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Framework for Scaling Up and Sustaining Early Grade Reading

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About the Presentation

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Scale-up and Sustainability of Early Grade Reading (EGR)

Methodology (1/2)

- Extensive review of the scale-up and sustainability literature with a particular, but not exclusive, focus on education
- Ancillary review of the reform support, implementation, and democratic deliberation literature
- Review of the EGR scale-up efforts in Egypt and Liberia
- All with an aim of discerning what was taken to scale, the extent of scale-up/sustainability, and most importantly, the factors that were attributed to the efforts' success/failure.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Methodology (2/2)

- These factors were amassed and analyzed such that a common set of factors were identified.
- The operational requirements of these factors were then discerned for scaling up and sustaining EGR
- The requirements were used to create a framework for successfully taking EGR to scale and sustaining it
- Given the likelihood that some USAID missions cannot do all that is asked for in this framework, a number of prioritization criteria were described
- A logical sequence of these requirements was then offered.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Assume that you have successfully piloted an EGR program and that you want to scale it up and sustain it.

What do you have in mind when you speak of scaling up and sustaining an EGR program?

When might you be able to say that you have successfully scaled up and sustained an EGR program?

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

A. When an EGR program is being fully implemented in every school/district in the country?
B. When all of the systemic and institutional "requirements" of an EGR program are in place and fully operative?
C. When there is widespread improvement in students' EGR scores over a 2-3 year period of time?
D. When every EGR teacher need not follow scripted lessons; when they have the knowledge, beliefs, viewpoints, and skills needed to effectively teach EGR in multiple contexts and settings, and generate solid EGR results every time they teach, wherever they teach, whoever they teach?
E. A and C?
F. A, B, and C?
G. A, B, C, and D?

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

That the answer is “G” is critical, in that it distinguishes an EGR program as something quite different from many things that can more easily go to scale and be sustained.

Changing what Elmore (1996) calls “the core of educational practices” is very difficult and also the reason why so many education reforms fail: because not enough attention is paid to changing “the core.”

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Coburn (2003) echoes Elmore as she maintains that scale up is about a lot more than numbers. For her, numbers say very little about what one really wants to have happen: “the nature of the change envisioned or enacted or the degree to which it is sustained, or the degree to which schools and teachers have the knowledge and authority to continue to grow the reform over time (page 4).”

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

For her, successful scale up has four dimensions:

- Depth
- Spread
- Sustainability
- Transfer of ownership

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Fundamental factors of successful scale-up and sustainability

- Demand
- Ownership
- Adaptability
- Learning-driven
- Accountability and Incentives
- Systemic
- Doable
- Political economy
- Implementation Support
- Time

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Demand

- If key stakeholders throughout the system demand that the reading situation improve, and they demand that a particular EGR program be taken to scale and be sustained, and if the demand were long lasting, it is quite likely that an EGR program would be taken to scale and be sustained.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Ownership

- If key stakeholders understand the nature of a problem to the extent that they own it, and if the truly own an EGR program, if they had a personal stake in its spread and success, it is quite likely that an EGR program would go to scale and be sustained.
- Ownership is not buy-in, nor is it nodding heads. Ownership is engendered when people feel deeply that something is theirs, not someone else's.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Adaptable

- Contexts vary across geography, space, and time.
- What may be a solution to Problem 1 in Context A, may not be a solution to Problem 1 in Context B.
- What may be a solution to Problem 1 in Context A in 2013, may prove to become a problem in 2018.
- If something is to go to scale across a wide geographic expanse and be sustained over time, it must be adaptable.
- So adaptable that it changes one's view of what exactly is going to scale and being sustained.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Learning-driven (ongoing)

- If one believes that an education system should always be continuously improving in everything that it does such that more and more children can learn more and more, then, reform never comes to an end, it is an on-going phenomenon.
- Targeted needs-based learning drives on-going reform and system-wide continuous improvement.
- Learning helps to make adaptation happen, learning and adaptation help to engender ownership, and all three help to generate demand.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Accountability and Incentives

- Training people to do what they need to do is a far cry from getting them to do what they need to do.
- While some people are intrinsically motivated to do what the need to do, and do it well, most are not.
- They need to be incentivized and held accountable for high-quality job performance.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Systemic

- EGR is a small part of a very large education system, one that is often times dysfunctional.
- If one likens a successful EGR program to a square peg, and the system in which one wants to take it to scale and sustain it to an amalgamation of round holes, some filled with round pegs, other simply empty, then the fate of that square peg becomes obvious.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Systemic

- One needs an accompanying square holed system.
- There are multiple systemic and institutional elements of an EGR system.

- The language/reading curriculum
- Reading policy
- Relevant textbooks and teaching and learning materials (content and design)
- Relevant textbooks and teaching and learning materials (production, budget, scope)

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Systemic

- Relevant textbooks and teaching and learning materials (distribution mechanisms, cost, efficacy)
- Pre-service teacher training as it pertains to EGR
- Teacher professional development as it pertains to EGR
- Continuous professional development mechanisms for non-teachers (principals, teacher trainers, coaches, etc.)
- Human resources (HR) policies, career ladders and advancement systems
- Student assessment mechanisms and systems
- Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Systemic

- Education management information systems
- Accountability and incentive systems
- Teacher management systems, staffing norms
- Finance systems and flows
- Procurement regulations

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Systemic

- But all these square holes do not a square-holed system make.
- Needed is a vision of what a scale-up up and sustainable EGR looks like.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Doable

"An intervention backed by solid research demonstrating its effectiveness is worthless if it is too costly and too difficult to implement (Borman, 2005)."

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Doable

- If the successful EGR program is the equivalent of a Mercedes, and all the MOE can afford, once the EGR system has gone to scale, is a VW, that EGR program will not be sustained.
- Efforts must be made to ensure that what one is piloting is affordable at scale.
- Pilots tend to succeed because an extraordinary amount of effort—resources and time—are put into it. It is also why most pilots tend not to go to scale, or if they do, fail soon after.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Political Economy

- Within the education sector, most good ideas tend not sell themselves. There is a political economy of education that has a vested interest in the status quo, and as such will fight any change that threatens their vested interest.
- That this is the case is why many reform efforts fail, in particular, in going to scale and being sustained.
- Pilots are not a threat to anyone. Taking them to scale is.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Implementation Support

- When one looks at all the work that has to be done with regard to reform—scaling up and sustaining an EGR system—work that is above and beyond the everyday work of most people in the education system, is it any wonder that when you ask someone who already has a 40 hour/week job to do more work, the work of reform, that it either doesn't get done, or does not get done well.
- One must put in place an entity whose sole job is to conduct the work of reform.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Operational Requirements

- Each one of these fundamental factors has what we are calling operational requirements.
  - If demand is necessary for EGR to go to scale and be sustained, then there are a number of things one must do to generate that demand.
- The many activities that one must do to operationalize a fundamental factor are its operational requirements.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Operational Requirements: Demand

Demand must be generated for just about everything one does in an attempt to take an EGR program to scale and sustain it. But let's start at the very beginning—generating demand to conduct an EGR pilot.

1. Generate demand to conduct an EGR *assessment*
2. If successful, design the EGR assessment instrument
3. Test the instrument
4. Train the assessors
5. Conduct the assessment
6. Clean the data

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Operational Requirements: Demand

7. Analyze the data
8. Package the data for a high-level policy dialogue with the decision maker
9. Conduct the policy dialogue
10. Decision made to pilot an EGR program

All of this work had to be done just to generate demand for an EGR pilot. Granted, a number of other things get accomplished as this is done, for example, a viable EGR assessment instrument and trained assessors.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Operational Requirements: Demand

What needs to be done to generate demand to take an EGR program to scale?

11. Develop the EGR program
12. Develop all the materials
13. Conduct a baseline EGR assessment in the pilot region (repeat 5-7)
14. Conduct a baseline EGR assessment among a sample of control schools (repeat 5-7)
15. Develop all the training programs and materials
16. Train everyone that needs to be trained

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Operational Requirements: Demand

17. Print and distribute all the materials
18. Implement the EGR program in the pilot schools
19. Conduct a post intervention EGR assessment in the pilot region (repeat 5-7)
20. Conduct a post intervention EGR assessment among a sample of control schools (repeat 5-7)
21. Package the results for a high-level policy dialogue
22. Conduct the policy dialogue
23. Conditional decision made to take it to scale

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Operational Requirements: Demand

- We say that a conditional decision made to take it to scale because a lot more has to be done before a decision maker decides to take an EGR program to scale.

Again, a lot of work has to be done to generate *just this demand*, the demand among the key decision makers, but a lot of other things came out of the effort as well: a viable EGR program, trained people, etc.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Operational Requirements: Demand

- Look back at Step 11: Develop the EGR program. How this is done is critical because one needs to ensure that there is widespread and deep-rooted ownership of and demand for this program. One must also be sure that it can go to scale and be sustained—that it is doable at scale, that the government can keep it going for years after it has gone to scale.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Operational Requirements: Doable

- Let's now look at the operational requirements of the fundamental factor, Doable. To ensure that the overall effort is doable, that the EGR system one is putting in place can be sustained by the MOE over time, one must do the following:

1. Develop an enrolment, input, cost projection tool that can examine the cost implications of this EGR system at scale.
    a) Develop the widely owned and well informed vision of the EGR system.

2. Assess the personnel and cost implications of this vision.

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Operational Requirements: Doable

3. If these prove to be too high given rational values for GDP and budget growth,

a) Find “fat” within the current system that can be trimmed and used to help cover the costs

b) Alter some of the characteristics of the vision/EGR program

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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Operational Requirements:

- This was done for every fundamental factor, leading to a table of quite a number of specific activities and activity domains.
- And while it may seem daunting, it does delineate all that one needs to do to successfully take EGR to scale and sustain it.

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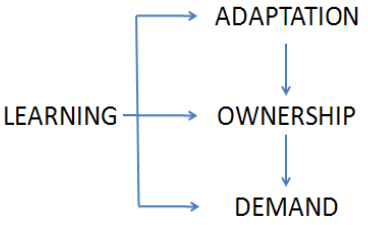
Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Framework:

- These factors, and the activities that need to be done in order to manifest them, relate to each other in a variety of ways. For example, we have already noted this:



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Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR

Framework:

- So, if the various learning systems that one puts in place are designed correctly, they can facilitate adaptation, engender ownership, and generate demand in perpetuity.

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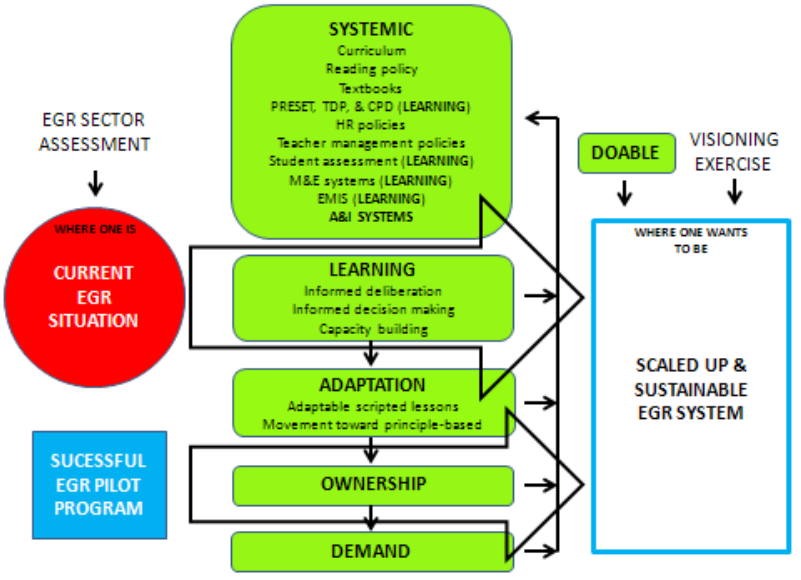
Framework for Successful Scale-up and Sustainability of EGR



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Prioritization Criteria

- Extent to which certain tasks generate demand
- "Closeness" to the task at hand: EGR
  - Tasks
  - Stakeholders
- Difficulty
  - Degree of influence/control one has over a particular objective
  - Political economy
- The extent to which something has already been done
- The extent to which one can achieve an objective given the availability of financial resources
- The extent to which one can achieve an objective given the availability of time

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Prioritization Rubric

Activity	Criteria	Response
Design an EGR assessment		
	Helps to generate demand	
		If designed correctly it can help generate demand
	Core EGR activity?	
		Yes
	Closeness to Core: Activity	
		Yes
	Closeness to Core: Stakeholder	
		Must involve those most impacted by the EGR assessment: testing stakeholders and teacher
	Difficulty: Control	
		Low
	Difficulty: Political economy	
		Low
	Already done?	
		No
	Efficacy of watered-down activity	
		Major concern: A watered down EGR assessment instrument would be unacceptable.

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Sequence

- Design and conduct the EGR assessment
- Analyze and package the EGR assessment results
- Conduct strategic policy dialogue around the results: target audience are those around whom and the person who makes the decision to go ahead with an EGR pilot

If decision is made to pilot an EGR program:

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Sequence

- Design/adapt the EGR program that is going to be piloted and do so in a manner that a) generates widespread ownership among key stakeholders (within the MOE and pilot region) of the program that is going to be piloted, and b) is mindful of the fact that one will want to take this program to scale and sustain it over time.
- Conduct a baseline EGR assessment of the pilot region
- Implement the EGR program in the pilot region
- Conduct a post-intervention EGR assessment of the pilot region

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Sequence

- Analyze and package the post-intervention EGR assessment results
- Conduct strategic policy dialogue around the results: target audience are those around whom and the person who makes the decision to take the EGR program to scale and sustain it over time

If the decision is made to take the EGR program to scale, or at the very least, to explore the feasibility of doing so

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Sequence

- Design and launch a nationwide policy marketing, or communications campaign, aimed at generating widespread demand for scaling up an EGR program. This effort would highlight the results of the initial EGR assessment that led to the decision to go ahead with the EGR pilot, as well as the pre- and post-intervention EGR assessment results in the pilot region, along with some critical cost effectiveness analyses.
- Design and conduct a baseline EGR sector assessment
- Analyze the results of the baseline EGR sector assessment

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Sequence

- Design and conduct a number of workshops around the sector assessment findings in an effort to engender widespread ownership around a) the problems and issues underlying the poor EGR situation within the country, and b) the potential solutions to those problems.
- Design and conduct a series of workshops aimed at pulling all of the “solutions” together into a widely-owned vision of a coherent “EGR system.”

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Sequence

- Hold that draft vision up against the results of the EGR sector assessment and begin to identify all the work that needs to be done in order to take EGR to scale and render it sustainable over time: the systems that need to be developed and/or reformed; the institutional aspects of the education system that need to be developed and/or reformed; the capacities that need to be developed; the organizational elements of the system that have to be developed and/or reformed; etc.
- Develop a tool that will guide policy dialogue sessions around the cost of taking the EGR intervention to scale and sustaining it over time.

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Sequence

- Using that tool, conduct a number of policy dialogue sessions around the parameters of an affordable vision and approach to realizing it over time.
- Finalize the vision and the EGR program.
- Develop an implementation plan, or series of implementation plans, to help move the system toward that vision
- Implement the plan(s).

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