

The Liberia Family Literacy Initiative 2018-2019 Adult Literacy Program

David J. Rosen, Ed.D., djrosen@newsomeassociates.com

Member, Friends of Liberia Education Working Group

The Liberia Family Literacy Initiative is sponsored by three partnering organizations

- HIPPY International
- Friends of Liberia <https://fol.org/>
 - U.S. - based non-for-profit organization
 - Made up of former Peace Corps Volunteers and others who have lived in Liberia,
 - Mission: to positively affect Liberia and Liberians by funding educational, social, economic and humanitarian programs
- We-Care Foundation, a local NGO in Liberia that operates the Family Literacy Initiative and other education programs

Two components of the Family Literacy Initiative (FLI)

- Home Visitor Program based on the HIPPIY Curriculum and HIPPIY model
- Adult Literacy Program (ALP)

How the Adult Literacy Program (ALP) came about

- Oral survey by staff of the We-Care Foundation of parent/caregiver participants in the home visitor program about their need for adult literacy classes.
 - Nearly 60% of respondents said that they had an English literacy need, and would enroll in those classes if they were available
- We made clear that attending these classes was not required to participate in the Family Literacy Initiative
- We also decided to contextualize the adult literacy classes as much as possible to the HIPPY first year curriculum, and to the emerging needs for reading and writing that participants requested

ALP Evaluation

- We used a literacy (Reading only, not writing) assessment called the Out-of-School Youth Literacy Assessment (OLA) developed for Liberia by Dr. John Comings and Dr. John Strucker specifically for a Liberia out-of-school youth education program sponsored by the U.S.-based Education Development Center (EDC), for its Advancing Youth program in Liberia
- We pre- and post-tested participants using an EDC-approved adapted version of the OLA, hiring an independent evaluation consultant in Liberia, Benjamin Freeman.

Evaluation CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Conclusion 1:** The Adult Literacy Program has demonstrated positive learning gains. With increases across all tasks, adult learners who participated in the program benefited by improving their literacy skills based on matched baseline and endline OLA scores
- **Recommendation 1:** Program administrators should ensure that any participant who enrolls after the start of the program is pretested with the OLA.
- **Conclusion 2:** With 12 of 22 replacements necessary in the endline sample, it is clear there was a retention problem.
- **Recommendation 2:** Conduct a qualitative study that includes focus groups and/or interviews of families of dropouts to determine how to mitigate the reasons for withdrawal and promote retention. A cost-effective way could be to have program supervisors poll adult learners who dropped out of the program in 2018-2019 and summarize the findings.
- **Conclusion 3:** Given the OLA assessment is an unfamiliar assessment instrument for many assessors, it is important to ensure that all future assessors are thoroughly trained.
- **Recommendation 3:** Assessors should have no relationship to the program beneficiaries in these communities.