



CASE STUDY



# PROMISING PRACTICES IN REFUGEE EDUCATION



## LEARNING & WELL-BEING IN EMERGENCIES: A three-pronged approach to improving refugee education

Save the Children US

<b>Location</b>	Doro camp, Maban, South Sudan and urban Cairo, Egypt
<b>Target population:</b>	School-aged refugee children from Syria, Sudan and Eritrea enrolled in grades 1 through 6
<b>Intervention type:</b>	Two-year pilot project with three key objectives: 1. To support learning in refugee education responses, 2. To improve wellbeing of students and teachers through integrated Social Emotional Learning (SEL) content) and 3. To better understand the potential correlation between learning outcomes and well-being
<b>Date started:</b>	March 2016 (planned activities through December 2017)
<b>Direct beneficiaries:</b>	2,250 children – 1000 girls/1250 boys

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## KEY FINDINGS

Learning and Well-Being in Emergencies (LWiE) is an approach to education in emergencies (EiE) programming that focuses not only on literacy, but on the issues impacting children's capacity to learn. It is being piloted in Cairo, Egypt and Doro Camp, Maban, South Sudan. By focusing on the well-being of both teachers and students and assessing their related social and emotional needs, LWiE, while still in the pilot phase, is an effective innovation to garner community support for education and to ensure teachers and children are equipped with the tools to learn and thrive, even in the face of uncertainty:

- An assessment of children's literacy and well-being at the beginning of the project helped to inform teachers of student needs. It was found that more than half of the students assessed fell into the "below basic" category suggesting that they did not have the foundational literacy skills despite being enrolled in the third grade. Students also expressed a desire for more avenues to discuss their feelings and translate feelings into prosocial behaviour.
- The impact of the approach is apparent in both the capacity of teachers and the learning outcomes of children. Through classroom observation, formative assessments and discussions with teachers and children, teachers have demonstrated improved classroom management and pedagogy skills and children's literacy levels have increased.
- Many parents and community members have participated in local reading events such as reading awareness workshops and local read-a-thons as well as in Parent Teacher Association (PTA) groups and school-based activities. This shows that even in potentially transient and unstable contexts, parents support their children's access to quality education.
- Given that this is a pilot, we have not been able to test one of the most compelling principles of LWiE, the ability to successfully transition from a development to crisis context with limited disruption to children's learning. We have, however, demonstrated that the program can be established quickly with minimal external resources by following the guidance included in the comprehensive LWiE toolkit.

Cover: A student in class in Maban, South Sudan. © Save the Children



# INTRODUCTION

The LWiE pilot is looking to find ways to help address the challenge facing refugee children of not only accessing education, but ensuring that the education they receive is of good quality and that the learning environment is one that is supportive of their unique emotional needs. The pilot aims to do so by assessing both the learning and well-being needs of refugee children, attempting to understand the correlation between the two and provide teachers with the tools and knowledge to be able to address the most pressing needs of children.

LWiE is based on Save the Children's flagship Literacy Boost model. Literacy Boost is an innovative, evidence-based approach to improving literacy learning outcomes, originally designed for development contexts in response to growing evidence of gaps in basic literacy learning. Launched in 2009, it has been implemented in 34 countries with the support of partners. Literacy Boost aims to ensure that children are supported in school and in their communities to strengthen the core skills of reading, based on the three pillars of: Learning Assessment, Teacher Training and Community Action. LWiE adheres to the same three pillars but with a stronger focus on well-being – measuring children's well-being as it relates to their learning outcomes, ensuring teachers have the skills and knowledge to promote social and emotional learning in the classroom and engaging the local community in activities that promote literacy and well-being outside of the school.

## The pilot is based on the following three objectives:

### Objective 1:

To increase refugee children's foundational learning (which includes literacy, reading, writing and social emotional learning skills).

### Objective 2:

To strengthen teacher capacity to monitor and respond to learning achievement data in refugee contexts.

### Objective 3:

To capture impact for the purpose of creating opportunities to learn and apply the principles, approaches and tools in other contexts globally.

LWiE was in part developed as a response to the need for continuity between the development and emergency context, an attempt to limit disruption to children's learning in the event of a crisis. In terms of education programming, by building humanitarian elements into an existing Save the Children approach used in development contexts, development education staff are better equipped to "pivot" in the event of a crisis. This is more cost effective than bringing in external EiE staff and is a step toward bridging the humanitarian development divide.

The pilot has, so far, been implemented in two unique contexts – Cairo, Egypt and Maban, South Sudan in Doro refugee camp. It is being implemented by our Country Office staff in each context working in close conjunction with counterparts at UNHCR and with technical support from both Save the Children and UNHCR at the global level. It was agreed that the Egypt project would include all three pillars of LWiE – Learning Assessment, Teacher Training and Community Action whereas the South Sudan program would focus exclusively on the Learning Assessment and Teacher Training pillars given the low capacity (education and experience) of teachers in the South Sudan context.

The anticipated results will include: strengthened capacity of teachers with knowledge and skills on how to assess, identify and respond to individual learner's needs and use more effective teaching practices with refugee children; increased community knowledge and support of children's learning which reinforces school-based refugee children's foundational learning; increased awareness and capacity to assess learning and affect classroom-based teaching as well as higher level decision making; and finally that the pilot will inform EiE advocacy and funding for refugee situations within Egypt and South Sudan and globally.

Photo: An assessment of children's literacy and well-being informs teachers of students needs. © Save the Children

# CONTEXT

Save the Children's interventions in Egypt and South Sudan are designed to improve refugee children's foundational learning, reading, literacy and social emotional skills, and strengthen teacher capacity to better monitor and respond to learning and well-being assessment. As part of the initial contextual analysis for the program and to help inform the design, a mapping of the context - including the level of existing literacy outcomes and community and teacher analysis - was conducted to help identify context specific issues and barriers.

Through this, key interconnected factors identified as contributing to the ability of refugee children to access quality education were: geographical location; teacher capacity; learning environment; various stress factors; community/parental support for education and issues related to access to the national system. These challenges were found to manifest themselves differently in each of the two contexts.

## Egypt

Egypt is currently hosting refugees from Syria as well as asylum seekers and migrants from across the Middle East and Africa. As of June 2017, UNHCR had registered more than 200,000 refugees from Syria and Sudan, as well as Somalia, Iraq, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and South Sudan.<sup>1</sup> Just over 120,000 of these refugees originated from Syria and also many migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are not registered. Most refugees in Egypt are living in urban settings in Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta, side by side with already vulnerable host communities.

The Egyptian public-school system is under-resourced in terms of meeting both the needs of Egyptians and the influx of additional refugee students. Not all refugee children in Egypt have the right to access education as part of the Egyptian public system, while Sudanese and Syrian children are allowed to access primary education, refugees of other nationalities, for example, Iraqi, Somali, Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees do not have the same legal right to education.

The Sudanese Embassy and Sudanese Ministry of Education allow children who study the Sudanese curriculum in the refugee community schools to sit the national exam and receive accreditation. Syrian children are permitted to enter formal schools in Egypt, but members of the community have instead chosen to establish their own community schools where the Egyptian curriculum is taught. UNHCR currently supports these two models for refugee education, but beginning in 2018, will be shifting to a more targeted support for the formal education system.

According to Save the Children's 2015 Quality of Learning Environment (QLE) assessment report,<sup>2</sup> the average number of classrooms per school was between 25 and 36, whereas the average number of students in each classroom was between 64 and 80. The average teacher student ratio is approximately 28. There is also a marked absence in both public and refugee community schools of reading and other educational materials, school activities to engage youth and capacity to respond to children with learning difficulties, special needs and unmet psychosocial needs. These obstacles have been identified as contributing factors to irregular or non-attendance of refugees in both public and refugee community schools.

## South Sudan

Maban County, South Sudan currently hosts 138,193 refugees - 62% or 85,679 of whom are children under the age of 18, from Sudan's Blue Nile State- in four refugee camps. Of those, 52,756 refugees reside in Doro camp, the largest refugee settlement in Maban.<sup>3</sup> Estimates put the host community population at 51,000. Although refugees are not directly targeted by armed forces, continued hostilities between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the de facto blockade of humanitarian assistance into Blue Nile State prevent the refugees from returning.

Within the refugee community in Maban, approximately 40% of school aged children are not attending primary, an Accelerated Learning Programme or secondary school. Current physical facilities allow for only 13,310 students to attend school in a double-shift system of which 10,151 are primary school children. At an average of 85 students per classroom, the current capacity is far above the South Sudan minimum standard of 50 students per classroom. Low teacher capacity continues to be a major challenge to the provision of quality basic education for children in Doro camp and the host community.

Fighting in Upper Nile continues - both between the refugee and host community as well as between members of the refugee community itself - and stands as a reminder that South Sudan is a fragile territory. As a result, children have experienced and witnessed violence that has impacted their psycho-social well-being and their ability to learn. Also, because of continuous displacement and associated lack of access to food, employment and basic services, the population has been affected by chronic stress which has had an effect on teachers' and children's well-being and in turn, their capacity to teach and learn.



Photo: In Maban County, South Sudan, 62% of refugees are under the age of 18. © Save the Children





# INTERVENTION

## Objectives of Intervention

In the past, EiE has been seen as more of a stop gap measure, a way of engaging children until the community returned to a sense of normalcy. However, as the nature of emergencies change and the number of years, on average, people are displaced has grown exponentially, there is a need to support children's learning in the immediate term following a crisis – either with a resumption of formal schooling or the establishment of different types of temporary learning opportunities. The LWiE toolkit focuses on promoting literacy and well-being within the community during an emergency and can be implemented immediately following a crisis. Due to the disruption of formal education that takes place in most emergencies, community-based activities are very important and effective supplements to school-based learning. Children who are not yet back in a consistent school schedule can benefit from being engaged in learning activities through community approaches with an emphasis on well-being.

## Nature of Intervention

Save the Children is constantly improving and adjusting the LWiE approach to most effectively meet the learning needs of children. The LWiE toolkit includes modules on teacher training and community and classroom activities all with a focus on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), as well as guidance on carrying out literacy and SEL assessments. While the roll-out of the program will necessarily look different in every context, below is an overview of the process:

## Contextualization of Materials and Approach

Given the changing nature of emergencies and displacement, the first and most important step in rolling out LWiE is to sensitize education actors in the community about the approach and adapt it for the given context. The contextualization process often takes place over the course of a week and brings together representatives from government, the community, local education actors, parents, members of the school community, teachers and children. Some questions that are considered in the contextualization process include: What is the level of support for education from members of the local community? What is the capacity, gaps and availability of local teachers? What are the available teaching and learning resources? What was the educational context prior to the emergency? What is the nature of the crisis, what type of measures need to be taken to ensure the program is rolled out sensitively to the conflict context? The answers to these and other questions will determine the next step.

## Community Action – Recruitment, Training and Activity Roll-Out

In some contexts, it may be most appropriate to begin with the Community Action component in order to focus on addressing some of the well-being needs of the community. Depending on the nature of the crisis, parents may prefer this step for the safety and protection of their children to an immediate return to the classroom. The first step in the Community Action component is to identify individuals in the community – both adults and young people – to train as leaders. The LWiE toolkit includes information on how to best equip these individuals to lead the various proposed activities including the establishment of book banks, reading clubs, reading festivals, read-a-thons, peer reading buddy programs and literacy programs for parents and caregivers.

## Teacher training

Part of the contextualization process will be identifying the local teacher capacity which can help the team to draft a teacher training strategy. The LWiE toolkit includes a guide to the initial Training of Trainer and then a suggested way forward to cascade the training to local teachers. The teacher training package includes modules on: healthy and safe learning environments and addressing stress; teacher well-being; student well-being and resilience; classroom literacy activities; reading and writing, classroom diversity and reading comprehension. Teachers also learn about classroom management and formative assessment as ways to monitor student progress.

## Assessment

Once the children have returned to the classroom, the literacy and well-being assessments are carried out. Part of the contextualization process is working with existing tools and considering locally available equivalents. A team of assessors are trained to carry out the assessments and then work with technical advisors to analyse the data.





Photo: All classrooms are well-stocked with learning materials and libraries of books (Cairo, Egypt). © Hannah Hames / Save the Children.

### Monitoring

The LWiE pilot was designed as a learning opportunity for both Save the Children and UNHCR and as such, one of the priority considerations throughout the life of the pilot has been to feed into the agreed upon Learning Agenda. In addition to the findings from the baseline and endline assessment, the Learning Agenda poses a series of agreed upon questions and themes for exploration throughout the process, the answers to which will be included in the revised LWiE toolkit and the guidance developed for further roll-out. The questions include: how to continue programming in the face of insecurity (as we have faced multiple times in South Sudan); the successful integration of LWiE principles in the classroom; the impact of language issues on children's success in school and the role of gender.

The International Social and Emotional Learning Assessment (ISELA), a tool developed by Save the Children, was designed to measure the impact of social and emotional well-being programs on children by looking at social and emotional competencies, the SEL environment, individual approaches to learning and executive functioning. The tool can be used cross-sectionally to help staff make decisions about specific components of programs and get a more holistic picture of social and emotional resilience. It can also

be used as part of a longitudinal assessment, with a baseline and an endline to help staff understand if change in children's social and emotional well-being was affected by an intervention or program in which they were participating. This was the approach used in the current LWiE pilot. The baseline assessments were carried out in 2016 with the endline scheduled for the final phase of the project during the fourth quarter of 2017.

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the pilot is being overseen by the M&E teams in accordance with the agreed upon indicators and the Learning Agenda. These teams have supported the development and implementation of tools to support classroom and teacher observation, feedback from community members, parents and students through participation in community meetings, but also through more innovative means including putting on plays to convey the importance of the program. They have also overseen and taken responsibility for the training of enumerators on the baseline and endline assessments. The Learning Agenda builds on some of these principles around monitoring and learning that are not only focused on program implementation but also impact and with that, sustainability.





Photo: Effective community engagement increases sustainability of the program © Save the Children

## KEY MILESTONES & OUTCOMES

### Impact & Sustainability

Halfway through the second year of the pilot, many key milestones and anticipated outcomes have been recorded. Significant progress was made in both geographic contexts but with delays in South Sudan.

### Assessing the Situation

In both South Sudan and in Egypt, baseline assessments were contextualized and conducted for learning and social and emotional well-being using the ISELA tool and adapted to the local circumstances. The baseline reports were shared with field staff and teachers to inform teaching practice. Some of the recommendations and initial findings were: the need for teachers to provide children with more avenues to discuss their feelings and translate feelings into prosocial behaviour and a significant number of children in the sample fell into the “below basic” category suggesting that they did not even have what is considered to be a basic understanding of the foundational literacy principles.

### Supporting Teachers

Teachers in both contexts were trained through the cascade model and teacher learning circles - small groupings of teachers matching those with more and less experience – were established

and remain active. As an innovative way to address the challenge of the distance between schools in Cairo, teacher learning circles are being facilitated using What’s App. We trained more than 150 teachers in the first year of the pilot and support is planned for training additional teachers in the second year of the pilot. Classroom observation and discussions with teachers found that teachers are integrating new skills and content into their classes and reporting a general improvement in the levels of literacy. Teachers in South Sudan have been provided with additional support and mentoring as appropriate. The training received is not only focused on literacy instruction but also broader topics related to classroom management and pedagogy. With this, the project is developing skills in teachers for the immediate term in support of the project itself but also in the longer term, building the overall capacity of teachers.

### Equipping Classrooms

In both Egypt and South Sudan classrooms have been provided with the appropriate teaching and learning materials. In Egypt, each of the schools have been provided with well-stocked libraries of books and learning materials that children are free to take home with them and used by classroom teachers. In the second year of the pilot,







country office teams have been procuring more advanced teaching and learning materials to reflect the learning progress of students and the more basic materials can be used with younger children. We have found that many children are making use of the lending libraries in their schools.

### Engaging the Community

Effective community engagement will prove key to the long-term sustainability of the intervention. In Egypt, we trained 15 parent session facilitators and through that, engaged 108 parents in reading awareness sessions and 3 community-wide reading festivals. In South Sudan in year 2, 30 peer networks of youth and community members were established with plans for more local celebrations on literacy and learning.

### Good News Travels Fast!

As per the original program - also below where “projects” are mentioned design, the LWiE approach has influenced other education projects in each of the offices. Staff have facilitated workshops on the approach and discussed ways to integrate principles of LWiE into existing programming. Given the two very disparate contexts, the influence of LWiE has manifested itself very differently. In South Sudan, additional training and capacity support has provided an opportunity for staff to complement the ongoing work in the camps with new and different interventions. In Egypt, education staff working in the local development context have been supported to better understand the additional needs of children in crisis and understand the ways in which education programming can bridge the humanitarian and development divide. This understanding and integration is being carried out intentionally in order to contribute to the longer-term sustainability of the pilot.

### Scaling Up

In Egypt, Save the Children works closely with government counterparts with positive results for the pilot itself and the education sector more broadly. The Ministry of Education's standard literacy assessment was used as part of the LWiE pilot. Representatives from the remedial education division have participated in workshops along with school and community members where they have contributed to the contextualization of materials, the training of trainers for teachers and community sensitization. They have made welcome suggestions related to the ISELA tool and are committed to adapting their own assessment processes to be more in-line with the LWiE approach of measuring learning and well-being. They have also expressed an interest in scaling up the pilot by training a cadre of master trainers and using LWiE to implement a training program with Arabic primary school teachers working with refugees in the formal schools. The Literacy Boost program or various aspects of it has been taken to scale nationally in different contexts globally but this would be a first for the LWiE and a great opportunity to learn about the ways the inclusion of SEL is being taken up by governments.



Photo: Aseel\*, 9, sits with her classmates attending an Arabic language lesson at a community school in a Cairo suburb, Egypt.  
© Save the Children

### Sharing Lessons Learned

In the final months of the pilot, we will be hosting both in-country and cross-context consultative workshops. Locally, workshops will be held to socialize local stakeholders on the impact of program interventions and discuss opportunities for sustained engagement. In South Sudan, we will produce a contextualized literacy Teacher Training manual based on the LWiE model that Save the Children can use across South Sudan with their education partners while in Egypt we will produce a contextualized Teacher Training manual and a Community Action manual that Save the Children can use with their education partners.

Following the endline assessment, we will be hosting colleagues from both UNHCR and Save the Children in South Sudan and Egypt as well as regional counterparts in Nairobi at a Learning Event. This will be an opportunity to share best practices, lessons learned and impact across contexts. These reflections will then feed into the development of a revised LWiE toolkit that can be used to inform a wider roll-out of LWiE programming globally.

# CHALLENGES

Over the course of the two years the pilot has met with challenges which have been used as opportunities for staff and community members, as well as technical advisors, to reflect and recalibrate as appropriate.

## South Sudan

As anticipated, teacher and student capacity in South Sudan is very low. As part of the design of the project, it was decided that the South Sudan pilot would not include a Community Action component to apply more focus to issues of capacity. To better support teachers, training of trainers as well as the cascade teacher workshops were rolled out more slowly providing more time to apply skills in the classroom and more time was spent observing classroom teachers. However, despite the need for additional focus on capacity, the community expressed an interest in being provided more structured opportunities to engage with their children's learning. As a result, in Year 2 we have built in a stronger community component to the South Sudan pilot which will include more community activities such as reading festivals and the establishment of local book banks as well as networks of peer support groups.

Recent changes to government education policy related to the language of instruction have posed additional challenges such that teachers are required to instruct students in English, a language they themselves were not educated in. Furthermore, the recent policy change made it difficult to access sufficient teaching and learning material locally and in the South Sudan context, we faced challenges with procurement. As a result, many classrooms did not receive materials during the first year of the pilot, but procurement has been prioritized in Year 2 given the previous year's challenges.

In Maban we have also faced security challenges with programming interrupted for up to a month twice in 2016, amid fighting between refugee and host communities and most recently when fighting erupted between different groups within the refugee community. To minimize conflict between groups, a temporary camp was established and a number of refugees relocated which poses a challenge for our capacity to track and follow the same students and teachers. We are working on ways to support learning when schools are closed. Additionally, the original design of the pilot considered the transient nature of the refugee community and assessments and trainings were rolled out in such a way that even with movement of students and teachers from the original cohort, conclusions about the impact of the pilot could be reliably drawn. While the assessments were carried out with students enrolled in specific third grade classes at the schools, the findings are aggregated to create a picture of the group as opposed to the individuals to ensure a slightly different class make up at the end of the pilot will still provide us with significant findings.

## Egypt

The Egypt context presented less challenges than South Sudan. Rather than teacher capacity, challenges have centred around the successful engagement of parents from the Syrian refugee community with other Syrian parents or parents from the African refugee community. This reticence on the part of Syrian parents is supported by research carried out in the recently published Whole of Syria Education report<sup>4</sup> which suggests that while parents often engage with their own children's learning, there is a reluctance to engage with teachers and school administrators and other parents.<sup>5</sup> We did not explore this phenomenon further, however we did consider possible reasons for this could be cultural related to the role of parents in schools, but also potentially related to the view of displacement among the refugee community. Many Syrian parents and children we had the chance to meet with, still hope that their time in Egypt is temporary and they will be returning to Syria. In the second year of the pilot, Egyptian colleagues are attempting to expand engagement activities for the wider school community and other ways to engage parents using What's App, for example.



Photo: Aseel\*, Sima Diab/Save the Children. 9, plays with her friends during a break between lessons at a community school for Syrian refugees in a suburb of Cairo, Egypt. © Save the Children

## LESSONS FOR PROMISING PRACTICE

Well into the second year of the pilot, we have identified many lessons for promising practice that could serve as recommendations for the sector. The project design also includes opportunities at the end of the second year for project staff and community members to reflect on both the successes and challenges and capture those learnings in revised guidance and materials.

- **Well-being has an integral role to play in ensuring that children feel supported and are able to learn.** While there has been a strong focus in both child protection and EiE programming in recent years on well-being, LWiE is unique in that it looks at measuring well-being and linking that to learning. Without exploring and trying to establish these connections, education actors and teachers are not able to deliver on our commitment to quality education.
- **There are different cultural norms and different dynamics between members of the various refugee communities which point to the importance of working to understand communities and contextualizing approaches.** In Egypt, Syrian and African (primarily Sudanese and Eritrean) parent communities seem to be engaging differently with their school communities. African refugee parents are more likely to engage with one another and with the school communities. Similarly, there was a decision at the outset of the project to not include a community component and yet the team in South Sudan is receiving feedback from community members that they would like to be more involved in their children's learning. While we have not looked into the underlying issues at play, there do seem to be marked differences between communities and their connection to their country of arrival given the period of displacement from their home countries, their financial situation and other factors. Creative and innovative approaches that resonate with communities need to be explored.
- **Consider the type of learning being assessed.** Many of the available literacy programs focus exclusively on skills of letter recognition and phonemic awareness. The LWiE approach takes this assessment one step further and measures comprehension which provides a more in-depth look at children's understanding and with that, guidance for teachers on most effectively addressing real learning needs.



Photo: Assessing learning outcomes in South Sudan  
© Save the Children

- **Work with existing systems to promote sustainability and scale up.** In Egypt, the team has been working closely with government counterparts to integrate the LWiE tools and lessons learned into the remedial education curriculum and rolling out a national training of teacher trainers scheme. Despite this being a two-year pilot, uptake by the government and scale up will contribute to the longer-term sustainability of the approach. This is particularly important given the shift in focus away from the community school model toward strengthening the formal education system from 2018 forward.
- **Establish links between development and emergency programming.** While we have not had the opportunity to test the LWiE in the initial phase of an acute onset emergency to understand the capacity to limit disruption, it is important to consider ways in which education programming can be delivered consistently in various contexts. In the past, too large a wedge has been driven between development education and EiE to the detriment of children trying to learn. While support for well-being has recently been established as a key distinction between children's needs in development and crisis contexts, all children need support. Development education programming could also learn from EiE.



# PERSONAL IMPACT STORY

## South Sudan -Maban field office

My name is Job Joshua; I am 23 years old and a refugee from Blue Nile region of Sudan. I am an English teacher for primary three (P.3) at Samari primary school. When I started teaching in 2014-2015 it was difficult for me because children were not able to understand what I was saying as I talked too much and never gave the learners the time to talk - I expected them to listen only.

I am grateful to Save the Children for introducing Learning and Well-Being in Emergencies trainings. The training I received on literacy components has improved my teaching skills as I can now use many teaching methodologies and activities in my English lessons, especially when conducting reading sessions. For example, I can use choral reading, echo reading, alphabet songs and phonological awareness game like use of rhymes and which I was never exposed to as a primary learner.

LWiE is a wonderful programme; it has strengthened my teaching competencies in reading, writing and pronunciation. I never knew that letter knowledge is combination of letter names, letter shape and letter sound. I was singing and reciting the letters with my learners in the class and at the end children were only able to recite the name of the letters they could not recognize the shapes and sounds of the letters learnt. I was teaching using the text book but now I can plan my lessons well in advance and teach well.

What is really amazing is the rapid change in children's reading skills after the four months of LWiE training in 2016. The learners have now mastered letters, some can read properly, they can recognize syllables in a word, understand rhyming sounds of letters in a word, some can read any given text book of their level and answer comprehension questions. This was not the case before.

I am also a member of the Peer Network Support (PNS) in my school. The group is comprised of 5 teachers and I am the secretary. In the group, we support each other on how to prepare schemes of work, lesson plans and prepare teaching and learning aids. I was having difficulty extracting subject content, especially in social studies for P.1 and P.2 but my colleagues helped me identify what to teach in that subject. In our network, we also discuss problems affecting learners in our classes.

I also want to mention the children's reading buddies program. I am the teacher in charge of reading buddies here in Samari primary school and have formed 14 reading buddy relationships because there are very few children in primary grade 5 who can read well. The buddies are helping children to access text books and they relate better to each other than before. I have also formed reading buddies for my own children at home they support each other in reading while at home.

What I am planning now is when I go back to Blue Nile, I want to introduce LWiE in the school where I will be teaching. Thank you Save the Children for the wonderful programme.

Photo: Imam is a student in a school supported by Save the Children in Doro camp, Maban. © Save the Children



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## APPENDIX

- 1 UNHCR Egypt Fact Sheet June 2017
- 2 Save the Children International Egypt (2015) Quality Learning Environment Evaluation report
- 3 UNHCR, South Sudan Refugee Statistics; 31 January 2017
- 4 <http://wos-education.org/>
- 5 [http://wos-education.org/uploads/assessments/160905\\_Syria\\_education\\_sector\\_analysis\\_summary\\_WEB.pdf](http://wos-education.org/uploads/assessments/160905_Syria_education_sector_analysis_summary_WEB.pdf)

Photo: Children race on the rooftop of a community school for Syrian refugees in Cairo, Egypt. © Sima Diab/Save the Children







**Promising Practices in Refugee Education is a joint initiative of Save the Children, the world's largest independent children's rights organisation, UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, and Pearson, the world's learning company.**

Launched in March 2017, the initiative set out to identify, document and promote innovative ways to effectively reach refugee children and young people with quality educational opportunities.

This case study is one of more than twenty promising practices that were selected as part of the initiative.

The practices have been grouped under one or more of six themes.

-  **Equity**
-  **Access**
-  **Learning**
-  **Wellbeing**
-  **Technology**
-  **System Strengthening**

The practices and the experience of implementing partners have been used to identify ten recommendations, grouped under three overarching pillars, aimed at improving refugee education policy and practice. They are:

**Approaching the immediate crisis with a long-term perspective:**

1. Strengthen inclusive national systems
2. Commit to predictable multi-year funding for education in refugee responses
3. Improve collaboration and develop innovative partnerships

**Understanding different contexts and meeting distinct needs**

4. Adopt user-centred design and empowering approaches
5. Establish diverse pathways that meet distinct needs
6. Use space and infrastructure creatively

**Improving outcomes for all**

7. Support teachers to help ensure quality
8. Prioritise both learning and well-being
9. Use technology as an enabling tool in pursuit of education outcomes
10. Build a robust evidence base

Our reflections on all of the promising practices that we identified and documented and their implications for policy and practice are available in a separate Synthesis Report.

More information including case studies, the Synthesis Report and a series of articles from thought leaders in the field can be found at

**[www.promisingpractices.online](http://www.promisingpractices.online)**

