



Save the Children

Qualitative Evaluation of Save the Children's First Steps Program in Rwanda

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Introduction

The Government of Rwanda has realized that early grade reading competency is critical for continued retention and success in future grades. Driving the government's renewed focus on language and literacy are the results of a national Early Grades Reading Assessment (EGRA) conducted in 2011 that showed Rwanda's fourth and sixth grade students were still struggling to read and comprehend second to third-grade level texts in Kinyarwanda and English. The 2011 EGRA study also used its reading data to analyze factors associated with better student performance. The study cited four broad categories that most correlated with how children fared in their reading: 1) the instructional environment, 2) the school environment, 3) the home reading culture, and 4) the socioeconomic status of students' families. In its work to improve children's early grades reading skills in developing contexts in Asia and Africa, Save the Children has found similar correlations.

Save the Children and Umuhuza are implementing a parenting education program called First Steps (FS), "Intera za Mbere" for parents of children aged 0 -3 years in Ngororero district. This project is designed based on the 2014/15 implementation experience and learning from First Read Project which was implemented by Save the Children and Umuhuza in this particular district from April 2014 – May 2015. This project which is part of the wider Save the Children Rwanda Advancing the Right to Read Programme (ARR) brings together groups of parents and children to attend a training programme for parents and play based learning for children. Parents learn among other things, simple activities that they can do at home with their children to facilitate Holistic Early Childhood Development. This holistic approach includes: providing parenting education and opportunities for community reading activities; providing children with access to high quality reading materials in their local language; developing a culture of literacy and learning that emphasizes the value of literacy and creates opportunities for children to practice and enjoy reading together. The aim of this program is to equip families with knowledge and skills in parenting practices, child development indicators and emergent literacy promotion in the home.

First Steps Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) was implemented in Ngororero district using three different interventions conditions from August 2015 – September 2016. Umuhuza, a nongovernmental organization that has worked in Ngororero, implements First Steps (FS) on behalf of Save the Children. In the first group, parents attend parenting education sessions facilitated by radio, supported by a local volunteer that has received a 3-day trainings and a basic package of training materials. In the second group, parents receive the same package above but with additional learning materials. The local volunteer also receives training on how to use materials, book gifting. At the same time, a facilitator supports the local volunteers in guiding group sessions and conducting home visits in group two. In addition to all the three trial conditions, a local bookseller component was established in each of the communities to show different patterns of book purchasing behaviors. The last group, the control only has booksellers available in their communities. . Throughout this report, these groups will be called Arm 1, Arm 2, and control respectively. A summary of the modalities follows:

- Arm 1 (Light Intervention): Parents attend parenting education sessions facilitated by radio, supported by a local volunteer that has received 3 day trainings and a basic package of training materials;
- Arm 2 (Full Intervention): Parents attend parenting education sessions facilitated by radio, supported by a local volunteer that has received a full package of materials and an additional training for the volunteer on how to use them, book gifting to participating families, plus a salaried area facilitator supporting the local volunteers in guiding group sessions and conducting home visits.
- Arm 3: Control

Research Questions

The purpose of this evaluation is to better understand the impact of First Steps programming on parents, children, and broader community in Ngororero. The evaluation research questions were:

- Are First Steps activities sustained over time? What are the critical success factors for this?
- What are the benefits of the parenting education program on parents, children and larger community?
- What are the factors influencing book buying behaviors of rural communities in Ngororero?
- What are the critical success factors for building children's book seller chains in rural hard to reach areas?
- Does parenting education influence book buying behaviors of parents?

Research Methods and Ethics

Research design and instruments were developed in consultation with Save the Children Rwanda and Save the Children US staff. Interview protocols for parents, community leaders, community facilitator volunteers, and children were developed and written in English and later translated into Kinyarwanda.

Data collection was conducted in two phases using structured interviews and focus group discussions. In phase one, parents, community facilitators, booksellers, local leaders in the program intervention district, and Umuhuza staff in Ngororero were interviewed. Given that the program is implemented by Umuhuza, the principal investigator (PI) worked with Umuhuza staff to select research participants for inclusion in the study. The PI submitted a list of groups to be interviewed to Umuhuza staff in Kigali who worked with their counterparts in Ngororero to choose participants. Umuhuza Ngororero staff purposively sampled participants who were willing to be interviewed with no compensation. Compensation was not provided to participants due to restrictions on First Steps program funds and concerns about biasing the community since FS beneficiaries are not given incentives to attend sessions. Umuhuza Ngororero staff were unable to identify any parents in the control community who wanted to participate in the study.

Parents were interviewed in their homes and community leaders in their offices; booksellers were interviewed at their respective shops, and focus group discussions were held with some parents and community volunteers at cell leader offices. A bookseller was interviewed in the control area. In total, 18 interviews were conducted with 35 people in this phase. Most participants were women parents while most men interviewed were community leaders. All interviews in Ngororero were conducted in Kinyarwanda with assistance from Catherine Kukunda, Benjamin Setaha, and Diane Uwamahoro who wrote summaries of interview content in English for the PI during each interview.

Demographics of Interviewees

District	Person	M	F	Total
Local Leaders				
Ngororero	Director of Education First Read/Steps	1	0	1
Ngororero	Sector Education Officer Arm 2	1	0	1
Ngororero	local leaders (cell level) Arm 2	1	1	2
CFV				
Ngororero	Community Family Volunteer-Arm 1	0	4	4
Ngororero	Community Family Volunteer-Arm 2	1	2	3
Booksellers				
Ngororero	Bookseller- Arm 1	0	2	2
Ngororero	Bookseller- control	1	0	1
Ngororero	Bookseller-Arm 2	0	1	1
Ngororero	Bookseller-Arm 2	0	1	1
Parents				
Ngororero	Parents Arm 1	1	1	2
Ngororero	Parents Arm 1	1	1	2
Ngororero	Parents Arm 2	1	6	7
Ngororero	Umuhuza staff	3	1	4
Kigali based publishers and bookseller				
Kigali	Mendota Publisher	1	0	1
Kigali	Rainbow Publisher	1	0	1
Kigali	Yego Publisher	1	0	1
Kigali	Dane Publisher	1	0	1
Kigali	Jeanne Bookseller	0	1	1

In phase two of data collection, all interviews were conducted in Kigali in English by the principal investigator. The principal investigator purposively sampled national publishers who worked with Save the Children. In total, the principal investigator interviewed 4 national publishers and one bookseller.

Ethics: Research design and interview protocols were submitted to Save the Children US's Ethics Review Committee for approval. Consent forms were prepared in English and translated into Kinyarwanda. All interviewees were read (or read) the consent form before the interview began and signed or stamped their thumbprint for consent. All names of people and places within the program district Ngororero and Kigali are pseudonyms.

Data Analysis: Phase one interviews were transcribed from Kinyarwanda to Kinyarwanda and then translated into English by Rwandan colleagues. All interviews from Phase two were transcribed in English by the principal investigator. Data analysis was conducted using MaxQDA, a qualitative data analysis software. Interviews were uploaded into the software and coded by theme. Themes were developed from research questions. A list of codes and frequency used is provided in the Appendix; also there is a screenshot of a coded interview in MaxQDA.

Limitations: Distance between rural communities and availability of an Umuhuza staff member constrained the number of interviews conducted. Driving time between interviews in Ngororero ranged from thirty minutes to an hour. Also, distance from CFV homes to the local leaders' office could have limited the availability of CFVs for interview. Consequently, the number of beneficiaries available for interview was limited due in part to the short research period. Parents in the control group were not interviewed due to the difficulty in mobilizing parents not involved in the program to sacrifice their time for no compensation.

Accuracy of Translations: Translation from Kinyarwanda to English yielded inaccuracies in meaning and grammatical errors; the PI attempted to correct English translations with notes from interviews to reflect the intent of participants' statements.

Executive Summary Findings

First Steps programming has many benefits for parents, community members, and children. Following, findings of this report are outlined by research question.

1.) Are First Steps activities sustained over time? What are the critical success factors for this?

Parents and Community Family Volunteers (CFV) agreed that the program has helped parents to build and sustain parenting skills over time. First Steps intervention has changed parent attitudes towards play and development, and parents reported that they understand that they, not their children's school, are their children's first teachers. The radio program and home visits with CFVs are the critical success factors that reinforce learning for parents. Listening to the radio program in a group strengthens parent learning, and home visits allow parents to ask questions about parenting sessions one-on-one with their CFV. All parents reported sustained parenting skills at home over time.

2.) What are the benefits of the parenting education program on parents, children and larger community?

First Steps builds the parenting skills of families and has transformed parental attitudes towards play and child development. Parents reported that listening to the radio program contributed to social cohesion. In the broader community, First Steps builds relationships among community members and encourages social cohesion among neighbors through the gathering at parenting sessions. Children benefit from the program by learning to play with their parents and play well with one another.

3.) What are the factors influencing book buying behaviors of rural communities in Ngororero?

Poverty limits the number of books parents are able to buy. Parents in both treatment arms of the RCT expressed the desire to buy books but could not afford to at current prices. Parents in the intervention did understand the importance of books for their children's development but are unable to actualize this desire. Parents strongly advocated for cheaper cost of books so that they can begin buying books.

4.) What are the critical success factors for building children's book seller chains in rural hard to reach areas?

The critical success factors to building book seller chains are: broad bookseller marketing of books to parents at community events and market days; local bookseller and publisher motivation to remain in the book selling and publishing industry; Save the Children's relationship with national publishers; and increased demand for publishers' books by other nongovernmental organizations. Some challenges to building the book seller chain are: national publishers need of continued training on publishing titles for the 0-3 market, building parents' purchase of children's books, and building the book distribution network through national book sellers and publishers.

5.) Does parenting education influence book buying behaviors of parents?

Parents do know where to buy books, but the cost of books and poverty limits parent book buying behaviors. Parenting education has taught parents in both arms the importance of books in their children's development. According to the book sellers trained parents express desire to buy books in comparison to the parents in the control who show no desire to buy books for their children.

Outline of the report

The report is divided into two sections. Section 1 discusses the benefits of the parenting education program for parents, children, CFVs and the larger community. This section also includes parental attitudes around books and book buying. The section ends with challenges in program implementation for each beneficiary group and offers some program recommendation. Section 2 of the report examines the book selling chain from the perspective of local booksellers, those booksellers based in Ngororero, and publishers based

in Kigali. The section concludes with challenges in the book seller chain and recommendations for improvement. The Appendix includes more detailed demographic information on the number of interviewees, interview protocols, and additional data excerpts from each sub-theme.

Acronyms

CFV	Community Family Volunteer
DEO	Director of Education
FS	First Steps
SEO	Sector Education Officer

Part One: Benefits of Program

This section illustrates the benefits of parenting education programs for parents, children, and the wider community. In summary, this section finds that First Steps (FS) builds parenting skills of families and changes parent attitudes towards play and reading. FS also builds social cohesion among neighbors. Children learn how to play with their parents and how to play with others. Community Family Volunteer (CFVs) enjoy respectful relationships with parents in their groups and need additional non-monetary support and training to continue their work. Parent attitudes towards books and book buying is also explored in this section. This section concludes with challenges for each beneficiary group and recommendations to strengthen the program.

Parents

First Steps builds parenting skills. Parents, community leaders, booksellers and CFVs agree that the main benefit of FS is that it builds the parenting skills of parents involved. The program has changed the way parents interact with their children. Parents in FS report playing games and reading books with their children as important to their children's general development. Some responses are below:

Arm 1

Parents

Female Respondent: "Since the beginning of the project, we have changed because before I did not know that is important to play with our children. We used to fear that if a neighbor saw us playing with a child they would ridicule us, but now I know that playing with my children is good. It is also kind of relaxing to interact with our children."

Bookseller

"The project has enhanced our capacities and we now able to teach parents how they can help their children learn how to read right from their early years. Before the project, parents and children could not learn these skills anywhere. This means children would only start learning when they entered primary school. But now a child can start learning how to read right from his/her early years. This helps him/her to grow up with the ability and foundational skills for reading. The mindset has changed and we liked buying these books."

Arm 2

Parents

Interviewer: How do you help your child to learn at home?

Female Respondent 1: "When you are at home you look for some toys for him, and then you play together. It is good because this makes him grow up with skills."

Interviewer: Any other points?

Female Respondent 2: "When you are together at home you make him feel free and comfortable with you, you talk to him, you sing for him. It shows that you care for him/ her, and he develop cognitive skills."

Interviewer: Do you play games or read books for your child?

Female Respondent 3: "We read for them."

Female Respondent 4: “It is important because when you play with them they feel happy, and they are happy to see it, they also become fearless, and develop socially and mentally by seeing that you care for them.”

Parents in both Arms affirmed how FS has changed their parenting skills. Prior to the intervention, parents did not play games or read to their children, but now they regularly incorporate play into their parenting repertoire.

Change in parent attitude towards play and development. In conjunction with increased parenting skills, parents in both arms reported their attitude towards the general development and emergent literacy of their children has changed. Before being a part of the project, parents in rural areas believed that education of their children began with formal schooling and not at home. Parents in the intervention, however, have a changed attitude towards their children. Parents, local leaders, and implementing partners confirm that FS intervention has transformed community attitudes on the role of parents in their children’s development. Parents in both arms asserted the importance of their role as their children’s first teachers.

Arm 1

Parents

Female Respondent: “We have benefited very much from parenting sessions, because we are taught how to teach those young children. They learn gradually... finally they learn many things. But, before attending the parenting sessions, I used to say that children ask nothing and useless things. I didn’t know that children ask to know not to challenge. When you tell a child something more than once, He cannot forget it.”



A mother reading a book with her child at home.

Arm 2

Local leaders

Female Respondent: “The ways through which this program has helped community members include the following: You see that parents have changed their attitudes towards the way they care about their children; because initially, parents were convinced that children will start learning

once they are in front of the teacher... Children are now cared for better than before the training. You can observe important differences between children of parents who participated in the program and those who did not participate in it.”

Parenting skills and meetings are sustained over time. Parents affirm that they maintain their new parenting education skills and meetings over time.

Arm 1

Parents

“Groups are still there. We still meet in our respective groups and work. Even the next year we will be working.”

Parents

“Even though Umuhuza stops trainings, the skills we got can still be applied, but we do not want them to go.”

Arm 2

Parents

Female Respondent 1: “When we reach home we apply what we have learned.”

Interviewer: You mean that you can discuss or carry out the program when you are not along with a facilitator?

Male Respondent: “We can, but it comes after the training and practice from the facilitator.”

Female Respondent 2: “We do it when we met.”

Female Respondent 3: “The facilitator is there and he is the one who assists us, but when we reach home we apply the learning. If there is a game I play it with my child to see what will happen and see how he will react.”

Radio builds social cohesion among parents and reinforces learning. The radio program also builds social cohesion among parents and reinforces their learning. Parents in both arms affirmed that they enjoyed listening to the radio program more with other parents than listening alone. The radio program benefits parents

because it provides parents the opportunity to learn from and ask questions of one another. Parents maintained that the radio program works well when it is heard, but the reception of the radio is sometimes not received in some rural areas.



A Save staff member holds up the radio antenna during a parenting session

Arm 1

Parents

Female Respondent: “It was good to attend radio program in groups rather than alone. When I am alone, I cannot attend because I can be busy with home activities... We prefer to attend the talks on site with other parents than listening alone at home.”

Arm 2

CFV

Female respondent 1: “Parents really appreciate the radio, when someone has not attended the previous session and listen to the comments of other parents who have listened, she feels upset for missing the radio program and falling behind her peers in learning.”

Female respondent 2: “We listen to radio program and share what we have learned from it. When we meet on Thursday, people share what they have heard on the program with others.”

Radio reinforces learning for parents when they listen to the radio program in parenting sessions. **In both arms, parents agreed that they retain and understand more**

information from the radio program better if they are listening to it in a group and asking questions of one another. CFVs and parents advocated for a longer radio program.

Home visits reinforce parent learning. Parents benefit greatly from home visits done by their CFVs. Parents affirmed that home visits give them one-on-one time to ask questions of their CFVs as well as learn how to apply parenting education techniques. Families also said the timing of home visits (length of visit and number of visits per month) was enough given their other work and family demands.



A CFV carrying out a home visit

Some responses include:

Arm 1

Parents

Male Respondent: "Home visits are the best part of this program."

Interviewer: How are they beneficial?

Male Respondent: "When you are with your CFV who is there to teach you, you feel safe because he can advise and support you anytime you meet a challenge in learning how to teach your children. CFVs taught us to how to interact with our children in any situation. We enjoy home visits."

Male Respondent: "I like to be visited by the CFVs."

Female Respondent: "They trained us, interacted with us and helped us in many ways. We do not fear them."

Arm 2

Parents

Interviewer: Do you think being visited at home is important?

Female Respondent: "You see, when the CFV comes to visit us, [name of person] the facilitator tries to teach me how to interact with my children. For me, I see that being visited at home is helpful."

Interviewer: What do you like in this program of visiting people in their homes?

Male Respondent: "It is good to be taught by a teacher who visits you in your home. When they visit us at home, they show us what to do, even when you are at the gathering place you see that he cares for you."

Home visits provide an informal space for parents to pose questions to their CFVs and reinforce what they have learned in parenting sessions. Parents enjoy having a visit to their home. **Home visits reinforced the importance of the program to fathers who normally do not attend parenting sessions.**

Parental Attitudes around Books

Understanding parental attitudes around books and book buying was a main evaluation question. Parents were interviewed about the availability of books in their home, their book buying behavior, the importance of books for children, and an affordable cost of books.

Availability of books in households. In Ngororero, the First Steps program provides the only source of books for children. Both local leaders and parents concurred that parents solely receive books through FS parenting sessions. Few households reported that they had any reading materials.

Arm 1

Parents

“We have no books.”

Arm 2

Local Leaders

“It is not easy to find the reading materials for parents. Books are distributed by Umuhuza project through its workers who work on the district level. Books that CFVs may have are not enough. And they also get them from those Umuhuza workers on the district level. Even the day before, we were together in a meeting saying that they have some but they are very few. They wished they would have a public library in their sector.”

Male local leader: “Yes, I do. They are a gift from Umuhuza organization.”

Female local leader: “There are some other places where I saw books but I could find what their prices were.”

Male local leader: “There were even some sellers who were given some books by the Umuhuza organization.”

Parents

Interviewer: What kind of books do you have at home? Do you have books?

Respondent 1: “We have them.”

Interviewer: Which ones?

Respondent 2: “Picture books to show the children.”

Respondent 3: “There have good images. We read the pictures for the children.”

Interviewer: How do you get books?

Respondent 1: “The facilitators gave them to us.”

Control

Male Respondent: “When parents come to visit my shop, they say their children get books from school for free.”

Education Official- Arm 2

Sector Education Officer in Arm 2 only mentioned school libraries as a source of books for parents. He contended:

“Here we have small libraries at every school. When a parent comes to school searching a book for his child, we have instructions that staff and teachers help parents to get the book, either for his/her child, or for him/herself because we have program of adult literacy, Ministry of Education gives many books to schools.”

Though there was a FS bookseller stationed a block from his office, the Sector Education Officer did not know that parents have the opportunity to buy books in his sector. While this government official’s lack of awareness of FS programming may seem to raise questions on the relationship between Umuhuza and his office, a follow-up conversation with Umuhuza staff member responsible for this sector cleared these doubts. The Umuhuza staff member responded:

“The other thing I have got from the sector, the Sector Education Officer has asked me why we sell books without telling him while we continue to meet with CFVs and parents. This official wants to know why he is not trained on the book selling in his district so that he can advertise the book sellers during the meeting with the community members.”

The staff member reported that the Sector Education Officer has been invited numerous times to trainings on FS in his sector but failed to attend. It is interesting to note these senior education officials did not cite FS programming such as booksellers and parenting sessions as a source of books in the sector and district. It seems that these education officials still associate books with schools and older children and not the young children targeted by FS.

Poverty and book buying. Parents, CFVs, and booksellers stressed poverty limits the number of books parents are able to buy. Parents in Arm 1 and 2 expressed a desire to buy children’s books but lack the financial means to do so. According to a bookseller in the control area, parents in the control group do not want to buy books. Following, respondents’ views are displayed by group.

Control group

Bookseller control

“The first reason, they say these books are expensive and add that such a book cannot cost 1000RWF. They also say that their children get books from schools and for free; but add that they are expensive because the price is very high... Community members here around are not willing to buy these books; you see yourself that this place is like in the countryside. They do not hesitate to tell you that they would pay 100RWF, 200RWF. That is the cost they would suggest you... They say they are useful but expensive and add that their children get books from schools and for free. They argue: I cannot buy a book of 1000RWF while they get books from schools and for free. They say books are for older school going age children”

Arm 1

CFV

Interviewer: Do parents like the kinds of books you bring? The one which the coordinator gave you? Do you like them?

Respondent 1: “They like them but the problem is how to get books.”

Respondent 2: “Parents like them but the challenge is all about money.”

Respondent 3: “You can see parents wanting books, but they are expensive.”

Arm 2

Parents

Interviewer: Do you buy books?

Female Respondent 1: “No. We don’t buy them.”

Interviewer: “Why don’t you buy them?”

Female Respondent: “They (CFFs and CFVs) give us books for reading but they also tell us that if we can, we may buy them, but for us it is not yet our plan but they show us where to buy them. We don’t have money yet.”

Across all groups, respondents affirmed that poverty limits parents’ purchasing power of children’s books. Parents in Arms 1 and 2 expressed an interest in buying children’s books but are unable to because the price of books is too high in comparison with their household incomes.

Importance of books for children’s development. Crucial to understanding parents’ book buying behaviors is learning parents’ attitude towards reading and books. Parents in First Steps acknowledge the value of having books to support their children’s emergent literacy. Yet this culture of reading has not spread to families who are not involved in FS, according to local booksellers and national publishers. Parents in Arm 1 and 2 affirmed the value of books to their parenting practices.

Arm 1

Parents

Female Respondent 1: “Yes, books are beneficial. Because when you give him a book, [the baby] immediately turns pages, looking for pictures.”

Bookseller

Male Respondent: “The project has enhanced our capacities and we able to teach parents how they can help their children learn how to read right from their early years...Parents’ mindset has changed on books and we liked buying these books.”

Arm 2

Female Respondent: “They are not enough books at home because we have not yet bought them.”

Parents know where to buy books. Another factor influencing parents’ book buying behaviors is their knowledge of where books sold. Though most parents acknowledged that they knew where books were sold in their communities, their trepidation over the price of books dissuaded them from visiting booksellers. Thus knowledge of where books are sold does not equal parents buying books.

Arm 1

Parents

Female Respondent: “They told us that books are available in [neighboring town] but they are very expensive”.

Parents

Interviewer: Where can you find books in this community?



A bookseller displaying books in his shop

Female Respondent: “in [neighboring town].”

Interviewer: Did you buy some?

Female Respondent: “not yet.”

Interviewer: Have you ever gone there?

Female Respondent: “Never.”

Arm 2

Parents

Interviewer: Do you know where to buy books?

Female Respondent 2: “Yes.”

Interviewer: Have you bought any book?

Female Respondent 4: “We are still thinking about going there and buying them.”

Cell leader

Female Respondent: “There are some other places where I saw books but I did not ask about their prices.”

Reasonable cost of books. Since parents and local leaders contended that books were too expensive, parents were asked to name an affordable price of books that would encourage them to begin buying books. Most respondents asserted that parents can afford to buy books between 200-500 Rwandan Francs (RWF). Following, respondents’ views are displayed by group.

Control Group

Bookseller

“If you want to encourage buying books in this community so that they can reach all children and help them to grow up with important reading skills, then the first thing I think you can do is to reduce the price of books. The price should be reduced to such a level where even poor people can buy books...According to me, the reasonable price would be 500RWF or 400RWF.”

Arm 1

Bookseller

“When prices are reduced books will be bought. Most of the parents like these books; but still, poverty remains a challenge and the price is very high.... Most of them want to buy books at 300, 400 and 500RWF.”

Community Members

Builds strong relationship among community members. Parenting sessions builds strong relationships among CFVs and parents. Parents and CFVs alike reported healthy, trustful relationships among one another. Parents felt respected and affirmed by their CFVs.

Arm 1

CFV

Female Respondent 1: “Parents are very happy.”

Interviewer: Do they respect you?

Female Respondent 2: “Yes. They respect us. There is no problem.”

Female Respondent 3: “They respect us.”

Female Respondent 4: “They call us teachers, even when we see children around the community, they call us teacher.”

Arm 2

Parents

“It is good to be taught by a teacher who knows your home. When they visit us at home, they shows us what to do, even when you are at the meeting place you see that he cares for you.”

Parenting sessions and home visits build congenial relationships among CFVs and parents. Parents feel respected by CFVs, and CFVs are trusted teachers of parents.



Locally made children's toys used in parenting sessions

Build social cohesion among neighbors. FS builds social cohesion among parents. Parents and implementing partners reported that parents are starting financial cooperatives out of parenting groups to support their children's later education. For example, a parent in Arm 2 advocated for Save the Children support for his parent group cooperative: “There is a cooperative we have for our children please advocate for us so that it can be developed”. Another parent in Arm 1 also mentioned this his group has started a cooperative to help other parents. She stated, “You can help our cooperative financially in order to attract other parents hopping that they will access the aid too”. One parent in Arm 1 affirmed how their CFV has lead their cooperative efforts. She stated:

“Umuhuza came and taught us to start groups like cooperative and each month we give money to one of us who needs money. We rotate each month so every person gets a chance to receive money the next month...”

Parents are continuing to meet outside of parenting sessions in self-formed cooperatives that continue to meet beyond the end of the program.

Children

Children learn to play and read with parents. FS intervention has a direct impact on children's learning. Parents and CFVs report that children are learning how to play and read books with their parents and with peers. First, children's attitudes towards reading and play will be discussed. Second, children's interaction with peers will be illustrated.

Arm 1

CFV

Female Respondent 1: “Additionally, a child who attended training becomes fearless when interacting with his parents compared to the one who did not attend. The child becomes more sociable and does not hit other children.”

Female Respondent 2: “The child who attended parenting sessions is likely to have more skills compared to a child who did not attend.”

Arm 2

Parents

“In addition, Children are learning good manners through this program.”

Umuhuza staff

“The children who have involved in this program are active rather than those ones who did not participate in it”

Children who attend FS are no longer afraid to play with parents, but look forward to reading books and playing with toys at the session. Likewise, parents have learned that their children should not be fearful of them.

Children learn to play with each other. Another benefit of FS is that children have learned not only how to play with their parents but it has reinforced play among children. Parents and CFVs in Arm 2 discuss how children’s interaction with one another has changed through this project.

Parents

“Through this program our children get to know each other. And they become familiar to one another and they learn to play with one another.”

CFV

“Those children who come are active and they have strong friendship with others rather than those who do not come”.

Challenges

Families. Families face three challenges in their participation in the program. One challenge is the under-representation of fathers in parenting sessions and home visits. Mothers interviewed stated that their partners were busy farming and did not have time to attend sessions. CFVs agreed that mothers compose the majority of attendees to both parenting sessions and home visits. Some of the fathers interviewed did not know much about program components beyond what was shared by their partners. Another challenge for parent participation is the lack of material compensation provided by the program. According to a CFV in Arm 2, parents expected tangible support from the parenting program since other nongovernmental organizations operating in the region give families seeds and other items. Some parents also expressed a frustration with the network coverage of the radio program. Some parents in Arm 1 were unable to comment on the radio program because their radio could not receive the radio signal during parenting sessions.

CFVs. Community Facilitator Volunteers found completing multiple home visits to be challenging given the condition of rural roads. A CFV in Arm 2 stated, “People’s homes are scattered through rural communities, so it is not easy to visit every house”. CFVs conduct home visits using their own money, and most reported using walking as their primary means of transportation. Given the distance between families and conditions of rural, mountainous roads in Ngororero, it is difficult for CFVs to visit all families within their groups more than once per parenting session term.

Compensation for CFVs. CFVs expressed an internal motivation to continue in their work even though they are not compensated. Because of the respect given to CFVs by parents and community leaders, CFVs have stated that they will continue to deliver the program. Overall CFVs found gratification from their roles. To ascertain if there were non-monetary forms of

compensation that could be offered to CFVs, they were asked what other benefits they would like to receive. Overall CFVs desire materials to identify themselves such as T-shirts, umbrellas and airtime to call families.

CFV Arm 2

“Female Respondent: We need ID cards or t-shirts that show that we are volunteers.

Interviewer: What else?”

Male Respondent: “We need training materials.”

Male Respondent: “In the rain, it is very hard to get to the sessions.”

Training for CFVs. CFVs in both arms also expressed the desire to have additional training on specific lessons and conflict management.

CFV Arm 2

Female Respondent 1: “We have requested them to train us on lesson 17, which is what we wanted to be trained on.”

Female Respondent 2: “We need more training. This help us to repeat/revisit the things we have learnt during training session and share different points of view.”

Interviewer: Which sessions do you need more training on?

Female Respondent 3: “It is session 15.”

Umuhuza Staff

Interviewer: In what way can the training of community facilitators be improved?

Male Respondent 1: “Increase the time and training session from three or five to more than five days. It is not sufficient to have five-day training for someone who will train the community member.”

Female Respondent: “And when you are going to the field, you can find gaps in knowldge of what you missed in training. We sometimes face the cases and this shows you what one lacks/missed a chance to learn it better. And then, you solve the challenge in it whatever way you think because you are not trained on it.”

Male Respondent 2: “We have not received any training on conflict management. We need this because we work with families and sometimes they expect us to help solve conflicts in community and families”

Often CFVs and Umuhuza staff visit homes in which there can be intra-familial conflict; additional training on conflict management could help volunteers navigate these situations. CFVs also want additional trainings to reinforce their understanding of First Steps curricula.

Community Leaders. Mid-level bureaucrats such as Sector and District Education Officers had a varied understanding of First Steps project components. These leaders knew some project components that were operating in their areas, but did not know about the bookselling component. Lower level leaders such as cell leaders, however, had a more intimate understanding of FS.

Conclusion and Recommendations: Benefits

In conclusion, this section discussed the benefits of FS programming on parents, children, and the broader community.

Benefits for Families

The program builds parenting skills of families and has transformed parental attitude towards play and child development. Program elements such as radio and home visits reinforce parenting learning. FS helps parents to build and sustain parenting skills over time.

Benefits to Children

Children benefit from the program by learning to play with their parents and play well with others.

Benefits to Communities

In the broader community, FS builds relationships among community members and encourages social cohesion among neighbors

Parent Attitudes on Books

Parents in Arms 1 and 2 expressed a desire to own books, but poverty limited their ability to purchase books from booksellers. Parents generally know where books are sold in their community, and some have visited booksellers. Parents strongly advocated for a cheaper cost of books to encourage their future purchase of books.

Some recommendations are:

- **Provide non-monetary compensation for CFVs:** CFV morale will be greatly strengthened if they are provided with umbrellas, t-shirts identifying them with program, and name badges.
- **Extend radio coverage in Ngororero:** Some parents in Arm 1 did not fully benefit from the radio program because they were unable to capture the radio signal or the program started late. Save the Children should work with local radio stations to ensure that radio signals have a broadcast coverage area for the entire program district. Alternatively, Save the Children could repeat the radio program over multiple times during the day so that parents have multiple opportunities to hear the broadcast.
- **Extend radio program time:** Other parents felt that the radio program time was too short and they needed additional time to understand the lesson. Interviewees noted that Save the Children can consider adding 10 minutes to the radio portion or repeat the program multiple times during a session.
- **Support cooperatives or groupings of parents:** A common theme amongst both groups of parents was the establishment of savings cooperatives. FS has garnered social cohesion among groups of parents, and they desire to remain connected through cooperatives. Program staff should think of ways Save the Children can provide non-monetary support to these cooperatives such as the provision limited learning materials to the groups to support a continued focus on children's development.
- **Continue to support a culture of reading:** Parents in the intervention value children's books while parents in the control group do not yet understand the importance of children's books. When the RCT ends, arm 1 or arm 2 package should be extended to the control group area so that they learn about children's

development. FS programming empowers parents with the knowledge of the importance of reading. Without this knowledge, demand for children's books will remain low.

- **Encourage book publishers to create lower cost books:** Parents and CFVs contended that the cost of books is still too prohibitive for rural families. On the other hand, publishers claimed are able to lower the cost of books, with a subsequent reduction in quality. Save the Children should continue to work with publishers to build their capacity to produce a low-cost product.
- **Extend CFV volunteer training:** CFVs expressed the desire to have refresher trainings on FS curriculum and additional training on conflict management. Save the Children can work with Umuhuza to extend training opportunities for CFVs.
- **Modify Outreach to mid-level bureaucrats:** The Sector Education Officer and District Education Officer did not know much information about bookselling in their localities. Some suggested options include: Umuhuza can modify their outreach strategy to senior education officials by giving them a one-pager on the program or give a tour of local booksellers in the area.
 - o From an Umuhuza staff member: "What is needed, we need to prepare a briefing document to hand it to leaders (SE) which describes this program; this will help them to know what is taking place in this area. If not they will not pay attention to the program and understand its components."

Part Two: Bookselling Chain

This section discusses the book selling chain from the perspective of local booksellers and national publishers. Local booksellers are those who sell books and other household items in Ngororero. Publishers on the other hand, write and produce children's books and are generally located in Kigali. Also included in this section is the perspective of a national bookseller who sells books in Kigali and in other parts of Rwanda. In total, this section includes perspectives from 5 local booksellers, 4 publishers, and 1 national bookseller.

Booksellers

Booksellers marketing. Local booksellers' marketing of books to parents is crucial to building book seller chains in rural Rwanda. Local booksellers are marketing books to parents through display at their shops, display at community events such as local meetings, and at the market. Booksellers in Arm 1 confirmed that they market books during community events and on market day to reach more customers.

Arm 1 Bookseller

Interviewer: What day do you sell the most books?

Respondent 1: "The market day and the day of the meeting."

Interviewer: What is that meeting?

Respondent 2: "The community or the cell meeting. When they have money, parents can also buy books on the day of their meeting."

Interviewer: Do you take the books to the market or they come and buy them right here at your shop?

Respondent 3: "I take them to the market or to the parents' houses."

Arm 2 Bookseller-1

Interviewer: What are days do parents purchase the most books?

Female Respondent: "Only during parents' evening [Umugoroba w'Ababyeyi]"

Interviewer: Do you take the business to the market to make more sales?

Female Respondent: "Yes, here there is a market place, we try to take the books there."

Arm 2 Bookseller-2

Interviewer: When do majority of parents come to buy the books?

Female Respondent: "They come mostly on the market day. In the evening, the market takes place here; the parents mostly come to find the books here. When they are buying the notebooks and the pens, they also the look at these children's books, and their children ask me to give them the books to see. We like it when that happens."

Control Bookseller

Male Respondent: "I take them to schools and sell them there. I can also take them to the monthly community service day (Umuganda) so that once we finish working I can invite them to buy them. When I have a meeting at the trading center, I also take them there but they do not buy them."

Intrinsic motivation to remain in industry. Both local booksellers and publishers illustrated an intrinsic motivation and interest in selling children's books as their lifetime calling. Publishers' motivation to stay in the children's publishing industry is to build a strong source

of children's books for rural communities. Likewise, local booksellers were excited to be chosen to sell books to their neighbors.

Arm 1

Female Respondent 1: "I am happy to sell books because it does not hinder me in doing other activities."

Female Respondent 2: "We had a zeal to contribute to the intellectual development of our children. We felt proud of that and recognized its importance. Therefore, this made us to willingly and voluntarily be involved in the business."

Arm 2

Interviewer: Why did you decide to be a bookseller for this project?

Female Respondent 1: "The reason why we accepted is because we are also CFVs."

Female Respondent 2: "We have the zeal to contribute to the development of our children."

Publisher response to cost of books.

While parents affirmed they would be able to afford books that cost between 300-500 RWF yet most publishers and booksellers countered that they could produce books at a cheaper cost, but it is difficult for them to produce high quality children's books within these ranges. For example, Yego Publishers responded:

Interviewer: What is the lowest price you can sell a book and still make a profit?

Publisher: "It depends on the book. The cheapest one is 1300."

Interviewer: Parents want to buy books at 300-500.

Publisher: "It can be feasible. This one can go to 500Frw because it's black and white (showing a black and white book). But people are not interested in the black and white. We are still exploring ways how we can make the books as cheap as possible."

Save the Children relationship with publishers. Save the Children's congenial relationship with publishers ensures that high quality children's books reach rural Ngororero. All publishers and booksellers remarked that the partnership with Save the Children has built their capacity to produce quality children's books. Specifically, publishers commented that Save the Children training for publishers has been the most beneficial to increasing the number of titles available. Mendota publishers commented:

"It (the project) opened our eyes and ears and we have become more creative. We think a lot and we think wide when we produce books. It has opened us to be able to identify what types of books will be liked by children. In the past we used to think whatever you write will be liked by children. Now we understand you have to bring your thinking to the level of the child and know what they like and then write books that depict what they like."

Increase in business for publishers. Some publishers commended Save the Children for increasing their customer base by organizing purchasing consortiums involving other partners. For example, Mendota Publishers admitted that working with Save the Children has increased his business. When asked if his business has increased, he replied:

"Yes, not only the government even other organizations. NGO's, international organizations such as UNICEF and UNICEF funded projects. There are many organizations like VSO and World Vision that have known about our business because of Save the children's work."

Another publisher, Yego Publishers also acknowledged that working with Save the Children has helped him win contracts with other nongovernmental organizations. Since Save the Children is a leader in the children's book industry, other organizations are copying/ learning from its procurement policies and programming by buying children's books from publishers.

Challenges in the Book Chain

Further training for booksellers and publishers. Publishers advocated for further training to improve the quality of children's books they produce.

Publishers want training on how to create fantastic characters, how to write for 0-3 age group, and training for illustrators. The national bookseller wanted a training on how to strengthen the relationship between publishers and local booksellers. Mendota publishers stated:

"We need more illustrators trained. We have a very small group of illustrators and because they are few, they have a lot of work. They become more expensive. We need more illustrators. There are many that are willing to be trained that have come on board because the industry is growing. And illustrators see there is something we need from them. But they need to be trained how to illustrate for children, and designers need training too."



A local shop in control area that sells books

Building a culture of reading. Outside of program intervention however, there is not a strong culture of reading in the district. Consequently, there is not a great demand by parents for children's books. For some families in rural Rwanda working as subsistence farmers, buying a children's book is not yet seen as household need. To strengthen book chains in rural areas, Save the Children should continue to work build a culture of reading in rural communities. A publisher in Kigali, Rainbow Publishers stressed that there is a nascent culture of reading in Rwanda:

"For me on the side of the price, I think it is still a behavior they are trying to learn because people here do not have a culture of reading. So it's something that is still being built, so by the time these young children grow up it will be better...For parents who do not have that culture, who did not read a book, it's strange. People here believe in tangible things, something they are going to eat, something they are going to use."

For many families surviving off of subsistence farming in rural Rwanda, purchasing a children's book is not seen as valuable as meeting other household needs.

Building the book distribution network. Save the Children currently procures books directly from publishers which may reduce opportunities to build capacity and market share of national booksellers. However, according to Save the Children staff, this is done currently because book sellers are not yet capable of handling large procurements and publishers are not yet ready to release this part of their business to book sellers. Save the Children is working to strengthen the Rwanda Publishers and Book Sellers's Unions so that they can develop policies that allow for a split between publishing and book selling - a real sign of

maturity of the book industry. The staff adds that the weak regulatory framework in the industry makes it hard to split the roles so most publishers are both publishers and book sellers which makes it difficult for those only engaged in the retail side of book sales.

Conclusion and Recommendations: Book Chain

In conclusion, this section discussed parent book buying behaviors and the book seller chain in rural Rwanda. On the other side of the book seller chain, local book sellers and national publishers are driven beyond solely profits to stay in the children's book industry. Local booksellers market books to parents both within their shops and at community events. Save the Children's relationship with national publishers and publishers' personal motivation to remain in the book industry are critical factors to build book seller chains. Further training for publishers, continuation of Save the Children's programs in Ngororero, and strengthening of the book distribution network are necessary for the future of the book industry in Rwanda.

Challenges

Publishers continue to need additional training from Save the Children to increase their capacity to produce high quality children's books for the 0-3 age group. There is still much work needed to be done to spread a culture of reading into areas that have not benefited from the project. Finally, a national bookseller advocated for a modified book distribution channel in which organizations like Save the Children buy books in bulk from book sellers instead of publishers directly.

Some recommendations are:

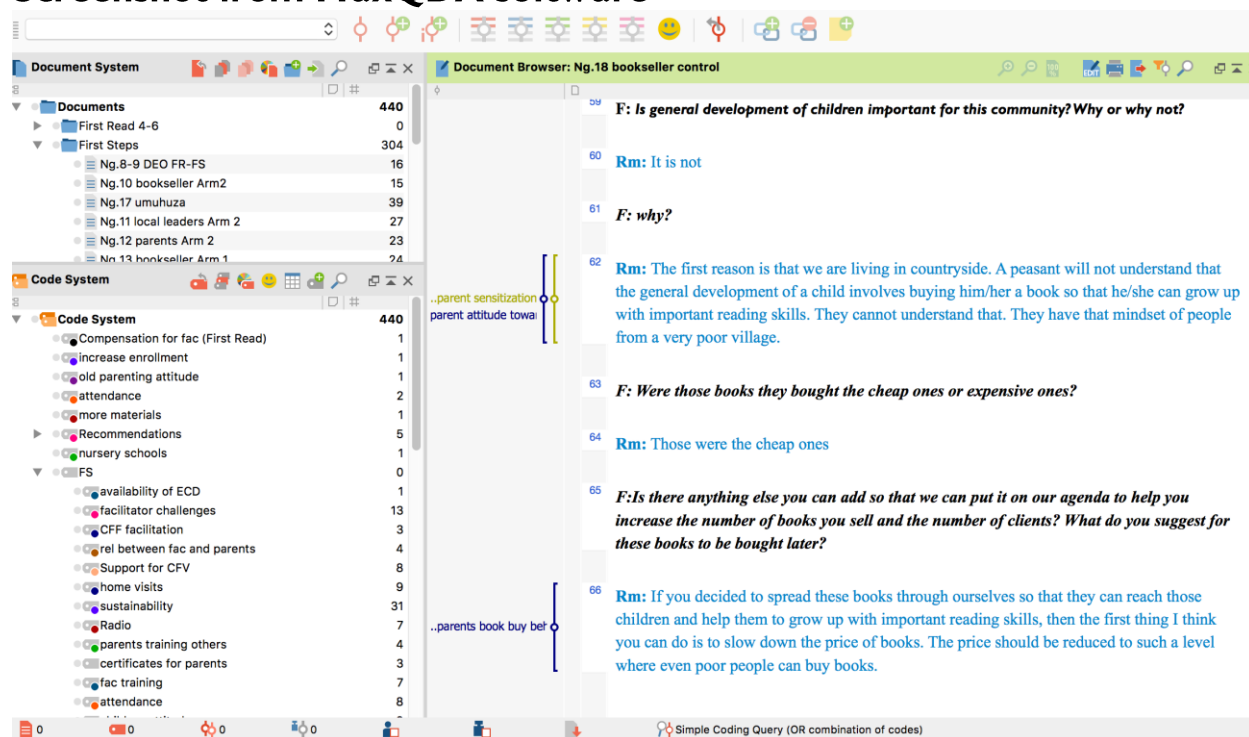
- **Local booksellers should continue to advertise books at community meetings:** Booksellers reported the most success when they took their books to parents vs. solely selling them in their shop. Local booksellers should be encouraged to attend community meetings such as cell meetings and others to advertise their books.
- **Continue training National Publishers:** All national publishers stressed that Save the Child trainings have increased their capacities to produce high quality children's books. Trainings for national publishers should continue with a focus on design and illustration and the production of books for children aged 0-3.
- **Strengthen the Book Distribution Chain by advocating for a split between book selling and publishing at national level:** Through its work with the Rwanda Publishers and Book Sellers Union (RPBU) Save the Children should continue to advocate for a split between book selling and publishing roles to allow growth of the book selling chains at both national and local level.

Appendix:

Code System

Code System		#
Code System		440
	First Steps	0
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	facilitator challenges	13
	CFF facilitation	3
	relationship between CFV and parents	4
	Support for CFV	8
	home visits	9
	sustainability	31
	Radio	7
	parents training others	4
	certificates for parents	3
	CFV training	7
	attendance	8
	children attitude	8
	attitude change	9
	identification of facilitators	8
	Attitude before program	3
	compared to other programs	2
	Umuhuza	5
	avail of books	14
	parenting skills	11
	benefits	15
	parent attitude	9
	community support	11
	Book selling	0
	children like of books	1
	books for older children	8
	customer base	4
	Bookselling business	7
	parents book buy behavior	47
	places sell books	10
	parent sensitization books	11
	book seller chains	11
	publisher-bookseller motivation	6
	further training	5
	Save the Children-publisher relationship	6
	parents book preferences	9
	display of books	2

Screenshot from MaxQDA software



Interview Protocols

Interview protocol for families

- 1.) How long have you been in this program? Which literacy programs does your family participate in? (cue radio, parenting sessions, playgroups)
- 2.) Why did you decide to join?
- 3.) How did you interact with your children before this project began?
- 4.) How has the project changed how you interact with your child? How do you support your child's learning at home? Do you play games or read books to your children? Do you think it is important to do that? Why or why not?
- 5.) Do you think reading is more for girls or for boys or for both? Why?
- 6.) What kind of aspirations do you have for your child's future? How do you think better literacy skills will help your children?
- 7.) What are the benefits of parenting sessions for your family?
- 8.) What do you enjoy about parenting sessions? What do you dislike?
- 9.) Describe the relationship you have with your facilitators. Do you enjoy working with them? Are they respectful of you?
- 10.) How often do you attend parenting sessions? What are the challenges you have faced to attend sessions?
- 11.) How can parenting sessions be improved?

- 12.) Would you recommend this program to your neighbor? Why or why not?
- 13.) Would you be willing to teach your neighbors or new parents what you have learned in parenting sessions? How would you go about doing this?
- 14.) (If yes to previous) What opportunities or platforms would you use?
- 15.) Do you get any home visits? Were they helpful or beneficial? In what way? How many home visits do you think are realistic and beneficial?
- 16.) What do you like most about home visits?
- 17.) What do you think about the radio program? Was the time enough?
- 18.) Which part of the radio program do you like the most?
- 19.) Was it the Introduction, reflection on previous session, drama, or advice session?
- 20.) Who is your favorite radio character and why?
- 21.) What is the most memorable lesson you will remember from the radio session?
- 22.) What were the challenges of having part of the session on the radio and what are some proposed solutions to this problem?
- 23.) Would you listen to the radio program outside or without a parent facilitator or outside a group?
- 24.) Do you think listening as a group is better than listening alone? Why?
- 25.) What did you think about this program when it first began? Did you think it was beneficial to parents and children? How have your views on this program changed over time?
- 26.) What did you do to strengthen the program after active implementation? What has motivated you to continue participating in the playgroups?
- 27.) What would you recommend for a better sustainability of this program in your community?
- 28.) Do you feel confident that you can support your children's emergent literacy? Why or why not?
- 29.) What other types of support do you need to build your children's emergent literacy?
- 30.) Will you continue to participate in parenting sessions (insert modalities: radio, community parent training sessions) in the future? Why or why not?

Books

- 1.) What types of print material do you use at home?
- 2.) How do you receive books? Buy or gifting?
- 3.) (If answers buy) What type of books do you buy?
- 4.) How far do you have to travel to get books? How often do you buy/receive them?
- 5.) Do you like the titles that are available from sellers? (If dislike: What types of titles would you like to see?)
- 6.) How often do you use books at home with your children?
- 7.) Are there books for all of their children in your family? Do your older kids have books?
- 8.) Has having more baby/young child books affected your older kids at all?
- 9.) How do you think about buying books for your older kids?
- 10.) What aspects of the books do your children enjoy? Pictures? Content? Family time?

- 11.) What do you think about the cost of books? Are they too expensive or affordable?
- 12.) (If answers gifting) Why do you not buy the books?
- 13.) (book bank) What kind of books do you like from the book bank?

Interview protocol for Community Volunteers and Paid Staff

Book

- 1.) What are book buying behaviors of parents in your circle? What type of books do parents buy? How often do they buy books? (If answer is no, ask: What are the barriers to parents buying books?)
- 2.) How useful do parents find the books in supporting their children's learning?
- 3.) Are there books for all of the children in families? Do older kids have books?
- 4.) Has having more baby/young child books affected older kids at all?
- 5.) How do families think about buying books for older kids?
- 6.) What are the main items you use during parenting sessions? How often do you use books?
- 7.) What are the barriers that limit the number of books parents buy?
- 8.) Do parents like the books you bring? How do you know?

Sustainability

- 1.) Why did you decide to become a volunteer/facilitator?
- 2.) How was the training you received? Did it adequately prepare you for your role?
- 3.) How can facilitator training be improved?
- 4.) When you have a problem or need to know how to manage a particular situation with a family, who can you turn to? (What are the support networks that you have)
- 5.) What is most beneficial about the support visits from Umuhuza staff?
- 6.) What are the benefits of this program for parents and the greater community?
- 7.) In what ways do parents and community members show their support of this initiative?
- 8.) What are some of the challenges you have faced as a facilitator?
- 9.) In one year do you think this program will still be in existence? Why or why not?
- 10.) What needs to change about this program between now and next year for it to be strengthened?
- 11.) How is the length of the program? Should it be longer or shorter?
- 12.) What type of further support (training, financial, etc) do you need to continue being a facilitator in this community?
- 13.) Describe a typical parenting session. How long does it last? How many families and children attend? What do you discuss? How many other facilitators are with you?
- 14.) What are the challenges you face when leading parent sessions?
- 15.) What are the challenges parents face in attending sessions? What are the reasons parents choose to not come? What are the possible solutions to those challenges?
- 16.) Do mothers or fathers come more to parenting sessions? Why?
- 17.) Do you think the parents who attend your sessions can successfully support the general development of their children? Why or why not?
- 18.) What difference do you see between children from parents who attend sessions and children whose parents do not attend?

Radio-only for First Steps

- 19.) Do parents in your session enjoy the radio program? What parts do they like the most?
- 20.) What are the benefits of radio to your sessions? Does radio help with parent attendance?
- 21.) How can parenting sessions and radio program be improved?
- 22.) How much time out of a week do you spend in sessions? How much time do you spend in home visits? How many home visits do you do per week?
- 23.) Describe the activities you do during a home visit.
- 24.) What do you think is the impact of home visits on families?
- 25.) How is your relationship with families in your parenting sessions and home visits?
- 26.) How has the relationship between children and parents changed as a result of parenting sessions and home visits?

Compensation

- 27.) If you were not a facilitator how would you be spending that time? (Household labor, farm, etc)
- 28.) How much longer do you think you will continue in this role?
- 29.) What type of compensation do you receive?
- 30.) Will you continue facilitating sessions without pay? Why or why not?
- 31.) What non-monetary types of compensation can Save give you to support your work? (i.e. phone credit, t-shirts)
- 32.) How do you think this program impacts literacy in this community? Which factors do think can lead to that impact?
- 33.) If this program stops, what do you think will be its impact in this community on parent's education skills in 1 year and in 2 years?

Interview protocol for Local Booksellers

- 1.) What are your business goals in this community? What are the main items you sell? Who is your target customer?
- 2.) How often do families buy books from you? What other items do they buy when they come to your shop? What day you sell the most books?
- 3.) Where do you get books from?
- 4.) Do you take the business to the market to make more sales?
- 5.) What types of books do people buy the most?
- 6.) What languages are the books you sell in? Is it in English? It is in French? Is it in Kinyarwanda? Which ones are the most bought by the community?
- 7.) Is your company profitable selling Kinyarwanda titles?
- 8.) Did your company sell the 0-6 titles before the project?
- 9.) (If yes) In the past, how did you choose which books to sell?
- 10.) How has this project changed how you sell Kinyarwanda titles?
- 11.) What are the barriers to increasing the number of Kinyarwanda titles you sell?
- 12.) How has this project addressed these barriers?
- 13.) Has this project impacted your interest in selling Kinyarwanda titles? How so? If not, why?
- 14.) Has the project increased your customer base? If so, how?
- 15.) In one year, do you think your enterprise will still be selling these titles? Why or why not?

- 16.) Is general development of children important for this community? Why or why not?

Interview protocol for National Publishers

- 1.) How long involved in Rwandan Children's Book Initiative? What activities participating in?
- 2.) What are your business goals in the Rwandan market? Who is your target audience? Where is your customer base?
- 3.) What languages are your books in?
- 4.) What types of books are most profitable for your company? Is your company profitable selling Kinyarwanda titles?
- 5.) Describe how your company chooses 0-6 titles to sell before this project.
- 6.) How has this project changed how you produce and sell Kinyarwanda titles?
- 7.) What are the barriers to increasing the number of Kinyarwanda titles you produce and sell?
- 8.) How has this project addressed these barriers?
- 9.) Has this project impacted your interest in selling Kinyarwanda titles? How so? If not, why?
- 10.) Has the project increased your customer base? If so, how?
- 11.) Which titles are families buying the most?
- 12.) In one year, do you think your company will still be selling these titles? Why or why not?
- 13.) How did the training and technical support you received build your capacity to produce high quality books? If not, what support training do you need in order to produce these books?
- 14.) How can training and technical support be improved to better serve your needs as a publisher?

Interview protocol for Community Leaders

- 1.) What types of literacy opportunities exist in this community for parents outside of parenting sessions? Are there playgroups?
- 2.) How often do families participate in these playgroups?
- 3.) What are the benefits families see in participating in playgroups?
- 4.) What are the factors needed to sustain playgroups in this community?
- 5.) Is emergent literacy important for this community? Why or why not?
- 6.) How do community members like you show your support of emergent literacy? Do you attend parenting sessions?
- 7.) (If yes) Why do you go to parenting sessions? How often do you attend?
- 8.) Did you help the program identify facilitators? If so, what are the characteristics of successful facilitators in this community?
- 9.) (If yes) how do you see the program benefiting your community?
- 10.) Since the project began, how have people's attitudes changed towards emergent literacy of children 0-6 years? Whose attitudes have changed the most? What is it men or women?
- 11.) How have people's actions changed towards reading?
- 12.) Where do parents get reading materials in your community? Community libraries? Gifting? Book sellers?

- 13.) Will you continue to support parenting sessions, home visits, and playgroups in the future? Why or why not?
- 14.) In what ways can this program be sustained in this community?
- 15.) What did you think about this program when it first began? Did you think it was beneficial to parents and children? How have your views on this program changed over time?