Contents

About this RfP - 'Let's Read Fluently!' Pilot Evaluations (2021-2022) and possible follow-on Efficacy Trials (2022-2023)

The purpose of this Terms of Reference (TOR) is to describe the independent consultancy services sought by the Queen Rania Foundation for Education and Development (QRF) for evaluations of a new education intervention for Jordan – 'Let's Read Fluently!' (LRF). This work falls under QRF's commitment to improving rates of Arabic literacy achievement for school children in both Jordan, and the wider region.

If the results from the Pilot evaluations secure evidence of promise, and demonstrate the feasibility of Efficacy Trials, the project will progress one, or both, of the implementation models we describe below into efficacy studies. We envisage these to be in the form of Randomized Control Trials (RCTs).

It is our hope that the Consultancy recruited for the Pilots will continue on the project to deliver the evaluations for the Efficacy Trial(s). This is conditional on findings from the Pilot stage demonstrating evidence of promise and the feasibility of Efficacy Trials, alongside satisfactory delivery of evaluation services in the Pilot phase and capacity to design and deliver Efficacy Trial(s).

Given this, we are asking interested service providers to propose a response for *both phases* of this work (Pilot and Efficacy) although we expect less detail for the second phase.

There are two stages associated with responding to this ToR:

1) Initial submission of Expression Of Interest (EOI), and
2) Submission of a full tender for selected organisations. Only organisations that have submitted EOIs will be considered for stage two.

The deadline for submission of the EOI is **4th March at 17:00 Jordan time**, to mgriffiths@qrf.org. Fuller details of the timeline and process to recruitment are set out in §

Project Partners

About the Queen Rania Foundation for Education and Development (QRF) and the Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA)

'What the Arab world needs today is an educational revolution; we need a fundamental change that will fulfill every parent's ambition to provide their child with a quality education'

Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah, 2013

In this project, the Queen Rania Foundation (QRF) acts in the role of managing the successful independent evaluator of 'Let's Read Fluently!' alongside being responsible for school recruitment, liaison with the Jordanian MoE and with project funders.

QRF was established in 2013 by Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah, with a mandate to improve student learning in Jordan on a national scale. Through research, program development and monitoring and impact evaluation, QRF is supporting efforts to improve educational policies and practices targeting literacy learning outcomes for children at the pre-primary and primary stages in Jordan. QRF seeks to create or localize impactful, innovative, scalable and sustainable interventions using an evidence-based approach to program development, while conducting policy-relevant research to inform both programming and policy in the Kingdom. Website: www.qrf.org

In this project, the Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA) is responsible for the delivery of the intervention to teachers. They do this by providing Teacher Professional Development (TPD), follow-on Coaching and delivery of materials (the student practice book, instructional guide and, for the Literacy Catch-Up model described below, diagnostic tests) to students, schools and classrooms.

QRTA is an independent non-profit organization committed to the vision of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah of empowering educators with the skills, recognition, and support necessary to excel in their classrooms. Since it was launched in 2009 in partnership with the Ministry of Education, QRTA has offered professional development programs for teachers in accordance with the educational needs in Jordan and the Arab World. Website: https://qrta.edu.jo/about

About the Education Endowment Foundation (the EEF) and their Global Trials Fund

The Education Endowment Foundation (the EEF) is an UK based charity dedicated to breaking the link between student achievement and parental income in England. To advance this goal, the EEF summarizes high quality evidence, generates new evidence of 'what works' to improve teaching and learning, and supports the active uptake of educational research on the part of teachers and school leaders.

Website: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/)

QRF is a global partner of the EEF through its "Building a global evidence ecosystem for teaching" project, which is delivered in partnership with the BHP Foundation.

The evaluation of 'Let's Read Fluently!' is supported via the Global Trials Fund strand of this project. This Global Trials Fund supports scientifically rigorous research that measures the impact of interventions to improve educational attainment and related outcomes in either low, middle or high income countries.

The context for 'Let's Read Fluently!'

Many students in Jordan are exiting the first three years of schooling lacking the foundational reading skills they need to enjoy success in life and school. Evidence from other school systems suggests that it is very unlikely these students will make up for this learning loss[1] during the next stages of their education, leaving such children at a significant disadvantage throughout their schooling and life.

It is estimated that beginner readers in Arabic need a level of automaticity[2] in Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) of 45-60 words per minute in order to allow working memory to be freed-up for comprehension. Data from the use of the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tool in 2018 suggests that only around 19% of Grade Two and Grade Three students meet, or exceed, the lowest levels of this benchmark. Alongside that, a significant number of students in Jordan (16.6% in 2018) scored zero in ORF. [3] Evidence indicates that this number is increasing.

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[1] World Bank, 'Ending Learning Poverty: What will it take?' 2019
[2] Automaticity is defined as being able to complete a task with no conscious effort, in much the same way as you are able to read this footnote, or calculate 2*2. Its importance for reading is that automaticity in decoding allows brain space to be devoted to the task of reading comprehension.
[3] RTI, Nov. 2018, Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Initiative Lot Quality Assurance Sampling Assessment.

There are also concerns with global levels of literacy, and the World Bank has recently announced its 'Literacy Makes Sense' approach to reduce what they describe as 'learning poverty'.[4]

When diacritics[5] are used, Arabic is a transparent language – that is, there is a reliable relationship between letters and sounds. Given this, these scores in ORF reflect a gap in phonics skills[6]. The importance of phonics is reflected in the EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit and other literature[7].

The Intervention: 'Let's Read Fluently!'

The student practice book

Drawing upon multiple studies from cognitive science, the Al Qasimi Foundation[8] in the UAE has worked with Dr. Helen Abadzi to develop and trial a student practice book that facilitates perceptual learning for decoding alongside extensive practice to attain fluency.

The key insights upon which the practice book is built include:

- Small font sizes negatively affect letter identification, so the book uses large font sizes and spacing. Gradually the size is reduced.
- The Arabic script is dense and complex, and so creates a higher cognitive load for beginner readers than other languages. Recognizing this, the most important activity the intervention facilitates is student practice and teacher feedback.
- Pictures are not used to ensure students learn letter values, rather than guessing them.
- Brain neurons make few new connections at any given time. So, letter shapes are introduced patiently, one by one.
- The brain learns a lot from pattern analogies, so these are stressed (e.g., da di du, which links the 'd' sound with each of the short vowels).
- Students need to see meaning in text, so real world words and sentences are introduced as soon as possible.

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https://ierc-publicfiles.s3.amazonaws.com/public/resources/Jordan%20RAMP%20LQAS%20Summary%20Report%20FINAL.pdf

[4] https://www.worldbank.org/en/who-we-are/news/campaigns/2019/literacy-makes-sense

[5] Diacritics are marks placed above or below (or sometimes next to) a letter in a word to indicate the short vowels.

[6] See: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics/

[7] For example, Seidenberg, 2017 or Castle et al 2018

[8] http://www.alqasimifoundation.com/en/home

Currently, there is no student practice book used for this purpose in Jordan. To make this more real, the student practice book stresses repetition of patterns, alongside lots of practice in recognizing them –

Repetition of sounds

Perpetual learning is enhanced through inviting learners to recognize subtle changes. For example:

Same word – slightly different font size and spacing

Teacher support

The Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA), with no support from QRF in order to allow for a fully independent evaluation, will train teachers in how to use the practice book described above. This will be one day of face-to-face training, where teachers will be exposed to -

- the research rationale for the project (both the evaluation itself and the practice book)
- their revised role in one of our two implementation models (see next section), and
- the revised learning experience we are asking them to facilitate
- how to appropriately communicate the project to parents/carers
- how to support the involvement of parents/carers – for example, we will suggest that the practice book is sent home, with encouragement for students to practice it with their parents/carers.
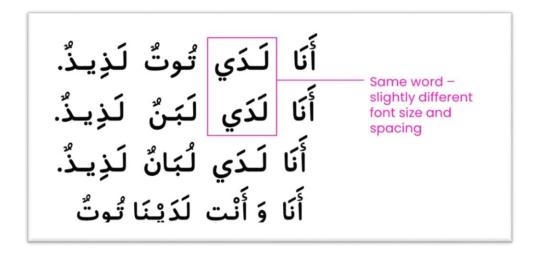
This will then be followed by opportunities to practice the new teaching and learning technique, and to explore potential barriers and how they can be overcome.

School Supervisors will be invited to attend this training alongside teachers in their District. Principles of schools in the intervention group will receive separate orientation training.

Following on from the face-to-face training, teachers will receive up-to three follow-on coaching visits (accompanied by classroom observations from the Coaches) that will be delivered by QRTA staff. To facilitate these, QRTA will use a coaching model designed to promote a growth mindset on the part of teachers.

Teacher training and coaching will focus on one of two implementation models, each of which has the student practice book at its heart. Teachers (and schools) in the intervention groups will only be asked to deliver one of the implementation models. This means that we are treating this project as two separate Pilots (although with the same underlying intervention) and, conditional upon results from the Pilots, up to two Efficacy Trials.

Our two implementation models: Whole Class and Literacy Catch-up

Whole Class (W/C)

The first implementation model is a Whole Class Teaching and Learning approach (W/C) for students in the second semester of Grade One. The rationale for the choice of second semester is that introducing the practice book at this stage allows an alignment with the sequence of letter-sound introductions specified in the 'in-place' Grade One text-books.

The intervention will be delivered in three sessions a week, with each session 30 minutes. The classroom time for this will be taken from one of the three 'free activity periods' in the Jordanian school curriculum, and two of the Arabic language classes.

The 'pedagogical routine' within each classroom lesson is very simple. Using large versions of the text-book, the classroom teacher introduces the letter-sound, or letter combinations, and models 'reading' it. ("I do").

This is followed by an opportunity for the whole class to practice 'reading' use either the choral or echo method ("we do").

Following this, learners are invited to independently work through the student practice book, taking each item in turn and with their finger on the text sounding out the letter, or word. ("I do".) At this stage of independent student practice, the teacher's role is to encourage engagement with the task and to provide feedback. This stage of independent practice with teacher feedback should be c. 20 minutes.

All students will receive a copy of the practice book. They will be encouraged to take it home for extra practice with their parents/carers, with teachers facilitating this form of parental engagement.

These sessions will replace 'business-as-usual' teaching, although we have worked with the Jordanian Ministry of Education to ensure that this is appropriately aligns to existing curriculum content such that students have a coherent learning experience.

Literacy Catch-Up (C/U)

The second implementation model we are calling 'Literacy Catch-Up' (C/U). Eligible students are c. 20% of lowest achieving students in a class that are either in the second semester of Grade One, or in the first semester of Grades Two and Three. The rationale for the former is that it is felt that the first semester of Grade One is too early to identify struggling readers. For the latter, the rationale is simply project planning.

Schools in the Literacy Catch-Up intervention arm will be expected to deliver this extra support to selected students in all three Grades (One-to-Three), for three sessions a week over one semester.

Selection of students for the intervention will be carried out *by teachers*, using the coarse grained diagnostic tool developed by the Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Programme (RAMP) that is already in use in Jordanian classrooms. In the teacher training, teachers will be advised to

exclude from the intervention students who have severe learning difficulties. That is, we will advise that eligible students are those for whom it is plausible that a change in teaching and learning approach will be helpful.

In this model, the intervention will be delivered by either classroom teachers or resource room teachers (the latter is the name for teachers in Jordan whose role is to provide extra support to struggling students). Our current understanding is that the scheduling of extra support to struggling learners (referred to as 'Resource Room teaching' in Jordan) is agreed between the classroom teacher and the resource room teacher, that schools have autonomy over this scheduling and that this extra support is provided during the normal school day. The Jordanian MoE has given us permission to use one 'free activity period' for literacy catch-up. In the teacher training, we will advise teachers to schedule the remaining two sessions in a way that minimizes any disruption to normal learning.

In effect, this is a form of extra small group tuition, using the practice book as the learning material. Based on the global evidence[9], we will recommend that group sizes are five-to-six students who are grouped according to similar literacy learning needs.

In Appendix A – Draft Logic Models you will find the draft Logic Models for the two implementation models.

For ease, in the remainder of this document we use the term 'the intervention' to cover both implementation models. When a distinction is required between them, we refer to either Whole Class (W/C) or Literacy Catch-Up (C/U).

Research Questions

Draft Evaluation Questions for the Pilots

The following evaluation questions are draft and will be developed and prioritized in consultation with the contracted evaluator, other project partners and following insights generated from the Pre-pilot stage (the evaluation of the Pre-Pilot has been commissioned through a separate standalone ToR).

We anticipate that these questions are addressed through a mixed-methods design. A comparison group is envisaged to allow us to better understand business-as-usual teaching (especially in regard to support to struggling readers and the use of resource room teachers) and

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[9] https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition/

to understand the feasibility of data collection where there is not the incentive of participating in the intervention.

Unless indicated otherwise, these draft research questions apply to both implementation models.

Evidence of promise (is there evidence of expected change happening?)

1. In what ways, and to what extent, does 'Let's Read Fluently!' (LRF) affect school, teacher, student and parental practice as compared to business-as-usual teaching and learning?
2. How do principals, teachers, parents and students perceive the intervention and any changes that it has delivered?
3. Is there evidence to support the Logic Models?
4. Is there any evidence of unintended consequences (negative or positive) as a result of the implementation of LRF?

Feasibility of the intervention

5. Was LRF delivered as intended in terms of dosage, nature and quality? What modifications were made, with what implications?
6. What is the learning about teacher's use of the Coarse Grained Diagnostic tool? How successful is, it in use, at identifying the most appropriate students for the Literacy Catch-Up implementation model (C/U model only).
7. What were the facilitators / barriers to engagement in the teacher training, teacher coaching and 'Supervisor' and Principal orientation sessions?
8. To what extent do teachers develop sufficient skills and confidence through the training and coaching?
9. What do we know about how teachers need to be supported (coached) during delivery?
10. Are there any key contextual factors that appear to facilitate or impede successful implementation of LRF?

Feasibility of the Efficacy Trial(s)

11. What does the Pilot tell us about the feasibility of the process components of an Efficacy Trial? E.g., school recruitment, retention, or data collection in both intervention and control groups
12. What does the Pilot tell us about the feasibility of the resources of an Efficacy Trial E.g., measurement instruments or specific equipment used

13. What does the Pilot tell us about the feasibility of the management components of an Efficacy Trial? E.g, problems with data collection or variability of collected data.

Readiness for the Efficacy Trial(s)

14. What changes, if any, are needed to the Logic Models?
15. What changes to the intervention, implementation models, support or materials need to be made?
16. What can we learn from the Pilots about minimal detectable effect size estimates, intra-cluster correlations, pre-and-post correlations and sample sizes?
17. Is there any evidence of contamination between the control and treatment groups? For example, from the Supervisors who attend the training alongside teachers in their District spreading, or promoting, aspects of LRF to other schools under their Supervision.

Draft Evaluation Questions for the Efficacy Trial(s)

Progression of either implementation model to a Trial is conditional upon the findings in the Pilots. It is possible that neither model will be progressed.

We anticipate that the questions below are addressed through a Randomized Control Trial (an RCT) alongside a process and cost-evaluation. The exact research questions we ask in the Trial(s) will be informed by results from the Pilot stage.

However, at a high-level, we expect that the Trials will address –

Learning outcomes

1. What is the impact of 'Let's Read Fluently!' on students' letter-sound identification and speed and accuracy of word decoding, as measured by the EGRA assessment, compared to students receiving business-as-usual teaching and learning?
2. What is the impact of 'Let's Read Fluently!' on students' reading comprehension, as measured by the EGRA assessment, compared to students receiving business-as-usual teaching and learning?
3. What differential effects does the intervention have based on student literacy levels prior to delivery of the interventions?
4. How does any progress made by students in the Literacy Catch-Up model compare to the progress of similar students in the Whole Classroom model?

Mechanism(s) of change

5. Was LRF delivered as intended in terms of dosage, nature and quality?
6. How do any modifications affect the intended mechanism by which 'Let's Read Fluently!' delivers its intended outcomes?

Development

7. Are there any key contextual factors that appear to facilitate or impede successful implementation of LRF?
8. What learning has been generated about the potential for scale up and the nature and cost effectiveness of doing so?
9. Is there any evidence of unintended consequences (negative or positive) as a result of the implementation of LRF?
10. What changes to the intervention, implementation models, support or materials need to be made prior to scale-up?

Implementation Plans

Delivery

After the Pre-Pilot (which is outside of this ToR) delivery of the intervention is expected to cover the time period September 2021 to the end of 2023. This is described in more detail in Table 1 below.

In readiness for the Pilots, we wish to engage with the selected evaluator for the Pilot from April 1st 2021 at the latest.

Note that timings are indicative only and subject to change, particularly as the country responds to the C-19 pandemic. The Funder is aware of these challenges and has indicated flexibility with respect to timings and funding. Potential contractors should be aware of this need to be flexible.

Table 1. Let's Read Fluently phases and timeline – Covid permitting.

Stage	Model	Academic Yr 2020-21	Academic Yr 2021-22		Academic Yr 2022-23		Academic Yr 2023-24	
		Sem 2	Sem 1	Sem 2	Sem 1	Sem 2	Sem 1	Sem 2
Pre-pilots	Model 1a C/U (Grade 1)	▨ (excluded)						
	Model 1b C/U (Grade 2, 3)	▨ (excluded)						
	Model 2 W/C	▨ (excluded)						
	Evaluation Preparations	▩						
Pilots	Model 1a C/U (Grade 1)			▩				
	Model 1b C/U (Grade 2, 3)		▩					
	Model 2 W/C			▩				
Analysis	Model 1a C/U (Grade 1)				▩			
	Model 1b C/U (Grade 2, 3)				▩			
	Model 2 W/C				▩			
Efficacy	Model 1a C/U (Grade 1)					▩		
	Model 1b C/U (Grade 2, 3)					▩		
	Model 2 W/C					▩		
Analysis	Model 1a C/U (Grade 1)						▩	
	Model 1b C/U (Grade 2, 3)						▩	
	Model 2 W/C						▩	
Close	Post-pilot closure					▨ (excluded)		
	Post-efficacy closure							▨ (excluded)

Note:

C/U = Literacy Catch-Up model

W/C = Whole class model

Cells marked with a diagonal line indicate activities excluded from this ToR

Student Numbers

The numbers in the treatment and control groups across the intervention stages are indicative at this stage. Estimates for the suggested numbers for the efficacy trials have been derived using the PowerUp! Tool. Further information and calculations will be shared with the successful vendor.

When reading the numbers in the tables below, please note that:

- One school will *not* be assigned to both of the implementation models, either in the treatment group or the control. That is, any school *x* in the counts below will not show up in another count.
- Schools in the Literacy Catch-Up intervention arm will be expected to deliver this to selected students in Grades One-to-Three, although as indicated in Table 1 the timing of delivery will differ.

Table 2. Data from the School Management Information System (MIS) on average class sizes in Jordan's MoE Schools, extracted March 2020

	G1			G2			G3		
	Rural	Urban	Across School Type	Rural	Urban	Across School Type	Rural	Urban	Across School Type
A. Mean number of classrooms (calculated using C/B below)	1.7	2.7	2.2	1.72	2.70	2.20	1.68	2.69	2.18
B. Average no. of students per class	20.55	25.38	22.61	21.43	27.67	24.09	21.78	29.46	25.06
C. Average no. of students across classes (i.e. per school)	35.93	69.19	50.11	36.85	74.68	52.98	36.55	79.14	54.71

Therefore, assuming an equal number of rural / urban schools, for each *school* in the project:

	Implementation Model	
	Whole Class (W/C)	Literacy Catch-up (C/U)
Average Number of Classes	2.2	6.6
Average Number of Teachers	2.2	7.6*
Average Number of Students	50.11	31.56**

* This is the number of classroom teachers, plus one extra resource room teacher who works across Grades One-to-Three

**Assuming the intervention works with the lowest achieving 20% of students in Grade One through to Grade Three.

Table 3. Pilots and Trials Intervention and Control Group Information

Pilots				
	Whole Class (W/C)		Literacy Catch-up (C/U)	
	Intervention Group	Control Group	Intervention Group	Control Group
Number of schools	10	5	10	5
Number of Classes	22	11		
Number of Teachers	22	11	76*	38*
Number of Students	501	251	316**	158**

*Classroom and Resource Room Teachers

**Across Grades One-to-Three

Efficacy Trials				
	Whole Class (W/C)		Literacy Catch-up (C/U)	
	Intervention Group	Control Group	Intervention Group	Control Group
Number of schools	70	70	70	70
Number of Classes	155	155		
Number of Teachers	155	155	532*	532*
Number of Students	3,508	3,508	2,209**	2,209**

*Classroom and Resource Room Teachers

**Across Grades One-to-Three

Expectations of the Successful Evaluator

High-level contract deliverables

For the Pilots –

a. Review, and support the update and maintenance, of the current Logic Models (see Appendix A – Draft Logic Models)

b. Design a robust and objective evaluation approach that effectively addresses the research questions posed above in § Draft Evaluation Questions for the Pilot

Tests to assess the literacy levels of students have been selected: EGRA[10] and the RAMP coarse grained reading assessment.[11] The EGRA test will be administered by assessors provided by the evaluator for the purpose of evaluation only. The purpose of this assessment at the Pilot stage is *not* to assess impact but to address the evaluation questions in the Pilot around the feasibility and readiness of an Efficacy Trial.

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[10] https://www.rti.org/rti-press-publication/early-grade-reading-assessment
[11] https://shared.rti.org/taxonomy/term/34391?page=1

The RAMP coarse grained reading assessment will be administered *by teachers* for the purpose of selecting students for inclusion in the Literacy Catch-up implementation (not Whole-Class).

c. Manage and deliver all the evaluation activities including data collection, analysis and interpretation and reporting. Best management practices will include the identification and mitigation of assumptions and risks.

Guidance of primary data collection activities to ensure the quality of data collected will also be the responsibility of the contractor, including reviewing and ensuring quality of data collection plans, enumerator training, pilot testing of instruments and procedures and quality assurance of final datasets.

For the Efficacy Trial -

At this stage an experimental study design, in the form of one or more RCTs, will need to be accompanied by a process and cost evaluation in order to effectively address the draft research questions posed above in § Draft Evaluation Questions for the Efficacy Trial.

Dependent on results from the Pilots, and confidence from the Pilots in the ability of the evaluator to continue to deliver high-quality and timely work, we would ask the successful evaluation agency to support us to refine the power calculations, the draft research questions, and to design and deliver all evaluation activities needed to address them.

Draft Timescale for Evaluation Deliverables

The consultancy is expected to fulfill the deliverables laid out in § High-level contract deliverables over the course of up to thirty-six (36) months..

Note that QRF adheres to strict quality expectation and outputs are only considered to have been met if they fulfil expectations. These expectations will be laid out in the inception meeting in discussion with the successful contractor. Continuity of the selected Evaluator for the Pilot onto the Efficacy Trial is conditional upon high-quality performance in the Pilot stage.

The following timeline assumes an overall work plan beginning, at the latest, by March 1st 2021 and ending on December 31st 2023.

Table 3: Let's Read Fluently Timeline, Activities and Deliverables (Covid permitting)

Timeline	Activities and Deliverables
Pre-Pilot Phase January to June 2021	This is for information only – this phase is subject to a separate ToC
Pilot and Analysis Phase: March 2021-December 2022 1. Preparation: April 2021- July 2021. 2. Pilot Intervention: September 2021-May 2022. 3. Analysis: January 2022 – December 2022. Note that the delivery of models is staggered so there is overall lap between delivery and analysis phases.	Plan, deliver and manage the evaluation for the Pilot Phase of 'Let's Read Fluently!' including, but not limited to, the following tasks: a. Run a workshop to review and update our draft Logic Models b. Support the submission of an IRB c. Procurement of suppliers/assessors/enumerators etc. as appropriate; d. Develop and reviewing data collection instruments (including consent forms), based on the study's goals and drawing from internationally validated tools where possible, following international best practices, documenting where items have been borrowed or adapted; e. Management of data collection/enumerator training to ensure rigorous training of, including review (or development, if needed) of training materials and manuals; f. Mange primary data collection, making technical research decisions or addressing challenges that arise during data collection; and g. Guide data piloting and validation of data collection instruments where necessary. Additionally: h. Deliver regular **evaluation update reports**; i. Flag up challenges and potential solutions; j. Undertake regular data quality assurance; k. Data analysis and interpretation; l. Participation in regular partner meetings, ensuring good working relationships; m. Deliver an **evaluation report** (max 50 pages, excluding appendixes) addressing the research questions agreed; n. Convene a **workshop** on the findings from the pilots; and o. Manage knowledge uptake including the delivery of at least **two lessons learned outputs** about subject and research (including on methodology, experience working with schools, teachers and children, and working in Jordan.) If an Efficacy Trial is viable: p. Plan for Efficacy Trial Phase as appropriate

Note: A decision will be made as soon as data allows about the viability of proceeding to the Efficacy Trial stage.	
Efficacy trial and analysis 1. Delivery: July 2022 – June 2023 2. Analysis: January 2023 – December 2023 Note that the delivery of models is staggered so there is overall lap between delivery and analysis phases.	Plan, deliver and manage the evaluation for the Efficacy Trial Phase of 'Let's Read Fluently' including, but not limited to, the following tasks: a. Procurement of suppliers/assessors/enumerators etc. as appropriate; b. Support the submission of an IRB c. Oversight of data collection/enumerator training, including review (or development, if needed) of training materials and manuals; d. Mange primary data collection, making technical research decisions or addressing challenges that arise during data collection; e. Deliver regular **monitoring and update reports**; f. Flag up challenges and potential solutions; g. Data Quality Assurance; h. Data analysis and interpretation; i. Participation in regular partner meetings, ensuring good working relationships; j. Deliver a summary **evaluation report** (max 50 pages) addressing the questions agreed for the Efficacy Trials; k. Convene a **workshop** on the findings from the Trial; and l. Manage knowledge uptake including the delivery of at least **three lessons learned outputs** about subject and research (including on methodology, experience working with schools, teachers and children, and working in Jordan).

Ethics –

QRF expects the successful evaluator to have their approach scrutinized by an IRB[12] or ethics board, and to work with the IRB throughout the life time of the service agreement.

In delivering the evaluation –

The successful evaluator should also expect to align with the conditions of the grant agreements that QRF has in place with the EEF. At the time of writing, we understand these to include requirements that the successful evaluator –

a. Registers the trial, and updates the entry with the results of trials once an evaluation report has been published.

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[12] IRB: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institutional_review_board

b. Defines educational outcomes in sufficient detail to allow others to reproduce the results using the trial data.

c. Complies with all relevant data protection regulations in Jordan.

d. Follows the best practice guidance set out in SPIRIT and CONSORT Statement and undertakes implementation and process evaluation and cost evaluation as part of impact evaluations

e. Consults with the EEF's best practice guidance and templates for Evaluators

f. Follows the principles outlined in the EEF Statistical Analysis Guidance -

The analysis framework includes key principles, guidance on analysis, and guidance on presentation of results. Exceptions need to be agreed in writing. As a minimum, the evaluation should demonstrate how the sample size was determined using the frequentist approach to sample size determination, take into account the clustered nature of the data where applicable, use an intention-to-treat analysis accompanied by the sensitivity analyses of Evaluators choice, generate an effect size (Hedges g) and a measure of uncertainty in the effect size.

g. Ensures quality control through peer review process -

Evaluation quality assurance processes need to be in place and that all key outputs (e.g., trial protocol, statistical analysis plan, report) should undergo appropriate peer review to check their validity and evaluate their suitability for publication. The EEF will act as one of the peer reviewers.

h. Does not make changes to the research design or the statistical approach without prior QRF and EEF agreement -

The successful evaluator should inform both QRF and, through QRF the EEF, of any situations which may require changes to the protocol, the study plan or the statistical analysis plan as soon as possible. Changes should be discussed with both QRF and the EEF and agreed and confirmed in writing before being implemented.

i. Produce plain language summaries of evaluations

Production and publication of plain language summaries of evaluations are part of QRF and the EEF's commitment to helping people use and interpret research evidence. This should include a conversion of the effect size into a meaningful metric for the target audience.

k. Meets the quality requirements to allow for trial results to be included in the EEF Teaching and Learning toolkit.

l. Provides data on the database codebook variables needed for the inclusion in the EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit -

EEF Partners are asked to require Evaluators to provide data on as many of the variables in the database codebook as possible by asking them to complete the database entry for their project (in spreadsheet or other pre-specified form) and include it as an appendix to the report.

m. Co-operates professionally with all Project Partners-

The successful evaluator is required to work in a collegiate and professional fashion with delivery teams and Partner organisations. They are entitled to expect the same in return. Partners are encouraged to follow the expectations pertaining to this relationship found in the EEF's grantee-evaluator relationships policy.

m. Makes the study data publicly available whenever possible -

Our default is to make the data from the evaluation available for research purposes and foster interest in using the data.

Insurance –

The successful evaluator is expected to have in place appropriate insurance, for specified minimum amounts, covering employer's Indemnity or Liability Insurance, General Liability Insurance or Public and Product Liability Insurance, Motor Vehicle Insurance, and Umbrella Liability Insurance.

Anti-corruption –

The Evaluator will provide training at least once every eighteen (18) months to all of its employees involved in the Project in respect of:

1. anti-corruption obligations; and

2. restrictions on permitted activities

Required Qualifications

This consultancy may be conducted by an organization with all of the requisite qualifications, or by an organization that has part of the expertise and forms a team by subcontracting relevant individuals who can collectively provide the needed expertise.

A clear lead investigator must be identified for this complex project. A strong management approach must be clearly laid out to demonstrate how effective and integrated team working practices and engagement will be maintained to achieve holistic and cohesive deliverables.

The consultancy team should collectively have the following experience, as a minimum:

- Demonstrated expertise in the education sector, particularly in the early grades with a strong literacy focus.

- Experience designing and managing large-scale trials and qualitative and quantitative research studies in Jordan, MENA, and/or or lower middle-income countries.

- Demonstrated expertise in working with schools and engaging with teachers and students.

- Strong portfolio of evaluation, and quantitative and qualitative studies related to literacy, preferably Arabic literacy.

- Strong sampling and statistical expertise.

- At least one team member should have a doctoral degree in a relevant research field, such as Education, Statistics or Economics.

- Ability to work in Arabic and English to a high level (written and spoken).

The successful contractor must have a clear appetite for lesson learning and knowledge uptake and working in partnership with the contracting organizations to ensure that this phase occurs in a substantive way.

Covid-19 Management and Ethics

Contractors should expect to work with the latest governmental guidance and provide for delivery (and the real possibility of delays) in an uncertain context using options such as virtual platforms, minimizing contact as appropriate and ensuring the safety of all who come into contact with this intervention.

This programme of work will undergo an IRB process and potential evaluators should be aware of this level of scrutiny and be prepared to work with the IRB over the course of the project.

Guidelines for Proposal Submission

Interested vendors should note that there is a two stage process to this call for tenders as follows:

Expression of Interest (EOI)

- This should be a maximum of 2,000 words including web links but excluding appropriate references as footnotes.
- The EOI must be submitted electronically by 17.00 (Jordan time) on the **4th March 2021** to: mgriffiths@qrf.org

The following criteria will be used to assess the EOI:

	Criteria	Weight
One	The extent to which the proposed research team collectively demonstrates excellent knowledge of the topic areas of the proposed research.	Up to 20 points
Two	The extent to which the proposed research team collectively demonstrates experience in the sector, and settings, with direct relevance to the proposed research.	Up to 20 points
Three	Evidence of showing a thoughtful and informed consideration of the proposed research design and its key elements.	Up to 20 points

Vendors who wish to submit an EOI may ask questions of clarification by email between 09.00 and 17:00 (Jordan time) to mgriffiths@qrf.org between the 8th February and the 3rd March. Questions and responses will be shared by blind copy across all interested vendors where known, by QRF.

A short list of potential evaluators selected who will be invited to prepare a full proposal. We expect to make these invitations by the 9th March 2021.

Full Proposals

Following being invited, selected evaluators will be given until **the 20th April 2021** to prepare proposals of no more than 7,000 words (word count including all tables, appendices and in-text citations but excluding the reference list).

Full proposals should be made up of two documents: a technical proposal and a separate financial proposal. For both, we understand that, at this stage, respondees will be able to provide more detail for the Pilot Studies than the Efficacy Trial(s).

QRF is open to proposals that articulate informed adjustments or alternative approaches to the scope of work. These must aligned with expected stages of the EEF's Global Trial stages of a Pilot speedily leading to an Efficacy Trial, and be accompanied with a rationale of how the proposed approach achieves the objectives in an improved way.

We expect to receive fully costed proposals for the Pilots including a breakdown of unit prices for each item and the total price of services proposed, including overheads and relevant taxes where applicable. These costs should be based on the reach figures set out in this ToR and the research questions posed.

In recognition of the greater degree of uncertainty for the Efficacy Trial(s), initial cost estimates by broader cost categories is sufficient. As working assumptions, the draft reach figures and research questions for the Efficacy Trials should be used. You should also assume, for the proposal that both implementation models progress to Efficacy Trials.

For both phases, QRF is interested in ensuring value for money and vendors should seek to demonstrate how their offer represents that.

The technical proposal will be assessed by a panel using the following criteria:

	Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Weight
One	Collective capability and relevant experience of project team, as expressed in -	Demonstrable evidence of required qualifications to undertake this work (see § Required Qualifications)	Up to 20 points
		Track record of lesson learning and knowledge uptake	Up to 10 points
		Understanding of the context and key research topics relevant for the project	Up to 10 points
Two	Methodology and Approach	The extent to which the proposed design and analysis meet the research objectives	Up to 15 points
		The suitability of the proposed approach to analyzing data and reporting against the research questions (including coding qualitative data, quantitative analysis, triangulation across sources and outputs)	Up to 15 points

		The extent to which key risks to the project delivery are identified and appropriate strategies to mitigate these risks are proposed (e.g., timeline, burden on participants, response bias)	Up to 10 points
		The extent to which appropriate data governance has been demonstrated (including data protection safeguards and data compliance standards in Jordan)	Up to 10 points
Three	Ethics	The extent to which the proposal engages with ethics and safeguarding policy and practices, including how these are pro-actively ensured within the organisation and the evaluation.	Up to 10 points

The financial proposal will be assessed in terms of value-for-money only, up to 50 points.

Notification

Following scoring, we expect to invite shortlisted organization to an interview (on-line) on the 29th April. The final decision on who to enter into contract negotiation with will be made shortly after.
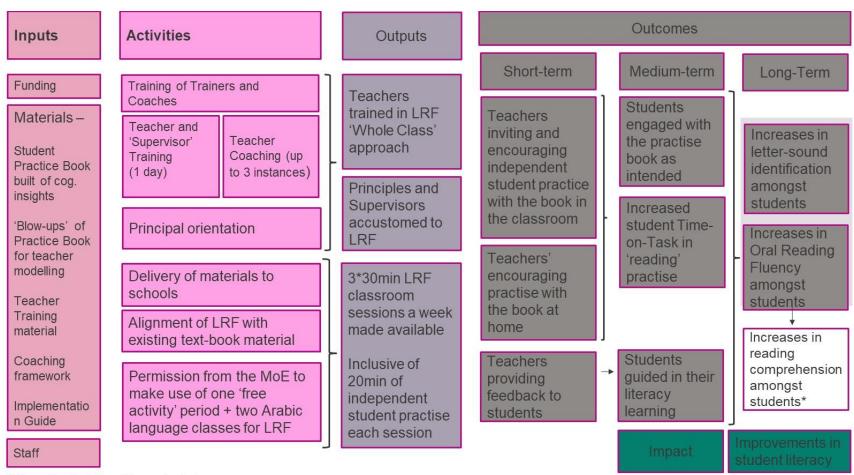
Evaluation Budget

A budget appropriate to the seriousness and ambition of this work has been set aside, but potential evaluators will be expected to provide their own estimate of an appropriate budget given the information provided in this ToR.

Appendix A – Draft Logic Models

Whole Class Implementation Model

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		
			Short-term	Medium-term	Long-Term

Inputs

Funding

Materials –

Student Practice Book built of cog. insights

'Blow-ups' of Practice Book for teacher modelling

Teacher Training material

Coaching framework

Implementation Guide

Staff

*Strength of relationship contested

Activities

Training of Trainers and Coaches

Teacher and 'Supervisor' Training (1 day)

Teacher Coaching (up to 3 instances)

Principal orientation

Delivery of materials to schools

Alignment of LRF with existing text-book material

Permission from the MoE to make use of one 'free activity' period + two Arabic language classes for LRF

Outputs

Teachers trained in LRF 'Whole Class' approach

Principles and Supervisors accustomed to LRF

3*30min LRF classroom sessions a week made available

Inclusive of 20min of independent student practise each session

Outcomes

Short-term

Teachers inviting and encouraging independent student practice with the book in the classroom

Teachers' encouraging practise with the book at home

Teachers providing feedback to students

Medium-term

Students engaged with the practise book as intended

Increased student Time-on-Task in 'reading' practise

Students guided in their literacy learning

Long-Term

Increases in letter-sound identification amongst students

Increases in Oral Reading Fluency amongst students

Increases in reading comprehension amongst students*

Impact

Improvements in student literacy

1

Literacy Catch-Up Implementation Model

QUEEN RANIA FOUNDATION
مؤسسة الملكة رانيا

Inputs

Funding

Materials –

Student Practice Book built of cog. insights

Diagnostic Tests

Teacher Training material

Coaching framework

Implementation Guide

Staff

*Strength of relationship contested

Activities

Training of Trainers and Coaches

Teacher Training (home teachers, resource room and 'Supervisors') (1 day)

Coaching for classroom and resource room teachers (up to 3 instances)

Principal orientation

Delivery of materials to schools

Permission from the MoE to make use of one 'free activity' period and to use LRF for Resource Room

Outputs

Teachers Trained in LRF 'Catch-Up' approach

Supervisors and Principles accustomed to LRF 'Catch-up' approach

3*30min LRF small group tuition sessions a week made available

Outcomes

Short-term

'In need' students identified

Small group tutoring of 5-6 students

Teachers providing feedback

Student groupings and learning material shaped around student needs

Teachers inviting and encouraging independent student practice with the book (in school and at home)

Medium-term

'In need' students receive extra support

'In need' students receive differentiated support

Increased student Time-on-Task in 'reading' practise

Long-Term

Increases in letter-sound identification amongst students

Increases in Oral Reading Fluency amongst students

Increases in reading comprehension amongst students*

Impact

Improvements in student literacy

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