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| Indicator description         | <b>Number of DFID supported countries showing improvement in the proportion of children that can read with sufficient fluency for comprehension in early grades</b>  |
| Type of indicator             | Annual   |
| Overview                      | Counts the number of DFID supported countries which demonstrate improved early grade reading outcomes over time.   |
| Technical Definition Summary  | This will be based on the number of countries that measure oral reading fluency at least twice between 2009/10 and 2014/15, and counts the number of countries showing an improvement over this time period.   |
| Rationale                     | <p>This indicator enables DFID to better understand and track performance on learning outcomes in its partner countries. Where DFID is providing budget or sector support, it provides a proxy for how well DFID is supporting improved learning. This enables DFID to track implementation of its latest policy, which puts learning at the heart of its support to education.</p> <p>Early grade reading is an indicator of the quality of an education system, and literacy is a pre-requisite for learning in all other subjects. Assessing literacy at an early grade (e.g. Grade 2 or 3) is still early enough for governments to take remedial action to improve teaching and learning.</p>   |
| Data calculation and guidance | <p>Early Grade Reading is not an internationally standardised education indicator and so the methodology will differ across countries.</p> <p>For a country to be included in the result, they will have to carry out at least two sample based assessments of reading fluency or comprehension in early grades (Grades 2-4) between 2009-10 and 2014-15. The two assessments should be comparable to enable an assessment of trends over time. This means the assessments should be conducted in a comparable way across the time points, both in terms of the questions asked and the methodology. The assessment could be conducted by any local partner (Government, development partner or NGO). Results from the first and latest assessments will be compared to identify any improvements.</p> <p>The assessments should ideally be nationally representative. If this is not available, data that is representative of a significant part of the country (eg a key state) can be used. In this case the coverage of the data should be clearly stated in the Country Office return.</p> <p>Each country is asked to report data on the proportion of children that can read with sufficient fluency for</p> |

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|              | <p>comprehension in early grades. The most commonly used methodology will be the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA). This includes a connected text oral reading fluency test which measures the children's ability to read a story created to be appropriate for particular regions and targeted at grade 2. The test lasts for one minute, and the number of words read correctly is recorded. Children are usually assessed at the end of Grade 2, or early in Grade 3.</p> <p>The methodology requires the Government or DFID country office to establish – ideally in advance of data collection – a benchmark for the level of fluency (words per minute read correctly) required for comprehension. On average this is around 45-65 words per minute, but varies depending on the language. The proportion of children who read more words correctly than this agreed benchmark is used to track progress on this indicator.</p> <p>The indicator should focus on the most commonly used language of instruction for a country or region. This would normally be the main local language. Where regions have different main languages of instruction, the test should ideally be conducted in the main language in each region, with the results amalgamated using school age population weights.</p> <p>If oral reading fluency data is not available, it is also possible to use other indicators of reading fluency or comprehension. For example the number of comprehension questions answered correctly, compared to an agreed benchmark</p> <p>If using an UWEZO assessment, as another example, the indicator: “the percentage of children in a higher grade who can read and comprehend an early grade level story” could be used. In Kenya this would have been based on the % of children in Classes 4 or 5 who correctly answered two basic comprehension questions after reading a Class 2 level paragraph.</p> |
| Data sources | <p>The most commonly used assessment is likely to be EGRA. USAID intends to conduct nationally representative EGRA assessments at Grade 2 in all USAID supported countries.</p> <p>However countries can use a different methodology, provided this measures reading fluency or comprehension in the early Grades (Grades 2-4). Other possible methodologies include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government led ‘National Learning Assessments’</li> <li>• Civil society led learning assessments (ASER, UWEZO)</li> <li>• Written assessments of reading comprehension</li> </ul>   |

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| Reporting roles                               | DFID Country Offices decide whether the country has the data required to be included in this indicator. If so, it selects the most relevant data and calculations and submits these to the DFID HQ. The final numbers and calculations are then quality assured by DFID HQ.  |
| Worked examples                               |  |
| Baseline data and aggregate target monitoring | The baseline for each country is the earliest data available from 2009/10. The data was first collected from country offices in 2011. Countries are counted if they have two comparable data points between 2009/10 and 2014/15. The total number of countries with relevant data will be provided, along with the number showing an improvement.  |
| Return format                                 | Proportion of children reading with fluency, along with: type of assessment/data source; date of assessment; sampling frame; language of assessment; grade; and any specific quality or measurement issues.  |
| Data dis-aggregation                          | Data should be disaggregated by sex whenever possible.   |
| Data availability                             | DFID will collect any new data from countries annually. However each country is only likely to conduct a learning assessment every 2-5 years.  |
| Time period/lag                               | Survey data can have a time lag of a year or more from collection to publication.  |
| Quality assurance measures                    | International assessments are normally quality assured by the supporting partner (eg USAID for EGRA). In addition the DFID country office should conduct a light touch quality assurance of the assessment data to ensure it is fit for purpose. The DFID calculations are quality assured by DFID HQ.   |
| Interpretation of results                     | <p>Learning data in many countries is patchy, but improving. As a result many DFID focus countries may not have the time series of data needed to report on this indicator. DFID is actively working with partner government and other stakeholders to increase the availability of early grade learning assessment data.</p> <p>In most cases an improvement in the indicator for a particular country will reflect improved reading of children in early grades; which could be due to improved teaching methods, class sizes, resources etc.</p> <p>The indicator is focused on learning outcomes of children in school. In some countries learning outcomes may be affected by large changes in enrolment. Hence a decrease in the proportion with good learning outcomes for those children in school may still represent an improvement in</p> |

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|  | <p>learning outcomes across all children, if more children are attending school. Whenever relevant and possible, this will be noted. Similarly an increase may reflect a reduction in enrolment.</p> <p>A country is counted in the indicator if there has been any improvement in the result. It does not take into account whether this improvement is statistically significant, although this should balance out across countries.</p> |
| Additional comments                      |  |
| Variations from the standard methodology |  |

## **Annex: Additional guidance on EGRA (using Ethiopia as an example)**

EGRA is an orally administered assessment targeted at measuring the pre-reading and reading skills foundational to later reading (and academic success). EGRA takes approximately 15 minutes to administer and is often combined with a questionnaire measuring a variety of student background variables to assist in explaining some of the reading outcome findings. The Ethiopian EGRA consisted of the following components, which have been found to be highly correlated with one another.

1. Letter-naming (or fidel identification) fluency: ability to read the letters of the alphabet (or the fidel) without hesitation and naturally. This is a timed test that assesses automaticity and fluency of letter or fidel sounds. It is timed to 1 minute, which saves time and also prevents children having to spend time on something that is difficult for them.
2. Phonological awareness: awareness of how sounds work with words. This is generally considered a pre-reading skill, and can be assessed in a variety of ways. In some Ethiopian languages, this task might be designed to determine whether children could differentiate the first syllable (or fidel) in a word, or whether they could identify all of the fidels in a word.
3. Familiar word fluency: ability to read high-frequency words. This assesses whether children can process words quickly. The lists of words were derived from the 50 most frequently used words in Grade 2 and 3 textbooks in each language. It is timed to 1 minute.
4. Non-familiar or non-sense word fluency: ability to process words that could exist in the language in question, but do not. The words were derived from the list of familiar words and follow the common patterns of the language. This component assesses a child's ability to "decode" words fluently. It is timed to 1 minute.
5. Connected text oral reading fluency: ability to read a passage, about 60 words long, that tells a story. The stories were created to be appropriate for particular regions and targeted at Grade 2 and Grade 3 children. The component is timed to 1 minute.
6. Comprehension in connected text: ability to answer several comprehension questions based on the passage read.
7. Listening comprehension: being able to follow and understand a simple oral story. This assesses a child's ability to concentrate and focus to understand a very simple story, assessed by asking simple non-inferential (factual) questions. It is considered a pre-reading skill.

Each EGRA task has to be adapted and essentially redesigned uniquely as per the local minimum learning competencies and to suit the languages/ medium of instruction.

**For the DFID indicator the government or country office would need to identify a benchmark for the correct words per minute needed for comprehension. The proportion of children reading more words per minute than this benchmark would then be reported (from component 5 above).**