



Nurturing reading cultures and literacies in post-pandemic ecosystems

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How sustainable is the Room to Read Literacy Program after the 4 year support has been fulfilled?.

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Room to Read

Purpose of the study

- Identify best practices and risks associated with the sustainability of Room to Read's literacy program in schools
- Develop guidelines outlining how curriculum advisors/Department of Basic Education can support project schools after Room to Read's commitment has been fulfilled
- Share best practices with currently active project schools to develop an effective sustainability plan

Sample characteristics

- Schools – Probability sampling, simple random sampling technique
- Participants – Non-probability sampling, purposive sampling technique

- 8 schools were sampled
- 24 respondents interviewed (22 in schools, 2 circuit managers)

- Each school was represented by 4 participants: School Principal, Foundation Phase HOD, Classroom Instruction Teacher, and Teacher Librarian

Data collection

- A mixed method approach was used to collect data from participants

Qualitative approach:

- Semi-structured interviews (Principals, HODs, Teachers and Teacher Librarians)

Quantitative approach:

- Quantitative data was gathered through the use of the RtR Library Rating System (LRS) forms

Findings

1. Majority of schools continued implementing the Literacy Program after Room to Read's commitment was fulfilled

- a) Majority of program schools have continued with the classroom instruction and library activities post RtR support
- b) Library activities have been sustained more than classroom activities post RtR support
- c) Library Ratings revealed that all libraries were” developing”. (3 library ratings: Developing – ensuring a literate environment and professional development; Functioning – ensuring a literate environment and professional development + making time to read; Highly Functioning – ensuring a literate environment and professional development; Functioning – ensuring a literate environment and professional development + making time to read + family and community engagement)

Finding 1 continued

- d) Teacher librarians and classroom teachers were satisfied with the support received from their colleagues and community members, but felt that the support received from the Department of Basic Education is minimal

- e) The Department of Basic Education is showing support for sustainability to enhance teacher skills and knowledge through the training of Foundation phase HODs

2. Threats associated with the sustainability of the Literacy Program

- a) Classroom teachers find it difficult to integrate RtR work and the newly implemented NECT work
- b) Poor orientation of new foundation phase teachers into the literacy program activities.
- c) Overcrowding in schools affects the classroom and library teaching and learning process

Finding 2 continuation

- d) The absence of community volunteers and library support from other teachers in the library interferes with library activities being carried out

- e) Libraries experience book losses and damages to books but if the damage is minor they use tape to fix and reshelve

3. Best practices associated with the sustainability of the Literacy Program

- a) Schools have incorporated their sustainability plan into the school development plan
- b) Schools managed to add new books to their library shelves through fundraising efforts
- c) Schools continue to use Room to Read library management systems such as accession registers and checkout cards to inform their monitoring of the library

Recommendations

- a) Room to Read to collaborate with NECT in finding ways to support teachers in schools where both programs are active
- b) At least 2 to 3 school staff should be trained on library management so they can assist the teacher librarian in case the school does not have a volunteer
- c) Room to Read Literacy Program workshops should place more emphasis on training school staff to be able to orientate new foundation phase teachers in both the classroom and the library
- d) Schools to engage communities and parent association to support and retain volunteers

Thank you!!!