

‘The role of parent facilitators in Village Child Reading Clubs’ – improving student learning outcomes in primary schools in rural Vietnam - an initiative from World Vision Vietnam.

Brief introduction of WVV Basic Primary Education Project

From 2010, World Vision International has shifted its focus to Child Well Being Outcomes in which Education Quality, especially children’s learning outcomes is a big goal. Vietnam’s Education Development Strategy 2009-2020- Draft 14 also emphasizes the goal of access to and completion of basic education for all school age children up to 2020.

In this context, World Vision Vietnam has reviewed its Basic Primary Education project and revised its objective accordingly with the aim of improving access to and education quality for the most vulnerable children in their programs.

The main activities of this primary education project includes: a) Providing in-service training on Active Learning Method, Inclusive Education for disabled children, Teaching Vietnamese Language as second Language for teachers; b) Equipping schools with rich classroom resources; c) Strengthening community involvement in education and support Parent-Teacher Committee (PTC) to establish and facilitate Village Child Reading clubs.

The role of Parent facilitators/volunteers in Village Child Reading Clubs

1. Who are parent facilitators/Volunteers?

They are parents having children at primary school age. They are grandmothers, grandfathers of the children in their villages. They could be retired people. They could read and write. They are willingly committed to working with “*the Village child reading clubs*” to help children read to learn better at schools and learn to read as independent readers.

2. Why is their role important?

The parent volunteers live in the community, and are whom who care most about their children’s education. They could be in contact with schools and teachers easily. For a long term, the parent volunteers stay with the children and community while the project may not.

Through these Village Child Reading clubs, parent volunteers could improve collaboration between parents and schools for better education of children and justify that parents could do more for education rather than paying their children’s school fees.

Parent volunteers also could contact with local authority in many village meetings to back parents on advocating for the right for education for every child.

3. What is a Village Child Reading club?

A group of students aged 6-11, living in the same village, facilitated by the parent facilitators, under parent-teacher committee. These children meet each other once every two weeks to read and be read stories that convey life values and participate in games for improving reading skills.

4. How is a Village Child Reading club established?

Village Child Reading clubs are under the management of Parent- teacher committees (PTC). So, PTCs have a number of specific activities to establish these clubs: a) PTC work with local authority and schools and parents to confirm needs for Village child reading clubs. b) PTC select place for reading sessions. c) PTC agree on parent facilitators and trainings for them. d) PTC work with parent facilitators to review their work quarterly, including selecting value-based stories e) PTC work with parent facilitators to agree on key activities and methods for these reading sessions. f) PTC manage the book cabinet of these clubs.

5. How do parent volunteers facilitate a reading session?

“Pre-reading” activities:

Parent facilitators organize warm up games before reading. These games support children to play while learning alphabets, words, sentences, paragraphs and their other skills such as drawing, cutting, pasting, working in team.

“While reading” activities:

Parent facilitators read a value-based story to children and facilitate their reading in groups and individually. After that, they organize activities that help children understand the story. These activities could be asking children questions, asking children to match content with pictures, letting children role-play the story, ...

“Post reading” activities:

Parent facilitators facilitate the children’s take-away lesson session which shows children’s viewpoints about the lessons conveyed in the stories. These activities could be drawing and decorating a slogan, writing a different endings for the story, telling the characters children love, or simply just choosing another title for the story.

6. *How are the Children's reading skills evaluated ?*

To evaluate the reading skills of the children, including the children participating in the Village Child Reading clubs, World Vision Vietnam uses the Functional Literacy Assessment Tool (FLAT). The level of functional literacy has been measured in 2013 ranges from 50% to 90% across 35 program districts. In addition to quantitative results, annual interviews with parent facilitators and teachers revealed that the children at these clubs have really improved their reading skills. Ms. Thanh, facilitator of Duan Kinh club shared: "Many children at Grade 2-3 could read louder and clearer while children at higher grades such as Grade 4-5 could express characters' emotion well and play characters' roles creatively." Ms. Huong, facilitator of Kim Giao club said: "Children learn about love, unity, respect, environment protection from the stories they read every week. They know to work in team well." Ms. Be, facilitator of Tra Loc said: "The children are excited with these reading sessions, they come early and really enjoy the stories. Therefore, they could retell the story by themselves actively. For me, these clubs are really useful for children, especially during summer holidays to keep children away from bad activities."

Some lessons learnt from the Clubs Vai trò hướng dẫn của phụ huynh trong các "Câu Lạc Bộ đọc sách trẻ em thôn bản"

a) As this initiative improves participation from parents for education activities, trainings for them to work effectively with children are essential. b) There should be strategy to replace parents who stop facilitating these clubs when their children go to secondary schools. c) Funding for books and cabinets and stationeries should be guaranteed by the parent-teacher committees through their fund-raising activities annually.