The Quality And Learning Agenda

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FTI Board Meeting
18 – 19 May 2011 | Kigali, Rwanda
Board Decision and Input

• Endorse Strategy for Quality Improvement for EFA FTI developing country partners
• Questions for the Board
Outline

• Size and nature of the problem
• Solutions: technical
• Stating a feasible goal
• Solutions: process
• Next steps
• Questions for the Board
Size and Nature of the Challenge

• Learning matters more than years in school
• Yet:
  – 50%-90% children in poor countries cannot read a single word after 2-3 grades
  – Average girl or boy in poor countries: at “severe or extreme risk” in rich countries
  – Years in school in poor countries: 60-70% of rich countries, but learning only 20%
  – 40%-50% repeating grade 1 in some countries
• 200 million in school, learning very little, 67 million out of school
• No contradiction between enrollment and quality
Average child in lower-income countries

Richer countries’ distribution
Richer countries improve performance of the poorest children more: education for all
Problems and Solutions: Technical Components

• Teaching
• Textbooks
• Testing
• Time use
• Mother Tongue

Note: detailed slides on these issues skipped in the interest of time. Can come back at the end.
• Start now
• Start with basics
• Produce results
• Early reading as case-in-point:
  • prove it can be done
  • also, fundamental to further learning
• Then: math, later grades, etc.
• FTI’s outcome focus on literacy
Comprehension exercises often just memorization
No calling on individual children
Only 1/20 children focused on book OR board
Solutions are relatively easy
With such low base, radical progress possible

Teacher spends 5 minutes writing on the board what is already in the book
In cursive, when a book is in print, difficult to focus on symbols (two symbols for same thing)
Choral repetition without decoding, processing, or comprehension
Almost no child engagement with the text
**Time use**

Class time as theoretically allotted by gov’t (e.g., 200 days or 1000 hours)

After time lost due to strikes, unplanned holidays, weather, unplanned teacher training, etc.

After time lost to teacher absenteeism

After time lost to student absenteeism

After time lost due to inefficient class management

After time lost due to ineffective teaching and learning

Loss of time: 50% to 70%

Solutions:
- Re-claim time for direct instruction in reading
- Governance and accountability to enforce instructional time
- Improved teaching as noted above
Integrate all components, demonstrate

• Integrated all T’s in tight fashion
• Measure base, create awareness, report
• Start scalable efforts to demonstrate
• If integrated, and provide support, can improve massively, and fast
• Concurrently study and plan going to national scale within 3 years
  – Set ambitious but doable goals
  – Plan for the inputs (exp teacher training, textbooks)
  – Plan the logistics and integration
Reasonable Goals Based on Existing Evidence

• Pilot projects in Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, South Africa
• Scaled-up to national level: The Gambia, Nicaragua, Zambia
• Well-controlled, well-researched studies exist
• Children can read in <1 year, not 4 as now
• **National** 100% improvement is possible
  – In 3-5 years
  – If use research, serious logistics
Gains in Reading Fluency, Liberia, Improved versus Current Methods, 16 Months
Zambia Early Literacy Program: Improvement in Performance, in 3 years, Mother Tongue and English

Results in Mother tongue:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copperbelt</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luapula</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lusaka</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of 300% to 400% are possible (if low base, intense application)

Results in English in Grade 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Process

• Support broad international interest, share lessons
• Support ongoing or start-up efforts in pilot form and (already) national scale in:
  – The Gambia, Rwanda, Kenya, and many others
• Secure local and regional commitment and share knowledge/technique
• Keep improving knowledge base through analysis
• Start up in a few more countries, especially those neglected so far
• Secure local commitment and enthusiasm for new ones
• Secure technical support as well
• Evaluate and track all efforts
Partnership

• Interesting possible roles:
  – Gov’ts in going forward (The Gambia, Liberia: examples)
  – UNESCO in mandating and encouraging mutual commitment of Ministries to specific quality goals
  – UNESCO-IBE in supporting technically, other TA
  – UIS in tracking
  – UNICEF in integrating and piloting at local level
  – WB in TA, supervision, knowledge sharing
  – Bilaterals in working in LEGs, financing scaleable actions, funding for experiments, tech support, and tracking
  – NGOs and think tanks (e.g., Brookings) for policy dialogue, experiments, technical support to countries
  – FTI Secretariat as convener, provider of “social glue” to effort, provider of kick-off ideas and tech support

• Use of Global and Regional Activities and other trust funds
Next Steps

1. Create /strengthen team
2. Continue support to a few countries
3. Continue international, regional, local awareness creation, conviction, technical skills
4. Bring in other UN agencies, bilaterals, NGOs
5. Evaluate and track
Questions for Board

• Which countries should be chosen?
  – Support those already ongoing?
  – Help the newly interested?

• What should be the intensity and role of FTI Secretariat?
  – International convener? Networker of donors?
    Regional workshops?
  – Focus on a few countries as cases-in-point others can learn from?
    • Only where there is no other presence? Or as help to other presence? Right mix?
For Decision

BOD/2011/-05-XX **Quality Strategy**: The EFA FTI Board of Directors endorses the strategic direction outlined in the Strategy for Quality Improvement for EFA FTI developing country partners as described in BOD/2011/05-DOC 05 and requests the EFA FTI Secretariat to provide to the EFA FTI Board of Directors by 31 August 2011 the final report on the strategy described in Annex 1, for further endorsement, reflecting input received from the EFA FTI Board of Directors.
Teaching: Issues

• Teachers not taught to teach reading
• Neither in pre-service nor in-service
• Thus, methods poor:
  – Oral recitation without reading text
  – No active student involvement with symbols
  – No checking of progress in class
  – No proper sequencing of lessons
  – No basis in research on effective method
  – Poor use of textbooks when available
• Little teacher coaching and supervision on method
Teaching: Solutions

• Develop simple and direct lessons
• Guarantee accomplishment if followed faithfully
• Ground in curriculum but more practical
• Strong coaching on concrete methods
• Sustainable: tie to teacher supervision system, pre- and in-service systems
• Experiment using of technology to maintain high quality “cascade” training
Textbooks

• Sometimes not enough provision
• Cost and access problems due to:
  – Intellectual property, small print runs, excessive sales costs, corruption, fancy materials use, too many agendas, etc.
• Teaching problems due to:
  – Under-use of text, text too small, too many new words introduced suddenly, inappropriate mix text-graphics, excessive cost due to too much color, etc.
• Current Decisions: conventional wisdom, not research:
  – Address two issues above with research-based decisions
Are textbooks good for teaching, and economical? Often not.

For example:
Complex penmanship: “art” more than text processing
Lots of white space makes books expensive: important pedagogically?
Testing

• Written assessments
  – too late, are corrected in capital, results are not fed back to teachers, connection assessment-teaching not clear

• Create simple localized assessments
  – With clear policy and teaching utility
  – Early-grade oral assessments available
    • Consolidate and improve
  – Communicate results to school management, community, policy-makers
  – Track results
  – Not to replace others
Mother Tongue

- Mother tongue key to effective reading
- But current commitment superficial
- Insufficient planning in scale-up
- Sets up vicious cycle, parents disappointed
- Evidence exists for serious, research-based programs
  - Careful scale up
  - Enable teachers even if not masters of language
  - Improve simple mother tongue texts
  - Integrate with lessons, assessment, teaching methods