orthographies are the most standardized and are ready for use for reading instruction? • Which languages' orthographies are the least standardized and will need to be standardized to be ready to use for reading instruction? • What is the process that will need to take place for a language to be reviewed, standardized and officially "approved" for use for instruction? How much time will it take and who will be involved?	
5. **Identify and obtain consensus on what languages will be used for reading and language instruction**	• What is the process and who needs to be involved in deciding what languages will be used for reading and language instruction? • Is the following information available to inform decision-making?: number of children who speak the different languages, orthography readiness, dialect differences, availability of TLMs, political or cultural considerations, etc. • What is the process for developing a reading program in multiple different languages? Will it be staggered? • Are all stakeholders in agreement regarding the language(s) of instruction? If not, how can consensus be obtained?	
6. **Develop and conduct public awareness campaign around language issues**	• What are language-related attitudes and beliefs in the communities where the EGL program will be implemented? • What kinds of public awareness activities regarding language and the reading program will be most effective in fostering understanding and encouraging support for the reading program among different audiences/stakeholders? • What is the effectiveness of the public awareness campaign?	
7. **Analyze language-specific issues to inform**	• What are the differences and similarities between the languages to be used for language and literacy instruction?	

LANGUAGE ISSUES		
Key activities	**Questions & considerations to guide planning**	**Your program experience & plans**
instruction, materials development	• What instructional approaches will be needed to teach children to read in the languages chosen, based on the specific properties of the languages, degree of similarity between languages, etc.? How might these be similar or different across languages? • What instructional approaches will be needed in contexts where children will be expected to learn to read in a language that is not their first or mother-tongue language? • What instructional approaches will be needed to support transfer of skills in contexts where children will be expected to learn to read in more than one language? • What research may be needed to support the identification of effective instructional approaches, especially in contexts where children are expected to transition from one LOI to another? • What materials are available in the languages chosen for instruction? What new resources will need to be developed?	
8. **Assess teacher language and literacy skills, as well as knowledge and beliefs about reading and language instruction**	• How well do teachers read, write and speak the languages they will be expected to teach? • What kind of teacher language/reading skills assessment would be appropriate and feasible to conduct, based on the information needed and contextual considerations? • What PD opportunities and resources might teachers need to improve their literacy skills? • What knowledge and beliefs do teachers have about language and literacy instruction, early grade reading, and the languages to be used? How might their knowledge and beliefs affect their training and instructional support needs? • How can teaching and learning materials be designed to accommodate teachers' language skills as well as improve them?	
9. **Align instructional scope and sequence (S&S) for all languages to be used for reading instruction**	• Do scopes and sequences (e.g., plan for what to teach, and how to teach it) reflect instruction of familiar/similar language characteristics before unfamiliar/dissimilar characteristics? • Are skills presented in logical, developmental patterns associated with language learning (i.e., oral skills before reading/writing skills, interactive lessons, use of realia or drama, etc.)?	

LANGUAGE ISSUES		
Key activities	**Questions & considerations to guide planning**	**Your program experience & plans**
	• Do S&S include continuous improvement of L1 literacy skills, even after Lx has been introduced?	
10. Evaluate implementation to determine whether approach to teaching reading in different languages, language policies and practices need to be fine-tuned	• How has language been explicitly incorporated into MERL plans? • Are all aspects of the program (content, instruction, materials teacher PD) aligned with respect to language? • Are teachers providing appropriate, effective instruction in the languages identified for instruction? • Are children learning to read in the target languages as anticipated? If not, what are the challenges and what needs to be modified? • In contexts where children are learning to read an L1 and Lx, what "language thresholds" have been identified to inform transfer and transition from one LOI to another? • How are language-specific aspects of EGL program implementation and results being communicated and used?	
11. Address language-related policies and practices	• What changes in policy may need to be made related to the languages used for instruction? • What changes in policy or practice may need to be made with respect to LOI assignment to schools? • What changes in policy or practice may need to be made with respect to teacher school assignment based on language? • What changes in policy or practice may need to be made with respect to teacher training (language of training, training on language issues, etc.)?	