

African Revival Uganda: End of Phonics Programme Continuation - 2018

The African Revival phonics project trains primary teachers on the phonetic method of teaching reading and writing, in 25 Schools in Northern Uganda (15 primary schools in Amuru district and 10 primary schools in Nwoya district). Unlike traditional rote methods, phonics teaches learners to recognise sounds rather than words, providing a much stronger literary foundation.

This report gives a detailed account of the phonics continuation programme and its achievements. **This Report has been written by Thomas Kinyera, Phonics Officer.**

The project aims to increase capacity of local teachers to: improve their knowledge of phonics methodology; use learner-centred teaching techniques, and confidently delivering the curriculum. The project improves literacy rates, participation, and reading ability of students.

Phonics continuation is built on our pilot phonics programme and included the following activities:

- Phonics support monitoring and supervisions.
- Joint monitoring phonics project with the District education joint monitoring team.
- Early Grade Reading Assessment in all the 25 intervention schools and 5 control school.

Phonics support monitoring and supervision came out with the following findings;

- ✓ Phonics methodology has improved pupils confidence to read and write.
- ✓ Phonics readers supported by BFSS have been used by pupils as the reading materials during the Library hours.



*This pupil at Anaka Primary school, emerged the best reader in the reading test (EGRA), and said that her P.2 teacher Madam **Apio Eunice** inspired her to become an independent reader through her teaching of phonics in their classroom. She said that her p.2 teacher would guide them on how to blend the sounds in the words and give them story books to read under her supervision and this made her more confident when reading*

Joint Monitoring.

All the 25 schools benefitting from the phonics project were jointly monitored by the District education joint monitoring team of Amuru and Nwoya District respectively. The team comprised of the District Education Officers, Inspector of Schools, Centre Coordinating Tutors and Associate Assessors from Gulu Core Primary Teachers College.

Findings:

Phonics content coverage;

Simple sounds (Set 1 sounds), by the closure of term III, December 2018, 95% of the teachers teaching set 1 have completed set 1, and only 5% were still teaching set 1 and are the point of finalizing.

Complex sounds (set 2 and set 3); 65% of teachers were teaching set 2, 25% of teachers had completed set 2 sounds and 20% of teachers were teaching set 3 sounds at the time of joint monitoring.

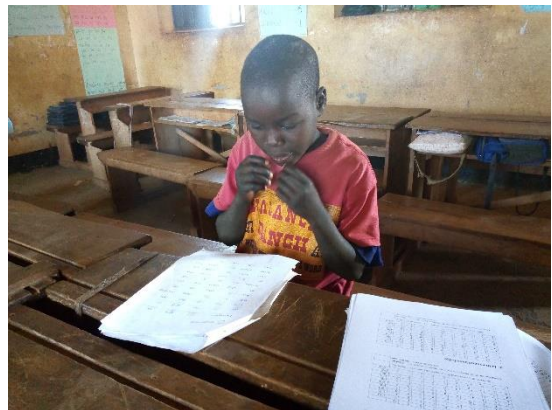
Additional findings:

- ✓ Teachers' performance in delivering phonics: currently 75% of teachers have been scored averagely at 71% compared to 70% of teachers who were scored averagely at 69.5% in last year's joint monitoring.
- ✓ 10% of teachers have engaged themselves in team teaching of phonics in their classrooms.
- ✓ Team work and group reading have been established among pupils and this has enhanced peer learning among pupils.
- ✓ Enhanced ability of teachers to plan for phonics lessons.
- ✓ Enhanced quality of classroom environment with learning corners being created and other learning materials displayed in the classrooms.

Early Grade Reading Assessment

Pupils reading and writing ability have been assessed in all the 25 intervention schools and 5 control schools.

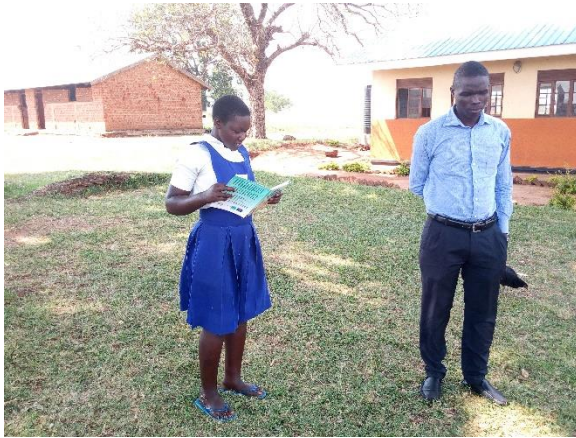
A total of 600 pupils were tested using EGRA (early grade reading assessment) tool. And was used to determine the literacy level in intervention schools and control schools in comparison with the baseline data of 2016. The result of the test have been presented in the figure 1 below:



A P1 pupil at Oberabic primary school was sounding and reading words with sound actions during the EGRA test.



P4 pupils at Pawel Langetta using readers as a reading material during the Library hours.



A pupil reads a story from the phonics reader as a positive disciplining to her teacher Mr Obur innocent at Pawel Langetta primary school, Mr Innocent has innovated one of the best ways of positive disciplining, that is all late comers must first read a section of story in the phonics readers before being allowed to go into class and whoever fails to read, will stay out until he/she has read the story correctly alone or in groups.

Project in Pictures



Left to Right: Center Coordinating Tutor Alero (Okeny Goddie) and Anaka (Ocitti Charles Ongom) respectively during the supervision of phonics lessons during phonics joint monitoring.

Below: Thomas Kinyera, Ruth Okabo and Steven Komakech respectively conducting the Early Grade Reading test

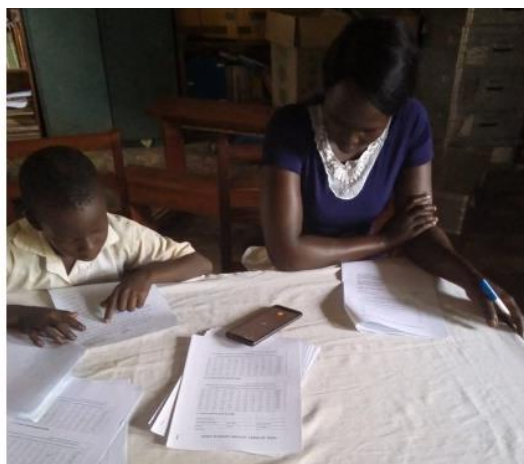
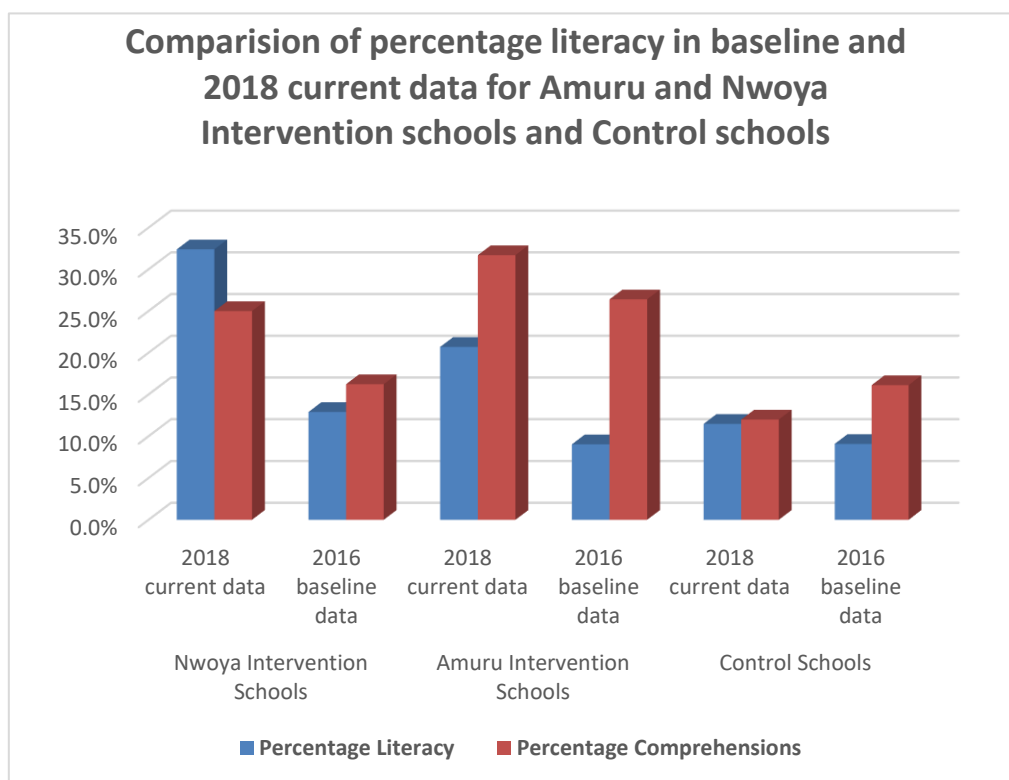


Figure 1, EGRA data



(Source; primary data from the field 2018 and 2016)

The bar graph above shows the percentage progress/improvements in literacy and comprehension of pupils since the inception of the phonics project in 2016 to project completion in December 2018. Reading and writing (literacy) among the lower primary of Nwoya district phonics intervention schools has improved by 19.5%. The current 2018 literacy is at 32.4% compared to the 12.9% literacy in the baseline of 2016. However, improvements in the comprehension components were lower, with 5.3% improvement from the baseline data of 2016. Current 2018 comprehension skills of the pupils in Nwoya is at 31.7% compared to the 26.4% in the 2016 baseline.

We expect this to improve now the phonics readers funded by BFSS are in schools. Literacy of lower primary students at Amuru district target schools has improved by 11.67%. Current literacy is at 20.7% compared to 9.03% at 2016 baseline. Improvements in comprehension were again lower – increasing by 8.77% over project duration. Current (2018) comprehension skills of pupils in Amuru is 25% compared to the 16.4% in the 2016 baseline. Control schools' literacy among the lower primary pupils only improved by 2.4% over project duration from 9.08% to 11.48%. Comprehension has actually decreased by -4.12% at control schools since