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READING GHANA – WESTERN REGION

ENDLINE STUDY REPORT

FEBRUARY, 2026

VENUE

Tarkwa Nsuaem and Prestea Huni Valley Municipals

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List of Acronyms

ASER – Annual Status of Education Report

DD – Deputy Director

DDE – District Director of Education

DEO – District Education Office

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

GES – Ghana Education Service

P2 – Primary Two

P5 – Primary Five

PLCs – Professional Learning Communities

PTA – Parents and Teachers Association

RGWR – Reading Ghana Western Region

SISO – School Improvement Support Officers

SMC – School Management Committee

TLMs – Teaching and Learning Materials

Executive Summary

Purpose and Scope

The Reading Ghana Western Region Program was implemented to strengthen literacy instruction and improve learning outcomes in Tarkwa Nsuaem and Prestea Huni Valley. Since January 2023, it has supported over 300 teachers, 45 head teachers, and district officials, directly benefiting approximately 15,000 learners.

Methodology

The endline evaluation used a mixed-methods approach: ASER English assessments for Primary 2 and 5, classroom observations, teacher interviews, and focus group discussions with pupils, parents, and district officials. Eighteen schools were sampled (12 intervention, 6 non-intervention), ensuring robust comparative analysis.

Key Findings

- **Literacy Gains:** Primary 5 comprehension level rose from 16.02% at baseline to 58.5% at endline; Primary 2 comprehension increased from 2.7% to 17.8%. Intervention schools consistently outperformed non-intervention schools.
- **Pedagogical Improvements:** 36.4% of intervention teachers were rated “Excellent” in pedagogy compared to none in non-intervention schools. Structured training and coaching were decisive.
- **Community Engagement:** PTAs and SMCs shifted from passive to active involvement, monitoring attendance, supporting reading at home, and mobilising resources.
- **System Integration:** District Directorates embedded RGWR components into planning and training, with SISOs providing ongoing coaching.
- **Challenges:** Teacher shortages, large class sizes, limited materials, and socio-economic barriers (child labour, absenteeism) persist.

Recommendations

1. Institutionalize continuous teacher professional development within GES frameworks.
2. Expand access to appropriate supplementary readers and establish replenishment mechanisms.
3. Formalize Reading Clubs and protect structured reading time in timetables.
4. Promote learner-centered, inclusive pedagogy with gender-responsive strategies.
5. Strengthen community and parental engagement through awareness campaigns and PTA/SMC empowerment.
6. Address systemic challenges in teacher deployment and class sizes, with targeted support for rural schools.
7. Scale successful practices to non-intervention schools and beyond.

8. Ensure sustainability by embedding RGWR interventions into GES policies and district plans.

Conclusion

The RGWR Program has delivered measurable improvements in literacy outcomes, pedagogy, and community engagement. Sustaining these gains will require continued investment in teacher development, expansion of resources, and system integration. The program stands as a model of effective collaboration between donors, government, and communities, offering a strong case for replication across Ghana.

Chapter 1: Overview of the Reading Ghana Program and the Endline Evaluation

1.0 Overview of the Reading Ghana Program

Ghana’s education reforms over the past decade have consistently emphasized the importance of literacy as the foundation for lifelong learning. Within this national agenda, continuous teacher professional development has been identified as a critical driver of improved learning outcomes. The Reading Ghana Western Region (RGWR) Program was conceived in direct alignment with these priorities. Implemented by the Gold Fields Foundation in partnership with CODE and the Ghana Education Service, and supported by the Olinga Foundation for Human Development, the program sought to strengthen literacy instruction and improve learning outcomes in Tarkwa Nsuaem and Prestea Huni Valley Municipalities.

The program recognized that early grade reading is not simply an academic milestone but a leverage point for a child’s entire educational trajectory. Evidence from Ghana and globally shows that children who fail to acquire strong reading skills in the early years are more likely to struggle in later grades, with long-term implications for educational attainment and life opportunities. By prioritizing literacy development in the lower primary years, RGWR aimed to break this cycle, ensuring that learners could progress confidently through the education system.

At its core, the program was designed to improve reading outcomes among primary school pupils by enhancing teacher effectiveness and promoting structured, learner-centered pedagogical approaches. It also sought to create enabling environments for literacy development by engaging families, communities, and education stakeholders. Since its inception in January 2023, RGWR supported over 300 teachers, 37 head teachers, and district education officials, directly benefiting approximately 13,000 learners. The program’s holistic design—combining classroom interventions, community engagement, and system-level support—was intended to generate sustainable improvements in literacy outcomes.

1.1 Background of the Endline Evaluation

The endline evaluation represents the final phase of assessment of the RGWR Program, building on the baseline conducted in February 2023 and the midline study. This continuity of evaluation across three phases provides a robust evidence base for understanding the program's performance, outcomes, and impact.

The evaluation covered the same cohort of 18 schools: 12 intervention schools and 6 control schools across two districts in the Western Region. This design allowed for comparative analysis over time, measuring changes in teaching practices, pupil learning outcomes, and school-level engagement between baseline, midline, and endline. By maintaining consistency in sampling, the evaluation ensured that observed changes could be attributed to the program rather than external factors.

The primary purpose of the endline evaluation was to determine the extent to which RGWR achieved its intended objectives. Specifically, it sought to assess improvements in pupils' reading and comprehension skills in English, the strengthening of teacher pedagogical practices, and the enhancement of community participation in education. It also examined the sustainability of observed changes and the likelihood that gains made during implementation would be maintained beyond the life of the project.

The evaluation provides evidence-based insights into what has worked, what has changed, and what remains to be addressed. These findings are intended to inform decision-making, support future programming, and guide strategies for scaling and sustaining effective literacy interventions.

1.2 Objectives of the Endline Evaluation

The evaluation was guided by several objectives:

- To assess the extent to which teachers and learners adopted and effectively applied RGWR pedagogy in classroom practice.
- To measure improvements in learners' reading and comprehension outcomes compared to baseline and midline.
- To evaluate the effectiveness and consistency of instructional practices implemented by teachers.
- To examine community involvement in schools and its contribution to literacy outcomes.
- To determine the overall effectiveness of the program by identifying key achievements and challenges.
- To generate evidence-based recommendations to inform future programs, scale-up, and sustainability efforts.

These objectives framed the evaluation as both an accountability exercise—demonstrating to donors and stakeholders the impact of their investment—and a learning opportunity, providing insights to strengthen future literacy interventions.

1.3 Methodology

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. This design ensured a comprehensive and triangulated understanding of program outcomes, as well as the contextual factors influencing implementation and results.

Quantitative data were collected through learner assessments using the ASER English tool for Primary 2 and Primary 5 pupils. A total of 233 Primary 2 learners and 248 Primary 5 learners were sampled, with balanced representation of boys and girls. Classroom observations provided further quantitative measures of teaching practices, including language use, pedagogy, gender sensitivity, questioning skills, pupil participation, and use of teaching and learning materials.

Qualitative data were gathered through interviews and focus group discussions. Head teachers and teachers provided insights into instructional practices, challenges, and professional development experiences. PTAs and SMCs shared perspectives on community engagement and accountability. District officials offered system-level insights into program implementation and sustainability. Student FGDs captured learner experiences, motivations, and challenges.

This combination of methods allowed the evaluation to capture both measurable outcomes and the lived experiences of stakeholders, providing a holistic picture of the program's impact.

1.4 Sampling and Team Composition

Eighteen schools were selected for the endline study: 12 intervention schools and 6 non-intervention schools located near intervention sites. The sample was carefully matched, considering rural and urban settings, school categories, and access to socio-economic resources. This design ensured comparability and strengthened the validity of findings.

The evaluation team comprised 15 trained enumerators and supervisors. A two-day centralized training program was organized in Tarkwa, covering the use of instruments, ethical considerations, and school entry protocols. Training methods included mock interviews, case studies, and guided discussions. Enumerators were equipped to conduct high-quality data collection, adhering to ethical standards and ensuring reliability.

1.5 Data Collection Instruments

Three primary data collection methods were employed: structured surveys, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. Instruments included school checklists, lesson observation tools, teacher interview guides, PTA/SMC FGD guides, student FGD guides, and district office FGD guides. The ASER tool was used for learner assessments.

Together, these instruments provided a comprehensive framework for capturing data at multiple levels—classroom, school, community, and district.

Chapter 2: Characteristics and Context of the Students, Teachers and Schools

2.0 Introduction

Understanding the demographic and contextual characteristics of schools, teachers, and learners is essential for interpreting the outcomes of the Reading Ghana Western Region (RGWR) Program. Literacy interventions do not occur in a vacuum; they are shaped by the realities of school infrastructure, teacher availability, classroom environments, and community support. This chapter provides a detailed narrative of the conditions in which the program was implemented, highlighting both the strengths and challenges that influenced its effectiveness.

2.1 School Characteristics

The schools sampled for the endline evaluation varied in size, infrastructure, and resources. Intervention schools generally recorded higher enrolment, averaging 275 pupils compared to 180 in non-intervention schools. This difference reflects both the attractiveness of intervention schools—where parents perceived higher quality teaching—and the demographic realities of the communities. Larger enrolments, however, also posed challenges, with teachers in intervention schools often managing crowded classrooms.

Infrastructure conditions were mixed. Some schools benefited from relatively well-maintained buildings and classrooms, while others struggled with inadequate furniture, poor ventilation, and limited space. Intervention schools were more likely to have designated reading corners and visible literacy materials, creating environments conducive to learning. Non-intervention schools, by contrast, often lacked such features, leaving classrooms bare and less stimulating.

2.2 School and Class Data at the Primary Level

At the primary level, class sizes varied significantly. Intervention schools tended to have larger classes, sometimes exceeding 40 pupils per classroom, while non-intervention schools averaged closer to 25–30 pupils. This disparity influenced teaching dynamics. Larger classes required teachers to adopt more structured approaches to maintain engagement, while smaller classes allowed for more individualised attention.

Gender distribution among pupils was relatively balanced, though in some rural schools boys outnumbered girls due to socio-economic factors such as early marriage and household responsibilities that disproportionately affected girls. Intervention schools made deliberate efforts to encourage girls' participation, often through Reading Clubs and targeted support from teachers.

2.3 Characteristics of Head Teachers and Teachers

Head teachers in intervention schools were generally more experienced and had received training in literacy leadership. They played active roles in supporting teachers, monitoring classroom practices, and ensuring that literacy strategies were implemented consistently. In non-intervention schools, head teachers were less engaged in instructional leadership, focusing more on administrative duties.

Teachers in intervention schools were predominantly female (67 percent), reflecting national trends in primary education. Many had formal qualifications in education, though some rural schools relied on untrained teachers or community volunteers. Intervention teachers reported greater confidence in literacy instruction, attributing this to the professional development and coaching provided under RGWR.

2.4 Teacher Availability and Qualification

Teacher availability remained a challenge across both intervention and non-intervention schools. In some rural communities, classes were left without teachers for extended periods, forcing head teachers or volunteers to step in. Intervention schools benefited from more consistent teacher deployment, though shortages were still reported.

Qualifications varied. While most teachers in intervention schools held diplomas or degrees in education, non-intervention schools had a higher proportion of untrained teachers. This disparity contributed to differences in instructional quality, with intervention teachers better equipped to deliver structured literacy lessons.

2.5 Reading Clubs

Reading Clubs emerged as a distinctive feature of intervention schools. By endline, 24 clubs had been established, compared to just one in non-intervention schools. These clubs provided structured opportunities for pupils to practice reading outside regular lessons. Activities included group reading, storytelling, and competitions, all designed to build fluency and confidence. Pupils reported enjoying these sessions, which fostered a culture of reading and peer learning.

Non-intervention schools lacked such structures, leaving pupils with fewer opportunities to engage with texts beyond the classroom. This absence contributed to weaker literacy outcomes.

2.6 Availability of Supplementary Readers

Access to supplementary readers improved significantly in intervention schools, with over 38,000 age-appropriate books distributed under RGWR. Classrooms were stocked with storybooks, picture books, and graded readers, enabling pupils to practice independently and at home. Teachers integrated these materials into lessons, using them for guided reading and comprehension exercises.

Non-intervention schools faced acute shortages, with many classrooms lacking even basic textbooks. Pupils in these schools had limited exposure to print, constraining their ability to develop fluency.

2.7 Dedicated Time for Reading

Intervention schools institutionalised dedicated reading time, often scheduling 30–45 minutes daily for literacy activities. This structured approach ensured that pupils consistently practiced reading, reinforcing skills acquired during lessons. Teachers reported that dedicated reading time improved fluency and comprehension, particularly among struggling readers.

In non-intervention schools, reading time was irregular and often sacrificed for other subjects. Pupils therefore had fewer opportunities to consolidate literacy skills.

2.8 Integration of Literacy Strategies

Teachers in intervention schools integrated literacy strategies into their lessons more consistently. Phonics, guided reading, and interactive storytelling were common practices. Teachers also employed questioning techniques to stimulate comprehension and critical thinking. These strategies were reinforced through professional development and coaching.

Non-intervention teachers relied more on rote learning and repetition, with limited use of structured literacy approaches. This contributed to weaker outcomes in comprehension and higher-order reading skills.

2.9 Print-Rich Classroom Environments

Intervention classrooms were notably more print-rich. Word walls, alphabet charts, and book corners created environments that reinforced literacy learning. Pupils were surrounded by text, encouraging them to engage with print throughout the day. Teachers reported that these environments motivated pupils and supported independent practice.

Non-intervention classrooms were often bare, with few visual aids or reading materials. Pupils in these environments had limited exposure to print, reducing opportunities for incidental learning.

Conclusion to Chapter 2

The characteristics and contexts of schools, teachers, and pupils played a decisive role in shaping literacy outcomes. Intervention schools benefited from stronger leadership, better teacher qualifications, structured Reading Clubs, access to supplementary readers, dedicated reading time, and print-rich environments. These factors created conditions conducive to literacy development. Non-intervention schools, by contrast, struggled with shortages of teachers and materials, weaker instructional leadership, and less stimulating environments.

This chapter underscores the importance of context in evaluating program outcomes. The disparities between intervention and non-intervention schools highlight the added value of RGWR interventions and the need for continued investment to address systemic challenges.

Chapter 3: Key Findings from Lesson Observation

3.0 Introduction

Lesson observations formed a central component of the endline evaluation, providing direct evidence of how teachers applied literacy strategies in the classroom. Observations were conducted in both intervention and non-intervention schools, allowing evaluators to compare practices and assess the impact of the RGWR Program. This chapter presents a detailed narrative of the findings, highlighting differences in language use, pedagogy, gender sensitivity, questioning skills, pupil participation, and the use of teaching and learning materials. It also examines variance across baseline, midline, and endline, showing how teacher practices evolved over time.

3.1 Use of Language

In intervention schools, teachers demonstrated stronger command of language, using clear and accurate English during instruction. At endline, 31.8 percent of teachers in intervention schools were rated “Excellent” in language use, compared to none in non-intervention schools. Teachers in intervention schools consistently modelled correct pronunciation and grammar, reinforcing literacy skills for pupils. By contrast, teachers in non-intervention schools often relied on local languages or mixed codes, limiting pupils’ exposure to English.

Variance analysis shows steady improvement in intervention schools. At baseline, many teachers struggled with fluency, but by midline, structured training had improved confidence. Endline observations confirmed consolidation of these gains, with teachers more deliberate in modelling language.

3.2 Language of Instruction

Intervention teachers adhered more consistently to English as the language of instruction, particularly in literacy lessons. This alignment with program objectives ensured that pupils were immersed in English, building familiarity and competence. Non-intervention schools, however, frequently reverted to local languages, especially when pupils struggled. While this approach provided short-term comprehension, it limited long-term literacy development in English.

3.3 Subject Knowledge and Content Accuracy

Teachers in intervention schools demonstrated stronger subject knowledge and content accuracy. Lessons were well-structured, with clear objectives and accurate explanations. At endline, intervention teachers were more confident in delivering phonics, guided reading, and comprehension strategies. Non-intervention teachers, by contrast, often relied on rote memorisation and repetition, with occasional inaccuracies in content delivery.

Variance analysis shows marked improvement in intervention schools. At baseline, content accuracy was inconsistent, but by midline, professional development had strengthened teacher knowledge. Endline observations confirmed mastery, with teachers able to explain concepts clearly and respond to pupil questions effectively.

3.4 Gender Sensitivity

Intervention teachers demonstrated greater gender sensitivity, ensuring that both boys and girls participated actively in lessons. At endline, 31.9 percent of intervention teachers were rated “Excellent” in gender sensitivity, compared to none in non-intervention schools. Teachers deliberately called on girls to answer questions, encouraged equal participation, and challenged stereotypes. Non-intervention schools showed less deliberate effort, with boys often dominating classroom interactions.

Variance analysis highlights progress in intervention schools. At baseline, gender sensitivity was limited, but by midline, training had raised awareness. Endline observations confirmed that teachers had internalised gender-responsive practices, creating more inclusive classrooms.

3.5 Questioning Skills

Intervention teachers employed more effective questioning techniques, stimulating critical thinking and comprehension. Questions were open-ended, encouraging pupils to explain and elaborate. Non-intervention teachers relied more on closed questions, limiting opportunities for deeper engagement.

Variance analysis shows steady improvement in intervention schools. At baseline, questioning was superficial, but by midline, teachers had begun to use probing questions.

Endline observations confirmed mastery, with teachers using questioning to assess understanding and guide learning.

3.6 Use of Pedagogy

Pedagogical practices improved significantly in intervention schools. At endline, 36.4 percent of intervention teachers were rated “Excellent” in pedagogy, compared to none in non-intervention schools. Intervention teachers employed learner-centered approaches, integrating phonics, guided reading, and interactive storytelling. Lessons were engaging, with pupils actively participating. Non-intervention teachers relied more on traditional lecture methods, limiting pupil engagement.

Variance analysis confirms progress in intervention schools. At baseline, pedagogy was largely teacher-centered, but by midline, structured training had introduced learner-centered approaches. Endline observations confirmed consolidation, with teachers confidently applying diverse strategies.

3.7 Pupil Participation

Pupil participation was notably higher in intervention schools. Teachers encouraged pupils to read aloud, answer questions, and engage in group activities. Classrooms were lively, with pupils actively involved in learning. Non-intervention schools, by contrast, had more passive classrooms, with pupils listening rather than participating.

Variance analysis shows steady improvement in intervention schools. At baseline, participation was limited, but by midline, teachers had begun to involve pupils more actively. Endline observations confirmed that participation had become a norm, with pupils confident and engaged.

3.8 Evaluation of Lessons

Intervention teachers were more deliberate in evaluating lessons, checking pupil understanding and adjusting instruction accordingly. They used formative assessment techniques, such as oral questioning and quick exercises, to gauge comprehension. Non-intervention teachers were less systematic, often moving on without confirming understanding.

Variance analysis shows progress in intervention schools. At baseline, evaluation was minimal, but by midline, teachers had begun to incorporate checks for understanding. Endline observations confirmed mastery, with teachers using evaluation to inform instruction.

3.9 Use of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)

Intervention teachers made more effective use of TLMs, integrating supplementary readers, charts, and visual aids into lessons. Classrooms were print-rich, with pupils

surrounded by text. Non-intervention schools had fewer materials, limiting opportunities for engagement.

Variance analysis shows steady improvement in intervention schools. At baseline, use of TLMs was limited, but by midline, distribution of materials had increased. Endline observations confirmed effective integration, with teachers using TLMs creatively to support learning.

3.19 Overall Conclusions for Lesson Observation

Lesson observations confirm that the RGWR Program significantly improved teaching practices in intervention schools. Teachers demonstrated stronger language use, subject knowledge, gender sensitivity, questioning skills, pedagogy, pupil participation, and use of TLMs. Variance analysis across baseline, midline, and endline shows steady progress, with teachers consolidating gains over time.

Non-intervention schools, by contrast, showed limited improvement, relying on traditional methods and lacking resources. The disparities highlight the added value of RGWR interventions and the importance of sustained investment in teacher development.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Teacher Interviews

4.0 Introduction

Teacher interviews provided invaluable insights into the implementation of the Reading Ghana Western Region (RGWR) Program. While classroom observations captured what teachers did, interviews revealed why they adopted certain practices, how they perceived the program's support, and what challenges they continued to face. This chapter presents a narrative synthesis of teacher perspectives, highlighting their educational backgrounds, instructional strategies, motivation techniques, child-centered practices, gender responsiveness, access to materials, and professional support.

4.1 Teacher Educational Background

Teachers in intervention schools generally had stronger educational backgrounds, with many holding diplomas or degrees in education. This formal training provided a foundation for adopting structured literacy strategies introduced by RGWR. In contrast, non-intervention schools relied more heavily on untrained teachers or community volunteers, particularly in rural areas. These disparities in qualifications contributed to differences in instructional quality, with intervention teachers better equipped to deliver effective literacy lessons.

4.2 Integration of Literacy Instructional Strategies

Intervention teachers reported integrating literacy strategies such as phonics, guided reading, and interactive storytelling into their lessons. They emphasised that RGWR

training had improved their confidence and provided practical tools for teaching reading. Teachers described how phonics helped pupils decode words, while guided reading sessions allowed them to monitor comprehension. Non-intervention teachers, lacking similar support, relied more on rote memorisation and repetition, which limited pupils' ability to develop higher-order literacy skills.

4.3 Strategies for Supporting Struggling Readers

Teachers in intervention schools described deliberate strategies for supporting struggling readers. These included pairing weaker pupils with stronger peers, providing additional practice during Reading Club sessions, and using differentiated materials. Teachers emphasised that supplementary readers were particularly useful, allowing them to tailor instruction to different ability levels. Non-intervention teachers, however, had fewer resources and often struggled to provide targeted support, leaving weaker pupils behind.

4.4 Motivation Strategies Used by Teachers

Motivation emerged as a key theme in teacher interviews. Intervention teachers reported using competitions, praise, and peer recognition to encourage pupils. Reading Clubs provided opportunities for pupils to showcase their skills, boosting confidence and motivation. Teachers noted that pupils were more eager to participate when they felt recognised and valued. Non-intervention teachers, with fewer structured activities, relied mainly on verbal encouragement, which had limited impact.

4.5 Child-Centered Teaching Practices

Intervention teachers described adopting more child-centered practices, creating inclusive environments that encouraged active participation. They reported using group work, interactive discussions, and pupil-led activities to engage learners. Teachers emphasised that RGWR training had shifted their mindset from teacher-centered to learner-centered approaches. Non-intervention teachers, by contrast, continued to rely on lecture methods, with pupils passively listening rather than actively participating.

4.6 Access to Supplementary Reading Materials

Access to supplementary readers was a recurring theme in teacher interviews. Intervention teachers highlighted the importance of the 38,000 books distributed under RGWR, noting that these materials provided opportunities for independent practice and home reading. Teachers integrated these books into lessons, using them for guided reading and comprehension exercises. Non-intervention teachers lamented the lack of materials, explaining that pupils had little exposure to print outside textbooks, which constrained literacy development.

4.7 Gender-Responsive Teaching Practices

Teachers in intervention schools reported greater awareness of gender responsiveness. They deliberately encouraged girls to participate, challenged stereotypes, and created inclusive environments. Teachers noted that girls often outperformed boys in comprehension, but boys showed late gains in story recognition. By ensuring equal participation, teachers helped balance outcomes. Non-intervention teachers, however, were less deliberate, with boys often dominating classroom interactions.

4.8 Coaching, Mentoring, and Professional Support

Intervention teachers valued the coaching and mentoring provided under RGWR. They described how School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) visited classrooms, observed lessons, and provided feedback. Teachers emphasised that this support helped them refine practices and build confidence. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) also provided opportunities for peer learning. Non-intervention teachers lacked similar support, relying mainly on personal initiative.

4.9 Key Challenges Affecting Literacy Instruction

Despite progress, teachers identified persistent challenges. Large class sizes made it difficult to provide individualised attention. Teacher shortages in some schools forced untrained volunteers to step in. Limited materials constrained instruction, particularly in non-intervention schools. Socio-economic factors, such as absenteeism due to child labour, also affected pupil engagement. Teachers emphasised the need for continued support to address these challenges.

4.10 Overall Comparison Between Intervention and Non-Intervention Schools

Intervention teachers demonstrated stronger integration of literacy strategies, greater confidence, and more inclusive practices. They benefited from access to materials, coaching, and structured support. Non-intervention teachers, by contrast, struggled with limited resources, weaker qualifications, and less professional support. These disparities highlight the added value of RGWR interventions and the importance of scaling successful practices to non-intervention schools.

Conclusion to Chapter 4

Teacher interviews confirm that RGWR significantly strengthened instructional practices in intervention schools. Teachers reported greater confidence, stronger integration of literacy strategies, and more inclusive classrooms. They valued the professional development and coaching provided, which helped them refine practices and support pupils more effectively. However, challenges remain, particularly in addressing large class sizes, teacher shortages, and material constraints. Sustaining gains will require continued investment in teacher development, resource provision, and system-level support.

5.0 Introduction

Parents and community stakeholders play a decisive role in sustaining literacy outcomes. The Reading Ghana Western Region (RGWR) Program deliberately engaged Parents and Teachers Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs) to strengthen accountability, mobilise resources, and foster a culture of support around reading. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with these groups provided rich insights into how communities perceived the program, the extent of their involvement, and the challenges they faced. This chapter presents a narrative synthesis of those discussions, highlighting the transformation in parental engagement, the contributions of PTAs and SMCs, and the contrasts between intervention and non-intervention schools.

Transformation of Parental Engagement

At baseline, parental involvement in schools was limited. Parents typically attended occasional meetings, often convened to discuss administrative matters or disciplinary issues. Literacy was rarely a focus, and many parents assumed that reading was solely the responsibility of teachers. By endline, however, FGDs revealed a marked transformation in intervention schools. Parents described visiting schools weekly, sometimes daily, to monitor attendance, check exercise books, and observe reading activities. They expressed pride in their children's progress and confidence in their ability to read independently.

This shift was attributed to deliberate sensitisation efforts under RGWR. Awareness campaigns, Reading Club showcases, and teacher-parent dialogues helped parents understand the importance of supporting literacy at home. Parents reported encouraging children to read aloud in the evenings, providing time for practice, and in some cases purchasing additional books.

Contributions of PTAs and SMCs

PTAs and SMCs in intervention schools played active roles in supporting literacy development. They mobilised resources to improve school infrastructure, provided furniture for reading corners, and contributed funds for supplementary materials. Some committees organised community reading events, inviting parents and pupils to participate. These activities reinforced the culture of reading and demonstrated community ownership of the program.

SMCs also strengthened accountability. Members monitored teacher attendance, ensured that reading time was protected, and advocated for the deployment of qualified teachers. Their involvement created a sense of shared responsibility, with communities recognising that literacy outcomes depended not only on teachers but on collective effort.

In non-intervention schools, however, PTAs and SMCs remained less engaged. Meetings were infrequent, attendance was low, and literacy was rarely discussed. Parents in these schools often prioritised economic activities such as farming, trading, or mining, leaving little time for school involvement. As a result, pupils had fewer opportunities for reinforcement at home, and schools lacked the community support necessary to sustain literacy initiatives.

Challenges Identified by Communities

Despite progress, PTAs and SMCs identified persistent challenges. Limited availability of supplementary readers remained a concern, with demand outstripping supply. Parents expressed frustration that children sometimes had to share books, reducing opportunities for independent practice. Teacher shortages were another challenge, particularly in rural schools where classes were left unattended. Communities also noted socio-economic barriers, including absenteeism due to child labour and household responsibilities.

PTAs and SMCs emphasised the need for continued support to address these challenges. They called for more books, better teacher deployment, and sustained sensitisation to keep parents engaged.

Conclusion to Chapter 5

FGDs with PTAs and SMCs confirm that RGWR significantly strengthened community engagement in intervention schools. Parents moved from passive to active involvement, monitoring attendance, supporting reading at home, and contributing resources. PTAs and SMCs played critical roles in sustaining program gains, reinforcing accountability, and mobilising support. Non-intervention schools, by contrast, struggled with limited engagement, highlighting the added value of RGWR interventions.

This chapter underscores the importance of community involvement in literacy development. Sustaining gains will require continued investment in parental sensitisation, resource mobilisation, and system-level support to ensure that PTAs and SMCs remain active partners in education.

Chapter 6: Findings from District Directorate

6.0 Introduction

The role of district education authorities is central to sustaining literacy interventions. While classroom practices and community engagement drive immediate outcomes, system-level oversight ensures that gains are institutionalised and scaled. The Reading Ghana Western Region (RGWR) Program deliberately engaged District Directorates of Education in Tarkwa Nsuaem and Prestea Huni Valley, recognising that their leadership and support were critical for long-term sustainability. Interviews and focus group discussions with district officials provided valuable insights into how the program was implemented,

the improvements observed, and the measures taken to embed literacy strategies within district systems.

6.1 Implementation of the RGWR Program

District officials confirmed that RGWR was integrated into their operational frameworks from the outset. Directors and Assistant Directors of Supervision described how they worked closely with School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) to monitor program activities, provide coaching, and ensure fidelity of implementation. Training officers highlighted their role in organising professional development sessions, while HR staff emphasised the importance of deploying qualified teachers to intervention schools.

Officials noted that RGWR strengthened collaboration between the district and schools. Regular review meetings were held to assess progress, identify challenges, and plan corrective actions. District staff visited schools to observe lessons, interact with teachers, and provide feedback. This level of engagement was unprecedented compared to previous literacy initiatives, reflecting the program's emphasis on system ownership.

6.2 Improvements and Sustainability Measures

District officials reported significant improvements in literacy outcomes, attributing these to the structured support provided under RGWR. They highlighted the establishment of Reading Clubs, the distribution of supplementary readers, and the institutionalisation of dedicated reading time as key drivers of progress. Officials also noted improvements in classroom environments, with intervention schools becoming more print-rich and engaging.

Sustainability measures were a recurring theme in discussions. District staff emphasised the importance of integrating RGWR components into Ghana Education Service (GES) systems. They described efforts to formalise Reading Clubs, protect reading time within timetables, and incorporate literacy strategies into district training programs. SISOs committed to continuing coaching and mentoring beyond the life of the project, recognising that ongoing support was essential for maintaining gains.

Officials also highlighted resource mobilisation as a sustainability measure. Districts sought partnerships with local stakeholders, including mining companies and NGOs, to supplement resources. They advocated for continued donor investment but emphasised the need for districts to build capacity and ownership.

Conclusion to Chapter 6

Findings from the District Directorate confirm that RGWR strengthened system-level oversight and sustainability. District officials played active roles in implementing the program, monitoring progress, and supporting teachers. They reported significant

improvements in literacy outcomes and outlined measures to embed program components within GES systems.

This chapter underscores the importance of district leadership in sustaining literacy interventions. While classroom practices and community engagement drive immediate outcomes, system-level support ensures that gains are institutionalised and scaled. Sustaining RGWR's impact will depend on continued collaboration between districts, schools, communities, and donors, with district directorates serving as the linchpin of long-term success.

Chapter 7: Findings from Focal Group Discussion with Students

7.0 Introduction

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with pupils provided a unique perspective on the Reading Ghana Western Region (RGWR) Program. While teacher interviews and lesson observations captured instructional practices, student voices revealed how these practices translated into lived experiences. Pupils spoke candidly about their enjoyment of reading, the role of Reading Clubs, the activities they engaged in, and the challenges they faced. Their testimonies confirm that RGWR not only improved literacy outcomes but also fostered a culture of reading and confidence among learners.

7.1 Why Pupils Like Reading

Students in intervention schools expressed enthusiasm for reading, describing it as both enjoyable and empowering. Many reported that reading allowed them to “understand stories better,” “speak English more confidently,” and “share ideas with friends.” Pupils emphasised that reading was no longer a chore but an activity they looked forward to. This transformation reflects the program's success in making literacy engaging and relevant.

In non-intervention schools, pupils were less enthusiastic. They described reading as difficult, often limited to rote memorisation of textbook passages. Without supplementary materials or structured support, reading remained a mechanical exercise rather than a source of enjoyment.

7.2 School Reading Clubs

Reading Clubs emerged as a cornerstone of pupil engagement. Pupils in intervention schools described clubs as safe spaces where they could practice reading without fear of ridicule. They valued the opportunity to read aloud, listen to peers, and participate in group activities. Clubs also fostered friendships, with pupils bonding over shared stories and competitions.

Non-intervention schools lacked such structures, leaving pupils with fewer opportunities to practice outside formal lessons. As a result, learners in these schools reported less confidence and weaker fluency.

7.3 Activities Conducted in Reading Clubs

Pupils highlighted a range of activities conducted in Reading Clubs, including storytelling, role-plays, reading competitions, and group discussions. These activities were designed to build fluency, comprehension, and confidence. Pupils particularly enjoyed storytelling, which allowed them to use imagination and creativity. Competitions motivated them to practice more, while group discussions encouraged critical thinking.

These activities reinforced literacy skills in ways that traditional lessons often could not. They provided opportunities for informal learning, peer support, and enjoyment, making reading a social and cultural activity rather than a solitary task.

7.4 Impact of Reading Clubs

The impact of Reading Clubs was evident in pupils' testimonies. Learners reported improved fluency, greater confidence in speaking English, and stronger comprehension. They described how clubs helped them "read faster," "understand stories better," and "answer questions in class." Teachers corroborated these accounts, noting that club members often outperformed non-members in literacy assessments.

Reading Clubs also fostered a positive reading culture. Pupils began to see reading as part of their identity, proudly showcasing their skills to peers and parents. This cultural shift is critical for sustaining literacy gains beyond the classroom.

7.5 Learners' Ability to Speak English

Pupils in intervention schools reported greater confidence in speaking English. They attributed this to regular practice in Reading Clubs and structured classroom activities. Learners described how they could now "speak without fear," "answer questions in English," and "talk to friends confidently." This improvement reflects the program's emphasis on oral fluency as a foundation for literacy.

Non-intervention pupils, however, expressed less confidence. They often reverted to local languages, particularly when struggling with comprehension. This limited their exposure to English and constrained literacy development.

7.6 Availability of Supplementary Readers

Pupils in intervention schools valued the supplementary readers provided under RGWR. They described how storybooks and graded readers made reading enjoyable and accessible. Learners reported borrowing books to read at home, sharing them with siblings, and using them for practice. These materials expanded pupils' exposure to print and reinforced classroom learning.

Non-intervention pupils lamented the lack of materials, explaining that they had little to read beyond textbooks. This shortage constrained their ability to practice and limited their progress.

7.7 Role of Teachers and Club Facilitators

Pupils acknowledged the role of teachers and facilitators in supporting Reading Clubs. They described how teachers encouraged participation, guided activities, and provided feedback. Facilitators created inclusive environments, ensuring that both boys and girls felt comfortable reading aloud. Pupils expressed gratitude for this support, recognising that it helped them improve.

7.8 Challenges

Despite progress, pupils identified challenges. Limited availability of books meant that some had to share, reducing opportunities for independent practice. Socio-economic factors such as child labour, household chores, and excessive television viewing also affected attendance and engagement. Pupils emphasised the need for more materials and continued support to overcome these barriers.

7.9 Conclusion

FGDs with pupils confirm that RGWR transformed learner experiences in intervention schools. Pupils expressed enthusiasm for reading, valued Reading Clubs, and reported improved fluency, comprehension, and confidence. They highlighted the role of supplementary readers and teacher support in sustaining progress. Non-intervention pupils, by contrast, reported weaker engagement and limited opportunities, underscoring the added value of RGWR interventions.

This chapter validates program outcomes through student voices, demonstrating that literacy gains were not only measurable but also meaningful to learners. Sustaining these gains will require continued investment in Reading Clubs, supplementary materials, and strategies to address socio-economic barriers.

Chapter 8: Pupil Performance and Learning Outcomes

Primary 2 Findings

The literacy trajectory for Primary 2 learners demonstrates both the promise and the challenges of early grade interventions. At baseline, a quarter of sampled pupils in intervention schools were at the **Initial Level**, unable to recognise even four letters. By midline, this proportion had already declined significantly, and by endline it had dropped to just 10.5 percent. This reduction illustrates the program's success in moving children out of the lowest literacy stage. In contrast, non-intervention schools showed little progress, with more than one in four pupils still at the initial level at endline.

Letter recognition peaked at midline, with nearly 40 percent of learners in intervention schools able to correctly identify letters. By endline, the proportion stabilised at 25.7 percent, suggesting that many learners had transitioned beyond basic recognition into higher literacy levels. Non-intervention schools, however, remained stagnant, with a large share of pupils struggling with foundational recognition.

Word recognition followed a similar trajectory. Intervention schools recorded 21.2 percent at midline, recovering to 24.3 percent at endline. This pattern indicates consolidation of basic literacy before advancing further. Girls consistently outperformed boys in word recognition, reflecting the effectiveness of gender-responsive pedagogy.

Paragraph recognition proved more challenging. Intervention schools achieved a breakthrough at midline, with 12.2 percent of learners able to read short paragraphs fluently. By endline, this figure declined to 7.9 percent, suggesting difficulties in sustaining progress at this stage. Non-intervention schools stagnated at around 2.5 percent, underscoring the importance of structured support.

Story recognition improved steadily, rising from 7.5 percent at baseline to 13.8 percent at endline. Boys demonstrated stronger late-stage gains, overtaking girls at endline. This suggests that boys benefited from peer learning and oral storytelling activities in Reading Clubs.

Comprehension, the highest literacy level assessed, showed the most dramatic improvement. Intervention schools recorded a six-fold increase, rising from 2.7 percent at baseline to 17.8 percent at endline. Girls maintained a slight lead over boys, with 15.9 percent achieving comprehension

Overall Impact Conclusion

The endline evaluation confirms that literacy outcomes in programme schools have **improved significantly compared to comparison schools**. Learners in **intervention schools** reduced their share at the lowest literacy stage (**Initial Level**) more effectively and achieved **more than double the gains in Reading Comprehension: 17.8% vs. 8.7%**.

Donor investments are directly linked to **measurable improvements in foundational and higher-order literacy skills**, validating the programme's inclusive design and effectiveness.

Key Messages



Programme Schools Outperform

Halved the lowest-level learners and **doubled comprehension gains**.



Gender-Responsive Pedagogy




Girls lead in literacy, boys show late-stage gains in recognition.



Reading Clubs Lift Early Deficits

No club members at the Initial Level, confirming early effectiveness gap elimination.

Key Insights: Intervention vs. Non-Intervention Schools

 <p>Fewer Learners at Initial Level</p> <p>10.53% vs. 27.16%</p>	 <p>Comprehension Gains Doubled</p> <p>17.76% vs. 8.65%</p>	 <p>Story Recognition Success</p> <p>13.82% vs. 3.70%</p>
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compared to 13.3 percent of boys. Non-intervention schools achieved only 8.7 percent comprehension at endline, confirming the program’s effectiveness in building higher-order literacy.

Overall, the Primary 2 trajectory demonstrates that the program successfully reduced the proportion of learners at the lowest literacy levels and steadily increased those achieving

comprehension. However, sustaining midline gains in paragraph recognition remains a challenge, requiring targeted instructional reinforcement.

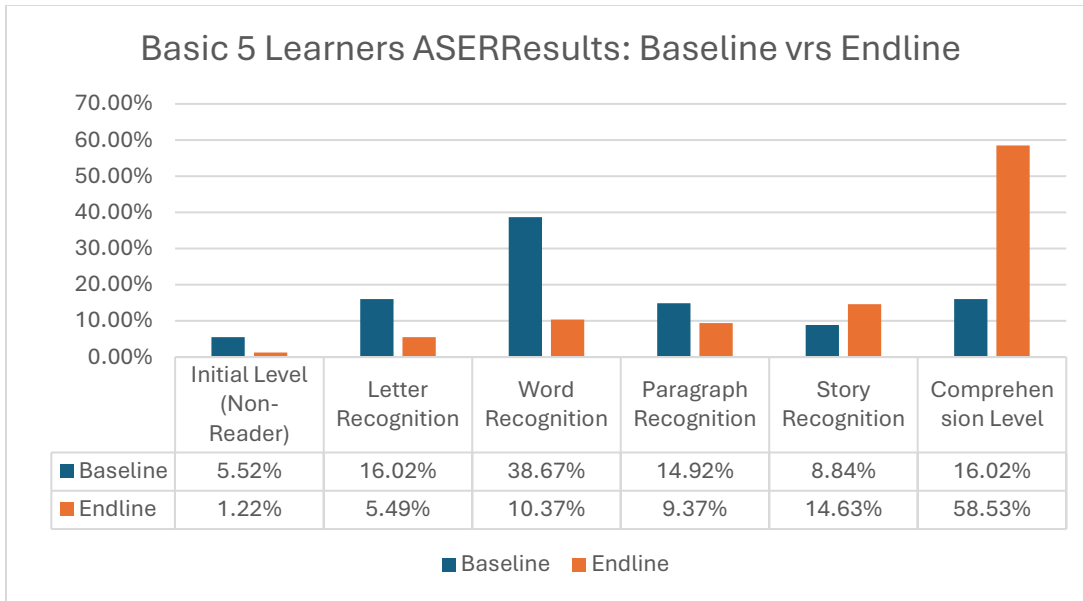
Primary 5 Findings

ASER Literacy Trend Analysis – Primary 5

Overall English Literacy Performance of Primary 5 Intervention Learners

The ASER English Literacy assessment results between baseline and endline demonstrate clear progress in learners’ literacy skills, validating the impact of the Reading Ghana – Western Region program.

Figure 1: ASER Literacy Trends – Primary 5 Intervention Learners



Key Findings

- Reduction in Non-Readers:** At baseline, approximately 5% of learners were classified at the Initial Level (Non-Reader category). By endline, this reduced substantially to about 1%. This decline suggests that the project interventions successfully supported struggling learners and enabled many previously non-reading learners to acquire basic literacy skills
- Improvement in Letter Recognition:** Learners demonstrating proficiency in Letter Recognition reduced from approximately 16% at baseline to about 5% at endline. While this may appear as a decline, it reflects learner progression to more advanced reading levels rather than stagnation. Many learners moved beyond basic letter identification into higher-order reading competencies such as word and comprehension recognition.
- Transition from Word Recognition to Higher Reading Levels:** At baseline, the majority of learners (approximately 38%) were concentrated at the Word Recognition level. By endline, this reduced significantly to about 10%, indicating that many learners progressed from basic word decoding to more advanced literacy skills, including paragraph reading and comprehension.
- Paragraph Recognition Performance:** Paragraph Recognition levels showed a moderate reduction from approximately 15% at baseline to about 9% at endline. Similar to the trend observed in word recognition, this suggests learner advancement into higher reading proficiency categories rather than regression.

- **Story Recognition:** Story Recognition improved from approximately 9% at baseline to about 14% at endline. This demonstrates increased learner ability to read connected text with greater fluency and understanding.
- **Significant Improvement in Comprehension Skills:** The most notable improvement was recorded in Comprehension Level performance. At baseline, only about 16% of learners demonstrated comprehension proficiency, while endline results increased dramatically to approximately 58%. This indicates substantial gains in learners' ability not only to read text but also to understand, interpret, and respond meaningfully to what they read

Interpretation

The ASER results confirm that the program is successfully reducing the proportion of learners at the lowest literacy levels while enabling progression into connected text and comprehension.

- **Positive Trajectory:** The sharp decline in Initial Level scores and the breakthrough in comprehension demonstrate the program's effectiveness in building foundational and advanced literacy skills.
- **Skill Progression:** Learners are transitioning from recognition stages (letters and words) into connected text (paragraphs and stories), validating the impact of structured interventions such as teacher training, reading clubs, and provision of teaching and learning materials.
- **Impact:** These results provide strong evidence that investments are yielding measurable improvements in literacy outcomes, equipping learners with skills essential for long-term educational success.

8.6 Gender Comparison – ASER English Literacy Progress (Primary 5 Intervention Learners)

The ASER English Literacy assessment results across baseline and endline highlight distinct gender patterns in literacy progression among Primary 5 intervention learners.

Gender-Disaggregated ASER Literacy Trends –Primary 5 Intervention Learners

Key Findings

- **Reduction in Lowest Levels:** Both girls and boys reduced their share at the Initial Level to less than 1%
- **Story Recognition Divergence:** The boys outperformed the girls at the Story Recognition level. The boys peaked at 10.97% but the Girls declined to 3.66% at the endline.
- **Comprehension Level:** Girls continue to outperform boys at the comprehension level. The girls surged (**56.25%**) while the boys improved to **43.75%** at endline.

Overall Interpretation Primary 5 ASER results

The endline assessment findings demonstrate that the Reading Ghana Project contributed significantly to improving foundational literacy skills among participating learners. The data reflects clear learner progression from lower-level reading competencies toward higher-order comprehension skills.

The sharp increase in comprehension performance particularly highlights the effectiveness of the project's integrated interventions, including teacher training, coaching and mentoring, classroom support, provision of teaching and learning materials, and learner-centered instructional approaches.

The reduction in learners within lower competency levels combined with increased performance in advanced reading categories suggests that the project successfully strengthened reading fluency, confidence, and understanding among learners.

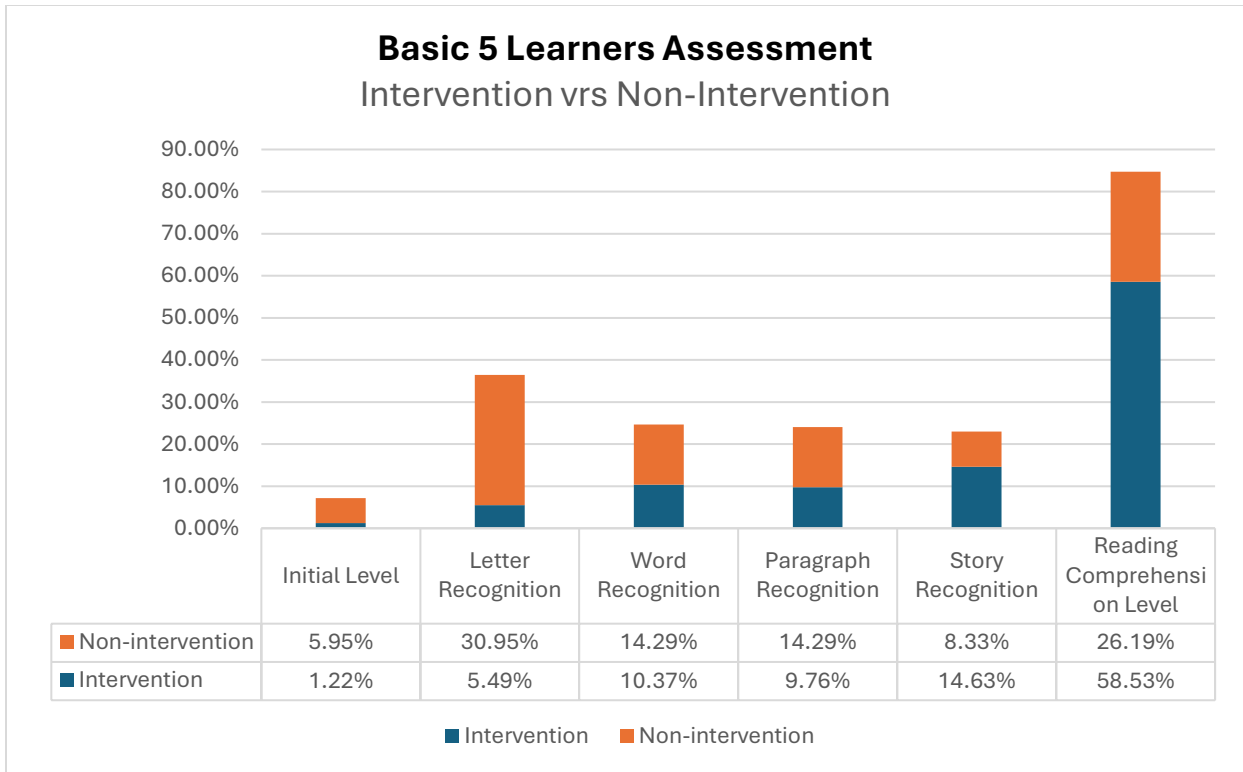
Conclusion

The Endline Learners Assessment confirms that the Reading Ghana Project made meaningful contributions toward improving literacy outcomes in participating schools. Learners demonstrated measurable progress across key reading indicators, with the greatest gains observed in comprehension and higher-level reading abilities.

These findings underscore the importance of sustained teacher support, continuous literacy instruction, and targeted interventions in improving foundational learning outcomes. Continued investment in literacy-focused programs will be essential to sustaining and further expanding the gains achieved under the project.

8.7 Comparative ASER Literacy Analysis – Primary 5 Intervention vs. Non-Intervention Schools

Figure 2: Literacy Progress in Intervention vs. Non-Intervention Schools (Primary 5)



The endline assessment revealed substantial improvement in literacy outcomes among learners in intervention schools compared to non-intervention schools.

The findings indicate a remarkable increase in the proportion of learners reaching comprehension level, rising from **16.02%** at baseline to **58.53%** at endline. This suggests that the literacy interventions significantly improved learners' ability to read fluently and understand texts.

Additionally, the reduction in learners categorized as non-readers and letter readers demonstrates positive learner progression from foundational reading stages toward higher reading competencies.

Although some improvements were observed in non-intervention schools, the progress was comparatively lower than that recorded in intervention schools.

The proportion of learners achieving comprehension level increased modestly from 18.18% to 26.19%, while the percentage of learners remaining at lower reading levels such as letter reader remained relatively high.

Key Findings

Significant Improvement in Comprehension: Intervention schools recorded a major increase in comprehension-level learners from 16.02% to 58.53%, while non-intervention schools increased from 18.18% to 26.19%. This suggests that learners exposed to project-supported literacy interventions developed stronger reading fluency and comprehension skills.

Reduction in Non-Readers: Intervention schools reduced non-readers from 5.52% to 1.22%, whereas non-intervention schools experienced an increase from 3.64% to 5.95%. This indicates stronger learner progression within intervention schools.

Transition from Lower to Higher Reading Levels: Learners in intervention schools moved steadily from letter and word reading levels into paragraph reading and comprehension stages. This demonstrates improved mastery of foundational literacy skills.

Improved Teacher Effectiveness: The improved learner outcomes in intervention schools suggest that teacher training, coaching, mentoring, and literacy support activities contributed positively to classroom instruction and learner engagement.

Conclusion

The endline learners' assessment findings demonstrate that the Reading Ghana Project made a significant contribution toward improving literacy outcomes among learners in intervention schools.

The substantial increase in learners reaching comprehension level, coupled with the reduction in non-readers and lower-level readers, reflects the effectiveness of the project's literacy interventions and teacher support strategies.

Comparatively, intervention schools outperformed non-intervention schools across most reading competency levels, providing strong evidence that targeted literacy interventions can lead to measurable improvements in learner achievement.

The results further highlight the importance of sustained teacher support, learner engagement activities, and continuous literacy-focused interventions in improving foundational reading skills.

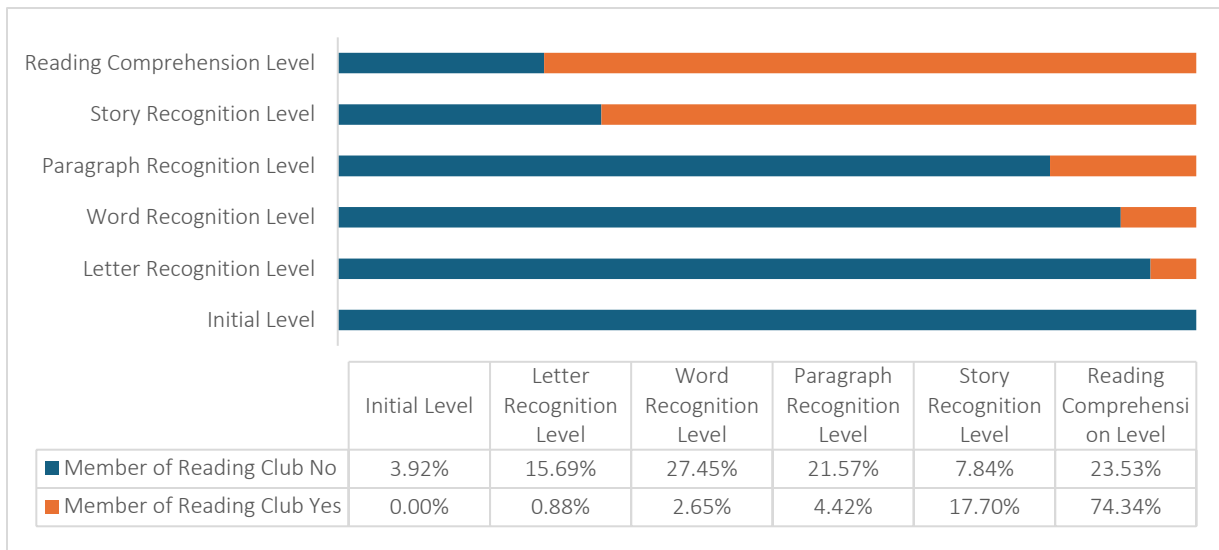
opportunities to consolidate progress at the comprehension stage while scaling successful strategies across all schools.

8.7 Effectiveness of Student Reading Clubs – Literacy Performance Among Primary 5 Learners in Intervention Schools

Participation

Out of **164 Primary 5 learners** in intervention schools, **113 (69%)** were active Reading Club members, while **51 (31%)** were non-members. This high participation rate demonstrates strong uptake of the programme’s peer-learning model and provides a robust basis for comparative analysis.

Figure 3: Literacy Performance Distribution – Reading Club Members vs. Non-Members (Primary 5 Intervention Schools)



Key Findings

- **Initial Level:** No Reading Club member remained at the Initial Level (**0.0%**), compared to **3.9%** of non-members — confirming the club’s success in lifting learners out of the lowest literacy tier.
- **Letter Recognition:** Only **0.9%** of Reading Club members were at Letter Recognition, compared to **15.7%** of non-members — showing accelerated foundational progress among club participants.
- **Word Recognition:** Just **2.7%** of Reading Club members were at Word Recognition, compared to **27.5%** of non-members — highlighting stronger movement beyond basic decoding skills.
- **Paragraph Recognition:** **4.4%** of Reading Club members remained at Paragraph Recognition, compared to **21.6%** of non-members — indicating faster progression into connected text reading.
- **Story Recognition:** **17.7%** of Reading Club members reached Story Recognition, more than double the **7.8%** of non-members — showing clear programme impact on narrative reading.
- **Reading Comprehension:** A striking **74.3%** of Reading Club members achieved Reading Comprehension, compared to only **23.5%** of non-members — more than

threefold higher, confirming the club’s effectiveness in advancing higher-order literacy.

Interpretation

The data demonstrates that Reading Clubs are a high-impact intervention within Primary 2 classrooms. With nearly **70% of learners participating**, the clubs are enabling members to consistently outperform non-members across all literacy stages, especially in comprehension and story recognition. The near elimination of club members in the lowest tiers (Initial, Letter, and Word Recognition) underscores the effectiveness of structured peer learning, guided practice, and targeted support.

Impact

Donor investments in Reading Clubs are yielding **transformational literacy outcomes**. With nearly **three-quarters of club members achieving comprehension** compared to less than one-quarter of non-members, the clubs are proving to be a scalable, high-impact strategy. These results validate the program’s inclusive design and highlight Reading Clubs as a cornerstone intervention for accelerating literacy and bridging performance gaps in Ghana’s primary schools.

8.8 Overall Impact Conclusion – Primary 5

The endline evaluation confirms that literacy outcomes in program schools have improved significantly compared to comparison schools. Learners in intervention schools reduced their share at the lowest literacy stage (Initial Level) more effectively and achieved a major breakthrough at the **Comprehension Level** (58.5% vs. 26.2% in non-intervention schools). This demonstrates that donor investments are directly linked to measurable improvements in foundational and connected-text literacy skills, validating the program’s inclusive design and effectiveness.

Gender-disaggregated analysis shows that teachers are applying gender-responsive, learner-centred pedagogy. Girls consistently outperform boys in foundational literacy (letter recognition) and comprehension, while boys demonstrate late-stage gains in story recognition. These patterns reflect the program’s success in fostering equitable classroom practices..

Student reading clubs are functioning as intended, with **69% of Primary 5 learners participating**. Club members **consistently** outperformed non-members: none remained at the Initial Level, only 0.9% were at Letter Recognition, and just 2.7% at Word Recognition, compared to much higher proportions among non-members. Most strikingly, **74.3% of club members achieved Reading Comprehension compared to 23.5% of non-members**, confirming the clubs’ effectiveness in advancing higher-order literacy. These results highlight reading clubs as a cornerstone intervention.

Conclusion: Donor support has enabled program schools to achieve substantial improvements in literacy outcomes, with clear evidence of stronger performance compared to comparison schools. Teachers are applying gender-responsive pedagogy, and reading clubs are accelerating literacy progression by eliminating early deficits and driving comprehension gains. To maximize impact, future programming should focus on sustaining comprehension, strengthening boys' foundational progress, and enhancing the instructional quality of reading clubs. Together, these strategies will consolidate achievements and ensure equitable, long-term educational success for Primary 5 learners.

8.9 ASER Conclusions

The endline ASER results provide robust evidence of literacy improvements in program schools compared to non-intervention schools:

- **Reduction in Lowest Levels:** In Primary 2, learners at the Initial Level dropped from **25.2% at baseline to 10.5% at endline**, while non-intervention schools remained much higher at **27.2%**. In Primary 5, only **1.2%** of intervention learners were still at the Initial Level compared to **5.9%** in non-intervention schools.
- **Progression into Fluency:** Intervention learners moved beyond basic recognition stages. Primary 5 showed a **rise from 16.5% at baseline to 58.5% at endline**, compared to just **26.2%** in non-intervention schools.
- **Comprehension Gains:** Primary 2 learners achieved more than **double the comprehension outcomes** of non-intervention peers (**17.8% vs. 8.7%**). Reading clubs were especially effective, with **40% of members reaching comprehension compared to 13% of non-members**. In Primary 5, comprehension rose **from 16.02 at Baseline to 58.53%** suggesting a drastic improvement (breakthrough) in learners' comprehension skills
- **Story Recognition:** Gains were evident across both cohorts. Primary 2 intervention learners improved from **7.5% to 13.8%**, while Primary 5 learners rose from **8.3% to 14.6%**, outpacing non-intervention peers.
- **Gender Patterns:** The endline results revealed that while girls in intervention school outperformed the boys at the comprehension Level (56.25% vrs 43.75), boys in non-intervention schools outperformed the girls. Primary 5 girls outperformed the boys at **56.25%** against **43.75%** while Primary 2 girls also did **15.9% comprehension vs. 13.3% for boys**). The assessment results revealed a significant difference in reading comprehension outcomes between girls in intervention schools and those in non-intervention schools. Girls in intervention schools achieved a comprehension level of **56.25%**, compared to **41.0%** among girls in non-intervention schools. This represents a difference of **15.25 percentage points**, highlighting the positive impact of the Reading Ghana Project on girls' literacy

development. The findings suggest that girls who participated in Reading Ghana intervention schools benefited from a learning environment that intentionally addressed barriers to participation and learning through the application of gender-responsive pedagogies. The comparatively lower performance of girls in non-intervention schools may suggest the absence of similar structured literacy support and gender-responsive teaching approaches. These trends validate the program’s integration of gender-responsive pedagogies in the classroom

- **Overall Conclusion:** Donor investments have enabled program schools to achieve substantial improvements in both fluency and comprehension. Learners are transitioning into higher-order literacy skills, teachers are applying gender-responsive practices, and reading clubs are reducing early literacy deficits. To consolidate these achievements, future programming should focus on strengthening boys’ foundational progress and enhancing the instructional quality of reading clubs.

Chapter 9: Key Findings and Recommendations

9.0 Introduction

The endline evaluation of the Reading Ghana Western Region (RGWR) Program provides clear evidence that the initiative achieved its core objectives of improving literacy outcomes, strengthening pedagogy, and deepening community engagement. Across all levels—classroom, school, district, and community—the program generated measurable progress and built systems that can sustain these gains. This chapter distills the key findings and presents strategic recommendations to guide future programming, scale-up, and institutionalisation within the Ghana Education Service (GES).

9.1 Key Findings

1. Improved Literacy Outcomes:

Learners in intervention schools demonstrated significant progress in reading fluency, comprehension, and confidence. Primary 2 comprehension rose from 2.7 percent at baseline to 17.8 percent at endline, while Primary 5 paragraph recognition surged from 16.5 percent to 58.5 percent. These gains confirm that structured literacy interventions—particularly Reading Clubs, supplementary readers, and dedicated reading time—were effective in transforming learning outcomes.

2. Enhanced Teacher Pedagogy:

Teachers in intervention schools adopted learner-centered approaches, integrated phonics and guided reading, and demonstrated stronger classroom management.

- At endline, 36.4 percent of intervention teachers were rated “Excellent” in pedagogy compared to none in non-intervention schools. Continuous professional development and coaching proved decisive in improving instructional quality.
3. **Strengthened Community Engagement:**
PTAs and SMCs moved from passive to active involvement. Parents monitored attendance, supported reading at home, and contributed resources for school improvement. Community ownership emerged as a key factor in sustaining program gains.
 4. **System-Level Support and Sustainability:**
District Directorates integrated RGWR components into planning and training frameworks. SISOs provided ongoing coaching, and reading time was protected within school timetables. These measures lay the foundation for long-term sustainability within GES systems.

Persistent Challenges: Despite progress, teacher shortages, large class sizes, and limited materials continue to affect instruction. Socio-economic factors such as child labour and absenteeism also undermine learning. Addressing these systemic issues is essential for consolidating gains.

9.2 Recommendations

1. **Institutionalise Continuous Teacher Professional Development**
Embed structured literacy training within GES professional development frameworks. Regular coaching, mentoring, and Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions should be sustained and expanded to non-intervention schools. This will ensure consistency in pedagogical quality and reduce disparities across districts.
2. **Expand Access to Supplementary Reading Materials**
Increase the quantity and variety of age-appropriate and levelled readers. Establish mechanisms for replenishment and maintenance to prevent shortages. Partnerships with local publishers and private sector actors can enhance supply and reduce costs.
3. **Formalise Reading Clubs and Structured Reading Time**
Reading Clubs should be institutionalised as a core component of school literacy programs. Dedicated reading time must be protected within timetables and monitored by school leadership. This will ensure that reading practice remains consistent and embedded in daily learning.
4. **Promote Learner-Centered and Inclusive Pedagogy**
Training should continue to emphasise active learning, gender responsiveness, and support for struggling readers. Teachers should be equipped with practical strategies to differentiate instruction and create inclusive classrooms that engage all learners.
5. **Strengthen Community and Parental Engagement**
Sustain awareness campaigns to encourage parents to support reading at home. PTAs and SMCs should be empowered to mobilise resources and monitor school performance. Community ownership is vital for long-term sustainability.

6. Address Systemic Challenges and Resource Gaps

Collaborate with education authorities to improve teacher deployment, reduce class sizes, and enhance learning conditions. Targeted support for rural schools will help bridge equity gaps.

7. Scale Effective Practices to Non-Intervention Schools

Given the positive outcomes observed, successful components such as structured literacy strategies, coaching models, and Reading Clubs should be replicated in non-intervention schools within the districts and beyond.

8. Ensure Sustainability and System Integration

Integrate RGWR interventions into GES policies and district plans. Building ownership at district and school levels will be critical for continuity and scale. Donor support should focus on capacity building and system strengthening rather than short-term inputs.

9.3 Conclusion

The Reading Ghana Western Region (RGWR) Program has demonstrated that targeted, well-structured literacy interventions can deliver transformative results when anchored in strong teacher development, community participation, and system-level leadership. Across the evaluation cycle—from baseline through midline to endline—the program consistently improved pupils’ reading fluency, comprehension, and confidence, while strengthening the pedagogical capacity of teachers and the accountability of schools.

The evidence confirms that intervention schools achieved measurable progress: learners advanced from basic letter recognition to paragraph reading and comprehension; teachers adopted learner-centered, gender-responsive approaches; and communities became active partners in education. District Directorates institutionalised program components, ensuring that reading time, coaching, and monitoring are now embedded within Ghana Education Service (GES) structures.

These achievements extend beyond numbers—they represent a cultural shift toward valuing literacy as the foundation of learning. Pupils now see reading as a source of pride and possibility; teachers view literacy instruction as a professional craft; and parents recognise their role in sustaining progress.

Yet the evaluation also highlights areas requiring continued attention: persistent teacher shortages, large class sizes, and limited materials threaten to slow momentum. Addressing these systemic challenges will be essential for consolidating gains and scaling success.

In closing, the RGWR Program stands as a model of effective collaboration between donors, government, and communities. Its outcomes affirm that when evidence-based strategies are combined with local ownership, literacy can flourish even in resource-constrained settings. Sustaining and expanding these interventions will not only preserve the progress achieved but also advance Ghana’s broader goal of ensuring that every child can read, learn, and thrive.

Annexes

Annex 1: Extended Team Composition

Detailed list of enumerators, supervisors, and school assignments during the endline evaluation. Includes team members' names, roles, and the schools they covered across Tarkwa Nsuaem and Prestea Huni Valley.

Table 1: Details of Endline Team

	TEAM 1	TEAM 2	TEAM 3	TEAM 4
	1. Leonard Nubuasah	1. Philip Blebo	1. Ernestina Tetteh	1. Joseph K. Nuako
	2. Emmanuel Nketsiah	2. Sandra Gyimah	2. Samuel Osei	2. Anthony Mensah
	3. Benjamin Marfo	3. Albert Quayson	3. Srajj Abdulai	3. Rhoda Sangmorkie
	4. Francis Acquah		4. Hamad Feizoure	4. Agnes Aziliku
1	Goldfields Basic Sch.	Damang R/C	Aboso Methodist Primary	Huniso Methodist
2	Richard Graeme M/A Basic School	Koduakrom M/A Basic	Amoanda M/A Basic	Awudua R/C
3	Wangarakrom/Badukrom M/A Basic	Subri T.I. Ahmadiyya	Hunivass Basic	Abekoase/Tebe M/A Basic
Control Schools				
5	Akyem Methodist Primary	Kuranti M/A Basic	Aboso Nsuaem M/A Basic	St. Augustine Anglican Primary
6	Tarkwa John Taylor	FDG with Prestea Huni-Valley DEO	Atwereboanda M/A Basic	FDG with Tarkwa Nsuaem DEO
	TEAM 1	TEAM 2	TEAM 3	TEAM 4
	5. Leonard Nubuasah	4. Philip Blebo	5. Ernestina Tetteh	5. Joseph K. Nuako

	TEAM 1	TEAM 2	TEAM 3	TEAM 4
	6. Emmanuel Nketsiah	5. Sandra Gyimah	6. Samuel Osei	6. Anthony Mensah
	7. Benjamin Marfo	6. Albert Quayson	7. Srajj Abdulai	7. Rhoda Sangmorkie
	8. Francis Acquah		8. Hamad Feizoure	8. Agnes Aziliku
1	Goldfields Basic Sch.	Damang R/C	Aboso Methodist Primary	Huniso Methodist
2	Richard Graeme M/A Basic School	Koduakrom M/A Basic	Amoanda M/A Basic	Awudua R/C
3	Wangarakrom/Badukrom M/A Basic	Subri T.I. Ahmadiyya	Hunivass Basic	Abekoase/Tebe M/A Basic
Control Schools				
5	Akyem Methodist Primary	Kuranti M/A Basic	Aboso Nsuaem M/A Basic	St. Augustine Anglican Primary
6	Tarkwa John Taylor	FDG with Prestea Huni-Valley DEO	Atwereboanda M/A Basic	FDG with Tarkwa Nsuaem DEO

Annex 2: Sampling Tables

- **Table A2.1:** Sample size for Primary 2 and Primary 5 learners, disaggregated by gender and school type (intervention vs. non-intervention).

Grade Level	Basic 2		Basic 5	
	Intervention	Non Intervention	Intervention	Non Intervention
School Type				
No. Schools	6	3	6	3
Male	83	37	84	41
Female	69	44	80	43
Total	152	81	164	84

Annex 3: Data Collection Instruments

- School Checklist (infrastructure, enrolment, resources).
- Lesson Observation Tool (language use, pedagogy, gender sensitivity, questioning skills, pupil participation, evaluation, TLMs).
- Teacher Interview Guide (educational background, instructional strategies, challenges).
- PTA/SMC FGD Guide (community engagement, parental support, resource mobilisation).
- Student FGD Guide (reading habits, club participation, challenges).
- District Directorate FGD Guide (implementation, sustainability measures).
- ASER English Tool (P2 and P5 literacy assessments).