



Re-imagining National education systems through curricula support: A desk review of how Kenya initiated and scaled the Tusome Early Grade Reading program



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Background

- There has been remarkable increase in educational access
- However, Early grade reading scores (literacy outcomes) are still low
 - ❖ NASMLA (2011) in class 3
 - ❖ Uwezo
 - ❖ EGRA (2007)/EGMA(2009)
- Lower primary received less interest and attention from head teachers, parents and teachers
- Instructional methods in these classes are wanting

Why reading?

- It is the most fundamental skill children learn
- EGR is linked to future academic success and life outcomes.
- In Kenya, reading skills are critical to “reading to learn”
- Reading skills are fundamental to other subjects
 - Including maths, science, etc.
- Reading achievement is low
 - NASmLA, SACMEQ, UWEZO, EGRA

Reading is a Global Movement



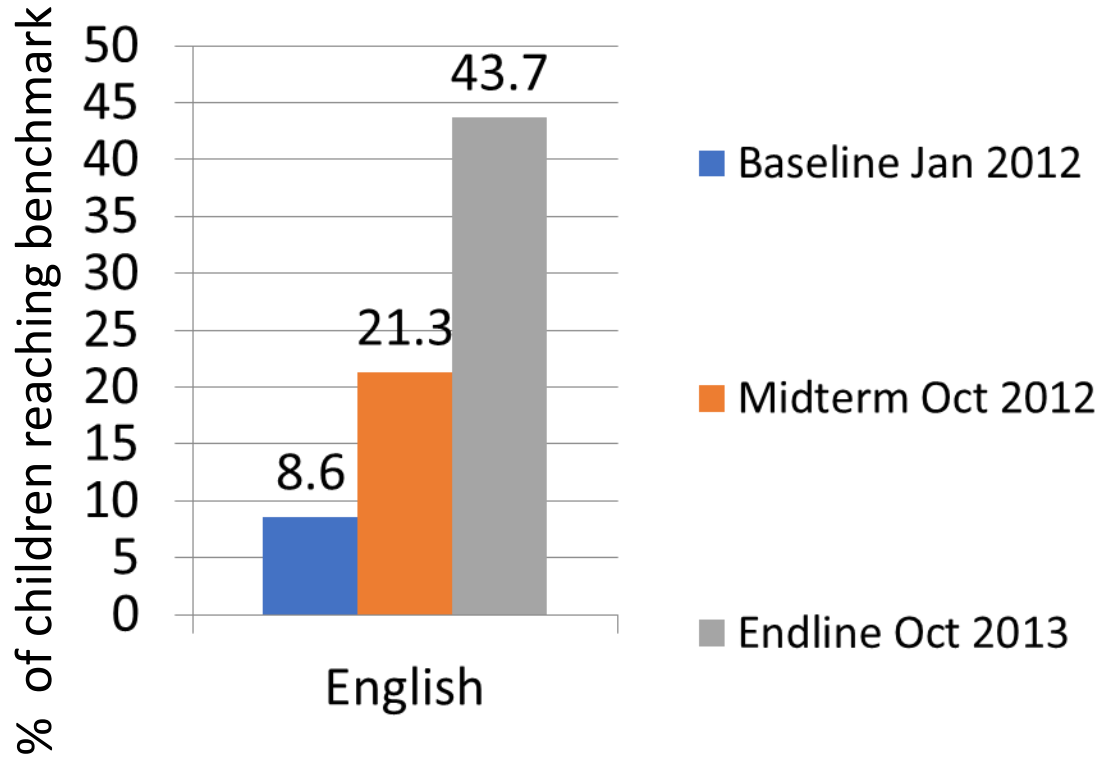
- Egypt
- Ethiopia
- Kenya
- Uganda
- Malawi
- Zambia
- South Africa
- DRC
- Ghana
- Liberia
- Mali
- Rwanda
- Nigeria
- Sierra Leone
- The Gambia

From Primary Math and Reading (PRIMR) to Tusome

PRIMR research led to Tusome

- 2011-2014
- USAID and DFID funded
- Piloted in 1384 schools
- Class 1 and 2
- English, Kiswahili, mother tongue and math
- Books, training and coaching
- Compared several treatment groups
- Successful models selected for Tusome
- Key elements were Books, Training and Coaching

PRIMR Impact



- Twice as many children read at benchmark in treatment schools
- One year of learning in PRIMR was worth 2+ years in control schools

Tusome Launch – 28 January 2015



11th Pan Africa Literacy for All Conference 2019. Kampala
Serena Uganda

Tusome Objectives

Overall: Improve English and Kiswahili literacy outcomes for Class 1 and 3

Specifically;

1. Improve teacher capacity for effective delivery of teaching
2. Improve access to appropriate textbooks and supplementary materials in literacy
3. Enhance instructional support supervision of teachers by TAC tutors, coaches (curriculum support officers-CSOs) and headteachers
4. Establish effective and efficient M&E system
5. Enhance use of ICT to support education outcome
6. Enhance capacity of education sector to sustainably improve literacy outcomes

Kenya Tusome Scope

Metric	Scale
Teachers	75,000+
Head teachers	23,800
Coaches (CSOs)	1270
Pupils (yearly)	3.6 million
Books distributed	23 million <i>(approx.)</i>
Include:	Textbooks Teacher's Guides Homework Books Supplementary readers

Duration: 2015 - 2019

Classes 1-3

Languages: Kiswahili and English

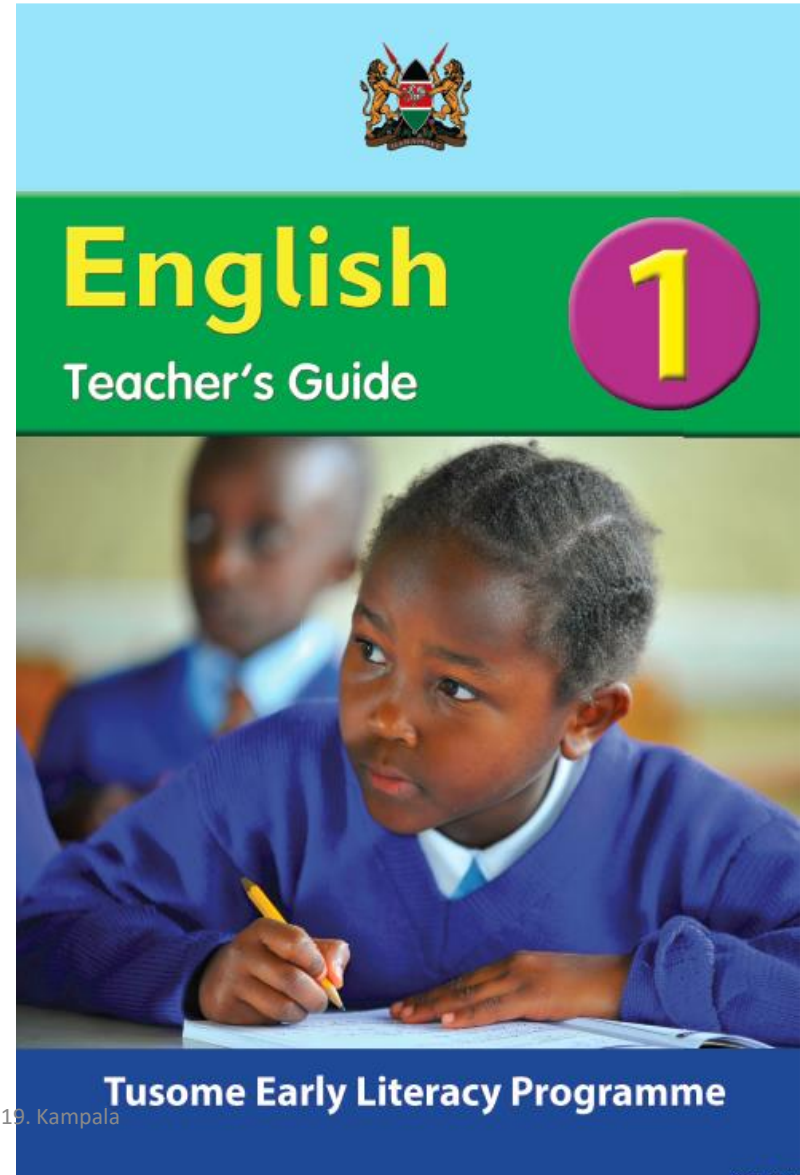


Tusome Program Focus

- Tusome focuses on five key interventions that were developed and proven under PRIMR to improve pupils' learning outcomes:
 1. Enhancing teachers' capacity to effectively deliver classroom instructions
 2. Improving learners' access and use of appropriate core and supplemental reading instructional materials and resources
 3. Enhancing instructional support and supervision
 4. Integrating the use of information and communications technology (ICT) and data through Curriculum Support Officers' (CSOs') tablets, nationally
 5. Enhancing collaboration with other literacy actors locally and internationally.

What Tusome Provides

- Pupils books and Teacher's Guides
 - English
 - Kiswahili
 - Letter cards
 - Pocket chart
 - Pupil stimuli
 - SNE adapted books
 - Tusome books for private schools
- CSOs
 - Instructional leadership, literacy skills, classroom observation
- Teachers
 - Termly training
 - Routine observation by TAC tutors
 - Monthly reflection sessions



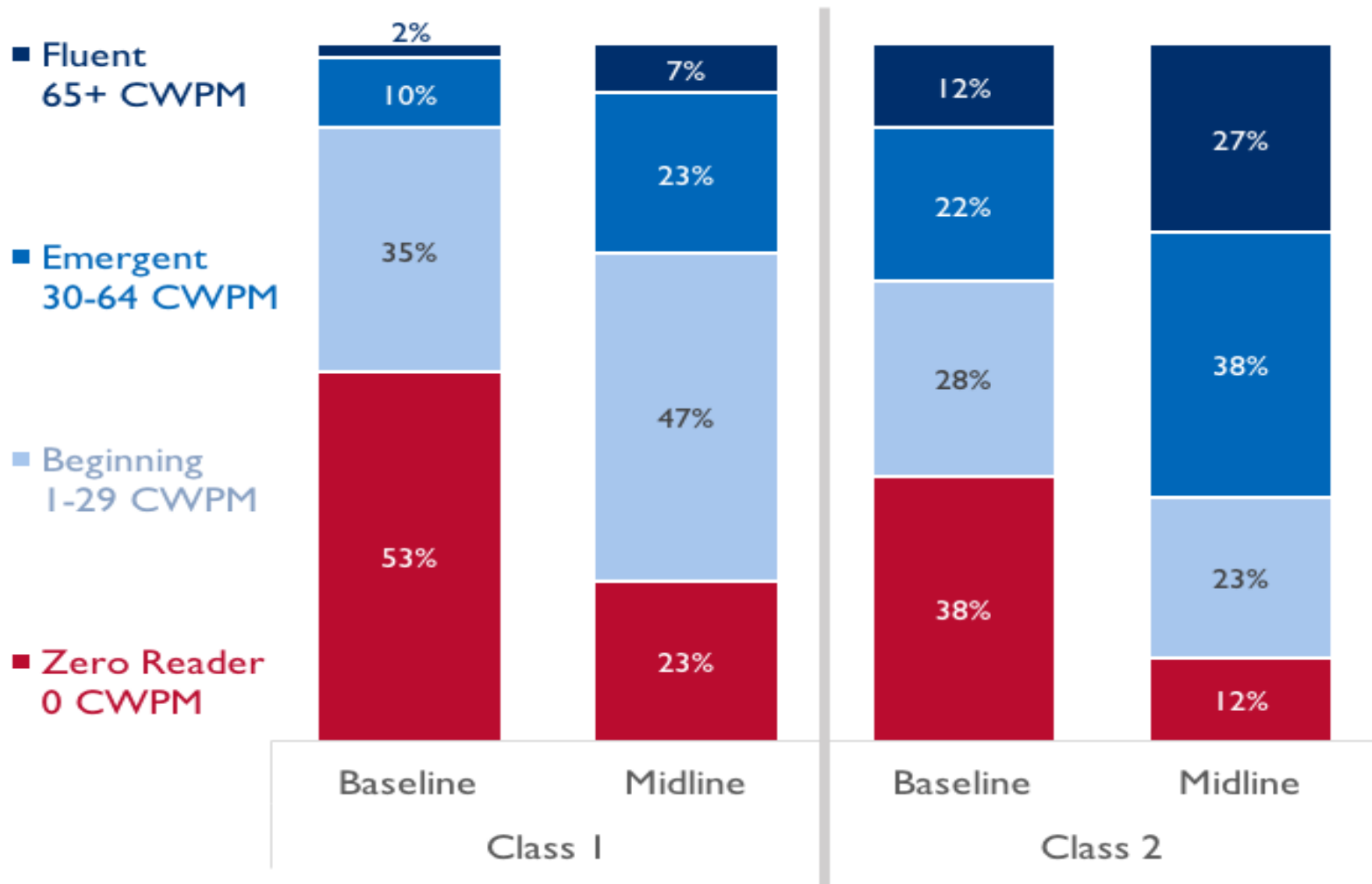
Tusome Books Distribution



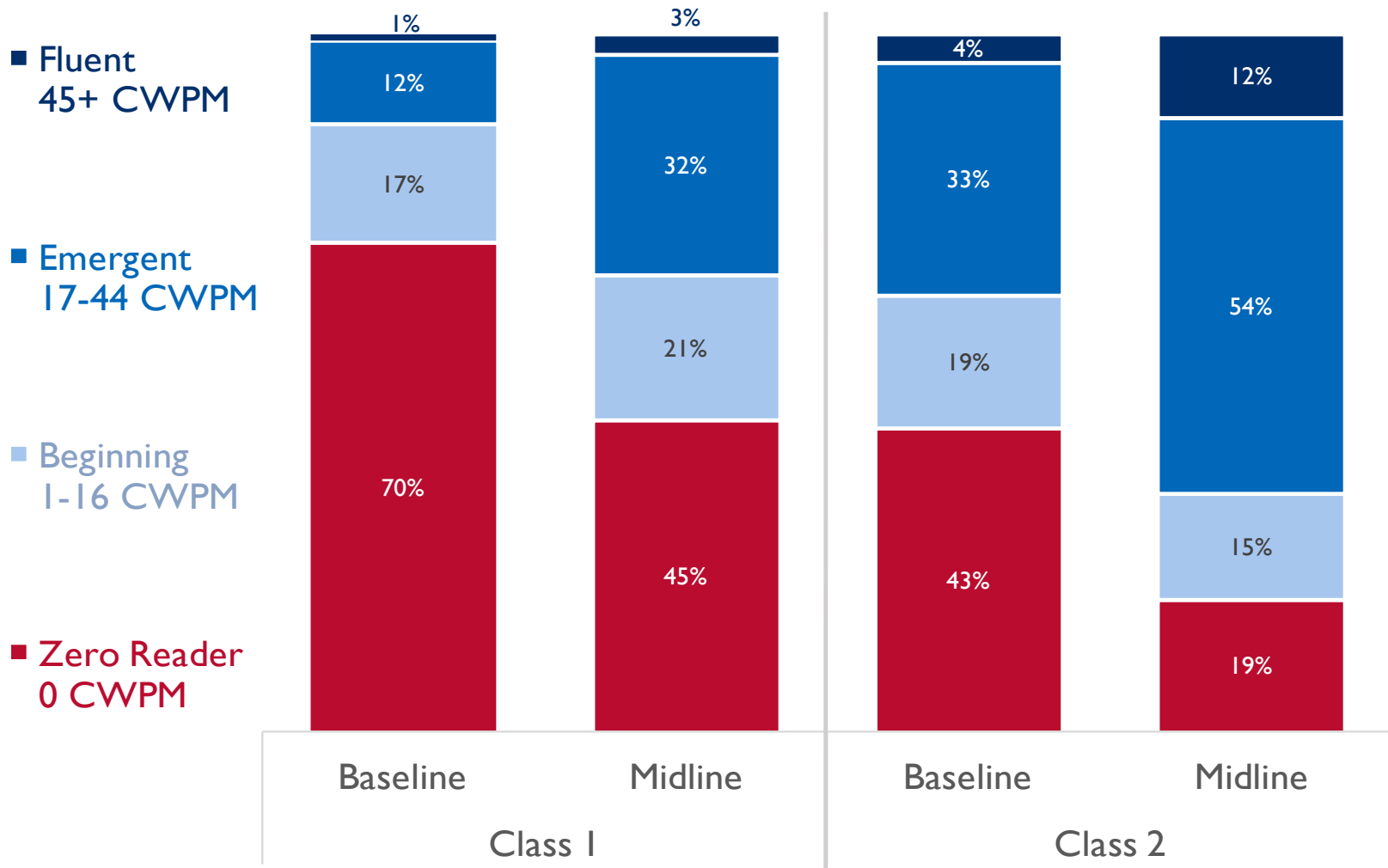
Tusome Trainings – ToTs, CSOs, HTs & Teachers



Tusome Assessments: Progress Against English Benchmarks



Progress Against Kiswahili benchmarks



New Benchmark & Targets Table – Grade 3 (regular learners) and the Blind (Grades 1 & 2)

		English		Kiswahili		Signed Exact English	
		Low Benchmark	High Benchmark	Low Benchmark	High Benchmark	Low Benchmark	High Benchmark
Grade 3 Regular	Benchmark	40	80	30	55	X	X
	% at Benchmark	27.9%	15%	21%	4.7%	X	X
	% at Benchmark (2022)	35%	20%	35%	10%	X	X
Blind Grade 1 (letters)	Benchmark	10	15	10	15	X	X
	% at Benchmark	20.6%	18.3%	16.8%	13.7%	X	X
	% at Benchmark (2022)	30%	28%	27%	23%	X	X
Blind Grade 2 (ORF)	Benchmark	15	20	10	15	X	X
	% at Benchmark	23.7%	19.1%	22.9%	15.3%	X	X
	% at Benchmark (2022)	34%	30%	33%	25%	X	X

New Benchmark & Targets Table – the Deaf (Grades 1&2)

		English (SEE)	
		Low Benchmark	High Benchmark
Deaf Grade 1 (finger spelling fluency)	Benchmark	15	35
	% at Benchmark	40.6%	20.1%
	% at Benchmark (2022)	50%	30%
Deaf Grade 2 (Sign reading fluency)	Benchmark	10	25
	% at Benchmark	21.1%	4.7%
	% at Benchmark (2022)	30%	15%

New - Grade 1 and 2 benchmark table – regular learners

	English		Kiswahili	
	Emergent	Fluent	Emergent	Fluent
Current benchmarks (Both G1 & G2)	30	65	17	45
Grade 1 (new)	20 23.6% 35%	35 16.0% 25%	10 13.8% 30%	30 5.9% 12%
Grade 2 (new)	30 49.0% 60%	65 16.7% 25%	17 66% 80%	45 12% 24%

Factors that have led to success of Tusome

1. Conducive policy environments: Kenyan constitution, Basic education act of 2013, political will/buy-in, National Education Strategic Plan 2013-2018
2. Tusome design and leverage of existing government systems/structures e.g CSOs,
3. Availability of teaching and learning materials with a pupil to textbook ratio of 1:1
4. Use of result-oriented research-based ICT methods and Kenya's national tablet program
5. Teacher and headteacher training and supervision by CSOs and TAC tutors
6. Economic factors/Government spending on the education sector
7. Improved infrastructure such as electricity , computer rooms and computers, school libraries, and school feeding
8. Learner factors such as appropriate age for class, household social economic status,
9. Youth grants program; awardees working in communities to engage youth aged 18-35 in the improvement of early grade reading skills

Tusome implementation challenges

These are mainly challenges that had spilled over from the PRIMR program. Main issues included;

1. Capacity gaps at the national level, such as limited monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity for the education system,
2. Inadequate data on school lists and pupils enrollment within APBET and Special Needs Education (SNE) schools
3. Distribution of learner books and other materials

Other challenges were;

1. Lack of functional libraries for both staff and pupils.
2. The delayed replacement of retired CSOs

Tusome implementation challenges: Mitigation

Mitigation measures

1. Direct distribution of textbooks to schools was centralized to mitigate the misuse of capitation funds that were initially sent to schools.
2. Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development (KICD) oversaw learning material development by a group of curriculum specialists
3. KICD also proposed a competitive search for the cheapest source for publication of learning materials.
4. Tusome program supported the development of the Education Management Information System and demonstrated how MoE would conduct M&E through a Dashboard; Collection of data using GPS
5. Tusome also strengthened collaboration between the MoE departments, Teachers Service Commission (TSC), and other partners in capacity development.
6. It developed a policy framework for capacity development of education managers, continued to design new training activities in response to changes in the education sector, and continued engaging with TSC on CSO replacement.

Tusome sustainability plan

- The plan guides the MoE to assume full responsibility of all activities by January 2020.
- Core activities include
 - Development, printing, and distribution of instructional materials
 - Data management on Dashboard
 - Teacher and headteacher trainings and professional development (capacity building)
 - On-going classroom support
 - Mentoring and coaching.
- RTI International has gradually released responsibilities to MoE, but will continue to provide technical and logistical support to the Ministry
- The MoE, through KICD has incorporated Tusome interventions into the new Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) for the Early Years Education (Classes 1-3), which was rolled out in all public primary schools in Kenya.
- MoE, through KICD has revised Tusome materials to ensure that they are CBC compliant, acquired copyright of the materials, and will be publishing the materials henceforth to ensure the success and sustainability of Tusome.
- At the county level, the MoE and TSC developed and are rolling out joint County work plans that integrate Tusome key activities in all the 47 counties.
- The MoE has committed funds to the education sector.

Thank you!

