

READ – Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development SUMMARY DOCUMENT

READ is a new 4-year project, supported by US Agency for International Development, to address gaps in early grade learning, especially literacy learning, which affect all aspects of a child's learning trajectory. By ensuring a strong foundation at the beginning of school, the expectation is that fewer children will repeat grades or drop out in the primary cycle, and a higher proportion will complete school with solid primary school skills – such as literacy - which are indispensable life skills in today's world.

READ's Overall Objective

All primary school children in Bangladesh attain expected learning outcomes and competencies.

Expected Results

1. Improved teacher competence in evidence-based, interactive literacy instruction in grades 1-3.
2. Increased use of early grade (1-3) reading assessment.
3. Expanded provision and use of relevant and age-appropriate supplementary materials.
4. Strengthening community support for early grade literacy.

Partners

At the outset, READ will be implemented by five large, national NGOs who have been implementing the PROTEEVA project for the past four years (and before that, SUCCEED) –

VERC in Dhaka division; **JCF** in Khulna; **FIVDB** in Sylhet; **CODEC** in Barisal and Cox's Bazar; and **RDRS** in Rangpur and Rajshahi.

At the same time, Save the Children will work hand in hand with government Ministries, Departments and agencies responsible for teacher education, learning assessment and material development –

MoPME/Directorate of Primary Education, National Curriculum and Textbook Board, National Academy of Primary Education, and Primary Training Institutes.

Focal Areas

READ's will tackle the following areas where constraints have been identified in DPE's Annual Sector Performance Report (2012):

1. **Teacher education and training**, particularly focusing on continuous professional development (CPD) of teachers already in service; providing assessment tools so that teachers can monitor learning progress and provide remediation where needed;
2. **Opportunities to practice** – ensuring that diverse, age-appropriate reading materials are available in schools and homes; providing enjoyable, out-of-school opportunities for reading; maximizing the number of contact hours dedicated to literacy learning.
3. **Home and Community Support** – catalyzing School Management Committees around literacy learning; enabling parents to support their children's learning; encouraging a culture of reading for enjoyment at home or in the community.
4. **Diversified Pedagogy** – designing tailored approaches to literacy learning for children struggling to learn, or who attend diverse schools such as multi-lingual schools and unregulated, faith-based schools.

Implementation

READ will be implemented in two phases:

The first phase, from October 2013 up to January 2016, will field-test READ approaches in Government Primary Schools where the PROTEEVA project is already active in pre-primary and early grade (1-2) education. There are a total of 1,260 schools that PROTEEVA reaches, located in 21 districts across 6 divisions. These schools will receive teacher training on instructional strategies and diagnostic tools, training for head teachers and Assistant Upazila Education Officers, CPD for teachers, project-sourced reading materials, SMC training on reading, and reading awareness workshops for parents.

The second phase, running from January 2015 through September 2017, will implement READ in new schools and sites, jointly decided with DPE. 1,616 new schools will be reached in phase 2, divided in two equal cohorts, one of which begins activities in January 2015 and the second a year later. READ intends to cover all schools in targeted upazilas to allow in-depth partnership with upazila education offices and to demonstrate a sub-district wide approach. All phase 2 schools will receive the inputs mentioned above, but a sub-set (160) of schools in phase 2 will additionally receive community-based reading activities. The added value and cost effectiveness of these additional activities will be researched.

The second phase will also demonstrate the use of ICT in the classroom in 1,800 GPS's with multimedia classrooms. The same 2-cohort timeline will apply (50% in 2015/ 50% in 2016). One teacher from each school will receive 3-day training; schools will receive supplementary reading materials and Bangla e-content. In phase 2, READ will develop tailor-made approaches in 45 multi-lingual GPS schools in Khagrachari District (Chittagong Hill Tracts) and 80 qwami maqtab and Noorani madaris. The latter intervention will build on PROTEEVA's pre-primary activities in the maqtab and madaris. Save the Children has an MLE program in CHT which paves the way for READ.

READ's Reach

Ultimately, READ will reach an estimated 1,024,597 direct beneficiaries and 2,938,742 indirect beneficiaries, coming to 3,963,339 beneficiaries in total. Indirect beneficiaries include grade 4 and 5 students in target schools, people reached through public awareness activities on reading, and teachers as well as students from non-READ schools who will benefit from resources on the READ website.