

Reading Support Project

Design Evaluation

BRIDGE Early Grade Reading CoP
25 August 2020



Agenda

- Background to the Early Grade Reading Study and Reading Support Project
- Lessons from reading programmes in South Africa and international
- Reading Support project (Findings from the design evaluation)
- Process Maps



Background to the Early Grade Reading Study and Reading Support Project

Lessons from Reading Programmes



RESPONSE TO IMPROVING LITERACY IN SOUTH AFRICA

- **US Government Response**
 - **PERFORM**: improve the reading skills of primary grade learners. USAID's investment is in line with **the US Government Basic Education Strategy** (2019-2023), and with **USAID's Education Policy** (November 2018)
- **South African Government Response**
 - Since 2006 embarked on efforts
 - **National Development Plan (NDP)** goal: ensure that 90% of Grades 3, 6 and 9 learners, “achieve 50 percent or more in the Annual National Assessment in literacy, numeracy/ mathematics and science”
 - **DBE's Action Plan to 2019**: Towards the Realization of Schooling 2030. Goal 1 of the action plan is to “Increase the number of learners in Grade 3 who, by the end of the year, have mastered the minimum language and numeracy competencies for Grade 3”
 - **The National Reading Strategy** (2008) gave rise to the Foundations for Learning Campaign

South African Government Response (cont.)

2006

- Drop All and Read Campaign
- 100 Story book project
- National Reading Strategy
- Foundations for Learning Campaign
- Pilots of Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA)
- DBE Workbook provision
- Annual National Assessment (ANA) and
- National Catalogue for Grades 1 to 12

2013

- Read to Lead Campaign
- “Drop All and Read” or “Read me a book” campaign
- DBE Reading Series (alongside DBE Workbook provision)
- 1,000 schools offering Grade 1-3 implemented the EGRA (In June 2015)
- CAPS give high weighting to reading and writing skills in Grades R to 12
- National Reading Plan (implementation of reading norms for Grades R-12)
- Establishment of 1000 fully functional school libraries since 2015

South African Government Response (cont.)



- GAUTENG PRIMARY LITERACY AND MATHEMATICS STRATEGY (GPLMS) – Phase I (2010-2014); Phase 2 (2015-2019)
- NATIONAL EDUCATION COLLABORATION TRUST (NECT)
- EARLY GRADE READING STUDY (EGRS I) 2015–2017
- PRIMARY SCHOOL READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (PSRIP) 2016 – 2017
- EARLY GRADE READING STUDY (EGRS II) 2017 – 2019
- READING SUPPORT PROJECT (RSP) 2019 – 2020



Challenges to improving early grade reading

- Ineffective English and mother tongue language teaching practices
- School leadership
- Insufficient time to practice reading
- Lack of coordination
- Inefficiencies in the provisioning of resources
- Poor sustainability and scaling of promising projects
- Low ratio of subject advisors per school
- Requirement for rapid pacing in mandated lesson plans



Factors that influence learner's performance

- Access to school libraries
- Class size
- School attendance
- Parental enjoyment and engagement



Teacher training

1. Scaffolding through detailed lesson plans
2. Substantial instructional support from curricular advisors
3. Training that strengthens English and mother tongue teaching practices in the Foundation Phase
4. Coaching/mentoring support for behavior change



Teacher training (cont.)

1. “activities that channeled a portion of resources into **two or three complementary training components** seemed to have a greater chance of success than those that focus exclusively on a single type of training intervention.”
2. Limited amount of information on amount of training time / dosage
3. Teacher attrition is a common issue
4. Cascade training is likely to be less effective

(USAID, 2018)



Teacher training (cont.)

Teacher Training content focus on:

- use of instructional guides or scripted lessons introduced through new textbooks
- strategies to increase student time on task
- oral reading fluency
- letter recognition
- phonemic awareness
- vocabulary and reading comprehension



LTSM

1. Programmes collaborate with Ministries of Education to produce, distribute, and train teachers to use textbooks and scripted/guided lesson plans
2. Often the delivery of materials to schools is delayed or not available at the time of training
3. Class libraries that encourage taking the books home to practice reading
4. Learners lack reading materials in the home



Coaching

1. Coaching is cost-effective in producing improvement in learner comprehension tests
2. International studies indicate that channeling resources on a few complementary training programs have a greater chance of success
3. Cascade training models result in lower quality and limited impact on learning



Coaching (cont.)

1. Preparation and support of coaches (formal training with a focus on reading content and instruction and coaching methods)
2. Clearly communicate coach roles and responsibilities
3. Monitoring and evaluation of effective coaching to identify effective practices
4. Scaling up and sustainability by providing key data to administrators
5. Scaffold, stagger, and adapt coach training
6. Allow sufficient time for design, implementation, and modification of coaching programs as it may take more time to show effectiveness
7. Frequency and duration of coaching may influence student reading gains (Bean et al, 2010)



SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TRAINING

- Training in mentorship and adult education skills
- HODs, and school leadership engaging in classroom support, modelling good practices, and providing support to teachers
- Shift from school improvement planning to learner performance improvement planning
- Head Teachers in high performing schools more active in communicating expectations and supporting curriculum changes in the Early Grade Reading program

Findings from Design Evaluation

DESIGN EVALUATION QUESTIONS

I. Is the RSP theory of change likely to lead to the anticipated results?



SUB QUESTIONS

- What is the RSP's theory of change?
- What are the intended changes and the expected causal pathways?
 - Is the coaching design likely to lead to the anticipated impact?
 - Is the training design likely to lead to the anticipated impact?
 - Are the lesson plans and other learning materials likely to support the achievement of the anticipated impact?

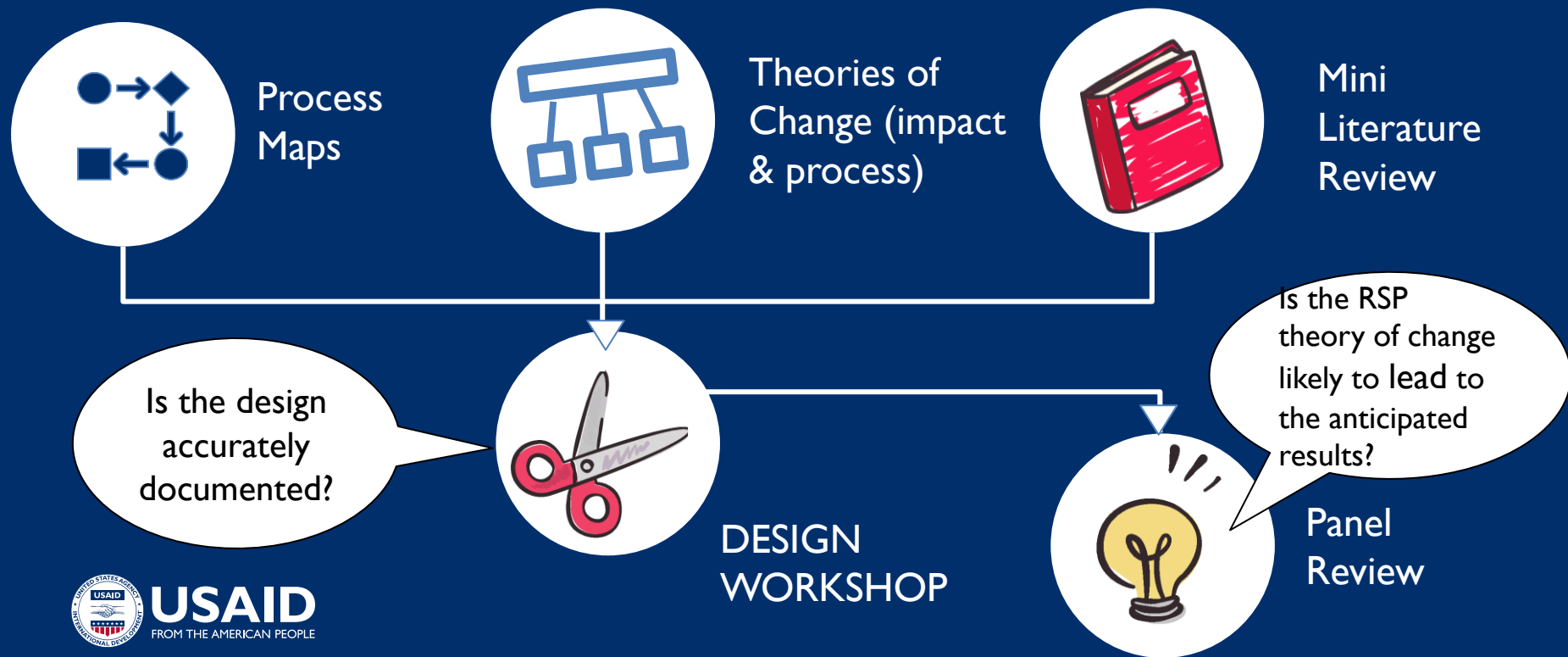
DESIGN EVALUATION QUESTIONS cont.



SUB QUESTIONS (cont.)

- Is the TOC coherent, comprehensive and scalable?
- Does the RSP design depart in material ways from the EGRS I?
- What are the inputs, activities, outputs and expected short term outcomes?
 - What are the steps in the main delivery processes?
 - Where are the main implementation risks in the processes?
- Are appropriate monitoring and control measures in place?

DESIGN EVALUATION METHODS



Findings

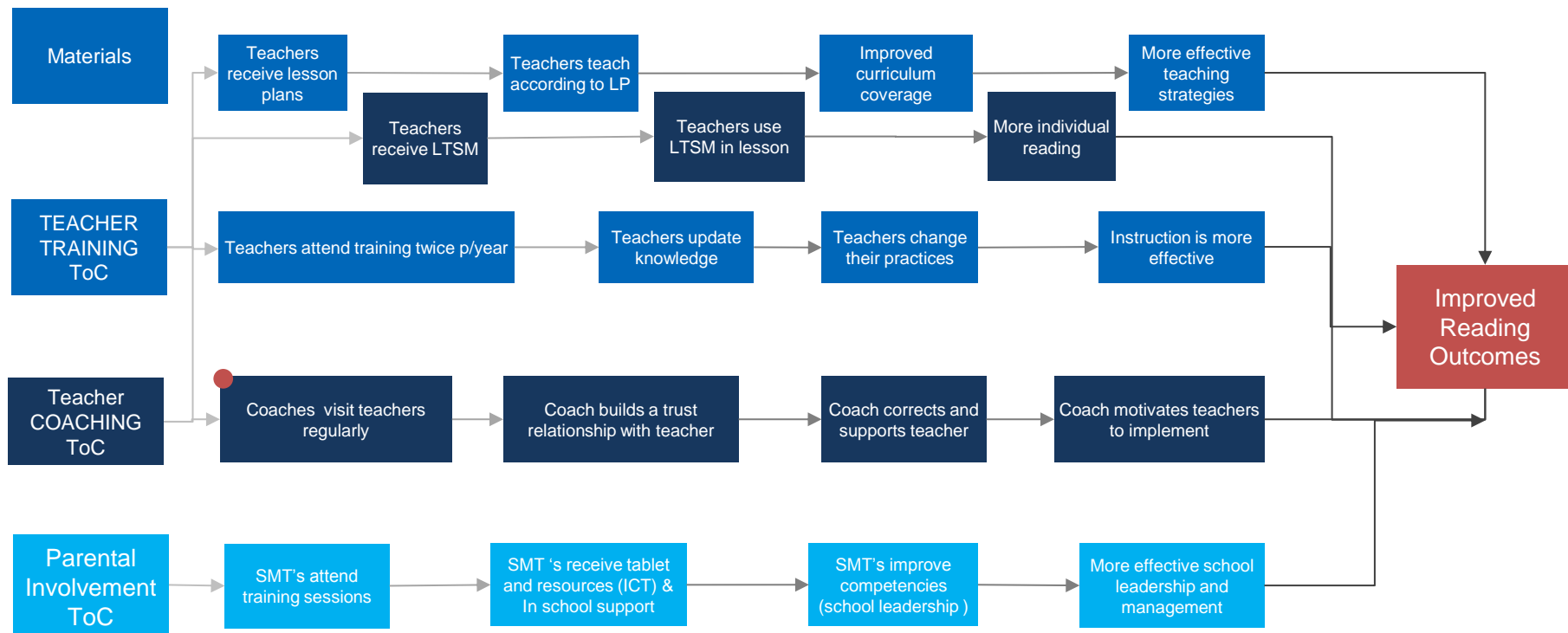
- Comparison of RSP and EGRS I
- Feasibility of the RSP components leading to outcomes, and process risks
- Coherence and Comprehensiveness of the RSP TOC





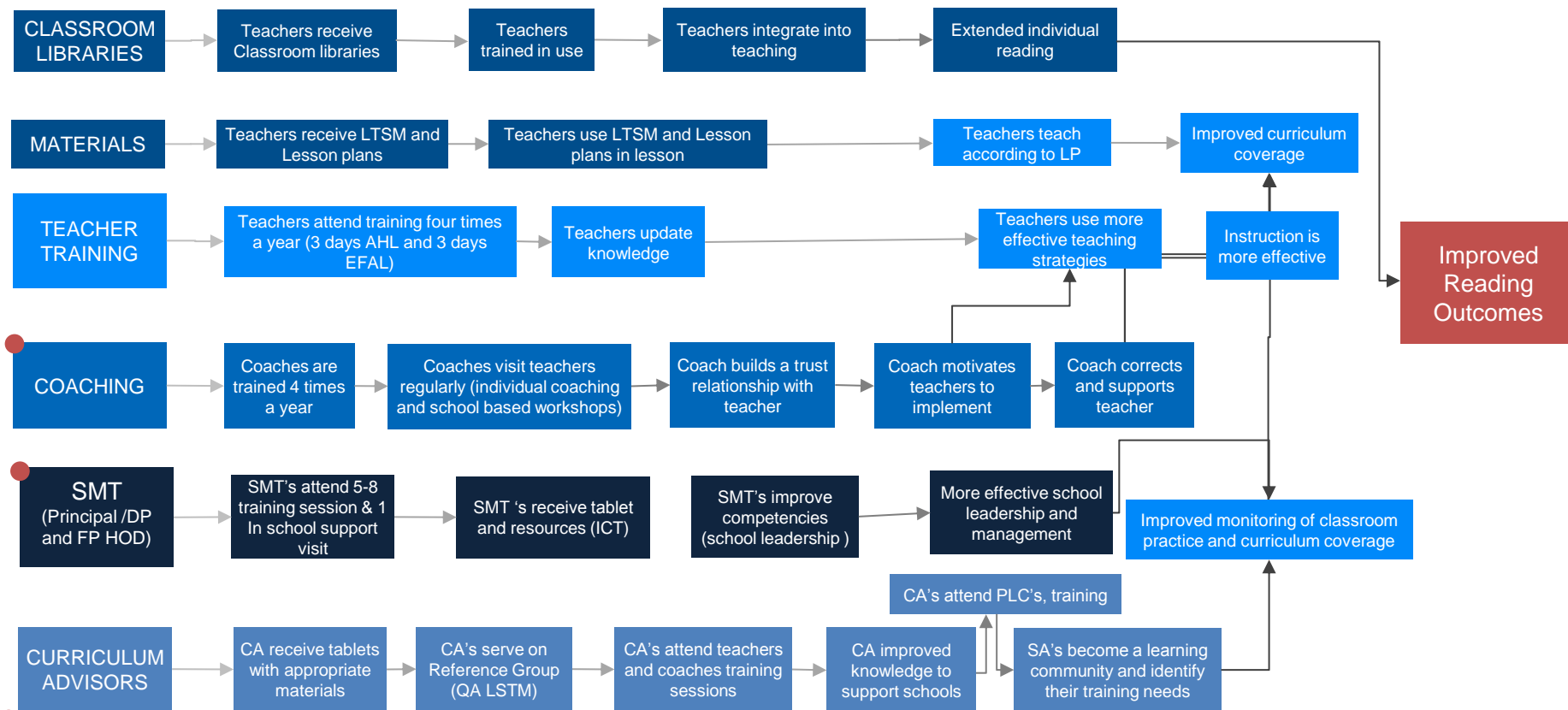
Comparison of RSP and EGRS I

EGRS THEORY OF CHANGE



● Coaching not included in all schools

RSP THEORY OF CHANGE (Foundation Phase HL and EFAL)



Coaching & SMTs not included in all schools

Dosage Comparisons

	Individual coaching support	Coaching support in afternoon workshops
EGRS I	10 x 2 hours = 20 hours	10 hours
RSP	9-13 x 1 hours = 9–13 hours	18-26 hours

Dosage Comparisons

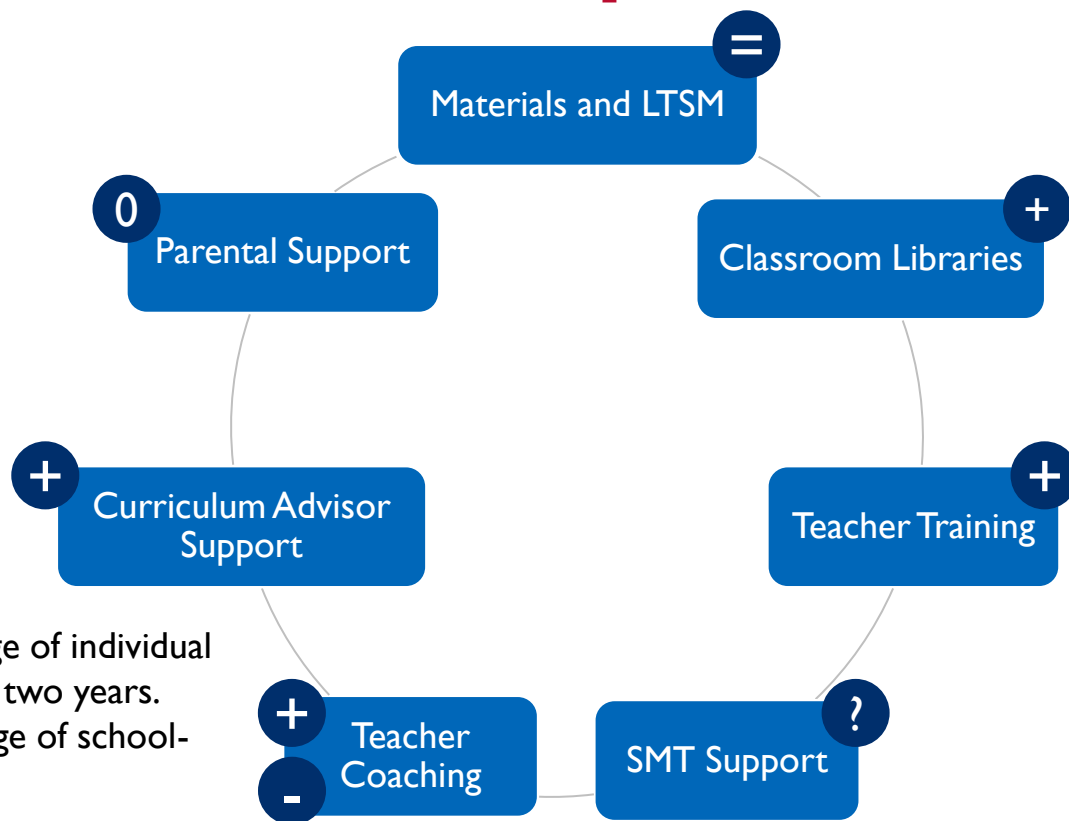
	Teacher Training	Individual coaching support
EGRS I	<p>2 + 2 days Total: 4 days over one year</p> <p>Per Subject: Setswana HL 4 days</p>	<p>10 x 2 hours = 20 hours (one year)</p> <p>Coaching support in afternoon workshops: 10 hours</p>
RSP	<p>2 + 1 + 2 + 1 days in year 1 2 + 1 + 2 + 1 days in year 2 Total: 12 days over two years</p> <p>Per Subject: Setswana HL 6 days and EFAL 6 days</p>	<p>9 to 13 x 1 hours = 9 to 13 hours (over two years)</p> <p>Coaching support in afternoon workshops: 18- 26 hours</p>

RSP Coaching Dosage Calculations

Year	School days per year	Effective school days/ per year	Schools per coach	Support visits per school	Number of teachers	Days support to each teacher	Individual coaching support sessions	Group coaching support sessions
Year 1	150	120	10 (may be as high as 14 per coach)	12 (may be as low as 8)	6 2/grade	2 days	6 x 1 hour sessions (may be as low as 4)	12*
Year 2	170	140	10 (may be as high as 14 per coach)	14 (may be as low as 10)	6 2/grade	2-3 days	7 x 1 hour sessions (may be as low as 5)	14*
Total				26		5 days	13 x 1 hour sessions	26*

* It is assumed that all Foundation Phase teachers will attend all afternoon sessions. It is possible that coaches may target some of the workshops to teachers in a specific grade only. This would result in a lower dosage.

How does RSP compare to EGRS I?



RSP has more frequent training sessions, a higher dosage of training - Split across two languages & over 2 years

RSP has a lower dosage of individual coaching spread over two years.
RSP has a higher dosage of school-based workshops



RECOMMENDATIONS

Materials

Maximise links with the Integrated Strategic Plan for teacher development

1. Afternoon workshops = PLCs?
2. Make sure CPTD points are claimed at SACE.
3. Integrate classroom libraries into future lesson plans and training, and ensure coaches can support use of libraries in class.
4. Complementarity between roles of different stakeholders should be exploited
 - * Coach vs CA
 - * Coach + SMT + Teacher + CA



RECOMMENDATIONS

Coaching

5. Sustain strategies for coach development – JIT, ongoing professional development, support from head coaches, dry-runs.
6. Continue to explore the coaching qualification
7. Help to build the “Army” of reading coaches – Train more coaches, promote and plan for turnover.
8. Provide guidance to coaches about how to prioritise support if there are more than 6 FP teachers, if there are novice teachers, if there are teachers that missed training.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Coaching

- 14. Provide guidance so that coaches prioritise facilitating reflective practice
- 15. Reiterate that afternoon workshops **MUST** happen – it is valuable additional development time.
- 16. Compile a pack of possible training items which is designed to address topics such as promoting comprehension, class management, teaching routines, etc.

Process maps

What is a process map?

A process map visually shows the steps of a work activity and the people who are involved in carrying out each step

Process map example:



Source: <https://creately.com/blog/diagrams/process-mapping-guide/#what>

Why develop process maps?

Unpack the process Theory of Change in more detail and indicated activities and workflows relevant to key processes

Based on a review of project documents, interviews with key stakeholders and a workshop

#EvalTuesdayTip: <https://www.khulisa.com/evaltuesdaytip-process-mapping-for-design-evaluations/>



Process maps activity (using Google Jamboards)