READING WITHIN REACH

Early Grade Reading Program Design and Implementation: Best Practices and Resources for Success

Webinar series presented by Reading within Reach (REACH) in collaboration with the Global Reading Network

June-July 2019

Welcome!

- This EGR professional development series was developed by the **Reading within Reach (REACH)** initiative, which is funded by **USAID** and implemented by **University Research Co., LLC (URC)**

- REACH supports the **Global Reading Network (GRN)** to develop and share research, innovations and resources related to EGR programming

- For more information about REACH and the GRN, visit www.globalreadingnetwork.net

Webinar presenters

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Webinar series goal, content and approach

- The purpose of this professional development webinar series is to **provide participants with evidence-based information, guidance and resources to support the design and implementation of effective EGR initiatives**

- Each session is focused on a key technical topic and includes a summary of **research, experiences and best practices to date**

- **Cross-cutting issues** such as gender equity, ICT and inclusive education are integrated throughout the different webinars

- Issues related to EGR program **monitoring, evaluation, expansion and sustainability** will be addressed as well

- **Opportunities for interaction and questions** will be provided throughout each webinar

Webinar session topics and dates

Webinar 1 – Early grade reading programming: From conception to scale (June 25)

Webinar 2 – Resources for teaching and learning early grade reading (July 10)

Webinar 3 – Key EGR skills and strategies for effective instruction and assessment (July 17)

Webinar 4 – Language considerations in early grade reading programs (July 24)

TODAY! **Webinar 5** – Continuous professional development (CPD) in early grade reading programs (July 30)

Materials available on GRN website under
"Tools and Training"

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https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/tools

Session overview

Participants will know and be able to apply learning about:

- Characteristics and purposes of effective CPD

- Content & modalities of CPD for teachers and other educators

- Evidence on the effectiveness of specific CPD approaches

- Coaching to support EGR teachers

- Considerations when planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating teacher and educator CPD

Thank you to Marion Fesmire for her work creating an earlier iteration of this webinar

To share your questions and comments

- We will provide time throughout the webinar to address your questions and comments

- Please submit them via the chat box in Zoom

- Send them to "all panelists and attendees"

Continuous professional development

- An ongoing, job-embedded process that prepares and supports teachers in acquiring the knowledge, skills and strategies needed to help ALL students learn, including multiple modalities of learning for teachers and other educators

- The bridge between implementing new initiatives and the extent that these reforms become embedded within classroom instruction (Demonte, 2013)

The goal of PD is improved teaching practices and student outcomes in reading, writing, speaking and listening (Blazer, 2005)

ACTIVITY: CPD approaches in EGR programs

Reflect and use the Zoom chat window to share your experiences and ideas

> **Think about the CPD approaches you have designed, implemented or participated in within EGR programs:**
> 1. What were/are the different CPD activities implemented?
> 2. What activities have you found to be most successful or effective?
> 3. What challenges related to CPD have you experienced?

Section 1: Modalities & Characteristics of Effective CPD

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Who needs CPD in EGR programs?

- **A variety of actors need and will benefit from targeted CPD, including:**
  - Teachers of EGR
  - Government officials at national and sub-national levels
  - Personnel responsible for various components of EGR programming
  - School administrators
  - Pedagogical coaches
  - Pre- and in-service teacher educators
  - School management committees and community members

- **CPD activities for different stakeholders may be the same or differ depending on needs and context**

How do we know what is effective?

- **No one modality of PD works for all learning outcomes, for all learners and for all contexts**
- **Across modalities, there are common factors that support effective PD:**
  - Activities based on adult learning theory and active participation
  - Content and instruction is carefully organized and contextualized
  - High-quality materials that support PD and learners' needs, and are contextually appropriate (may include technology)
  - Time to learn about and practice using relevant classroom materials
  - Opportunities for collaboration and continued professional development and support
  - Follow-up training at the school or regional level combined with coaching support

Handout 1: Adult learning theory

Modalities of CPD

Formal training	• Workshop setting • Common content for all
Coaching/ On-site support	• Individualized support & mentoring • One-on-one observation • Small-group support
Learning communities	• Formal to informal • Co-planning, feedback, experience sharing, and occasionally study groups
Self-guided reflection and study	• Independent self-study using learning materials • May be via distance or online

Content of CPD to support EGR programming

Teachers	Other Education Actors
• Rationale for EGR improvement • Key EGR skills to teach • Effective EGR instructional and assessment strategies • Effective use of TLMs (including technology, if applicable) • Language-specific considerations related to EGR instruction • Classroom management practices • Inclusive instructional strategies, including for learners with disabilities • Issues related to gender equity • Strategies for teaching in conflict, crisis and emergency contexts • Strategies for supporting students' social and emotional well-being	• Rationale for EGR improvement and program components • Roles and responsibilities for supporting EGR improvement • Topics relevant to specific responsibilities (e.g., curriculum, materials development, M&E, teacher PD, etc.) • Instructional leadership skills and tools • Cross-cutting issues including gender equity and inclusive practices, supporting education in conflict and crisis contexts, etc. • Topics specific to coaches (see resource with list)

ACTIVITY: CPD modalities

Reflect and use the Zoom chat window to share your experiences and ideas

Consider your own experiences with different modalities and types of CPD

1. Which modalities and types of CPD have you found to be most *effective* in supporting long-term instructional improvement?
2. How did you identify an appropriate and effective mix of CPD approaches?

Overview of training

- Training provides a **foundation of common knowledge and skills** that can be refined and applied during instruction

- It allows programs to better ensure that target group have received the same professional instruction on how to **implement programs with fidelity**

- When done well, it allows for effective modeling for teachers, and **practice in a setting where experts can provide support**

Photo: RTI International, Nigeria RARA (USAID)

Characteristics of high-quality training

Need-specific

Practical

Hands-on

Context-appropriate

Iterative

Handout 2: Materials to support PD
Handout 3: Teacher PD resources
Handout 4: Training tips and activities

Example: Training for EGR teachers in Ethiopia

- In Ethiopia under READ TA II, EGR trainers use a structured approach that mirrors the "I Do, We Do, You Do" teachers are expected to use in their classrooms

- Training focuses on modeling strategies and providing time for participant to practice them

Photo: Florida State University, Ethiopia READ TA (USAID)

- Training is supported by a school- and woreda-based coaching program that is ongoing, uses existing governmental structures, and adds zero cost to the regular teacher training program

Example: Providing graduate-level training for teacher educators and others in Nigeria

- The Nigeria Northern Education Initiative Plus (NEI+) developed and delivered a graduate certificate course for teacher educators, researchers and national stakeholders to build their expertise in the design, delivery, monitoring and assessment of EGR programming

Handout 5: Sample EGR course syllabus

Photo: Creative Associates, NEI Plus (USAID)

Overview of coaching

- **Teachers need on-site support** as they apply new knowledge and practices

- **Continuous, regular feedback from a coach** helps both experienced and new teachers

- Coaching can also support **system- or program-level monitoring**

- It also helps to create a more **professional learning environment** for all adults in the school

Photo: Nigeria RARA, RTI International (USAID)

The case for coaching

Research from high-income contexts has long supported coaching:

- A recent meta-analysis of 44 studies of diverse coaching programs from U.S. pre-K and primary literacy programs found that coaching is an effective means of improving teachers' instructional practices and student academic outcomes *(Kraft, Blazar & Hogan, 2017)*

Evidence from low-income country contexts is limited, though growing:

- A recent RCT in **South Africa** found that coaching as part of a structured learning program was more cost-effective in increasing students' reading comprehension skills than providing training alone *(Rep. of South Africa, 2017)*

- A study in **Kenya** found that teacher coaching can improve literacy outcomes in both public and nonformal education settings (*Piper & Simmons Zuilkowski, 2015*)

Characteristics of high-quality coaching

Practical
- The content of coaching should focus on the practical problems teachers experience; should be needs-based and focused on self-identified learning needs

Collaborative
- The coach should not be viewed as yet another trainer, but instead as an expert peer and mentor; coaching activities should be co-constructed as much as possible in the setting

Non-judgmental
- Coaching is not evaluation and should not be used judge the quality of a teacher's instruction; instead it should focus on providing constructive criticism and supporting risk-taking with new approaches

Accountable
- While coaching is informal, it must be accountable; mechanisms should be in place to motivate both teacher and coach participation

Overview of learning communities

- Provide opportunities for teachers, principals, or coaches to come together to share experiences and find solutions to challenges

- Examples: Ghana, Nigeria

Photo: World Education, Cambodia (USDA McGovern-Dole Food For Education)

Appropriate and effective ICT to support CPD

- High-quality materials are necessary to support CPD

- ICT is increasingly being used, including:

  - Mobile phones (to support app-based content, SMS)

  - Tablets (include lesson plans, Papaya app with letter sounds, videos, assessment tools, used by coaches to support classroom observations)

  - Interactive videoconference workshops

  - Self-paced e-course via tablets

Research findings

- Technology is not always the most appropriate or cost-effective solution

- What works best for the context, for whom and is the most-cost effective should be explored, monitored and evaluated (Piper et al., 2016)

See Webinar 3 resources and references for a list of technology used to support EGR instruction

Considerations when designing CPD

- Identify **goals** for CPD aligned with policies and the initiative

- Identify the key **actors** that will participate in CPD

- Identify the knowledge, experience and **needs** of the target audience across topics

- Identify **facilitators** within the system

- Assess factors that impact the **sustainability** of your approach, including system capacity, feasibility and cost

Photo: AIR, LAC-READS, Haiti (USAID)

- **Align** in-service ad pre-service PD

- **Asses and evaluate** approach before expanding

Handout 6: Key activities and considerations for planning & implementing CPD

ACTIVITY: Planning for sustainable CPD

Reflect and use the Zoom chat window to share your experiences and ideas

Share your experience designing CPD to support expansion and sustainability.

- How did you prepare key actors to sustain the work beyond the program?
- How did you draw on and re-shape existing staff roles to support long-term CPD?
- How did you work with government to prepare for sustained CPD beyond the life of a project?

Photo: World Education, Cambodia (USDA McGovern-Dole Food For Education)

Handout 7: CPD references and resources

Section 2: Spotlight on Coaching

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Coaching in EGR programs: An overview

- Coaching is a common component of EGR improvement efforts

- Focused on getting teachers to adopt (usually new) instructional practices

- While similarities exist, coaching activities and design vary greatly

- Programs report many challenges providing and managing quality, effective coaching *that can be scaled and sustained*

- Monitoring and evaluation of coaches and coaching is insufficient—lack of evidence on what is working

Photo: RTI International, Nigeria RARA (USAID)

Video of Coaching in northern Nigeria: https://tinyurl.com/CoachinginNigeria

Coaching in EGR Programs: Evidence, Experiences and Recommendations

- Resource developed by REACH in collaboration with the GRN

- Summarizes research on coaching and EGR program experiences and provides guidance on key aspects of coaching

- Available on GRN website

Coaching in Early Grade Reading Programs: Evidence, Experiences and Recommendations

A Global Reading Network Resource

Key coaching issues in EGR programs

1. Coach roles and responsibilities

2. Knowledge and skills coaches need to be effective

3. Coach recruitment

4. Coach preparation and support

5. Technology to support coaches and coaching

6. Frequency and duration of coaching

Photo: FHI 360, Madagascar Mahay Mamaky Teny! (USAID)

ACTIVITY: Experiences with coaching

Reflect and use the Zoom chat window to share your experiences and ideas

1. What are your experiences with designing or implementing a coaching model?

2. What did you find most successful?

3. What did you find most challenging?

1. Coach roles and responsibilities

What do EGR coaches do?

- Train teachers

- Visit classrooms to observe teachers

- Provide individualized feedback to teachers and help them set goals for improvement

- Model instruction, peer teach

- Assess children's reading skills

- Facilitate group coaching

Key considerations:

✓ The role of a coach is different from that of a supervisor

✓ Coach responsibilities should be feasible given the context and coach capacity

✓ Coach responsibilities in a context should be evaluated in terms of their effectiveness in improving teacher instruction and student outcomes

2. Knowledge and skills coaches need to be effective

- Knowledge of literacy and language development, instruction and assessment

- Experience teaching the same grade level they are coaching

- Experience working with teachers or providing CPD

- Understanding of the coaching process & role

- Understanding of adult and peer learning

- Strong interpersonal, leadership and communication skills

Photo: RTI, READ Liberia (USAID)
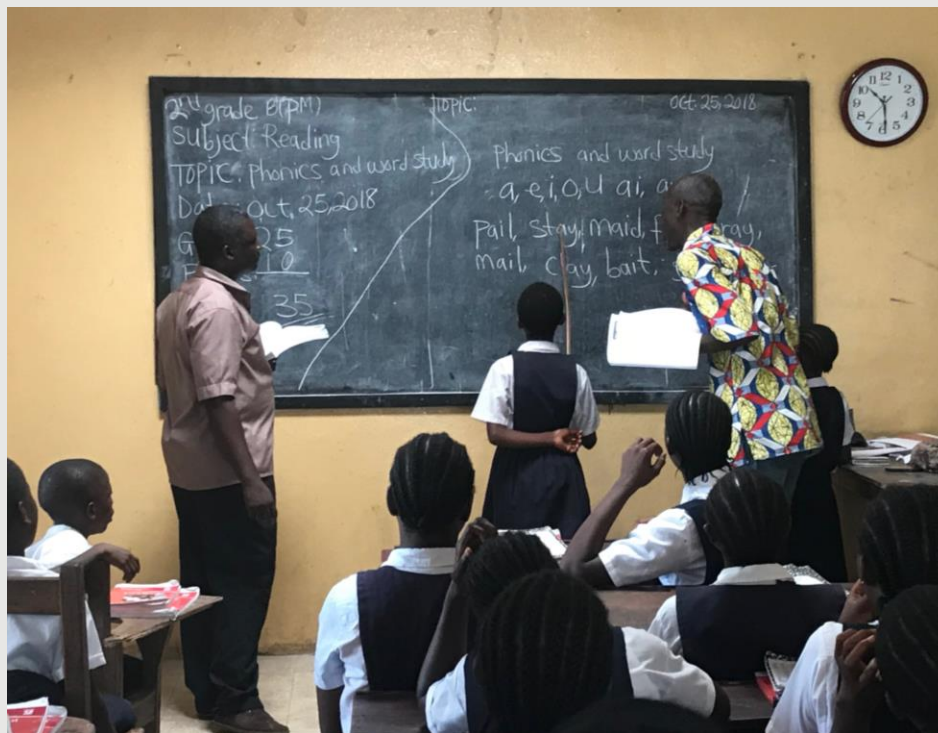
- Ability to develop a trusting relationship with teachers and to work well with them

Drawn from: Bean, 2014; International Literacy Association, 2004, 2010; L'Allier et al., 2010)

3. Recruiting effective coaches

Who commonly serves as a coach?

- School supervisors

- School principals

- Other teachers

- Teacher educators

**Handout 8:
Senegal case study**

Key considerations:

✓ Coach skill level

✓ Teacher needs

✓ Scaffolding of responsibilities

✓ Scale up and sustainability

Photo: EDC, Philippines Basa Pilipinas (USAID)

Trialing the effectiveness of school-based coaches: Examples from USAID EGR programs

- **Madagascar** recently evaluated a pilot where school directors served as coaches; the research found that although some school directors are motivated to serve as coaches, tapping other personnel such as teachers may be necessary in some schools *(Louge, N. & Razafindrabe, V. , 2019)*

- **Ghana** is currently evaluating the effectiveness of school-based Head Teachers (e.g., principals) and Curriculum Lead Teachers, who will be supported by district-based support teachers *(Miksic, E., 2018; FHI 360 2017)*

- **Senegal** is assessing the feasibility and effectiveness of using both school directors and inspectors for coaching. The inspectors' primary role is to "coach the coaches," although some directly coach teachers as well *(Swift-Morgan, J., 2018, 2019)*

4. Coach preparation and support

Best practices for coach PD:

1. Identify coach needs

2. Develop a context-specific approach

3. Include appropriate and comprehensive content

4. Provide diverse opportunities to learn

5. Dedicate time for coaches to practice and apply what they are learning

6. Scaffold, stagger and adapt training

7. Provide resources to support coaching

8. Evaluate effectiveness

9. Coach and monitor coaches

Key considerations:

✓Time and resources needed and available

✓Scalability and sustainability

Handout 9: Guidance and considerations for training coaches

See Louge & Razafindrabe, (2019) for more best practices from Madagascar

5. Technology to support coaches and coaching

- Support inexperienced coaches ("feedback tips" provided based on information recorded on tablets)

- Monitor coaches (via GPS tracking of uploaded data) and provide transportation allowance

- Facilitate timely and accurate data collection, analysis and use (e.g., inform ongoing teacher CPD)

- Provide remote support to teachers (via SMS)

Key considerations:

- ✓ User skill level
- ✓ Training and maintenance
- ✓ Cost-effectiveness (what is added value?)
- ✓ Scalability and sustainability

Handout 10: Technology to support coaching at national scale in Kenya

Guidance and tools to support coach visits

- Coach responsibilities during school visit should be realistic and feasible

- Training and tools to support coaches in providing effective feedback are critical

Handout 11: Resources and tools for coaches

6. Frequency and duration of coaching

- **Coach-to-teacher/school ratios** and the **frequency ("dosage") of coach visits** vary greatly among USAID EGR programs

- Recent research on coaching in U.S. found that the "quality and focus of coaching may be more important than the actual number of contact hours" (Kraft, Blazar & Hogan, 2017)

- But in EGR programs, quantity matters, at least for now….

Key considerations:

✓ Feasibility, scalability and cost-effectiveness of coach visits

✓ Roles, responsibilities and processes for planning and managing coaches

More information and findings from EGR programs can be found in the GRN resource on coaching

Monitoring, evaluation & research

- While coaching has the potential to improve teacher skills and student reading outcomes, significant gaps remain in what we know about coach quality, cost-effectiveness and impact on student outcomes

Key considerations:

✓ What critical questions need to be answered about coaching in your context?

✓ What tools, processes and resources are needed?

✓ How will findings be used and communicated?

Recent research of interest:
- *Slade, T. (2019) M&E of coaching frequency in Kenya*
- *Harden, K., King, S. & Pflepsen, A. (2018) Effects of coach characteristics, coaching quantity and quality on instruction*
- *Swift-Morgan, J. (2019). Coach monitoring in Senegal*

**Handout 12:
Monitoring, evaluation and research on coaching**

**Handout 13:
Coach monitoring tool example**

Photo: Chemonics, Senegal Education Pour Tous (USAID)

Handout 14: Key activities & considerations when planning for coaching

Handout 15: Resources and references on coaching

Coaching in EGR Programs: Evidence, Experiences and Recommendations (2019, available on GRN website)

Section 3: CPD Monitoring and Evaluation

ACTIVITY: Monitoring and evaluating CPD

Reflect and use the Zoom chat window to share your experiences and ideas

1. What methods and tools have you used to monitor and evaluate different types of CPD and their overall impact on teacher practices and student outcomes?
2. Share any research you have conducted during any stage of CPD and describe the findings.

CPD monitoring, evaluation and research

Purposes:

- Determine whether the target audience has acquired the knowledge and skills intended

- Identify whether student learning outcomes have improving as a result

- Assess cost-effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability

- Determine if/what changes to approach are needed

Photo: Nigeria RARA, RTI International (USAID)

Key considerations:

✓ Develop CPD MER plan while designing the overall program

✓ Design M&E to help identify effectiveness of specific PD modalities and "doses"

✓ Use appropriate methods and tools for different M&E purposes, types of PD and other considerations

Monitoring & evaluation of CPD

| Workshops, small group meetings, learning circles, etc.	Coaching	Overall teacher PD approach
• Trainer observations • Participant surveys (before and after PD event) • Formative assessment (quick checks against objectives) • Exit slips • Pre-post tests • Focus group sessions	• Observations of coaches by project/gov't personnel • Analysis of teacher practices, student outcomes vis-a-vis coaching • Feedback from teachers on coach support	• Observation of teachers' instruction and classroom practices (qualitative, quantitative) • Review of teacher journals and other work products • Assessment of student learning • Surveys and focus groups with key stakeholders

Key takeaways

- **Time:** It takes time to implement new CPD approaches, and for teachers and others to take up new practices

- **Opportunity:** Provide multiple and diverse opportunities to learn and apply new practices

- **Approach:** PD should be organized, structured and content-specific

- **Content:** PD should use evidenced-based practices

- **Activities:** PD should involve hands-on learning

- **Capacity:** Planning and action must be taken to ensure capacity for sustainability

Photo: EDC, Mali PHARE (USAID)

- **Implementation & evaluation:** Ongoing support and monitoring are needed
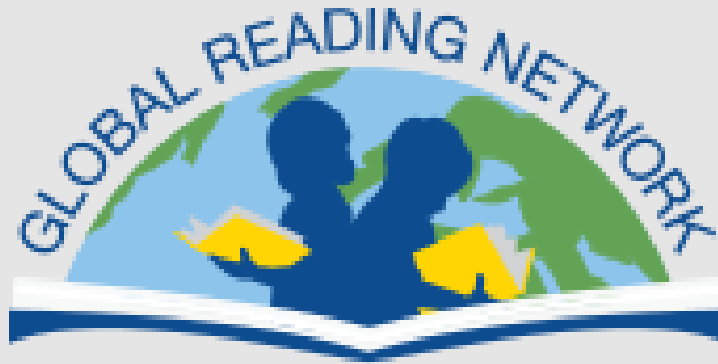
Thank you for attending the "Early Grade Reading Program Design and Implementation: Best Practices and Resources for Success" webinar series!

Webinar presentation materials and handouts may be downloaded from the "Tools and Training" category at:

www.globalreadingnetwork.net

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Upcoming events

August 22-23: Universal Design for Learning Toolkit in-person workshop in Chevy Chase, MD
Details coming soon!

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