



Case Study: School-based In-service Teacher Professional Development in conflict and crisis setting

Using Assessment Informed Instruction in math and literacy to strengthen learner understanding

Context

Justice Rising's uses a light-touch structured pedagogy, using teacher **Chalkboard Guides** to support the delivery of FLN in protracted conflict and crisis settings, where traditional structured pedagogy models are logistically challenging to implement. They link key instructional strategies with familiar instructional practices, targeting the average teacher to strengthen quality and consistency of instruction.

Guides used

In an initial small-scale pilot, Justice Rising monitored take-up of key instructional strategies embedded in the Chalkboard Guides over time and found that assessment-informed instruction had lower take-up. So, they decided to use the SoT HITS guides for *Assessment-Informed Instruction in Numeracy and Literacy*.

Format

Key content from the HITS guides was adapted into the format of the teacher support material normally used by Justice rising, in the form of guides (called "SERNAFOR plans") used for weekly school-based training sessions that have been instituted by the government.

Audience

Three schools were selected for the trial. One *Established* school, located in a relatively stable area and with a director that had been in place for 5 years; one *new director* school, also located in relatively stable area, but with a new director who had in place for less than 3 years and one *displaced* school, a one of the Justice Rising project schools that has had to relocate due to conflict in the area in which it was originally located.

Guide sections used

Some aspects of the HITS guides were used extensively, while others were not. The Justice Rising team drew heavily on the tables of exemplar strategies. The team used only the tier 1 strategies for assessment-informed instruction, though, since they felt their teachers would not be ready to discuss them based on classroom observations and school visit data over the last academic year.

Objectives

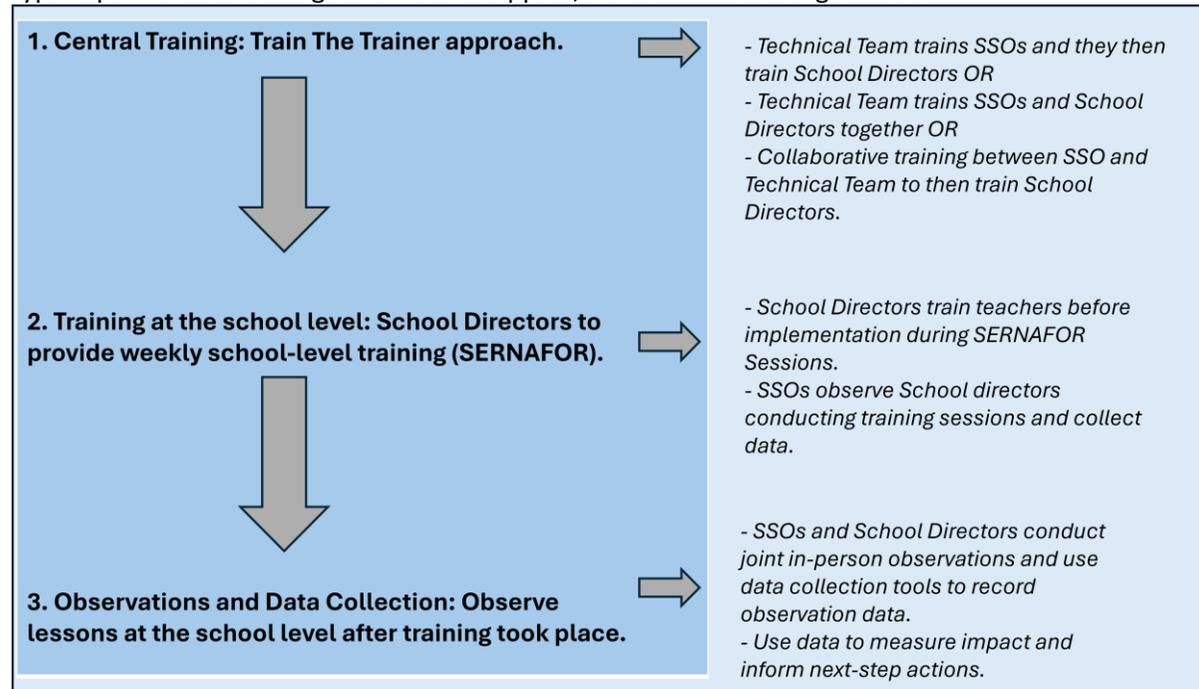
The objective of the training based on the HITS guides for assessment-informed instruction, which was carried out using the refined series of SERNAFOR plans, was to improve the quality teaching, specifically in relation to assessment informed instruction in mathematics and literacy lessons in the Justice Rising project schools.

Design

The Justice Rising team drafted four new SERNAFOR plans, drawing on the HITS guides, and then held a codesign meeting with target schools before finalizing them. These four new SERNAFOR plans, focused on assessment-informed instruction, included two for literacy and two for mathematics. The Justice Rising team found the two RTI HITS guides on Assessment-Informed Instruction easy to use and were able to develop their training material even though the experience level of the developers from their team varied.

Implementation

Once the HITS guide content was integrated into the SERNAFOR plans, Justice Rising followed its typical process for training and teacher support, as shown in the diagram below.



Classroom observations, using a timed-interval methodology, showed that assessment related activities were visible. The following table shows the type of activities recorded, with answering questions posed by the teacher being the most highly observed of the assessment-related learning activities on the part of the students during the observed lessons.

| 4. Q - What are the students doing at this moment? | First Obs. | Second Obs. | Third Obs. | Fourth Obs. | Overall | Overall percentages |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Actively participate in teacher demonstrations/explanation | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 8% |
| Answer questions posed by the teacher/peers | 12 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 36 | 30% |
| Try a practical example of the concepts on the board/in exercise books | 4 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 18 | 15% |
| Student/teacher interaction related to error – student speaks | 1 | | 2 | 2 | 5 | 4% |
| | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 120 | 100% |

User Experience

The teachers who were trained were very positive about the experience. Some comments they made about what they had learned were:

- We liked it because when the student commits the error and I correct him individually, he doesn't forget and . . . he won't commit the error again.
- It helps a lot for students to have the courage to answer even if it is the wrong answer, they know that we will always encourage them and correct them.
- It gives us the sincerity that the whole class has assimilated the material so there will be no children who have these errors. And then it gives me the taste and the courage to help children who seem weak.
- The main lesson that I have just learned during these two SERNAFOR lessons is - that we must follow the students who incorrectly answered the questions asked by the teacher and above all do remediation.

Another teacher mentioned the value of peers supporting each other in a common language:

- The students help each other by grouping together so that they understand each other and explain themselves in their languages which they understand either in Kiswahili in Kinande, in Kihunde, etc.

Finally, on how to teach for understanding a teacher responded

- I must ask questions that are clear, give them time to think and work, listen attentively, correct them with love, give them positive reinforcement.