

Literacy 360

FHI 360 advances gender equity, incorporates appropriate technology, fosters inclusive education and collaborates with partners to accelerate and sustain our collective impact.



No child learns in a vacuum. A complex web of factors either converge or conflict to determine whether a child learns to read. Does the teacher speak the child's native language? Did the textbooks arrive on time? What proportion of the school day is spent learning? When was the last time the child ate?

FHI 360 has developed a child-centered approach to improving literacy that looks across both the education system and the community to identify the factors that help or hinder a child's reading ability. We then deploy evidence-based approaches — founded on international best practices, our own research, and years of experience working in partnership with educators around the world — to improve reading outcomes.

Literacy 360 is holistic, sustainable and effective.

Holistic

When all the parts of a system align, the highest level of achievement can be attained at the lowest possible cost. FHI 360 shapes its proposed interventions around the child's needs. To this end, we work with host governments to ensure that:

- policies and systems dedicate sufficient time to high-quality literacy instruction and learning, and place high-performing educators in the early grades
- curricula and assessments are aligned to rigorous student performance standards
- teachers are well-prepared to teach reading and writing, and have high-quality instructional materials
- parents and communities are kept informed of children's progress through consistent reporting and are engaged in supporting their children's learning
- school leaders understand how children learn to read and write, and provide a supportive environment to ensure achievement

In every case, FHI 360 advances gender equity, incorporates appropriate technology, fosters inclusive education and collaborates with partners to accelerate and sustain our collective impact.

Sustainable

FHI 360 believes that working with and through existing education systems promises the most lasting and meaningful change. Parallel or isolated programs may produce commendable results, but they can seldom be replicated on a large scale. FHI 360's approach is sustainable because we work hand-in-hand with education partners, ensuring reforms are financially feasible and integrated into national systems and institutions from the start.

About FHI 360: FHI 360 is a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions. Our staff includes experts in health, education, nutrition, environment, economic development, civil society, gender, youth, research and technology — creating a unique mix of capabilities to address today's interrelated development challenges. FHI 360 serves more than 60 countries, all 50 U.S. states and all U.S. territories.



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Effective

Children need explicit, direct instruction in each of the domains of reading and writing — from phonemic awareness to comprehension, from handwriting to composition — as well as meaningful practice and application of these skills. FHI 360 works with educators to introduce children to high-quality content and contextually appropriate methodologies that turn them into independent readers and writers with strong critical thinking skills.

Equatorial Guinea. One of the world's largest public-private partnerships dedicated to education is the **Equatorial Guinea Education Development Program** (PRODEGE), which has had a significant impact on literacy. In a 2010 study, 67 percent of sampled first graders in PRODEGE schools mastered reading and comprehension of simple sentences, while only 33 percent of sampled first graders not attending PRODEGE schools mastered that skill. PRODEGE students can read simple texts and stories, are more motivated to undertake new reading challenges and have families that now participate in their learning. With these literacy skills, the students – and the country – are on a course for success.

Peru. The **Active Schools** approach, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Peru, dissolves socioeconomic and gender barriers to learning by empowering school directors, supervisors, teachers and community members to reflect on their practice, support their peers and innovate in the classroom. These strategies for reading helped increase the proportion of first graders reading at a basic, sufficient or advanced level from 28 percent to 76 percent over four years. Additionally, costs to reach mastery in language were 44 percent lower than in control schools.

Jordan. Drive to Read, a USAID-funded project, works with community-based organizations to promote a culture of reading by offering families free access to books, educational materials, cultural activities and tutoring via a mobile library. Following the first year of program activities, knowledge of concepts about print (for example, how to hold a book, direction of print, etc.) improved dramatically for struggling readers. In addition, 90 percent of surveyed students 6 to 12 years old reported they now enjoy reading and believe it will help them get a job when they grow up.