

Targeted and Remedial Instruction in Foundational Skills

Continuous assessments are critical formative evaluation tools that teachers and school administrators can draw upon to assess their students' learning progress. FHI 360 includes easy-to-use tools and scoring sheets to help teachers identify students in need of targeted instruction and remediation.



Photo: Nathalie Louge/FHI 360

FHI 360 recognizes that providing targeted instruction to students who struggle most and ongoing remediation and remedial learning opportunities to all students is essential to ensuring that all students achieve expected learning outcomes in the foundational skills of reading and math. Through their programs, FHI 360 incorporates formative evaluation and instructional guidance to teachers and systems to identify and meet the needs of struggling students.

TARGETED INSTRUCTION IN PRACTICE:

Targeted instruction is targeted teaching. It involves using assessment data to target interventions to small groups or individual students based on their level. The goal is to provide scaffolded instruction starting from where students are and building from there. Evidence shows that programs that target instruction to students' current learning level, rather than their age or grade, can increase learning outcomes.

TARGETED INSTRUCTION PROGRAM IN SENEGAL PASSERELLES

Under the USAID Passerelles program in **Senegal**, FHI 360 collaborated with local education authorities to design, pilot and refine a salable model after-school community-driven targeted instruction program to support Grade 3 and Grade 4 students who struggle the most in reading and math. Community-selected facilitators received training; a toolkit with scripted reading, writing, math, and social emotional learning activities and fill-in lesson plan templates; and a text and word problem annex. Facilitators used the toolkit to lead targeted instruction sessions twice weekly with a group of 25 students. The lowest-performing students were selected by their schools to participate in the program using a project-created test and scoring sheet, which was triangulated with their report card performance. Results from the 2023 cohort showed students who participated in the targeted instruction program had scores that were 7 to 9 percentage points (out of 100) higher in reading and math when compared with peers who had similar levels of academic performance but did not participate in the remediation sessions. These results are statistically significant with a notable 0.35 SD effect size demonstrating the effectiveness of the program to boost students' reading and math skills.



EXTRACURRICULAR TARGETED INSTRUCTION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO AND GHANA

In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**, under the USAID Elimu Ni Jibu (Education is the Answer) and **Ghana** Learning programs, FHI 360 supported the implementation of extracurricular targeted instruction programs for learners identified as struggling the most in reading and math. In the DRC, locally recruited tutors from civil society organizations use interactive audio instruction and mini-lessons in reading and math to support low-performing primary and nonformal learners twice a week for four months. Results from the 2023 cohort show statistically significant improvements for learners participating in the tutoring sessions. In **Ghana**, teachers organized targeted instruction sessions for their lowest-performing students before or after school. In both contexts, teachers identified the learners who struggle most through the administration of an ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) tool. Results from the 2023 cohort in the DRC show statistically significant improvements for learners participating in the tutoring sessions.

EXTRACURRICULAR 'TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL' INSTRUCTION IN MADAGASCAR

In **Madagascar** under the USDA McGovern-Dole Mianatra and Mavitraka Mianatra (MaMi) programs, FHI 360 leverages an existing and tested community-driven model whereby teachers administer an ASER tool to their students to group them by ability level, rather than by grade level. Thereafter, community volunteers and teachers are trained to conduct daily "Teaching at the Right Level" sessions on math and reading with groups of students over five months. Community members and teachers develop materials for use in these sessions using locally available low-cost/no-cost materials. In a pilot conducted by the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the program has shown to have remarkable success. FHI 360 aspires to get similar results after their first year of implementation in their target schools.

REMEDIATION IN PRACTICE:

Remedial instruction is the concept of reteaching and reinforcing previously taught basic skills to improve student outcomes. Like in targeted instruction, teachers use data to identify which skills most of their students struggle with and aim to reteach during their lessons or through designated remedial "periods". The goal is to get students back on grade-level, or to raise achievement to a similar level as peers, facilitating their engagement and learning during class time.

EVALUATION-REMEDIATION WEEKS INTEGRATED INTO TEACHERS GUIDES

In **Madagascar, Ghana** and the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, FHI 360 systematically incorporates formative evaluation and remediation into teachers guides in two ways: strategies to continuously assess and assist students daily and bimonthly evaluation-remediation activities to identify students who have not mastered key reading and writing skills and may require additional remedial instructional time. To lead teachers through these activities, the guides provide easy-to-use assessment tools that can be administered individually or to the whole class, along with scoring sheets so teachers can easily pinpoint skills for which students need more support. Remediation activities linked to these skills are also suggested in the guides.

ENACTING THE CONCEPT OF 'SPIRALING' SKILLS INTO CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Across our programs, FHI 360 embeds a spiraled approach to curriculum development. This allows for key concepts and skills to be presented repeatedly throughout the curriculum, but with deepening layers of complexity or for different applications, creating natural opportunities for remedial instruction. For example, in northeast **Nigeria**, FHI 360 developed an accelerated curriculum for overage learners that spiraled literacy and math concepts throughout a nine-month course, enabling children ages 10–15 to rapidly learn foundational skills. In **Madagascar**, FHI 360-supported curriculum developers adopted the spiraling approach when sequencing the skills and content for their math and literacy program spanning Grades 1–3. As a result, students across grade levels revisit skills and concepts they have learned previously to relearn and deepen their understanding and mastery.

About FHI 360: FHI 360 is a global organization that mobilizes research, resources and relationships so people everywhere have access to the opportunities they need to lead full and healthy lives. With collaborations in over 60 countries, we work directly with local leaders to advance social and economic equity, improve health and well-being, respond to humanitarian crises and strengthen community resilience. We share data-driven insights and scalable tools that expand access and equity so communities can effectively address complex challenges, respond to shocks and achieve thriving futures.

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