



Assessing the Catch Up, Scale Up programme in Zambia

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Client:	UNICEF Zambia
Duration:	2019-21
Objective:	To conduct a mid-line evaluation of the Catch Up, Scale Up programme of remedial learning in literacy and numeracy for primary school students to understand the degree to which the programme has met its objectives.
Summary:	<p>After successfully piloting the Catch Up, Scale Up programme for learners in Grades 3 to 5 in 2016, the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) scaled up the programme to more than 1800 schools in the Eastern and Southern Provinces during 2017-19. The programme focused on improving children’s literacy and numeracy using the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach.</p> <p>ACER India conducted a mid-line evaluation of the expansion of the programme during 2019-21. Key components of the study included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measuring if the programme was improving the numeracy and literacy skills of all students, especially those who were falling behind • understanding if the programme was implemented according to the programme plan • examining the sufficiency of resources to implement the programme • listing the key factors that contributed positively or negatively to the programme.
Significant challenges:	The COVID-19 pandemic, floods, and unavailability of a sufficient number of respondents affected the study. Also, many learners in the programme did not attend enough Catch Up, Scale Up classes so the results of the literacy and numeracy assessment need to be interpreted with caution.
Activities:	<p>As an independent reviewer, ACER had to measure the success of programme implementation and highlight the lessons from the field. Key activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary literature review: Discussing the terms of reference (TOR) with the programme team, carrying out initial desk research, and establishing the methodology, evaluation matrix, and data collection tools to complete the inception phase of the project. • Primary information collection and analysis: Conducting a literacy and numeracy assessment of students in Grades 3 to 5 using the Catch Up, Scale Up tool, and conducting key informant interviews with stakeholders at the school, province and national levels to identify the extent to which the programme was relevant, efficient, effective, sustainable, and inclusive. • Synthesis of primary and secondary research findings: Analysing data collected from the field, meeting programme stakeholders to validate primary data, preparing a draft report for inputs from the commissioning team, finalising the report, and creating policy briefs for programme advocacy.