



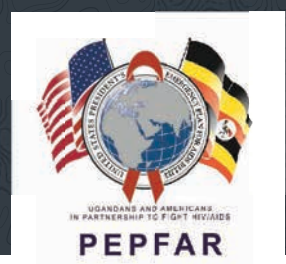
**Peace
Corps**
UGANDA



PRIMARY LITERACY PROJECT

▶ **ANNUAL
REPORT**

November, 2020



Prepared by: Education Team

Prepared for: Primary Literacy Project stakeholders and partners

Peace Corps Uganda Sectors and Projects of

Focus



Agriculture



Agribusiness and Economic Development Project



Education



Primary Literacy Project



Health



Uganda Health Project

Primary Literacy Project in detail
No. of staff: Three

Purpose

Pupils¹ in Uganda will gain access to literacy through teachers trained in literacy teaching techniques, access to culturally relevant learning resources and safe schools.

Goals

1

Improve Teaching:

Teachers and pre-service teachers will implement more student-centered and literacy-based teaching techniques.

2

Increase Pupil Success:

Pupils will improve literacy skills and raise academic success in the literacy/reading classroom or through extracurricular activities.

3

Improve the School Community:

Community members will improve or create school libraries and increase participation in their school and student learning.



Objectives:

Objective 1.1: Improve In-service and pre-service teacher's instructional practice

By 2020, 10,750 In-service and pre-service teachers will implement more literacy instruction, learner-centered teaching and effective classroom management techniques.

Objective 1.2: Improve pre-service teacher classroom achievement

By 2020, 10,000 students will show improved critical thinking and achievement in reading and writing.

Objective 1.3: Improve pre-service teacher achievement in clubs, camps, and extracurricular activities

By 2020, 2,500 students will show improved achievement and confidence in reading and writing, library skills, life skills, and increased participation and/or leadership skills in a club, camp, or other extracurricular school-based activities.

¹ Context for Uganda: Pupils refers to primary school learners, students refers to learners who are pre-service teachers at primary teacher colleges, in-service teachers refer to teachers at primary schools.

Objective 2.1: Improve pupil literacy achievement

By 2020, 7,500 pupils will show improved achievement and confidence in literacy skills and increased participation and critical thinking in classes.

Objective 2.2: Improve pupil achievement in clubs, camps, and extracurricular activities

By 2020, 3,000 pupils will show improved achievement and confidence in reading and writing, library skills, life skills, and increased participation and/or leadership skills in a club, camp, or other extracurricular school-based activities.

Objective 3.1: Expand use of library and/or ICT resources

By 2020, 12,500 pre-service teachers and pupils will participate in school more effectively through improved access to library or electronic resources.

Objective 3.2: Increase school community member involvement in literacy activities

By 2020, 16,000 school community members, including teachers, pre-service teachers, pupils, staff and administration, parents and guardians, and local leaders, will participate in activities that enhance the school environment for literacy and support increased student literacy achievement.

Objective 3.3: Increase student friendly school activities and positive behavior systems

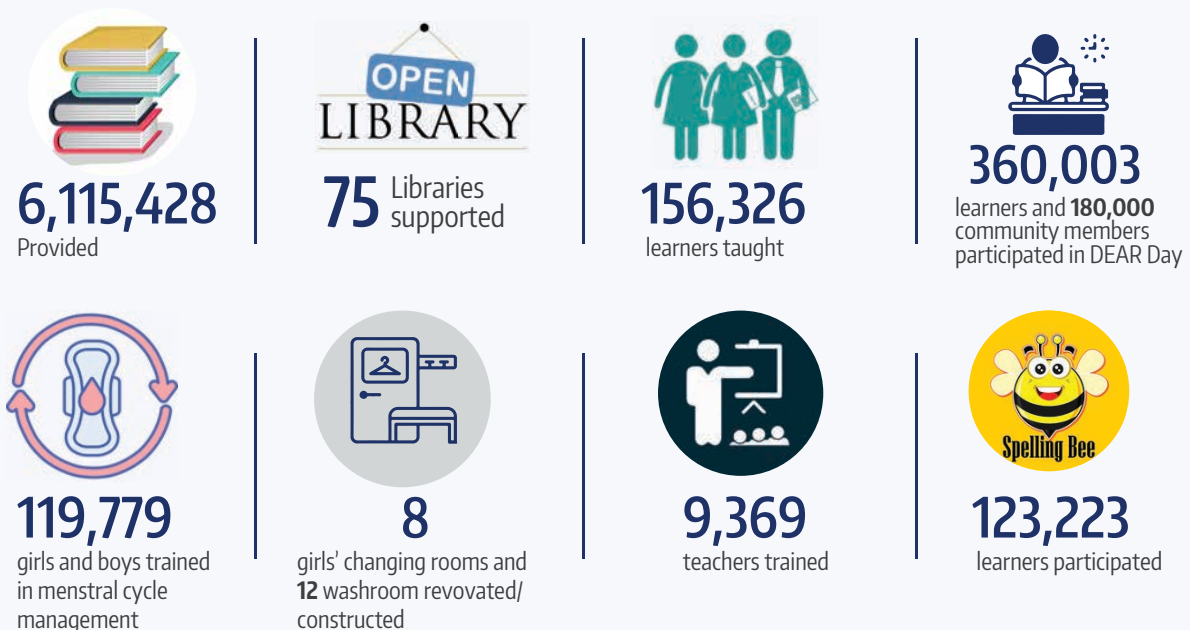
By 2017, 12,040 school community members, including teachers, pre-service teachers, pupils, staff and administration, parents and guardians and local leaders, will participate in or lead activities that achieve one or more of the following:

- i. Enhance the school environment for learning in general and more gender equitable practices,
- ii. Facilitate administrative procedures for teachers and/or provide additional out-of-class support for student learning and gender awareness.

Key activities

- Teacher workshops on techniques of teaching and developing basic reading skills, classroom management, cataloguing and managing a library
- Hands on demonstration on creation of low or no cost instructional materials from locally available materials
- Literacy clubs, camps and co-curricular school-based activities
- Library use and expansion: construction, rehabilitation, stocking, creation of systems to track resources
- Creation of learner friendly schools e.g. construction of changing rooms for girls and training on making reusable menstrual pads.
- Mobilize the school community to actively participate in literacy activities such as Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) Day and Spelling bee.
- Promote safe schools through introduction of classroom and school wide positive behavior systems including alternatives to corporal punishment

Some of the highlights during the five-year project life time

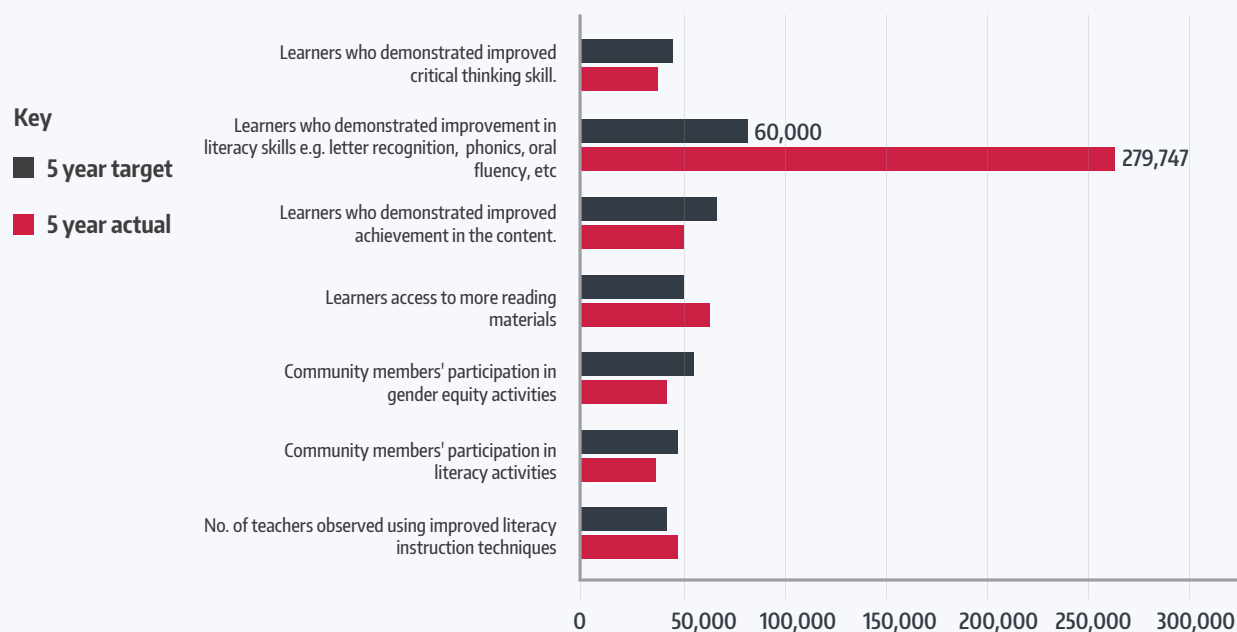


Some of the accomplishments by key indicators

Indicator	Achievement					Target	Trend lines
	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yearly Targets	
No. of teachers observed using improved literacy instruction techniques	4,203	4,074	2,181	2,728	39	2,150	
No. of community members who increased their participation in activities that support their school or enhance learner literacy opportunities.	3,697	3,299	1,803	2,459	11	3,200	
No. of community members who increased their participation in gender equity activities that strengthen the school community.	959	1,470	837	5,066	313	3,200	
No. of learners who gained access to more reading materials or were better able to use and access electronic resources due to the creation or expansion of a school library or computer center.	13,765	2,588	5,635	8,565	930	2,500	
No. of learners who demonstrated improved achievement in the content of the class, club, or camp, as determined by an assessment.	2,946	2,233	3,195	3,101	391	5,000	
No. of pupils who demonstrated improvement in one or more of the following skills: letter recognition, print knowledge, phonics, oral fluency or print production.	141,044	6,652	122,068	8,656	1,327	12,000	
No. of learners who demonstrated at least one new or improved critical thinking skill.	2,021	2,249	1,856	1,695	132	2,000	

Key: Yr: Year

Larger number of learners than was projected demonstrated improvement in literacy skills in 5 years



Explanation:

From the graph above, teacher literacy practice, community support and learners' access to reading materials in a friendlier learning environment all contributed to their literacy improvement and achievement.

Examples of Success Stories:

Promoting Girls' Sanitation and Hygiene at St. Kizito Primary School, Tororo district

Return Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV) Stephanie served at St. Kizito Primary School in Tororo district, from 2019 to early 2020. In addition to her primary role as a Literacy Specialist, Stephanie was passionate about improving the girls' sexual health at her school.

The Head Teacher, Ms. Clare Adikini Okoya considers her school lucky to have had two consecutive Peace Corps Volunteers in the past three years. Both PCVs greatly contributed to the efforts to improve the pupils' basic literacy skills and ensuring a positive learning environment at the school. RPCV Hannah, who served at the school previously, helped set a functional library and trained both teachers and pupils on how to use it. She also held workshops with teachers to train them on the teaching of phonics, in addition to introducing the skill of making Re-Usable Menstrual Pads (RUMPS).

Stephanie built onto this (Hannah's work), through conducting more RUMPS workshops that involved both teachers and learners. She secured funds through the Peace Corps grants program, and together with the school community renovated a washroom and added a changing area for girls on the school compound.

"This grant project to renovate the washroom and make reusable menstrual pads was the highlight of my Peace Corps service because it brought together all of the staff and pupils and will benefit the girls of St. Kizito Primary School for years to come. I was so lucky to have a supervisor and counterparts who were excited about the project and worked so hard to make sure we completed it successfully, and I am so proud of all of the teachers and pupils who engaged with our assembly and workshop about



RPCV Stephanie at the girls changing room

making RUMPs, even the boys! This project was also complemented by our DREAMS program for girl's empowerment with HIV prevention education and life skills for the Primary Six girls, which we ran for two terms. DREAMS was an important project for me because I benefited from a similar program as a teenager, and I knew how important these life skills would be for them throughout their lives. At the end of our DREAMS curriculum, we had a big celebration for all of the girls, who used the new washroom to change into their best dresses. It was wonderful to see them use and enjoy the washroom at the end of the term and officially open it for use." RPCV Stephanie.



Head Teacher MS Clare at the girls' changing room



Part of the interior of the girls' changing room

Library Development at St. Aloysius Primary School - Ngora

St. Aloysius Primary School, located in Ngora district Uganda, has many issues with its literacy and reading comprehension rates as is the case in so many other government aided schools in Uganda. As a community, it also lacks basic housing, classrooms, latrines, and water. With so many problems at hand, a meeting was arranged by the head teacher of the school and the School Management Committee in early 2019. After much deliberation, the parties decided on creating a 1,500-reading book library in an existing classroom with new wood benches for readers and a security fence to protect the lower primary school from vandals and thieves. Not only would this help combat the literacy and reading comprehension issues, but it would propel St. Aloysius into a new realm of top local government primary schools in the region.

When the project was agreed upon, a grant was submitted through Peace Corps Uganda's grant program. But, with such a large project to manage, how does a school with little to no resources build a fence and finish a library with less than \$3,500 USD? Both parties involved went to the drawing board and came up with a plan to work alongside the local vocational school to minimize costs. Not only could St. Aloysius stay within their budget, but the local vocational school's students would be given a significant project to use as a stepping stone for their own education. After ground breaking, supplies were ordered through a local company in town. Given the significance and magnitude of the project being coordinated by multiple parties, the School Management Committee assigned roles to members, teachers and vocational school instructors. Each group took turns monitoring the work of the vocational school students.



School administrators receiving consignment of text books



Room that was modified into library

The first significant portion of the project erected was the barbed wire security fence with two swinging lockable steel doors. While the works on the fencing was going on, a local welder installed large wire mesh window frames to re-enforce the existing windows of the library to ensure the security of the books and equipment. Subsequently, wooden benches were constructed and varnished by the carpentry unit of the vocational school. With old wood shelves repurposed by pupils and staff at St. Aloysius, the existing books were placed in the library. The floors and walls were cleaned and polished, then the benches were fixed. For the first time in its 112 years of existence, St. Aloysius Primary School had a reading library for its 600 plus students!

However, as the school year was getting into full swing and beneficiaries were warming up to utilize this novel facility, the spread and threat of COVID -19 put an effective end to all the plans in March 2020. With only 500 reading books, mostly within the 3-5 year old reading range, the school did not have enough material to take full advantage of its new accomplishment. Thankfully, in May 2020, the school received 1,000 reading books they had applied for through the African Library Project. Now, with over 1,500 reading books safely secured in St. Aloysius' new library, the school and the community can effectively push towards higher education for youths in Ngora for years to come.



Established library



Trainees and counterparts during training



Newly sworn in Volunteers celebrate



Celebrations after pre-service training (In a white dress on the left is Ambassador Deborah Malac)



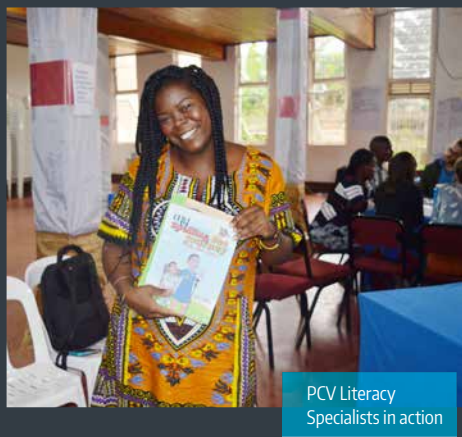
Volunteers supporting learners (as individuals and in small group) enhance their reading skills



Volunteer and learners during outdoor activity



Volunteer demonstrating how to construct tippy tap



PCV Literacy Specialists in action

Photo Gallery

Some of the Primary Literacy Project partners



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS



Uganda
Spelling Bee
Words change the world™



Education project review moving forwarding

The Peace Corps Uganda Education Project has been undergoing review. This is a Peace Corps Uganda standard practice done every five years to ensure that the project continues to meet the most pressing needs of the host nationals. Through this process, input from key stakeholders including implementing partners, Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), direct beneficiaries and host schools was sought to provide in-depth understanding of the realities of implementing the project. The review was aimed at ensuring that the Education Project aligns with the needs of Ugandans in the communities where the Peace Corps Volunteers live and work through validation of the projects and identification of areas of adjustments.

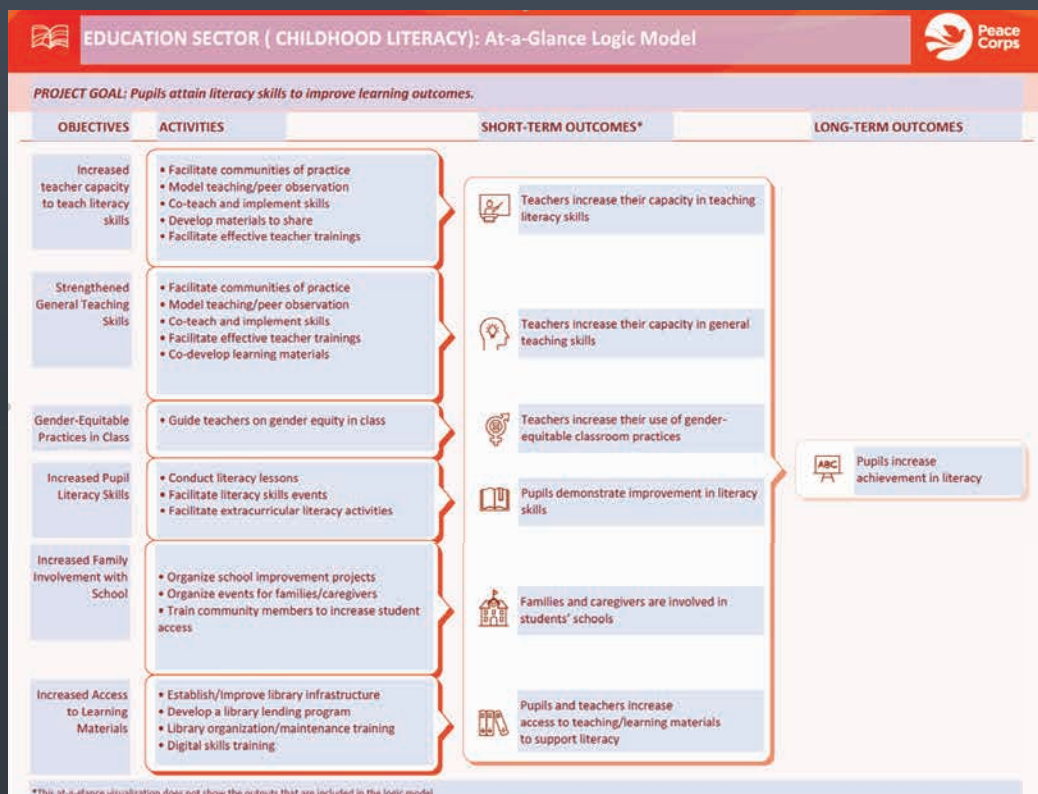
The key challenges identified during the field review process included the following:

- High learner to teacher ratio especially in government primary schools that compromises the quality of teaching and one on one learner support by teachers.
- Deeply rooted culture of corporal punishment among Ugandan teachers that demotivates learners to learn and causes some to drop out of school.
- Cases of absenteeism among learners and some of the Volunteer counterparts.
- High rates of teacher transfers that have a great negative impact on Volunteer support and systemic knowledge and skills transfer between the Volunteers and host teachers.

Based on the findings from the field review process, coupled with the available research on the state of primary education in Uganda, the Peace Corps Uganda Education Project seeks

to support the Ministry of Education and Sports to realize its strategic objectives through focusing on interventions that aim at improving access to quality Early Childhood Literacy. Volunteers can support teachers to increase knowledge and the application of effective techniques and methods for teaching reading and early literacy skills. Volunteers can work with pupils to increase literacy levels and can support the development of teaching and learning materials and resources that teachers need to provide high-quality literacy instruction. Finally, Volunteers can further engage parents and community members to encourage children's literacy and to promote a reading culture within the community.

The proposed framework is represented in the visualization below:





Challenges

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