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# USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading Program

The Status of Early Grade Reading and Teaching Reading in Primary School: Cluster 2 Baseline Report



**May, 2014**

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# USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading Program

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## Acronyms

CCT	Coordinating Centre Tutors
CSR	Center for Social Research
DEO	District Education Officer
DES	Directorate of Education Standards
DIS	District Inspectors of Schools
DQA	Data Quality Assurance
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ESS	Education and Sports Sector
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IRR	inter-rater reliability
LLBs	Local Language Boards
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NAPE	National Assessment of Progress in Education
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Center
ORF	Oral Reading Fluency
P1	Primary One
P3	Primary Three
PTA	parent–teacher association
PTC	Primary Teacher College
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
SIL LEAD	SIL Language Education and Development
SMC	School Management Committee
TDMS	Teacher Development Management System
TIET	Teacher, Instructor Education and Training (Department)
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WEI	World Education, Inc.

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# USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading Program

## Executive Summary

Current reading assessment data consistently point to unacceptably low levels of reading achievement among Ugandan primary school learners. Though the results presented here also show very low levels of reading achievement in the early primary grades, the good news is that there is a high level of motivation and support to rectify this situation and that there are “bright spots” from which to build reading reform efforts. These bright spots include a dedicated and committed Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), champions in the districts and schools, a primary school timetable that sets aside one hour (the literacy hour) for reading and literacy learning as well as time for English and Oral Literature, and a thematic curriculum that calls for learning in local languages in the early years of primary school (Primary 1 to Primary 3). This also includes support provided to the MoES by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the USAID/Uganda/School Health and Reading Program, which focuses on improving early grade reading in local languages and the transition to reading in English.

This report summarizes the findings from a baseline assessment that was conducted in February and March, 2014 to determine the current status of reading achievement in the “Cluster 2” schools in which the Program will be working, as well as achievement in control<sup>1</sup> schools that will be used as a basis for comparison in assessing the effectiveness of the interventions.

The baseline assessment sets out to answer the following questions in an attempt to lay the foundation for and support a national literacy policy and subsequent reading program in primary schools nationwide.

- What is the level of reading achievement among P1 and P3<sup>2</sup> learners in the local language and in English in Ugandan primary schools?
- What is currently happening in P1 reading lessons?
- How are teachers and schools supported to teach reading?
- What should be the focus of future MoES and stakeholder support for reading?

As these schools will be assessed annually for the next three years, the data will serve to track the reading gains in schools that have been supported by USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading Program compared to schools that have not received this support.

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<sup>1</sup> The student level results for the control schools are not discussed in this report but in the follow up report and in the impact evaluation which is being conducted by an external evaluation team.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that since the assessment took place in the first weeks of the new school term, scores are a better reflection of learner achievement in reading at the end of P2.

## Data collection

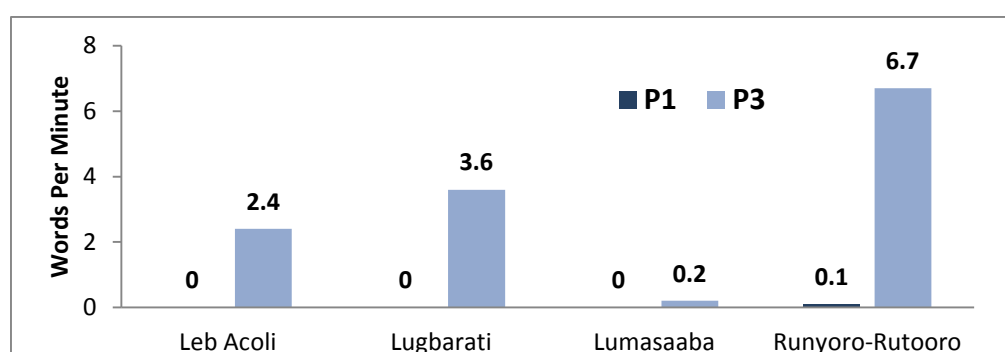
Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) data were collected from 255 randomly selected government primary schools in 10 program districts in Uganda. EGRA data were collected in five languages—Leb Acoli, Lugbarati, Lumasaaba, Runyoro/Rutooro and English; all learners were assessed in English and in one of the four local languages. Overall, 7,425 Primary 1 (P1) and 2,578 Primary 3 (P3) learners were assessed. In addition to this, 55 P1 reading lessons were observed and 213 teachers and 255 head teachers (or designees in their absence) were interviewed about the support that they provide to teachers in the area of reading.

## Findings: Oral reading fluency

Similar to other assessments of reading in Uganda, reading ability was very low. **Figure 1** shows the average local language oral reading fluency rates (words read per minute) achieved by P1 and P3 learners in Program schools at the beginning of the school year. **Since there were no significant differences between girls and boys, only the overall results are shown.** Very low scores at the beginning of the school year for P1 learners are not unexpected, but the scores for beginning P3 learners were also very low.

Little difference was found between reading achievement for boys and girls – where a difference was found, it is noted.

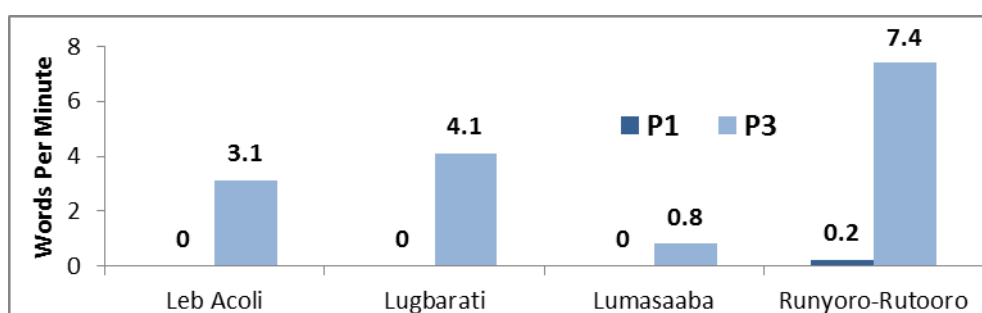
**Figure 1. Local Language Oral Reading Fluency (Words per Minute) In School Health and Reading Program Schools by Class and Language**



Local language reading fluency was lowest in Lumasaaba speaking schools, and the difference between P1 and P3 was minimal; P1 learners could not read any words in Lumasaaba, while P3 learners could read less than 1 word on average. The scores were slightly better in Leb Acoli and Lugbarati speaking schools where P3 learners read between 2 and 4 words per minute. Reading fluency was highest for Runyoro-Rutooro speakers: in P3 they could read on average more than 6 words per minute. Based on any type of “benchmark” these scores are extremely low; a lower bound for an international benchmark for P1 is 20 words per minute, P3 should be reading upwards of 40 words per minute.

English oral reading fluency results were also low as shown in **Figure 2**. As expected at baseline, virtually no P1 learners could read a single word in English, with the exception of some learners in Runyoro-Rutooro speaking schools. And, similar to local language oral reading fluency, learners in Lumasaaba speaking schools read less than one word on average in P3. P3 learners could read 3.1 words per minute in Leb Acoli speaking schools, 4.1 in Lugbarati speaking schools and 7.4 words per minute in Runyoro-Rutooro speaking schools. The gender difference between P3 girls in Runyoro-Rutooro speaking schools was significant in favor of girls – girls read on average 8.4 words per minute compared to 6.3 words per minute for boys.

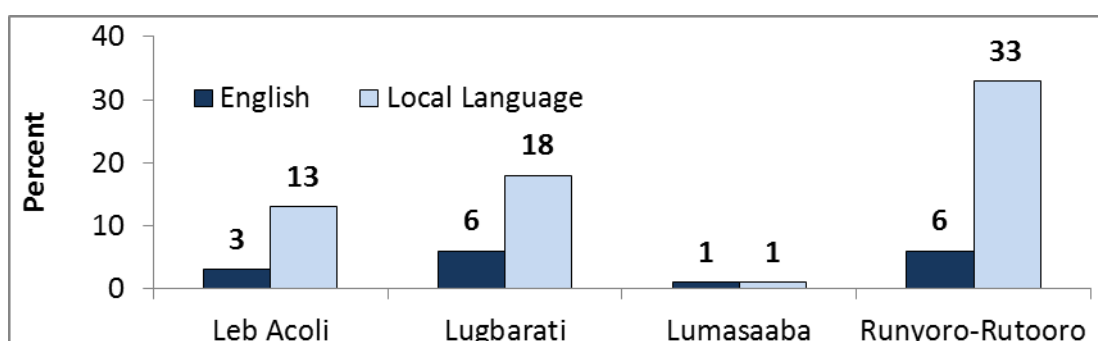
**Figure 2. English Oral Reading Fluency (words per minute) in School Health and Reading Program Schools by Class and Language**



### Findings: Reading comprehension

Learners need to read with fluency but they also need to be able to understand what they are reading. **Figure 3** shows the percentage of P3 learners who answered at least one comprehension question correctly after reading a story in local language and English.

**Figure 3. Percent of P3 Learners in School Health and Reading Program Schools Who Answer At Least One Comprehension Question Correctly**



In P3, 13% of Leb Acoli learners could answer one comprehension question correctly in Leb Acoli; 18% of Lugbarati speakers, 1% of Lumasaaba speakers, and 33% of Runyoro-Rutooro P3 learners could answer one comprehension question correctly in the local language. The results are lower in English where, there were no more than

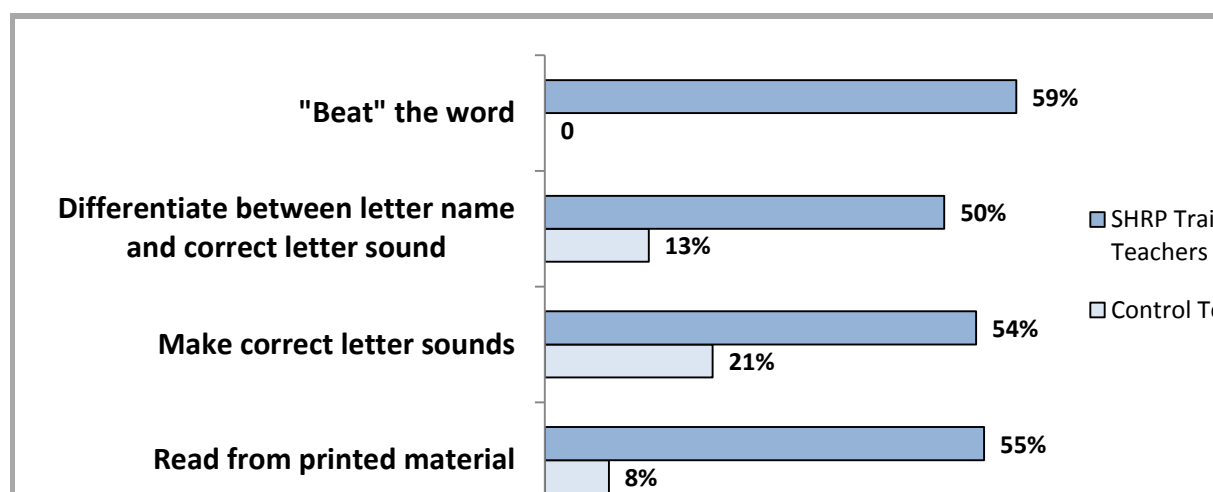
6% of learners who could answer a question in English in any of the language groups. **Though oral reading fluency may have been similar in English and the local language (or even slightly higher in English), comprehension was higher in local language, which confirms in this case that learners can read and comprehend better in a familiar language.** This was a similar finding for the four cluster 1 languages (Ateso, Leblango, Luganda and Runyankore-Rukiga) in the baseline undertaken in 2013.

### What is happening in the classroom and how are teachers supported to teach reading?

In addition to the EGRA data collected, 55 P1 reading lessons were observed and 213 teachers and 255 head teachers were interviewed to find out about support received from CCTs and head teachers towards the teaching of reading. Though this is a baseline, a major teacher training effort took place for P1 teachers in January, the month before the EGRA data collection. While we do not expect there to be significant differences in learner performance this early in the school year (many schools were just starting classes at the time of the assessment) and we may not have expected to see differences in teacher classroom behavior after just a few weeks and without materials, data from the classroom observations did show differences between treatment and control P1 classrooms. Findings indicate that there are many reading supportive actions being undertaken by the teachers in the Program classrooms that are not occurring in control classrooms.

**Figure 4** shows the percentage of observed P1 reading lessons where teachers were found guiding learners to undertake reading-promoting behaviors. In 59% of Program P1 lessons observed, teachers were seen guiding learners to “beat the words” (clapping the syllables) to illustrate the concept that words are made up of syllables. This method was not observed in any control classrooms. Program trained teachers were also more likely to guide learners to differentiate between letter name and correct letter sounds (50% vs. 13%) and make letter sounds (54% vs. 21%).

**Figure 4. Teacher Guides Learners to....**



## Support for teachers to teach reading

Besides training, a crucial component of teacher support is ongoing school based observation of teaching and feedback. Thirty eight percent of teachers interviewed<sup>3</sup> reported that they were observed once a week and 33% said they were observed every month by someone at the school (head teacher or designee). While 17% reported that they were observed only once a term, 3% were observed once a year and 9% were never observed. The ideal is for teachers to be observed teaching at least once per week (while they are getting used to the new methodology) by school based staff. External support from the Coordinating Centre Tutor (CCT) is also important. While the ideal is for CCTs to observe teachers twice per term (a 3 month period), 32% of the surveyed teachers reported that that in the previous year, their class had **never** been observed by a CCT. Thirty percent of the teachers reported that a CCT had observed their class once every term and an additional 21% were observed once in the previous school year. Seventeen percent of the teachers reported that they were observed once a month.

## Characteristics of Better Performing Learners

Of the learners assessed, 200 were able to read at least 20 words per minute in either English, local language or both. These learners and schools were used as the basis for an analysis of “better performing” learners, combining the EGRA data with data from the learner interview.

Characteristics associated with better performing learners include: Runyoro-Rutooro speaking schools; pre-school attendance; was wearing shoes; had packed something to eat for break or lunch that day; and were more likely to take materials home from school and see someone at their home reading.

## Recommendations for improving the teaching of reading and reading achievement in Ugandan primary schools

Given the very low levels of reading achievement in both local languages and English and the situation in schools and classrooms, the following recommendations for moving forward in the area of support for reading reform in primary schools in Uganda include:

**Materials:** Teachers need materials that will help them bridge the gap between the thematic curriculum and the teaching of reading in the classroom. The teachers’ guides linked to learner materials being developed and utilized under the Program will help fill this gap.

**Teacher training:** Teachers need to be trained on the explicit teaching of reading, how to utilize the teaching materials and guide learners on the use of the learner materials. Teachers also need to be given guidance on regularly assessing learner progress in foundational reading skills.

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<sup>3</sup> Treatment and control teachers are both included here as they were asked about CCT support in the previous school year before the beginning of the intervention.

**Teacher Support:** Teachers need more support for teaching reading in the classroom. Even if trained, they need continued follow-up support. This support includes observation of classroom teaching and feedback as well as continuous professional development. Who is best placed to provide this support? All sources of potential support, including head teachers; peers; CCTs; and local government including the district education officer, district inspectors, and even associate assessors<sup>4</sup> need to be brought “on board” to support teachers to teach reading.

## Early Grade Reading in Uganda and the USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading Program

### The reading context and challenge in Uganda

The Government of Uganda has led the way in the promotion of Education For All with the implementation of free Universal Primary Education (UPE) introduced in 1997. Ten years later, the focus had shifted from getting children into school to increasing the quality of learning. A major effort towards improving the quality of education was the introduction of the Thematic Curriculum in 2007, which promoted another groundbreaking intervention: the introduction of mother tongue instruction in the early grades of primary school. The use of the mother tongue, or local language as is used in this report, as the medium of instruction for the first three years of schooling is associated with enhanced quality of learning when accompanied by appropriate complementary inputs such as materials and teacher training. Indeed, research has shown that children learning in a familiar language perform better than those who learn in the national (if unfamiliar) language.

The inability to read affects learners’ performance in all academic areas, as reported in National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE, 2010), and MoES acknowledges that reading failure limits prospects for educational, as well as social and economic, achievement later in life.

Current reading assessment data consistently point to a reading crisis in Uganda. Recent NAPE (2012) data show that only 54% of the P3 learners assessed demonstrated reading proficiency in English; 41% reached this level of proficiency in English literacy in P6. This means that almost half of the P3 learners and 60% of P6 learners are not proficient in reading in English. An EGRA undertaken in 2010 found that 51% of P2 learners in the central region and 88% of learners in the Leblango region could not read a single word in English or a local language. Uwezo Annual Learning Assessment data (2012) show that 91% of P3 learners could not read a P2 level text. And the 2013 Early Grade Reading Assessment from program Cluster 1 languages found that 60% of beginning P3 learners could not read a single word of a P2 level text in English.

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<sup>4</sup> Associate assessors have been recruited and trained by the Directorate of Education Standards to be available for district level support to schools.

The MoES 2003/4 Curriculum Review found that children were not learning to read due to a gap within the current primary curriculum in the area of foundational literacy skills and the lack of appropriate teacher training. Though the teaching guide that accompanies the P1 curriculum includes a discussion of literacy (phonetic, syllabic, and whole word approaches) and even includes a model for a typical literacy hour (including group and silent reading), the daily training scheme presented offers suggestions such as “name things found in the home and their uses” or “read 8-15 words related to food” for competencies under the learning area of literacy—without discussing early reading skills or more specific competencies that learners should master (such as knowing the sounds that letters make).

Other partial explanations for the reading challenges facing Uganda’s primary school children include: inconsistent application of the language policy; inconsistent application of reading instruction methodology; lack of harmonization between the teacher education curricula and the primary education curricula; lack of relevant and adequate reading materials; and a lack of capacity for effective monitoring and support-supervision. EGRA (2010) research attributes the poor performance to teachers’ failure to develop basic foundational skills in reading acquisition in learners, which in turn is linked to the gaps in the primary curriculum and inadequate teacher preparation and support.

### **MOES efforts to improve reading: The USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading Program**

Given this backdrop of primary school learners underperforming in reading, the MoES has partnered with USAID to support early grade reading efforts under the USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading program. This is a five-year initiative implemented by RTI International in collaboration with World Education (WEI), SIL Lead (SIL), the Center for Social Research Uganda (CSR), Africa Development Corps and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO).

Underlying the overall goal of the program, “Increasing Literacy and Health Seeking Behaviors,”<sup>5</sup> is the result “Improved Early Grade Reading and Transition to English,” which supports the Government of Uganda in developing, implementing, assessing, and bringing to scale a successful approach to reading instruction and delivering the MoES’s stated goal of producing a Ugandan led “reading policy.” Specifically, the Program will support MoES to (1) strengthen policies and strategic planning related to reading; (2) develop local language and English pedagogy and materials to support early grade reading; (3) develop and support teacher training and support supervision to promote reading; (4) increase advocacy and support for reading at all levels; and (5) generate and use data for programmatic decision making.

In its initial year, the program worked in four local languages and English in ten districts identified by the MoES. In the second year of implementation, the program supported reading activities in four additional local languages and eleven additional districts while continuing to support the schools and districts from Year 1. The four

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<sup>5</sup> The program results and activities in the area of “health-seeking behavior” and the support of HIV/AIDS activities is not discussed in this report.

languages, Lumasaaba, Lugbarati, Leb Acoli, and Runyoro/Rutooro, and the corresponding districts are listed in **Table 1**. Ultimately, the program will develop reading programs in 12 local languages and provide direct support to approximately 30 districts and 3,300 government primary schools. The “roll out” of the Program follows the schedule shown in **Figure 1**, expanding annually to include more languages, districts and schools.

**Table 1. Districts and Languages Supported by the USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading Program**

Cluster	Year starting Program	Languages and Districts	Number of Schools
Cluster 1	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ateso (Kumi, Katakwi, Serere)</li> <li>• Leblango (Apac, Kole, Lira)</li> <li>• Luganda (Gomba, Wakiso)</li> <li>• Runyankore/Rukiga (Kiruhura, Kabale, Bushenyi (2014))</li> </ul>	1,400
Cluster 2	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Runyoro/Rutooro (Masindi, Kabarole, Kyenjojo)</li> <li>• Lebacholi (Gulu, Pader, Kitgum)</li> <li>• Lugbarati (Arua)</li> <li>• Lumasaaba (Mbale, Sironko, Manafwa)</li> </ul>	900
Cluster 3	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lugwere (Budaka, Pallisa, Kibuku)</li> <li>• Ngakarimojong (Nakapiripirit, Napak, Moroto)</li> <li>• Lukhondo (Kasese)</li> <li>• Lusoga (Iganga, Kumuli)</li> </ul>	1,000

## The EGRA Baseline Assessment

### The purpose of the assessment

The purpose of the EGRA baseline assessment is to determine the current status of reading ability and school and teacher inputs related to the teaching of reading prior to the implementation of the Program<sup>6</sup>, as well as provide data on basic educational inputs found in primary schools. EGRA data and other school level information will be collected annually from 2014 – 2016 in randomly selected program and control schools in order to gauge increases in reading achievement and reading supportive behaviors (among teachers, head teachers and CCTs, for example) associated with the intervention.

To this end, data were collected from 255 primary schools in 10 districts. In addition to administering individual oral assessments of students, head teachers and teachers

<sup>6</sup> As mentioned earlier, teacher training took place one month before data collection so this is not a true baseline as far as teacher behavior is concerned. It is believed it provides a true baseline of learner achievement however (and differences between treatment and control detected will be addressed during data analysis) since teaching had only started at the time of data collection (in some cases, it had not yet formally begun).



were interviewed, school and classroom resources were inventoried, and reading lessons observed.

Questions expected to be answered included:

- What is the level of reading achievement among P1 and P3 learners in the local language and in English in Ugandan Government primary schools?
- What is currently happening in P1 reading lessons?
- How are teachers and schools supported to teach reading?
- What should be the focus of future MoES and stakeholder support for reading?

Data collection will follow the schedule shown in **Table 2**. Baseline data is collected for each program “cluster” at the beginning of the school year in February and March and follow up data in September and October (the end of the school year).

This report focusses on data collected for the cluster 2 baseline, shaded dark blue in **table 2**.

**Table 2. Early Grade Reading Assessment Data Collection Schedule**

2013		2014		2015		2016
Feb/Mar	Oct	Feb/Mar	Sep/Oct	Feb/Mar	Sep/Oct	Sep/Oct
C1 Baseline	C1 Follow up	C2 Baseline	C1, C2 Follow up	C3 Baseline	C1, C2, C3 Follow up	C1, C2, C3 Follow up

## Overview of the EGRA

### *Why assess early grade reading?*

The ability to read and understand a simple text is one of the most fundamental skills a child can acquire. Without basic literacy there is little chance that a child can escape the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Yet in many countries, students enrolled in school for as many as six years are unable to read and understand a simple story. Recent evidence indicates that learning to read both *early* and at a sufficient *rate* are essential for learning to read well. Acquiring literacy becomes more difficult as students grow older, as the reading gap between early readers and nonreaders increases over time. A substantial body of research documents the fact that students can learn to read by the end of grade 2, and indeed need to be able to read by this time to be successful in school. Students who do not learn to read in the early grades (grades 1–3) are likely to fall behind in reading and other subjects, repeat grades, and eventually drop out of school.

Local and international literature shows that for learners to become competent individual readers, they must be able to decode words by using their knowledge of letter sounds. This must be combined with their ability to identify common words quickly (though this is more important in English than in many Ugandan languages). In addition, children must have enough language skills in the language that they are reading to be able to make meaning from the words that are being decoded and to

have the necessary reading comprehension skills. The lack of formal instruction on these key skills contributes to the low reading outcomes in Uganda.

### ***What the EGRA measures***

The EGRA instrument is composed of a variety of subtasks designed to assess foundational reading skills that are crucial to becoming a fluent reader. EGRA is designed to be a method-independent approach to assessment—that is, the instrument does not reflect a particular method of reading instruction (i.e., “whole language” or “phonics-based” approach). Rather, EGRA measures basic skills that a child must have to eventually be able to read fluently and with comprehension—the ultimate goal of reading.

These foundational reading skills are described below.

**Phonemic awareness** is the ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds in spoken words. Before children learn to read print they need to understand that words are made up of speech sounds (phonemes).

**Alphabetic principle** refers to the recognition and understanding that a letter or sequence of letters in a written word represents sounds in a spoken word.

**Oral reading fluency** is the ability to orally read connected text with speed, accuracy, and proper expression. Reading fluency is considered critical for comprehension, because rapid, effortless word-identification enables the reader to focus on the text and its meaning rather than decoding, or sounding out the words.

**Vocabulary** is the ability to understand the words that are used in conversation and print.

**Reading comprehension**, considered the goal of reading, refers to the ability to construct meaning from texts that are read. Comprehension is complex and requires mastery of oral language, background knowledge, attention, ability to decode, fluency, and motivation.

EGRA measures each of these foundational reading skills through individual “subtasks.” The subtasks included in the Ugandan EGRA instrument are described below.

### ***EGRA subtasks used in Uganda***

The subtasks used in this baseline assessment, how they are measured, and how the learner demonstrates the task during the assessment are outlined below in **Table 3**.

**Table 3. EGRA Subtasks Summary Table**

EGRA Subtask and How Measured	Foundational Reading Skill	How Learner Demonstrates
Letter sound knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Correct letters per minute (clpm)</li></ul>	Alphabetic principle	Provide SOUND of upper & lowercase letters in random order; “what is the sound of this letter?”

EGRA Subtask and How Measured	Foundational Reading Skill	How Learner Demonstrates
Segmenting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual sounds (phonemes) in English and syllables Leb Acoli, Lugbarati, Lumasaaba and Runyoro, Luganda, Ateso, and Runyankore-Rukiga, reflecting structure of orthography</li> </ul>	Phonemic awareness	Segments words into phonemes or syllables; “What are the sounds/syllables you hear in this word?”
Nonword decoding		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correct words per minute (cwpm)</li> </ul>	Alphabetic principle	Uses knowledge of letter sound correspondence to read non-words; “Read as many of these non-words as you can.”
Oral reading passage with comprehension		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correct words per minute (cwpm) and number of questions answered correctly</li> </ul>	Oral reading fluency and comprehension	Reads a passage with accuracy and speed and answer questions correctly
Listening comprehension (local language only)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of questions answered correctly</li> </ul>	Comprehension	Learner responds correctly to questions asked about a passage read to him/her
Oral vocabulary (English only)	Knowledge of vocabulary	Receptive language, point to body parts, objects & show direction (“place the pencil behind you”)

## Baseline Data Collection

In February and March 2014, data were collected from 255<sup>7</sup> randomly selected government primary schools in 10 districts in Uganda. EGRA data were collected in five languages: Leb Acoli, Lumasaaba, Lugbarati, Runyoro-Rutooro, and English—all learners were assessed in English and in one of the four local languages. Overall, 7,425 P1 and 2,578 P3 learners were assessed. In addition to this, 55 P1 reading lessons were observed and 213 teachers and 255 head teachers were interviewed.

### Data collection instruments

As mentioned above, EGRA is comprised of subtasks that measure foundational reading skills. The subtasks were adapted from EGRA instruments used to collect data on reading skills and achievement throughout the world. The subtasks selected for the Ugandan context were adapted into the four local languages in a weeklong workshop that included primary school teachers, language board members, CCTs, and MoES staff.<sup>8</sup> During this workshop the instruments were piloted in each of the four

<sup>7</sup> This includes 168 randomly selected program or intervention schools, 56 control schools from within the same districts and 56 schools from non-program districts.

<sup>8</sup> The adaptation workshops were held in August, 2013.

language areas. A learner context instrument was also adapted and piloted during this workshop. The learner context instrument includes information on learners' preschool attendance,<sup>9</sup> possessions in the household, support for reading in the home and other learner background characteristics believed to be associated with reading.

Supplementary data collection instruments, including a teacher interview, head teacher interview, school inventory, and reading lesson and classroom observation form were also developed. Both the teacher interview and the head teacher interview included questions about teachers support to teach reading in the classroom (training, supervisory support). The classroom observation tool instructed trained observers to assess a reading lesson and record basic information on the classroom environment and the lesson itself in the areas of instructional content, teaching methods, learner assessment, and materials used. The availability of materials was also observed. The school inventory asked and looked at basic infrastructure (water source and electricity) as well as the presence and use of a school library. Other questions investigated the presence of learners with special needs and SMC activity, which will inform other aspects of the School Health and Reading Program.

### Assessor training

Over 72 potential assessors started an eight-day training program, and the highest-performing 60 were selected for the final data collection. Assessors were selected based on inter-rater reliability tests (IRR) that were given throughout the week as well as interpersonal and leadership skills. Technical training was undertaken by School Health and Reading Program staff (RTI and CSR). The training included one day in a school administering the tool to learners and teachers. Trainees were first trained to administer the tools on paper and then introduced to electronic data collection on Nexus tablets so that they could be prepared for both circumstances.<sup>10</sup> Four Data Quality Assurance (DQA) Officers who also acted as assessor trainers were given extra training on the classroom observation instrument, including undertaking an observation in an actual classroom.

### Schools and Learners Sampled

Data were collected from 255 randomly selected government schools: 133 program (or treatment) schools and 122 control schools from non- intervention coordinating centres. From each school, 30 P1 and 10 P3 pupils were randomly selected (half boys and half girls) and one P1 teacher and one head teacher were interviewed. In total, 7,425 P1 (3,764 males and 3,661 females) and 2,578 P3 (1,290 males and 1,288 females) learners were assessed, 213 P1 teachers and 255 school heads were interviewed, and 55 reading lessons observed. **Table 4** shows the number of schools and learners by language area and gender.

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<sup>9</sup> Though not all of the data is presented in this baseline report, it will serve to inform the impact evaluation.

<sup>10</sup> In the end, no assessments were done on paper.

**Table 4. Number of Schools and Learners by Class and Gender\***

Language Group	Schools	P1 Learners		P3 learners	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
Lugbarati	29	440	441	149	149
Leb Acoli	79	1121	1122	392	400
Runyoro/Rutooro	79	1175	1096	396	397
Lumasaaba	68	1028	1002	353	342
Total	255	3764	3661	1290	1288

\*This includes all treatment and control schools and learners, see Annex 1 for a breakdown of treatment vs. control. For the student reading results presented in this report, only learners in treatment schools were included.

### Data collection

Data were collected from February 15 through March 20, 2014. Sixty assessors in teams of four (each of these teams included one supervisor) were deployed to the four language areas. Each of the four language area teams was supported by a DQA Officer. The DQA Officer was responsible for overseeing all aspects of data collection deployment, observing assessors and providing feedback and support, ensuring data were uploaded from the electronic tablets every evening, and observing the reading classes. Besides the team supervisors and the DQA Officers, data collection was overseen by staff from the Uganda National Examinations Board, Program Staff, and staff from the external evaluation team from NORC.

## Oral Reading Fluency and Reading Comprehension in Ugandan Primary Schools

Oral reading fluency (ORF) is an important index of reading competence as it measures the skill and speed with which learners translate letters into sounds, decode unfamiliar words, recognize known words, and simultaneously make sense of the text's meaning. To measure ORF, learners were asked to read a narrative passage of local relevance within one minute. The score for this subtask was the number of words from the passage that students could correctly read in one minute.

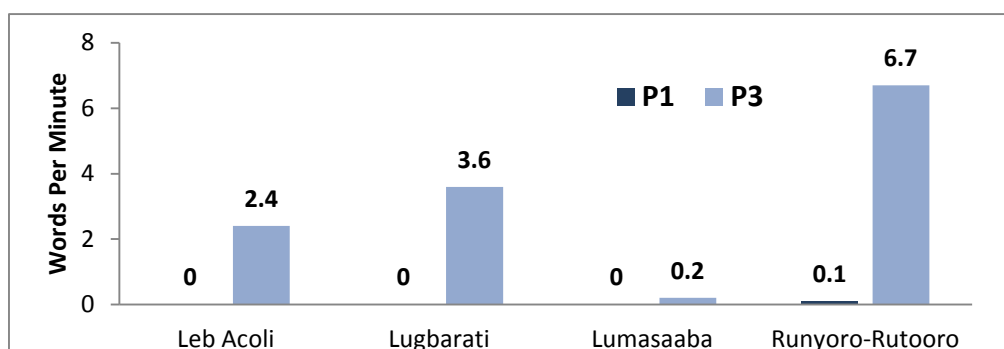
After learners had read the assigned passage for one minute (they were stopped early if they read no words correctly in the first line), they were asked questions about the story. Although there were a total of five questions associated with the story, students were asked only those questions that corresponded with the portion of the story that they were able to read within the time limit; learners who didn't read any words correctly were not asked any questions. Questions were both literal, requiring learners to directly recall information from the story, and inferential, requiring students to combine information from the story with their background knowledge to derive a

correct answer. Reading comprehension is measured here by the percent of learners answering at least on question correctly.

Though subtask results for the 4 language groups are presented side by side, caution needs to be taken when comparing learning acquisition across language groups as some languages are more complicated and difficult to learn than others. This being said (and given the relatively low reading levels at baseline among P3 learners in these language groups) some language groups do appear to be lagging in the development of basic and higher-level basic reading skills.

*Local Language Oral Reading Fluency:* Similar to other assessments of reading in Uganda, reading ability was very low. **Figure 5** shows the average local language oral reading fluency rates (words read per minute) achieved by P1 and P3 learners in School Health and Reading Program schools at the beginning of the school year. **Since there were no significant differences between girls and boys, only the overall results are shown.** Very low scores at the beginning of the school year for P1 learners are not unexpected, but the scores for beginning P3 learners were also very low.

**Figure 5. Local Language Oral Reading Fluency (Words Per Minute) in School Health and Reading Program Schools by Class and Language**

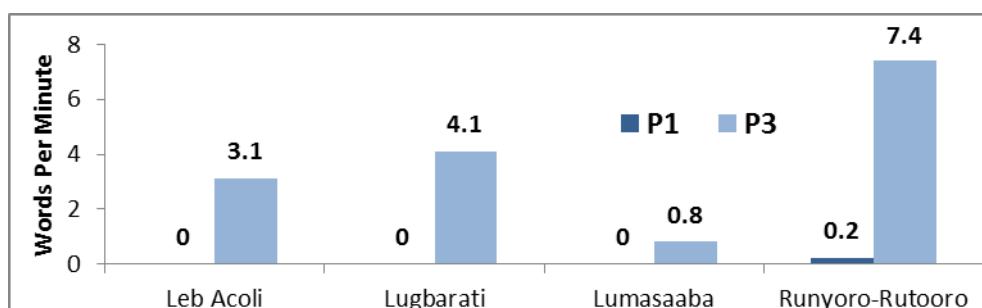


Local language reading fluency was lowest in Lumasaaba speaking schools, and the difference between P1 and P3 was minimal; P1 learners could not read any words in Lumasaaba, while P3 learners could read less than 1 word on average. The scores were slightly better in Leb Acoli and Lugbarati speaking schools where P3 learners read fewer than 4 words per minute. Reading fluency was highest for Runyoro/Rutooro speakers: in P3 they could read on average more than 6 words per minute. Based on any type of “benchmark” these scores are extremely low; a lower bound for an international benchmark for P1 is 20 words per minute.

*English Oral Reading Fluency:* English oral reading fluency results were also low as shown in **Figure 6**. As expected at baseline, virtually no P1 learners could read a word in English, with the exception of some learners in Runyoro Rutooro speaking schools. And, similar to local language oral reading fluency, learners in Lumasaaba speaking schools could not read one word on average in P3. P3 learners could read 3.1 words per minute in Leb Acoli speaking schools, 4.1 in Lugbarati speaking

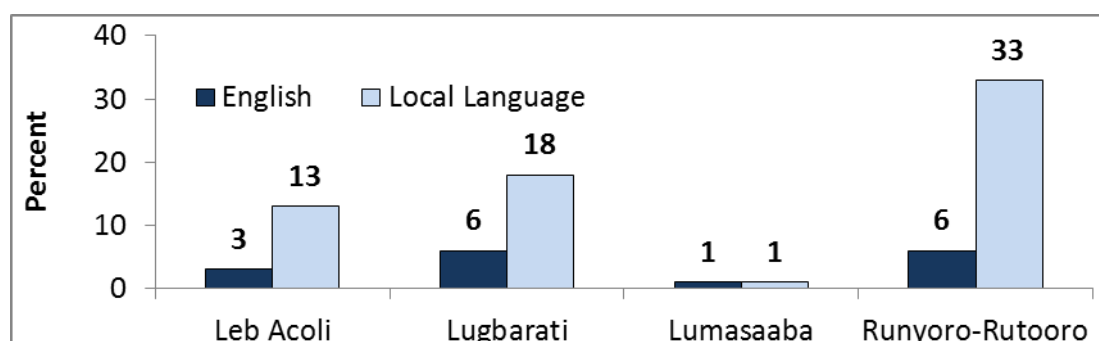
schools and 7.4 words per minute in Runyoro Rutooro speaking schools. The gender difference between P3 girls in Runyoro Rutooro speaking schools was significant in favor of girls – girls read on average 8.4 words per minute compared to 6.3 words per minute for boys.

**Figure 6. English Oral Reading Fluency (Words per Minute) in School Health and Reading Program Schools by Class and Language**



**Reading Comprehension:** Learners need to read with fluency but they also need to be able to understand what they are reading. *Figure 7* shows the percentage of P3 learners who answered at least one comprehension question correctly after reading a story in local language and English.

**Figure 7. Percent of P3 Learners in School Health and Reading Program Schools Who Answer At Least One Comprehension Question Correctly**



In P3, 13% of Leb Acoli learners could answer one comprehension question correctly in Leb Acoli; 18% of Lugbarati speakers, 1% of Lumasaaba speakers, and 33% of Runyoro Rutooro P3 learners could answer one comprehension question correctly in the local language. The results are lower in English where, there were no more than 6% of learners who could answer a question in English in any of the language groups. **Though oral reading fluency may have been similar in English and the local language (or even slightly higher in English), comprehension was higher in local language, which confirms in this case that learners can read and comprehend better in a familiar language.** This was a similar finding for the four cluster 1

languages (Ateso, Leblango, Luganda and Runyunkore-Rukiga) in the baseline undertaken in 2013.

This supports the idea that while learners may read as well in local language as in English (measured by the ORF) they comprehend more in the local or familiar language, which is at the core of both the thematic curriculum and the School Health and Reading Program.

## Emergent and Beginning Reading Skills: Results from EGRA sub-tasks

Before we see changes in reading fluency or comprehension, it is expected that we would see improvements in these “building block” or foundational skills—before a learner can read words, they need to know the sounds of the letters, for example. The skills that the EGRA subtasks<sup>11</sup> measure are acquired in phases and though the timing of these phases may vary, the phases themselves are predictable. Being able to identify sounds in words or is a very early, emergent literacy skill as is listening comprehension. Letter sound identification and non-word reading are considered the next stage of beginning reading.

### Emergent Literacy: Listening Comprehension

Listening comprehension is a pre-reading or emergent reading skill. The listening comprehension assessment involved the assessor reading a story to the learner in local language and then asking the learner questions (both factual and inferential) related to the story. Poor performance on the listening comprehension task suggests that the learner does not have a good foundational level of vocabulary and comprehension in the language.

**Figure 8** shows the number of questions answered correctly by P1 and P3 learners in SHRP schools out of a total of 3 questions asked. On average, P1 learners were able to answer at least half of the questions correctly in all language groups except for Lumasaaba where they answered less than half of a question correctly (on average). In Leb Acoli, P1 learners were able to correctly answer 1.8 questions, in Lugbarati 2.2 questions, and 1.5 questions correct in Runyoro Rutooro. The range for P3 learners is between 1.1 (Lumasaaba) and 2.6 for all 3 other groups. There were no significant gender differences.

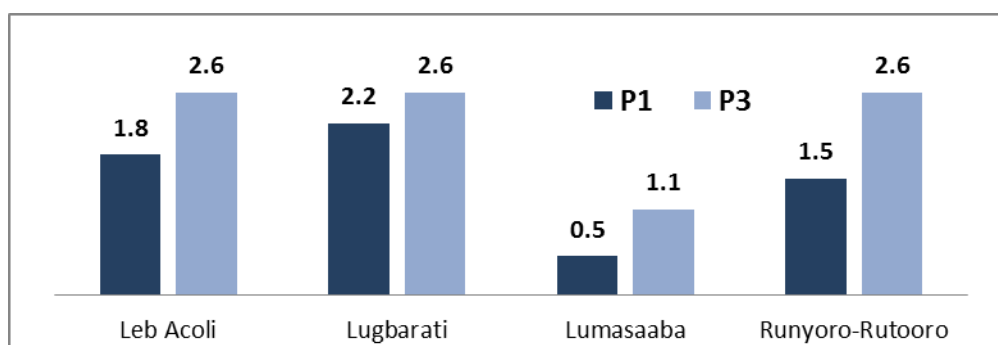
An interesting finding here is the relatively high performance among Leb Acoli and Lugbarati learners commensurate to the performance among Runyoro Rutooro learners given that these groups perform at a much lower level in the other EGRA subtasks. This provides evidence that lower EGRA scores in other areas (ORF for example) may not be a result of local language vocabulary deficiencies but other factors as the data show they do understand the language. . The low listening comprehension levels among Lumasaaba learners is alarming and an area for further attention.

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<sup>11</sup> These sub-tasks are described in detail in Table 3 above.



**Figure 8. Number of Local Language Listening Comprehension Questions Answered Correctly (Out of Possible 3)**



The fact that the scores were greater than zero in listening comprehension even at baseline in P1 suggests that it is possible to assess P1 learners contrary to the notion that they are simply too young to undergo external evaluation.

### Beginning Reader: Letter Sounds and Non-Word Decoding

As mentioned earlier, before a learner can read words, they must be able to identify letters and (in the SHRP model) the sounds the letters make.

**Table 5** shows the average number of correct letters per minute for P1 and P3 learners in both Local Language and English for each language group. For P1 learners, the average number of letters that they could sound out correctly is between 0.2 for English among Lumasaaba learners to 3.6 in Local Language among Lugbarati learners. The pattern is the same for P3 with Lumasaaba the lowest (1.3 correct letter sounds in English) and Lugbarati the highest (15.5 correct letter sounds in Local Language). The average number of letters correct is higher in Local Language than English for all P1 and P3 language groups. The only significant gender difference was among P3 Runyoro Rutooro learners where girls scored higher than boys.

**Table 5. Letter Sounds: Correct Letters Per Minute, P1 and P3 by Language**

	P1		P3	
	Local Language	English	Local Language	English
Leb Acoli	1.5	0.5	9.3	4.9
Lugbarati	3.6	1.9	15.5	9.8
Lumasaaba	0.3	0.2	2	1.3
Runyoro Rutooro	2.9	1.7	12.8	8.2

Non-word decoding, though a beginning reading skill is more complicated than recognizing individual letters and their corresponding sounds and would take more time to understand and master. **Table 6** shows the average number of Local Language and English non-words that were read correctly among P1 and P3 learners in the 4 language groups.

**Table 6. Non Word Decoding: Words Per Minute, P1 and P3 by Language**

	P1		P3	
	Local Language	English	Local Language	English
Leb Acoli	0	0	1.4	1.4
Lugbarati	0	0	2.6	2.8
Lumasaaba	0	0	0.3	0.4
Runyoro Rutooro	0.1	0.1	6.1	5.5

P1 learners could read virtually no non-words in both local language in English in all 4 language groups. Among P3 learners, Lumasaaba learners scored the lowest (less than 0.5 correct words read per minute in both local language and English) and Runyoro Rutooro learners performed the highest – reading over 5 non-words per minute in both Local Language and English.

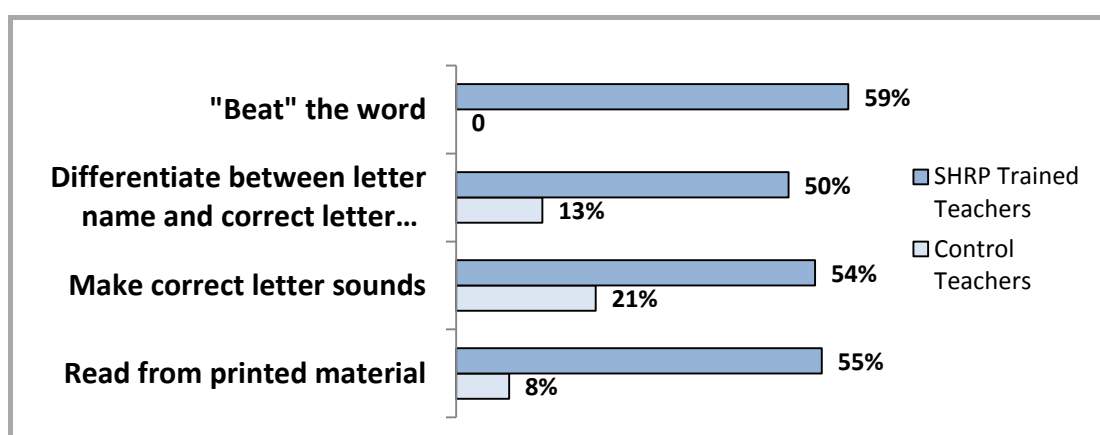
## What Is Happening in the Classroom? Reading Lesson Observations

To what extent are USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading Program trained teachers using new reading supportive teaching methods and good teacher practices in the classroom? To help answer this question, as part of the Early Grade Reading Assessment classroom observations were undertaken in 55 P1 classrooms<sup>12</sup> all from different schools. A basic classroom observation tool was used that relied on observation of obvious/objective teaching behaviors (“beating the word” or segmenting a word into syllables) and evidence of other behaviors (looking through lesson plans, assessment records and pupil exercise books for example). This tool is based on the classroom observation tool currently being used by the program and MoES colleagues to undertake support supervision of teachers in the classroom.

Findings indicate that there are many reading supportive actions being undertaken by the teachers in the Program classrooms that are not occurring in control classrooms. **Figure 9** shows the percentage of observed P1 reading lessons where teachers were found guiding learners to undertake reading-promoting behaviors that are part of the SHRP reading methodology. In 59% of SHRP P1 lessons observed, teachers were seen guiding learners to “beat the words” (clapping the syllables) to illustrate the concept that words are made up of syllables. This method was not observed in any control classrooms. SHRP trained teachers were also more likely to guide learners to differentiate between letter name and correct letter sounds (50% vs. 13%) and make correct letter sounds (54% vs. 21%).

<sup>12</sup> This analysis includes data from 24 SHRP and 24 control classroom observations as 5 teachers from SHRP program schools who did not attend the January training and 2 teachers from control schools who did attend the training were removed from the analysis

**Figure 9. Teacher Guides Learners To...**



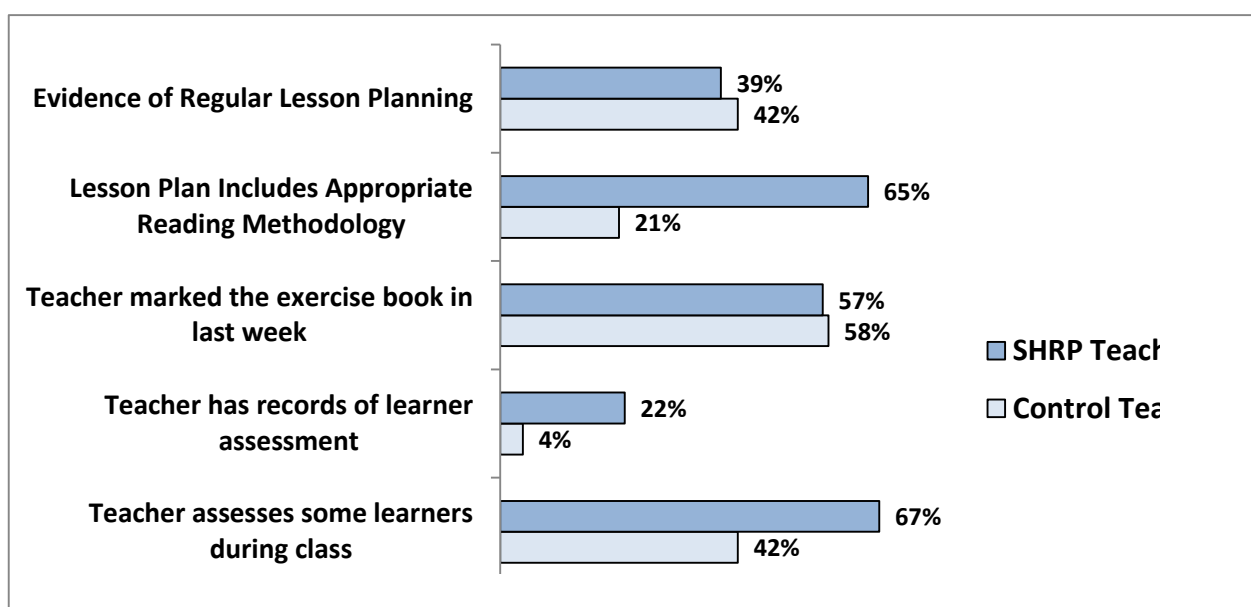
Time on task is very important in reading acquisition: how much classroom time is devoted to teaching reading? The thematic curriculum requires 30 minutes of reading (literacy 1) and 30 minutes of writing (literacy 2) making up the literacy hour every day. Of the P1 reading lessons observed, lessons observed in SHRP classes

**SHRP P1 reading lessons lasted 33 minutes on average, reading lessons in control classes lasted only 26 minutes**

lasted on average 33 minutes (the shortest was 20 minutes); in control schools, the average was 26 minutes (the shortest lasting 10 minutes). Seven minutes per reading lesson per day translates into 35 more minutes per week or reading instruction – equal to one extra reading lesson per week!

Other important aspects of the USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading Program Early Grade Reading (EGR) methodology (and good teaching practice in general) are: consistent lesson planning; incorporation of appropriate reading methodologies in lessons and lesson planning; regular learner completed exercises (consistently reviewed by the teacher) and regular learners assessment. **Figure 10** shows that while SHRP P1 teachers observed were more likely to incorporate appropriate reading methods into their lesson planning (65% vs. 21%) and both have records of learners assessment (22% for SHRP teachers and 4% for control) and be observed assessing learners during class (67% SHRP vs. 42% for control) they are no more likely to have marked learner exercise books in the past week (57% for SHRP teachers compared to 58% for control) and even slightly less likely to have evidence of regular lesson planning than control teachers, though the difference is small (42% for control compared to 39% for SHRP teachers). SHRP teachers were, however more likely to have a lesson plan for the observed lesson and teaching from that plan: 78% of SHRP teachers had a lesson plan compared to 58% of control teachers.

**Figure 10. Percent of P1 Teachers Using Reading Promoting Behaviors in the Classroom**



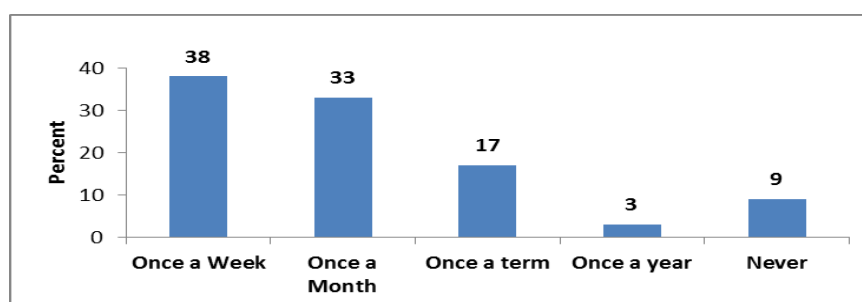
## Support to Teachers to Teach Reading

### Findings from teacher interviews

Teacher interview data were collected from 213 P1 teachers. Teachers were asked about support they receive for teaching of reading in the classroom. Support reported on here includes reading lesson observation and lesson plan review.

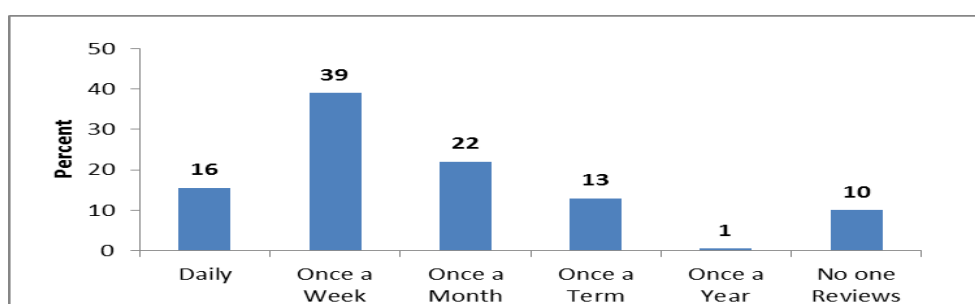
Head teachers (or deputy head teachers, directors of studies or other school based support staff) make up a part of the existing support structures whose mandate includes supervising teachers and observing what they are doing in the classroom in order to provide constructive feedback aimed at improving teaching and learning. When teachers were asked how often the head teacher, deputy head, or subject head observed their teaching (**Figure 11**), 38% said that they were observed once a week, 33% said they were observed every month, 17% reported that they were observed once a term (every 3 months), 9% were never observed. Three percent of the teachers interviewed reported that they were observed only once a year.

**Figure 11. How Often Teachers Observed in the Classroom (According to Teachers)**



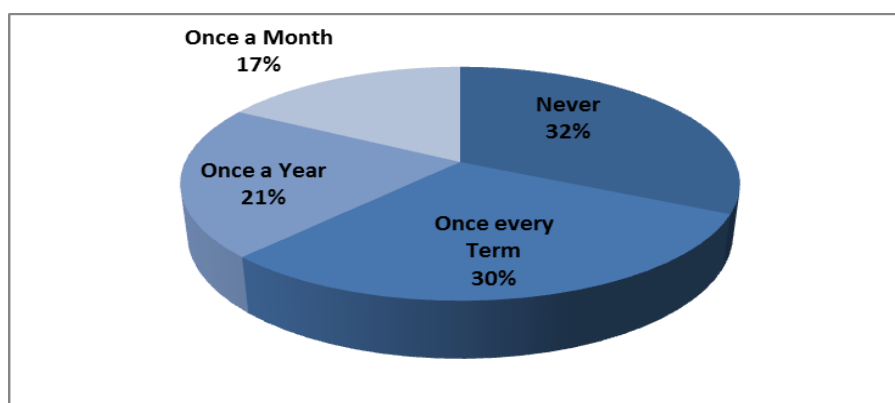
Teacher lesson planning is an integral part of providing quality teaching. Teachers should have daily lesson plans that are followed in the classroom. Another form of support that should be provided to teachers by head teachers and other school-based staff is the routine review of these plans and the majority of the teachers (91%) reported that someone at their school reviewed their lesson plans. Sixteen percent of teachers reported that their lesson plans were reviewed daily, 39% had their plans reviewed once a week; 22% had their plans reviewed once a month and 13% of the teachers had their lesson plans reviewed once per term. Ten percent of teachers reported that there was no one at the school assigned to review their lesson plans or that they were never reviewed.

**Figure 12. How Often Lesson Plans Reviewed (According to the Teachers)**



CCTs are a central feature of the Teacher Development Management System (TDMS) and source of external school and teacher support in the area of teaching and learning; thus they feature prominently in MoES/School Health and Reading Program planned interventions to support early grade reading. And while 17% of teachers reported that they were observed by a CCT once in the previous year, almost twice as many, 32% reported that their class had **never** been observed by a CCT (**Figure 13.**) Forty-seven percent of the teachers reported that a CCT had observed their class once every term, which amounts to the minimum level of CCT support that should be expected, or more often once a month. An additional 21% were observed once during the year.

**Figure 13. Frequency of Lesson Observation by CCT**



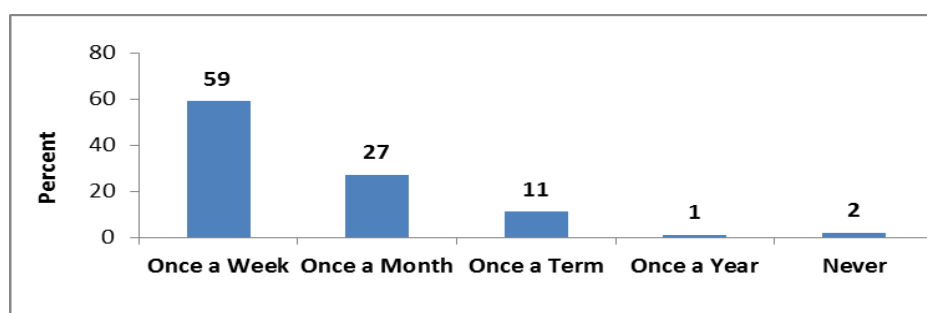
When asked what kind of support would be most useful to help them improve their ability to teach reading, 84% said materials (180 of the 213 teachers mentioned this), the next most commonly mentioned input was training (mentioned by 47.4% of teachers).

### Findings from head teacher and head of school interviews

Besides P1 teachers, 165 head teachers, 73 deputy head teachers, and 17 other school staff in charge on the day of the assessment were interviewed regarding their preparation and support for the teaching of reading in their schools. In the vast majority of schools (73%) it was reported that the responsibility for reviewing teacher's lesson plans fell to the head teacher. In 20% of schools this task fell to the deputy head teachers and in 7% of the schools it was the director of studies or a shared responsibility among the head teacher and other school staff.

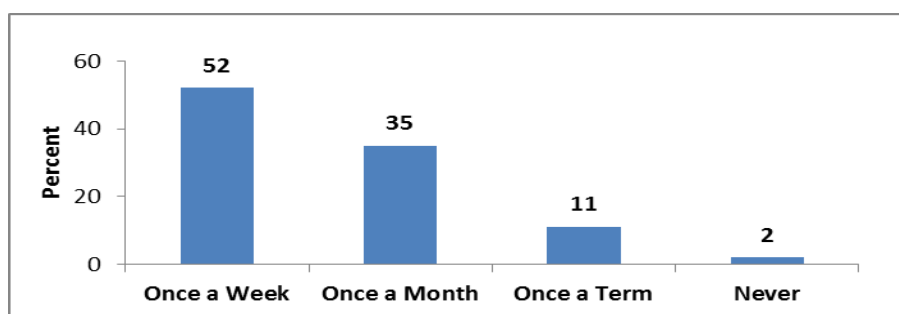
**Figure 14**, shows how often teachers' lesson plans are reviewed according to the heads of school. School leaders reported that teacher lesson plans were reviewed once a week in 59% of the schools, in 27% of the schools plans were reviewed once a month, and in 11% plans were reviewed once every term. It was reported that lessons plans were never reviewed in 2% of the schools and in 1% plans were reviewed once a year. This is not very different from what was reported by the teachers themselves as far as the frequency of lesson plan review.

**Figure 14. How Often Lesson Plans Reviewed (According to School Heads)**



In majority of the schools (77% of the schools) it was the responsibility of the head teacher to observe teachers in the classroom, followed by the deputy head in 15% of the schools. In the remaining 8% of the schools, others that hold this responsibility included DIS, CCTs, directors of studies, and heads of departments/subject heads. The school heads reported that teachers were observed in their classrooms once a week in 52% of the schools, and once a month in 35% of the schools. In eleven percent of the schools, teachers were observed once a term while in 2% of the schools, teachers were never observed. These percentages are higher than those reported by teachers (10% of teachers said that no one was designated to review lesson plans or that their plans were never reviewed).

**Figure 15. How Often Teachers Observed in the Classroom (According to Head Teachers)**



## Better Performing Learners and Schools: A bright spots analysis

Though the vast majority of learners assessed would be considered to be non-readers, 2 learners were able to read fluently in English (more than 60 words per minute). There were 138 learners who would be considered “emergent readers in English (read at least 20 words per minute) and 146 emergent readers in the local language.

The following analysis concentrates on the characteristics of these 200<sup>13</sup> “better performing” learners that may help to explain this level of performance and point to factors associated with better performance that could be replicated among learners and schools.

### Profile of Better Performing Learners

Girls were more likely to be better performing learners than boys: 43.5% of better performing learners were boys compared to 56.5% girls (though there was no statistically significant gender difference in oral reading fluency either in English or local language). Not surprisingly, 98.5% of these learners were in P3, though there was no significant difference in age between readers and their peers within the same class (this means that younger P3 learners were just as likely to perform well as older P3 learners).

#### Characteristics Of Better Performing Learners:

- Runyoro-Rutoro Speaking schools
- Attended pre-school
- Did not repeat current grade
- Wearing shoes
- Packed something to drink or eat for break or lunch on the day of the assessment
- More likely to take books home from classroom or library and see others reading at home.

Eighty percent of the better performing learners came from Runyoro-Rutoro speaking schools, 9% came from Leb Acoli speaking schools, 7% from Lugbarati and 4% from Lumasaaba speaking schools.

Learners who were better performing reported attending pre-school at higher rates than their peers (63% and 46% respectively). The availability and use of reading

<sup>13</sup> There were 200 learners who read 20 words per minute in English, their local language, or both.

materials outside the school seems to be an important predictor of success: learners performing better are more likely to bring home reading material. Similarly, 77% of better performers report seeing someone at home reading books or newspapers (compared to 68% for their peers). The two groups are equally likely to have someone read to them in their home (58% for the better performing learners compared to 56% for others).

### Profile of Better Performing Schools

Most schools in the study had fewer than 3 learners reading at least 20 words per minute. However, there were 12 schools where at least 5 learners are able to read 20 words per minute – these are referred to here as better performing schools.

#### Characteristics Associated with Better Performing Schools:

- Runyoro-Rutoro Speaking Schools
- Has electricity

Corresponding to the location of the better performing learners, the vast majority (11 of the 12 or 91.7%) of better performing schools were also Runyoro-Rutoro speaking schools in the Mid-West. Only one school was an Acoli speaking school.

Better performing schools are more likely to have electricity: 33% of better performing schools have electricity compare to only 5% of other schools.

## Recommendations for Improving the Teaching of Reading and Reading Achievement in Ugandan Primary Schools

Given the very low levels of reading achievement in both local language and English and the situation in schools and classrooms, the following recommendations for moving forward in the area of support for reading reform in primary schools in Uganda can be made.

**Teacher and Learner Materials:** Teachers need materials that will help them bridge the gap between the thematic curriculum and the teaching of reading in the classroom. The teachers' guide that accompanies the thematic curriculum (which was not seen in use in the majority of reading classes observed) provides methodological guidance on literacy (presenting letters and developing a scope and sequence for teaching reading), but this guidance is not carried over in the discussion of the themes on which teaching plans are based. So, in the theme "weather," an example of a scheme of work for literacy includes "interpreting pictures about weather" or "reading words, e.g., clouds, wind," but there is no bridging between the methodology and the scheme of work; learners should read weather-related words, but how do they actually learn how to read? There is no explicit inclusion of sounding out particular letters or combining them to make syllables or sounds. Also, since the guides are not available in the local language in most cases, the teachers need to do the translation as they are going along.



The teachers' guides being developed under the School Health and Reading Program will help fill this gap. These guides are being developed in local languages—not simply translated from English (the Luganda word for sun “*enjuba*” is more complex than its English equivalent and may be taught at a different level for example).

Learners need print materials in the local language linked to the teachers' guides. Learners need to be able to have contact with the materials: the ideal is for a learner to be able to point his or her finger from letter to letter or word to word so to more easily make the connection between letters and sounds (alphabetic principle). Illustrations also make reading easier and more enjoyable.

**Teacher Support:** Teachers need support for adopting a new methodology for teaching of reading in the classroom. Many teachers know in theory about sounding out letters, blending letters to make sounds, and assessing learner achievement (in fact many remember this as being the way they themselves were taught), but they need support in the way of training and follow-up supervision and feedback in order to improve their ability, skills, and practice. Teachers do not know how to turn their knowledge of how to teach reading (which currently includes teaching names of letters perhaps more literally than the sounds they should be teaching in order for learners to logically combine them to make sounds and words) into practice in the classroom. They need to be trained in a systematic methodology that has relevant, local language materials associated with it (which provide a bridge between the thematic curriculum and the reading methodology). But beyond that, they need continued follow-up support.

Who is best placed to provide this support? All sources of potential support, including head teachers; peers; CCTs and local government including the district education officers, district inspectors, and even associate assessors, need to be brought “on board” to support teachers to teach reading. There could even be a role for PTAs or SMCs. This includes ongoing monitoring of classroom teaching and continual feedback on performance.

## Actions and Next Steps

**Ongoing teacher training:** In 2013, more than 2,300 teachers were trained in early grade reading methodology. Since then, a cadre of 100 early grade master trainers from MoES, University and Teacher Training colleges has been developed. In 2014, 3,000 additional Primary 1 and Primary 2 teachers were provided initial and refresher training in early grade reading methods.

**Materials development:** To date, orthographies have been accepted by the 12 local languages catered for under the program. Primary 1 teacher guides and learner primers in 8 local languages and Primary 2 in 4 local languages have been developed. In 2013, local language and English books were in the hands of over 40,000 Primary 1 learners. In March and April 2014, more than 100,000 additional Primary 1 and Primary 2 learners received reading primers.

**Support supervision:** In July, 2013, teams from the MOES (BE and TIET), DES, NCDC and the districts established a system of ongoing support to program schools – working directly with CCTs, inspectors and head teachers to provide support to the schools and teachers. Since this time, over 350 teachers and head teachers have been directly supported at their schools (teachers observed teaching reading in the classroom). This past term, a plan was initiated to support CCTs to provide this ongoing support on their own.

The Basic Education Working Group of the MOES has developed the following action matrix (**Figure 16**) based on Cluster 1 baseline findings. This matrix describes the Ministry's plan for action to support reading in lower grades. Working with and through the Ministry is crucial to ensure that best practices are sustained.

**Figure 16. Action Matrix**

- Basic Education Department Ministry of Education and Sports
- USAID/Uganda School Health and Reading Program: status of Early Grade Reading and support to Primary School Teachers to teach reading in Uganda

Area	Action	Responsible Person (S)	Timeframe
1. Teacher Training on EGR	1.1 Ensuring that the Early Grade or Lower primary ( P1 – 3) teachers attend EGR training	Commissioner Basic Education	Immediate
	1.2 Commissioner Basic Education to write to DEOs of the Program Districts asking them to ensure that Head teachers send the Early Grade / Lower Primary Teachers for the EGR training	DEOs of Program Districts	
	1.3 Head teachers should also attend the EGR training so that they can offer support to their teachers	Head teachers of Program Primary Schools	
2. Teacher EGR Materials	2.1 Ensuring that the teachers receive and use the EGR Teachers guides for both Local Language and English	Commissioner Basic Education with support from the Program to issue guidelines on use of Teacher EGR materials	Immediate
3. Learner EGR Materials	3.1 Ensuring that the learners receive and use the EGR Learner Primers for both Local Language and English	Commissioner Basic Education with support from the Program to issue guidelines to Districts and Schools on use of EGR Learner Primers for both Local Language and English	Immediate
	3.2 Learners need to be able to have contact with print materials daily / regularly. The ideal is for the Learners to be able to point their fingers from letter to letter or word to word to make the connection between letters and sounds (alphabetic principle)		
4. Time on Task	4.1 EGR teachers need to be guided on how to effectively utilize the timetabled literacy hour	Commissioner Basic Education with support from the Program to issue guidelines to	Immediate

Area	Action	Responsible Person (S)	Timeframe
		Districts and Schools on how to effectively utilize the timetabled literacy hour	
5. Teacher Support / Support Supervision	5.1 There is need to identify the key actors (at National, District and PTC levels) and define their roles and responsibilities in providing ongoing support and supervision of EGR teachers in the classroom.	Literacy Adviser in consultation with Basic Education, Teacher Education, NCDC and DES	Immediate
	5.2 (Developing a document of the key actors and their roles and responsibilities in supporting EGR in Uganda Primary Schools)		
	5.3 Teachers need support for adopting the new methodology for teaching of reading in the classroom. In addition to being trained on the EGR methodology teachers need continued follow up support. This includes ongoing monitoring of teaching and continual feedback on performance		
	5.4 There is need to bring on board all sources of potential support: Head teachers, Deputy Head teachers, CCTs, DEOs/ MEOs, DIS' /MIS', Associate Assessors, SMCs, DES Regional Staff, School Management Committees.		
	5.5 Modifying supervision and monitoring tools to include more specific information about classroom teaching of reading in the school as well as support to teachers to teach reading	The Program technical team (M & E Director, Literacy Adviser and Professional Development Specialist) in consultation with Basic Education, Teacher Education, NCDC and DES	Immediate
	5.6 There is need to ensure that the policy of the medium of instruction in the Mother Tongue for lower primary (P1 - 3) which is in line with the thematic curriculum is followed by Program Districts and Primary Schools	The Commissioner Basic Education to write a circular to Program Districts and Primary schools reminding them on the policy of language of instruction in lower primary classes (P1 - 3)	Immediate
	5.7 The thematic curriculum is built on the premise that children learn best when taught in a familiar language in the early years of primary school.		
6. Language of Instruction			

## Appendix 1: Total number of learners assessed

Language	P1				P3			
	Treatment		Control		Treatment		Control	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Lugbarati	220	223	220	218	76	76	73	73
Leb Acoli	544	556	577	566	197	193	195	207
Runyoro/Rutooro	602	559	573	537	199	199	197	198
Lumasaaba	601	595	427	407	204	205	149	137
<b>Total</b>	<b>1967</b>	<b>1933</b>	<b>1797</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>615</b>