



## *Introduction to the Read@Home initiative*

Global Network for Early Years Bookgifting Meeting  
Wednesday, September 8, 2021



**WORLD BANK GROUP**

# Having books at home matters

- Home literacy environment & quantity and quality of interactions are linked to **language & cognitive development**
- Reading regularly at home associated with **higher reading comprehension, reading fluency and receptive vocabulary**
- Children in homes with many books get **3 years more schooling** than children from bookless homes



# But too many children are growing up without them

- Only 50% of parents worldwide regularly engage in cognitively stimulating activities with young children
- Only 3% of households in Sub-Saharan Africa have two or more children's books.

**Imagine if  
we could...**

- Strengthen the reading culture at home
- Increase the amount of reading children do before they start primary school
- Increase parents' engagement with children at home
- Help children build strong early literacy and oral language
- Establish a life-long love of reading

Read@Home will deliver reading, learning and play materials to hard-to-reach homes, as quickly and efficiently as possible, and encourage caregivers to support children's learning at home

# Read@Home provides technical assistance to complement country efforts & create global public goods



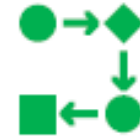
## Identify and select quality reading materials

To source, select, develop & procure quality titles and other reading materials



## Encourage parents to support reading at home

To select & develop materials for caregivers & support partnerships to engage caregivers & communities



## Strengthen the Book Supply Chain

To improve the efficiency of quality of the book supply chain across countries & lower the unit costs of books

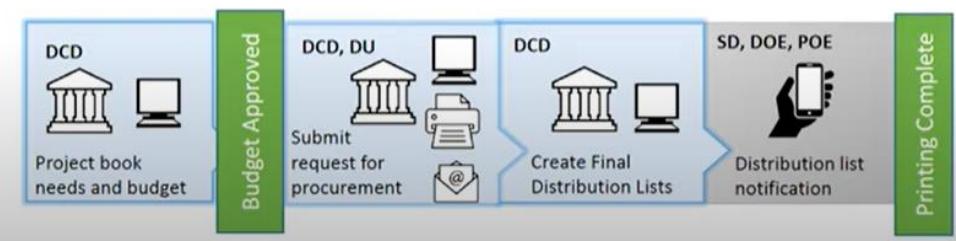
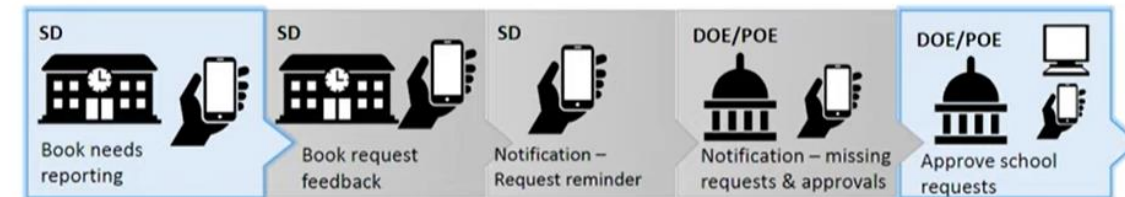
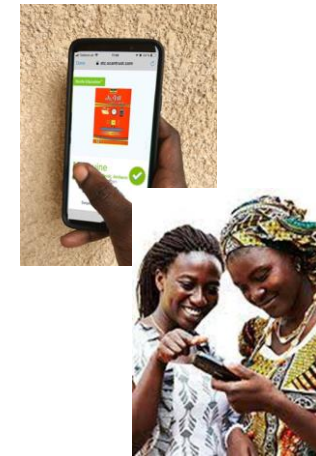


## Global public goods

- Guidance to identify reading materials
- Guidance on caregiver engagement
- Guidance on M&E
- Guidance on procurement

# Strengthening the Book Supply Chain

- Costs to procure and deliver books vary greatly
- Read@Home will improve the quality, cost-effectiveness and efficiency of book supply chains in countries by:
  - Guidance on procurement procedures
  - Standardized technical specifications for book procurement
  - Book distribution systems to ensure books arrive at their intended destinations
  - Innovative procurement solutions to reduce costs and timelines (Direct title procurement; pre-qualification including negotiated pricing; multi-year framework contracts, etc.)



# Read@Home is working with 13 countries so far



# Country examples



North Macedonia

Supported Ministry of Education and Science & Ministry Labor and Social Protection to **reach all children ages 3-12 in the country's poorest 10% of households (40,000 children)** with storybooks, reading comprehension activities and guidance to parents in the language they speak at home.



Senegal

Will reach **over 1 million children (30% of all children below the age of 6)**, partnering with community and public preschools, koranic schools, community-based nutrition platforms and mother's groups associated with cash transfer programs.



Cameroon

Will reach **over 200 schools (137,000 children) in grades 1-6**, in the regions with the lowest learning outcomes in the country, with storybooks and caregiver guidance in Ewondo, Doula, Fulfulde, Ghomala, Kom, French and English. A set of 200 titles in mother tongue for grades K-3 are being versioned/developed.





Provides guidance on how to:

- Identify and select **quality reading materials**
- Find, design and distribute accompanying **materials for caregivers to support children's learning**
- **Monitor and evaluate** book distribution efforts

Available in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese. Arabic coming soon!

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/brief/read-at-home>

# Global Research on Books and Reading

- The number of words that children know before they enter school is a predictor of school success
- Children with greater vocabulary are likely to become better readers and to have stronger comprehension skills
- Children who are read to multiple times a day from 0-5 years hear 1.4 million more words than children who are never read to
- A study in 35 low to high income countries found that having at least one children's book at home almost doubled the likelihood of the child being on track in literacy and numeracy
- Reading about diverse topics has been found to positively influence children's social and emotional learning competencies, apart from building cultural knowledge

# Book Selection: identifying quality storybooks



Figure 1.3. In the book *Everyone Sees*, the girl protagonist wears glasses. In *Cloud Party*, one of the girls wears a headscarf.

## BOOK SELECTION

# CHECKLIST

### READING LEVEL

- Storybooks and cards take account of the reading level of target children & caregivers

### LANGUAGE

- If possible, storybooks are written in the mother tongue

### CONTENT

- Variety of topics (familiar and unfamiliar situations)
- Variety of genres (fiction & nonfiction)
- Logically developed plot
- Diversity (rural/urban, family types, gender, background, cultures, persons with disabilities)

### ILLUSTRATIONS

- Varied illustrations (e.g. cartoon, realistic)
- Characters look playful, friendly and display obvious emotions
- Illustrations use perspective (close-up, panoramas)

### DESIGN

- Sans serif font (e.g. Andika)
- Paragraphs separated by four lines
- Six-line spaces separate headings/titles from the body of the text
- Image resolution of 300 DPI or more

### PHYSICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- Books- At least 80 grams for pages and 250 for book covers
- Storycards- 300 grams, laminated on both sides

Reading Level	Content	Diversity	Illustrations	Design
<b>Story cards and Level 1: Learning to Read</b>  <b>Example Titles:</b> <a href="#">My Brother and Me</a>  <a href="#">My Body</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Familiar objects and experiences</li> <li>- Simple plots</li> <li>- Word repetition</li> <li>- Rhythm and rhyme</li> <li>- Care should be taken to include materials aimed at older readers with lower reading levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversity in characters (different backgrounds, cultures, languages, including persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities etc.)</li> <li>- Different types of families</li> <li>- Rural, urban, peri-urban settings</li> <li>- Gender diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One informative picture placed consistently on the page</li> <li>- Text and pictures should support each other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large font (size 26)</li> <li>- Double-spaced</li> <li>- One sentence per page</li> <li>- Less than 5 words per sentence</li> <li>- Repeated words</li> <li>- Word range: 0 to 250</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2: Reading with Help</b>  <b>Example titles:</b> <a href="#">Aunty Jui's Baby</a>  <a href="#">Different Abilities</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simple genres in fiction and nonfiction</li> <li>- Stories with linear, engaging plots</li> <li>- Familiar content: home, neighborhood, and school</li> <li>- For older readers at lower reading levels, content should be targeted to their interests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversity in characters (different backgrounds, cultures, languages, including persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities etc.)</li> <li>- Different types of families</li> <li>- Rural, urban, peri-urban settings</li> <li>- Gender diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Illustrations depicting multiple ideas</li> <li>- Text and pictures should support each other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 22-24 size font</li> <li>- 3-8 lines of text per page</li> <li>- Fewer repeated words</li> <li>- Typically, 10-12 pages total</li> <li>- Word range: 250 to 600</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3: Reading Independently</b>  <b>Example titles:</b> <a href="#">Holidays with Grandmother</a>  <a href="#">The Novel Coronavirus: We can Stay Safe</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Popular topics (adventure, mystery, etc.)</li> <li>- Short non-fiction texts on one topic</li> <li>- More complex characters</li> <li>- More unfamiliar settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversity in characters (different backgrounds, cultures, languages, including persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities etc.)</li> <li>- Different types of families</li> <li>- Rural, urban, peri-urban settings</li> <li>- Gender diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New vocabulary and concepts may be illustrated to support comprehension in nonfiction texts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 14-16 size font</li> <li>- Sentences carry over pages</li> <li>- Many lines of print per page</li> <li>- Longer sentences – 10 words or more</li> <li>- Word range: 600 to 1500</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4: Reading Proficiently</b>  <b>Example titles:</b> <a href="#">Arya in the Cockpit</a>  <a href="#">Grandma's Bananas</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-fiction texts on many related topics</li> <li>- Complex and mature themes (racism, bullying, diversity) and abstract concepts (love, survival, war)</li> <li>- Unfamiliar plots and settings</li> <li>- Longer, more nuanced stories with many characters</li> <li>- Rich vocabulary</li> <li>- Language play (metaphors, similes, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversity in characters (different backgrounds, cultures, languages, including persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities etc.)</li> <li>- Different types of families</li> <li>- Rural, urban, peri-urban settings</li> <li>- Gender diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New vocabulary and concepts may be illustrated to support comprehension in nonfiction texts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 14-16 size font</li> <li>- Up to 150 words per page</li> <li>- Sentences carry over pages</li> <li>- Many lines of print per page</li> <li>- Word range: 1500+</li> </ul>

# Book Selection: identifying and selecting book titles



Figure 1.3. In the book *Everyone Sees*, the girl protagonist wears glasses. In *Cloud Party*, one of the girls wears a headscarf.

## In country:

- Ministry of Education officials
- Publishers and booksellers
- Funders (e.g. USAID, NORAD, FCDO) and sponsoring organizations (e.g. foundations)
- UN agencies engaged in education (e.g. UNESCO and UNICEF)
- International, regional, and national NGOs or community organizations focused on literacy (e.g. Uwezo, CODE, Save the Children, World Vision, Pratham, Room to Read, USAID implementing partners)
- Private schools

## Through digital libraries:

- [Global Digital Library](#)
- [Literacy Cloud](#)
- [Storyweaver](#)
- [BLOOM Library](#)
- [Book Dash](#)
- [African Storybook Initiative](#)



# Book Selection: costing children's books and story-cards

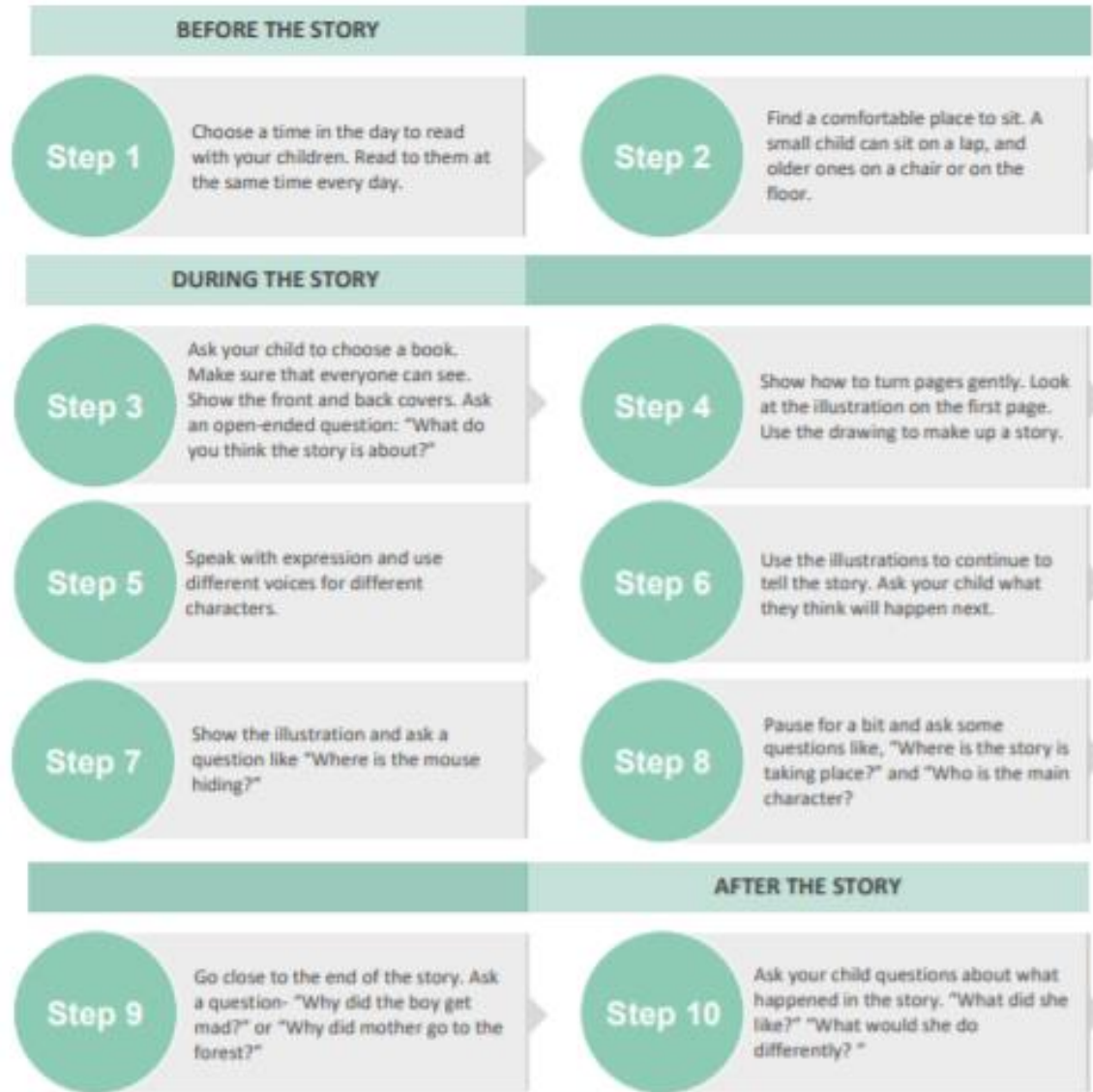


Figure 1.3. In the book *Everyone Sees*, the girl protagonist wears glasses. In *Cloud Party*, one of the girls wears a headscarf.

	Specifications	Number of pages/cards	Cost per copy (US\$)
Books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format: A5 (14.8 x 21.0 cm, about 5¾ x 8¼ in)</li> <li>• Paper: 80 gsm white woodfree</li> <li>• Cover: 250 gsm white, coated one side</li> <li>• Printing: Full color offset, letterpress, or gravure</li> <li>• Binding: Two galvanized wire stitches (staples) on spine</li> <li>• Order quantity: 10,000 copies</li> </ul>	8	0.55 – 0.65
		16	0.95 – 1.05
		32	1.35 – 1.45
Reading Cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format: A4 (21.0 x 29.7 cm, about 8¼ x 11¾ in)</li> <li>• Board: 300 gsm white, laminated both sides</li> <li>• Printing: Full-color offset, letterpress, or gravure</li> <li>• Trim: Corners rounded</li> <li>• Order quantity: 10,000 cards</li> </ul>	1	0.03 – 0.05
		Set of 10	0.30 – 0.50

# Guidance for Caregiver Engagement

- Strategies for caregiver engagement before, during and after reading
- Examples of key messages for caregivers



# Guidance for Caregiver Engagement: delivering content to caregivers

What are the existing services that support families on a regular basis?

- Cash transfer programs with regular meetings and/or a parenting accompanying measure;
- Education programs, including early childhood parenting groups or home visits, community libraries, PTAs, afterschool classes, and adult literacy or agriculture extension programs;
- Health programs, including health and developmental checkups, home visits, vaccination campaigns, community nutrition counselling, HIV support groups, or others;
- Community engagement programs run by faith-based leaders and groups (e.g. men and women's support groups);
- Community engagement programs run by nongovernmental organizations (savings groups, psychosocial support groups, etc.);
- Distance education programs (TV, radio, Short Messaging Services (SMS), Interactive Audio Instruction (IAI), and print materials).

# Guidance for Caregiver Engagement: delivering content to caregivers

What is the profile of families that we want to reach?

What language do they speak?

Can they read/interpret illustrations?

What is the penetration of technology in their area?



Source: [Save the Children Rwanda](#)



# Monitoring for Learning

- Short-term, Medium-term and Long-term Outcomes
- Can be used with Monitoring, Process-evaluation and Impact Evaluation frameworks

Evaluation duration	M&E Question	Outcome	Indicators	Data Collection Method	Sample tool
Short-term	Did families receive Read@Home materials in an efficient and timely manner?	<i>Families received materials</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of R@H packages delivered</li> <li># of books in the package</li> <li># of parental engagement handouts received</li> <li>-Time it took for book package to reach families (e.g., from start of procurement process, from when books are ordered, from when books leave distribution centers – depending on which aspect of the book chain is of most interest)</li> <li>-Condition of book package</li> <li>- Were materials appropriate for the ages and reading levels of the children in the household (see the Book Selection section of the manual above)?</li> <li>-Were materials provided in a language children know?</li> <li>- Did the materials cater to children with disabilities?</li> </ul>	Survey administered to mother or father in person or over the phone or via SMS (potentially via Track and Trace)	See <a href="#">Material Delivery survey</a> , pg 88 in <a href="#">Appendix G: Sample monitoring tools</a>
	Were procurement methods efficient and cost-effective?	<i>Procurement methods were efficient and cost-effective</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Type of procurement used</li> <li>-Technical specifications used</li> <li>-Timeline of procurement, from print ready files to delivery to country</li> <li>-Match between books ordered (quantity and specifications) and books received</li> <li>- Timeline of distribution from arrival in country to 90% delivered to homes</li> <li>-Unit cost of distribution</li> <li>-Use of track and trace system (y/n)</li> <li>-% of locations receiving correct quantity of books on time</li> <li>-% of children receiving correct quantity of books on time</li> <li>-% of locations/children with correct quantity of books three months post-distribution</li> </ul>	Checklist for country teams to fill out after materials are delivered	* Country teams and government counterparts may have procurement departments that have internal policies around procurement. Illustrative indicators are included here but it is recommended that teams work with their procurement specialists to develop more specific indicators and tools.
	Did teams select a variety of books across level and genre?	<i>Families received books across a variety of levels and genres</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of titles in a language children know</li> <li># of titles in language of instruction, if different</li> <li># of titles representing diverse populations, including people with disabilities</li> <li># of non-fiction titles</li> <li># of titles in reading level 1, 2, 3, etc.</li> <li># of titles written by local authors</li> <li># of titles written by international authors</li> </ul>	Checklist for country teams to fill out per family who received Read@Home materials	See <a href="#">Book Selection Checklist</a> , pg 89 in <a href="#">Appendix G: Sample monitoring tools</a> Appendix G. Sample monitoring tools



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