

# HOW-TO GUIDE: READING AND NUMERACY ACTIVITY (RANA)

## What is RANA?

- RANA was designed to improve literacy and numeracy instruction in grades 1–3 in both public schools and Integrated Qur’anic Schools (IQSs) by adopting the language of the immediate environment, Hausa. RANA uses a whole-language approach, which is structured to include a focus on phonics. The ultimate goal is to improve literacy outcomes for learners.
- To achieve these goals, RANA developed Hausa-language teaching and learning materials, built teacher capacity, mobilized communities and engaged local governments to improve early-grade reading policies. Baseline and endline assessments are carried out to evaluate learning outcomes.
- UNICEF and FHI 360 collaborated with the state ministries of education and affiliated agencies to implement the RANA programme in Nigeria’s northern states of Katsina, Zamfara, Bauchi, Niger, Sokoto and Kebbi as part of the Girls’ Education Project Phase 3 (GEP3), funded by UK Aid and as part of the More Out-of-School Children in School in Nigeria project, funded by Educate A Child. Technical assistance on scaling the RANA literacy package was also provided to Kano, Kaduna and Jigawa.



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## Why is RANA needed?

Nigeria’s education system is faced with the twin crises of a large and growing out-of-school population and a severe learning crisis:

- One in three<sup>1</sup> children are out of school<sup>2</sup> (10.2 million at primary school level and 8.1 million children at junior secondary level).<sup>3</sup>
- Three in four children cannot read with meaning or solve a simple mathematics problem by age 10.<sup>4</sup>
- School dropout remains high, with approximately 11 per cent of enrolled learners dropping out at each grade level annually from primary to junior secondary school.<sup>5</sup>
- Approximately 63 per cent of children who live in rural areas and around 84 per cent of children in the lowest economic quartile cannot read at all.<sup>6</sup>

## What are the preconditions for success?

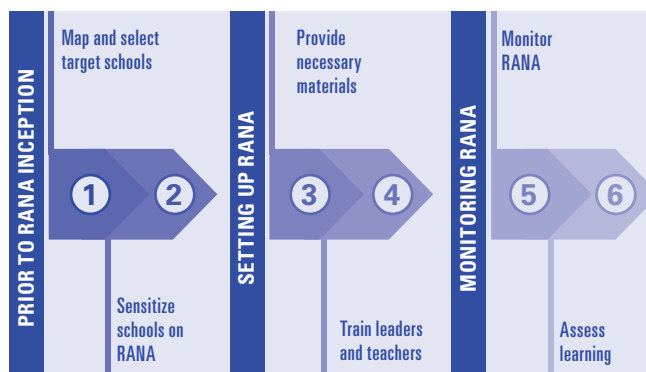
To set up RANA, schools must meet the following preconditions:

- Availability of qualified teachers;
- Safe learning environment;
- Existence of a school-based management committee (SBMC);
- Availability of RANA materials (pupils’ books, teacher’s guides, etc.);
- Provision of four periods on the school timetable for grades 1–3 (RANA lessons replace Hausa lessons in schools).

## Standard operating procedure

### Prior to RANA inception

1. **Target states, local government areas and schools are mapped and selected** by the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and Local Government Education Authority (LGEA).



2. **State, LGEA and school-level sensitization** on RANA is conducted among key stakeholders, including state and LGEA officials, head teachers, teachers, SBMCs, learners, parents and mothers’ associations, to ensure school communities are aware of the benefits of RANA and their roles and responsibilities.

### Setting up RANA

3. **Provide necessary learning materials**, including learners’ books, workbooks, teachers’ guides, step-by-step facilitation manuals and mathematics-themed read-aloud stories for teachers and learners in selected schools.
4. **State, LGEA and school-level leaders and teachers are technically trained** on RANA pedagogy, lesson observation and assessment.
  - Master trainers, who are resource persons selected from the College of Education and state ministries and agencies including SUBEB, State Agency for Mass Education and LGEA, provide training and mentoring to school support officers (SSOs).



- SSOs, who are resource persons selected from SUBEB and LGEA, provide training and mentoring to teachers at school level, and lead cluster meetings.
- Training is conducted once per term. Each training event is six days long, with a focus on literacy (three days), read-aloud stories (one day) and formative assessment (two days).

### Monitoring RANA

5. **Monitor RANA** and supporting teachers through regular mentoring and monitoring visits:
  - Master trainers and government officials from SUBEB and the State Ministry of Education monitor and quality-assure teacher training.
  - Pre- and post-training tests for teachers in training are conducted to assess training effectiveness.
  - SSOs visit schools and collect feedback on training quality from teachers.
  - Classroom-based teacher observations are conducted by SSOs and the results of these are discussed on a monthly basis at community-of-practice meetings.
6. **Learning assessment** is conducted to track learning progress. Data is collected monthly by teachers and SSOs using RANA's Early Grade Reading Assessment and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment tools. Learners are randomly sampled to participate in the assessment. Results are analysed monthly and used to inform the next term's training focus.

### Sustainability

- Certification developed with the Federal Ministry of Education, Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria, National Commission for Colleges of Education, SUBEBs and colleges of education should be further expanded to provide opportunities for professional development and career growth for RANA teachers.
- Given the success among students in achieving literacy skills by learning in their mother tongue, provision should be made in the national policy on education to adopt mother-tongue language instruction to teach foundational literacy and numeracy and to extend its use for literacy and numeracy teaching in the higher grades of primary school.



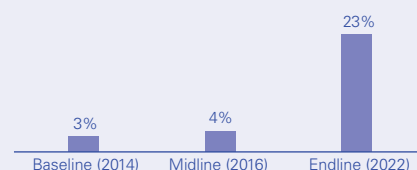
### Lessons learned

- **Monitoring costs reduced:** 43 per cent of RANA stakeholders at state, local government area, community and school levels reported that state governments are saving costs due to community engagement in monitoring of learning.
- **Working with communities:** The governments realized that to reach parents of pupils, they needed to work with community structures such as the SBMCs, community-based management committees and mothers' associations.
- **Community reading hubs reinforce learning at community and household level.**
- **Having access to learner workbooks facilitates learning:** The broader dissemination of workbooks, with reduced costs such as through recycling, reusing learner workbooks or using cost-effective printing materials, can increase access to learning materials in schools and communities.

### Key achievements

- An independent assessment of RANA showed incremental progress in basic Hausa literacy: the percentage of girls who achieved basic literacy skills in this language for Grade 2 improved from 2.78 per cent in 2014/15 and 4 per cent in 2016/17 to 22.8 per cent in 2022.<sup>7</sup>
- Children from RANA schools outperformed their counterparts from non-RANA schools in both literacy and numeracy, and teachers from RANA schools outperformed their counterparts from non-RANA schools.<sup>8</sup> Regarding literacy, pupils from RANA schools can read 50 words per minute whereas pupils from non-RANA schools can read only 32 words per minute.
- The combination of RANA and unconditional cash transfers (as part of GEP3) had a multiplier effect on girls' enrolment, retention and education completion.<sup>9</sup>
- Trends in the enrolment rates of pupils in RANA IQSs and public primary schools show an overall increase from 16,549 (2017) to 19,693 (2022) and suggest RANA is attractive to learners and their parents.
- RANA is an evidence-based and cost-effective approach to literacy and numeracy skills development, costing just US\$8 per child.
- RANA has been implemented in nine states since 2019.
- RANA is effective as a remote learning modality, as evidenced by its expansion during the COVID-19 pandemic to introduce literacy development through radio lessons that reached 2.6 million children.

Trend in girls in Katsina and Zamfara achieving basic literacy skills in Hausa<sup>7</sup>



### Endnotes

- 1 This calculation is based on the total number of out-of-school children at the primary and lower secondary levels globally.
- 2 Universal Basic Education Commission. (2019). Personnel Audit and Digest of Basic Education Statistics in Nigeria 2018.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2021). Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2021/22, Survey Findings Report. Abuja: NBS and UNICEF.
- 5 Ministry of Education. (2021). Annual School Census Report.
- 6 UNICEF. (2021). Education in Nigeria: Evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of SDG4.
- 7 CHIP Training & Consulting Ltd. (UK). (2022). RANA Implementation Assessment.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 United Nations Children's Fund. (2022). Girls' Education Project Evaluation Report.



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