



EARLY GRADE READING

Enhancing learning outcomes in North-East Nigeria

Since May 2019, the American University of Nigeria (AUN) with funding from USAID has been implementing a 3-year early grade reading intervention called Strengthening Education in North-East Nigeria States (SENSE) in Adamawa and Gombe States. The Activity has invested nearly N2,747,000,000 in the two states to improve reading outcomes for 200,000 learners of which ₦420,223,533.81 was spent in the provision of instructional materials to grade 1-3 learners and teachers in over 300 primary schools.



OVERVIEW

The SENSE Activity is determined to improve the quality of early grade reading instruction for girls and boys in Primary 1-3 across 335 schools in Adamawa and Gombe states (246 in Adamawa and 89 in Gombe). To do this, the SENSE Activity has adopted a three-pronged education systems strengthening approach: the provision of quality, context-sensitive teaching and learning materials; training, coaching and mentoring of teachers and education managers; and continuous community engagement to garner parental and community support. These efforts are expected to improve the learning outcomes of 200,000 primary school children across Adamawa and Gombe states.

ACTIVITIES

PROVISION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS



Since May 2019, the SENSE Activity has provided **136,156** learners in Adamawa and Gombe state with a pupil's workbook (textbook), school bags stocked with stationery, and access to one million supplementary reading materials at the school level.

Each of the 335 SENSE focus schools has been provided with at least one set of supplementary readers of 2,500 books contained in two large plastic boxes. The distribution of instructional materials in both states was highly successful with strong collaboration from the MOEs, SUBEB, LGEAs and SBMCs in the two states.

TRAINING AND PROVISION OF SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS

The SENSE Activity has provided intensive training for 3,245 teachers of grade 1-3 on the use of RANA and Mu Karanta Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) in addition to Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) training for effective classroom management. So far, 2,594 teachers (Male 1,238 and Female 1,356) in Adamawa and Gombe state are effectively using the materials provided by the SENSE Activity.

All teachers in SENSE focus schools who teach RANA or Mu Karanta lessons have been coached on how to develop customized teaching aids to create a print-rich and interactive learning environment within their classrooms. This coaching takes place in the 22 Teacher Resource Centers (TRC) refurbished by the SENSE Activity across the two states (one in each of the 22 SENSE intervention LGAs across Adamawa and Gombe states). SENSE continues to strengthen the capacity of teachers to deliver conflict-sensitive instruction by integrating SEL training and providing ongoing coaching and mentoring support as well as routine classroom observations to ensure the effective use of Hausa-based early grade materials in SENSE schools. For sustainability, state-employed School Support Officers (SSOs) have been trained by SENSE to provide support supervision to teachers.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT

SENSE engages closely with communities to strengthen education provision. SENSE currently works with 88 School Based Management Committee (SBMCs) to enhance their capacity to perform their roles and responsibilities. This includes the effective implementation of activities outlined within their School Development Plans (SDPs) with a focus on activities aimed at improving reading outcomes for learners. In addition, the SENSE Activity has recruited and trained 88 Community Education Volunteers (CEVs) - one from each of the 88 SBMCs. These CEVs are given a stipend by SENSE to facilitate the effective operation of SBMCs in the respective schools.

From October 2020 to September 2021, the SENSE Activity will onboard an additional 112 SBMCs to provide support to their schools through the monitoring of teaching and learning activities and the identification and mitigation of the barriers towards educational access within their communities.

TEACHER RESOURCE CENTER SUPPORT

To promote the continuous creation of simple teaching and learning manipulatives that will enhance interactive learner-centered environment within classrooms, the SENSE activity established Teacher Resource Centers (TRCs). The establishment of the Teacher Resource Center (TRCs) across the SENSE intervention 22 LGAs was a collaborative effort between the SENSE Activity and the governments of Adamawa and Gombe states. As part of the SENSE Activity's system strengthening objective, the two states were invited to provide a space where each TRC would be located. Next, the SENSE Activity refurbished the identified spaces and provided materials needed for teachers to produce simple teaching aids for use in their classrooms. To date, 22 TRCs (11 in Adamawa and 11 in Gombe) have been established with each located in a central location within the 22 LGAs.



The primary reason for establishing TRCs at the LGA level was for ease of access by the teachers in all schools within each LGA. The availability of these simple teacher-made learning manipulatives will make the learning environment in the classrooms print rich thus enhancing reading outcome. The Teacher Resource Center is therefore a means to an end - putting the learner at the center of learning. The activities of the TRCs are managed by a qualified LGEA staff appointed by the Education Secretary of each LGA and trained by SENSE to effectively carry out the assigned roles and responsibilities.

About SENSE: The Strengthening Education in North-East Nigeria States (SENSE) Activity is a USAID-funded early grade reading program implemented by the American University of Nigeria (AUN) in Yola through the Atiku Institute of Development (AID). The primary focus of this Activity is to improve reading skills through context-sensitive mother tongue instruction in close partnership with the Ministries of Education, State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEB) and Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) across 246 public schools in Adamawa and 89 public schools in Gombe state. The SENSE Activity strengthens capacity of teachers and education administrators to be more productive, accountable and deliver on their mandates.

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