Understanding Teachers’ Attitudes towards Learning through Play and their Classroom Practice in Kenya, Rwanda and Ghana
LEGO Foundation’s Play Accelerator Program

- The LEGO Foundation’s Play Accelerator program is specifically designed to expand playful pedagogies into primary schools in five low and middle-income countries (LMICs)
- RTI International has received funding from The LEGO Foundation to serve as a research partner for these five programs
- The five programs: Bangladesh (BRAC), Vietnam (VVOB), Kenya (Aga Khan Foundation), Rwanda (UNICEF) and Ghana (Right to Play)
Research Questions

- What are teachers’ attitudes toward Learning through Play?
- What are teachers’ classroom practices, in terms of using collaborative, interactive, creative, exploratory, and student-driven play-based approaches?
- How have teachers’ attitudes and practice changed after one year of interventions to support Learning through Play?
## Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program (Country)</th>
<th>Implementer</th>
<th># Classroom Observations</th>
<th># Teacher Interviews</th>
<th>Baseline/Midline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Rwanda)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TuKu</td>
<td>Aga Khan Foundation</td>
<td>279 288</td>
<td>139 150</td>
<td>Oct-Nov 2021 Oct 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Kenya)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners in Playful Pedagogies (P3)</td>
<td>Right to Play</td>
<td>361 491</td>
<td>196 289</td>
<td>June 2021 Nov-Dec 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ghana)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Findings

• Teachers in general support the concept of play and employing play-based teaching in the classroom, but far fewer are okay students directing their own learning.

• In practice, teachers spend the most time explaining/lecturing and monitoring the class.

• At midline, significant changes were detected in some aspects of teacher practice in Kenya and Ghana but overall the frequency of play based approaches is low.
What are teachers’ attitudes toward Learning through Play?
Percent of Grade 2 Teachers who agree with the more “Playful” Statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ghana</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>Rwanda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is more important that the students are engaged</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play is an important part of learning for children in primary school</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children learn literacy/language best in small groups</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents welcome more play-based approaches to learning in the classroom</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children learn best by exploring new things on their own</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children learn best from their peers</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If children answer their own questions, then they will be more likely to understand</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important for children to be free to talk</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children can choose their own learning activities in the classroom</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If children do not understand, then they should try to find the answer independently before asking the teacher</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see the benefits of implementing LtP in the classroom</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning through Play methods are too difficult to implement in the classroom</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I regularly use play-based teaching methods in the classroom</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have support I need from the school administration to effectively implement learning through play</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel confident in my ability to implement learning through play methods in the classroom</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are teachers’ classroom practices, in terms of using collaborative, interactive, creative, exploratory, and student-driven play-based approaches?
Teacher Actions During Grade 2 Lessons (Percentage of Observed Class Time)

- Explain concept:
  - Ghana: 25
  - Kenya: 22
  - Rwanda: 8

- Models:
  - Ghana: 20
  - Kenya: 19
  - Rwanda: 4

- Affirms:
  - Ghana: 2
  - Kenya: 3
  - Rwanda: 1

- Question Closed-Ended:
  - Ghana: 9
  - Kenya: 8
  - Rwanda: 11

- Question Open-Ended:
  - Ghana: 9
  - Kenya: 1
  - Rwanda: 3

- Monitors:
  - Ghana: 35
  - Kenya: 29
  - Rwanda: 11

- Management:
  - Ghana: 17
  - Kenya: 18
  - Rwanda: 6

- Nothing:
  - Ghana: 1
  - Kenya: 2
  - Rwanda: 1
Student Activity During Grade 2 Lessons (Percentage of Observed Class Time)

- **Reading**: Ghana 10, Kenya 10, Rwanda 10
- **Listening**: Ghana 16, Kenya 45, Rwanda 28
- **Writing**: Ghana 12, Kenya 16, Rwanda 30
- **Oral Response**: Ghana 20, Kenya 5, Rwanda 16
- **Turn taking**: Ghana 3, Kenya 2, Rwanda 0
- **Physical Response**: Ghana 4, Kenya 4, Rwanda 5
- **Manipulative Response**: Ghana 1, Kenya 2, Rwanda 1
- **Getting**: Ghana 4, Kenya 5, Rwanda 4
- **Not Engaged**: Ghana 1, Kenya 0, Rwanda 1

**Countries**: Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda
Use of Materials During Grade 2 Lessons (Percentage of Observed Class Time)
How have teachers’ attitudes and practice changed after one year of interventions to support Learning through Play?
Mean Scores of Teachers on the "Attitudes towards Learning through Play" Scale
Baseline (G1, 2021) vs. Midline (G2, 2022)
Changes in Teacher Practice from Baseline*

**Ghana**  Teachers affirming student responses more  
- Increased use of manipulatives  
- Fewer lessons with no materials  
- Fewer lessons with teachers as the initiator

**Kenya**  Teachers spent less time explaining concepts (lecturing)  
- Students spent more time listening  
- Amount of time spent with learning happening through *speaking* increased (students and teachers)  
- Fewer lessons with no materials  
- Less class time spent in “whole class” organization

**Rwanda**  None of the changes were found to be statistically significant

*statistically significant, compared to control*
In general, teachers are in support of Learning through Play in theory but are less in support of a more student-centered, “free” classroom environment. This may be due in part to a misconception that student agency and more student-centered approaches will lead to a less disciplined and more chaotic classroom.

Across all three programs, teachers spent the largest proportion of time explaining concepts, modeling activities and monitoring students’ understanding, while students spent the largest proportion of time listening. There was a noticeably limited use of more interactive or student-focused actions.

At midline, significant changes were detected in some aspects of teacher practice in Kenya and Ghana but overall the frequency of play based approaches is low.

Thank you!