



Ministry of Education, Science & Technology
New England, Freetown, Sierra Leone

3RD QUARTERLY REPORT

Leh Wi Lan: Improving secondary education
December 2017

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1 Summary of overall progress














The third programme implementation quarter ran from October to December 2017. It was a period of consolidation with emphasis on field support to ensure that the School Support Officers (SSOs) deployed nationally in the previous quarter were on track to deliver on their teacher and school support mandate. The final report of the first Secondary Grade Learning Assessment (SGLA) was produced and disseminated internally for user feedback, although a discussion of recommendations by MEST organised to be part of the 2017 Education Week had to be rescheduled due to the postponement of Education Week. A plan was finalised to reprint JSS Lesson Plans based on field information collected by SSOs on the number of JSS teachers still without Lesson Plans. DFID also approved funding for Pupils' Handbooks to be developed for JSS, complementing the ongoing work on SSS Teacher Guides and Pupils' Handbooks. At a wider level, results of the 2017 BECE examinations were finally released by WAEC. Performance was significantly higher in both English and Maths compared with 2016, with a narrowing of the gender gap in performance in favour of girls. Efforts will be made to better understand the drivers of improvement so that they can be sustained. Meanwhile, DFID is working closely with MEST to integrate Output 1 (GATE) into the rest of Leh Wi Lan for a more coherent programme.

The following two tables provide an overall summary of progress against programme plans and identify key challenges and actions for the next quarter. The plans include those contained and agreed in the forward planning section (Section 3) of the last Quarterly Report.

Green arrows indicate 'completed', amber arrows 'in progress' and red arrows 'not done'.

Table 1 Summary of progress, Oct - Dec 2017

| Programme Output | Key performance indicators | Activities in Quarter 03 (Oct-Dec 2017) | Overall progress |
|---|--|--|------------------|
| Output 2: Improving learning conditions in secondary schools | Annual KPIs (Logframe) | Activities: Oct-Dec 2017 | |
| | 1. % of JSS and SSS teachers in English & Maths using materials and teaching effectively | • JSS school visits by SSOs based on agreed visit schedules (classroom observation and teacher support, engagement with school Principals, and collection of data on availability of JSS Lesson Plans) | ↑ |
| | 2. No. of JSS and SSS teachers receiving training | • Ongoing development of SSS teacher guide and student handbook (MEST technical review and QA) | → |
| | Quarterly KPI milestones Oct-Dec 2017 | | |
| | → 1. JSS teachers have access to LPs | • Preparation of tender notice for procurement of 11,000 JSS LPMs (reprints) | ↑ |
| | → 2. SSS LP drafts reviewed in timely fashion by MEST | • Refining the model for teacher content remediation and syndicating the detailed design with MEST and key stakeholders | → |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of teacher content knowledge remediation tools (English and Maths) for JSS teachers – to be tested with SSOs Developing the model for student content remediation with MEST Planning development of JSS pupil handbook with DFID, MEST and IRC (with IRC to implement) Engage with MEST on approach to disability with a view to mainstreaming into school support programme (focus on elements identified in ESP and Disability Act) |     |
| Output 3: Strengthening MEST planning & monitoring capacity | <p>Annual KPI (Logframe)</p> <p>No. of actions agreed and delivered based on dashboard progress reports from districts</p> <p>Quarterly KPI milestones Oct-Dec 2017</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> MEST Implementation Plan to enable monitoring of updated ESP Analysis and ranking of performance by district in 2017 public exams (NPSE, BECE & WASSCE) National dashboard for monitoring district performance | <p>Activities: Oct-Dec 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide TA to support finalisation of updated ESP and Implementation Plan Support finalisation and submission of GPE Concept Note and ESP Implementation Grant application Support to Coordinator's Office including planning for quarterly social mobilisation exercise rescheduled for October Conduct Excel training for MEST HQ staff and identify further training Complete district level analyses of performance in public exams including BECE results; prepare Powerpoint presentations for all districts to support Ministerial meetings with districts Support conduct of 2017 Education Week as requested by MEST |       |
| Output 4: Strengthening district capacity to hold schools/teachers to account | <p>Annual KPIs (Logframe)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> No. of districts delivering agreed actions based on the on-time monthly dashboard progress reports from schools No. of Districts with at least 75% of all i) JSS schools and ii) SSS schools in District reporting monthly against key priorities | <p>Activities: Oct-Dec 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing management of DSO deliverables to ensure effectiveness and integration within DEO Hold second coordination meeting with all DDEs to review progress and any emerging operational challenges with respect to the district support work Secure approval of Director Inspectorate for revised Supervisor Form and use by Supervisors in |    |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| | 3. % of DSO and SSO reports delivered as planned, on time and reporting activity to improve performance in schools | collecting relevant school performance data | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing support to Situation Room, including procurement of rain gear and quarterly payment of monitors | ↑ |
| | Quarterly KPI milestones Oct-Dec 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate integration of EU assessment of EMIS capacity within MEST with Situation Room (e.g. oversight by Situation Room working group) | → |
| → | 1. Data dashboards created for district planning and monitoring and aggregated for use by Inspectorate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand district data dashboards and national summary dashboard to include data from Supervisors and Situation Room data | → |
| → | 2. Information from SSO, Supervisor and Situation Room reports feed into DEO performance management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and agree further support to Supervisors, e.g. provision of motorbikes, to build the operational capacity of DEOs | → |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate pilot on tablet-based reporting for SSOs and Supervisors | ↑ |
| Output 5: Monitoring, research and learning | Annual KPI (Logframe) | Activities: Oct-Dec 2017 | |
| | 1. Annual student assessment in English and Maths conducted on time, published and with sufficient sample | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit final report of SGLA1 | ↑ |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present full SGLA1 dataset and metadata to MEST for publication on website | ↑ |
| | 2. Assessment data used by all stakeholders and data availability and quality improved | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct capacity building workshop in data analysis for MEST data analysts | ↑ |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct capacity building workshop in data use for policy and planning for senior MEST officials (combined with above) | ↑ |
| | Quarterly KPI milestones Oct-Dec 2017 | | |
| → | MEST agrees and implements 3 actions based on the SGLA report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate full SGLA report and conduct recommendations workshop with MEST during 2017 Education Week | → |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities for district level dissemination of SGLA report, particularly to inform the work of SSOs and Supervisors | ↑ |

Table 2 Summary of Progress, Challenges and Actions

| | Summary of progress | Issues/challenges | Actions next quarter |
|--|---|--|--|
| 1 Girls supported to be in schools and safe (UNICEF) | GATE phase 1 implementation by UNICEF | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular sharing of progress reports on GATE would be helpful | Work with DFID and MEST on GATE 2 planning |
| 2 Improve learning conditions in schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 86% of JSS schools visited by SSOs, 62% of English & Maths teachers visited and observed twice on average Ongoing development of SSS Teacher Guide and Pupils' Handbook Plan to develop JSS Pupils' Handbook finalised Review of approaches to pupil content remediation Disability strategy: for mainstreaming into school support prog. TA support for finalisation of updated ESP & Implementation Plan TA support for finalisation GPE Concept Note & ESP Implementation Grant Application Operational support to Coordinator's Office, including quarterly social mobilisation exercise Excel training (3 sessions) for MEST interns and secretarial staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18% of JSS teachers still do not have Lesson Plans Quality review of SSS Lesson Plan drafts is heavy workload for MEST MEST inclusive education strategy not ready | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reprinting and distribution of 11,000 JSS Lesson Plans Development of JSS Pupils' Handbook Ongoing development of SSS Teacher Guide and Pupils' Handbook Agreement of approaches to Disability and pupil content remediation |
| 3 Strengthen MEST capacity to oversee service delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TA support for finalisation of updated ESP & Implementation Plan TA support for finalisation GPE Concept Note & ESP Implementation Grant Application Operational support to Coordinator's Office, including quarterly social mobilisation exercise Excel training (3 sessions) for MEST interns and secretarial staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to define ESP monitoring plan, e.g. annual sector review through Education Week Low interest in skills training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support finalisation of ESP and IP following feedback from GPE |
| 4 Strengthen district capacity to hold schools / teachers to account | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing management of DSO deliverables to ensure effectiveness and integration within DEOs Approval and dissemination of revised Supervisor Form for collecting school information and feeding into data dashboard Ongoing support to the Situation Room Review of DEO operational needs, including further support to Supervisors/Inspectors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to improve use of Supervisor Form and district level use of data Need to define the future of the Situation Room following end of transition funding from April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise quarterly coordination meeting with DOI and DDEs Plan for EMIS integration (with EU support), and post-transition plan for Situation Room Pilot use of tablets for SSO and Supervisor reporting in 2 districts Operational support to DEOs |
| 5 Improve understanding through monitoring and research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final report of 2017 Secondary Grade Learning Assessment Training of MEST data analysts and other staff in data analysis, interpretation and management Handover of SGLA metadata and datasets to MEST for website upload | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report awaiting Foreword by Minister Further data analysis training needed Website not yet fully upgraded SGLA Recommendations workshop postponed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold SGLA Recommendations workshop Disseminate SGLA report Commence planning for 2018 SGLA |

2 Programme progress by Output

Programme Output 1, “Keeping girls safe in school” is being implemented by UNICEF as the Girls Access to Education (GATE) programme. Key highlights during implementation of Outputs 2 – 5 during the quarter October to December 2017 are presented in the following section.

2.1 Programme Output 2 – Improving learning conditions in secondary schools

The progress reports on activities below are in line with workplan objectives agreed with MEST in the March 2017 Inception Report for implementation during this quarter.

Objective 1: Increase provision and use of structured lesson plans and other appropriate teaching aids to improve teacher effectiveness (initial focus on secondary English and Mathematics based on available resources)

2.1.1 Reprinting of JSS Lesson Plans to fill gaps in distribution

DFID funded the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to produce Primary and JSS Lesson Plans on behalf of MEST from 2016 to 2017. Primary and JSS teachers were trained in use of the LPs in April 2017 and the LPs were distributed to Language Arts and Mathematics teachers as well as head teachers.

An SSO development pilot in Port Loko District (reported in the June 2017 Quarterly Report) discovered that as many as 9% of JSS teachers visited in the District lacked LPs. Reasons for the gap included teachers not attending the initial training, insufficient copies of LPs at the training relative to the number of participants, and ‘unverified’ teachers receiving copies. The SSO programme was rolled out nationally in late September and generating further information on the scale of the JSS LP distribution gap was made a key objective. Data collection, analysis and verification during October and November indicated that 21% of the 5,108 JSS Language Arts and Maths teachers across the country were still missing one or more termly booklets of the JSS LPs.

DFID has approved the reprinting of 11,000 English and Maths LP booklets to cover the teacher gap and to also make copies available to DDEs, Supervisors, Inspectors, SSOs, DSOs and other relevant actors. A procurement tender notice has been prepared and will be issued at the start of the next quarter. The reprinted LPs are expected to be delivered and distributed to schools at the end of March 2018.

2.1.2 Development of SSS Lesson Plans and Pupils' Handbooks

The development of SSS Teacher Guides and Pupils' Handbooks continued during the quarter. The agreed closure date in December was missed due to delays in the approval process. The consequence is a revised implementation schedule now approved by MEST. Distribution of the LPs and training of all SSS English and Maths teachers is now planned for the start of the next school year in September 2018.

By December 2017, a total of 1,812 draft materials (Teacher Guides and Pupils' Handbooks in English and Maths) had been received from the IRC drafting team. Of these, 407 were approved with no further edits required, 452 were reviewed and required further edits, while 953 were under review by MEST.

Table 3 Status report on development of SSS Teacher Guides and Pupils' Handbooks

| | Received from IRC | Reviewed and further edits required | Approved - no further edits required | Under MEST Review |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| English | 1056 | 301 | 227 | 528 |
| Pupils' Handbooks | 528 | 136 | 128 | 264 |
| SS1 | 144 | 54 | 42 | 48 |
| SS2 | 144 | 46 | 50 | 48 |
| SS3 | 144 | 36 | 36 | 72 |
| SS4 | 96 | 0 | 0 | 96 |
| Teacher Guides | 528 | 165 | 99 | 264 |
| SS1 | 144 | 67 | 29 | 48 |
| SS2 | 144 | 65 | 31 | 48 |
| SS3 | 144 | 33 | 39 | 72 |
| SS4 | 96 | 0 | 0 | 96 |
| Maths | 756 | 151 | 180 | 425 |
| Pupils' Handbooks | 331 | 65 | 33 | 233 |
| SS1 | 96 | 0 | 0 | 96 |
| SS2 | 98 | 65 | 33 | 0 |
| SS3 | 137 | 0 | 0 | 137 |
| SS4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Teacher Guides | 425 | 86 | 147 | 192 |
| SS1 | 96 | 30 | 18 | 48 |
| SS2 | 137 | 46 | 91 | 0 |
| SS3 | 192 | 10 | 38 | 144 |
| SS4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Grand Total | 1812 | 452 | 407 | 953 |

In addition to the SSS materials, MEST has approved for Pupil Handbooks to also be produced for JSS. IRC has the commission to develop these during the next quarter with DFID funding. Leh Wi Lan will support MEST to quality assure the materials, including making them print-ready, print and distribute to JSS pupils, and provide relevant support to teachers on their use through SSOs.

Objective 2: Establish comprehensive teacher continuing professional development (CPD) programme providing teacher coaching, training and in-school support

2.1.3 SSO support to teaching and learning

School visits and teacher support work by SSOs was consolidated during the quarter. Following their national deployment in September, it was important to settle SSOs into their school support routines and ensure they established good relationships with school personnel. Field monitoring showed good progress in this regard. SSOs have generally enjoyed the cooperation of teachers and, even more significantly, cooperation from Principals has been key to successful school visits to date.

As reported in 2.1.1, an important aspect of SSO school visits during the quarter was collecting information on gaps in the distribution of lesson plans to JSS teachers. The information collected has since been collated and used to develop the procurement plan for reprinting JSS lesson plans. In a number of cases, LPs have been photocopied for teachers still missing them to ensure that they received the required support from SSOs.

Table 4 SSO report of teachers using lesson plans, October-December 2017

| | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| % of non-private JSS schools visited | 86% | 87% | 60% |
| % of JSS teachers: | | | |
| - Following LPMs and have prepared for the lesson | 8% | 14% | 22% |
| - Following the LPMs | 44% | 53% | 52% |
| - Loosely following the LPMs | 33% | 25% | 20% |
| - Not using the LPMs | 14% | 9% | 8% |
| - Does not have correct LPM | 17% | 20% | 17% |

An exciting highlight during the quarter was evidence that SSOs were becoming proactive and creative in how they are supporting teachers. One SSO in Western Urban Area took it upon himself to organise training in use of lesson plans for teachers in a cluster of schools. He had discovered during his classroom observations that some teachers were not confident in using the lesson plans as they had not been properly trained. In collaboration with his DSO, he developed and implemented a training activity for the teachers concerned. He requested and received training materials from Leh Wi Lan, persuaded Principals of the schools in the cluster to provide a venue and refreshments for participants from their schools, and secured the commitment of the teachers to attend the training on a Saturday. The training was successful and has become a model that DSOs have been encouraged to share with SSOs in their districts.

Table 5 An example of a proactive SSO

Model of a self-driven SSO...

Successes

- *Achieving consensus amongst JSS Principals and persuading them to contribute resources (venue, stationery and refreshments)*
- *Securing commitment of teachers to working on a Saturday – 28 out of 34 expected participants attended, including 5 teachers of other subjects who came out of interest*
- *Leveraging support from programme team – organisational support from DSO and provision of training materials by technical team*

Challenges

- *More time needed to bring other subject teachers up to speed*
 - *Teachers had to share or borrow LPMs due to shortage*
-

First term school examinations were conducted during the quarter. SSOs were asked to observe and review the examinations to assess how far they are aligned with the content being taught through Lesson Plans. A reflection on their findings and resulting action will be shared in the next Quarterly Report.

2.1.4 Teacher content knowledge remediation packs

The September Quarterly Report highlighted the need for a teacher content knowledge remediation programme following the Port Loko SSO pilot programme earlier in the year:

The SSO pilot programme in Port Loko District revealed that many English and Maths teachers had serious content knowledge gaps, limiting their ability to maximise the value of the Lesson Plans. This highlighted the need for a teacher content remediation programme focusing on boosting teachers' content knowledge, alongside the SSO programme focusing on content delivery, in order to ensure that teachers are able to use the Lesson Plans effectively and achieve better student learning outcomes.

Two national consultants were engaged during the current quarter to lead development of Remediation Packs for JSS teachers, to be tested initially with SSOs. The Packs are to include 1) Study Materials and 2) Content Review Exams in English Language Arts and Maths. The study and exams materials will be based on JSS Lesson Plan content for each term. To prepare SSOs to support teachers, SSOs themselves will be provided Key Concept Sheets to review. They will then be assessed on understanding of content and, where necessary, helped to improve their own skills before they engage with teachers on particular content topics.

The draft Remediation Packs will be shared with MEST for feedback once drafted in the next quarter.

2.2 Programme Output 3 – Strengthening MEST’s capacity to plan, monitor and manage service delivery

The progress reports on activities below are in line with workplan objectives agreed with MEST in the March 2017 Inception Report for implementation during this quarter.

Objective 1: Setting targets in line with updated Education Sector Plan

2.2.1 Finalisation of MEST Implementation Plan (IP) for ESP monitoring

The updated ESP document underwent several revisions based on feedback, particularly from donors and the GPE independent evaluation. It was eventually signed off by the Honourable Minister in November 2017.

Attention turned to the detailed ESP Implementation Plan without which it would be impossible to operationalise and monitor the ESP. MEST, with Leh Wi Lan TA support, developed the IP along with an intervention budget. In particular, the IP incorporated all large-scale donor supported programmes (e.g. funded by DFID and the EU) into a single MEST ‘Masterplan’. The Masterplan was then converted into a 12-month Implementation Plan with named MEST owners and a monitoring dashboard that can be used in IMT meetings to ensure each directorate working group meeting actually takes place and that ESP interventions are delivered and monitored as planned.

2.2.2 Sector performance monitoring through analysis of performance by district in 2017 public examinations

The long delay in the release of 2016/17 BECE results was finally addressed by the government, with WAEC receiving the examination fees that had been withheld. Programme TA supported analysis of performance by district and ranking of schools. Similar to the WASSCE results, performance spiked sharply in both English and Maths compared with 2015/16 and included significant reductions in the performance gender gap between boys and girls. The analysis and ranking is yet to be reviewed by the Honourable Minister and, at the time of writing, the annual Education Week (during which best performing schools are publicly recognised) was yet to happen.

Table 6 Comparison of performance in 2016/17 BECE exams against baseline

| Impact Indicator 2 | 2015 Baseline | 2016/17 | |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | | Target | Actual |
| Number of girls and boys passing BECE with passes in English and Maths i.e. getting Grade 1-6 | Eng 20,427 (G) | Eng 21,448 (G) | Eng 32,653 (G) (70.8%) |
| | Eng 26,530 (B) | Eng 27,591 (B) | Eng 37,030 (B) (77.1%) |
| | Eng 46,957 (Total) | Eng 49,039 (Total) | Eng 69,683 (T) (74.0%) |
| | Math 21,728 (G) | Math 22,814 (G) | Math 39,265 (G) (85.2%) |
| | Math 24,333 (B) | Math 25,306 (B) | Math 41,787 (B) (87.0%) |
| | Math 46,061 (Total) | Math 48,120 (Total) | Math 81,052 (T) (86.1%) |
| Source - MEST Examination Report | | | |

Objective 2: Support the delivery of PDT objectives to June 2017 (and beyond given MEST's recent commitment to a post-PDT transition plan)

2.2.3 Support to Coordinator's Office and MEST Internship programme

Support to the Coordinator's Office was provided during the quarter in line with the agreed workplan and budget. The main activity for the period was the second national social mobilisation exercise involving MEST partnering with Paramount Chiefs (PCs) to engage local communities on school reform efforts. This quarter's agenda included a useful introduction of Leh Wi Lan activities to PCs and communities. Progress on core MEST initiatives such as school feeding, teacher payroll cleaning, school approval and classroom construction was also reviewed. The exercise was delivered in 4 regional centres and administrative / financial support by Leh Wi Lan ran smoothly, indicating better understanding of the payment policy for MEST activities.

The internship programme continued to run with interns supporting day-to-day tasks across directorates and developing their own skills in the process.

2.2.4 MEST Capacity Building

A key objective of MEST's post-PDT transition plan is to ensure that personnel and directorates have the relevant skills and capacity to contribute to the delivery of MEST's priorities. Following a quick survey on capacity gaps through the PDT heads of working groups meetings earlier in the year, training sessions in Excel and budgeting skills were agreed by MEST, designed and delivered¹. By the last session at the end of October, middle level staff in MEST, including directorate secretaries and interns, had improved their Excel skills. District Support Officers (DSOs) have received the same training and will be free to share with district level personnel where the need is identified.

2.3 Programme Output 4 – Strengthening district capacity to hold schools and teachers to account

The progress reports on activities below are in line with workplan objectives agreed with MEST in the March 2017 Inception Report for implementation during this quarter.

Objective 1: Strengthen district supervision of schools

2.3.1 District support and coordination

The revised Supervisor Form, which streamlined an unwieldy 21-page document into an efficient 2-page tool, was signed off during the last quarter, following inputs from DDEs and the Director Inspectorate. It has now been deployed for use by Supervisors and uptake is

¹ The training was delivered with good participation. However, there has not been an evaluation of application on the job.

expected to be gradual². The introduction of the district data dashboard requiring data from the Supervisor Form (Annex 1), amongst other sources, will push demand and increase compliance.

The second quarterly coordination meeting with DDEs did not hold in December due to multiple and competing activities within MEST in a busy end-of-year period. The meeting will hold in the next quarter. Engagement with individual DDEs at district level has been good and there are currently no issues escalated to MEST.

The programme remains committed to providing operational support to District Education Offices (DEOs) to ease day-to-day operations and mitigate severe financial constraints which, for example, hamper routine school supervision visits. A comprehensive offer of support to DEOs, based on needs assessment by the programme team and consultations with DDEs, has been put together for DFID's consideration. DFID has subsequently shared the assessment with MEST and now awaits a three-way agreement of the final offer to districts involving MEST, DFID and the EU. While there are clearly multiple needs, provision will necessarily be prioritised within available resources and other feasibility factors.

2.3.2 District Monitoring Data Dashboard

School visits undertaken by SSOs during the current quarter have made it possible to populate the district data dashboard for the first time. The aggregated monthly data (National Dashboard) for the months of October, November and December is attached as Annex 2, with data mainly derived from SSO reports. From January 2018, the data dashboard will be circulated in the form of a visual report for use by MEST and other stakeholders. It will also be routinely presented on the MEST website once that is up and running again. However, there is progress with data from the two other principal sources – the Supervisor Form and the Situation Room. The latest available district level Situation Room data is for September and updated data will be incorporated as it becomes available.

The data dashboard broadly covers the following:

- Basic statistics: current data on schools and teachers
- Inputs: number and frequency of school visits (non-private) and observations by SSOs and Supervisors/Inspectors
- Outputs: data on use of Primary Lesson Plans (from Supervisor Form), use of JSS Lesson Plans (from SSO reports), school attendance (from Situation Room reports) and school feeding (from Situation Room reports)
- Outcomes: results from NPSE, BECE, WASSCE and the annual Leh Wi Lan SGLA

In addition to the dashboard, DSOs prepare and share short narrative reports with DDEs on a monthly basis. These reports interpret / digest data from the dashboard and enable DDEs to identify and respond to important decision points. The following are good examples from Kailahun District.

² For the revised form to be routinely used Supervisors have to be visiting schools; only a small number of them currently do so. The programme plans to support DEOs with additional motorcycles to increase the frequency of school visits by Supervisors.



Summary of Successes of current Week.

When compared with last week (44%) of teachers following the LPM steps were on level 3, there has been an increase to 64% of teachers following the 5 LPM steps and have moved from level 3 (Very Good) to level 4 (Excellent) .

Cordial relationship and improved collaboration between SSOs and School Authorities with particular reference to Luawa Islamic JSS Kailahun, Methodist JSS Kailahun, SLMB JSS Pendembu and St. Michaels Baiima to mention a few.

About 71% of the teachers are currently using more than one method of assessing pupils. Some of these methods include the 1-minute paper, Score cards, Questions and answers to mention a few.

Majority of the teachers observed (94%) checked for pupils' understanding of Lessons delivered by asking random questions to individual pupils using inclusive participation method.

Major Challenge for the previous week.

Some schools were on unannounced mid-term test prior to the SSOs visit (Government Secondary JSS Dia, Ngiebu Methodist JSS Nyeama, Ahmadiyya JSS Daru, Wallace Agricultural JSS Daru, Umar Binal Khatab JSS Daru, SLMB JSS Pendembu, Mandu JSS Mobai, Vocational JSS Pendembu).

Most teachers are still struggling with teaching aids (82%) as of October, 2017, especially on comprehension passages that take a lot of time to write on blackboard



Report to Deputy Director of Education: School Support Officer Activities

To: Deputy Director of Education, Kailahun District

From: Leh We Lan- Kailahun

Date: 3/11/2017

Priority Issues for DD Attention

LPM distribution is 98% complete as 39 of the 40 teachers without LPMs have now received LPMs we (MEST and Leh Wi Lan) distributed. The one left out has not surfaced during the period of distribution for which he has to sign.

As a latest development, teachers teaching Maths and English Language Arts from Gbela Methodist JSS Gbalahun have requested for TEACHING AIDS Specifically VAN CARDS and MARKERS to help them in their Lesson preparation and delivery. To a greater extent I think this is very important and realistic request as it is evident in the data for November that only 42% of teachers observed have been using teaching aids other than the blackboard. Even though only Gbela Methodist requested for these, but many other schools and teachers are faced with this same constraint (Reference to the data). However, if we have a head way in tackling this problem of Teaching Aid after we would have discussed it, I will ask my SSOs to collect data on the specific schools.

Celebrating Success for Previous week.

More teachers are interested in the support provided by SSOs as it helps improve their Lesson Delivery in class.

A very good percentage 44% are on level 3 (Very Good) of 4 levels prescribed in the data base on using the LPM correctly, while only 19% are still between Not using and Loosely using LPM Level 1 & 2 (Poor and Good)

Figure 1 Examples of DDE action reports based on data dashboard – Kailahun District

Objective 2: Enhance Situation Room data at the school level

2.3.3 Support to Situation Room

Support to the Situation Room (SR) continued during the quarter in line with the agreed workplan and budget for the transition period running until March 2018. Key activities during the quarter included conclusion of the large-scale procurement of rain gear for community monitors and district level monitoring and support visits by the SR team. Payment of the 1,182 community monitors across the country was also administered by the programme without hitches.

The EU project launched its review of EMIS capability in MEST during the quarter. Consultative discussions identified the need for closer integration of the SR and EMIS, and sustainable EMIS capacity when the current support to the SR transition plan ends in March 2018. A final report has not yet been produced for review by MEST.

Sustainability of the Situation Room beyond the end of the current transition period in March 2018 is now foremost on the agenda of the Situation Room Working Group. It is properly understood that DFID will no longer fund the Situation Room, including the 1,182 community monitors who collect data, and the team is currently reviewing options. The preferred scenario appears to be new funding through GPE and the current GPE grant application incorporates this option.

2.3.4 Tablet-based reporting for SSOs and Supervisors

The programme, in discussion with the SR and district level users, has finalised plans to pilot a tablet-based reporting system for SSOs and Supervisors. This is intended to minimise the administrative burden on DSOs of processing paper reports from school visits, make monthly reporting of school progress more efficient, and streamline the data monitoring dashboard that MEST and DEOs can use to monitor school performance by district.

The approach will be tested in two districts initially and involve a small selection of SSOs and Supervisors. If effective, the approach will be rolled out to all SSOs and Supervisors on payroll.

Highlight features of the proposed system include:

- Classroom observation and subsequent teacher feedback by SSOs / Supervisors aided by use of tablets
- Quick on-the-spot assessment of children's learning – captured on the same tablets
- Real-time reporting through data upload to the cloud but with an onboard saving module as backup – required in internet-constrained locations
- Use of GPS information to verify that school visits are actually taking place
- Integration of a Lesson Plan toggle function to enable SSOs / Supervisors to make quick references to Lesson Plans during lesson observation
- Compatibility with existing data reporting dashboards, e.g. EduTrac used for Situation Room reporting

The pilot will be implemented from March 2018 for 6 weeks and then rolled to all SSOs and Supervisors.

2.3.5 Regular programme monitoring

The programme district support structure of DSOs and SSOs only became fully operational at the end of September 2017. Field monitoring was, therefore, prioritised during the quarter to ensure that DSOs and SSOs were effective in their roles and school support plans stayed on track. The programme team undertook regular monitoring and support visits to monitor DSO performance and coordination with DDEs, review the efficiency of the SSO data collection and reporting system, solicit feedback from DDEs, school Principals and teachers, and identify immediate gaps and challenges. The figure below illustrates how analysis of dashboard information also helps to identify monitoring and support needs. In this case, there was a need to investigate why SSO school visits were relatively low in Bonthe and Tonkolili in the month of November³.

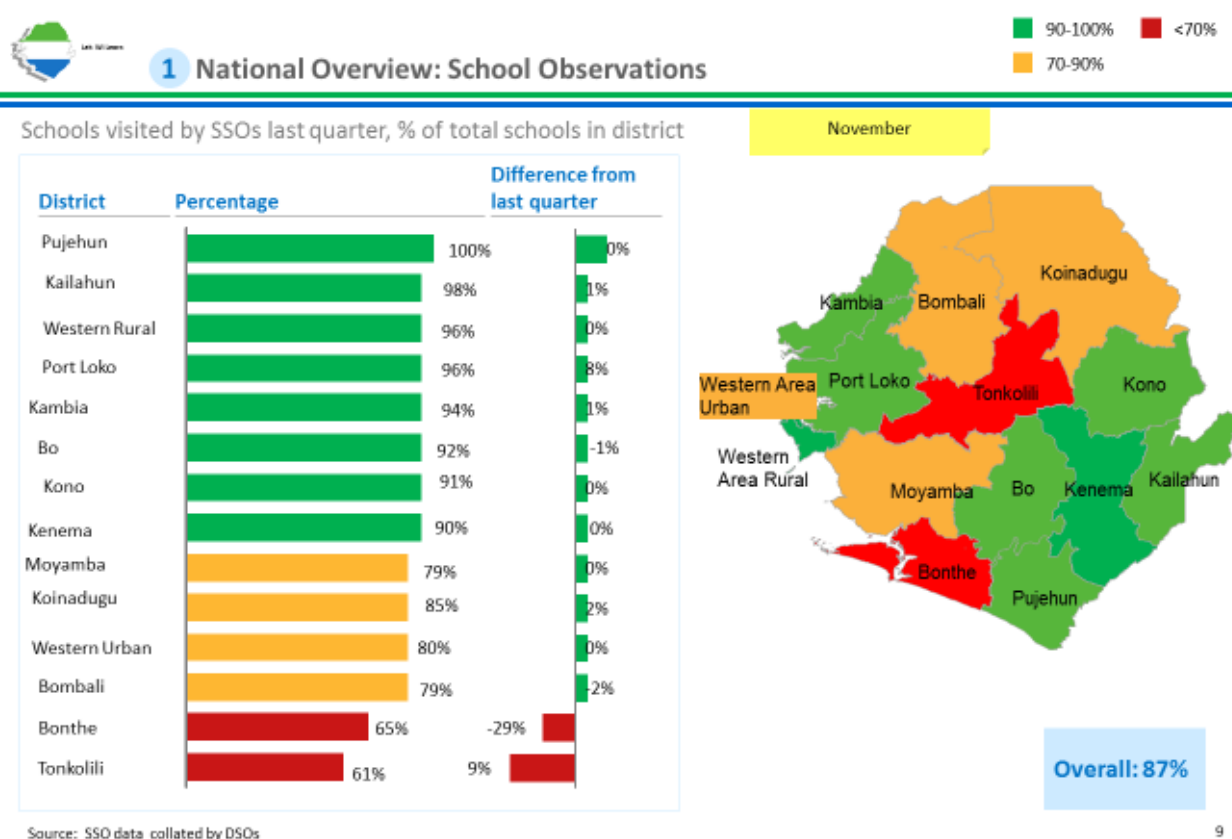


Figure 2 SSO school visit rates in November 2017

³ The low coverage of schools in Bonthe in November was attributed to the resignation and replacement of one of the three SSOs in the district. The replacement process left a vacuum which accounted for the low coverage of schools during the period.

2.4 Programme Output 5 – Improving system capacity for monitoring, learning and research

The progress reports on activities below are in line with workplan objectives agreed with MEST in the March 2017 Inception Report for implementation during this quarter.

Objective: Conduct an annual independent learning assessment

2.4.1 Final Secondary Grade Learning Assessment Report

The final SGLA report with a longlist of recommendations was completed and circulated internally to principal MEST officials including the Honourable Minister, the two Deputy Ministers, the CEO, MEST Directors and other relevant officers. It was also shared with DFID and the Leh Wi Lan programme team.

A recommendations workshop was scheduled to revise the longlist of recommendations into a prioritised set of feasible actions that MEST can take on in response to the SGLA findings. Due to competing demands on the time of MEST officials in the month of December the workshop has been postponed to the next quarter. It will be important for MEST senior decision makers to discuss, agree and prioritise the best and most feasible actions, agree ways forward for each prioritised action and allocate responsibility accordingly.

2.4.2 Handover of SGLA dataset to MEST to strengthen research and learning capacity

A capacity building workshop for MEST data analysts and other relevant staff was organised prior to handing over the complete SGLA dataset to MEST. The workshop was held at MEST from 7 – 9 November and sought to enhance capacity within MEST for analysing and utilising the SGLA data for informing strategy, policy and planning. A total of 15 officers attended the workshop under the leadership of the CEO and the Director, Policy and Planning.

The SGLA dataset and metadata was subsequently handed over to the managers of the MEST website for uploading. The package consisted of principal interview data, teacher interview data, pupil background and assessment data and disability background and assessment data in both Excel and STATA formats. The MEST website is currently undergoing upgrades and the SGLA material will be uploaded as soon as is feasible.

Further capacity building will need to be provided as only two of the workshop participants had hands-on knowledge of and responsibility for data analysis within MEST. The other participants, although keen to learn, were users rather than data managers.

2.5 Management and Admin

The programme became fully operational in all districts in the country during the quarter. This required putting in place effective operational procedures, policies and control systems for seamless delivery and management of issues when they arise. Good progress was made during the quarter familiarising staff with operational systems and troubleshooting early challenges. Guidelines and tools for financial and asset management are in place and were scheduled to be reviewed through an internal audit by Deloitte early in the next quarter. A

comprehensive programme assets register is also being collated for submission to DFID at the end of February.

The fleet of used motorcycles from DFID for 125 SSOs is now complete and the cost to the programme has been limited to basic repairs and maintenance, fuel and licenses. Overall, this has delivered good VFM for DFID. Liability statements have been signed by all DSOs and SSOs, ensuring greater personal responsibility for the safety of motorcycles and other programme assets in their custody. A plan for provision of motorcycles to Supervisors on payroll based on a comprehensive needs assessment has been shared with MEST by DFID. This will form part of a wider package of support to DEOs to be agreed with DDEs in the next quarter.

The programme has also received used furniture, computers and printers transferred from other DFID projects that are closing, thereby minimising procurement expenditure.

Approved Suppliers Lists (ASLs) have been finalised for all districts and are currently undergoing management approval. Once in place, the ASLs will streamline operational support to activities in districts and give respective DEOs greater control over the delivery of activities locally, e.g. in procuring catering, venue and hotel services.

Routine support to the MEST Coordinator's Office and the Situation Room continued during the quarter in line with approved workplans. The Situation Room undertook two substantial exercises which presented administrative challenges – procurement of rain gear and quarterly payment of stipends to 1,182 community monitors spread across the country. An improved working relationship with the MEST team ensured that the exercises were satisfactorily completed.

The programme continued to observe strict compliance to GoSL's dual employment policy, ensuring that all new employees and short-term consultants who are Sierra Leone nationals sign a dual employment declaration form. In addition, their details are submitted to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to verify that they are not currently on government payroll as required by law.

A tender notice was issued for the reprinting of 11,000 JSS Lesson Plans to increase the availability of Lesson Plans to JSS teachers in the country. The procurement was originally scheduled to happen before the end of December. However, it was essential to generate accurate data on the number of JSS teachers missing lesson plans for the procurement to be effective, and the process of collecting reliable data through SSOs took longer than envisaged⁴. Further, the plan to procure by the end of December overestimated the capacity of locally available printers to deliver within a reasonably short time frame.

The programme supported a total of 2,554 person days in workshops and training activities during the quarter, with a cumulative total of 3,889 participants benefitting. This was a drop from 4,243 person days recorded in the previous quarter (person days during the previous quarter were driven by multi-day induction and other training events for SSOs and

⁴ SSOs began work at the end of September and a few runs of data collection, over October and November, were required to establish the data reporting system as reliable.

Supervisors). The average cost of per diems and allowances⁵ per day for the quarter was £26, compared with £28 in the previous quarter⁶.

Technical implementation of the programme has developed quite rapidly and the capacity of the local team is at full stretch. In the next quarter, a Delivery Adviser role will be introduced to help coordinate technical implementation.

⁵ Estimated average for quarter based on total value of per diems and allowances paid / no. of activity days (categories: transport, subsistence, accommodation, refreshments)

⁶ No reliable benchmark currently exists on the cost of per diems, allowances and workshop related costs in Sierra Leone and the programme will have to apply internal benchmarking based on trend over time to assess VFM performance.

3 Plans for next quarter, Jan - Mar 2018

This section highlights key results and activities for the next quarter, January to March 2018, building on current progress and in line with the implementation workplan approved in the programme Inception Report.

3.1 Key Performance Indicators for the current quarter

Five key performance indicators were specified for the October - December 2017 implementation workplan. The following table shows the status of completion.

| KPI / Milestone Deliverable | Report (MM) | Confirmed (DFID-SL) |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Satisfaction KPI (very satisfied/satisfied/unsatisfied). If over 50% of responses are unsatisfied (taking weighting into consideration), then milestone not achieved: | Tbc (survey run by DFID) | No |
| 2. Improved learning conditions in schools – SSS and JSS teachers have and are using the resources to improve teaching (<i>Milestone: Every JSS teacher has access to the right Lesson Plan to teach</i>) | Not achieved | No |
| 3. MEST and DEOs discuss and take decisions based on real time data to manage performance of individual schools at least monthly (<i>Milestone: All DEOs feeding into MEST and to head teacher's performance management information collected by their office and the Situation Room</i>) | Achieved | No |
| 4. Impact of annual learning assessment maximised (<i>Milestone: MEST identifies three priority actions from the learning survey and implements them</i>) | Not achieved | No |
| 5. Logframe impact met for school year (<i>Milestone: 51,490 girls and boys passing BECE with credit grade in English and 50,525 girls and boys passing BECE with credit grade in Maths</i>) | Achieved | Yes |

Two milestones were achieved, two not achieved and one, the satisfaction survey conducted by DFID, still awaited.

The reprinting of JSS Lesson Plans (milestone 2) was not achieved for two reasons. The procurement plan for reprinting required up-to-date data from across the country on how many JSS teachers were still missing Lesson Plans. This information could only be collected through SSOs. SSOs were deployed nationally at the end of September and needed October and November to settle in and collect verifiable information. The required planning data did not become available until late in the quarter. Secondly, no local printer contacted was able to guarantee a production schedule within the quarter as earlier envisaged.

The second milestone not achieved (milestone 4) was dependent on a Recommendations workshop organised for senior MEST officials in December 2017. Due to competing end-of-year work demands, MEST rescheduled the workshop for January 2018.

Both missed milestones will be achieved by February 2018.

3.2 Key Performance Indicators for next quarter

The proposed KPIs and milestones for the next quarter (January – March 2018) are:

1. Satisfaction KPI (very satisfied/satisfied/unsatisfied). If over 50% of responses are unsatisfied (taking weighting into consideration), then milestone not achieved. Tracked every quarter.
2. Improved learning conditions in schools – SSS and JSS teachers have and are using the resources to improve teaching (Milestone: 80% of JSS teachers in non-private schools using LPMs)
3. MEST and DEOs discuss and take decisions based on real time data to manage performance of individual schools at least monthly (Milestone: Management system shows that MEST discusses and takes decisions based on real time data at least monthly)
4. Impact of annual learning assessment maximised (Milestone: Provide Logframe and Value for Money data for annual review)
5. Logframe impact met target for school year (Milestone: 51,490 girls and boys passing BECE with credit grade in English and 50,525 girls and boys passing BECE with credit grade in Maths)

3.2 Activities for next quarter

The full approved programme implementation workplan for the period July 2017 to July 2018 is attached as Annex 3. The following are headline activities by Output to be delivered during the next quarter.

Output 1: Improving learning conditions in secondary schools

| Q04 Activities | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Planning and design of GATE 2 | x | x | x |

Output 2: Improving learning conditions in secondary schools

| Q04 Activities | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|--|-----|-----|-----|
| JSS school visits by SSOs based on agreed visit schedules (classroom observation and teacher support, engagement with school Principals, and collection of data on availability and use of JSS Lesson Plans) | x | x | x |

| Q04 Activities | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|--|------------|------------|------------|
| Ongoing development of SSS Lesson Plans (MEST technical review and QA) | x | x | x |
| Reprinting and distribution of 11,000 JSS Lesson Plans to fill existing distribution gap | x | x | |
| Development of JSS Pupils' Handbooks led by IRC (MEST technical review and QA) | | | x |
| Share draft Teacher Content Remediation Packs for English and Maths with MEST prior to testing with SSOs | | | x |
| Developing and introducing the model for student content remediation with MEST | x | x | x |

Output 3: Strengthening MEST's capacity to plan, monitor and manage service delivery

| Q04 Activities | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Provide TA to support finalisation of GPE grant application | x | x | |
| Ongoing support to Coordinator's Office | x | x | x |
| Review further capacity building needs for MEST HQ staff and identify further training | | x | x |
| Complete trend analyses of performance in public exams (2015-2017) and prepare Powerpoint presentations for all districts to support MEST meetings with districts | x | x | |

Output 4: Strengthening district capacity to hold schools and teachers to account

| Q04 Activities | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Ongoing management of DSO deliverables to ensure effectiveness and integration within DEO | x | x | x |
| Hold second coordination meeting with all DDEs to review progress and any emerging operational challenges with respect to the district support work | x | | |
| Collaborate with DDEs to formally evaluate performance of SSOs | x | | |
| Ongoing support to the Situation Room | x | x | x |
| Facilitate integration of EU assessment of EMIS capacity within MEST with Situation Room (e.g. oversight by Situation Room working group) | x | x | x |
| Expand district data dashboards and national summary dashboard to include data from Supervisors and Situation Room data | x | x | x |
| Pilot tablet-based reporting by SSOs and Supervisors in two districts | | x | x |
| Define and agree further support to DEOs to improve operational capacity | x | x | |

Output 5: Improving capacity for monitoring, research and learning

| Q04 Activities | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|--|------------|------------|------------|
| Conduct MEST SGLA recommendations workshop | x | | |
| Disseminate final report of SGLA and relevant communication briefs widely, including via the MEST website | | x | x |
| Present full SGLA dataset and metadata to MEST for publication on website | x | x | |
| Review need for further capacity building in data analysis and use for policy and planning for MEST data management staff | | x | x |
| Explore opportunities for district level dissemination of SGLA report, particularly to inform the work of SSOs and Supervisors | | x | x |
| Develop concept and project plan for 2018 SGLA | x | x | x |

Glossary of acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|------------|---|
| ASL | Approved Suppliers List |
| BECE | Basic Education Certificate Examination |
| CEO | Chief Education Officer |
| CPD | Continuing Professional Development |
| DDE | Deputy Director of Education |
| DEO | District Education Office |
| DFID | UK Department for International Development |
| DSO | District Support Officer |
| EduTrac | Mobile phone based data collection system developed by UNICEF |
| EMIS | Education Management Information System |
| ESP | Education Sector Plan |
| EU | European Union |
| GATE | Girls Access to Education |
| GoSL | Government of Sierra Leone |
| GPE | Global Partnership on Education |
| GPS | Global Positioning System |
| HQ | Headquarters |
| IMT | Inclusive Management Team |
| IP | Implementation Plan |
| IRC | International Rescue Committee |
| JSS | Junior Secondary School |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicator |
| Leh Wi Lan | Krio for “Let’s Learn” |
| LPs | Lesson Plans |
| MEST | Ministry of Education Science and Technology |
| MM | Mott MacDonald |
| MoFED | Ministry of Finance and Economic Development |
| MTR | Mid Term Review |
| NPSE | National Primary School Exam |
| PDT | Presidential Delivery Team |
| p.p. | Percentage point |
| QA | Quality Assurance |
| QR | Quarterly Report |
| SGLA | Secondary Grade Learning Assessment |
| SR | Situation Room |
| SSO | School Support Officer |
| SSS | Senior Secondary School |
| STATA | Statistical analysis software package |
| TA | Technical Assistance |
| ToRs | Terms of Reference |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children’s Fund |
| VFM | Value for Money |
| WASSCE | West African Senior School Certificate Examination |