Extending literacy beyond the classroom: youth groups and library partnerships for sustainability

April 16, 2019

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### Kenya Tusome Early Grade Reading Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>75,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teachers</td>
<td>23,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaches (CSOs)</td>
<td>1270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils (yearly)</td>
<td>3.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books distributed</td>
<td>23 million (approx.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Duration:** 2015 - 2019  
**Grades:** 1 – 3  
**Languages:** Kiswahili and English

Include:  
- Textbooks  
- Teacher’s Guides  
- Homework Books  
- Supplementary readers
Youth Grants Programme

Purpose:
Awardees to work in communities to engage youth aged 18-35 in the improvement of early grade reading skills

Number of grantees
23 Grantees

Duration
12 months (October 2017 to September 2018)
Nakuru County Youth Bunge Forum (NCYBF)

Grant: $23,770 USD

Main Objectives/ Scope of Work:
• To provide an environment where children access and participate in quality reading and learning services within their communities
• To improve parents’ ability to provide, care and support reading and learning needs of their children
• To conduct Monitoring & Evaluation for Tusome activities

Period of Performance:
12 months (October 2017 to September 2018)
School based activities

- Storytelling sessions
- School reading and writing exhibition sessions
  - Group reading
  - Individual reading
- Parents’ engagement sessions
- Zonal reading exhibitions
  - At the zonal level, Zonal reading exhibitions held
  - schools in the zone participated.

Reading exhibition session at Mercy Njeri Primary being led by a class 3 girl.

Reading activity held at Keelwet Primary
Summary of activities excerpt – June to September 2018 period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>No. of sessions</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent engagement sessions</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>1187</td>
<td>1583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners/stakeholders involved</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers involved during parent engagement sessions</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School reading exhibitions</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils participating in the school exhibitions</td>
<td></td>
<td>2970</td>
<td>2790</td>
<td>5760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers involved during school exhibitions</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zonal reading exhibitions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils participating</td>
<td></td>
<td>196</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers &amp; Head teachers participating</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders involved</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E visits by RTI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Kenya National Library Services, Nakuru Branch

- Kenya National Library Service (KNLS) was established through an act of parliament in 1965
- KNLS has a network of 62 public libraries across 33 of the 47 counties.
- KNLS Nakuru was established in 1975, became state of the art library in 2012
- Head Librarian – Ms Purity Kavuri-Mutuku
  - 4 years in Nakuru KNLS branch
  - Over 15 years in library service
Partnership between KNLS and Nakuru County Youth Bunge Forum

- **December 2017** – NCYBF held a partners forum in Nakuru
  - KNLS attended and interest in partnering grew
- **March 2018** – memorandum of understanding between KNLS & NCYBF signed as follows:
  - **provide reading materials** (physical books, audio books, audio visual story books and games) for reading sessions and Tusome reading clubs
  - **assign staff** to carry out reading activities with NCYBF project team
  - **grant full access** to NCYBF to use their library space for any literacy activities
  - host a **teachers’ refresher session** on the use of digital materials to enhance literacy in their schools.
# Library activities

## Reading exhibitions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zonal Reading Exhibition – Ngata Zone</td>
<td>30/07/2018</td>
<td>KNLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zonal Reading Exhibition – Southern Zone</td>
<td>1/08/2018</td>
<td>KNLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Literacy Day Celebration</td>
<td>8/08/2018</td>
<td>KNLS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Deputy Librarian at KNLS Nakuru, Emily Onchari addressing children
International Literacy Day 2018

- 26 schools in attendance
- Over 600 children and their teachers in attendance
- Celebrations held at KNLS, Nakuru Branch
- Reading, story telling and writing activities held
- Participants during the reading activities included **Blind children** and **Deaf children** who showcased their reading ability.

Mrs Florence Wanambisi, HI Teacher at Ngala Primary School for Deaf, Nakuru supporting one of her learners.

Children participating in a group activity during the International Literacy Day celebrations.
Impact on Library (KNLS Nakuru)

1. **Increased library membership**
   - 14 schools subscribed with the library within a period of 2 months (expected annual target is 7)

2. **Increased library patronage**

3. **Attracted more community partnerships**
   - e.g. Nakuru Rotary Club donation of book bank for 10 schools

4. **Nakuru County government** – Sees the library as an education development partner

5. **Recognition of library KNLS Nakuru**
   Awarded by Kenya Library Association ‘The best public Library with community engagement category’
   Kenya Network of Community libraries

6. **International recognition**
Impact of partnership on library monthly attendance

- **Aug. 17**: Adult Male: 29%, Adult Female: 27%, Junior Male: 24%, Junior Female: 20%
- **Aug. 18**: Adult Male: 23%, Adult Female: 25%, Junior Male: 25%, Junior Female: 26%
- **Feb. 19**: Adult Male: 18%, Adult Female: 18%, Junior Male: 32%, Junior Female: 32%
Librarian (KNLS Nakuru)

- Pupils have impressive performance and mastery of literacy skills.
- Community support was beyond expectation. Parents ensured they had a representative during all the sessions conducted in all the schools.
- Parents have embraced the need to improve their literacy skills.
- Some parents have enrolled for the free adult literacy classes at the library especially computer classes.
Nakuru County Youth Bunge Forum

Tapped into an existing opportunity and created a bridge between the learners, the library and the community with great success.

• The experience was fulfilling for NCYBF:
  – seeing learners read books with enthusiasm
  – teachers confirming an improvement in reading ability
  – parents contributing to meet subscription costs at the Library to access more materials

• Successes
  – raised awareness of parents on their role and contribution in improving the learning environment,
  – parents help their children at home.
  – the program increased access of supplementary books by learners thus improving their performance.
  – enhanced collaboration between various ëi.e. Head teachers, class teachers, board of management, Parents association, parents, MoE/TSC and KNLS
Teachers

• ‘I have learned a lot from their story telling skills. The gave me refresher experience on the use of digital skills in accessing supplementary materials online using digital laptops that we were given by the government.’

• ‘I have witnessed a lot of positive change among the learners in and out of the class. Learners are always eager for reading sessions, their interaction with vocabulary has improved comprehension skills.

• ‘My learners have developed self-confidence within and without the class. They ask questions and answer questions more confidently and also make presentations at the school assembly unlike in the past’

• ‘It has led to the formation of the Tusome Reading Club in my school which is active’
Nakuru Youth Bunge have been of so much help to the schools
– by always coming to our school to engage parents
– bringing supplementary materials
– helping learners with reading and storytelling activities
– exposing learners to opportunities such as use of the Library
– Interaction with learners from other schools.

“Learners have registered improved reading abilities, improved self esteem and reading confidence, organization skills have improved tremendously.”

“Parents participation has increased significantly in program activities.”
Parents’ reflections

- ‘I have seen an improvement in my child’s academic performance’
- ‘The children have developed a positive attitude towards reading’
- ‘Most learners have taken learning seriously since it is enjoyable and fun’
- ‘My children can now read books on their own’
- ‘I joined a women’s group that was started by the library. We meet twice a week for knitting and bead making. I gained a skill which can help me make money while running house chores. ’
Recommendations

• Set up **clear goals of your partnership** from the very beginning and **focus** your energies towards achieving them.
• Develop conflict resolution strategies from the onset of a program.
• Programs should maximize complementary aspects of various organizations (an organization’s weakness could be another organization’s strength.)
• Involve all stakeholders
• Programs should think of sustainability from inception.
Thank you!

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