

## **World Vision IGATE (Zimbabwe)**

### **HAPPY READERS LITERACY & NUMERACY INTERVENTION**

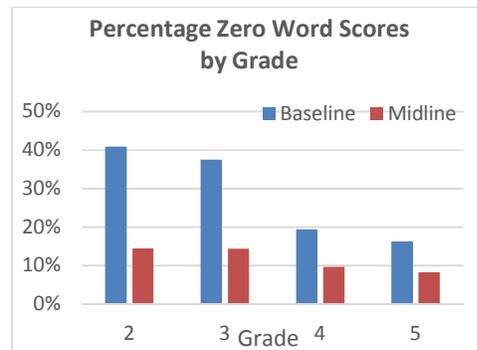
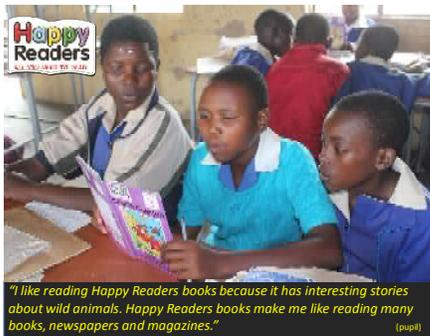
#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES**

##### **Highlights**

This report summarises the key findings from four separate assessments of Happy Readers impact on literacy in 300 schools in the GEC-funded IGATE project.

Study of Reading Test results from 2500 children at 35 IGATE-supported schools who used Happy Readers from July 2015 to July 2016

- **Big Reading improvements** especially in Grades 2,3 & 4. Less in Grades 5&6
- **Non-Readers dropped** i.e. the proportion of children unable to read a single word **decreased by 66% in one year.**
  - Non-Readers down from 40% of Grade 2 in 2015 to 12% in 2016.
  - Grade 3 dropped from 38% of the class to 12%.
  - Grades 4 & 5 dropped from 20% to under 10%.
- **Accelerated Learning.** Rate of children's progress in Reading Score in a year increased by over 150% in Gr 2&3
- **Strong correlation between Reading Outcome and number of Happy Readers books read** (+0.8 in Gr 2&3)
- **Very strong improvement in girls' reading** in Gr 2&3
  - Boys started behind girls in 2015 and have made good improvements but still lag behind girls overall.
- **Qualitative Analysis** affirms that schools (Heads, teachers and pupils) see that Happy Readers has made big positive impact on reading and reading culture.
- Improvements seen in **passage reading and comprehension** as well as word reading.



## **Feedback from Heads, Teachers & Pupils (Qualitative Analysis)**

Conclusions from Miske Witt Qualitative Report (feedback from 273 schools):

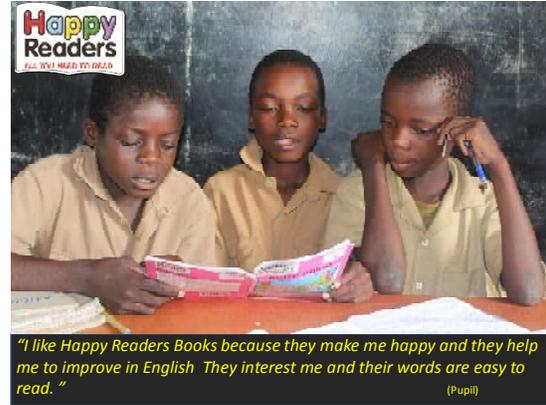
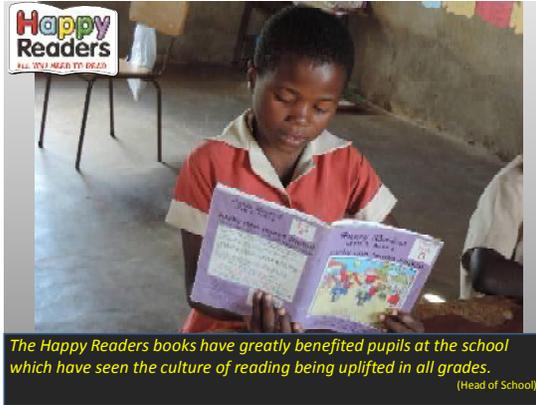
"The feedback from HoS, teachers, and pupils reveals a nearly universal consensus that the Happy Readers initiative has been a powerful tool to improve student literacy. Happy Readers has been instrumental in motivating students to read; building their discrete skills such as decoding and spelling; providing additional resources for teachers to incorporate new instructional strategies; increasing the amount and diversity of reading materials at schools; and generating a culture of reading in schools, which has generated enthusiasm for and engagement with reading in pupils and teachers alike. In particular, stakeholders appreciate the high quality of reading materials, particularly the use of culturally-relevant subjects, bright pictures, bilingual materials and a variety of fonts. Students report feeling more confident about reading because they are being exposed to such high-interest reading materials targeting them at their levels, which further increases their confidence in other subjects and may, in turn, inspire students to continue reading and learning. Overall, Happy Readers has inspired a culture of reading within schools that is maintained by the students with the ongoing support of teachers and HoS.

Teachers and HoS are enthusiastic about how the Happy Readers initiative supports their abilities to promote literacy effectively in their schools. The materials allow them to differentiate instruction and support their ability to implement government-mandated educational policies. Respondents report various perceptions with regard to Happy Readers efficacy according to students' ages, grades, and abilities; but feedback overall is extremely positive.

Although the provision of Happy Readers books and materials targeting numeracy has been less widespread, early indications are that Happy Readers also support numeracy. However, more time and more data will be useful in determining the ways and the extent to which these materials will have an impact on student learning.

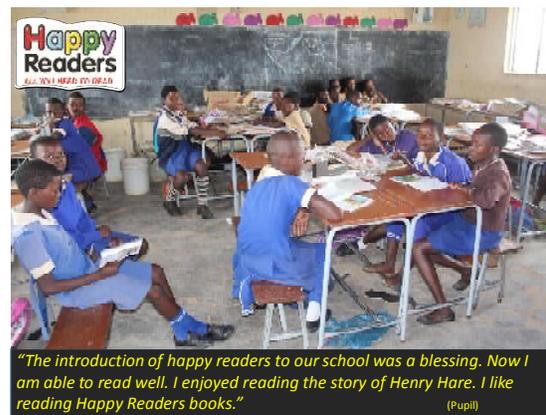
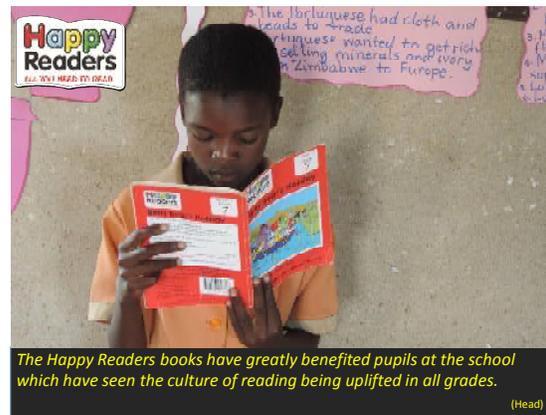
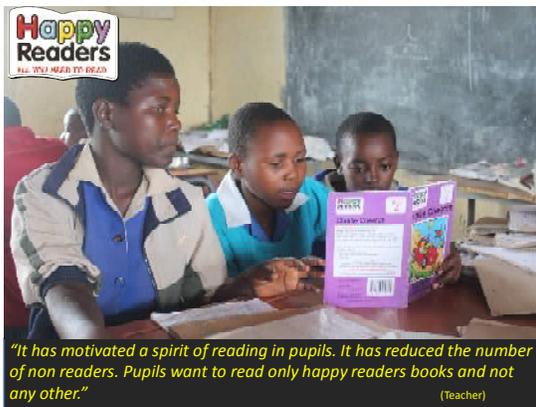
The feedback also reveals there are concerns with Happy Readers that could impede the progress that schools are making in student literacy, innovation, and instructional strategies, primarily due to the ratio of pupils to Happy Readers books. Respondents consistently expressed concern over the insufficient number of books preventing pupils and teachers from maximizing the possible benefits of the Happy Readers program. Another concern was the provision of sufficient teacher training, which respondents note as being critical to the success of the program. Increased teacher training and opportunities for teachers to share what they have learned with each other will only further benefit the Happy Readers initiative."

**HAPPY READERS LITERACY & NUMERACY INTERVENTION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES**

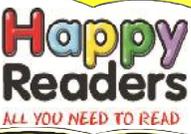
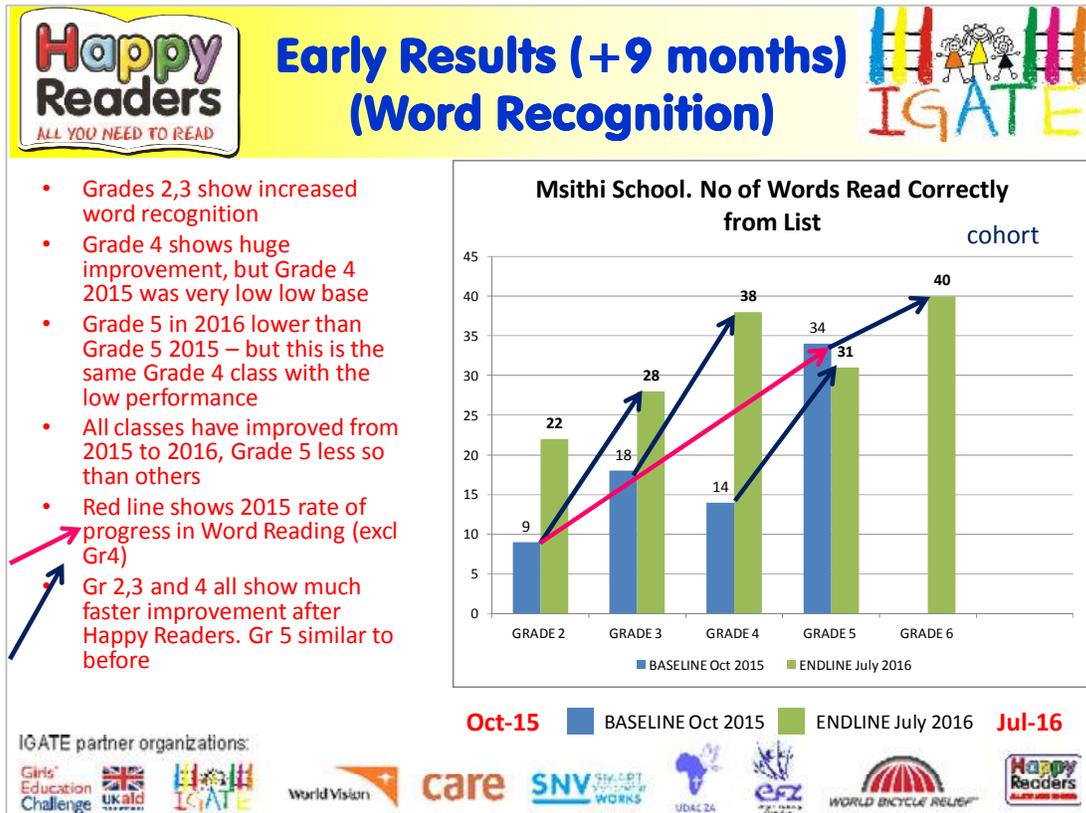


Some feedback and photos

From IGATE schools using Happy Readers.



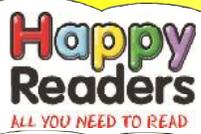
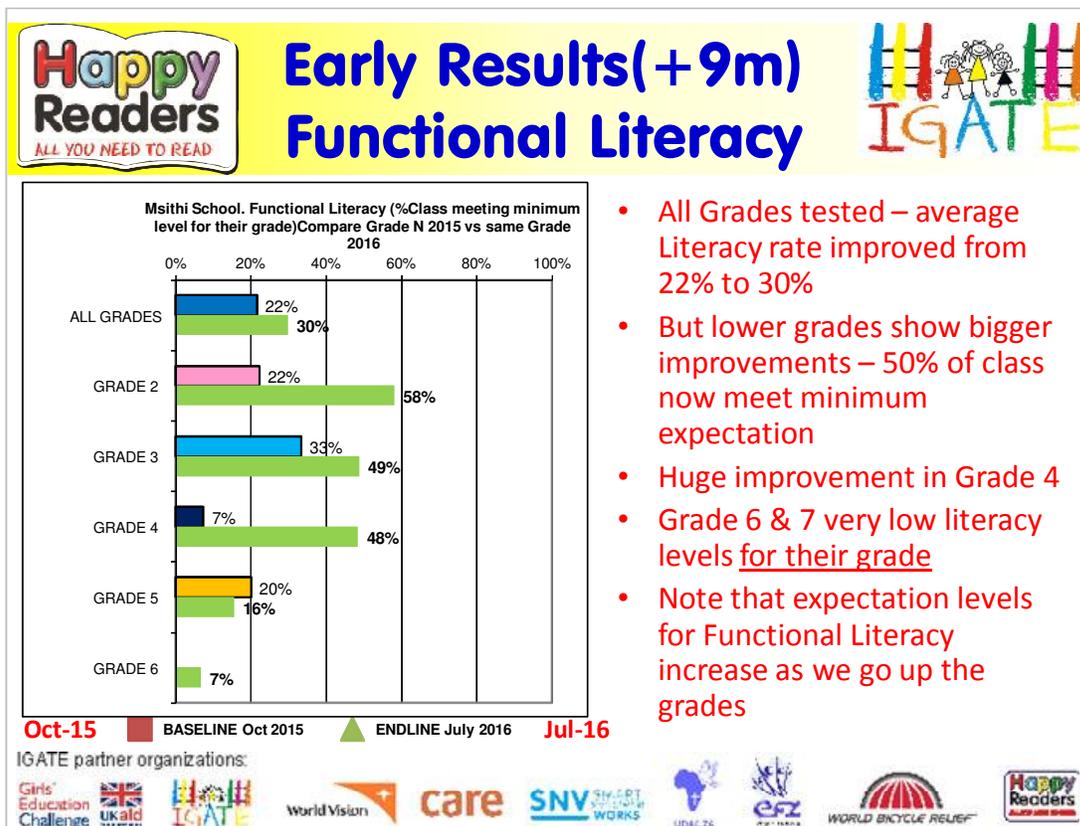
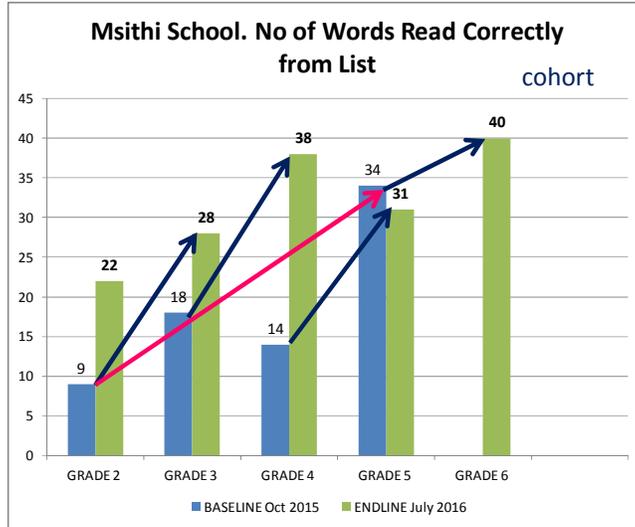
Detailed Results from Msithi School, Insiza



Early Results (+9 months)  
(Word Recognition)



- Grades 2,3 show increased word recognition
- Grade 4 shows huge improvement, but Grade 4 2015 was very low low base
- Grade 5 in 2016 lower than Grade 5 2015 – but this is the same Grade 4 class with the low performance
- All classes have improved from 2015 to 2016, Grade 5 less so than others
- Red line shows 2015 rate of progress in Word Reading (excl Gr4)
- Gr 2,3 and 4 all show much faster improvement after Happy Readers. Gr 5 similar to before



Early Results(+9m)  
Functional Literacy



- All Grades tested – average Literacy rate improved from 22% to 30%
- But lower grades show bigger improvements – 50% of class now meet minimum expectation
- Huge improvement in Grade 4
- Grade 6 & 7 very low literacy levels for their grade
- Note that expectation levels for Functional Literacy increase as we go up the grades

**Conclusions from Sifunda Quantitative Report (2500 pupils tested):**

"... children were below the Happy Readers expected literacy levels at the start of the intervention, and that this gap widened with each grade. On average, across all sample schools and grades, only one in three children could read to the Happy Readers minimum expected level for their grade."

**Greatest improvement was in Grade 2.**

- In 2016, the mean number of words read at Grade 2 was 75% (0.62 SD) higher than in 2015.
- There was a 65% (0.54 SD) decrease in the number of children who were unable to read a single word on the Happy Readers Reading Test.
- The proportion of children who could read the first 20 words on the test increased by 70% from the 2015 results.
- The headline literacy rate, that is the proportion of children who meet Happy Readers' minimum expected standard, increased proportionally by 57% to 63%.
- The proportion of Non Readers at Grade 2 more than halved from 2015 to 2016, whilst the proportion of Excellent readers almost doubled.

**Notable improvement in the Grade 3 results.**

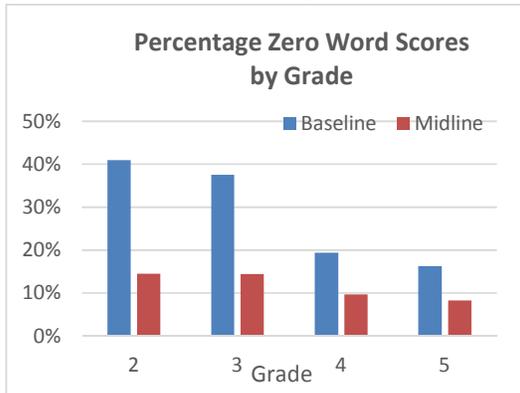
- The mean number of words read increased by 53% (0.49 SD).
- There was a 62% (0.48 SD) decrease at Grade 3 in children achieving zero word scores on the assessment, and a 47% proportional increase in children who could read at least the first 20 words.
- At Grade 3, the headline literacy rate improved by 54%.
- The proportion of Non Readers decreased whilst the proportion of OK, Good and Excellent readers all increased.

**Improvement of struggling readers at higher grades**

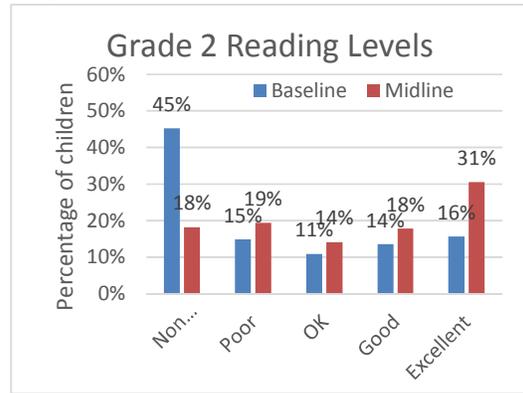
- The majority of the indicators showed that the Happy Readers intervention had the greatest impact at Grades 2 and 3. However, the results for the Zero Word Scores also suggested that there was a potential impact on struggling learners in the higher grades.
- The percentage of children with zero word scores decreased from baseline to midline across all grades at a similar rate. This decrease was more than 60% at Grades 2 and 3, and around 50% at Grades 4 and 5.
- The effects sizes at Grades 4 and 5 were 0.24 SD and 0.22 SD. Although modest, these effect sizes are significant when compared to the negligible change in mean words read correctly at these grades.

"...the strength of the results lead to the conclusion that the Happy Readers intervention is likely to have improved early literacy levels in Grades 2 and 3 of the sampled schools. The results suggest that the intervention was most effective when begun in Grade 1. The results also indicate that the Happy Readers intervention had an impact on those learners in all grades who were struggling to take the very first steps towards literacy."

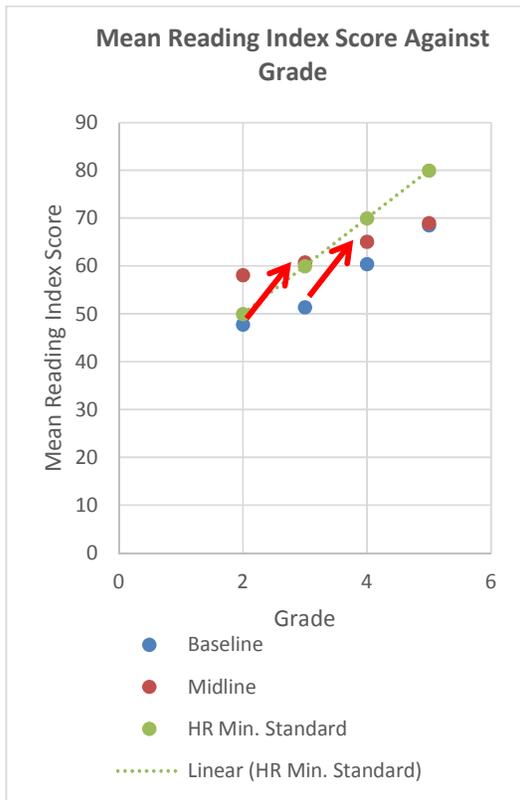
**Measured Results (Quantitative Analysis)**



A significant drop in the proportion of pupils unable to read a single word, from 40%+ to 10%.

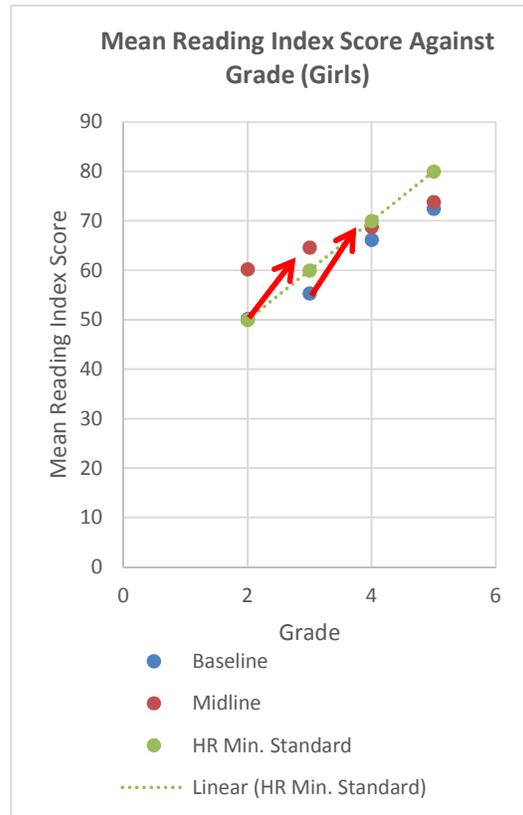


A significant drop in the proportion of pupils rated Non-Readers, from 45% to 18%. Pupils rated Excellent doubled (16% to 30%)



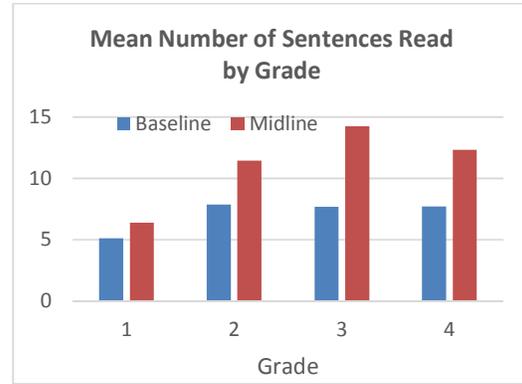
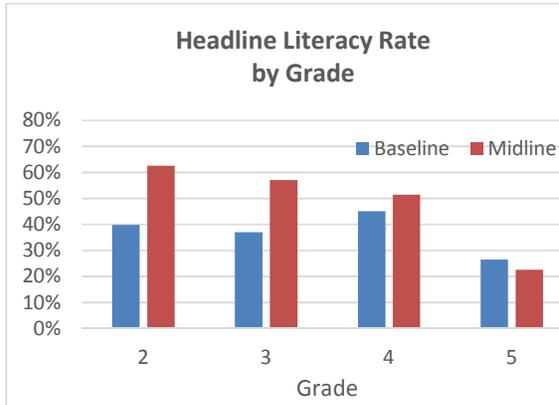
Grade 2 and 3 were below minimum expectation, now on or above after 12 months.

Note **Accelerated Learning path** from Grade 2 Baseline to Grade 3 Endline (same children). Similar for Grade 3 2015 to Grade 4 2016.



Girls in Grade 2, 3 and 4 were below minimum expectation, now on or above after 12 months.

**HAPPY READERS LITERACY & NUMERACY INTERVENTION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES**



Big jumps in Functional Literacy in Grades 2 and 3.

*(Note: expectation for functional literacy increases as children move up the grades)*

Girls' literacy rates slightly higher than boys;

Increase in number of sentences read and comprehension questions answered.

Dramatic improvements in Grades 3 and 4.

**TABLE 1 – EVALUATION OF MIDLINE RESULTS AGAINST HAPPY READERS ENDLINE TARGETS - 2015 TO 2016**

Target	Baseline 2015 Grade 2	Midline 2016 Grade 3	Target 2017 Grade 4
Not able to read a single word	41%	14%	max 20%
Able to recognize a minimum of 10 words	44%	72%	min 50%
Able to recognize a minimum of 20 words	35%	63%	min 50%
Headline Literacy Rate	40%	57%	min 40%
Improvement in Headline Literacy Rate between 2015 and end of 2017	N/A	43%	min 25%
Achieve an Improvement in words recognized between 2015 and 2017 for each grade using Happy Readers	N/A	0.81 SD	at least 0.2 SD
	Target NOT met	Target met	

At Baseline in 2015, all targets were unmet apart from the Headline Literacy rate at 40% of the pupils reaching this level.

At Midline (mid/end 2016) all targets have been met in one year of intervention. The Standard Deviation improvement in words read is 400% of the target.

## **Lessons Learnt**

**1. The late inclusion of HR in IGATE (2015) and Approval delays (2016) left little time for use in schools. Developing Literacy and Numeracy takes time, typically 2 to 3 years as a guideline. By the end of the project surveys, we may not capture the full effects which are likely to emerge 12 to 18 months after project closeout, especially for upper grades..**

**Recommendation:** Include HR model at beginning of project rather than in the middle and speed up approval processes in recognition that delays impact on available term time to implement trainings and use of materials in schools.

**2. The quantity of HR materials provided to each school was low relative to the number of pupils across all grades who need/want to use them, leading to reduced opportunity for each child to use them and taking longer for children to progress through the scheme, which may reduce the literacy and numeracy impact in the project lifetime. This was partly driven by higher than anticipated demand due to low literacy levels as well as positive uptake by teachers and children.**

**Recommendation:** Provide much higher quantities of Happy Readers to schools, in future. Leverage volume/price and direct purchases/imports to reduce costs.

**3. Short Duration of trainings (one day) leaves some teachers feeling overloaded with information and unsure of how to integrate HR with classroom activities.**

**Recommendation:** Extend duration of trainings to include integration with other IGATE models & context, integration with PLAP&ERI and classroom implementation. Train additional HR Facilitators, and include ERI/PLAP specialists from Ministry to provide refresher training on these areas. Train WV District ELFs to be able to provide local training and support of Happy Readers.

**4. There is a need for strengthening consortium partners' appreciation of other IGATE models (as a cross-cutting issue). Specifically, field staff's lack of familiarity with Happy Readers reduces their ability to promote and support the use of Happy Readers in the communities and seek to build links from their models to Happy Readers.**

**Recommendation:** Provide specific Orientation and training on Happy Readers to ALL consortium partners and WV District staff including district-level M&E Staff. May need a few of these as project progresses.

**5. The design of HR materials complementing MoPSE tools (ERI/PLAP), and existing positive experience of HR materials at other schools in districts led to increased support and up-take of HR books by MoPSE officials, schools and other stakeholders.**

**Recommendation:** Provide Happy Readers to more schools, in the project Districts and across the country!

## **Happy Readers Programme & Reach**

Happy Readers is a literacy scheme based around the provision of high-quality pupils learn-to-read books along with teacher and classroom support materials - all packed into one Class Box. Teacher training is provided in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education, who have approved and support the programme. Happy Readers boxes are provided at three levels of reading ability, plus one level of Numeracy materials. The materials are carefully levelled and graded to gradually increase vocabulary and proficiency in English. Level 1 has also been developed into other languages.

Happy Readers books, materials and training were provided to 300 rural primary schools in Zimbabwe as part of the GEC-funded World Vision IGATE project in 2015. A total of 2421 boxes with 228,000 books and 135,000 cards & posters were provided. 2,525 teachers trained and proven totals of 54,000+ children used Happy Readers in the first full year of operation

## **Reference Reports**

1. **Happy Readers Initiative Summary and Analysis**; Laura Wangness Willemssen, Ph.D., Suzanne Cade, M.A., Shirley J. Miske, Ph.D. Miske Witt & Associates Inc. 3490 Lexington Avenue North #320 Shoreview, MN 55126 USA www.miskewitt.com. February 20, 2017. (*Qualitative assessment of feedback*)
2. **HAPPY READERS IGATE PROGRAMME LITERACY INTERVENTION MIDLINE EVALUATION REPORT**, Kate Young, Sifunda Ltd, Livingstone, Zambia March 2017. (*Quantitative Analysis and report*)
3. **IGATE Happy Readers Project Report**. Joseph Woods, Harare, Zimbabwe, 15th March 2017. . (*Qualitative assessment of feedback*)
4. **In Depth Analysis - Msithi School**, Conor O'Beirne, Happy Readers Zimbabwe. March 2017. (*Quantitative Analysis presentation*)

## **Final Word**

*"Reading should not be presented to children as a chore or duty.*

*It should be offered to them as a precious gift." — Kate DiCamillo*