

Dramatically Transforming the Educational System in Kwara State Through KwaraLEARN



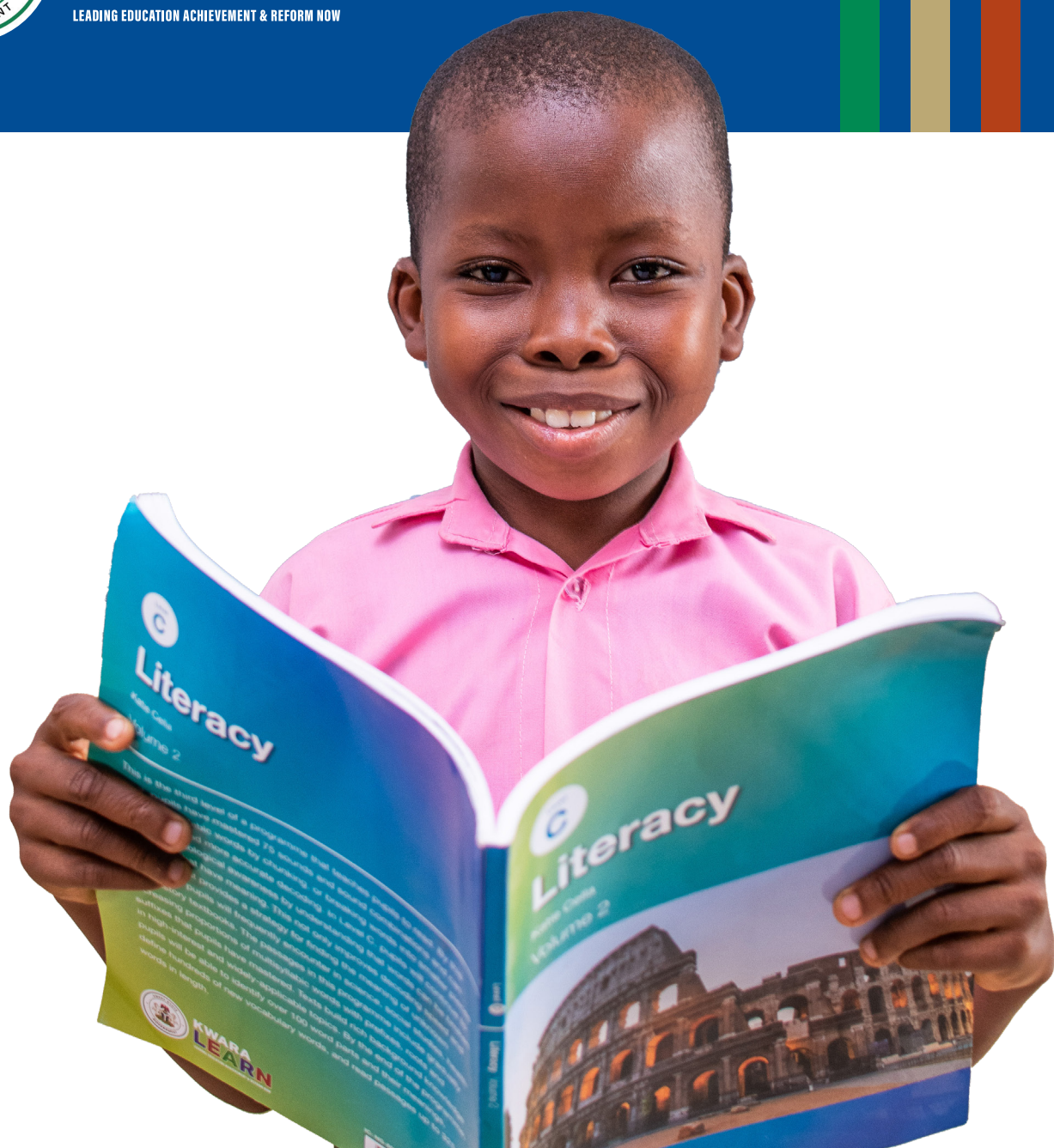
**KWARA
LEARN**
LEADING EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT & REFORM NOW



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Executive Summary



Before Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq launched the KwaraLEARN programme, the state of education was severely challenged. For instance:

- The average Primary 6 pupil could only read at the literacy skill level of a Primary 2 pupil.
- 50% of middle-basic class pupils (Primary 4 - 6) could not solve a simple addition problem like '56+17=73'



In November 2021, Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq launched the KwaraLEARN programme to transform government Primary schools across the entire state through a data-driven, instructional learning and 360-degree support system for the schools, teachers and pupils.



Today, KwaraLEARN programme is transforming education across 872 schools, empowering over 4,000 teachers with digital skills and teaching devices, and impacting the lives of over 120,000 children through transformational learning outcomes.

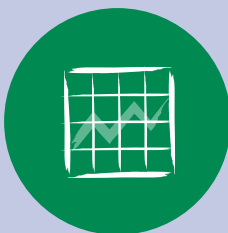


After the first 10 weeks of the programme, the percentage of pupils who could not read at all (non-readers) was reduced by 33% - especially in previously understaffed schools.



After 43 weeks, the programme achieved dramatic gains in reading fluency and numeracy:

- A metric akin to learning deprivation has dropped by almost 25%, making Kwara State closely resemble middle-income countries like Peru or Jordan.
- Primary 4 students are now reading as fluently as Primary 5 students before the programme.
- Numeracy skills also improved sharply: for example, Primary 2 pupils in KwaraLEARN can now perform simple subtraction operation problems in the form of '46-21=25' at a better rate than Primary 5 pupils before the programme.
- Across most numeracy sub-skills, KwaraLEARN pupils are doing better than their peers one grade ahead before the programme.



Enrolment in the schools that have been served since the start of the programme has increased by 30% since May 2022.



The KwaraLEARN programme has also improved the quality and quantity of instructional time that pupils receive through stronger observed pedagogical practices, higher lesson delivery rates and increased teacher attendance.

The KwaraLEARN Programme

KwaraLEARN is a core education programme developed by the Government of Kwara State to deliver dramatic improvements to learning outcomes in public schools for all children across the state. KwaraLEARN is **transforming government Primary schools** into powerful public schools using an **innovative technology-** and **data-driven platform**, coupled with **high-quality learning materials**, **effective training and ongoing coaching** for teachers and school leaders, and **technology-enabled support teams** to create **360-degree support** for learning outcomes.

“

It is a welcome development.

Pupils have improved tremendously.”

Head Teacher S, Baruten

The first day of class for the KwaraLEARN programme was in May 2022, at the start of the third term for the 2021-22 school year. It began serving 363 schools across four local government areas, training nearly 1,800 teachers and reaching over 43,000 pupils. As of January 2023, **the KwaraLEARN programme had already expanded to serve 872 schools, 4,184 teachers, and over 120,000 pupils in Primary 1– 6.** The scale of the programme speaks to the bold steps taken by the Government of Kwara State under the leadership of His Excellency AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq to transform education as an engine for the economic well-being of the state and its inhabitants.





A Dire Educational Landscape Before KwaraLEARN

Prior to the programme's inception, pupils in would-be KwaraLEARN schools displayed critically low levels across key foundational learning skills. For example, **the median Primary 2 pupil could not read a single word**, and the median Primary 5 pupil could read less than one word every four seconds. Given that mastery of core literacy skills by Primary 3 is paramount to ensuring pupils' success throughout their academic careers, this lack of proficiency placed most children in the state off-track from engaging with the written materials they need to learn in all subjects. It is perhaps not surprising then, that **the average pupil in Kwara State's government schools displayed literacy skills that were four grades behind where they should have been by the end of Primary school**. Similarly, before the programme, pupils demonstrated low performance in numeracy as well: for instance, **nearly one-half of Primary 3 pupils could not correctly solve a simple subtraction problem in the form of 55-14**. Even among those who could solve this problem in operational form, the vast majority of pupils lacked the conceptual mastery and literacy proficiency to translate this skill to real-life situations. For example, only **one-quarter of Primary 5 pupils could correctly solve a word problem requiring two-digit subtraction with carrying, even though 38% of them could solve a similar maths problem without the textual context**. These pupils were therefore facing serious challenges to use and apply their limited numeracy skills both in and out of school. Furthermore, especially considering the fact that **pupils possessed only a fraction of the conceptual proficiency seen in other contexts**, pupils in would-be KwaraLEARN schools before the programme were not poised to contribute to the economic development of the state, clearly evidencing the need for a holistic and transformative approach to education quality.

A Deep, System-Wide, Pupil-Centred Transformation

The KwaraLEARN programme is delivering significantly higher learning outcomes across the state

The KwaraLEARN programme is designed to yield rapid and lasting learning outcomes at scale, and as such, the benefits of the programme started showing shortly after its initial implementation. After its first school term — only 10 instructional weeks — rigorous classroom observations using an adaptation of the World Bank’s TEACH tool revealed that teachers in the KwaraLEARN programme were already displaying stronger pedagogical skills than teachers outside of the programme. Some of the skills that **KwaraLEARN teachers excelled at after only 10 weeks of instruction include fostering a supportive learning environment, facilitating daily lessons, encouraging critical thinking, and assessing pupil performance and addressing their corresponding needs.**



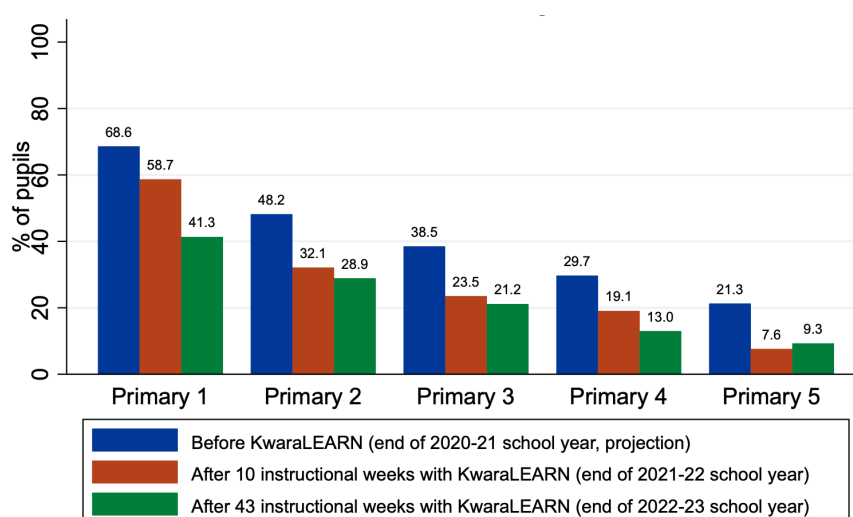
I feel excited to come to school everyday because I like the way our teachers are teaching during each lesson.

Pupil L, Ilorin West

Importantly, even after this short period, the KwaraLEARN programme started to yield positive outcomes in learning levels. The proportion of non-readers decreased at a much faster rate than in non-KwaraLEARN schools over the same period. During these 10 weeks, the proportion of non-readers decreased by 17 percentage points more rapidly than in comparison schools, **resulting in a one-third reduction in the number of non-readers.** This decrease in non-readers was 39% faster than the decrease among non-KwaraLEARN schools. This effect was especially pronounced among Progressive schools; for example, the programme

led schools to reduce the percentage of Primary 1 pupils who were non-readers from 86% to 60% in only 10 weeks. Such an improvement is important in itself due to the benefits for the pupils who are no longer non-readers, but it is also vital as **it reduces the disparity in reading levels among pupils in the same classroom, allowing for more efficient and better-targeted instruction.**

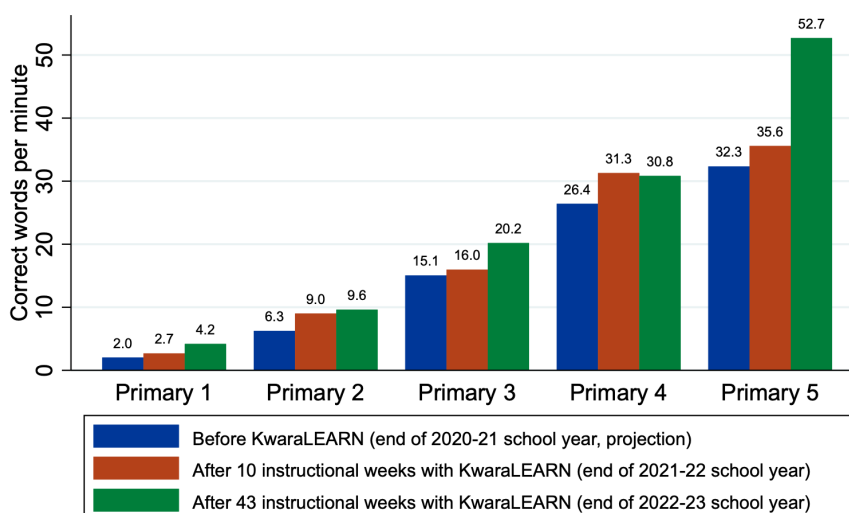
Reading Proficiency Average Level: Share of Pupils Who Are Non-Readers
Grade 2 Passage



At the end of the 2022-23 school year, after 43 weeks of instruction for the first cohort of schools that joined the KwaraLEARN programme, learning gains were even more pronounced. On average, across Primary 5, pupils were reading 20 correct words per minute more fluently than before the programme, which is an **effect that is larger than 95% of all studied education interventions in low- and middle-income countries.**¹ Such progress has tangible benefits for pupils: for example, **Primary 4 pupils are now reading at a similar level as Primary 5 pupils before the KwaraLEARN programme.** In schools operating under the “Primary” model, non-readers in Primary 1 are now as rare as non-readers in Primary 2 before the programme. In schools under the Progressive model, **there are now 15 percentage points fewer non-readers in Primary 1 than there were in Primary 5 before the programme.**

¹ This effect size corresponds to 0.59 standard deviations across the full sample for Cohort 1.

Reading Fluency Average Level Grade 2 Passage



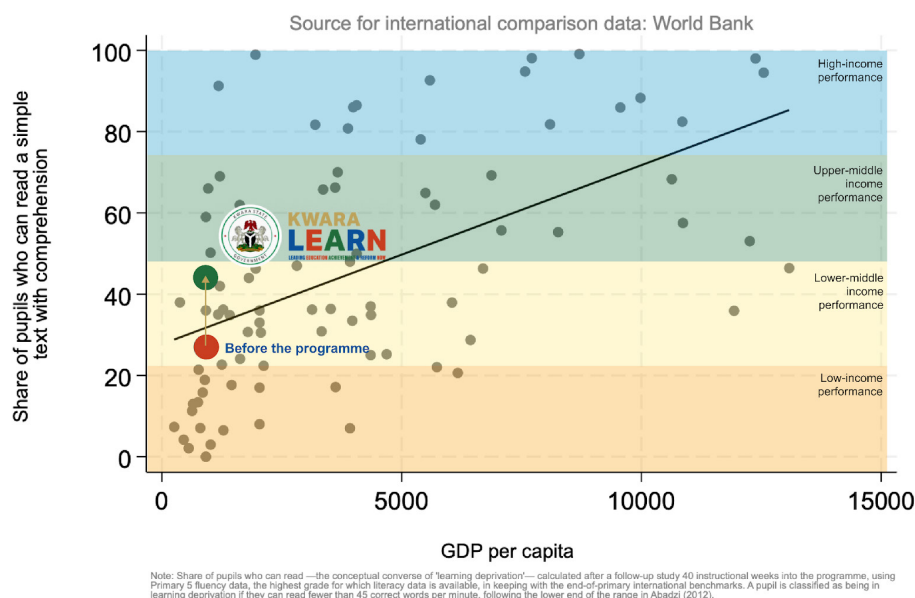
The learning gains in foundational literacy achieved through the KwaraLEARN programme are substantial, both in terms of absolute effects and relative to other interventions in similar contexts. Importantly, these gains also translate into meaningful and tangible effects on policy-relevant metrics, such as “learning deprivation.” Learning deprivation is defined as the proportion of children who fall below the minimum proficiency level, as outlined by the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning. By aligning learning deprivation metrics with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.1.1.b, which measures the proportion of children unable to read a simple passage with comprehension by the end of Primary school, one can further contextualise these gains. Using this metric, **schools in the KwaraLEARN programme experienced a reduction in learning deprivation from 73.4% to 56.3% in just 43 instructional weeks** — effectively reducing this metric by a quarter. This change means that these schools are **now performing more like upper-middle-income countries such as Jordan or Peru and less like lower-middle-income countries like Nicaragua, Benin or Comoros.**

“

KwaraLEARN is impressive and pupils learn in a better way and teacher and pupil are punctual to school now.”

Head Teacher B, Offa

Reading Skills in KwaraLEARN After 43 Weeks of Instruction Compared to Other Low- and Middle-Income Countries

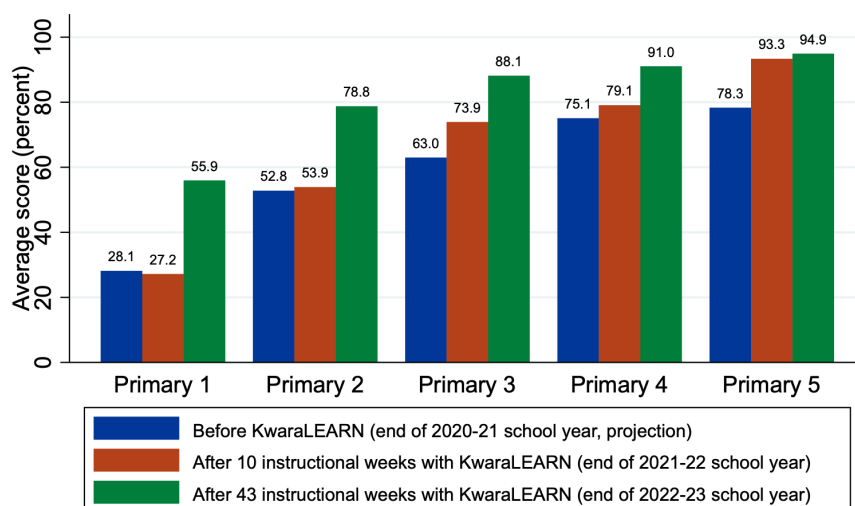


Over the course of its first 43 weeks of instruction, the KwaraLEARN programme has also achieved significant gains in numeracy outcomes. Similar to literacy, **these gains represent stronger progress than in over 19 out of every 20 education interventions studied in low- and middle-income countries.**² More concretely, effect sizes of this magnitude mean that, for instance, **Primary 2 pupils in the KwaraLEARN programme can now correctly perform subtraction exercises at a higher rate than Primary 5 pupils before the programme.** Similarly, across most grades and schools, **pupils are performing division problems at similar levels as their counterparts one grade ahead before the programme.**

² This effect size corresponds to 0.6 standard deviations across the full sample for Cohort 1.

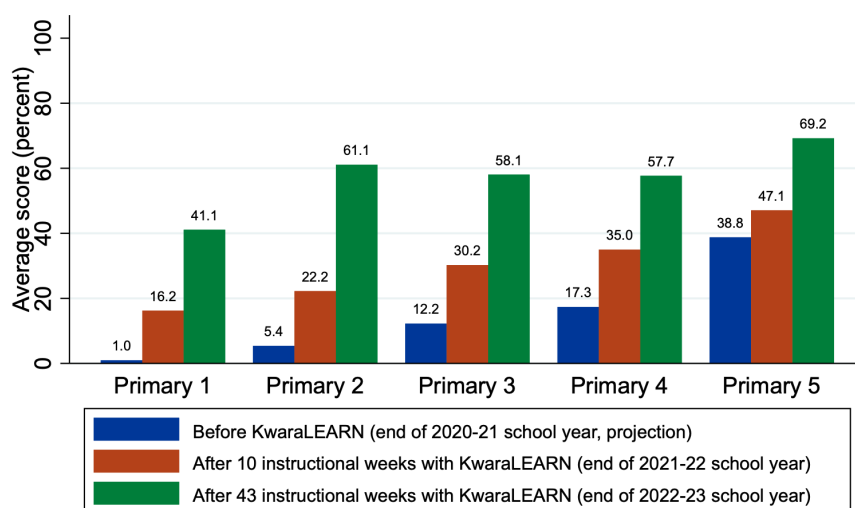
Share of Pupils in KwaraLEARN Schools Who Can Perform Subtraction Without Borrowing (46-21)

Primary Schools



Share of Pupils in KwaraLEARN Schools Who Can Perform Subtraction Without Borrowing (46-21)

Progressive Schools



KwaraLEARN is improving the return on education investment in the state through better and more instructional time, and higher enrolment numbers

The improvements in educational quality are also evident for parents and teachers alike, which, in turn, has started to translate into higher enrolment numbers. For example, among the first cohort of schools that joined the KwaraLEARN programme, enrolment in Primary 1-5 has increased from approximately 43,000 pupils by the end of the 2021-22 school year to over 56,000 by the end of the following school year. **In other words, in these schools, enrolment has increased by 30% over the course of four school terms.** In this sense, it is evident that the KwaraLEARN programme is not only providing higher quality education but also enabling more children to benefit from it.



The interaction between the teachers, the pupils and the parents has been positive and that has increased the enrolment of more pupils.

Teacher F, Baruten

The increased teacher accountability enabled by the technological platform of the KwaraLEARN programme has led to a marked decrease in teacher absenteeism across the system. **The share of students without a teacher in school due to teacher absenteeism has been cut in half since the start of the programme, dropping from 13% to 6%.** Furthermore, as teachers become more comfortable with the programme and see its benefits on their own pupils' learning outcomes, it has gained greater acceptance across the board. For example, **the share of lessons delivered to a satisfactory degree of completion has also increased significantly, rising from 57% to 74% since the programme's inception.** This increase has been particularly noticeable in Progressive schools —those schools that tend to have the most serious staffing problems. More specifically, **lesson completion in Progressive schools has nearly doubled since the beginning of the**

programme, increasing from 37% during its first three weeks to 67% during the last weeks of the 2023-23 school year.

The increases in teacher attendance, quality of instruction, and lesson delivery rates mean that pupils in the KwaraLEARN programme are now receiving significantly more and better instruction than before. Therefore, the stronger accountability mechanisms and quality of the support that teachers receive has augmented the overall return on the Kwara State Government's existing investment into the educational system.



Math 11/20/25

cs 2

$2 \overline{)5}$

$4 \overline{)7} 28$

$8 \times 4 =$

$9 \times 4 =$

$7 \times 4 =$

$4 \times 3 =$

$9 \times 8 \overline{)72}$

	wet	dry	To
Can	15	10	3
Dog	11	10	3
Total	26	20	6

ABDULLAHI

Punctual & organised

Respect for self

Respect for other

For School

Pupils

Class

Alabi

Ambas

Line

Back in

A/ro

Nasir





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