Webinar 4: Handout 5
Language mapping experience and resources

Afghanistan

The purpose of a language mapping by the Afghan Children Read initiative (supported by USAID) was to document the linguistic and literacy landscape in and around primary schools to better understand current practices under Afghanistan's current LOI policy, which states that either Dari or Pashto should be used for instruction. The language mapping research was designed to inform policy discussions about LOI in the classroom and how to best support children's reading and language acquisition in their mother tongue and the national languages.

Photo: Creative Associates Int'l (2018 Q1 report)

To collect data, the research team conducted classroom observations, structured interviews with school principals, teachers and students; and focus groups with parents and community members. Information gathered included the language used in classrooms; teacher self-reported language skills; and stakeholder opinions on language-related issues. Main findings included the following:
- Greater language diversity exists than originally assumed (12-15% of students in some areas do not speak the official LOI).
- Dialects spoken by students differ at times with those spoken by their teachers and found in textbooks.
- Teachers use languages besides the official LOI when students speak other languages, they employ various instructional strategies to support learners whose L1 was not the LOI.

The data collected provide a foundation for broad recommendations regarding language, education and reading instruction in Afghanistan.

To learn more about the instruments, technology and processes used, consult:

Ayari, S. & van Ginkel, A. (2018). Language mapping research in Afghanistan: Purpose, data collection issues, tools and lessons learned. Presented at the annual conference of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES). Available at
https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/resources/afghanistan-language-mapping-research-purpose-data-collection-issues-tools-and-lessons

Ghana

Under the USAID-supported Ghana *Learning* early grade reading program, the establishment of a Language Policy Working Group (LPWG) led to the recommendation for the program to conduct a language mapping study to understand the language situation in *Learning*'s targeted schools and districts. The language mapping exercise was designed to answer the following question: To what extent does the designation of the Ghanaian language of instruction (LOI) reflect the language environment of Ghanaian schools, as demonstrated by the languages spoken by pupils, teachers, and used in teaching and learning materials?

To answer this question, a census survey was conducted in partnership with the College of Languages Education–Ajumako and the University of Education–Winneba (UEW) between 2016-2017 in 7,105 schools in 100 target districts. In addition to

Map showing degree of teacher-student language "match" in Ghanaian schools

assessing children's language skills, group interviews were conducted with select pupils, and interviews were conducted with teachers and head teachers in kindergarten through primary 3. An inventory of materials was also conducted.
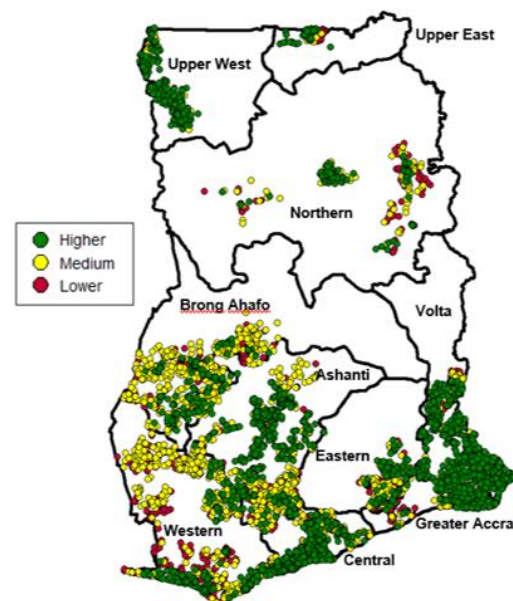
The main findings were as follows:

- Just over half of surveyed schools (58%) have high pupil language match.
- In 71% of schools surveyed, the pupil population includes at least two language groups.
- Across the 100 districts surveyed, 73% of schools have high teacher language match.
- Combining pupil and teacher match, 46% of schools have high overall match, 41% medium match and 13% low match.

The findings resulted in a set of short- and long-term recommendations related to LOI assignment in schools, instructional approaches and teacher qualifications and deployment. A "Language Map Decision Tool" has also been developed to assist stakeholders in identifying best and better practices in terms of instruction depending on the degree of teacher-student language match.

For more information, consult:

FHI 360. (2018). Ghana *Learning* Language Mapping Study: Analysis Report. Available at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00T4QS.pdf

Mozambique

Through the USAID-supported *Vamos Ler!* early grade reading program, a language mapping study was conducted to measure children's oral language proficiency (OLP) in each language they identified knowing. The data were used to describe what language skills children bring to the classroom to help them learn to read. The information was gathered to assist the program and policymakers to:
- Identify the best choice of language for initial literacy instruction and support children who may not have the OLP required to learn in that language
- Identify multilingual classrooms
- Identify to what extent students' oral language proficiency matches the official language of instruction assigned to the schools
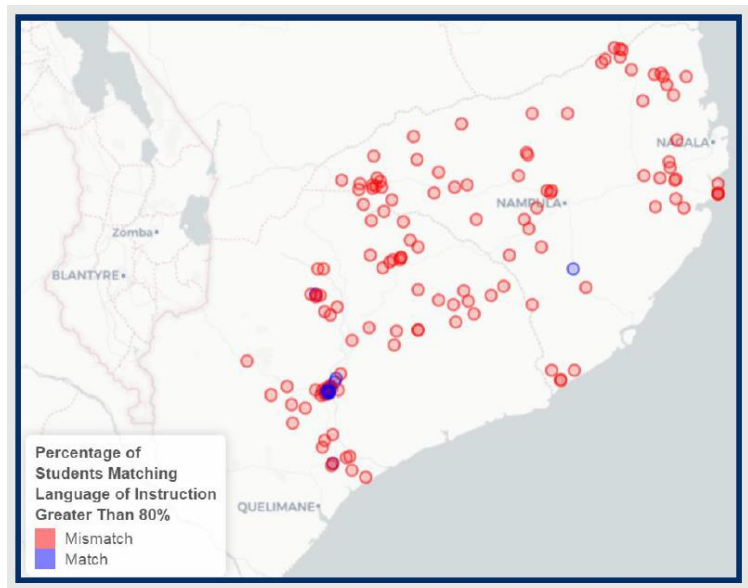
Main findings were as follows:
- Large mismatch between students' self-reported linguistic ability and objectively measured linguistic ability
- Nearly three-fourths (73%) of students had an L1 that differed from the official LOI
- 62% of schools are linguistically heterogenous

The findings are now being used to inform ongoing work to improve the teaching and learning of early grade reading in Mozambique.

Findings from the Mozambique language mapping study show a language mismatch between teachers and students in many schools in certain areas.

A full report and presentation about t he study can be found at:

Nakamura, P., Carson, K.; Davis, D. Rai, N. & Todd, A. (2018). Language mapping study in Mozambique. Produced by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) for Creative Associates International, on behalf of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Available at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00n7sd.pdf

Nakamura, P., Rai, N., Davis, D., Carson, K. & Blankenbeckler, C. (2018). "Are you bilingual? Unpacking 'language' in language mapping in Mozambique." Presentation at the annual conference of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES). Mexico City, Mexico. Available at https://globalreadingnetwork.net/resources/are-you-bilingual-unpacking-language-language-mapping-mozambique