



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

GLOBAL BOOK ALLIANCE



Books for every child in the world by 2030



GLOBAL BOOK ALLIANCE IN ACTION FINAL REPORT

JULY 5, 2019–JANUARY 10, 2023

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One of the ten titles developed in Tanzania. *Twiga Wetu*, published by Abantu Publications, LTD





Program Overview

The Global Book Alliance (GBA) was formed in 2018 by a group of partners, including United Nations (UN) agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and donors, to address global book shortages and to ensure that young people everywhere have access to the high-quality reading materials necessary for their literacy and learning.

In 2019, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), as a member of GBA, initiated the Global Book Alliance in Action (GBAIA), a two-year¹ program to improve national book supply chains so children will receive the books they need. GBAIA had four objectives:

- 1. Increase the use of the Global Digital Library**—a source of copyright-free digital reading materials in a multitude of languages, including local languages that are underserved by existing book publishers.
- 2. Conduct book supply chain analyses (SCAs) in nine countries**, studying each country’s context-specific issues in order to develop plans to address supply chain challenges wherever they occur and to get physical books into the hands of young readers, especially those without digital access.
- 3. Improve the capacity of USAID staff and partners** to implement the interventions developed to improve each country’s book supply chain through in-person trainings and the creation of online training modules for use globally.
- 4. Provide short-term technical support (STTA)** to the GBA Secretariat, USAID missions, and host-country partners for the development of partnership opportunities and outreach activities, such as webinars on issues affecting the book supply chain.

The Global Book Alliance in Action Final Report presents the work of the GBAIA and details its objectives, as well as describes its work, findings, and recommendations. →

GBA Partners



¹GBAIA was extended to three years due to COVID.



Executive Summary

Getting books to children is a significant challenge in many countries. Challenges can include insufficient funds, a lack of understanding of the requirement for Essential Reading Materials, or the unavailability of appropriate materials in schools and homes.

Although all countries have their own system for the provision of books, the overall supply chain for books includes activities such as Planning & Forecasting for Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) and other materials by governments; Title Development by Publishers, NGOs, and donors; Publishing and Printing, involving the steps necessary to create the physical books; Procurement and Purchasing of books by Ministries of Education and others; Distribution Management, or getting the books to schools and communities; and finally, Active Use by readers in schools and communities.



These stages tend to be interconnected and overlapping, rather than linear. For example, the Planning department of a Ministry of Education (MoE) forecasts the number of books needed in a year for a particular subject. The Procurement department may issue a tender and invited private publishers to create materials, which are then evaluated and approved by the MoE, before being distributed to schools.

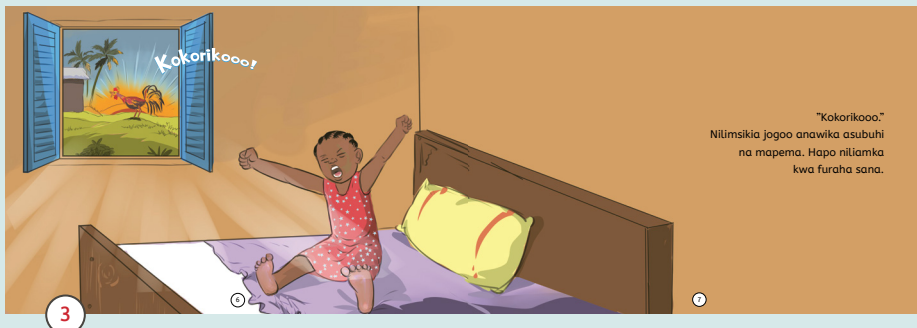
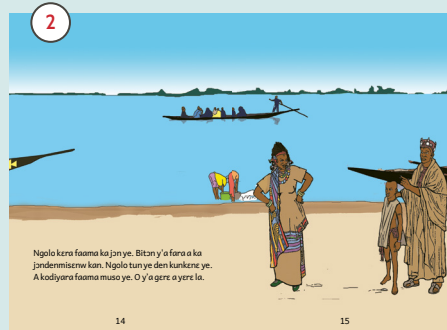
The GBAIA activity sought to identify the challenges of a particular context, and to suggest solutions to address these challenges.

At each of these stages, the chain can break down. For example, the local publishing sector may struggle with low demand. The government may not have sufficient funding to procure books for all students. Books may be damaged or lost during distribution.

Essential Reading Materials

For the purposes of this report, we use the following terms and definitions, per USAID guidance:

- **Decodable readers** are reading materials in which all words are consistent with the letters and corresponding phonemes that the reader has been taught.
- **Leveled readers** are a set of books organized by level of difficulty, based on the complexity of the words, sentences, content, and other factors.
- **Supplementary readers** are those used for reading practice; they may not be decodable or leveled, and they do not tie directly to the school curriculum.²



1. Example of a Decodable Reader
Matos el Mono, published by USAID Honduras Reading Activity and the Honduran Secretariat of Education
2. Example of a Levelled Reader
Ngolo Jara, published by Kartha
3. Example of a Supplementary Reader
Shambani Kwa Babu na Bibi, published by Alif Publications

²Definitions are adapted from USAID, 2020 Compendium of Standard PIRS for Education Programming.



Global Digital Library

Objective 1: Improve USAID Missions' Use of the Global Digital Library

The [Global Digital Library \(GDL\)](#) is an integral part of the GBA. Funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD), the GDL provides reading materials in a wide array of languages. Aimed primarily for online use through the GDL website, the openly licensed materials are available for translation into other languages.

GDL Materials Upload

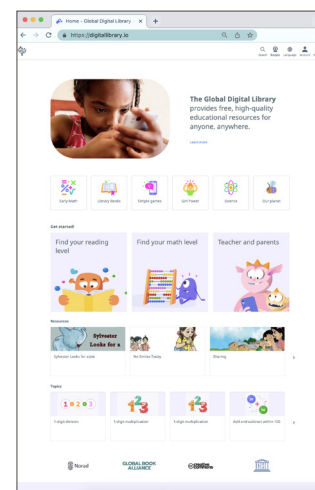
Uploading materials to the GDL was a prime focus of GBAIA. GBAIA tested procedures for converting from Adobe InDesign into ePUB format on 59 titles in three languages from USAID/ Senegal which was followed by the publication of a comprehensive set of instructions for submitting books to the GDL. The materials included instructions on converting materials from Adobe InDesign to ePUB, choosing a Creative Commons license, adding appropriate metadata, and organizing and preparing the files for upload. These instructions were subsequently piloted with the USAID Pakistan Reading Project to upload 365 leveled readers in six languages.

Following the success of the process, GBAIA worked with a diverse range of USAID projects, including those from Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Philippines, as well as materials from All Children

Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development and the REACH Trust Fund. GBAIA conducted orientation sessions with the projects, provided technical support and guidance for the process of uploading, conducted file transfers, helped to guide projects in the selection of appropriate licenses, and liaised with GDL staff to screen submitted materials for errors. During the project, GBAIA worked on 1,506 books in 46 languages, including 8 different sign languages. Of these, 826 titles have been uploaded to the GDL.

GBAIA also conducted a quality assurance check on over 470 English language storybooks available on the GDL, correcting grammar, spelling, and formatting errors. In addition, the team added ALT-text (text descriptions) for every image in the collection, which increased accessibility for those with blindness or low vision.

Global Digital Library



BY THE NUMBERS

1506
Book Titles

46
Languages

8
Sign Languages

During the project, GBAIA worked with the GDL to continue to update the process for readying the files for uploading. For example, in 2021 the GDL asked that materials be provided with metadata embedded into the ePub files, rather than as a separate Excel sheet, in order to streamline the uploading process. GBAIA updated the instructions and worked with projects to include this information.

Although providing materials in ePub is beneficial in that it facilitates opportunities for translation into other languages, the process for converting the files into ePub from InDesign is relatively convoluted and takes time. As such, it is recommended that projects convert the materials into ePub as the materials are developed, rather than at the end of the project.

Recognizing that some projects will not be creating materials in InDesign or may not have the resources to convert files to ePub, GBAIA has also worked with the GDL to accept files in PDF. GBAIA developed instructions for submitting material as PDF files, and from early FY23, projects will be able to send PDF files for uploading.

GBAIA also worked with the GDL to create a print-ready repository of files. Since the GDL is primarily focused on online access, this repository is not a key focus of the GDL. Discussions were held with a group led by the World Bank on how to include materials in a new repository being developed: the [Global Print Library](#).

Translation Sprint

GBAIA supported the GDL through the implementation of “translation sprints.” Originally designed as a way to support learners who were out of school due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Translate a Story initiative conducted a mass translation of GDL storybooks, particularly into local and

underserved languages. In 7 weeks, over 1,200 volunteers translated approximately 4,000 books for the GDL (and over 2,000 others for the other platforms) into 41 languages.

Building on this experience, GBAIA worked with the GDL to support various activities, including developing training materials, hosting webinars, and supporting various teams. Examples of successful collaboration included the Kaqchikel team in Guatemala, which translated 15 books—the first of this new language for the GDL. In Peru, students and teachers from the Micaela Bastidas University of Apurimac translated 38 books into Quechua, which are undergoing review to be published to the GDL. Other books in Chinyanja were translated by staff from EDC in collaboration with government officials in Zambia.

A tutorial explaining the translation process using the GDL platform is available on the GBA website. In addition to working with groups of volunteer translators, GBAIA also developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the translation company [Ulatius](#) to create a partnership for pro-bono translation for both the GBA website and resources on the GDL. Ulatius has translated 44 books into French and completed a case study reviewing the partnership.

GDL Training

To improve understanding of the GDL, a series of training modules were created covering a variety of issues:

- **Module 1** – What is the Global Digital Library? (interactive book)
- **Module 2** – Contributing to the GDL (interactive book)
- **Module 3** – Rights and Licensing on the GDL
- **Module 4** – Accessibility on the GDL
- **Module 5** – Guide for International Donors (interactive book)



Book Supply Chain Analyses

Objective 2: Conduct Book Supply Chain Analyses in Specific Country Contexts

The book supply chain analysis (SCA) is at the heart of the GBAIA activities. To gain an understanding of the challenges faced in book sectors around the world, the GBAIA team explored the book chains in nine selected countries³ to create an SCA for each, which included an in-depth analysis and recommendations for improvements.

These pilots are intended to serve as a model for future similar activities by organizations, donors, and implementing partners. Each SCA report identified the strengths and weaknesses in the links of the book supply chain (see page 2) and provided recommendations to ensure that learners can access sufficient, appropriate, and high-quality reading materials to improve reading outcomes.

During the formulation of these pilot activities, protocols were developed to guide interviews with stakeholders, such as ministries of education and other government bodies, private publishers, donors and implementing partners, NGOs, booksellers, and teachers and school leaders. The SCAs were guided by this fundamental question: What are the challenges to providing high-quality essential reading materials to all the children

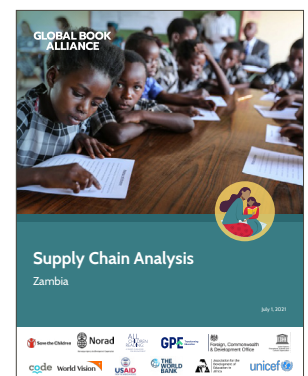
in your country? GBAIA probed all areas of the book supply chain to find out where the bottlenecks and challenges were in each context.

In response to each SCA, initiatives were designed based on the findings to rapidly address some of the challenges. In Malawi, for example, GBAIA recommended the development of a National Book Policy, the development of high-quality children’s books, and a social behavior change campaign (see page 14).

The SCAs are intended to be documents with actionable solutions, comprising both long- and short-term recommendations for all stakeholders.

Each SCA was conducted in close collaboration with USAID Mission Education staff members, who served as important guides to their countries’ contexts.

SCAs



BY THE NUMBERS

3
Years

9
Countries

400+
Stakeholder
interviews

³Cambodia, Malawi, Jordan, Zambia, Tanzania, Nigeria, St. Lucia, Dominica, and Grenada.

Supply Chain Analysis Countries



A Few Major Findings

- A healthy, robust, and thriving private sector publishing environment is critical to the development of a reading culture. Without high-quality publishers creating high-quality books, children are left with fewer or no books in their lives. We therefore encourage governments to consider private publishers as an important partner in the provision of books, both textbooks and other reading materials. Only by providing a steady supply of various kinds of books can a country begin to lift its overall literacy rates.
- Many countries in the developing world have insufficient funds for textbooks, which makes it difficult to plan for and procure these critical essential reading materials for schools and libraries. This issue could be mitigated in the immediate term by donor funding to support the overall book provision system.
- A National Book Policy is an important key to raising the visibility of the importance of books by outlining key issues, defining the stakeholders of a book sector, and addressing important issues of planning and financing for necessary books.
- Parents, especially those who are not literate themselves, often do not understand the critical impact that reading books can have on a child's early education. Advocacy efforts are important to educate them, including showing them how they can teach their children to love books early on even when they cannot read themselves.



“Why do products like sugar, salt, and matchboxes, for example, reach the remotest villages, when books cannot? We need to get books to the people needing them.”

—Elieshi Lema, E&D Vision Publishing



Training and Capacity Building

Objective 3: Improve the capacity of USAID staff and partners to implement interventions to improve the functioning of book supply chains

GBAIA worked to meet this objective through a number of activities that included the development and/or dissemination of materials on the book supply chain, including seven training modules, an inventory of tools and resources, and a video. Additionally, training was provided to the book sector through USAID missions.

Tools and other Resources

A four-minute video was developed describing what the book supply chain is, the importance of books being available to children, and the challenges to ensuring their availability. The video is available on YouTube at Global Book Alliance – The Book Supply Chain in English, French, Arabic and Spanish. GBAIA also developed and disseminated inventories of resources and tools related to the book supply chain via the GBA website,

Training Module Development and Dissemination

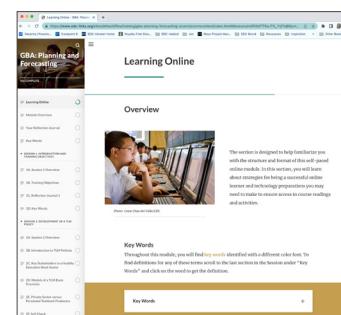
To improve the capacity of USAID, implementing partners, and education and book publishing stakeholders in strengthening each country’s book supply chain, seven training modules were developed, one for each of the key components in the book supply chain: Planning and Forecasting, Title Development, Publishing, Printing,

Procurement and Purchasing, Distribution Management, and Active Use.

GBAIA’s training team worked with book chain experts to develop the modules and then incorporated the results of the SCAs into the module content. Each module was reviewed by GBAIA’s USAID Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR) and subject matter experts. Once approved, each module was reviewed by an external expert. The modules were then piloted, revised as necessary, and finalized. Each module consists of a trainer’s guide, which includes all content needed for conducting a four-to five-hour face-to-face training workshop, including group activities, additional resources, tools, handouts, and an accompanying PowerPoint presentation.

Once finalized, the face-to-face modules were then adapted for delivery via an e-learning modality. The e-learning

Training Module



modules were developed using Articulate Rise software and include approximately two hours of content that mirrored the face-to-face module content. The e-learning modules were designed to be used by individuals or small, self-organized groups, and they included activities, reflection exercises, quizzes, tools, and resources.

Beginning in October 2022 and continuing over an eight-week period, GBAIA conducted a mini-training series of five sessions on the training modules, highlighting key content, with the aim of equipping USAID staff with an overview of the material covered in each of the modules. The sessions were organized to provide information to participants so they could recommend modules to the Ministries of Education, implementing partners, or private sector partners involved in the book supply chain. 17 USAID staff participated in these mini-trainings.

The GBAIA team worked with USAID and the EducationLinks staff to upload the training modules (both the face-to-face and online modalities) to USAID’s professional development portal [EducationLinks](#). On December 14, 2022, USAID and GBAIA hosted a launch of the training modules, during which 53 participants were introduced to the training modules, the key content of each of the modules, and

the two modalities for accessing the training. All face-to-face and online modules are currently available on the EducationLinks website and are accessible and free for all to use.

Supply Chain Analysis Toolkit

Because the GBAIA project (and the Supply Chain Analyses in particular) was conceived of as a pilot activity, the EDC team documented the learnings throughout, to create:

1. An SCA process analysis document. Interviews were held with participants in the Supply Chain Analysis, including USAID Mission and Washington staff, national consultants, writers and researchers to determine what worked well during the SCA process and what needed refinement.
2. From this process analysis, guidelines for conducting an SCA were created, including a full set of interview protocols.

These documents (which are available from the GBA) can help donors, governments and implementing partners to conduct an SCA before embarking on a materials development or book project in the country in which they work.

Tanzania Book Sector Training and Book Development

After conducting a training needs assessment, the GBAIA team began

BY THE NUMBERS

3

Years

7

Face to Face and

7

eLearning Modules Developed

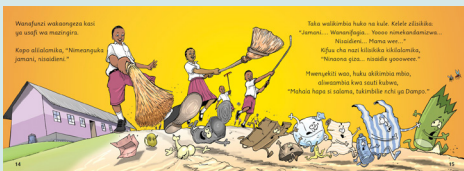
261

Participants Trained on Book Development

81

New Children’s Book Titles Developed

Tanzania



Vitishp Vya Taka, published by Best Deal Publishers and Book Sellers



Shambani kwa Babu na Bibi, published by Alif Publishers

“With this collection of books, Tanzanian publishers celebrate their revival as storytellers, professional children’s bookmakers, and guardians of Tanzanian literature.”

—Kathy Uwimana, African Book Publishing Expert

planning a joint training with publishers and staff from both the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) and the Zanzibar Institute of Education (ZIE). The Book Sector Training Workshop took place over four days from June 13–16, 2022, and was attended by 68 participants. The goal was to increase knowledge, skills, and best practices for creating high-quality early grade reading materials. Workshop sessions included presentations on types of children’s books, book evaluation and procurement, the book development process, and copyright laws and open licensing. One activity included a “failed project” case study where participants analyzed and proposed solutions to a book development problem.

A primary objective of the workshop was to support the establishment of working partnerships among TIE, ZIE, and the private publishing sector. After the training, seven Tanzanian and Zanzibari publishers were chosen to develop new books with a “title team”—an author, illustrator, and designer. The publishers submitted a total of ten manuscripts for either a picture book or a nonfiction informational book on the theme, “We are the People of Tanzania!”

Thirty-two members of the title teams participated in an intensive Storybook Development Workshop led by a group of GBAIA consultants and then received individual follow-up coaching sessions as they developed their books. In November 2022, development of all ten titles was final and the books were ready to print.

Micro-initiatives

Following the book supply chain analyses, context-specific challenges were identified in several countries. GBAIA staff developed plans to address these specific issues, with the idea that such solutions would be applicable to other countries

where similar challenges exist. USAID Mission staff in two countries—Mali and Malawi—requested additional in-person trainings with book professionals to improve the development and production of high-quality, openly licensed children’s books in local languages.

GBAIA contracted with local publishers using a results-based financing model, based on the following assumptions:

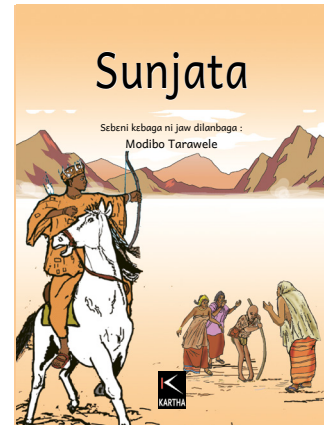
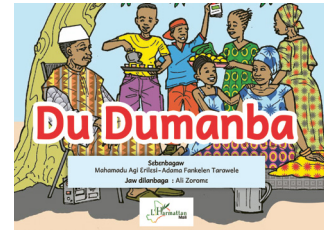
- USAID and other donors want materials funded by public money to be openly licensed.
- Despite some recent developments in alternative business models, publishers rely on copyright as their sole business model, and see Open Licensing as an existential threat.
- The Global Digital Library requires an open license on all materials.

To honor all three assumptions, we offered publishers a set fee for the development of the books (from writing through production of print-ready pdfs), paid in installments based on deliverables. Copies printed by USAID are openly licensed, while publishers retain the copyright on the books and can sell them on the open market.

Mali Publisher Training and Book Development. In researching the capacity of private publishers in Mali, the GBAIA team found that they already were trained and knowledgeable in the creation of high-quality children’s books. Therefore, the team and Mission staff decided to expand the publishers’ capacity by focusing a training on the necessity for and development of levelled readers in the Bamanankan language.

The one-week workshop on the design of decodable and levelled readers took place from September 13–17, 2021, and included 82

Mali Book Covers



Top: Published by l'Harmattan Mali

Bottom: Published by Kartha

participants—publishers, authors, illustrators, graphic designers, and representatives of the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Culture, and USAID, plus eight trainers. Topics covered included writing essential learning materials, including decodable and levelled readers; using essential reading materials in the classroom; and fundamentals of copyright and open licensing. During this training, participants produced two sample texts in Bamanankan incorporating what they had learned about developing and writing levelled readers.

From September 16–17, a concurrent training workshop took place for illustrators and graphic designers, with 17 participants from 14 different publishing houses who worked to create illustrations for the sample texts produced in the other training session.

Participants in both workshops reported increased interest in developing openly licensed essential reading materials for children in local languages. They also were enthusiastic about the collaboration strategies for book production they had experienced during the trainings. Participants provided their contact information and established a social media group in order to stay connected and possibly work together as teams in the future. Given this positive response, 16 publishing houses were chosen from among the 27 who had attended the initial training to develop new titles for distribution to Malian schools. Publishers, authors, illustrators, and graphic designers came together in twice-weekly coaching sessions led by individuals with publishing and pedagogical backgrounds to produce a draft of 28 children’s books in January 2022. The draft texts were submitted to the Ministry of National

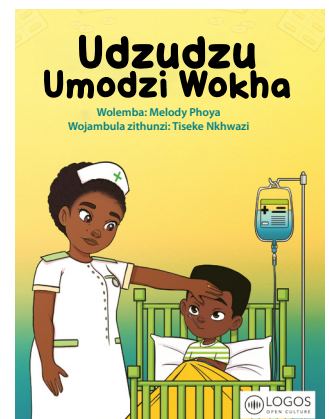
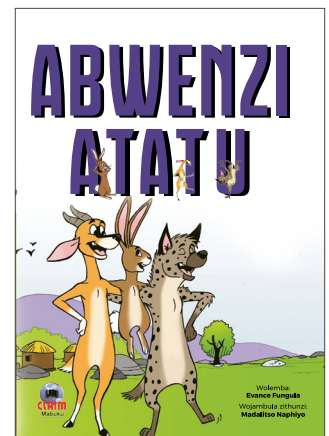
“To produce, to read in one’s mother tongue, is to give a chance of survival to this language. Because, just as a tree needs to be watered to blossom, the mother tongue needs to be spoken, read, and worked in to survive over time and escape extinction. This is why the project to produce children’s reading material in Bamanankan is wonderful. It gives the opportunity to the Bamanankan language to breathe, to blossom, to escape oblivion.”

—Fatoumata Keita, an author, publisher, and the Activity Coordinator for GBAIA-Mali

Education for review by language and pedagogy experts, and 25 were validated. Following some edits and revisions, the books were taken for review and feedback by three focus groups of school children and their teachers, who commented on their interest in each title and its level of difficulty. Finally, 21 of the books (at least one from each publisher) were selected for production; 5,000 copies of each were printed and distributed to 200 schools in November 2022.

Malawi Publisher Training and Book Development. Following the book SCA in Malawi, GBAIA and the USAID Mission staff conducted a survey of publishing houses to identify areas where training would be most helpful. They found that none of the publishers had any experience in producing books for children younger than 8 years of age, the books they did produce were primarily textbooks, and that their book development capacity was low. The plan for a capacity-building training therefore concentrated on developing an understanding of the elements and appropriate content of supplementary reading materials and books for young children. Information about copyright and open licensing

Malawi Book Covers



Top: Published by Claim, Limited

Bottom: Published by African Hoopoe Books

was also to be presented. Another important objective was to build direct relationships among publishers and content creators, such as authors and illustrators.

The one-week training workshop took place from March 7–11, 2022, with 68 participants, including publishers, authors, illustrators, representatives of the MoE and the Malawi Institute of Education, and staff members from NGOs eKitabu and World Vision. The ambitious goal of the workshop was to develop 50 new, openly licensed children’s books in the Chichewa language while providing practical capacity-building strategies to the private publishing houses. The participants were exposed to a wide variety of books from around the world, analyzing and discussing age-appropriate writing and illustration in both fiction picture books and nonfiction informational books.

Following the workshop, publishers were invited to apply to participate in the book development activity. In April, a series of Materials Creation Workshops were held where content creators worked with professional coaches on the writing and design of children’s books in Chichewa. Professional editors revised the draft manuscripts, each of which was then assigned to a Book Team made up of a publisher, author, illustrator, and designer. The teams worked collaboratively during May and June to develop their books through multiple rounds of editing and revisions. All 50 books were completed in July 2022, which was seen as an important achievement and a milestone on the country’s road to increasing literacy.

Malawi National Book Policy Development. Book sector actors across Africa have consistently

identified the lack of National Book and Reading Policies as a major impediment to the creation of a robust publishing industry that can support academic achievements across the school system, especially in the primary and secondary school levels.

Given the strategic role of the book sector, it is critical for every nation to ensure that the roles of all stakeholders, including governments, authors, publishers, printers, booksellers, librarians, readers, and archivists, are recognised, developed, and nurtured so they can perform optimally in the support and realisation of quality education.

In June 2019, the African Union Commission and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) validated the Continental Framework for National Book and Reading Policies (Continental Framework) that aims to guide member countries to formulate and enact National Book and Reading Policies, to be implemented in collaboration with National Book Development Councils and fully funded by national governments. GBAIA undertook the task of developing a National Book Policy



Participants in the Malawi National Book Policy workshops.

“A National Book (and Reading) Policy is a coherent set of regulations and indicators set by the national authority to govern the development, production, printing, distribution and dissemination of books and other reading materials, with the aim of promoting a reading culture.

The backing of the highest national authority is essential since it is not only a question of the allocation of sufficient resources, but also of giving official status to the book and reading policy to ensure that it will be implemented.”⁴

⁴Álvaro Garzón, National Book Policy: A Guide for Users in the Field. (Paris, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2005.)

in Malawi, working with a consultant who had worked on the ADEA Continental Framework, together with Malawian experts.

During initial missions to Malawi in October through December 2021 consultative meetings were held with high-profile government officials who had direct responsibility for policy formulation and implementation, as well as key stakeholders in the book industries and civil society. Following were the objectives of these meetings:

- Discuss the need to formulate and enact National Book and Reading Policies
- Explain how the Continental Framework on National Book and Reading Policies was developed and validated by ADEA and the Africa Union Commission
- Explain the toolkit for National Book and Reading Policy formulation and implementation
- Agree on the envisaged workshops that will lead to policy formulation and implementation as a priority for the respective countries

The role of MoEs is critical in the quest for creating a reading culture in schools and essential for encouraging students’ engagement and motivation as lifelong readers. Developing a reading culture takes time and requires sustained commitment and investment, hence the need for a national book and reading framework. MoEs are key actors in achieving the ambitious outcomes of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) and the African Union’s Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25). Given MoEs’ strategic role as custodians of countries’ goals of education, their involvement in the development of National Book and Reading Policies is essential.

In Malawi, two workshops were held in January and February 2022 with private sector actors and MoE officials, during which presentations were made on various issues facing the book sector in Malawi. Sessions included key areas in book development: planning book development, cross-cutting issues, creation, production, manufacturing, distribution, dissemination, and use.

At the center of all of these was the role of government as a key player in managing copyright, tax regimes, incentives, law enforcement, and capacity-building and ensuring the coordination of activities and harmony to create a conducive environment for the sustainable development of the book industry.

The objectives of the workshops were to:

1. Understand expert views from stakeholders about the key role they play and how they contribute to the overall success of the book industry.
2. Understand cross-cutting issues presented by experts in copyright, book law, bibliographic control, reading promotion, training needs, and the role of a book council, among others.

At the end of these workshops, consensus had been reached on the formulation of a National Book and Reading Policy, the establishment of a National Book Development Council, and the enactment of a Book Law. Additionally, a special task force was named and endorsed by the MoE, comprising MoE officials, development partners, and members of the private sector, to study the issues and to draft the policy.

The task force met four times between May and August 2022 to consider which issues should be determined by a National Book Policy. After drafting a near-final policy, a series of regional consultations were held. Finally, a stakeholder validation workshop was held in October 2022.

In December 2022, after a full year of development and participation by all stakeholders in the book sector, the Malawi National Book Policy was ready to be presented to the MoE for adoption into law.

Malawi Tiwerenge – Let’s Read Together campaign

The GBAIA team worked with the USAID/Malawi mission to design a reading campaign to be piloted in three districts and with 246 schools. Implemented in 20 zones in the Dowa, Salima, and Ntchisi districts, the goal of the campaign was to have parents, caregivers, and other family members read to and engage with their children by having daily, high-quality interactions with titles provided through the activity.

The reading campaign aimed to change the perceptions and behaviors of parents, caregivers, and other community members regarding children’s reading by a focusing on two key behaviors:

1. Have parents, caregivers, and other family members read stories to their children every day
2. Increase parent/caregiver demand for and access to high-quality reading materials for their children

The campaign was called “Tiwerenge” or “Let’s Read Together,” and it was designed to achieve the following:

- Inspire parents and caregivers to have agency over their children’s education related to improved reading, despite challenges such as their own level of reading ability, lack of immediate resources, or a child’s physical or learning disability
- Promote parents’ and caregivers’ regular and sustained action with their children in the home and community related to improved reading outcomes
- Ensure parents and caregivers are equipped with the skills needed to sit with their child and a book and have a meaningful, daily interaction reading a story together
- Increase the community’s awareness of their role and action in creating and supporting a literate community environment

Core Messages

- ALL parents can support their children’s reading, even if they are illiterate or new to reading.
- Reading is an enjoyable way to strengthen your relationship with your child.
- Reading is a key to success. Investing time in reading with your children will directly increase your family’s economic opportunities in the future.

Tiwerenge was conducted using three integrated activities:

- Printing and distribution of 500,000 copies of the children’s books developed under the training and book development activity
- A radio campaign and a print media campaign to be conducted by a selected Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) firm
- A community engagement activity that trained parents and caregivers of children in grades 1–4 in 246 schools on the importance of reading and how to read to and support their children’s daily reading at home.

A total of 500,000 books (10,000 copies each of 50 new titles) were printed locally. The books were then distributed to the 246 schools participating in the pilot for delivery to parents.

The radio and print media campaigns were carried out by a local Malawian firm, CONCOM PR and Publicity, from June 6, 2022, to December 31, 2022. CONCOM worked with the GBAIA team to develop an SBCC strategy, which included the campaign name, a logo, and three core messages. Radio dramas, public service announcements (PSAs), a jingle, and print materials were then developed reflecting the core messages. Seven radio stations covering the catchment area for the campaign were contracted to deliver the radio programming over the course of three months for a total of 350 radio spots. Due to the quality of the programming and the interest by the radio stations, the target for airing the programs was exceeded with a total of 1,078 spots logged. Programming began on October 9 and ran through December 31. In addition, posters and flyers were

developed for parents’ use during the training.

The community engagement activity was carried out through a subcontract awarded to the Centre for Development Management (CDM), a Malawian NGO. Implementation took place from September 14, 2022, to December 31, 2022. The goal of the activity was to train parents on the importance of reading and how to support their children in daily reading at home. Working with GBAIA staff and consultants, CDM developed training materials for a training of trainers and three school-level meetings. A training of master trainers was carried out in early October. The master trainers, consisting of community mobilizers (CMs) and provincial education advisors (PEAs), then carried out training of trainers to school-level trainers (SLTs) drawn from the school management committees, Parent Teacher Associations, and mothers groups at the participating schools. Once trained, these SLTs carried out three school-level meetings—one per month in October, November, and December 2022. A total of 750 SLTs and over 100,000 parents were trained.

Through the training sessions, parents were trained on the three core messages, received demonstrations of how to read with their children, discussed ideas for supporting daily reading at home, and learned how to care for books. At Meeting 2, the books were disseminated to the parents with each parent receiving between 2 and 5 books. At Meeting 3 in the series, parents shared how they had used the books with their children, their strategies for caring for the books, and ideas for how to continue to support their children’s reading at home.

Tiwerenge Let’s Read Together Reading Campaign



BY THE NUMBERS

495,415
Books Disseminated
to Parents and Children

3
Districts

246
Schools and School
Communities

105,330
Parents Trained

750
School Level
Representatives Trained

Case Study: Angela Ngwira

Angela Ngwira is 25 years old and a mother of two children from Senga Village in Dowa district. She lives with her husband, who works as a Prison Warden at a nearby juvenile correction facility. Mrs. Ngwira has a small business where she sells used clothes on market days.

Mrs. Ngwira was excited to hear that parents were asked to attend a meeting at her son’s school, where they would be given books and taught about reading.

Mrs. Ngwira says that at first, whenever she would sit with her son to read, he would be distracted by her neighbor’s children, who wanted him to play with them. Her husband suggested that, instead of chasing the neighbor’s children away, she invite them to sit do the reading together. Mrs. Ngwira now reads with her children as well as those of her neighbor. After the first week of reading, her neighbor started to show interest as well, and now she also sometimes comes to sit with then during a reading session.

She takes care of her books by putting them in a bag and then storing them in a safe place. She says her goal is for the neighbor’s children to also start a regular reading practice. She especially hopes this for her neighbor’s youngest child, who is in standard one and cannot read. She reads to him and asks him to tell her about the pictures.

She is very happy with the Tiwerenge project and shares that her husband now also spends time in the evening reading books with his son.



“My son is excited about reading and now is the one reminding me that it’s time to read.”

—Angela Ngwira



Children gather at a book distribution event in Dowa, Malawi



Posters from the campaign



Communications and Partnerships

Objective 4: Provide just-in-time technical assistance to the Global Book Alliance secretariat, USAID missions, and host country partners

Communications

GBAIA provided technical support to the GBA Secretariat throughout the project, including overall administrative support, leading GBA communications and partnership activities, and logistical support for GBA Steering Committee meetings.

Throughout the project, GBAIA's communication and outreach initiatives raised awareness about the importance of increasing access to high-quality books in languages children use and understand. Through several channels, GBA communications promoted Open Book Series webinars; marketed new resources, including nine supply chain analyses; highlighted open-source books on the Global Digital Library; and highlighted resources and successes from GBA members.

Traffic to the GBA website grew an average of 75 percent each year of the project, with 31,000 total unique visitors. Regular GBA posts on LinkedIn began in 2021 and grew to 791 followers by the end of 2022. Throughout the project, the GBA's Twitter following grew to 1,427

followers, and GBA tweets were viewed more than 365,000 times.

GBAIA also utilized short videos to dive deeper into issues related to the book chain. Seven videos were uploaded to the GBA's YouTube channel in the final year of the project. Three of the videos highlighted the Children's Book Development training in Mali and offered overviews in both French and English. Edited recordings of the Open Book Series webinars were uploaded, as well as an interview with Tanzanian publisher Elieshi Lema and a video outlining the GBA's campaign Book for Every Child: A Global Pledge. Videos were also embedded into blog posts and shared through GBA social media accounts to broaden their reach. To strengthen engagement with steering committee members, GBAIA communications produced a GBA member spotlight video to highlight the work of GBA partner All Children Reading—A Grand Challenge for Development.

Partnerships

The partnerships' work during the project focused on (1) updating and then implementing the original GBA's

BY THE NUMBERS

31,000

Unique Visitors to GBAIA website

56

Web Articles

11

Webinars

44

Resources Added to the GBA Website

7

Videos

791

Followers on LinkedIn

1,421

Followers on Twitter

809

Tweets

365,000+

Total tweet Impressions

295

LinkedIn Posts

Communication Products



partnership strategy; (2) devising partnership analysis tools and then implementing a pilot in Malawi; and (3) liaising with and supporting the GBA Steering Committee with engagement opportunities, including the Open Book Series Webinars, TED Talks, and members' partnership plans. Additionally, in conjunction with the GBA Secretariat and USAID private sector engagement advisors, work was undertaken to revise the GBA's governance structure and engage in the new GBA strategic planning process to support future partnership opportunities.

Building from the original GBA's partnership strategy, implementation work focused on liaising with potential partners across multiple sectors, including the International Publishing

Association (IPA), translation agency Ulatus, and Google. Prospecting strategies were devised for core sectoral groups and core GBA programs, such as the Global Digital Library and E-learning needs during Covid-19, or devising a reading culture in GBA countries. Focused outreach plans and materials were prepared to support advocacy and resource development at core global meetings and events. MOUs and potential partnership plans were created, which can be used as future templates.

At a country level, an analysis tool was developed that can support country-level analysis of available partners and the opportunities to support the book market and the GBA's vision. A guidance document detailing the process and all tools

was developed based on partnership best practices and existing USAID analysis instruments, then collated as a proposed research protocol for usage by USAID missions, GBAIA, and GBA country-implementing partners. The protocols were piloted by the GBAIA team in early 2020 in Malawi where more than 50 interviews with government advisors, international donors, and private sector partners were undertaken. The final report details the potential for partnerships in-country and the strategies to build those partnerships.

To build these partnerships, a series of engagement strategies was planned, including advocacy campaigns, partner outreach and engagement opportunities, and opportunities for members to share communications. These helped build support from the Steering Committee as partnership advocates for the GBA through individual partnership and engagement plans devised through individual interviews and alignment with existing GBA Steering Committee member plans and strategies. The Open Book Series of webinars was devised to highlight the work of the GBA, the Steering Committee and GBA members in support of the GBA's vision and mission. To date, they have highlighted International Literacy Day,



OPEN BOOK

The Global Book Alliance Partner Series

the work of the GBA, the importance of books for girls from advocacy and implementation points of view, and lessons learned from the Book Supply Chain Analysis in Malawi and Zambia. Speakers from African Governments, the IPA, nonprofit implementers, technology companies, and donors were invited to engage, and all webinars were shared to build further interest with stakeholders. Recently a new initiative was created to invite the GBA Steering Committee members to speak on video about an initiative that aligns with GBA priorities, such as the work of All Children Reading on edtech solutions and tools.

Finally to ensure strong governance and that partnerships and collaboration remain central to the GBA's work, the governance structure for the GBA was reviewed and updated in line with the new GBA strategy, which included partnerships across the agreed outputs and outcomes.

“Reading skills come with practice. The more you read, the more you gain the skills.”

—Parent in Salima, Malawi





Monitoring and Evaluation

M&E Approach

GBAIA continually monitored, evaluated, and reported project accomplishments through program outcomes and outputs, conducted process evaluations to learn throughout the duration of the activity, as well as carried out special studies to contribute to broader knowledge and to inform future programming.

GBAIA's monitoring, evaluation, and learning activities were guided by the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan. Given the evolving nature of project activities, particularly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, GBAIA regularly reviewed and revised the MEL Plan to reflect program adaptations throughout the life of the project. During this time, GBAIA designed and implemented three MEL plans, which were submitted and approved by USAID. The first was approved in January 2020. The second was modified to reflect changes in project activities due to the pandemic and was approved in December 2020. Lastly, in response to the project extension into Year 3, the MEL Plan was revised and reviewed in 2021, with the final MEL Plan approved by USAID in October 2022.

Indicator Accomplishments

On an ongoing basis, GBAIA rigorously collected performance

monitoring data on key output and outcome indicators to track the progress of the program and to aid management in fine-tuning the implementation approach (16 indicators were tracked).

Measuring GBAIA's Outcomes

GBAIA conducted outcome evaluations to measure project outcomes around improving the use of the GDL among USAID Education Missions and IPs, as well as to capture knowledge gains after training.

GDL Questionnaire to USAID Missions and Implementing Partners

The GDL questionnaire was a short electronic survey, programmed into Qualtrics, to gather information on Mission knowledge and use of the GDL. As part of GBAIA's outcome evaluation activities, the GDL survey was intended to see if changes had occurred in USAID Missions in regard to their knowledge and use of the

GDL. Additionally, this questionnaire was intended to be used for indicator reporting (Indicator 1: “Number of USAID Missions with education projects who report using the GDL in the past year”) as well as to inform technical activities. A baseline survey was conducted in October/November 2019, in which 18 Missions responded. A second survey was conducted in 2021 to measure changes in GDL knowledge and use. In total, 15 Missions participated in the survey, of which, 10 reported using the GDL and were counted under Indicator 1.

To gather information on IPs’ knowledge and use of the GDL, USAID sent a questionnaire to IPs in FY21. In total, 10 projects, representing three IPs, participated in the survey. Results showed that one project contributed to Indicator 2 (“Number of U.S.-financed basic education projects who upload and contribute resources to the GDL”); however, no projects contributed to Indicator 3 (“Number of basic education projects with USG financial assistance who download resources from the GDL”).

Due to low response rates among IPs, the IP survey and Indicator 3 were discontinued in FY22.

Mali Publishers’ Training Knowledge Assessment

To measure changes in participants’ knowledge of essential reading materials after participating in the Mali publishers’ training, pre- and post-test data were collected from 71 trainees on the first and last days of training. In total, 51 participants (71.8%) showed improved knowledge of essential reading materials at the end of the training (Indicator 14).

Process Evaluations

To ensure project fidelity of implementation, as well as to aid management in fine-tuning training strategies, GBAIA incorporated ad hoc process evaluations into the monitoring and evaluation framework. For instance, process evaluation data was gathered during in-person book development trainings in Malawi and Tanzania to assess participant satisfaction with trainings and to identify areas for improvement, which

BY THE NUMBERS

GBAIA achieved or exceeded the life of project (LOP) targets for most of its output and outcome indicators, including the following:

9
Book supply chain analyses conducted
(output; Indicator 6)

13
Dissemination presentations or events held with stakeholders on book supply chain findings
(output; Indicator 7)

8
Book supply chain analyses validated by the GBA Steering Committee
(output; Indicator 8)

1,506
Titles developed by USAID implementing partners (IPs) and uploaded to the GDL
(outcome; Indicator 13)

135
Education sector staff trained on using the GDL
(output; Indicator 5)

261
Participants (USAID staff and/or key stakeholders) trained on content regarding book supply chains
(output; Indicator 11)

7
Training modules developed to assist USAID missions, MoEs, and other stakeholders in designing, planning, managing, and monitoring supply chain initiatives
(output; Indicator 10)

could be incorporated into future trainings.

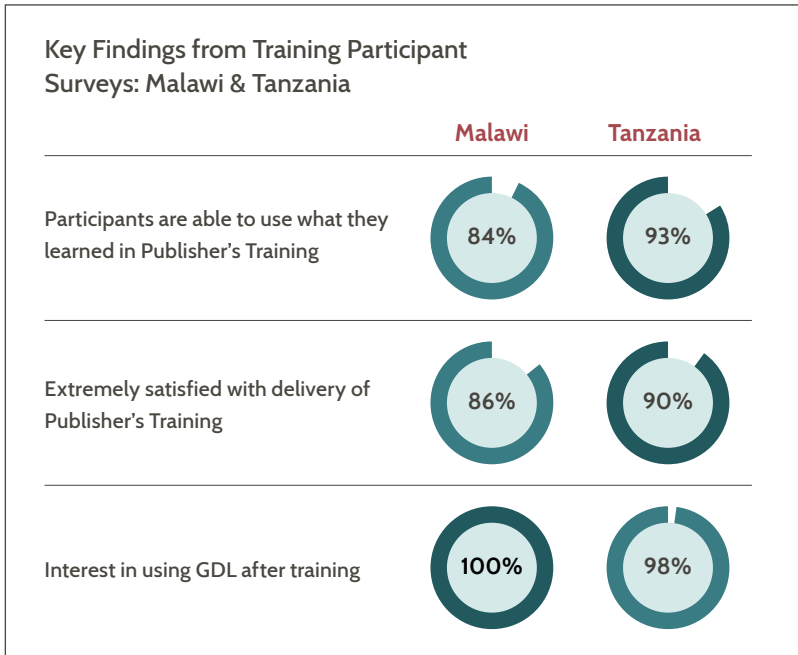
Malawi & Tanzania Book Development Trainings

Participant Satisfaction & GDL Surveys. In Malawi and Tanzania, brief feedback surveys were distributed to training participants during the book development trainings. Feedback from both trainings was largely positive, with most participants stating that they would be able to use what they learned and were extremely satisfied with the training delivery. Participants largely reported that they plan to use the knowledge gained from the training to improve the quality of books and for project management. During the trainings, participants were also introduced to the GDL. Nearly all participants who responded to the survey were interested in using the GDL after attending training.

GBAIA Learning Studies

To support on-going learning and inform technical implementation, GBAIA developed and implemented a series of learning agenda studies around the book supply chain and GBAIA’s micro-initiatives.

Mali Essential Reading Materials Study. As part of the Mali Micro-Initiative, GBAIA conducted the Mali Essential Reading Materials Study. The purpose of the study was to determine stakeholders’ perceptions of the reading materials that publishers developed during the Micro-Initiative. This feedback was used to improve the books before being printed, as well as to help build publishers’ capacities. In total, 19 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with teachers and second-year students were conducted to collect feedback on the content and format of the 21 books developed and selected for publication during the Mali Micro-Initiative. In each FGD, the teacher



read aloud one book to the students, and then the facilitator asked both the teacher and the children questions.

The feedback from children and teachers was overwhelmingly positive. Main findings included:

- **Relevant themes:** Teachers and children enjoyed the themes of the books, finding them relevant to the lives of the pupils.
- **Positive feedback on illustrations:** Children and teachers provided positive feedback on the illustrations in the reviewed books, sharing that “the pictures illustrate the content of the story,” and that they found the illustrations “beautiful.”
- **Appropriate level for students:** Both students and teachers agreed that most books were appropriately leveled and that children were able to “read the text without any difficulty” and to understand it.

Mali Micro-Initiative Study

In addition to the Mali Essential Reading Materials Study, an additional study was conducted to learn about the effectiveness of the Mali

Micro-Initiative, which focused on strengthening the capacity of Mali's publishing sector, specifically with regard to the publishing of children's books in national languages. The study utilized a mixed-methods approach consisting of an end-of-training satisfaction survey, as well as, 21 key informant interviews at the end of the Micro-Initiative with a range of stakeholders (publishers, authors, illustrators, graphic designers, government officials, and representatives of the Organization of Malian Publishers).

Malawi Micro-Initiative Study. In Malawi, in order to measure longer-term outcomes centered around the activity's Social Behavior Change Campaign (SBCC), a study plan and tool were developed to assess knowledge, attitudes, and practices of parents/caregivers at the end of the Micro-Initiative regarding books and the importance of reading, as well as the use of books provided. This study plan was shared with USAID so that USAID or its designee could conduct the study 6 to 12 months after the end of the GBAIA project.

Mali Micro-Initiative Study Key Findings

- Participants found the micro-initiative to be immensely valuable in terms of learning new content that they could use to produce quality books.
- Receiving feedback and guidance on writing manuscripts was helpful to publishers.
- Key informant interviews also found that participants felt that learning about decodable and leveled readers, as well as writing in Bamanankan, would help them to produce higher quality books for children by creating age- and grade-appropriate materials in the children's home language.



“The capacities of publishers were greatly improved following the Micro-Initiative. This was reflected in the quality of the books: Out of 25 books produced, the Ministry of Education validated more than 20. This shows the seriousness and dedication with which the work was done.”

—Malian Ministry of Culture official

Events Timeline





Conclusion and Recommendations

To fulfill GBAIA's role as a pilot mechanism, the project team documented learning throughout, in the hope that its work will be replicated and expanded upon.

For future activities, GBAIA suggests the following for the Global Book Alliance, USAID and any others undertaking this work:

SCAs

- Remain flexible and incorporate iterative learning while researching the SCAs. Each cultural and political context is different, and although many universal themes emerge, it is imperative to allow the project to adapt to the findings as it proceeds. After the initial phase of research, focus in on the aspects of the book supply chain that are most important to that context, and emphasize them in the report.
- Where possible prioritize in-person meetings over virtual. Ministry officials often lack the appropriate technology to make a virtual meeting fruitful, and value face-to-face contact. The stakeholder interviews should be considered the first step in a long process of bettering the supply of books and as such, the initial contacts formed during the research are critical to success.
- For the stakeholder interviews, appropriate support from GBA partners to facilitate access to the necessary people and information is crucial, as is the identification of appropriate local consultants and fixers who are connected to stakeholders in the education system and have sufficient authority to facilitate the meetings.
- Aim to ensure that the SCAs are completed in a timely manner, and that the recommendations can be acted upon swiftly. This will ensure that the focus on the book sector remains as tight as it does during the research phase, and that book sector stakeholders are motivated to act by their very recent engagement with the SCA. The more time that goes by after the end of the research phase, the greater the danger that the reports will be shelved.
- At the end of the SCA, follow the work with discrete policy briefs which can guide specific stakeholders to move the work forward. For example, draft a brief on how the Ministry of Education and/or USAID Mission could direct a SBCC activity in its country, or develop a National Book Policy.

- As a qualitative study, the SCA may be perceived by some as less reliable than a quantitative one. It is important that the research is seen as evidence-based for stakeholders to have the will to act. Ensure rigor and validity through research techniques, by testing hypotheses throughout data analysis, for example, and by asking each category of question of at least one person in three differing groups, so that information on a subject is triangulated.

Capacity-Building and Partnerships

- Since a thriving and robust private book publishing sector is critical to the availability of books, concentrate efforts on supporting private publishers, through partnership and financing agreements to develop high-quality children's books.
- To address capacity gaps, work with USAID missions to offer trainings on the book supply chain training modules to MoEs and other sector partners as soon as possible.
- Revise book supply chain training module series periodically to ensure that issues identified and best practices recommended are up to date with current state of the sector.
- Highlight strong public-private partnerships (PPPs) for book development, such as the work done by the Ghana Book Development Council, in countries where such partnerships do not yet exist but there is readiness for increasing the development of high-quality books through PPPs.

GDL

- To facilitate discussions on GDL uploading procedures, connect USAID projects with the GDL during the project lifecycle as soon as materials are finalized. Budget for sufficient resources to convert the materials into ePUB.
- To increase the use of the GDL, promote appropriate GDL materials to various stakeholders including MoEs, publishers, parents, and learners.
- To facilitate successful translation projects for the GDL:
 1. Create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) before beginning translation activities.
 2. Identify a motivated leader from the team with whom regular check-in meetings could be scheduled.
 3. Ensure quality of the translations through establishing a careful editorial process.
 4. Consider liaising with MoEs to provide "authorized" translations that can be promoted to teachers and parents.

You can find more in-depth information and recommendations about these issues in the [SCAs](#) themselves, and in the GBA SCA Protocols and Guidelines, available upon request from the GBA and on the USAID Edulinks site.

Acronyms

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
CDM	Centre for Development Management
CESA 16-25	Continental Education Strategy for Africa
CM	Community Mobilizer
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FY	Fiscal Year
GBA	Global Book Alliance
GBAIA	Global Book Alliance in Action
GDL	Global Digital Library
IP	Implementing Partner
IPA	International Publishing Association
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Nongovernmental Organizations
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development
PEA	provincial education advisors
PSA	Public service announcement
SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication
SCA	Supply Chain Analysis
SDG 4	Sustainable Development Goal 4
SLT	school-level trainers
STTA	Short-term technical support
TIE	Tanzania Institute of Education
TLMs	Teaching and Learning Materials
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
ZIE	Zanzibar Institute of Education



USAID
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GLOBAL BOOK ALLIANCE

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