READ Community Outreach - (READ CO) Year 4, Quarter Two Report (October 1 – December 31, 2017)

Revised Final February 25, 2018
This report was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Save the Children.

READ Community Outreach
(READ CO)

Quarterly Program Report
Year 4 Quarter Two (October 1-December 31, 2017)

Submitted by: Kamal Hossain, Chief of Party
Save the Children
Ethiopia Country Office
Old Airport, PO Box 387, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: Ex. +251 113 728875

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ACRONYMS

ADA	Amhara Development Association,
ANFEAE	Adult and Non Formal Education Association of Ethiopia,
ARRA	Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs
BOFED	Bureau of Finance and Economic Development
CTE	Collage of Teachers Education
EGRW	Early Grade Reading and Writing
HI	Handicap International
KETB	Kebele Education and Training Board
LOA	Life of Award
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
M&E	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MOE	Ministry of Education
MEP	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
OWDA	Organization for Welfare and Development in Action
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PSI	Project Specific Indicator
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTSA	Parent Teacher Student Association
READ CO	Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Community Outreach
READ M&E	Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed
RSEB	Regional State Education Bureau
SC	Save the Children
SIP	School Improvement Plan/School Improvement Program
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region
SRM	Supplementary Reading Materials
TDA	Tigray Development Association
TLM	Teaching and Learning Materials
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WOE	Woreda Education Office
ZED	Zonal Education Department

PROJECT SUMMARY INFORMATION

Program Name:	READ Community Outreach (READ CO)
Activity Start Date And End Date:	January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2018
Name of Prime Implementing Partner:	Save the Children
Cooperative Agreement Number:	AID-663-A-15-00003
Name of Subcontractors/Sub-awardees:	Amhara Development Association , Tigray Development Association and Organization for Welfare and Development in Action
Major Counterpart Organizations:	Ministry of Education and Regional State Education Bureaus
Geographic Coverage (regions):	Amhara, Oromia, Tigray, Somali, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) Region
Reporting Period:	October 1- December 31, 2017

Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Community Outreach (READ CO) is a four-year (2015 to 2018) program funded by USAID, under the leadership of Ethiopia's Ministry of Education. Save the Children (SC) and its local sub-partners—Amhara Development Association (ADA), Tigray Development Association (TDA) and the Organization for Welfare and Development in Action (OWDA) implement the project in five regions: Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR, Tigray and Somali. READ CO works to strengthen community outreach resulting in improved reading and writing skills of primary school children (grades 1 to 4). READ CO Intermediate Results (IRs) are aligned with the READ Sub-Intermediate Results framework for Ethiopia, which include reading materials development, training, capacity building, support to community involvement, and monitoring and evaluation inputs. READ CO has adopted the following three Intermediate Results (IRs) to measure achievement towards its goal:

IR 1: Access to supplementary reading materials in vernacular languages increased

IR 2: Opportunities for children to practice reading and writing created

IR 3: Parental and community engagement to support learning to read strengthened

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

READ CO achieved or exceeded nearly all of its key activities and targets for the FY 2018 second quarter implementation period. Major achievements of the reporting quarter included:

- Introducing the supplementary reading material (SRM) use strategy to 30 higher officials in Amhara region;
- Provision of 356,706 copies of SRMs in seven mother tongue languages;
- Supportive supervision and technical guidance for 1,568 targeted schools; and
- Purchase and distribution of 2,847 slates, 435 bin boxes and 1,745 shelves to strengthen school and community level reading spaces.

As part of the community awareness and sensitization effort, a 30-minute program was produced on the READ CO interventions in collaboration with stakeholders, and aired through the Amhara Mass Media Agency, reaching an estimated 25 million audience members.

Capacity building activities in this reporting period included coaching and mentoring training for 146 school cluster supervisors and woreda focal persons, and level one and level two trainings for intervention and non-intervention schools in SNNPR. In addition, as part of READ CO's effort to expand project benefits to refugee children, 108 selected participants from four Eritrean refugee camps (including reading volunteers, refugee camp committee members, parent teacher student association (PTSA) chairs, principals, ARRA project officers) received level one and level two training in this reporting quarter.

Monitoring and evaluation activities in the quarter included finalization of the school profile records for FY2018, national and regional level review meetings, and assessment plan and protocol development finalization for the READ CO diagnostic assessment—planned for next quarter to improve program data and evidence.

READ CO and its sub-partners, in collaboration with different stakeholders at woreda, zonal and regional level, also continued working strongly on READ CO expansion in non-intervention regions, and incentivizing youth reading volunteers by mobilizing community resources.

1. SUMMARY INDICATOR TABLE AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

Standard Indicators	Baseline FY 2015	Annual Target	Q1 FY2018	Q2 FY2018	Q3 FY2018	Q4 FY2018	Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%)	On Target Y/N
Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support	0	n/a	n/a	467[1]			N/A	
Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with USG assistance	0	766,428	352,122	356,706			92%	Y
Number of learners receiving reading interventions at the primary level	0	1,102,000	242,443	922,454			84%	Y
Number of teachers / educators / teaching assistants who successfully completed in-service training or received intensive coaching or mentoring with USG support	0	n/a	n/a	96[2]			N/A	
Number of PTAs or similar 'school' governance structures supported	0	n/a	n/a	0			-	

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[1] Number of administrators and officials trained in this reporting quarter are from READ CO expansion schools in SNNPR and refugee schools (12 refugee school and 455 trained from READ CO expansion schools in the three zones of SNNPR).

[2] Reflects level two training participants trained in this quarter from Eritrean refugee camps in Tigray. Level two training was also provided in SNNPR expansion schools, which will be reported in the coming quarter after data compilation and verification.

2. PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES

IR 1: Access to supplementary reading materials in vernacular languages increased

In the second quarter of FY 2018, key activities to improve children's access for reading materials included awareness creation on SRM usage strategy; printing and distribution of 356,706 Grade 1-4 SRMs, flash cards and graphic organizers; development of a new strategy for grassroots SRM development; and review of Afaan Oromo SRMs.

Sub IR 1.1 System capacity to provide culturally-relevant reading materials strengthened

Creative grassroots materials development (1.1.3.7). With advice from USAID, READ CO replaced the strategy of building capacity of local publishers and writers to use the revised Bloom Software, with a new strategy to engage grassroots level stakeholders[3] to develop simple and cost effective materials in the seven languages, and to locally duplicate and distribute these materials to grades 1-4 children in the five regions. Specifically, the strategy aims to:

- Strengthen print rich environment in schools and community reading centres
- Produce supplementary reading materials at grass- root level and share the practice for local level stakeholders

Implementation of the strategy will begin with pilot activities in Amhara, and school selection is under discussion with the RSEB. Pilot schools will be supported by a cluster resource center. READ CO will link pilot schools with cluster member schools and woreda structures to strengthen the practice of grassroots SRMs development and to support community mobilization. READ CO will directly take part in organizing and leading the grassroots level development, piloting, and disseminating the good practice to the other four regions in the other six languages.

Grassroots development of Alphabet charts for the seven MT languages (1.1.3.7). READ CO plans to develop sample alphabet charts as part of the grassroots level SRM development and creating print rich environment. Follow up on getting the right order of alphabets/letters for each of the seven languages is underway, and currently Amhara, Tigray and Oromia RSEBs have submitted the alphabet order (as this was their responsibility). After the alphabet charts are developed, and with the support of stakeholders[4] the printing, binding and distribution will be undertaken at the cluster resource center with respective stakeholders and shared accordingly. The development of sample alphabet charts will support zonal education bureaus to develop full alphabet charts of all languages at the cluster-school level.

Re-reviewing of Afaan Oromoo materials (1.1.6.6). Following the request from Oromia RSEB, READ CO undertook the re-review of 115 Afaan Oromoo titles of grades 1-4, of which 112 were accepted. The 115 titles are among those printed but not yet distributed to schools, and this gave an opportunity to the Bureau to re-review and adjust these materials. There are over 60 titles that were already distributed to some target schools before the need for re-review of the materials was initiated.

The Oromia RSEB engaged six reviewers (who were previously trained and have experience working on SRM review) to re-review the materials using evaluation criteria prepared/developed for this particular purpose. The objective of the review was to lessen the SRMs' alignment to the mother tongue curriculum

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[3] Mother tongue language teachers, students, parents, community elders, WEO officials and others.
[4] Teachers, students, WEOs and deputy school principals.

and rectify placement of logos, national and regional flags on the materials, and maintain consistency of language use on the cover and title pages. The Oromia RSEB provided a short guideline to lead the adjustment of all remaining titles before printing and distribution to the target schools in the region. Over 706,693 grades 1-4 SRMs were corrected as per the new guidance before distribution to target schools.

Sub IR 1.2 Supplementary materials for school community reading activities made available

Provide decodable texts, leveled readers and read-aloud texts for grade 1-4 targeted student (1.2.1.1, 1.2.2.1). In the reporting period, 303,687 copies of SRMs were distributed to schools in the five intervention regions. In addition, as part of READ CO expansion and sustainability, three zones in SNNPR region distributed 72,000 copies of SRMs to non-intervention schools. READ CO provided level one training for these expansion schools, and the cost of printing and distribution of SRMs for expansion schools was covered by government as part of its initiative to support READ CO model expansion in non-targeted schools. The following table summarizes the distribution of SRMs in the reporting quarter by text type, language and grade level.

Table 1: Distribution of Supplementary Reading Materials in the Reporting Quarter

	Amharic	Tigrinya	Af-Somali	Hadiyissa	Wolayttatto	Sidaamu Afoo	Afaan Oromoo[5]
Grade 1	0	20,275	13194	0	0	0	88,626
Grade 2	0	4473	6360	0	0	0	42,549
Grade 3	6336	3560	17,520	6710	9042	10,156	0
Grade 4	10787	8560	21,240	7688	9569	15,316	1726
Total	**17,123**	**36,868**	**58,314**	**14,398**	**18,611**	**25,472**	**185,920**

Printing SRMs titles for learners with visual difficulty (1.2.1.4). READ CO has created access to SRMs and opportunities to practice reading for children having various type of impairments. The major achievement of the quarter was the printing of 8,288 copies of adapted titles in six mother tongue languages for children with low vision. Distribution of these materials will be done in February 2018 and will benefit an estimated 2,072 children with visual difficulty in 2,488 target schools.

Introducing SRM use strategy in grades 1-4 (1.2.2.5). To guide early grade reading and writing efforts of children in and outside school settings, READ CO developed a SRMs use strategy in Amharic and Afaan Oromoo languages during the previous quarter. In this reporting quarter, READ CO introduced the strategy to 30 higher education officials from Oromia and Amhara, which included the deputy RSEB head of Oromia; and directors from both regions of directorates of curriculum and implementation, mother tongue language, and English language education. In addition, the resource mobilization directorate from the MOE also participate in this training. In the coming reporting quarter, training of 50 teachers from 25 pilot schools will takes place in Amhara region. In Oromia, meanwhile, the curriculum is undergoing revision and SRMs previously developed in alignment with the previous curriculum are being revisited and reviewed.

Purchase and distribution of materials for reading spaces (1.2.4.2). Though most of the regions previously procured and distributed reading spaces materials[6] for cohort one and two schools, in this reporting quarter, READ CO distributed number of materials to cohort three schools. These materials

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[5] Afaan Oromoo titles distributed in the reporting quarter are SRMs previously printed and stored at woreda level, new title printing and distribution for Afaan Oromo language in process due to the re-review and adjustment made on certain elements such as logo and flag setting on the previously printed SRMs, initiated as per the request of the Oromia RSEB.

[6] The reading space materials package includes slates, book bank bins, shelves and mats.

included 1745 shelves, 435 book bank bins, and 2847 slates purchased and distributed particularly for cohort three schools and community reading centers found in SNNPR, Somali, Amhara and Tigray implementation regions, respectively in this quarter.

Printing and distribution of flash cards and graphic organizers (1.2.4.4). During this reporting quarter, READ CO printed 335,380 copies of flash cards, image cards, alphabet cards, index/empty cards and graphic organizers for Af-Soomaali, Hadiyyisa, Sidaamu Afoo and Wolayttatto languages. The printing process took a long time, partly due to a packaging issue and partly due to a difficulty in engaging experienced printers who would print as per the specifications. READ CO succeeded in negotiating packaging with no additional cost.

Afaan Oromoo flash cards, which were printed under ANFEAE supervision, are now under distribution. READ CO is currently discussing with Tigray and Amhara region implementers to organize flash cards and graphic organizers printing.

IR 2: Opportunities for children to practice reading and writing created

Sub IR 2.1 School and community-based reading and writing activities established

Supportive supervision of reading spaces and their functionality (2.1.1.7). In this reporting quarter, supportive supervision of reading spaces was undertaken by READ CO implementing partners, READ CO South and Oromia staffs, and government partners. A total of 1,475 schools and community reading spaces were supervised in the five intervention regions as part of category one supportive supervision activities (supportive supervision activities undertaken at targeted school levels by community outreach officers). In addition, 93 targeted schools in Amhara, Tigray and Somali regions received category two supportive supervision (supervision by regional, zonal and woreda based staffs in collaboration with government officials). Altogether, 1,568 schools were supervised in category one and two supportive supervision activities. During these visits in four of the regions (Amhara, Tigray, SNNPR and Somali) teams monitored 1,508 book banks, 1,508 reading camps, 1,616 reading and writing clubs, and 5,595 functional reading spaces. This quarter marked the inception period for READ CO Oromia, and the newly recruited zonal and woreda staff visited 290 schools in the quarter and confirmed 414 reading and writing clubs are functional.

During the supervision visits, teams focused on observing and supporting youth reading volunteers, mother tongue language teachers, and woredas and community level structures (KETBs and PTSAs) to strengthen capacity to implement and sustain READ CO activities. Teams identified and documented any capacity gaps, and discussed strategies for improvement with the respective stakeholders. This included provision of technical assistance during the visits to mitigate the capacity gaps.

The supportive supervision teams also identified promising practices in the communities. In SNNPR, teams found examples of strong linkage and collaboration between schools and community reading spaces. In these examples, the mother tongue teachers were identifying children to refer to youth reading volunteers for additional support, and schools are providing stationery support for community reading spaces.

Work with Refugee Schools

Supportive supervision and strengthening of READ CO intervention in Somali refugee camps (2.1.4.1). Supportive supervision to refugee schools in Somali region (both Jigjiga and Dolo Ado refugees) was not done, due to the delay in receiving ARRA approval. A first round of level one and level

two training was conducted during FY2017 for participants selected from targeted schools. In FY2018, READ CO planned to provide further technical assistance and support for refugee schools in Somali region. The project, however, was unable to provide technical support to the refugee schools because the ARRA did not accept the scope of planned support to targeted schools. (More details are provided under the challenges section of the report, below).

Provision of READ CO training for Eritrean refugees in Tigray (2.1.4.2). With the request of USAID, SC in collaboration with TDA organized level one and two training for ARRA staff (one day) and Eritrean refugee communities (five days). The training was held in North-West zonal town at Shire-Endasilassie from December 11 to 16, 2017. A USAID team visited the training. The training focused on the school and community level reading and writing skills development activity manuals. As a result of the training, it is expected that 12 reading corners, four reading and writing clubs, four book banks, and four reading camps will be established in the four schools and communities of refugees to provide better opportunity to 3,998 students (male: 2434, Female:1564). The following table summarizes training participants.

Table 2: Training Participants at Tigray Training for Refugee Schools

Participants	Level One Training Participants		Level Two Training Participants					
	ARRA Zonal Program Officer	Program Officers of Refugee Camps	Principals	Unit Leaders	Mother Tongue Language Teachers	Reading Volunteers	Refugee Camp Committee (RCC)	PTSA Chair persons
Male	2	3	4	4	20	10	4	3
Female	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1
Total	2	4	4	4	20	12	4	4

On the last day of the training, the trainees developed an action plan to implement READ CO activities in their respective schools and communities. Each participant has taken the mandate to contribute to the establishment and functioning of reading spaces as well as mobilization of the refugees' community. As indicated in their action plans, READ CO activities will start functioning in January 2018.

IR 3: Parental and Community engagement to support learning to read strengthened

Sub IR 3.1 Community participation to support reading enhanced

Use media to create awareness on reading (3.1.2.4). Media is a powerful means for sensitizing community and parents on the importance of children's reading. READ CO media messages were developed by the READ CO national team and delivered to implementing partners for translation into respective local languages. While translated, the messages have not yet been aired, as there are still ongoing negotiations with the regional media agencies, which want the airtime cost covered by READ CO. SC and implementing partners are working with their respective RSEBs to negotiate with their regional media agencies to get the messages aired at no cost to the project.

In this reporting period, ADA in collaboration with Amhara RSEB, made a documentary program on the achievements of READ CO intervention in improving the reading and writing skills of children in sampled

target schools of the region. The documentary program was broadcasted through Amhara Television for half an hour at no cost to READ CO. The documentary highlighted the supports provided to target school children and the results obtained from the effort. The program also addressed the role of the community and all stakeholders (including government officials) in improving children reading and writing proficiency in the region. It included interviews with education experts, teachers, students, and ADA READ CO project staff.

The broadcast was a good opportunity for raising the awareness of the regional public in general, and Amhara regional state government leaders in particular. It brought the attention of the leadership to children's reading and writing skills improvement in the region. As reported by ADA, the television program is expected to reach more than 25 million people in the region.

Training on coaching to support MTLT and youth volunteers to reinforce reading skills of children (3.1.2.5). READ CO developed a draft-coaching guide and distributed it to target regions. Woreda focal persons and cluster supervisors have been supporting the community-level implementers using the coaching guide. To help the coaches better understand the practice of coaching and enable them to provide better support to community level implementers, this quarter OWDA and TDA provided two days training on coaching for READ CO focal persons and cluster supervisors. The following table summarizes the number of schools cluster supervisors who received coaching training in the reporting quarter.

Table 3: School cluster supervisor training in the reporting quarter

Implementing partner	Participants								
	Cluster supervisors			Woreda Focal persons			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
TDA	81	7	88	14	1	15	95	8	103
OWDA	39	-	39	4	-	4	43	-	43
Total	**120**	**7**	**127**	**18**	**1**	**19**	**138**	**8**	**146**

Organize periodic community reading activities, including competitions (3.1.2.6).
In this quarter, 10,451 children in SNNPR participated in reading competitions to showcase their reading improvement. READ CO also continued to encourage youth volunteers to support and promote such activities, during the youth volunteer refresher trainings held this quarter. During youth volunteer refresher training conducted in SNNPR, Tigray and Amhara regions, the volunteers shared experiences in making reading spaces print rich and diversifying activities in reading spaces, including incorporation of reading competitions.

Provide refresher training to strengthen youth volunteers' skills (3.1.2.7). SC and implementing partners are providing two days' refresher training to youth reading volunteers as part of the youth volunteer incentivizing and capacity building initiative. In this reporting quarter, three intervention regions provided refresher training to the youth volunteers in their respective regions (see table below)

Table 4: Youth Volunteer Refreshing Training Participants

Region	Male	Female	Total
SNNPR	803	498	1301
Tigray	431	529	960
Amhara	958	975	1933[7]

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[7] The youth refresher training in Amhara is conducted separately for treatment one and schools. Among the total 1,933 participants, 99 participants are from treatment one schools.

The training focused on how to support children in the reading spaces at community and school levels based on students' identified gaps, student profile management, proper handling of supplementary reading materials, and documentation of project activities.

The refresher training in Somali region also included mother tongue language teachers. The five days training used the school and community level reading and writing skills development activity manuals. Participants included 240 MTLT, 120 school principals, 119 vice school principals, 360 community youth volunteers, 120 PTA members and 120 KETB members.

Incentivizing community youth reading volunteers. READ CO undertook a study (activity 4.3) to identify the motivational factors for youth volunteerism in the education sector. The study recommended different actions to be undertaken by all actors to support volunteerism in the education sector. READ CO discussed the issues raised by the study during the first quarter review meeting with partners and stakeholders. Following those meetings, several regions made progress this quarter in developing and implementing incentives for volunteers. For example, in Amhara region, 289 volunteers became FAL facilitators, 114 volunteers became preschool facilitators, 19 volunteers became librarian, 2 volunteers became guards and 1 volunteer became a logistics officer in a primary school[8]. In Tigray, 19 volunteers have new employment opportunities(13 are serving as adult education facilitators, 3 as "O" class facilitators and 3 as alternative basic education facilitators[9]) In SNNPR, all 50 non-target woredas that are expanding the READ CO model hired community reading volunteers on a contractual base and are paying the volunteers 400-600 hundred ETB per month.

In addition, as an incentive to the youth reading volunteers, READ CO through its sub partners is procuring youth volunteers' kits. This quarter OWDA procured bags, T-shirts, caps (for male), umbrellas (for female), registration books and 360 pens and distributed to youth reading volunteers. These kits have been distributed to reading volunteers with each volunteers receiving one Bag, one T-shirt, one cap (male), one umbrella (female), one registration book, and 10 pens. Procurement and distribution of volunteers' kits will be finalized for all intervention regions in the next quarter.

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[8] In Amhara region, the 425 youth reading volunteers incentivized in this reporting quarter with new employment opportunities were replaced by newly recruited youth reading volunteers. The newly recruited youth reading volunteers will be supported by READ CO staffs and cluster supervisors and will receive READ CO training in this implementation period during youth reading volunteer refresher sessions.

[9] In Tigray region, the 19 youth reading volunteers who received employment opportunities are still facilitating READ CO sessions in reading spaces. This youth reading facilitators are expected to continue volunteering for READ CO in addition to their new roles.

3. GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

READ CO is working hard to make sure that gender and inclusion is integrated in its project activities.

Supporting girls' participation in reading activities at school and community level. In Somali region, 1,350 girls are participating in reading spaces and about 1,200 girls are members of reading and writing clubs. In addition, the below data from TDA shows participation of boys and girls in reading spaces.

Table 5: Participation of boys and girls in reading spaces

Reading Spaces	# of Students			Female participation
	Male	Female	Total	
Reading & Writing Club	18,089	19,671	37,760	52%
Reading Corner	31,305	28,568	59,873	48%
Book Bank	16,572	14,503	31,075	47%
Reading Camp	15,731	12,952	28,683	45%

Participation of children with disability in reading spaces. At school and community level, participation of children with disabilities is increasing due to project efforts to provide opportunities for all children to practice reading at reading corners, clubs, camps and book banks. Mother tongue language teachers and community reading volunteers provide special support for girls and children with disability at the reading spaces. The table below shows participation of children with disabilities in reading spaces in SNNPR schools.

Table 6: Participation of Students with Disabilities in Reading Spaces in SNNPR

Reading spaces	Grade 1			Grade 2			Grade 3			Grade 4			Grade1-4		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Reading Corner	87	68	155	69	81	148	63	57	119	47	53	100	**266**	**259**	**525**
RW Club	5	5	10	6	4	10	11	8	19	12	10	22	**34**	**27**	**61**
Reading Camp	33	23	56	26	19	48	10	11	21	9	9	18	**78**	**62**	**140**
Total	125	96	221	101	104	206	84	76	159	68	72	140	**378**	**348**	**726**

Based on the report from TDA, children with various type of impairments are participating in school and community level reading spaces. The table below shows their participation in READ CO target schools across Tigray region.[10]

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[10] Data from SNNPR and Tigray available this quarter; READ CO will report similar information for the other regions in later reports.

Table 7: Participation of Students with Disabilities in Reading Spaces in Tigray

Type of CWD	Male	Female	Total	Female participation
Learning	389	275	664	41%
Visual	113	119	232	51%
Hearing	170	124	294	42%
Physical	205	99	304	33%
Total	877	617	1494	41%

International Disability Day Celebration. With its aim to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life, International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is observed on 3rd December every year. The theme for 2017 is: *"Transformation towards sustainable and resilient society for all".* The overarching principle of this theme is to 'leave no one behind' and empower people with disability to be active contributors of society. READ CO is working hard to create access to SRMs, and provide opportunities for children with disabilities

Photo caption: students gathered to commemorate IDPD at Kimir Dingay primary school. Photo credit: Firdawek Alemu, ADA.

to practice reading equally with others. Moreover, it also works to create awareness among parents and communities to support children with disabilities in reading.

ADA organized celebrations of IDPD which was held at Kimir Dingay primary school of South Gondar Zone, Farta Woreda, and at Robit primary school of North Wollo Zone, Raykobo Woreda on December 5 and 7, respectively. Records showed 2445 participants (1388 F) attended the events in the two schools. Among the key government officials who attended were South Gondar zone education office vice head, special need lecturer at Begemidir teachers' college, school principals and school cluster supervisors.

The events were educative and entertaining, and both involved and were often led by students themselves. Students presented songs for participants about the importance of education. In addition, children with disabilities presented poems by using braille, which portrayed their hope and importance of education for children with disabilities. Finally, poems and SRM reading competitions were carried out for children with disabilities, and ADA provided prizes for all competitors.

4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

FY 2018 school profile data (4.7). The FY 2018 school profile records for all intervention regions were finalized in the reporting quarter, which was reported based on the data forecast in the previous quarter. For FY2018, READ CO targeted children reach is 922,454 grade 1-4 children, with the following distribution in each respective implementation region.

Table 8: READ CO Targeted Students by Sex and Region

Sex	Amhara	Oromia[11]	Tigray	SNNPR	Somali	Total
Male	131,058	151,418	51,079	141,262	17,895	492,712
Female	111,855	130,829	45,946	128,310	12,802	429,742
Total	242,913	282,247	97,025	269,572	30,697	922,454

Diagnostic Assessment (4.10). READ CO is launching an in-house performance assessment of children's reading, on sampled children from intervention schools. This diagnostic assessment is designed to better understand READ CO effects on children's learning performance. In addition, this assessment also considers factors related to READ CO intermediate outcomes, which includes:

- Access and availability of supplementary reading materials for targeted students.
- Targeted students' access for reading spaces and opportunities.
- Level of parental engagement and support for children learning to read in intervention areas.

The assessment will utilize both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, and the sample will consist of students, teachers, government stakeholders, WEO, PTSA, and KETB members.

In the quantitative method, 2,000 grade two students selected from 100 schools found in five regions and 100 grade two sampled teachers will be interviewed. The qualitative method mainly utilizes two data collection approaches: key informant interviews and focus group discussion. By this arrangement, 32 key informant interviews and 26 focus group discussions will be conducted with informants and discussants selected per the sampling procedure.

By the end of the quarter under review, all preparations to launch the assessment were finalized, including tool development and electronic configuration of the developed tools. The tools comprise of different questions to assess the students' background situation, home literacy environment, students' participation in school and community level literacy activities, children's access and engagement with reading materials and reading skill tests. The teacher's questionnaire focuses on assessing issues related with methodology of teaching, access and availability of supplementary reading materials, and the current practice to support children learning to read in general.

This assessment will utilize READ M&E midterm assessment and NORC data to support comparative analysis of results. In general, the planned assessment is expected to support SC and other stakeholders with better evidence-based data on the existing situation of reading in targeted intervention areas, as well as the design of similar intervention and future planning. The data collection is planned to be undertaken in February 2018 in all intervention regions and the final results will be availed in March 2018.

5. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT

The FY 2018 second quarter partners national level review meeting (0.1.6). The FY2018 second quarter partners review meeting took place December 27-28, 2017 in Addis Ababa. In this review meeting, all READ CO implementing partners and READ CO SNNPR and Oromia teams participated. The following issues were discussed by participants:

- Review of READ CO implementing partners' and SNNP and Oromia activity, and financial achievement against the plan for the quarter.

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[11] Due to recent data collection and verification still in process, we expect some changes in Oromia data in the coming reporting quarter.

- Capacity building/sensitization on photo capturing and success story development.
- Sensitization on the community outreach guide, creative community grassroots level SRMs development, the diagnostic assessment, and gender and inclusion.
- Orientation on data management and the revised quarter reporting templates.

Best practices were identified and action points developed and shared with stakeholders. Some of the best practices identified during the meeting included:

- ADA's media utilization for READ CO awareness raising, notably the documentary program.
- TDA's management of regional level review meetings. TDA created a chance for participants to share experiences in regional review meetings by including the participation of selected model teachers and principals from selected schools.
- Youth volunteer's incentive approaches of ADA, TDA and OWDA. The three implementing partners approached the government sector offices and were able to secure job placement and other opportunities for youth reading volunteers. Several discussions were undertaken with education offices of each respective region, and action points developed and shared among each stakeholder, including timelines. These efforts produced better resource mobilization to support youth reading volunteers.

In addition, participants identified the following shortcomings and areas needing improvement for READ CO implementation:

- Funding the radio media messages transmission in the four regions.
- Incentivizing volunteers and quantifying data on youth volunteer incentives; such as the amount of resource mobilized to support youth volunteers.
- Case story development and documentation with better quality.
- Need to strengthen joint supportive supervision with regional, zonal and woreda level stakeholders by ensuring stakeholders' participation in these visits.
- Immediate action to distribute supplementary reading materials at stock (TDA, ADA, Oromia).
- Clear guidance on printing of flash cards and graphic organizers from SC for implementing partners.

Regional level review meetings (0.1.6). In addition to the national level review meeting, regional level review meetings were undertaken in four regions this quarter: SNNPR, Oromia, Tigray and Somali. A total of 255 participants selected from woreda education offices, targeted schools, zonal education departments, USAID regional representatives, and regional education bureau representatives attended these meetings. The agendas of the meetings focused on sustainability, reading volunteers incentives, implementation gaps identified during supportive supervisions, SRM printing and distribution by the use of government funds, community involvement, and experience-sharing among participants, and READ CO model scale up in non-intervention woredas and schools.

In Oromia, SC began direct implementation this quarter following the implementing partner termination. After a series of discussions with the Oromia RSEB, agreement was reached on utilization of SRMs, provision of offices for READ CO, and the expected efforts need to be exerted by the education offices at different level to insure READ CO implementation success. The RSEB promised to collaboratively work with the project. After this discussion, 39 staff (2 female) were deployed at woreda, zonal and regional levels, and 28 woreda and 5 zonal offices were established to manage and ensure implementation in the region. Following this, regional review meetings were conducted in five zones focusing on creating awareness on READ CO and on issues of project activities strengthening at the regional level. In addition, the staffs deployed carried out an assessment on the status of implementation in targeted schools and

distributed 185,920 copies of backlogged SRMs, which were previously stored at woreda and zonal education offices.

All regional level review meetings conducted in SNNPR, Oromia, Tigray and Somali regions were concluded by setting action points and sharing responsibilities among participant stakeholders. This resulted in some tangible achievements, such as in SNNPR, where zonal governments have assigned budget from government funds for SRMs printing for expansion schools, and level two training undertaken in expansion schools. In addition, in Amhara region, one woreda agreed to purchase and distribute SRMs from government funds. Follow up on action points is a key priority for all implementers in the upcoming implementation quarter.

6. ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER PROJECTS/ STAKEHOLDERS

READ CO expansion in non-targeted Woredas. In SNNPR, discussions were held with zonal education departments, woreda and regional level education office to expand the READ CO community outreach activities in non-intervention regions. As a result of these discussions, in this reporting period TOT training was conducted for 455 participants selected from 50 expansion woredas in the three zones. Following this TOT training in Wolaita and Sidama zones, READ CO conducted level two training for 7,272 participants selected from 891 expansion schools in two zones[12] by the use of government funds.

The SNNPR RSEB finalized printing of 72,000 copies of SRMs from READ CO sources to be distributed next quarter to expansion schools. Currently three target zones are working on procurement of SRMs at zonal level and they will order the printing to distribute SRMs before the start of second semester and ETB 5000 per school was allocated for this purpose. A total of 1,232 schools in three targeted zones are expected to make SRMs procurements.

In addition, there are emerging efforts in Amhara region to work on READ CO expansion. Discussions were held with RSEB, ZED and WEOs. Currently one of the targeted woredas—Fogera woreda education office—in consultation with the school principals, is making efforts to use GEQUIP budget for procurement of SRMs (an estimated amount of ETB 2 million). READ CO implementer in the region, ADA, is discussing with the RSEB to expand this experience to other non-targeted woredas and project schools.

Incentivizing community youth reading volunteers. In this reporting quarter, youth reading volunteers incentives were increased and reinforced through the support and collaboration of stakeholders. This action expected to reduce youth reading volunteer turnover as well as expected to contribute in maintaining youth reading volunteers motivation to support READ CO activities (details under IR 3).

Collaboration with READ M & E and NORC. READ CO is working with READ M&E on the diagnostic assessment planned to be undertaken in the next reporting quarter. Specifically, collaboration has focused on establishing a data transfer agreement signed between SC and AIR to support the diagnostic assessment with baseline data and READ M&E draft midterm assessment report. In addition, READ CO and NORC are working in collaboration on the planned NORC evaluation expected to be undertaken in May 2018 in two regions.

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[12] Level two training in Hadiya Zones is in process and will be reported in the next quarter

7. CHALLENGES

- **Challenges to SRM printing and distribution in *Afaan Oromoo* languages.** The recent shift in Oromia to using the old mother tongue language curriculum required some adjustments on the covers and title pages of the already printed 706,693 READ CO SRMs. This caused considerable delay in their distribution to grades 1-4 children in project schools.
- **READ CO program implementation in refugee camps of Somali.** READ CO planned to implement refugee education activities through partner OWDA. However, as ARRA did not have any formal relationship with OWDA, ARRA did not permit OWDA to implement activities. To mitigate this problem, READ CO has already started implementing refugee activities directly through the SC Jigjiga field office (as of January 2018).

8. LESSONS LEARNED

- Better understanding of the project activities by the government partners and community members is creating better support for READ CO activities at the ground level, for example, the support provided for youth reading volunteers by government stakeholders and READ CO expansion in non-targeted intervention areas. READ CO is prioritizing support for expansion of activities to non-target areas to expand the practice in all intervention areas, as it is a key means to ensure sustainability.
- READ CO visibility and reach to the wider general audience in Ethiopia is limited. There is enormous opportunity and potential for sharing information on READ CO to a wider stakeholder audience through the use of different mass media and other display channels. Currently, there are emerging efforts in the use of mass media channels; the practice of ADA in transmitting a program on READ CO through the Amhara Mass media Agency TV program is a strong example. READ CO plans to build on this and other similar experiences to reach a wider audience. In addition, a plan is in place to collect, document and share READ CO most significant changes following the most significant change qualitative approach, to improve READ CO visibility and increase documentation for future programing.
- READ CO experience has shown that the government-led SRM development process can be expensive and lengthy. To provide a complementary approach to strengthen print-rich environments in schools and communities, READ CO developed a plan to be implimented in the FY 2018 third quarter to develop grassroots SRMs, make reading spaces print rich, and link reading spaces with community structures to ensure sustainability. This approach is expected to create better print-rich classrooms and reading spaces, and build the capacity of grassroots level stakeholders to develop and use simple SRMs.

9. MAJOR ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1- MARCH 31, 2018

Table 9: Major Activities Planned January 1- March 31, 2018

Result	Deliverable	Time frame
IR 1. Access to supplementary reading materials in vernacular languages increased	Follow up on printing and distribution of SRMs, flashcards, graphic organizers.	January- March, 2018
	Support on the development and piloting of creative grassroots SRM development	January- March, 2018
	Development and printing of flash cards use strategy	March, 2018
	Train MT teachers in Amhara region on SRM strategy	February, 2018
IR 2. Opportunities to practice reading and writing created	Follow up the establishment and functionality of reading spaces in Oromia and Eritrean refugees in Tigray	March, 2018
	Agreement signing and supervision and support to refugee schools and communities in Somali region	February, 2018
	Supervision of READ CO activities in the target regions	February- March, 2018
IR 3. Parental and community engagement to support learning to read strengthened	Summary of strategies on READ CO program implementation developed	March, 2018
	Follow up READ CO level one and level two training in Oromia	March, 2018
	Follow up of program implementation in Amhara and Oromia	March, 2018
M&E	Data collection, analysis and report preparation on the diagnostic studies	March 31, 2018
	Data collection on READ CO most significant change	March 31, 2018
	Train MEAL and project coordinators on MEAL	February 28, 2018
	Coordinate category three supportive supervision	February- March, 2018
Gender and Inclusion	Distribution of 8288 titles of adapted SRMs to target schools in 4 regions (pending for Oromia)	February- March, 2018
	Conduct bi-annual review meeting with gender and inclusion task force	March, 2018
	Development of success stories. 1 quality story per region excluding SNNPR.	March, 2018

10. PMP PROGRESS SUMMARY

Table 10. MEP indicator progress[13] - USAID Standard Indicators and READ CO Custom Indicators

Strategic objective: Strengthen community outreach resulting in improved reading and writing skills of primary school children													
		Baseline data			FY2018		Quarterly Status – FY 2018				Annual Perform. Achieved to Date (in %)	LOA Actual	LOA actual %
Indicator	Data Source	Year	Value	LOA plan	Annual Cumulative Planned Target	Annual Cumulative Actual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Intermediate Result (IR) 1: Access to supplementary reading materials in vernacular languages increased													
Sub-IR 1.1: System capacity to provide culturally-relevant reading materials strengthened													
Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support **(USG Standard Indicator (SI 3.2.1-3)**	Training rosters	2015	0	3,559	0	n/a	n/a	467			n/a	3,593	114 %
Number of private sector publishers, authors and illustrators who successfully completed training on development of reading materials **(Project Specific Indicator (PSI))**	Training rosters	2015	0	100	0	n/a	n/a	n/a			n/a	76	76%
Number of materials produced by local publishers aligned with the curriculum **(PSI)**	MOE reports	2015	177	526	0	n/a	n/a	n/a			n/a	526	100 %
Number of textbooks and learning materials developed **(SI 3.2.1)**	TLM receipt	2015	0	604	72	0	-	0			-	532	64 %
Sub-IR 1.2: Supplementary materials for school community reading activities availed													
Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials	TLM receipt rosters	2015	0	2,816,829	766,428	405,141	352,122	356,706			86 %	2,091,349	72 %

[13] Performance based on available data at the end of the reporting period.

(TLM) provided with USG assistance **(SI 3.2.1)**													
Intermediate Result (IR) 2: Opportunities for children to practice reading and writing created													
Sub-IR 2.1: School- and community-based reading and writing activities established													
Number of learners receiving reading interventions at the primary level **(SI 3.2.1-35)**[14]	TLM activity rosters	2015	0	1,102,000	1,102,000	242,443[15]	242,443	922,454			84 %	1,359,640[16]	98 %
Number of laws, policies, regulations, or guidelines developed or modified to improve primary grade reading programs or increase equitable access **(SI 3.2.1-38)**	Signed review sheets	2015	0	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			n/a	2	67%
Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who successfully completed in- service training or received intensive coaching or mentoring with USG support **SI 3.2.1-31)**	Training rosters	2015	0	7,464	24 [17]	-		96			-	7,479	100 %
Number of volunteers who successfully completed training **(PSI)**	TLM receipts	2015	0	7064	-	75	75[18]	84[19]			n/a	7,223	102 %
Number of PTAs or similar 'school' governance structures supported **(SI 3.2.1-18**)	PTSA / KETB rosters	2015	0	4776	20[20]	-	-	-			-	4683	98 %

[14] Based on student enrollment. Achievement of targets depends on school attendance, teacher presence and participation in reading activities.

[15] The number indicate number of school children benefit through summer reading program.

[16] This number indicate the number of children reached through READ CO intervention up to date, For FY 2018 target calculation new children enrolled in the FY 2018 added on previous targets.

[17] Mother tongue teachers, school directors and ARRA, RSEB of Tigray region and targeted refugee schools in Tigray.

[18] The number indicate those new enrolled volunteers in the program receive training in the reporting period.

[19] The number indicate the number of new youth reading volunteers who receive training for the first time in the reporting quarter.

[20] Refugee camp committees from targeted refugee schools of Tigray.

Number of reading support activities and spaces established[21] **(PSI)**	TLM receipts	2015	0	13,075	423	-	-	-		-	12,652	81%
Intermediate Result (IR) 3: Parental and community engagement to support children's learning to read strengthened												
Sub-IR 3.1: Community participation to support reading enhanced												
Number of PTSAs who raised funds to support reading **(PSI)**	PTSA records	2015	0	622	129	-		50[22]		39 %	543	87 %
Sub-IR 3.2: Parental engagement in children's learning to read strengthened												
Percent of parents who increased their knowledge of children's reading[23] **(PSI)**	Parent survey	2015	0	0	0		0	0		-		

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[21] Reading activities established per school community, as follows: one reading-writing club, five reading corners (school-level reading spaces in grades 1 to 4), one book bank and 1 reading camp (both at community level). Actual targets reached will depend upon delivery of reading materials and level of local support.
[22] The achievement indicates the number of PTSA structures who mobilize resources to support reading in this reporting quarter.
[23] Changes in parents' knowledge depends on dissemination of training content to parents by PTSAs, and support from WEOs and school cluster supervisors. Data will be collected next quarter as part of the diagnostic assessment, and again at the end of the project in MOE FY2019.