Teacher Professional Development in Reading: Liberia Coaching Model

A new concept experienced resistance; now, much appreciated

February - March 2012

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About the Presentation

• This presentation was prepared for the All Children Reading: Africa 2012 workshop in Kigali, Rwanda, February 28-March 2, 2012. The workshop was hosted by the Global Partnership for Education.

• The presentation was funded by the USAID EdData II project, led by RTI International under EdData II Task Order Number 1, EHC-E-00-04-00004-00, and Liberia Teacher Training Program 2 (LTTP2) implemented by FHI360 and RTI International.

• Thank you: the World Bank and USAID/Liberia for the early efforts in reading through Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) Plus Liberia, and to USAID/Liberia for continued support to through LTTP2 project. Finally Many Thanks to Ministry of Education in Liberia, our teachers, students, principals, parents, and many more.

• The presentation will share our approach to teacher training using the coaching model. It will highlight the process of coaching, Implementation, successes and challenges and lessons learned.
Presentation

• Instructional Components and the Model Overall
• Training of Teachers (Face to Face Training)
• Coaching at the Classroom Level (School-Based Support)
• Training of Coaches, Deployment to Schools, Fidelity of Implementation
• Results to date
Presentation

Instructional Components and the Model Overall

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Reading Intervention Components

Intervention components:
- Instructional program
- Continuous assessment
- Community and parent report cards.

- Coaching
- Management and reporting
- Accountability through targeted assessment
Coaching model

• Once the coach is trained and deployed to his/her 12 schools they provide support to teachers as follows:
  – Face to Face training of Grades 1-3 teachers in a cluster school or venue for all 12 schools
  – Monthly visits to schools – each school is visited by a Coach once per month for a full day. If there is need, Coach might go to some schools twice per month
  – At the school level, schools are assigned to select a master trainer who will continue the efforts of the Coach
The Coaching Model

The model is designed to:

• Sets the stage for creating a productive, healthy relationship with teachers
• Focuses on teacher’s potential future performance rather than past performance
• Uses a series of support and accountability mechanisms
Face to Face Training of Teachers

• Designed:
  – To introduce the program, role of a coach as an advisor and not the inspector
  – Focuses on the Program component: PA, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension; introducing an instructional model – “I do; we do; you do”
  – Teaches teachers on how to use manuals
  – Provides tips on some quick ways to improve reading – such as 20 minutes of reading at home every day leads to a whole grade improvement by itself.
  – Total duration 5 days; at a cluster school
Monthly Visits

- Classroom-based support
- Prepare to teach/model lesson
- Inform teacher of planned visit
- Teacher introduces you as a team teacher
  - Observe classroom lesson presentation
  - Conduct mini training
- Full day
- Enrollment Data – M/F
- Accountability through targeted assessment
Supporting the Willing, but Struggling Teacher

- Ask teacher permission to try something different.
- Prepare to model the lesson
- Teacher observes
- Fills out observation tracker
- Mini training and discussion
Supporting the Willing, but Struggling Teacher

- Teacher models during next visit
- Observe and support as needed
- Discuss and conduct mini training on the next set of lessons
- Schedule additional visit if needed
Supporting the Teacher who is Unwilling or Afraid

• Prepare to model the lesson
• Observe teacher teach
• Teach lesson if teacher refuses
• Discuss the unwillingness
• Provide mini training on next set of lessons
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Who are the Coaches

• The ultimate goal is to build the capacity of schools through master trainers to continue the reading efforts
• Liberia does not have a coach position. Apart from District Education and his/her assistant
• Currently project hires coaches in hopes that a) build the school level capacity, and b) they may end up becoming teachers or serve some other capacity building role.
Training of Coaches

• Training organized just the way we would teach teachers
• Organized prior to their deployment and then following the end of semester.
• Support by phone and management visits to the extent possible. Each project staff is assigned a certain number of coaches to support them.
• If needed, in year 1, coaches are invited for a refresher course mid-way through a given semester
Deployment

- Deployment is organized in groups
- Debrief 2-3 days
- No office, hire taxis or bikes to get to schools
- Travel with some of the materials
  - Workshop materials
  - School Materials
  - Workshop training agenda
Preparations for Teacher Training

• Introductory letter from the Ministry of Education and the Project Director
• Meet with District Education Officer and invite him/her to training
• Locate schools and Invite grades 1-3 reading teachers and Principals
• Identify suitable hall to host training. Train the teachers
Logistics for Teacher Training

- Training / teacher materials go with the coaches
- Participants receive transportation reimbursement and feeding
- Coaches traveling to the longest distances take along 3 days feeding and lodging funding
- Finance team follow up to complete the payment and collect documentation (3 – 5 business days to complete task)
- Participants are provided transportation to take some of their materials to schools
- Remaining materials are delivered at a later date
Fidelity of Implementation

- The Coaching model is a one-step cascade. So in order to ensure that Coaches support teachers, we:
  - Systematize support for Coaches so that all know what to do during the face-to-face training and every time they go to visit schools, from one month to another.
  - We provide them with a set of support and accountability tools in order to gauge the uptake by teachers and the progress of students.
- So just as the lessons are scripted for teachers, the support provided by Coaches is also fairly structured.
- As their capacity is built, they will become more efficient and will be able to function without the systematization.
- A few examples of accountability tools (next slide)
## Task Description

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Name/Code:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principal:</td>
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<td>Date of Visit:</td>
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<td>Time of arrival/departure:</td>
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<td>Total Number of Hours Spent</td>
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<td>Coach:</td>
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### A. Information

- Teacher names (write teacher names)
- Enrollment across all sections
- Attendance (day of visit) across all sections

### B. Teaching

- Names of teachers who are using the reading manual
- Do teachers follow the schedule of intervention (enter actual lesson plan, e.g. Week 4, Day 2)
- Do teachers teach reading 5 times a week, 45 minutes a day. If not, state how much by teacher
- Do teachers ensure that students read at home to parents at least 20 minutes a day (enter number of teachers using the read-at-home tracker)
- Total number of students who checked out books from the library - count on a monthly basis
# Tracker

## Classroom Observation Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phonemic Awareness</th>
<th>Grade 1: Teacher name</th>
<th>Grade 1: Teacher name</th>
<th>Grade 2: Teacher name</th>
<th>Grade 2: Teacher name</th>
<th>Grade 3: Teacher name</th>
<th>Grade 3: Teacher name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Syllable and phoneme segmentation</td>
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<td>Syllable and phoneme blending</td>
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<td>Beginning/middle/ending</td>
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<td>Sounds in words</td>
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<td><strong>Teacher Role</strong></td>
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<td>Giving directions</td>
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<td>Telling information</td>
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<td>Questioning</td>
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<td>Modeling</td>
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<td>Assessing</td>
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<td><strong>Student Response</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group oral response</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group response: raise hands, stand up, thumbs up/down</td>
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<td>Group written response</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual student response oral or written</td>
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</table>
Presentation

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How does all this fit into the Liberian Education System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Counterparts</th>
<th>Early results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Reading experts</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td>Reading taught as subject, reading curriculum being developed, reading standards established, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading and Math Specialists</td>
<td>County Level</td>
<td>1,300 teacher students trained; reading curriculum being integrated into pre-services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(at RTTIs)</td>
<td>Rural Teacher Training Institutes (RTTIs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coaches</td>
<td>District Level</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaches Support 12 schools in a</td>
<td>DEOs, there is no Coach position in the education</td>
<td>816 schools supported, 3,264 teachers and principals trained, some schools have already assigned pedagogical advisors at the school level, PTA are getting on board. Pilot results – with intervention, students learning 3 times faster than otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cluster</td>
<td>system, Teachers, Principals, PTAs</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
New Roles to build a sustainable effort to teach reading well

• A reading course that is aligned with the intervention program is taught at the TTIs (Teacher Training Institute).
  – All students receive a set of the instructional materials prior to practice teaching.
  – Whenever possible, students should practice teach in schools in which the reading intervention is being implemented with coaching support.

• Two Reading/Math Specialists are housed at the Ministry. Their roles include provide national teacher professional development in Reading and Math. In addition, they supervise coaches.
Building sustainability

• Identify teachers to become school-based mentors so that we can phase out the Coaches to fill other roles
• Build capacity by expanding the pre-service reading course to the National University System
• Reading Report Card integration into the national report card
• And so on…
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Challenges

- Student-teacher ratio
- Material distribution and Storage
- Travel and safety
- Community Rite of Entry
Success: from 180 to 816 LTTP2

- Reading intervention rolled out to 816 schools (second cohort equal in size starts in 2013)
- 68 coaches and in-service-field officers trained and deployed
- 3,264 teachers trained (2011-2012)
- Number of pre-service students trained:
  - 1300 trainees and trainers
  - They will be assigned to practice teach in reading intervention schools
Results from the EGRA Plus Project: 2008-2010

Oral Reading Fluency (Words Per Minute)

Baseline: 15.5
2 years of school: 7.1
EGRA Plus Effect: 21.1
What made it work?

– Instructional model
– Scripted lessons
– Support
– Books for students
– Reading competitions
– Radio shows
– Community involvement through PTA
It’s all worth the effort!