



**Liberia Empowerment Through Attendance, Reading, and Nutrition
(LEARN II)**

Midterm Evaluation

7/1/2024

Liberia Empowerment Through Attendance, Reading, and Nutrition (LEARN II) Midline Report

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Acronym List

AIR	American Institutes for Research
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CART	Center for Action Research and Training
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DEO	District Education Officer
DDS	Dietary Diversity Score
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IRB	Institutional Review Board
IRR	Inter-rater Reliability
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices
KII	Key Informant Interview
LBRA	Literacy Boost Reading Assessment
LEARN	Liberia Empowerment Through Attendance, Reading, and Nutrition
LRP	Local and Regional Procurement
MDE	Minimum Detectable Effect
MGD	McGovern-Dole
MOE	Ministry of Education
PTA	Parent–Teacher Association
RCT	Randomized Controlled Trial
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
SC	Save the Children
SD	Standard Deviation
SG	School Garden
SHC	School Health Club
SHN	School Health and Nutrition
SMP	School Meal Provider

SMS	Short Message Service
SRGBV	School-Related Gender-Based Violence
STAR	Students and communities Appreciate and Reward
UL-PIRE	University of Liberia Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USC	United States Food Commodities
USD	United States Dollar
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government Commodities
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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Executive Summary

Project Background and Purpose

Liberia Empowerment Through Attendance, Reading, and Nutrition (LEARN) II is a 5-year program (2021–2026) funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition program (McGovern-Dole). Save the Children is leading the implementation of LEARN II in partnership with Mercy Corps, and government partners, including the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Health. LEARN II is a follow-on to the LEARN project, a 5-year project completed in September 2022.¹ LEARN II builds and expands on the work done during LEARN across the same four counties: Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Rivercess, and River Gee.² In addition to LEARN's base package of school feeding services and school health clubs (SHCs),³ LEARN II expands the use of the literacy boost, and school garden activities. Additionally, LEARN II introduces the use of local and regional procurement (LRP) commodities to complement those donated by USDA. LEARN II aims to serve 176,958 direct beneficiaries, including 85,129 pre-primary and primary school children in 234 schools.

LEARN II program activities are designed to achieve USDA's two strategic objectives: (a) improve the literacy of school-age children by enhancing the quality of instruction and increasing student attentiveness and attendance through provision of school meals procured, both from U.S. government (USG) commodities and from local communities and (b) increase the use of health and dietary practices by enhancing knowledge of health and hygiene best practices, upgrading sanitation facilities, and improving food safety and storage systems.

Evaluation Methodology

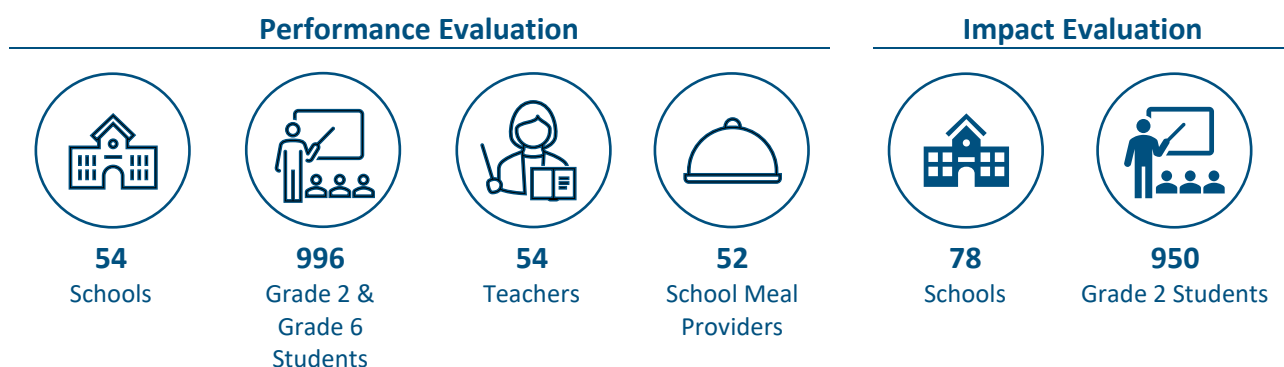
Save the Children selected the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) to design and conduct the project and impact evaluations of the LEARN II project from 2022 to 2026. The midterm evaluation, which is the focus of this report, will assess the progress of LEARN II implementation, examine the relevance, impact, and early effectiveness of the interventions, determine whether the project is on track to meet its objectives, and document lessons learned and make recommendations. Below is a snapshot of our evaluation approach for the midterm evaluation:

¹ LEARN aimed to reach 132,780 direct beneficiaries, 60,164 of whom (students) were expected to receive meals through school feeding activities in 220 schools.

² Mercy Corps implements LEARN II in Grand Bassa and Rivercess counties and SC implements in Grand Gedeh and River Gee counties.

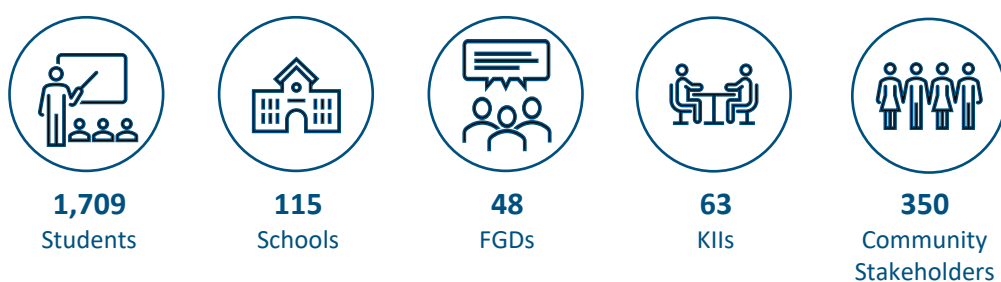
³ School health champions (SHNs) are a component of the SHCs.

Sampling. A sample of 54 schools in which data were collected from Grade 2 and Grade 6 students, teachers, and school meal providers (SMPs) for the performance evaluation; and a sample of 78 schools in which data were collected from Grade 2 students for the impact evaluation.



Methodology. A mixed methods approach for a performance evaluation to measure LEARN II progress over time; and a randomized controlled trial (RCT) for an impact evaluation to assess the causal effect of the LRP component of LEARN II interventions on student dietary diversity, cultural appropriateness and timeliness of school meals, health and nutrition outcomes, and literacy outcomes.

Data Sources. Primary quantitative data from 1,709 students, 54 teachers, and 52 school meal providers; qualitative data from 394 students, caregivers, teachers, principals, cooks, storekeepers, community mobilizers, and district education officers (DEOs) across 12 school communities (48 focus group discussions and 46 local-level key informant interviews); two national and Save the Children Mercy Corps staff members; and two national Government of Liberia staff members.



Analysis. A pre–post comparison of baseline (2022) and midterm (2024) values across all four counties, triangulating the survey data with qualitative interviews for the project evaluation, and an assessment to capture changes in the literacy of school-age children and the health and nutrition knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) of students, teachers, and school meal providers. A causal analysis of the impact of the LRP component using ordinary least squares regression for the RCT, while controlling for baseline school level variables.

Findings and Conclusions

Strategic Objective 1: Improved Literacy of School-Age Children

Literacy

- **Reading outcomes did not improve, and in some cases, were significantly lower at midterm.** Less than half of students (47%) showed a good grasp of letter knowledge, defined as being able to identify at least 90% of the letters in the alphabet. While a larger share of students viewed themselves as a good reader (73%), just 2% could read with comprehension, and only 12% of the students in the sample were classified as readers. Of those classified as readers, reading comprehension declined by 41 percentage points compared to baseline. For non-readers, listening comprehension dropped from 13% to 8%.
- **Gender gap in early literacy skills improved.** The gender gap in basic literacy skills from baseline to midterm declined, with around half of both boys and girls being able to identify letters proficiently at midterm, relative to 51% of boys and 39% of girls at baseline.
- **Students in treatment schools had better reading and comprehension than in comparison schools.** Students in treatment schools were 19 percentage points more likely to read five words of a passage in 30 seconds and answer 80% of comprehension questions correctly than students in comparison schools.
- **There has been less emphasis on literacy interventions across communities.** Qualitative data find late supply of classroom books, few reading clubs, and little work with parents and community members to provide at-home literacy support to students.
- **Students' home literacy environments fell in some areas.** Over half of the students reported being helped with their studies by someone at home (70%); however, there was a decline in students reporting being read to by someone (54%), and only 25% of students said someone at home told them a story. There were regional differences: Rivercess, which had the lowest home engagement at baseline, saw significant improvements in someone reading to the student at home, helping with studies, and seeing someone reading at home. Alternatively, River Gee, which had the highest parental engagement at baseline, saw the largest decline (38 percentage points) in reading to the student at home. Qualitative data suggest a lack of resources for students outside of school, and few parents elaborated on ways they could support their child's learning unless they had prior literacy skills or financial means to hire a tutor.
- **Students lack readily available, age-appropriate, non-school books to read at home.** Fewer students (29%) reported having any storybooks or comic books at home compared to baseline. Students in Grand Gedeh were 14 percentage points less likely to report reading books other than textbooks outside of school.
- **Most students (87%) cited learning new things or enjoying lessons as a reason they enjoy coming to school at midterm.** There was also a 16 percentage points increase in students agreeing that they felt valued and respected at school. But fewer students reported liking their teacher compared to baseline. The qualitative data support this finding; students revealed high expectations about what they could achieve in the future provided they were able to continue their schooling. The most cited dislikes were related to physical or mental abuse by other students (29%) or by teachers (26%).
- **Fewer students have access to non-textbook reading materials in schools.** More than half of students (54%) reported not having any access to reading materials that were not textbooks. Of those that did have access, only 23% reported the ability to take books home for free and 23% reported not being able to take books off school property. Additionally, significantly fewer students in Grand Gedeh reported reading books other than textbooks outside of school compared to baseline.

Strategic Objective 2: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices

Health and Hygiene Knowledge and Practices

- **In some counties, students have improved handwashing knowledge, but their practices have declined.** Overall, handwashing knowledge increased by 4 percentage points on average. At the county level, students' knowledge increased by 17 percentage points in Grand Gedeh, and by 21 percentage points in River Gee. However, students' handwashing knowledge dropped in Grand Bassa from 22% to 11% at midterm. Additionally, fewer students reported washing their hands the previous day, and only 12% did so at each of the three critical moments.
- **Nutritional knowledge remains low among students and teachers at midterm.** Just 3% of students reported knowing what a balanced diet is, and fewer than 1% could prove they knew. However, Grade 6 students showed improvement in nutritional knowledge. Fewer teachers could successfully cite components of a nutritious meal at midterm, a 16 percentage point drop from baseline. Further, teachers' knowledge of the three food groups for a nutritious meal and knowledge of foods that help children grow dropped across all indicators at midterm.
- **There were mixed results with respect to school meal providers' (SMPs) knowledge and practices at midterm relative to baseline.** All SMPs recognized the importance of basic food preparation practices such as wearing clean clothes when preparing meals (94%) and maintaining a clean cooking space (96%). SMPs also expressed strong support for practices that reduce food contamination, reinforcing the importance of ensuring flies do not touch prepared food (94%); and storing meat and cooked food in a clean place (96%). However, SMPs were 48 percentage points less likely to wash their hands after handling raw meat, and 22 percentage points less likely to follow recommended practices on preparing raw meat infected with pests. Additionally, while most (75%) SMPs felt very confident in their ability to prepare healthy and nutritious meals, only 31% provided school meals that reflected recommended guidelines.
- **School meals are overall very popular.** All qualitative stakeholders said the meals contributed to increased attendance and improved attention at school.
- **More students report eating three meals each school day, while fewer do so on non-school days.** A key success of the project was that more than half of students (64%) reported eating three meals per day, a significant 31 percentage point increase from baseline. Less than a quarter of students (19%) reported the same on non-school days, a 6 percentage point decline from baseline. However, students in treatment schools were significantly less likely to report consuming three meals each day than those in comparison schools.
- **A key success was that students' meals have more dietary diversity and students are more knowledgeable about foods that protect from disease.** Students' meals included more dietary diversity at midterm, increasing by 17 percentage points from baseline, and were more likely to add diversity to their diet during dinner. Students in treatment schools were significantly more likely to name at least one food that protects from diseases, such as green leafy vegetables, than students in comparison schools. Girls in treatment schools also showed significant positive effects on dietary diversity relative to boys. Qualitative data show improvement in schools' ability to supplement school meals with produce from their own gardens. They also noted new relationships with the community to supplement food from their gardens.
- **Students in treatment schools were less likely to report that school meals appeared appetizing.** Students in treatment schools were 32 percentage points less likely to view school meals as "good" or "very good" compared to students in comparison schools. This finding is complemented by student FGDs that noted children did not enjoy meals prepared with Power Gari, usually because Power Gari was said to be often spoiled. Students in treatment schools were also less likely to report that school meals are similar/identical to what they eat at home. Compared to students in comparison schools, students in treatment groups were 39 percentage points less likely to report consuming school meals that were like those eaten at home.
- **SHCs and parent-teacher associations (PTAs) are active and effective, but they pay little to no attention to nutrition.** Qualitative data show that most PTAs take ownership of their tasks within school communities, a notable change from baseline. There is increased commitment and activity, especially working on school garden initiatives, supplying schools with food or infrastructure/materials donations, compensating volunteer or poorly paid teachers, and monitoring teacher and student attendance. However, despite nutrition being part of SHN champion and SHC activities, SHCs and PTAs do not prioritize nutrition.
- **School gardens are becoming more successful and common across LEARN communities.** Qualitative data showed that gardens are not only helpful but have the potential to contribute to sustained school feeding activities at the end of LEARN II.

Strategic Objective 2: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices

School-Related Gender-Based Violence and Gender Norms

- **Teachers and students share a perception that girls have a more positive experience at school but differed in other views.** Both teachers and students were more likely to say that girls received more positive comments from teachers', while boys received the bulk of the negative comments and insults. A larger share of teachers felt that it was equally important for both boys and girls to attend school and felt that they answered students' questions equally. Teachers also showed some improvement in their view of students' gender roles, with a larger share believing both genders should be responsible for school chores and farm work. Students were more likely to assign more traditional gender roles, with most students reporting that girls should help with housework and boys should help with farm work.
- **Teachers were more aware of school rules than students.** All teachers were aware of the rules intended to govern their interaction with students (98%). However, less than half of students had knowledge of a code of conduct for teachers (48%) or rules surrounding teacher–student interaction (48%). Contrarily, the qualitative data indicate that students and teachers had good knowledge of teacher code of conduct and teacher-student interaction. Students were also less willing to report misconduct (39%) even though more students reported witnessing teacher misconduct at school. Qualitative data support this, with both students and parents noting confusion about the appropriate way to report violations, and students expressing fear of retaliation if they were to report.
- **Students did not show improvement in perceived gender norms.** Boys were 14 percentage points more likely to believe that girls who wear short skirts are asking for men or boys to touch them. Girls were 10 percentage points more likely to believe that if a boy touches a girl at school, it was because they did something to attract it. Girls were also 23 percentage points more likely to believe girls liked being teased by boys. Students were also less likely to believe that both genders are prioritized equally regarding feeding.
- **Teachers showed improvement in their approach towards classroom discipline.** Qualitative data show teachers more clearly communicated classroom rules to students upfront, and no teachers sent students outside as a form of punishment. However, there were still reports of teachers having students kneel or stand up, or perform physical labor like cleaning the classroom.

Limitations

Some potential limitations of the LEARN II midterm evaluation include the following:

Reliance on Self-Reported Data. The main limitation is that the quantitative approach relied on self-reported data from children for several socially and culturally sensitive subjects such as school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). Although AIR adopted best practices in eliciting this information, the data could still have some degree of measurement error, like data collected in other contexts on sensitive topics. To mitigate this limitation, prior to the baseline data collection in 2018 for LEARN, AIR devoted considerable attention to cognitive testing of the survey instrument with students in Grades 2 and 6. In consultation with local partners, AIR adjusted question phrasing to ensure children understood the questions and felt comfortable answering. To further improve data reliability at midterm, AIR incorporated some sensitive topics in qualitative interviews to triangulate with quantitative data. Even then, the qualitative data may be unreliable if respondents have an interest in slanting what they say, potentially including cooks reporting on their hygiene practices, teachers reporting on their use of corporal punishment, and parents reporting on the frequency of reading with their children.

Internal Validity of Impact Evaluation. One limitation of the impact evaluation arises from the lack of individual student-level baseline data necessary to check that the treatment and comparison groups were balanced in terms of dietary diversity score (DDS), and to include baseline DDS as a covariate in the regression analysis to improve the precision of the treatment effect estimate. To mitigate this limitation, we imputed missing values of student DDS at the school level with average school DDS and conducted baseline tests to assess whether the treatment and comparison schools were similar in terms of DDS. Furthermore, in the impact regression analysis, we controlled for baseline DDS using the imputed values. Finally, the impact evaluation used intent-to-treat design, which compared the treatment group to the comparison group of schools regardless of how much program activities were delivered to the treatment group. As such, another limitation of the impact analysis is that it can be conservative in its estimate of treatment effect because we included participants who did not receive the planned interventions (e.g., school gardens), which can make the treatment and comparison groups appear similar.

Internal Validity of Qualitative Findings. As with all qualitative research, results are not generalizable, but rather show the broad spectrum of types of perspectives that may be encountered across project beneficiaries and stakeholders. Because of this, the communities chosen purposefully represented the broad types of community covered by the LEARN II project (rural, peri-urban, and urban; the combined package vs. the base package).

Recommendations

Below, AIR presents recommendations based on key project outcomes, limitations, and lessons learned from the midterm evaluation.

Overall

- **Track fidelity of implementation systematically using detailed quantitative data to help contextualize findings and recommendations based on what has happened.** As suggested at baseline, Save the Children should conduct regular assessments to identify gaps in implementation and work to fill those gaps appropriately. A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that provides robust and detailed quantitative data at the individual school level throughout project implementation should be used to closely track fidelity of implementation and will lead to a more refined evaluation of the project's impacts during the final evaluation. This is critically important for all project components to understand why activities might or might not have their intended impact, including key literacy and LRP activities.

Literacy

- **Renew attention to literacy activity implementation, including customizing literacy**

interventions, to effectively meet the needs of non-readers and existing readers. At midterm, we found a significant decline in the percentage of children reading outside school and the percentage of children who can read at grade level by the end of two grades. Reading clubs were conducted in only one of the sites sampled for qualitative data collection. Knowledge of the “I help my children learn” tool and similar support aids, which had been robustly used by participants over the last LEARN project, was largely absent from the qualitative sample. Save the Children can more systematically track fidelity of implementation of the literacy component to ensure all key literacy activities are taking place in the four counties. Additionally, as at baseline, the data suggest increased/renewed attention to literacy activities, including targeting non-readers and facilitating their access to Literacy Boost activities. Working with PTAs to support literacy initiatives (e.g., establishing reading clubs) could help consolidate gains at the school level. Alternatively, if non-readers are supported with such activities but still do not improve, then providing customized instruction based on their skill level may help less advanced students to progress.

- **Produce innovative and locally made reading materials.** Given the decline in the key indicator of percentage of children reading outside of school, it is critical to empower students and parents to create their own reading materials when there is a lack of content to read. At baseline, literacy champions provided good examples of how children can use locally made materials (e.g., flashcards and transcribed stories narrated by community members) to enhance literacy; as we did not find evidence of this at midterm, we would encourage strengthening this component after re-mobilizing literacy champions or similar actors.
- **Address ways to mitigate or overcome high rates of teacher turnover with the government from now until the final evaluation to ensure sustainability.** At midterm, teacher turnover continued to be a major concern. It is critical to communicate to the government the degree to which teachers lament being underpaid and overworked and feel the government does not consider their concerns. Advocacy in this regard would need to come from multiple partners regularly, as has been done already through the Education Sector Development Committee; however, in the meantime, instituting strategies to acknowledge teachers’ work and provide supplementary compensation (e.g., through PTA or the STAR teachers intervention) could enhance teacher morale, attendance, and performance. Consider also holding in-depth dialogues and engagements at county and district levels for deeper understanding of contextually specific issues related to government-paid teachers and volunteers. Finally, there is a fundamental need to address the frequent transfer of teachers to other schools, particularly those who have been trained under LEARN as literacy champions or SHN champions. One successful model, initiated by communities, is to pool PTA resources to help supplement teachers’ incomes. While not a replacement for adequate government support, the qualitative data showed its utility.

- **Continue to emphasize the importance of parents’ engagement in their children’s education and facilitate dialogues between parents and teachers about the challenges parents face in engaging with their children’s education.** As done through LEARN via radio, SMS (texting), and home learning cards, teachers and principals can continue to emphasize to parents the critical and constructive role they play in enhancing their children’s education even without being educated themselves. This will also enable teachers to better understand parents’ challenges and what they need to support their children. Together with teachers, Save the Children should develop realistic strategies that parents and caregivers can use to encourage their children to ensure that literacy indicators do not decline further. Save the Children should also consider using social media and other technology to encourage parent engagement. LEARN II staff could also facilitate PTA meetings and use meetings to educate parents on the important role they play in their children’s education. Additionally, staff could mentor and coach parents in using the “I Help my Child to learn” tool, and also monitor its use.

Feeding and LRP

- **Ensure schools have adequate materials and infrastructure to maintain a healthy and safe environment, in addition to ensuring higher compensation for SMPs.** Like at baseline, midterm data showed that while cooks and storekeepers demonstrate adequate understanding of food safety procedures, they lament lack of materials or poor infrastructure in the school kitchens to meet those standards. Job satisfaction among SMPs is low and they do not believe they are fairly compensated for their work. Save the Children can potentially tackle this through advocating for higher pay since directly paying SMPs is not part of Save the Children scope, to ensure greater motivation from SMPs to ensure hygiene and cooking of nutritious meals.
- **Separate water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and nutrition components, rather than grouping them as SHN, and task different parties to manage each.** SHCs demonstrated willingness and capacity to engage in school cleaning activities, and some were active in teaching fellow students about handwashing. However, improving nutrition was rarely mentioned, likely because of the already difficult task SHCs and SHN champions had in maintaining school cleanliness. Having separate individuals responsible for the nutrition component (e.g., dividing an SHC into two “wings”) may help prevent nutrition from being sidelined. Also, emphasis on small-group training that is more interactive and practical may help SHN champions and SHCs better apply the skills learned during the large-group training.
- **Focus on strengthening the LRP component to ensure that it is truly local and cost-effective and can be sustained at the end of LEARN II.** Qualitative interviews with program implementers revealed that Save the Children and Kawadah Farms were not able to set up a processing facility as initially planned, leading to delays in the procurement of Power Gari. To

address this challenge, Power Gari was shipped to treatment schools from further away than intended, . Across multiple FGDs in the qualitative sites, students and other stakeholders also reported that, currently, Power Gari spoils very quickly (most likely due to delays in shipping from longer distances) and does not taste very appealing when it is served spoiled. Meanwhile, some communities had taken their own initiative in working with local farms to supplement staple foods like cassava and rice, though the supplements are not nearly at the level to sustain school feeding without the donated commodities. Addressing these issues and working actively within the community to resolve land procurement challenges, including forging relationships with farmers, in the next two years, will be critical to sustaining the LRP component.

- **Continue rolling out and strengthening school gardens to ensure sustainability at the end of LEARN II.** At midterm, showed positive reactions to the school gardens and progress in establishing and expanding them such that they were often able to help supplement school lunches, enhancing enjoyment and nutrition of the meals. Dietary diversity has also increased from baseline to midterm, a result that could be related to the school garden component. While PTAs showed increased ownership of school gardens at midterm, there were concerns about the sustainability of school gardens in the absence of Save the Children given challenges in accessing quality seeds and materials. Some schools said they sold produce to purchase necessities, but it was challenging to do so regularly. Given the high potential of school gardens in supplementing school meals, it is important for Save the Children to ensure the sustainability of this component at the end of LEARN II. At the same time, there is room to sensitize PTA members to the role that school gardens can play beyond supplementing school feeding activities. For example, a larger garden could generate more income for PTA activities or help individual PTA members cover their children’s educational expenses, as demonstrated in some cases where PTAs have sold produce for supplementary income. Accordingly, providing PTAs with training on business management and marketing as part of the village savings and loan associations (VSLA) intervention could be helpful.

SRGBV

- **Refocus attention on strengthening activities related to SRGBV, including ensuring there are clear guidelines on redressal mechanisms.** At midterm, there was a significant decline in student knowledge of the Teacher Code of Conduct and a decline in students’ knowledge of general rules for teacher conduct. Qualitative interviews also noted that there was confusion about to whom complaints should be reported. Additionally, some stakeholders reported that, given the lack of consensus on who to report to and the fact that redressal was rare, complaints were often not raised. Given this, it is essential to refocus attention on strengthening knowledge on rules and the code of conduct to ensure all students are up to

date. It is also important to institute a process to clarify to whom students and parents should report complaints for each type of complaint. Save the Children should clarify this process and communicate it to each school. Information sessions clarifying reporting chains and redressal mechanisms, including a clear roadmap for redressing each complaint, would be useful.

- **Give ample attention towards providing students with Safe Schools where students are safe to learn and develop among their peers and teachers, teacher's role-model pro-social behavior, and within a positive school climate.** To help achieve this, consider community dialogues as part of the scale-up of the LEARN Safe School interventions in four counties so stakeholders better respect and enforce the school code of conduct and students can learn in a safe environment. Revising the school code of conduct will open opportunities for widespread sensitization on its content, including dialogues with school personnel, caregivers, and students. Dialogues can elucidate whether misunderstanding of the content, disagreement with rules, or lack of alternative disciplinary strategies in accordance with the code (e.g., strategies that could replace corporal punishment) is limiting enforcement.

Section 1. Introduction

The USDA, through the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, has funded Save the Children to implement the LEARN II project between 2021 and 2026. The project aims to improve literacy outcomes of school-age children and enhance the use of health and dietary practices. This midterm evaluation assesses the progress of LEARN II in achieving the desired project outcomes and addresses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of key program interventions through implementation. We also provide recommendations based on lessons learned.

This section outlines the project's context and describes the interventions and the theory of change for the LEARN II project. The next two sections outline the evaluation approach, including the research questions, evaluation design, sampling, data collection methods, data analysis, and limitations. Sections 4 and 5 present the midterm evaluation findings from our mixed-methods approach, and the LEARN II impact evaluation results. Section 6 provides more contextual information from the qualitative findings. Finally, we conclude with lessons learned and the implications for the McGovern-Dole results framework and provide recommendations based on the key findings, limitations, and lessons learned from the midterm evaluation.

1.1 Project Context

Learning (e.g., reading skills) contributes more to a country's economic growth than *school attendance* (e.g., years of education). A 10% increase in the share of students who reach basic literacy skill levels translates into an annual growth rate that is 0.3 percentage points higher than it would be otherwise for that country (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2009). Consequently, many international development projects have refocused their missions to keep children in school and ensure children are learning while at school. Similarly, McGovern-Dole projects aim to improve school enrollment, academic performance, and overall student health by providing school meals to students and teacher training and related support; raising community awareness on SRGBV; and improving health and nutrition practices.

Liberian Education. The Liberian education system faces challenges with student attendance, rates of graduation, over-aged enrollment, repetition, teacher quality, gender discrimination, gender-based violence, and basic educational attainment. The World Literacy Foundation estimates that the economic cost of illiteracy in Liberia is \$1.84 billion (USD) (Cree et al., 2022). According to the Education Statistics Report produced by the Republic of Liberia Ministry of Education, nearly half of the population (43%) is under the age of 15, a percentage that is expected to continue growing (Republic of Liberia Ministry of Education, 2023). However, student

enrollment declined overall during the 2021–22 school year compared to 2015–16. Additionally, while primary education is free and compulsory in Liberia, less than half of students (40%) were enrolled in primary school and only 21% of students completed primary education, according to the 2021–22 Annual School Census Report (Liberia MOE, 2022). Of the students enrolled in primary school, 38% were estimated to be over-age. Various cultural and economic factors drive low and over-age enrollment and low attendance in primary and secondary school, including national crises like the civil war, Ebola outbreak, the COVID-19 pandemic, and other structural issues.

Food Security and Malnutrition. Despite significant progress following the end of the prolonged civil war in Liberia in 1996, food insecurity and malnutrition are still widespread. According to the World Food Programme, more than half of all Liberians live on less than \$1.00 per day (WFP, 2022). In a report published by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 81% of Liberians were moderately or severely food insecure in 2022, and more than a quarter of children were stunted (FAO et al., 2022). Malnutrition is not distributed evenly across the country, with Montserrado, Bomi, and Grand Cape Mount experiencing the highest global acute malnutrition rate for children under the age of 5 (WFP, 2022).

Recognizing the limitations in the Liberian system of education, in 2022, the MOE released its Education Sector Plan (2022/23–2026/27), which included suites of strategic reforms aimed at reducing the over-age student population, increasing enrollment and gender and economic parity among students, improving teacher training programs, and strengthening efficiency and management capacity (Liberia Ministry of Education, 2022). Part of the MOE response to school improvement has included measures to strengthen education system resilience in the face of climate change, which is also aimed at mitigating the impacts of food insecurity and forced displacement. The plan also includes activities to scale up a school feeding program, expand school garden interventions, and provide food supplies during and after emergencies.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. Compounding the problems of education and food insecurity is the epidemic of gender-based violence in Liberia, and conditions following the end of the civil war, the Ebola outbreak, and the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated this problem. According to the MOE’s Education Sector Plan (2022), in 2021, a third of women (33%) and more than half of men (62%) opposed gender equality (2022). Of the reported rape cases between 2016 and 2020, 70% were comprised of children. Girls are at the greatest risk. Girls are more likely to be sexually abused by a teacher and religious figure and are three times more likely to experience transactional sex and coercion (Steiner et al., 2018). Liberia also has one of the highest adolescent birth rates in the world. It is estimated that 30% of women have given birth before the age of 18 (Liberia MOE, 2022).

Over-age enrollment, common in Liberia, consistently exposes young girls to older young men who are enrolled in the same grade. The 2021–22 Annual School Census found that 65% of students enrolled in junior secondary school were over-age. Several studies have found that nearly one-third of primary school and secondary school Liberian children report having engaged in transactional sex for financial gain, respect, or improved grades. Age and power differentials make it incredibly difficult for these youth to refuse sex (Parkes, 2016). In a 2015 survey of secondary school students in Liberia, 30% of girls and 22% of boys reported that they were forced to have sex. Peer abuse was common, but many children in the same study spoke of sexual abuse by teachers and other school staff (Postmus et al., 2015). Currently, there is a lack of evidence to show that government actions or policies have curbed incidences of gender-based violence in schools, or in broader society.

1.2 Project Background

Following the successful implementation of the LEARN project between 2017 and 2022, Save the Children began the implementation of a \$25 million second phase, LEARN II, from 2021 to 2026. In partnership with , Mercy Corps, and government partners including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Health. LEARN II builds upon LEARN’s activities and expands the use of the literacy boost, SHCs, and school garden activities to support student enrollment, attendance rates, and literacy levels; improve health, nutrition, and hygiene knowledge; and alleviate food insecurity. In addition, LEARN II incorporates the use of LRP by women-led farming cooperatives. LEARN II aims to serve 176,958 direct beneficiaries including 85,129 pre-primary and primary school children in 234 schools in the same four counties as LEARN: Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Rivercess, and River Gee (Exhibit 1).⁴

Exhibit 1. LEARN II Targeted Counties in Liberia



⁴ There may be positive and negative unintended consequences of the LEARN II programming. On the positive side, the local procurement activity can create a new market for local farmers to sell their produce. Not only those with whom LEARN directly works may benefit, but also others may benefit who may learn about the opportunity to sell to new intermediaries selling to local schools. This may improve livelihood opportunities in the local communities and improve investment in the health and human capital of the children of farmers. Another positive spillover effect may be that in the presence of any future pandemic or shock that disrupts supplies of foreign food aid to schools, the local community may be more resilient and able to meet the needs of

To achieve the program’s primary objective of carrying out school feeding to reduce hunger and improve literacy and primary education, LEARN II implements 14 activities related to school feeding, school health and nutrition, literacy, and capacity building. While all schools receive the base package of school feeding activities, not all targeted counties receive the same LEARN II interventions (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2. LEARN and LEARN II Activities

# SCHOOLS IN COHORT	LEARN ACTIVITIES	LEARN II ACTIVITIES
RIVER GEE 39		
GRAND GEDEH 20		
GRAND GEDEH 23		
GRAND GEDEH 13		
RIVER GEE 44		
GRAND BASSA 95		
KEY Base Package Literacy Education SHN Champions School Health Clubs School Gardens LRP		

1.3 Purpose of the Evaluation

The American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) is using qualitative and quantitative methods to conduct a performance evaluation and an impact evaluation for LEARN II. The performance evaluation measures changes of key performance indicators over the life of the LEARN II project. The impact evaluation measures the causal effect of LEARN II interventions (local food procurement, school gardens, and U.S. commodities) on literacy, health, nutrition, and KAP outcomes among school-age children (in River Gee and Grand Gedeh counties). The report will help inform SC, USDA, and other key local stakeholders about the progress and lessons learned from LEARN II thus far. SC staff can use the findings and recommendations from this evaluation to inform and adapt LEARN II activities heading into the final years of the project. The evaluation of LEARN II includes three phases: baseline in 2022, midterm in 2024 (the focus of this report), and final in 2026.

The objectives of the midterm evaluation are to:

- assess the progress of LEARN II implementation;
- examine the relevance, impact, and early effectiveness of the interventions;
- determine whether the project is on track to meet its objectives;
- summarize lessons learned to date; and
- make recommendations to project components.

children in schools. However, there may be some unintended negative effects as well. Local purchases may drive up food prices, thereby harming poor, net buyers who do not benefit from selling to schools. Home gardens may not be able to meet the consumption needs of students, so there may be greater reliance on local procurement for meeting food needs. Food supplies might also become riskier in the presence of a local shock that damages local produce.

In the following sections, we describe the research design, objectives, evaluation methodologies (quantitative and qualitative), and outcomes for the impact and project evaluations of the LEARN II interventions at midterm. We conclude with some discussion and recommendations.

Section 2. Evaluation Approach

AIR followed the same mixed methods approach we used for the baseline evaluation for the midterm performance and impact evaluations. The goal of the midterm study was to generate an appropriate comparison against baseline benchmarks and respond to evaluation questions related to relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of program interventions. This section describes the midterm sampling methods, data sources, and data analysis methods.

2.1 Quantitative Design and Sampling

The LEARN II quantitative design includes a performance and impact evaluation. The performance evaluation tracks trends over time in children’s dietary diversity, literacy skills, health, nutrition status; children’s KAP about health, hygiene, and nutrition; and teachers’ and school meal providers’ KAP about health, hygiene, nutrition, and meal preparation. The impact evaluation estimates the differential impact of individual intervention modalities for school meal preparation on children’s nutrition, health, and education outcomes. We describe the performance and impact evaluation designs and sampling strategies of LEARN II in detail below.

Performance Evaluation Design and Sampling

Using mixed methods, the project evaluation measures the progress of the performance indicators related to core LEARN II activities from baseline (2022) to midterm (2024), and endline (2026). To accurately reflect changes in program performance over time, AIR measures the same program indicators at all three data collection points. To measure literacy and health KAP indicators, AIR used a two-stage clustered sampling approach to select a cross-section of Grade 2 and Grade 6 students across all four LEARN II counties.⁵ First, AIR randomly selected a sample of project schools from each county proportional to the total number of project schools participating in LEARN II. Subsequently, the team randomly chose 10 students each (five girls and five boys) from one randomly chosen Grade 2 and Grade 6 classroom each.

⁵ For grade 6 students, we only focus on health and nutrition KAP, SRGBV, and perceived gender norms.

AIR followed the recommendations from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) Toolkit (RTI International, 2015) to confirm the sample size of 1,300 children (730 each in Grade 2 and 570 in Grade 6). The sample size was calculated using the following formula:

$$n = 4 \left(\frac{t_{\frac{\alpha}{2}, n-1} \sqrt{1 + (k - 1)\rho\sigma}}{CIwidth} \right)^2$$

Where $t_{\frac{\alpha}{2}, n-1}$ is the critical value corresponding to a 95% confidence level (set to 1.96), k is the cluster size (set to 10 students per school), ρ is the inter-cluster correlation (set to 0.50 based on previous EGRA studies), σ is the estimated standard deviation (SD) (set to 26 based on previous EGRA studies), and $CIwidth$ is the width of the confidence interval (set to 10). That is, we planned to sample 57 schools across the four counties. AIR selected a total of 10 students (five boys and five girls) from Grades 2 and 6. We obtained parental consent prior to data collection.

Rather than following the same students over time, a different sample of students is being sampled in each round of data collection: baseline, midterm, and final evaluation. A cross-sectional sample of students is preferable to a cohort design because of the substantial probability of student attrition from school. In addition, having independent samples surveyed every period minimizes the probability that the act of measurement itself influences subject behavior (e.g., children from the same cohort may score better in a test when they take the same type of test multiple times, not because they know more, but because they are more used to taking that test) (Feldman & McKinlay, 1994).

AIR selected a sample of students at the school level by physically lining up second grade boys and girls separately in their classrooms. To identify the n^{th} student for random selection, AIR used a simple rule as follows:

$$n^{th} \text{ girl or boy to sample} = \frac{\text{Total number of girls or boys in each grade}}{\text{Total number of girls or boys to be selected}}$$

For example, if there are 25 female second graders and AIR requires five for the study, then AIR will select every fifth girl from the line ($25/5 = 5$). AIR applied the same rule to select students systematically from all sampled schools and by gender. In the absence of pre-established electronic class lists, this approach ensured sampling consistency across schools and will achieve a random sample of students who were present on the day of data collection.

As part of the LEARN II midterm project evaluation, we also administered a health KAP to teachers and SMPs in each of the project evaluation schools. We selected one Grade 2 teacher and one SMP in each project evaluation school for the health KAP. **Error! Reference source not found.** shows the final sample of schools after fieldwork was completed in each of the four counties.

Exhibit 3. Quantitative Sample Sizes at Midterm From Each County for the Project Evaluation

County	Number of LEARN II schools	Number of schools selected for project evaluation	Total Grade 2 students	Total Grade 6 students	Total teachers	Total SMPs
Grand Gedeh	56	11	147 ^a	151	12	12
River Gee	39	10	124 ^a	84	11	11
Grand Bassa	95	22	247	67	23	23
Rivercess	44	11	97	79	11	11
Total	234	54^b	615	381	57	57

^a Eight schools in River Gee and all 12 schools in Grand Gedeh overlap with the impact sample and will have 18 Grade 2 students selected.

^b One school in River Gee no longer operates as an elementary school and one in Grand Bassa.

Impact Evaluation Design and Sampling

In November 2022, after the baseline evaluation was conducted, Save the Children and AIR redesigned the impact evaluation to measure the effect of LRP on Grade 2 students' dietary diversity.⁶ This redesign was necessary to better align the evaluation methodology with the theory of change of the nutrition related LEARN II activities conceived to affect behavioral changes among beneficiaries resulting in improved student dietary diversity.⁷ The impact evaluation uses a block cluster-level RCT design with 80 schools in the counties of Grand Gedeh and River Gee.

School Sampling

For the redesign of the impact evaluation, we sampled schools as follows. Of 95 schools in River Gee and Grand Gedeh where Save the Children operates, 15 schools that had already received LRP in a pilot during Year 1 of the project were excluded. The 80 remaining schools were organized into 19 clusters based on geographic proximity, determined in coordination with Save the Children. To account for the fact that some schools already had benefited from prior LEARN activities such as school gardens, school clusters were organized within three distinct blocks depending on the type of activities the schools were part of in the previous phase of the project:

⁶ Originally, school gardens were planned to be implemented simultaneously with LRP, but the implementation of the school garden activity has been delayed, and hence at midterm we only look at the impact of LRP (versus USG).

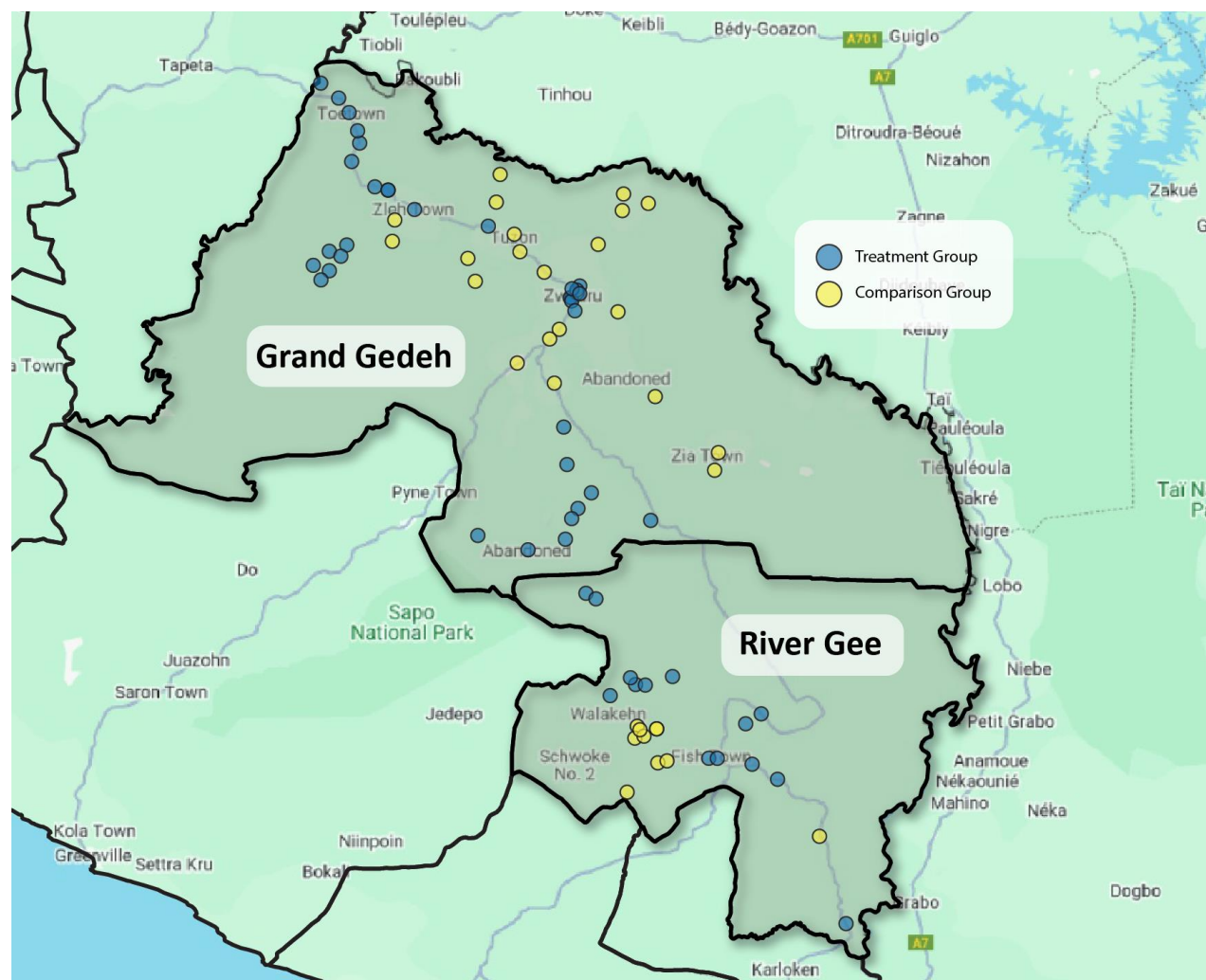
⁷ The LEARN II baseline evaluation report showed that the earlier treatment and comparison groups (identified with matching techniques) were not equivalent which motivated the redesign in collaboration with Save the Children. Using random assignment of clusters of schools, we are still addressing the same research question as at baseline to measure program impacts of the LRP but with a much stronger and more rigorous experimental design.

- Block 1: LEARN schools with existing school gardens (five clusters and 20 schools)
- Block 2: Schools with prior LEARN activities but no gardens (11 clusters and 47 schools)
- Block 3: Schools with no prior LEARN activities (three clusters and 13 schools)⁸

Within each block, school clusters were randomly assigned to treatment and comparison groups. Forty-eight schools organized in 10 clusters were randomly assigned to the treatment group to receive a combination of LRP and USG commodities from January 2023 through September 2026. Thirty-two schools organized in nine clusters were randomly assigned to the comparison group to receive USG commodities exclusively until September 2024 and then receive LRP and USG commodities from October 2024 through September 2026 (delayed treatment). Exhibit 4 maps the 80 schools.

⁸ These schools served as control group for the previous impact evaluation of LEARN.

Exhibit 4. Map of School Sample for Impact Evaluation



After random assignment, we conducted balance tests using average DDS at the cluster level to determine whether the randomization resulted in two similar groups of schools.⁹ Because baseline data on DDS were only available for 42 out of the 80 schools, we imputed missing values for the schools without baseline data equal to the average DDS at the school level of the other schools within the same cluster. Convergence in balance tests was achieved with this missing data imputation approach.

During midterm, one treatment school was no longer operating as an elementary school. Another treatment school only included one Grade 2 student and was excluded from the analyses to

⁹ DDS was defined as the number of food groups consumed by the child in the previous day out of the following seven: (1) cereals, roots and tubers; (2) legumes and nuts; (3) milk and milk derivatives; (4) meat products (meat, poultry, offal, and fish); (5) eggs; (6) vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables (leafy green vegetables, yellow fruits and vegetables); and (7) other fruits and vegetables.

preserve the integrity of the data.¹⁰ Losing two schools represents 3% overall attrition, which is considered low and is expected to lead to low levels of bias (WWC, n.d.). The final sample size for the impact evaluation at midterm included 78 schools. As part of our midterm analyses, we conducted ex-post baseline equivalence analysis using school characteristics such as total enrollment and girl-to-boy and student-to-teacher ratios, which we obtained at midterm. We discuss these results in Section 5.2.

Student Sampling

The original plan included randomly selecting 18 Grade 2 students (nine girls and nine boys) from each school to participate in outcome data collection for a total sample size of 1,440 students. Due to the smaller than expected number of students present at school during midterm data collection, the final sample of Grade 2 students who provided outcomes measures is 950, which is an average of 12 students per school. With 80% power and alpha level of 0.05, a sample of 950 students allows us to detect a minimum detectable effect size (MDES) of 0.289 on student outcomes. The final MDES is only slightly higher than the one we calculated in fall of 2022 (Dong & Maynard, 2013).¹¹ Student outcome data collection for the impact evaluation coincided with the performance evaluation data collection. The student survey includes student DDS as the primary outcome, as well as student health, nutrition, and literacy, and perceived cultural appropriateness and timeliness of food assistance as secondary outcomes. At midterm, the evaluation team estimated the causal effect on student outcomes of approximately one year of receiving LRP and USG commodities relative to the comparison condition of only receiving USG commodities (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5. Impact Evaluation Design at Midterm Evaluation

Treatment and timeline	Sample	Mode of selection	Treatment effect
LRP + USG January 2023 – March 2024	573 students across 46 schools in 10 clusters within 3 blocks	- Random assignment of clusters of schools within blocks - Sampling of Grade 2 students with consent form and present at school on the day of data collection	1-year effect of LRP
USG January 2023 – March 2024	377 students across 32 schools in 9 clusters within 3 blocks		

2.2 Qualitative Design and Sampling

¹⁰ Sensitivity analyses showed that this school disproportionately affected results and possibly introduced measurement error. We decided to remove this outlier and minimize the noise in the data.

¹¹ The MDES for the RCT were calculated using a “PowerUp” tool with intra-cluster correlation and R-squared values from project baseline data. Specifically, we assumed an intra-cluster correlation of 0.05 for level 2 (schools) and 0.01 for level 3 (clusters of schools); and R-squared of 0.06 (level 1: student), 0.08 (level 2: school), 0.03 (level 3: cluster of schools). The MDES minimum detectable effect with these assumptions for a sample size of 18 students across 80 schools is 0.265.

Building on the approach used for LEARN, the midterm qualitative research for LEARN II focused on the beneficiary and stakeholder perceptions of efficiency, relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of LEARN II activities since baseline. These activities included: strengthening the provision of school meals via activities such as cassava processing and supporting women's cooperatives and farming cooperatives; establishing and using new school gardens for feeding; partnering with Kawadah Farm to enhance crop production to supplement school meals and create income generating activities for school community members in River Gee and Grand Gedeh; establishing VSLAs to help parents save for education and other expenses; deworming activities; and teacher training on "positive school culture." New topic areas included relevance and effectiveness of the LRP component in promoting dietary diversification and a deeper look into cultural appropriateness of school meals.

The qualitative research took place in three intervention schools in each of the four counties for a total of 48 FGDs and 46 KIIs across 12 schools. The purposive sample of communities aimed to capture varying perspectives based on locale (rural, peri-urban, urban) and treatment package.

All FGDs were conducted as planned. Within communities, students were randomly selected from rosters of those in Grades 4, 5, or 6. Groups were split between girls and boys, but grade levels were mixed. If students who were selected were not available at the time of research, students from the oversample list were contacted. A total of 94 boys and 98 girls participated in the 24 FGDs. Caregivers were selected based on whether they were available during the day of research, though efforts were made to include at least two members of the PTA. In total, 59 female caregivers and 23 male caregivers participated across the 12 FGDs. Finally, teachers were purposefully selected for FGDs to ensure a broad representation of grade levels and genders per community, and inclusion of the teacher SHN Champion in the FGD; 13 female and 61 male teachers in total were interviewed across the 12 communities.

We were unable to accomplish all planned district-level and community-level KIIs. Seven (of 12) DEOs were unable to be reached despite multiple attempts in person and by mobile; three principals, two storekeepers, and four community mobilizers were also away at the time of research and unavailable for interview by phone. We expected two literacy champions in each of the four communities with Literacy Boost (all River Gee communities and one Grand Gedeh community). However, only one each was identified in two River Gee communities; others in River Gee were unavailable at the time of research. In the Literacy Boost community in Grand Gedeh, researchers were told that the literacy champion had not been active for multiple years. Finally, no interviews with county-based staff of Kawadah Farm were conducted because, as reported by Save the Children staff, processing activities had not yet started in LEARN counties at the time of research (they only operated in Nimba County). The few DEO interviews completed means that we have limited information on DEO perspectives, especially looking across the counties (since

none were done in Rivercess and just one in River Gee) where widely varying levels of government ownership and knowledge of LEARN was seen, and additional variation would likely have been found in those missing interviews. We are confident, however, that perspectives from Principals, storekeepers, and Community Mobilizers are sufficiently represented given perspectives and information was relatively consistent across available interviews. Finally, that Literacy Champions were missing in many cases is a finding in itself and elaborated on in the Qualitative Efficiency and Effectiveness sections. Completed interviews are summarized in Exhibit 6.

Exhibit 6. Number of Interviews for the Qualitative Evaluation, by County

Interview Type	Grand Bassa	Grand Gedeh	River Gee	Rivercess	Total
Girl Student FGD	3	3	3	3	12
Boy Student FGD	3	3	3	3	12
Caregiver FGD	3	3	3	3	12
Teachers FGD	3	3	3	3	12
Principals KII	3	3	3	3	12
Community Mobilizer KII	3	1	1	3	8
Cook KII	3	3	3	3	12
DEO KII	2	2	1	0	5
Storekeeper KII	3	2	2	3	10
Lit Champ KII	0	0	2	0	2
Total Community Level	25	23	24	22	94

Note. KII = Key informant interview; FGD = Focus group discussions

Finally, the lead qualitative researcher conducted four national-level key informant interviews (KIIs) (with relevant government, Save the Children, and Mercy Corps staff) via mobile or Skype.

2.3 Data Sources

AIR collected and analyzed two types of data: (a) quantitative data, including student surveys, Literacy Boost Reading Assessment (LBRA), and KAP surveys with teachers and school meal providers; and (b) qualitative data that included KIIs and FGDs. We also conducted a school assessment checklist that captured student attendance, health and sanitation features, and food storage and preparation methods.

Student Survey

AIR administered a student survey to Grade 2 and 6 students, which was previously developed and cognitively tested during the LEARN evaluations and used for all three rounds of LEARN and the LEARN II baseline. The student survey gathered information on seven key topics including background information, hygiene and health knowledge and practices, nutrition knowledge, SRGBV, school and home environment, disability, food intake recall, diarrhea disease recall, and cultural appropriateness of school meals (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7. Overview of Student Survey Key Topics

Topics	Types of questions
Background information	• Demographic information (e.g., students' age, main language spoken at home)
Hygiene and health knowledge and practices	• Handwashing knowledge (when one should wash hands), including the implication of COVID-19 training on their knowledge • Handwashing practices (when students wash their hands), including the implication of COVID-19 training on their practices
Nutrition knowledge	• Knowledge of a healthy diet (e.g., if a student knows what a balanced diet is)
SRGBV	• Knowledge of SRGBV behaviors (sexual and physical violence and harassment; bullying; corporal punishment) • Awareness of the existence of the code of conduct in school and its revised version • Knowledge of/propensity to use/confidence in reporting mechanisms to report instances of SRGBV • Perceived gender norms (Grade 6 only)
School environment	• Attitudes toward their school • Teacher attendance
Home environment	• Home literacy activities (e.g., if anyone reads to students or tell them a story) • Parent's engagement in home learning • Reading culture at home
Disability	• Difficulty in seeing, hearing, talking, walking, etc.
Food intake recall	• Information about student's meals for the day including frequency and content of the meals
Diarrhea disease recall	• Students' experience with receiving care after experiencing bouts of diarrhea
Cultural appropriateness of school meals	• Students' satisfaction with the meals they are served in school

Student Literacy Boost Reading Assessment (LBRA)

In addition to the student survey, Grade 2 students in the impact and performance evaluation samples also took the LBRA. AIR developed the LBRA using Liberia second grade textbooks, calibrated it to the Liberian context through the Liberia MOE, and field-tested it on Grade 2 students in non-project schools during the LEARN baseline. AIR used the same LBRA for the LEARN II midterm to generate an appropriate comparison to baseline. Using the same instrument between impact and performance evaluation samples helps maximize comparability in literacy outcomes and findings between the two evaluations.

Since the official language of instruction in Liberia is English, all LBRA subtests were in English. The LBRA version used for this evaluation consisted of four subtests:

1. **Letter knowledge:** The number of letter sounds that a student could identify, out of 26.
2. **Word recognition:** The number of words out of the 20 most-used words from leveled textbooks that a student could read correctly. Recognition is defined as the student’s ability to read the word.
3. **Decoding (invented word recognition):** The number of invented words, out of 20, that a student could decode correctly.
4. **Reading comprehension**
 - a. **Reading aloud:** Using a short story of 155 words, we assessed:
 - i. Fluency: The number of words read correctly in a minute.
 - ii. Accuracy: The percentage of words read correctly (untimed).
 - b. **Comprehension:** Ten comprehension questions related to the short story were asked orally in one of three conditions:
 - i. Reading comprehension, which applied to children who could read at least five words in the story correctly in 30 seconds. These children were identified as “readers.”
 - ii. Listening comprehension, which applied to children who could not read five words in the story correctly in 30 seconds. The enumerator read the story aloud to these children, identified as “non-readers.”
 - iii. Listening comprehension for “readers,” which applied to students who read at least five words correctly but gave up before attempting a significant portion of the passage or could not finish the passage. The enumerator read the rest of the story to them.

Teacher and School Meal Provider KAP Surveys

We captured the health and nutrition KAP of teachers and SMPs through surveys administered at the schools. The teacher tool efficiently yet comprehensively captures all relevant information related to their knowledge and attitudes related to children’s health and nutrition. It also includes a module on SRGBV-related knowledge and attitudes of teachers. Similarly, the SMP KAP measures their knowledge and attitudes related to children’s health and nutrition and captures their KAP regarding safe food preparation and storage.

Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

For the qualitative component, the same communities from LEARN II baseline were visited at midterm. Questions informed the degree to which LEARN II activities, at midterm, were efficient, relevant, effective, and sustainable. Topics included those that were inherited from LEARN, so we used parts of the LEARN I tools, as well as the LEARN II baseline tools. They also included questions

about LEARN II-specific activities including the potential for strengthening the provision of school meals via activities such as cassava processing and supporting women’s farming cooperatives, establishing and using new school gardens for feeding in River Gee and Grand Gedeh, deworming activities, and teacher training on “positive school culture.” In addition, new topic areas include relevance and effectiveness of the LRP component in promoting dietary diversification and a deeper look into cultural appropriateness of school meals.

All lines of inquiry that were pursued in FGDs and KIIs are summarized in Exhibit 8. KII protocols were designed for 30 to 45-minute conversations and FGD protocols lasted approximately 90 minutes. Though discussion guides were written in Standard English, the qualitative team translated questions written in Standard English to Liberian English (or local languages, as needed) during interviews, or otherwise rephrased the questions to help participant understanding. The team enlisted the help of local day-hire interpreters for instances when participants were unable to converse in Liberian English or any other ethnic language that the local researchers spoke (though efforts were made to include interviewers with knowledge of as many Liberian languages as possible on the qualitative team). Female data collectors interviewed female students and female caregivers in every case; males or females interviewed female cooks, teachers, principals, and others.

Exhibit 8. Overview of Topics Covered in Qualitative Protocols for Midterm

Topics	Types of questions (asked to groups/individuals)	
Background information	Background/role in project	All
Access to and value of education	- Access to education in the community; barriers to access and full engagement (who is excluded) - Gender equity of access - How confident parents feel in supporting their children’s learning and well-being	Caregivers FGD Teachers FGD Principals KII
School feeding/nutrition	- Present organization and activities of local farming cooperatives; potential for additional activities and limitations around cassava production to supply schools - Existence of and quality of kitchen gardens - Perceived effectiveness of feeding program; successes and areas for improvement - Status of training of MOE school feeding division officials - Knowledge of and agreement to ground rules on gardening activities; challenges to date	Students FGD Caregivers FGD Teachers FGD Principals KII Community Mobilizers KII Cooks KII Storekeepers KII DEO KII Farming Cooperative KII Kawah Farm Staff KII Save the Children/Mercy Corps Project Staff KII National-level Ministry of Agriculture (as suggested by Save the Children) KII

Topics	Types of questions (asked to groups/individuals)	
School health clubs (SHCs)/water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)/nutrition	• Perceived effectiveness of SHN champions and SHCs SHCs on improving nutrition and WASH practices in schools • WASH status in schools • Progress on development of SHCs SHCs and manuals • Progress on Save the Children collaboration with community education officers and DEOs to provide training to the SHN champions • Perceived effectiveness of community mobilizers	Students FGD Caregivers FGD Teachers FGD Principals KII Community Mobilizers KII DEO KIIs National-level Ministry of Health (as suggested by Save the Children) KII
School literacy environment	• How much students are exposed to literacy activities within the school environment (e.g., presence of library, teacher reading exercises) • Resources and encouragement provided to students to read outside of school (e.g., can take home library books, working with parents/PTAs to encourage reading at home)	Students FGD Teachers FGD Principals KII Literacy Champions KII Community Mobilizers KII National-level Ministry of Education (as suggested by Save the Children) KII
Home/community literacy environment /reading clubs	• How much students are exposed to literacy activities within the home (e.g., presence of books or other reading materials) • Whether literacy is valued in the home (e.g., if reading and doing homework is encouraged) • Existence of/quality of community-based reading activities and resources (e.g., book banks, reading clubs, reading festivals [not yet started]), ease of accessibility to materials within • Difference between in school/out of school uptake in Summer Reading Clubs • Adequacy of training received to be literacy champion	Students FGD Caregivers FGD Teachers FGD Principals KII Literacy Champions KII Community Mobilizers KII

Topics	Types of questions (asked to groups/individuals)	
SRGBV	- Extent to which students, parents, and teachers know about whether they are protected in the school by: (a) a code of conduct that restricts SRGBV behaviors and (b) effective referral and reporting mechanisms to report such behaviors if they do occur. - Positive discipline strategies (as an alternative to corporal punishment) in place; their effectiveness or limitations - Teacher and principal understanding of and perspective of aspects related to “positive school culture” - Perceived prevalence of SRGBV; existence /effectiveness of reporting mechanisms for students/teachers to use to report violations of school code of conduct	Students FGD Caregivers FGD Teachers FGD Principals KII Community Mobilizers KII DEO KIIs National-level Ministry of Education (as suggested by Save the Children) KII
Parent–teacher associations	- Existence and activities of PTAs; successes and areas for improvement to enhance collaboration and effectiveness - Degree to which parents in PTAs collaborate with teachers/principals - Effectiveness of parent engagement messages on literacy	Caregivers FGD Teachers FGD Principals KII Community Mobilizers KII

School Observation Checklist

The midterm evaluation used the same school assessment checklist tool that was used for the baseline for LEARN II. At midterm, the checklist was used to observe any changes in the status of students’ enrollment, attendance, school characteristics, safe food preparation, storage practices, and latrine cleanliness. In addition, we added more items to better capture dropout rates for students and teachers. These data can be useful to triangulate self-reported responses from the interviews and to identify gaps in resources to modify for the LEARN II final evaluation.

2.4 Data Analysis

We started our data analysis with a quality assessment of the quantitative and qualitative data before proceeding with data cleaning and analysis. These quality checks included checking for duplicate responses, missing values, outlier values, survey skip patterns, and other logic checks.

Performance Evaluation Analysis

The first step in the analysis of the midterm performance evaluation data was to assess the quality of the survey data by running frequency tabulations and counting missing responses. The evaluation team examined the frequency distributions for each survey question to ensure that all data were within a valid range. The team then used the survey data and performance monitoring plan to construct the performance indicators required by USDA. To present an initial snapshot of the findings at midterm, AIR analyzed the cleaned data descriptively by constructing means and percentages and presented findings in tables, bar charts, histograms, and other visualizations. To

measure changes over time, AIR used a pre–post comparison using constructed means through clustered t-tests. AIR used this methodology to quantify LEARN II’s progress by tracking changes in outcomes over time. We disaggregated applicable findings by county, gender, grade, or main language spoken at home and reported any statistically significant or notable findings.

The qualitative data contextualized the findings from the literacy assessment, the student health KAP assessment, and the teacher and SMP KAP surveys. Although qualitative research does not allow for empirically generalizable results, it offered critical perspectives to enrich the quantitative data and provide context about circumstances that might have influenced quantitative findings. The qualitative data from project participants and stakeholders also provided information about activities that was not obtained from quantitative surveys, in addition to the perspectives of stakeholders who were not reached with the quantitative component.

The qualitative team relied on detailed notes and summary forms from the KIIs and FGDs to analyze the data, synthesize the findings, and identify major themes to address key evaluation questions. An Excel-based qualitative database was built for the data collection team to enter notes in English. Codes were established to help assess the relative response types provided across all the notes, paying attention to where (a) the qualitative data supported the quantitative data; (b) there were outliers; and (c) nuance was not captured by the quantitative tools. Also at this phase, quotations demonstrating key topics were pulled for use in this evaluation report.

Impact Evaluation Analysis

AIR performed initial descriptive analyses with the survey data, constructing overall means and standard deviations as well as means and standard deviations by gender and county. We tested significant differences in means across groups using *t*-tests. We conducted ex-post baseline equivalence analyses using 2021–2022 school data obtained from Save the Children monitoring records.

AIR estimated the impact of LRP activities using regression analysis of student outcomes as follows:

$$Y_{is} = \alpha + \gamma Treatment_s + \beta X_{is} + \delta Z_s + \mu_s + \varepsilon_{is}$$

Where

- Y_{is} is the outcome of interest (e.g., dietary diversity) of student i in school s at midterm;
- $Treatment_s$ is an indicator variable equal to 0 for schools in the comparison group (USG) and equal to 1 for schools in the treatment group (LRP + USG);

- X_{is} includes a list of variables such as age, gender, English as main language, and socio-economic status, which are unrelated to the program;
- Z_s includes a set of baseline school-level variables such as total enrollment, student-to-teacher ratio, girl-to-boy ratio, and missing data flags;
- μ_s represents block and school cluster-level fixed effects to control for time-invariant school geographic and other characteristics that vary across schools and can affect outcomes; and
- ε_{is} is the error term.

Students in the same school might be similar to each other on observable and unobservable characteristics (Hansen, 2007). Therefore, the student outcomes within a particular school may be related to each other. To account for this correlation of error terms across students in the same school, we clustered the standard errors at the school level. We also conducted subgroup analyses by student gender and county. Finally, we conducted exploratory impact regression analyses on teacher and meal provider outcomes related to perceived cultural appropriateness and timeliness of food assistance. However, we caution that the study was underpowered with the smaller subsamples.¹² Results from the impact evaluation are discussed in Section 5.

¹² The MDES for the exploratory impact analyses was calculated using the same assumptions as in the student impact analyses except with a single respondent per school: an intra-cluster correlation of 0.05 for level 2 (schools) and 0.01 for level 3 (clusters of schools); and R-squared of 0.06 (level 1: respondent), 0.08 (level 2: school), 0.03 (level 3: cluster of schools). The MDES minimum detectable effect with these assumptions for a sample size of one respondent across 80 schools is 0.714.

Section 3. Fieldwork

This section provides information on human subject protection, enumerator training, instrument field testing, fieldwork, and challenges faced during data collection.

3.1. Human Subjects Protection

Prior to collecting data for the baseline evaluation for LEARN II, AIR received institutional review board (IRB) approval to ensure that the proposed evaluation complied with local and international rules and procedures. AIR submitted protocol documents to the University of Liberia Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation IRB (UL-PIRE IRB) in January 2024. AIR also submitted the research protocol to the Save the Children Ethics Review Committee to confirm that the research was ethically sound and safeguarded the rights, safety, and well-being of children. Finally, AIR submitted to AIR's internal IRB committee for review and approval.

AIR used the IRB-approved instruments, as well as updated informed consent and assent forms. We also submitted our modified midterm research protocols to the Save the Children Ethics Review Committee and the AIR IRB to confirm that our modifications to the research protocols followed the ethical framework and the safety and well-being of children. During the enumerator training, AIR briefed enumerators on procedures for interviewing respondents, protecting respondents' privacy and confidentiality, and securing the data. We also included GBV-specific training for relevant data collectors. This included guidelines from the [Global Data Institute](#) and the [USAID SRGBV Toolkit](#), including being able to differentiate between sex and gender; defining SRGBV; identifying forms of SRGBV, root causes, contributing factors, and consequences of SRGBV in the Liberian context. The training also defined procedures for responding to children experiencing psychological distress during the interview. We also included risk mitigation and management protocols in asking children about their experiences of violence. Risk management procedures identify those individuals responsible for following up on the identified risk factors and steps that the individual should take to manage that risk. AIR also invited the Save the Children Liberia team to provide enumerators with a refresher training on safeguarding children at school. Additionally, any safety concerns shared by a student were referred by the enumerator to AIR and then to Save the Children U.S. and appropriate follow-up health and psychosocial services were recommended, if needed.

To survey students and for student FGDs at the LEARN II midterm, we obtained parental consent similar to baseline. Specifically, given the low literacy levels among the parents, Save the Children facilitated awareness building sessions for PTAs, which included parents of children in the sampled schools. Save the Children explained in detail the content of the consent forms at these meetings. At the end of these sessions, parents were invited to sign the consent forms, and AIR surveyed

only those children whose parents completed the consent forms. Additionally, AIR asked for students' assent, similar to baseline. This assured children that their participation was voluntary and that they could terminate the survey at any point.

For all KIIs and FGDs, AIR sought consent from adult participants. AIR also assured respondents that their participation was voluntary with referral mechanisms in place, and that they could terminate the interview at any time. If respondents did not consent to recordings, we took detailed notes of the discussion.

The qualitative and quantitative field teams also received a training on procedures for contacting respondents, protecting respondent privacy and confidentiality, child safeguarding, and securing the data, thus ensuring high compliance with ethical guidelines to conduct research. Furthermore, after data collection, the evaluation team protected the privacy and confidentiality of respondents by storing the data in secure servers and separating personally identifiable information from the survey data. The data will be archived on the server at the end of the contract.

3.2. Training and Pilot Testing

AIR partnered with the Center for Action Research and Training (CART) for data collection. CART has worked with AIR to collect data for LEARN evaluations since the LEARN baseline in 2018. CART hired 19 enumerators—many of whom worked on the LEARN II baseline evaluation. AIR held an enumerator training from February 19 to 23, 2024. The AIR team led the in-person training of enumerators in collaboration with the CART team leaders and fieldwork managers. Prior to the training, AIR reviewed all training tasks with CART's director and fieldwork managers to ensure that, in case of connectivity issues, she would be able to continue leading the training.

The training consisted of 4 days of theory-based classroom training and 1 day of pilot testing in a nearby school. During classroom training, enumerators learned: (a) the purpose of each survey question; (b) how to ask questions directed to vulnerable respondents (in this case, children under 18); (c) how to assess students' literacy; and (d) how to use tablets to implement the in-person surveys without an internet connection. Pilot testing provided an opportunity for enumerators to practice with real respondents. Afterward, enumerators regrouped with the AIR team remotely to debrief and discuss any issues they encountered.

Prior to data collection, the AIR qualitative lead held multiple remote training and discussion sessions with CART's qualitative researchers. CART's researchers field-tested selected protocols such as FGDs with teachers and students, based on the availability of respondents in the pilot school, and debriefed remotely with the AIR team. After pilot testing, the team met to discuss challenges such as comprehension (questions that confused respondents) and duration (insufficient time to complete all questions) and allowed for adjustment to the necessary

protocols. The meeting also allowed the team to receive follow-up training and opportunities to practice facilitation and notetaking to strengthen their interviewing and summarizing skills.

3.3. Data Collection

The quantitative team conducted fieldwork from March 4 to April 4, 2024. CART organized enumerators into two teams. Each team then split into groups of 2–4 who traveled to each school. One team focused on Grand Bassa, which had the largest sample, while the other team visited Grand Gedeh, Rivercess, and River Gee. The fieldwork managers, in collaboration with the MOE and school district offices, coordinated their school visits with school principals. All enumerators regrouped with their supervisors several times during the data collection to debrief, submit daily paper-based data collection logs, submit electronic surveys, and review and plan for the next days of data collection. The CART director and fieldwork managers were responsible for updating AIR’s project director on challenges and decisions. The AIR data specialist regularly downloaded the data through a secure server to run quality assurance checks and flagged the findings back to the team in the field to make additional decisions and adjustments as needed.

For the qualitative data collection, a two-person qualitative team from CART collected data in the targeted schools. During the interviews and focus groups, one person led the discussion, while the other took notes. Each team was comprised of at least one woman to conduct the girl student FGDs. The male researcher was not present in any of the girl student FGDs (the female researcher took her own notes while facilitating). The local qualitative team summarized the main points of each session using a structured summary “field form” with one discussion question per page that paralleled the structure of the focus group or interview protocol. The summary synthesized the major points and salient themes and included verbatim quotations that addressed the supplemental evaluation questions.

With the respondents’ permission, CART also recorded all KIIs and FGDs as a back-up for the qualitative team to fill in gaps in their notes, as needed, on the same day that data collection occurred. The finalized detailed notes were entered into an Excel database for the lead qualitative researcher’s subsequent coding and analysis. For quality assurance, within 48 hours after the first school’s KIIs and FGDs were completed, samples of notes pages and description of activities were completed, and challenges encountered were sent to the lead qualitative researcher via WhatsApp. Feedback was provided to help ensure high-quality and complete data. The notes and recordings from the KIIs and FGDs were not shared outside the evaluation team.

3.4. Fieldwork Challenges

The data collection team faced several challenges. First, while most parents consented to having their children surveyed, collecting their signatures did delay the start of data collection. Similar to

earlier rounds of data collection for LEARN and LEARN II, attendance at many of the schools was very low. In many of the schools, the data collection team surveyed every available (and consented) student but still failed to reach our targets. A common cause for low attendance in schools where enrollment suggests a larger population was a teacher or principal falling ill or otherwise needing to be away from school. Additionally, there was one school in River Gee that is no longer operating as a primary school and one in Grand Bassa that had only had no sixth grade and only one enrolled second grader who could not be found on the survey date so there are two schools that are not included in the sample at all.

To mitigate this challenge, the team oversampled in schools with larger attendance and revisited schools that had lower attendance to see if they could find more students another day. Additionally, the team coordinated with the DEOs, principals, and Save the Children field staff to assist with communication for the team's visits. In addition to low attendance, a few performance and impact schools had to be swapped for replacement schools in the weeks before data collection, adding to the logistical challenges. Schools for the performance evaluation were suffering from staff shortages, which often led to the cancelation of school. The impact schools became private schools and dropped out of LEARN II after baseline. In the end, the team collected about 81% of the target sample, similar to baseline.

The only challenge with qualitative data collection was around the difficulty in interviewing DEOs in seven of the 12 communities, despite many efforts made to speak to them with assistance from Save the Children field staff. Also, there was a relatively low response rate in requests for interviews with national and regional-level government staff given that the evaluation coincided with the swearing-in of new government officials, so documentation was consulted as available to try to fill in gaps.

Section 4. Project Evaluation Midterm Findings

4.1 Project Evaluation Sample

We followed the sampling strategy outlined in Section 2 to select 608 Grade 2 students and 381 Grade 6 students from 54 schools in the four counties where LEARN II is active.¹³ Additionally, we sampled 54 teachers and 52 SMPs in these schools.¹⁴ Although we aimed to survey 10 students in each grade, we were only able to meet this target for Grade 2 students. We found that many schools had no Grade 6 students available at all. Some of the challenges that the data collection team faced are recounted in Section 3. Exhibit 9 disaggregates the sample sizes by county.

Exhibit 9. Sample Sizes for the Project Evaluation at Midterm, by County

County	Schools	Grade 2 students	Grade 6 students	Teachers	SMPs
Grand Bassa	22	247	151	23	21
Grand Gedeh	11	147	84	10	11
Rivercess	11	97	67	11	10
Rive Gee	10	124	79	10	10
Total	54	608	381	54	52

Source: Student survey, teacher survey, SMP survey. Authors' calculations. Note: Grand Gedeh and River Gee midterm figure is the total sample size for the project evaluation only. Additional schools and students were sampled in Grand Gedeh and River Gee for the impact evaluation sample described in Section 5.

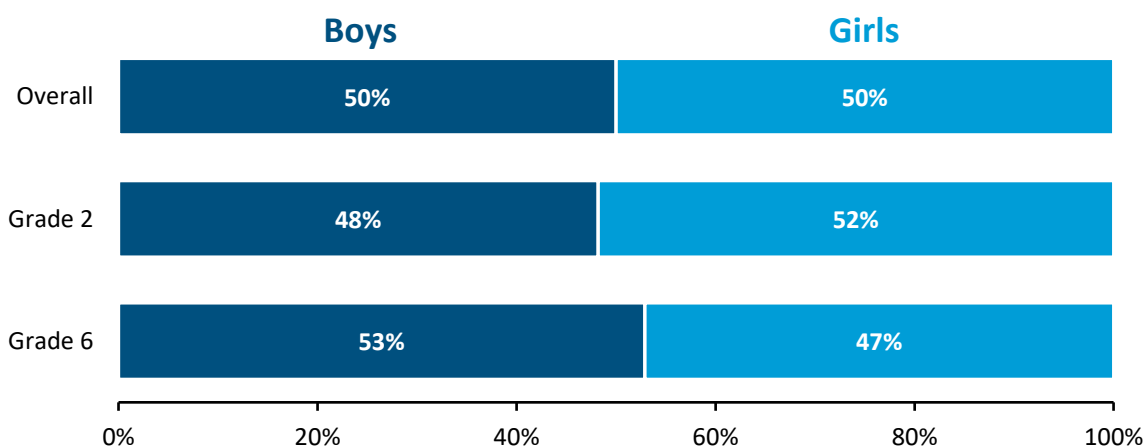
Student Characteristics

At midterm, the student sample was balanced by gender, with small differences in each grade (Exhibit 10).

¹³ Of the 56 sampled schools, one school in River Gee is no longer operating as an elementary school, and one school in Grand Bassa had one enrolled Grade 2 student who was absent on the day of data collection and no sixth Grade 6 class.

¹⁴ Two schools had no SMPs available to survey.

Exhibit 10. Gender, by Grade



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. $N = 608$ in Grade 2 and $N = 380$ in Grade 6.

Similar to baseline, at midterm, the average student was 12 years old in Grade 2 and 16 years old in Grade 6, with the age ranges 7–20 and 9–23 years, respectively (Exhibit 11). According to World Bank data, Liberia has the second largest share of over-age primary school students in the world (47%), behind only South Sudan (World Bank, 2020). The high average ages and wide age ranges are likely the result of delayed education due to the Liberian Civil War and a 2001 government policy that eliminated school fees and required primary school enrollment.¹⁵

Exhibit 11. Age Distribution, by Grade at Midterm

Grade	Mean	Median	Range
Grade 2	12	12	7–20
Grade 6	16	16	9–23

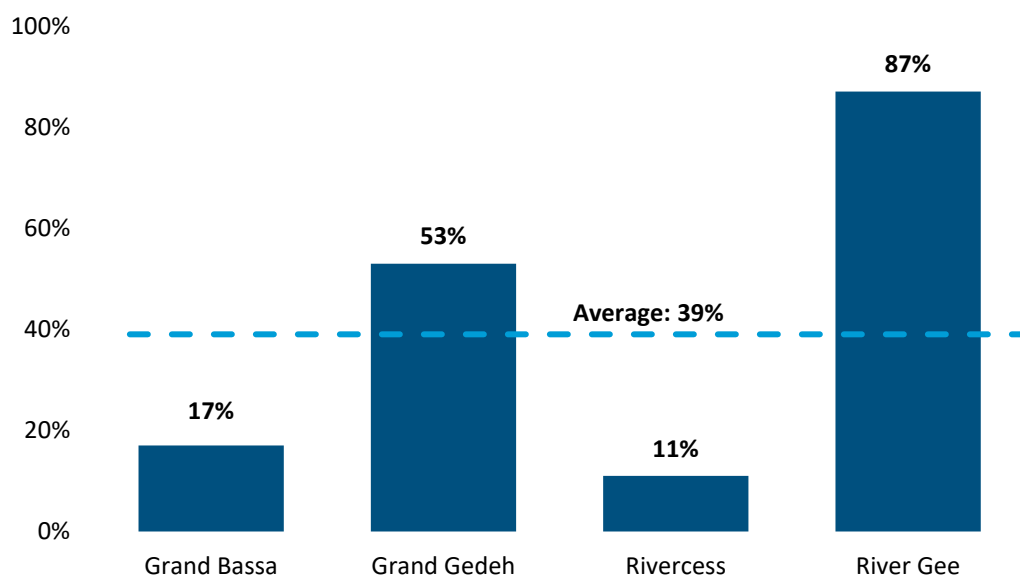
Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. $N = 1,007$.

The average household size was 7.3 people, with no major differences from baseline or by county or gender. Household sizes ranged from 2 to 20 household members; however, 19% of students reported a household size with over 10 people, the same as at baseline. Most students (72%) reported that their mother was their primary caregiver, a small decrease from baseline (76%, $p < 0.10$). Similar to baseline, 15% of students said their father was their primary caregiver. This was similar across counties; however, girls were more likely to say their mother was their primary caregiver (77% vs. 67%, $p < 0.01$) and boys were more likely to say their father (20% vs. 9%, $p < 0.01$).

¹⁵ There are many studies that find long-run impacts of wars on educational attainment in several contexts (see e.g., Merrouche, 2011; Justino et al., 2014).

Overall, 38% of the students reported English as the language they speak most at home, a sharp decrease from baseline (74%, $p < 0.01$) (Exhibit 12). There were large variations by county, ranging from 11% in Rivercess to 87% in River Gee. The most common primary language besides English was Bassa at 39%, a significant increase from baseline where just 11% of students reported speaking the language ($p < 0.01$). Bassa is the primary language of 87% of the students in Rivercess. Ninety-seven percent of the students reported speaking multiple languages.

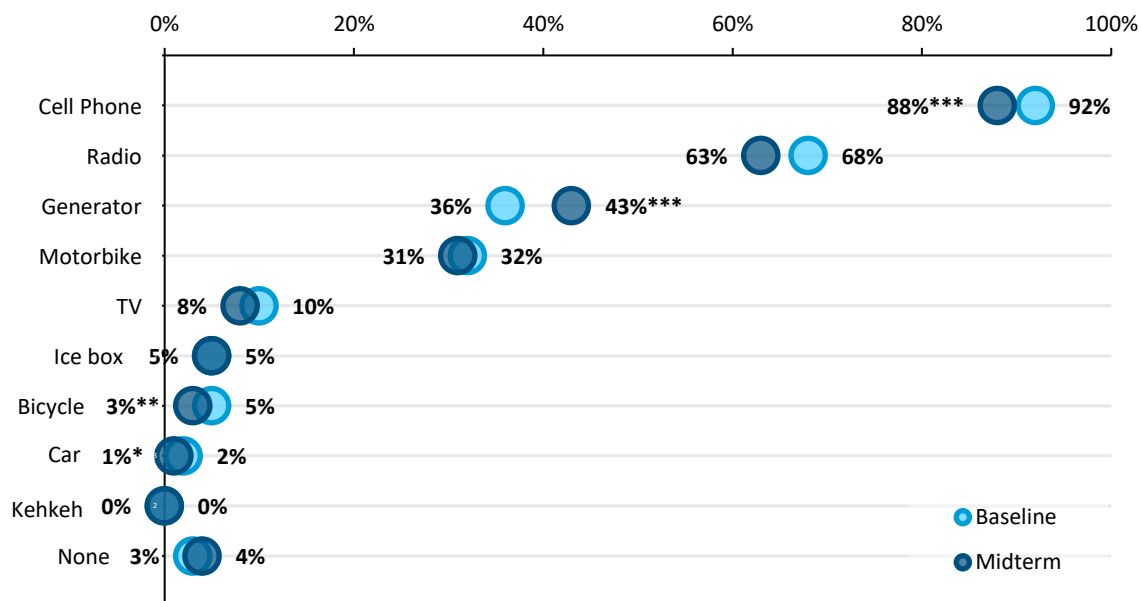
Exhibit 12. Proportion of Students for Whom English Is Their Main Language



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. $N = 398$ in Grand Bassa, 231 in Grand Gedeh, 164 in Rivercess, and 202 in River Gee.

To gauge students' socioeconomic status, we asked if their household owned any of eight different assets (Exhibit 13). On average, students reported having two of eight assets—the most common being cell phones (88%), followed by radios (63%), generators (43%), and motorbikes (31%). At midterm, 63% of students had a radio at home, about the same as at baseline, and the majority (97%) reported the radio being functional. There were some regional differences, with Grand Gedeh appearing to be a little wealthier than the other counties. The total number of items reported averaged between 2.4 and 2.6 between the project counties. The biggest gaps were that 92% of students in Grand Gedeh reported having cell phones compared to the average of 88% and 56% said they had generators compared to the average of 43%. Radios were most prevalent in Grand Bassa (73%), compared to a range of 51% to 58% in the other counties. There were some small differences by primary language, with English-speaking students being more likely to own a cell phone (93% vs. 87%, $p < 0.01$) and less likely to own a bicycle (3% vs. 5%, $p < 0.05$). English speakers were also more likely to own at least one of the items we asked about (98% vs. 95%, $p < 0.01$).

Exhibit 13. Students' Socioeconomic Status



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 1,007$ at baseline and 996 at midterm.

Teacher Characteristics

At midterm, teachers in our sample were predominantly male (91%). By county, Grand Gedeh had the largest concentration of female teachers (30%) in the sample, whereas Rivercess had none (Exhibit 14). There were no significant differences in teacher gender relative to baseline.

Exhibit 14. Teacher Respondents, by Gender and County



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm $N = 54$.

At midterm, the average teacher was 47 years old and had 13 years of experience as a teacher and 23 years of experience living in the community in which they teach (Exhibit 15). There were no significant differences in age and years of experience from baseline. Under a quarter of the sampled teachers were relatively new to the profession, with 5 or fewer years of experience (19%). All sampled teachers had at least three years of experience living in the community. Those with minimal experience living in the community (i.e., 5 or less years) (11%, n = 6) had either 3 (17%, n = 1) or 4 (83%, n = 5) years of experience living in the community

Exhibit 15. Teacher Age Distribution and Years of Experience

Teacher	Mean	Median	Range
Age (years)	47	47.5	25–71
Years working as a teacher	13	14	1–42
Years living in the community	23	19	3–71

Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 54.

School Meal Provider Characteristics

At midterm, the SMP sample had greater gender balance relative to the baseline sample, with approximately three-quarters of female SMPs in the midterm sample (79%) (Exhibit 16). Relative to baseline, the share of female respondents overall ($p < 0.01$), in Grand Bassa ($p < 0.05$), and in River Gee ($p < 0.05$) significantly decreased from 96%, 95%, and 100%, respectively.

Exhibit 16. School Meal Provider Respondents, by Gender and County



Source: School meal preparer survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 52.

On average, at midterm, SMPs were slightly younger than teachers and had fewer years of experience, but they had lived longer in the community in which they served as an SMP than had teachers (Exhibit 17). About a third of surveyed SMPs were relatively new to their position, with 36% reporting 5 years or less working as a food preparer (a significant reduction from 70% at

baseline, $p < 0.01$). On average, SMPs in Grand Gedeh were more experienced (8 years) than their counterparts in Rivercess (6 years), River Gee (6 years), and Grand Bassa (5 years).

Exhibit 17. SMP Age Distribution and Years of Experience

SMP	Mean	Median	Range
Age (years)	45	44	18–66
Years working as an SMP	6	6	1–20
Years living in the community	31	35.5	3–66

Source: School meal preparer survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 52.

Project Evaluation Qualitative Sample and Characteristics

We interviewed 394 community-level stakeholders ($n = 192$ female and $n = 202$ male) from the 12 intervention sites. Boy ($n = 94$) and girl ($n = 98$) students were in Grades 4, 5, or 6 and ranged in age from 9 to 24, with an average age of 14 and a median age of 14. The 59 female and 23 male parents/caregivers ranged in age from 21 to 91, with a median age of 42. Of those, more than half ($n = 46$) had no education; the remainder had elementary ($n = 14$), junior high ($n = 7$), high school ($n = 12$), or college ($n = 3$) education. Teachers were mostly male ($n = 61$ males and $n = 13$ females); all but one principal was male. Most teachers had college/teaching certificate education (92% of female teachers and 66% of male teachers), noting the small sample size of female teachers ($n = 13$); all the remainder had high school education. All the principals had college education (Exhibit 18).

Exhibit 18. Respondents' Educational Attainment

	Boys	Girls	Caregivers	Teachers	Principals	Cooks	Storekeepers	Lit Champs	Community Mobilizers	DEOs
None	0%	0%	56%	0%	0%	83%	30%	0%	0%	0%
Elementary	100%	99%	17%	0%	0%	8%	10%	0%	0%	0%
Middle School	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	0%
High School	0%	0%	15%	30%	0%	8%	30%	0%	0%	0%
College	0%	0%	4%	70%	100%	0%	20%	0%	100%	100%
Unknown	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%

Source: 2024 midterm local-level qualitative interviews in all 12 intervention sites for a total of 394 stakeholders at school and community levels. Authors' calculations.

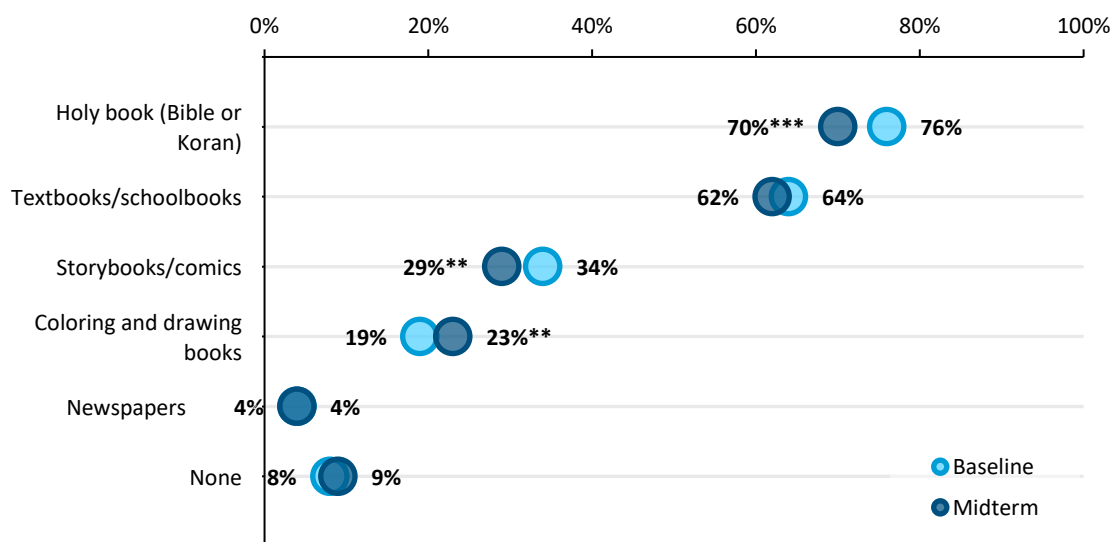
4.2 Student Reading-Related Outcomes

This section describes the status of Grade 2 students in LEARN II schools at midterm compared to baseline based on their responses to survey questions about the literacy environment at school and at home and their ability to read with comprehension. The survey questions focused on the availability of reading materials in and out of school, students' home literacy environment, their attitudes toward schooling, the presence of teachers in schools, and students' reading outcomes. Interpretation of these findings should consider the fact that the LEARN II schools were previously exposed to the LEARN interventions, including literacy-focused programming in River Gee and some schools in Grand Gedeh. The LEARN II intervention expands the literacy programming to Grand Bassa, Rivercess, and the remaining schools in Grand Gedeh.

Reading Materials Availability

Exhibit 19 shows the different types of reading materials that students reported having in their homes. Overall, students lacked age-appropriate, non-schoolbook reading materials at home, with just 34% having access to storybooks or comic books at baseline. This declined to 29% at midterm ($p < 0.10$). There was also a significant decline in access to holy books by six percentage points from baseline to midterm ($p < 0.01$). There were some county differences (see Exhibit B1 in Appendix B for details). Only one county, Grand Gedeh, saw an increase in the number of textbooks/schoolbooks at home (61% at baseline and 78% at midterm, $p < 0.10$). Access to storybooks/comics decreased in every county except Rivercess, where it increased 10 percentage points from 24% to 34% since baseline; however, this difference was not statistically significant. There was little change in access to coloring books in all counties except for Rivercess, where access increased sharply from 4% at baseline to 34% at midterm ($p < 0.01$).

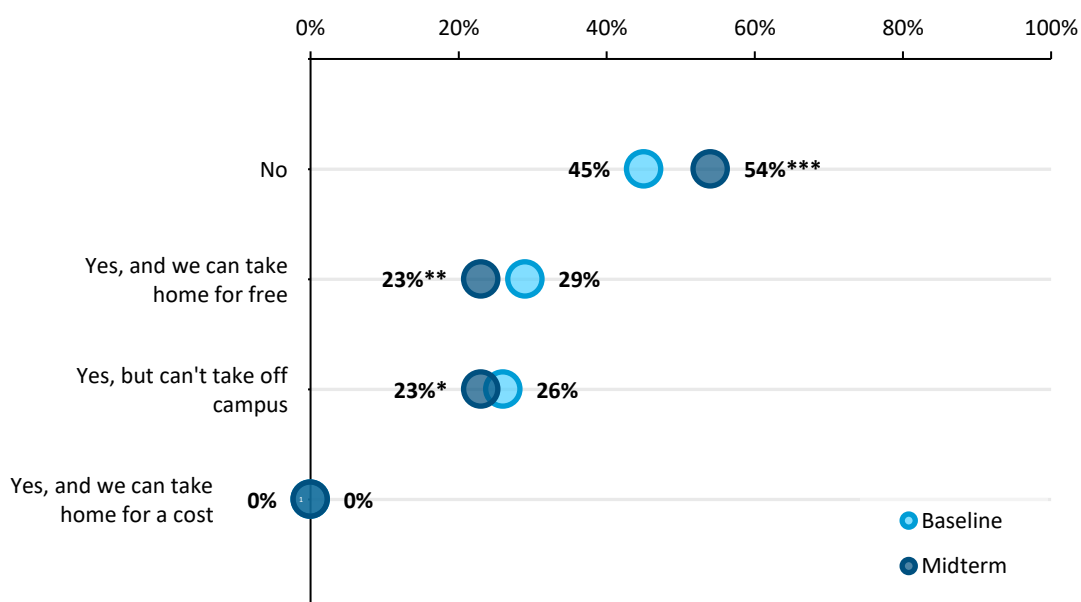
Exhibit 19. Books Available at Home



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 1007$, at baseline and 988 at midterm.

Overall, there was a decline from baseline to midterm in the ability of students to access non-textbook reading materials in schools from 45% of students not having access at baseline to 55% at midterm ($p < 0.01$) (Exhibit 20). Further, there was a six percentage point decline from baseline to midterm in students' reporting that they were allowed to take them home for free ($p < 0.05$). There were variations in responses between counties. In Grand Gedeh, 19% of schools had books that could be taken home (a 24 percentage point decline from baseline, $p < 0.01$). In River Gee, half of the schools had non-textbooks available, and of those schools, 36% said they could be taken home (a 28 percentage point increase from baseline, $p < 0.10$). In Rivercess, 87% of students reported that their school did not have non-textbooks (an 18 percentage point increase from baseline, $p < 0.01$), and just 7% said that their school had books that could be borrowed.

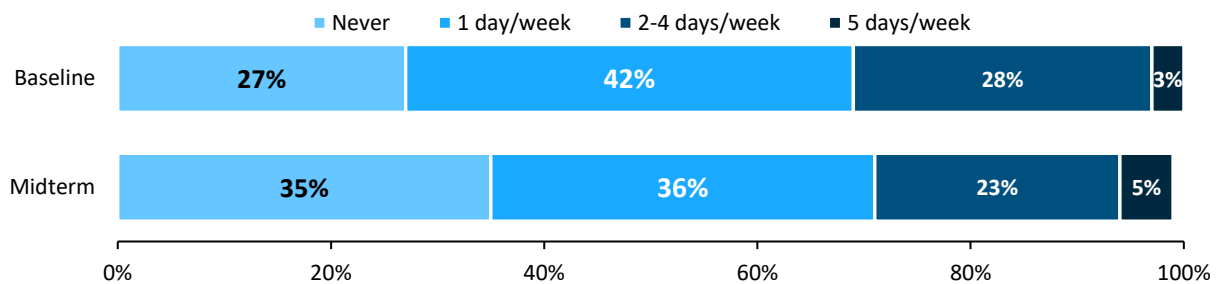
Exhibit 20. Access to Non-Textbook Reading Materials in Schools



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 620$ at baseline and 601 at midterm.

Of the students who said they could bring books home, 64% reported doing so at least once per week at midterm, relative to 73% at baseline (Exhibit 21). The percentage of students who brought home books 5 days a week increased from 3% at baseline to 5% at midline. Girls were more likely to take books home at midterm relative to boys (7 percentage points, $p < 0.10$). In River Gee, a little more than a third of the students reported never borrowing non-textbook reading materials, an increase from 0% at baseline ($p < 0.10$). More than half the sample in Rivercess also reported not borrowing any non-textbook reading materials at midterm.

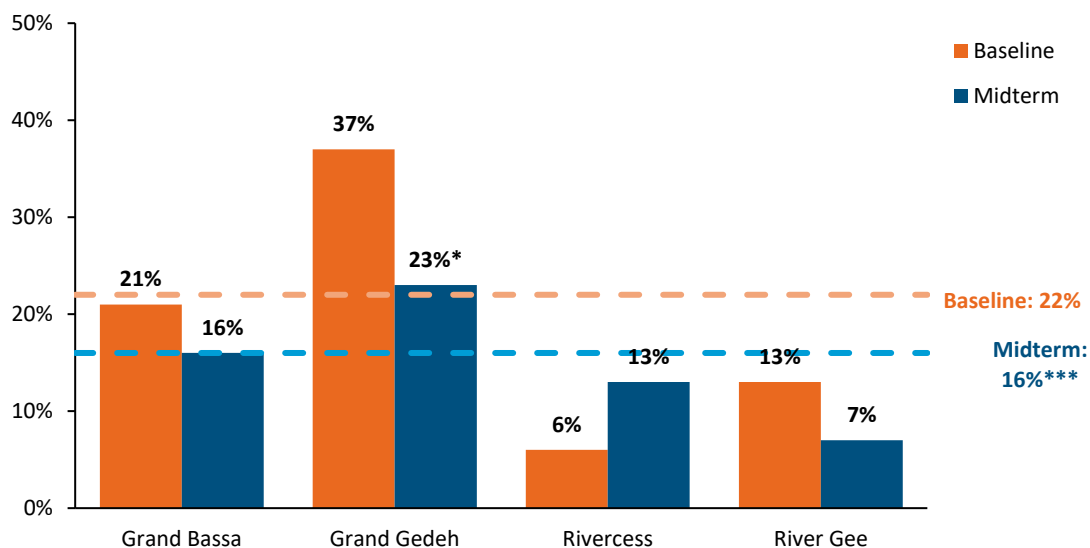
Exhibit 21. Frequency With Which Students Borrowed Non-Textbook Reading Materials to Take Home



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. $*p < 0.10$; $**p < 0.05$; $***p < 0.01$. N = 181 at baseline and 137 at midterm. Note: This question was only asked of students who reported taking home a non-textbook reading material.

There was an overall decline from baseline to midterm in the proportion of students who read books other than textbooks outside of school by 6 percentage points ($p < 0.01$). Except for Rivercess, all other counties witnessed a decline from baseline to midterm (Exhibit 22). There was also a decline in students agreeing or strongly agreeing to enjoying reading in general from baseline to midterm by 20 percentage points ($p < 0.01$), with no differences by gender or county.

Exhibit 22. Proportion of Students Who Read Books Other Than Textbooks Outside of School, by County



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. $*p < 0.10$; $**p < 0.05$; $***p < 0.01$. Grand Bassa N = 248 at baseline and 245 at midterm. Grand Gedeh N = 154 at baseline and 147 at midterm. Rivercess N = 67 at baseline and 97 at midterm. River Gee N = 154 at baseline and 122 at midterm.

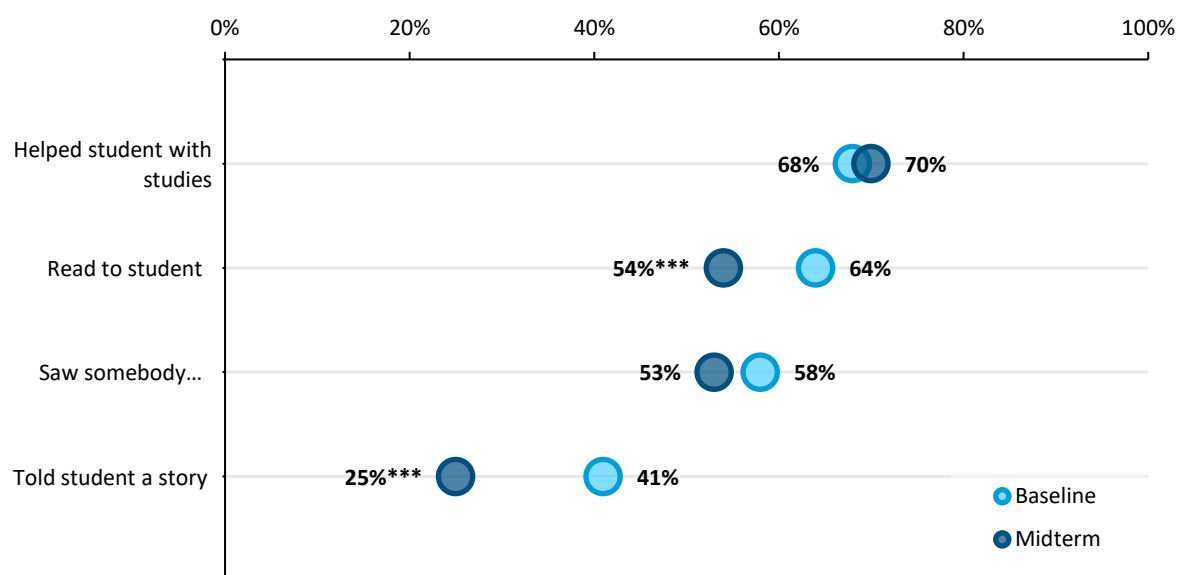
The qualitative data tell a similar story, that was also seen at baseline: students were eager to read but lacked resources, including at school. SC national staff noted that there had been multiple

delays in the distribution of books, which was confirmed to be problematic in many communities. Also, communities continued to remark that the books delivered, while welcome, were inadequate to address all the literacy needs in the community, saying that they would benefit from books that went beyond Grade 2, and they would benefit from books that were more focused on subjects like social studies or science, which may interest learners more. While previous evaluations of LEARN provided evidence of Literacy champions creating their own reading materials to try to overcome these challenges, there was no evidence of this at LEARN II midterm. Instead, there appears to be much less literacy champion activity at midterm compared to baseline. While Literacy Champions were phased out as a LEARN intervention after the first phase of the project, the qualitative team found only one each was active in one River Gee school and the one Grand Gedeh school. Literacy champions will be replaced with Catch up Clubs whose implementation has been delayed until after midterm. Others had been absent for months to years. While the literacy champion in one of the communities complained of lack of training and materials, the literacy champion in the other reported multiple activities with the community. In that community, standing out from others, caregivers and learners noted that there was literacy support available. Still, actual materials were lacking.

Home Literacy Environment

We asked students about the literacy support they received in their homes, as research has shown connections between the home literacy environment and reading outcomes (Dowd et al., 2016; Kim, 2009). Overall, there was a decline in reading to the student at home from 64% at baseline to 54% at midterm ($p < 0.01$). There was also a decline in telling students a story from 41% at baseline to 25% at midterm ($p < 0.01$) (Exhibit 23). There was an increase in the percentage of students who reported being helped with their studies from 68% at baseline to 70% at midline. Students whose main language was English were more likely to have someone reading to them at home relative to those who primarily spoke a different language (37% vs. 28%, $p < 0.01$). There were county-level differences at midterm. Rivercess, which had the lowest parental engagement at baseline, saw significant improvements from baseline to midterm around seeing someone reading at home (37 percentage points, $p < 0.01$), someone helping with studies (25 percentage points, $p < 0.01$), and someone at home reading to the student (35 percentage points, $p < 0.01$). Conversely, River Gee, which had the highest home engagement at baseline, saw the largest decline in someone reading to the student at home (44 percentage points, $p < 0.01$) and in seeing someone reading at home (38 percentage points, $p < 0.01$).

Exhibit 23. Household Literacy Activities in the Past Week



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. N = 624 at baseline and 607 at midterm.

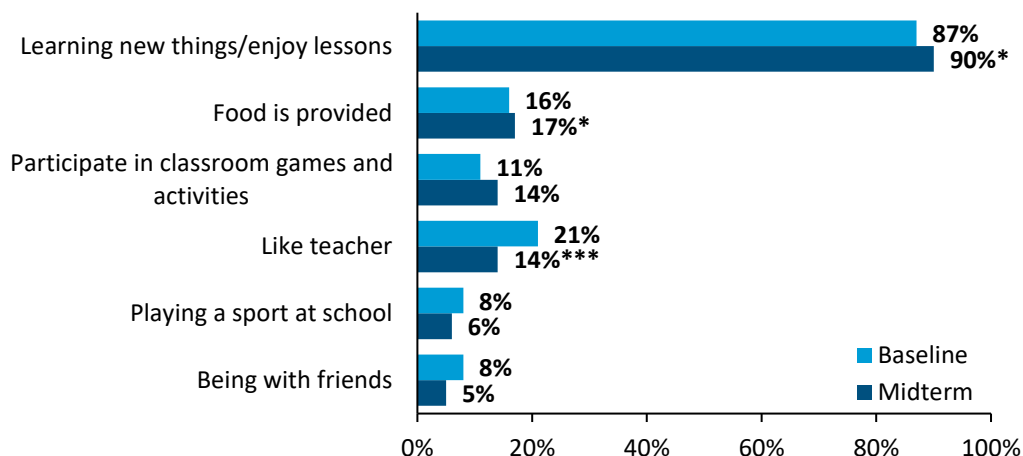
According to qualitative data, students are generally dependent on literate family members to help them. Respondents in only one community said they knew about the “I help my child to read” tool and, accordingly, most parents said that they were unable to help their students because of their own illiteracy. When possible, parents would pay for a “home tutor” but this was often prohibitively expensive.

Student Attitudes Toward Schooling

To assess students' attitudes toward school, we asked Grade 2 students what they liked and disliked about school. Most students listed “learning new things” as something they enjoy both at baseline and midterm, with a marginal increase at midterm ($p < 0.10$) (Exhibit 24). There was also a marginal increase from baseline to midterm in enjoying school because food is provided ($p < 0.10$). There was, however, a significant decline in students liking their teacher from 21% to 14% from baseline to midterm ($p < 0.01$). At midterm, the only gender difference was that girls were twice as likely to say that they like participating in classroom games (18% vs. 9%, $p < 0.01$). We also asked students specifically if they enjoyed reading; like at baseline, 96% said they do at midterm. At midterm, students whose main language was English were more likely to like coming to school relative to those who primarily spoke a different language ($p < 0.01$). In terms of county-level differences, in Grand Gedeh, there was a 38 percentage point increase in enjoying school because food is provided ($p < 0.01$), and a 17 percentage point decline in students reporting that they liked the teacher ($p < 0.01$). There was also a 16 percentage point increase from baseline to midterm in students strongly agreeing that they felt valued and respected at school by teachers,

with Grand Bassa (26 percentage points, $p < 0.01$), and Rivercess (19 percentage points, $p < 0.01$) reporting the largest increases.

Exhibit 24. What Students Enjoy About School

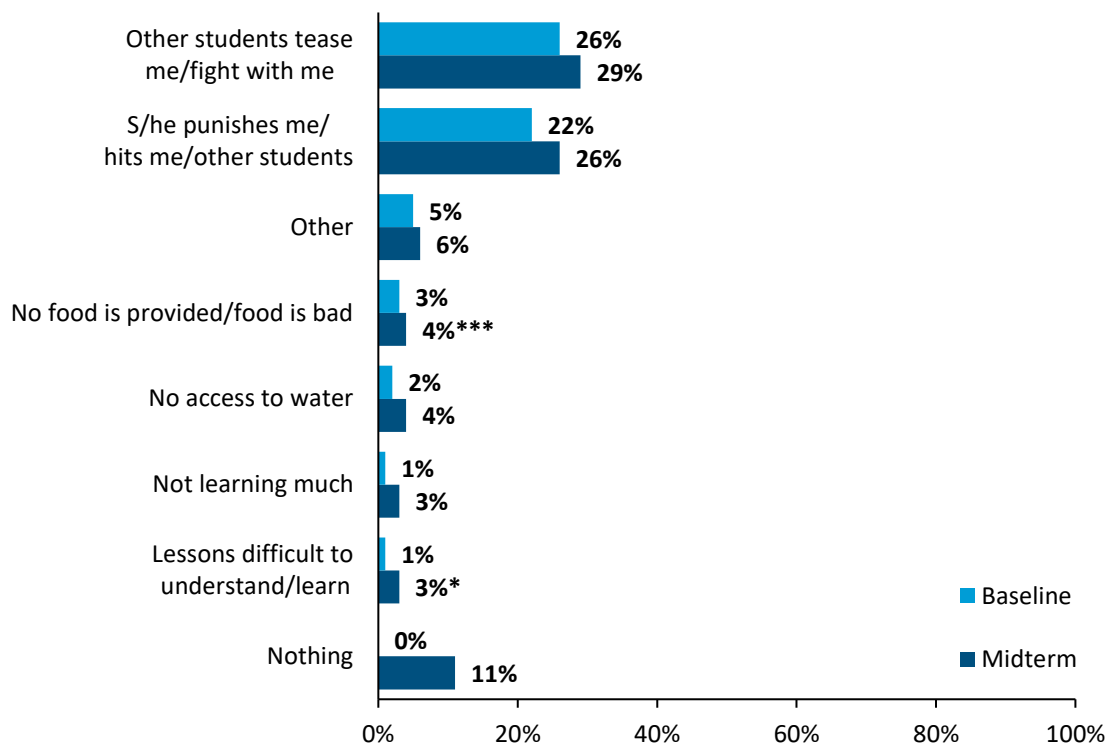


Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. N = 625 at baseline and 608 at midterm. Responses under 3% were omitted from the graph. Note: This question was only asked of Grade 2 students. Responses under 2% are omitted from this graph.

The qualitative data also indicated, as with previous evaluations, that students enjoyed school and needed little convincing of its value. Students also revealed high expectations about what they could achieve in their future, provided they were able to continue their schooling.

The quantitative data show that students were more divided about what they did not like about school. The two most common responses at midterm (like baseline), being teased or fought with by students and being punished by teachers, are both more related to being personally put down by others than the teaching or infrastructure of the school (Exhibit 25). Like baseline, very few students mentioned teachers asking them for money (2%) or not feeling safe at school (0%). Non-English speakers (3%) were more likely to list lessons being difficult to understand than English speakers (1%), a difference significant at the 10% level. They were also more likely (29% vs. 20%, $p < 0.01$) to report being punished by the teacher as a reason for not liking school.

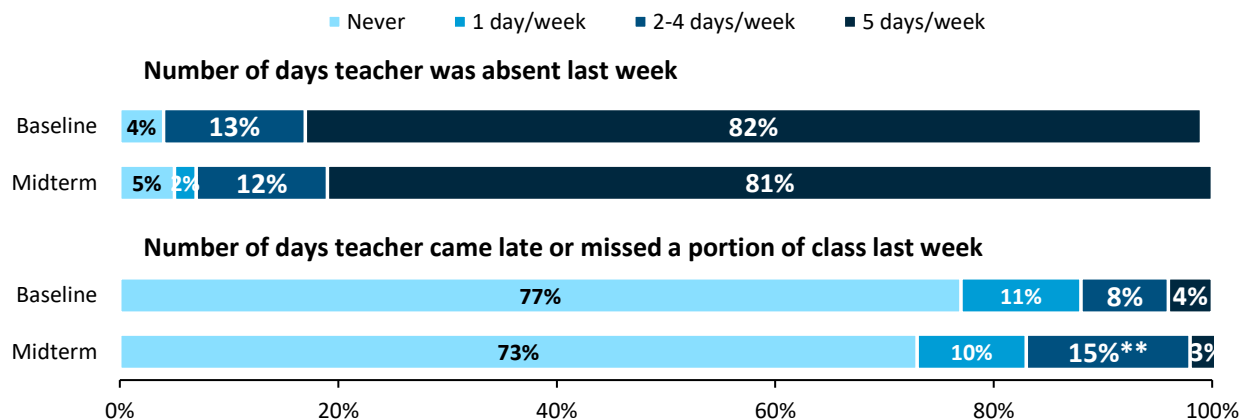
Exhibit 25. What Students Dislike About School



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. N = 625 at baseline and 615 at midterm. Note: This question was only asked of Grade 2 students. Responses under 3% at midterm are omitted from this graph.

Like baseline, students reported that their teachers attend school most or every day (Exhibit 26). There were slightly different rates by county with 0% of students in Grand Gedeh saying their teachers missed every day of school in the last week compared to 9% in River Gee. There was an increase from baseline to midterm in students saying their teachers are absent 2–4 days per week (8% vs. 15%, $p < 0.05$); however, the change appears to come from some teachers becoming tardier and some becoming less so over time.

Exhibit 26. Teacher Attendance According to Students



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Absenteeism $N_s = 426$ at baseline and 443 at midterm. Tardiness $N_s = 408$ at baseline and 421 at midterm. Only students who were in class the previous five days were asked.

The qualitative data, noting that it is from older students in Grades 4, 5, and 6, showed that students overall enjoy school and are generally positive about their teachers. Notably different from baseline and LEARN I evaluations, students substantially less often reported being beaten by teachers or being asked to do manual labor but noted alternative discipline such as being asked to clean the classroom after school or stand in a corner inside the classroom during instruction. Indeed, some did remark that they had absent teachers sometimes, and one FGD of girls noted that their principal often came to school drunk. Also, students noted that while they greatly appreciated school lunches, they were often dissatisfied when the food tasted spoiled or had bugs in it.

Reading Outcomes

According to the LBRA collected from Grade 2 students, at midterm, 47% of students could identify at least 90% of the letters in the alphabet. Twelve percent of second graders could read at midterm, an increase from nine percent at baseline. Just 2% could read with comprehension (a 2-percentage point decline from baseline, $p < 0.10$) (Exhibit 27). There was also a decline in reading comprehension levels among readers from baseline to midterm by 41 percentage points ($p < 0.01$), with Grand Bassa witnessing the largest declines. At midterm, boys were more likely to be readers (16% vs. 10%, $p < 0.05$). There were also some differences between students whose primary language was English relative to non-English speakers. Among readers, 59% of English language speakers could answer 80% of the reading comprehension questions correctly, relative to 28% of non-English speakers ($p < 0.01$).

Exhibit 27. Reading Outcomes, by County

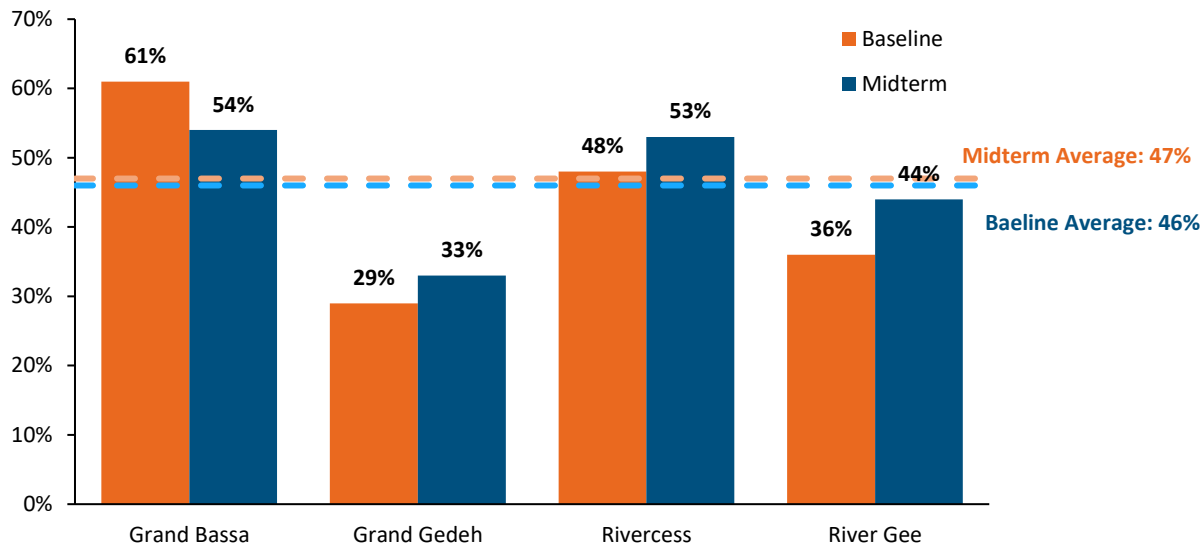
Literacy Indicator	Grand Bassa		Grand Gedeh		Rivercess		River Gee		Overall	
	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M
Letter knowledge (identified >90% of letters)	61%	54%	29%	33%	48%	53%	36%	44%	46%	47%
Most used words (% identified)	28%	31%	13%	16%	22%	20%	16%	17%	21%	23%
Invented words (% identified)	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%**	1%	1%	1%	1%
Readers	14%	20%	3%	3%	12%	11%	7%	8%	9%	12%
Accuracy (% of words in passage read correctly) ^a	48%	52%	34%	43%	50%	42%	72%	36%**	52%	48%
Fluency (words/minute) ^a	21	17	10	17	16	13	28	13*	21	16*
Listening comprehension (readers) ^a	14%	8%	25%	20%	0%	9%	0%	2%	10%	11%
Reading comprehension (readers) ^a	68%	24%**	0%	50%	80%	0%	82%	67%	67%	26%***
Listening comprehension (non-readers)	12%	4%***	14%	13%	15%	6%	15%	11%	13%	8%**
Reading comprehension	5%	3%	0	1%	6%	0%	6%	2%*	4%	2%*

Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. B = Baseline. M = Midterm.

Baseline N = 249 (35 readers) in Grand Bassa, 154 (4 readers) in Grand Gedeh, 67 (8 readers) in Rivercess, and 155 (11 readers) in River Gee. Midterm N = 247 (50 readers) in Grand Bassa, 147 (5 readers) in Grand Gedeh, 97 (11 readers) in Rivercess, and 124 (10 readers) in River Gee. ^a Among readers only.

To assess students' letter knowledge, enumerators showed students a chart of 26 letters in English and asked them to identify the sound of each letter. As shown in Exhibit 28, Grade 2 students in Grand Bassa (54%) were more likely to be able to identify at least 90% of the letters in the alphabet while Grand Gedeh's students were the lowest performers at 33%. The gender gap from baseline to midterm declined, with around half of both boys and girls being able to identify letters proficiently at midterm, relative to 51% of boys and 39% of girls at baseline (see Exhibit B2 in Appendix B). While 50% of students could not identify 90% of the letters, 81% could identify at least 80% of the letters and only 3% could name 10 letters or fewer (about 40% of the letters). Overall, on average, at midterm, students could identify 84% of the letters correctly, like baseline.

Exhibit 28. Letter Knowledge, by County

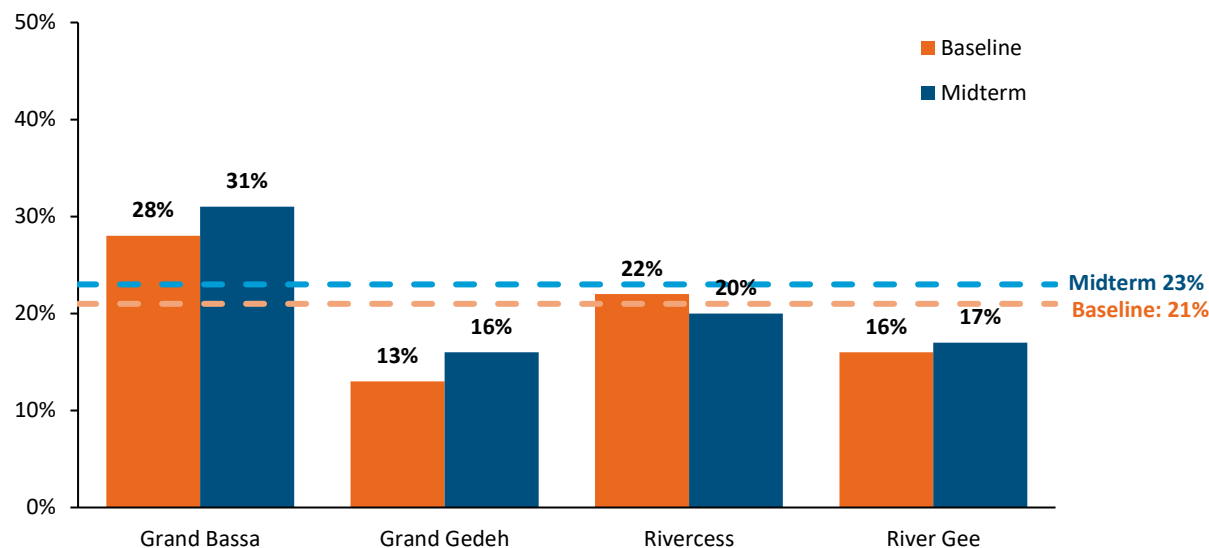


Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline N s = 249 in Grand Bassa, 154 in Grand Gedeh, 67 in Rivercess, and 155 in River Gee. Midterm N s = 247 in Grand Bassa, 147 in Grand Gedeh, 97 in Rivercess, and 124 in River Gee.

To assess children's ability to recognize words, students were given a chart of 20 words that we developed based on the most frequently used words from their textbooks. As shown in Exhibit 29, similar to letter knowledge, students in Grand Bassa (31%) outperformed the other counties (16% to 20%) in their ability to identify common words. Again, like baseline, at midterm, there was a gender gap, with boys identifying 25% of the words compared to 21% of girls ($p < 0.05$).

We also included a decodable word test in the LBRA to measure the ability of students to recognize basic sounds and phonemes. We rearranged the 20 most common words from the word recognition test to form "pseudo words" and asked students to decode them. Like baseline, at midterm, this subtest proved to be a struggle for students who, on average, could only identify 1% of the invented words.

Exhibit 29. Most Used Words Knowledge, by County

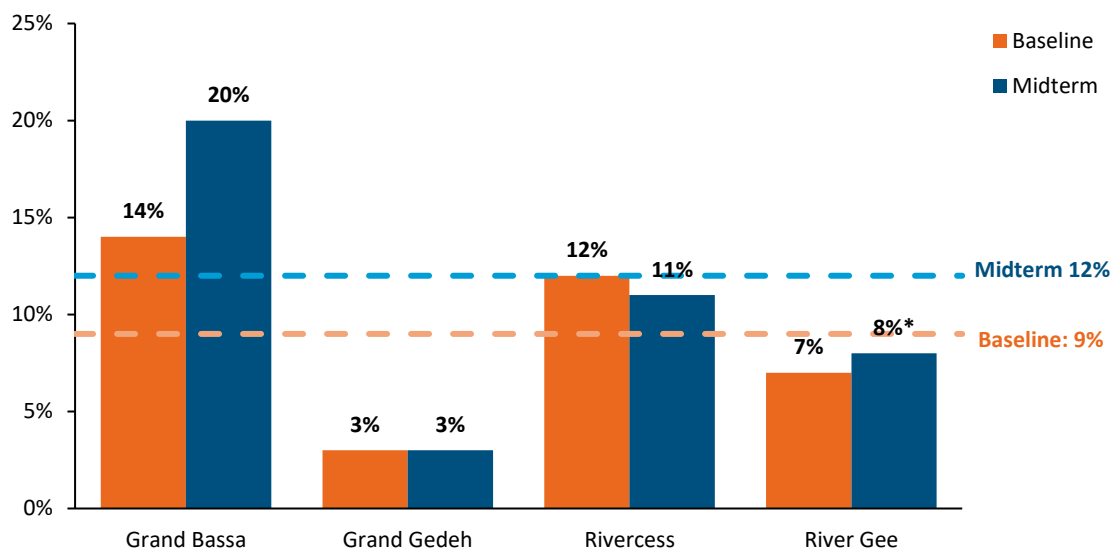


Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 249$ in Grand Bassa, 154 in Grand Gedeh, 67 in Rivercess, and 155 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 247$ in Grand Bassa, 147 in Grand Gedeh, 97 in Rivercess, and 124 in River Gee.

The reading comprehension section of the LBRA began by asking students to read a 155-word story. Students were classified as readers if they could read at least five words in the first 30 seconds. If the student was deemed a reader, they were given time to read the whole passage. If the student was a reader but could not complete the passage or if the student was not a reader, then the enumerator read the passage to them. As shown in Exhibit 30 below, 12% of the students were classified as readers at midterm, relative to 9% at baseline, though this was not a statistically significant change. Literacy was higher in Grand Bassa and Rivercess (20% and 11%, respectively) than River Gee and Grand Gedeh (8% and 3%). At midterm, a larger proportion of boys were classified as readers relative to girls (16% vs. 10%, $p < 0.05$).

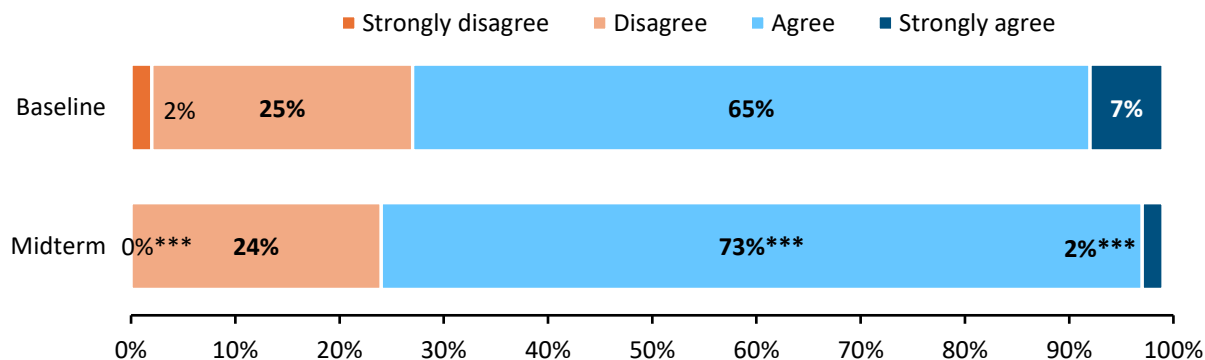
The low readership numbers contrast with students' self-reported ability to read. Most students in each county saw themselves as good readers (Exhibit 31). This points to a mismatch in expectations between students and the educational system. The low literacy levels in students' communities could indicate that students are generally good readers relative to their community, even if they are not truly readers yet as defined by the LBRA.

Exhibit 30. Proportion of Students Who Can Read, by County



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 249$ in Grand Bassa, 154 in Grand Gedeh, 67 in Rivercess, and 155 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 247$ in Grand Bassa, 147 in Grand Gedeh, 97 in Rivercess, and 124 in River Gee.

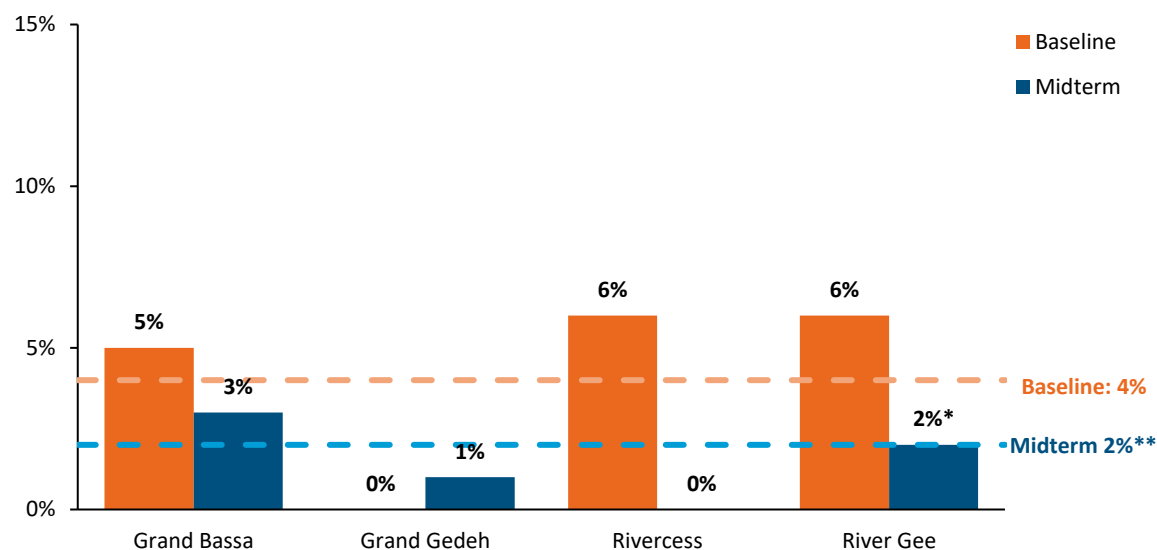
Exhibit 31. Proportion of Students Who Consider Themselves a Good Reader



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 622$ at baseline and 612 at midterm.

Exhibit 32 compares the proportion of readers and readers with comprehension in each county. Few students demonstrated the ability to read with comprehension (2%) at midterm, a 2-percentage point reduction from baseline ($p < 0.05$). This was consistent across counties except for Grand Gedeh, where only 1% of students were able to read with comprehension. Students whose main language was English were more likely to read with comprehension (4% vs. 2%, $p < 0.05$).

Exhibit 32. Proportion of Students Who Can Read with Comprehension, by County



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 249$ in Grand Bassa, 154 in Grand Gedeh, 67 in Rivercess, and 155 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 247$ in Grand Bassa, 147 in Grand Gedeh, 97 in Rivercess, and 124 in River Gee.

We also looked at comprehension based on type of reader—a reader who could read the whole passage, a reader who could not finish the passage, or a non-reader. Enumerators read the passage to readers who could not complete the passage and to non-readers. There was a significant decline from baseline to midterm, with comprehension among the readers who could read the whole passage themselves declining from 67% of these students successfully comprehending the passage at baseline to 26% at midterm ($p < 0.01$). There were large regional variations among these students, ranging from 0% in Rivercess to 67% in River Gee. However, these results should be interpreted with caution given the small sample of readers who could read the complete passage. Listeners struggled to understand the passage, with 8% of non-readers (a 3 percentage point decline from baseline, $p < 0.01$) and 11% of readers who could not complete the passage successfully comprehending the text.

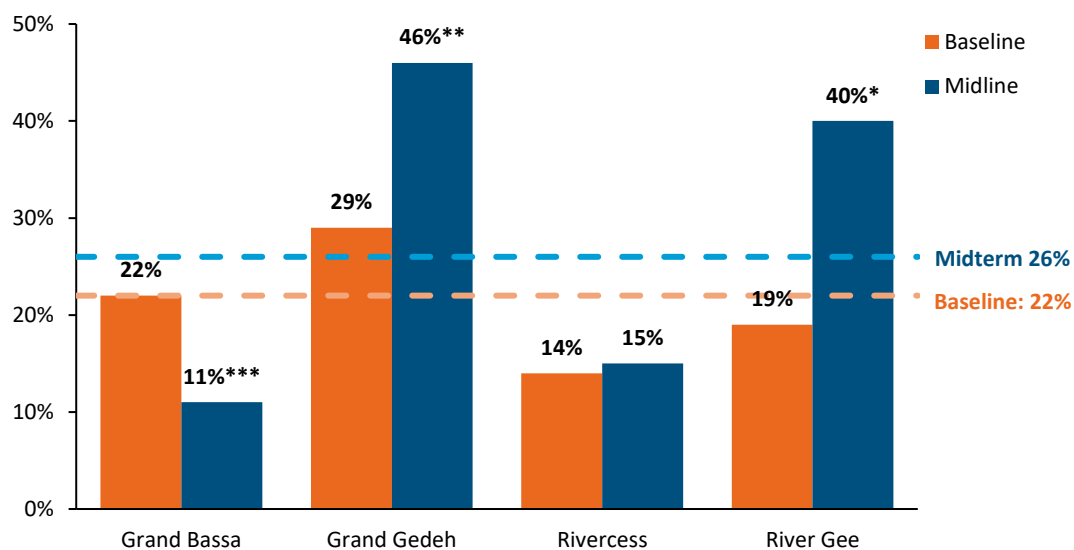
4.3 Other Student Outcomes

This section describes differences between baseline and midterm for key project evaluation outcome indicators pertaining to health and hygiene, nutrition knowledge and practice, SRGBV, gender norms, and disability. Like at baseline, at midterm, enumerators asked questions about these topics of both Grade 2 and 6 students, except for questions about gender norms, which enumerators only directed to Grade 6 students.

Hygiene and Handwashing Practices

To better understand students' hygiene knowledge and practices, we first asked students to name the critical times when they should wash their hands and then asked them when they actually wash their hands. The critical handwashing moments include after using the toilet to defecate, after using the toilet to urinate, and before consuming food. Overall, there were no major changes in handwashing knowledge from baseline to midterm. (Exhibit 33). Most students knew that they should wash their hands after defecating (85%); however, fewer knew to do so after urinating (49%) or before eating (56%). At midterm, there was wide variation in handwashing knowledge by county, ranging from 11% in Grand Bassa to 48% in Grand Gedeh. Grand Gedeh and River Gee witnessed a significant increase in handwashing knowledge from baseline to midterm (17 percentage points and 11 percentage points, respectively), while there was an 11 percentage point reduction in handwashing knowledge in Grand Bassa ($p < 0.01$). There were differences among students whose main language spoken at home was English relative to those whose main language spoken was different from English, with English-speaking students significantly more likely to report that they wash their hands at these critical times by 4 percentage points ($p < 0.05$). There were no significant differences between Grade 2 and Grade 6 students at midterm.

Exhibit 33. Students' Handwashing Knowledge



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 381$ in Grand Bassa, 261 in Grand Gedeh, 102 in Rivercess, and 263 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 398$ in Grand Bassa, 224 in Grand Gedeh, 164 in Rivercess, and 202 in River Gee.

There was a decline from baseline to midterm in students reporting that they washed their hands the previous day (87% vs. 93%, $p < 0.01$). Of these, the proportion washing with only water increased from baseline to midterm by 7 percentage points ($p < 0.01$) and those washing with

soap and water declined by 5 percentage points ($p < 0.05$). River Gee and Grand Bassa witnessed the largest declines from baseline to midterm in students reporting washing hands yesterday by 16 and 6 percentage points, respectively. Students in Grade 6 were more likely to use soap and water than Grade 2 students by a margin of 9 percentage points (92% to 83%), a difference significant at the 1% level. It should be noted that handwashing data are known to be subject to social desirability bias and therefore should be interpreted with caution (Contzen et al., 2015).

Despite the high proportion of students saying they washed their hands yesterday, at midterm, only 12% did so at each of the three critical moments, a decline from 16% at baseline, driven by results in Grand Bassa. However, this change was not statistically significant. Similar to the decline in handwashing knowledge in Grand Bassa, in Grand Bassa, washing hands at the three critical moments also declined significantly by 14 percentage points from baseline to midterm ($p < 0.01$). There were no significant deviations from baseline in the other three counties with respect to washing hands at the three critical moments. Again, at midterm, most students said they washed their hands after defecating (71%), a significant decline from baseline by 11 percentage points ($p < 0.01$). Smaller proportions said they did so after urinating (34%) or before eating (42%). There were no significant differences by grade at midterm.

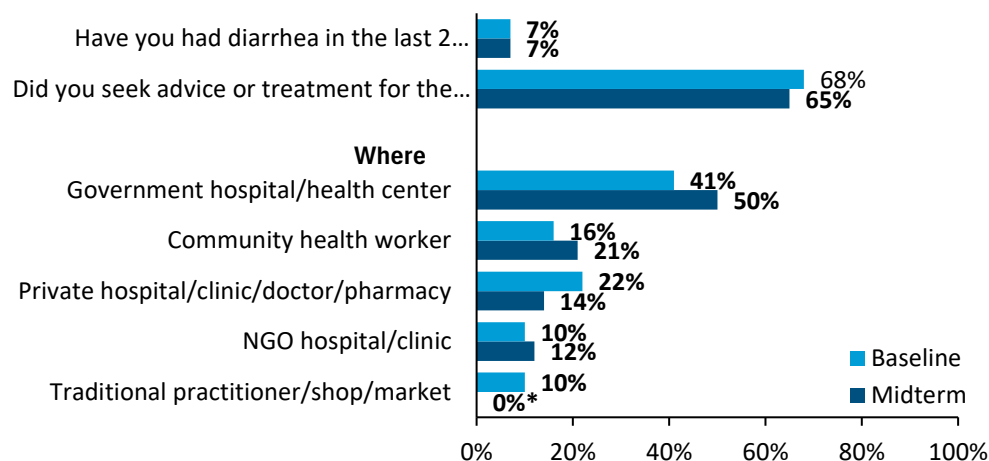
The qualitative data tell a more positive story, suggesting that school cleanliness and student hygiene is good, and has in many cases been said to improve since baseline, particularly with SHCs becoming more active and effective and school health and nutrition (SHN) champions active in all schools as part of LEARN II. In some schools (three of 12), it was said that latrines could become very dirty as a result of inadequate supplies or people to clean them (janitors were said to be responsible); however, this did not appear to be a prevalent or regular problem in most schools. Water was not said to be an issue, and handwashing was mentioned in all student FGDs as a main topic that they had learned about via SHN champions or SHCs.

Diarrhea Disease

For the LEARN II baseline and midterm evaluations, we added questions on the prevalence of diarrhea and how it is treated. Like baseline, at midterm, a relatively low proportion of students (7%) reported experiencing diarrhea in the past two weeks. The remaining diarrhea questions were only asked to these students, so the sample sizes are small, and results should be interpreted with caution. Students who had diarrhea reported eating much less than usual. Sixty-five percent said they ate “much less than usual” while another 8% said they did not eat at all. Exhibit 34 shows the differences between baseline and midterm among the students who sought treatment for diarrhea. Overall, there were no significant differences between baseline and midterm in where students sought treatment. Most reported seeking treatment from a government hospital or health center (50%). Fourteen percent sought treatment from a private facility, while 21% used

community health workers. Boys (54%) were about twice as likely to seek treatment from a government hospital than girls (26%), a difference significant at the 5% level.

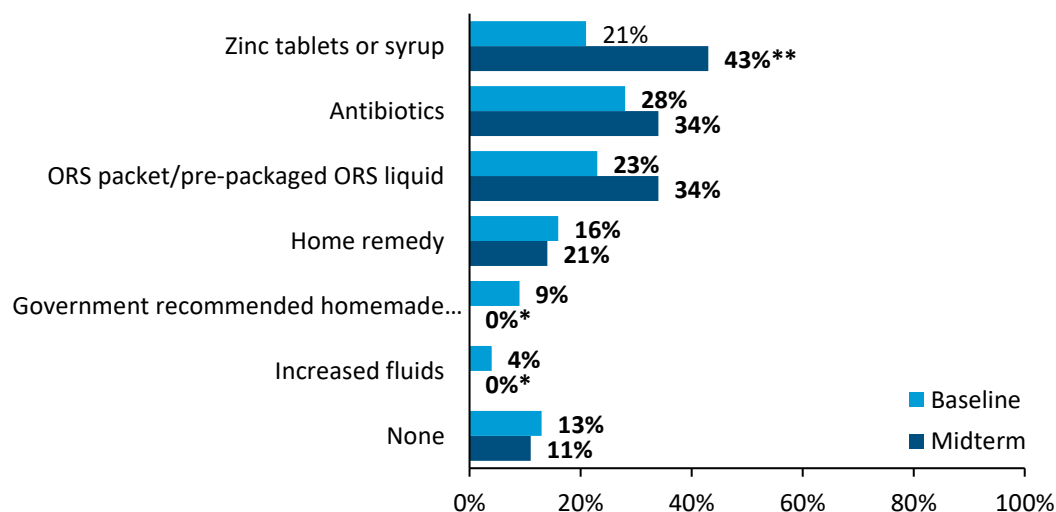
Exhibit 34. Proportion of Students Who Sought Treatment for Diarrhea



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 1,007$ at baseline and 996 at midterm. Questions about treatment of diarrhea were only asked to those who had recently experienced it. Responses under 3% were omitted from the graph.

As shown in Exhibit 35, there were some differences between baseline and midterm in the treatment of diarrhea, with zinc tablets or syrup significantly increasing as a treatment option by 22 percentage points ($p < 0.05$). The next most common treatment options were antibiotics (34%) and oral rehydration salts packets (34%). There were some county-level differences at midterm. Increased fluids were the most common treatment option in Grand Gedeh (54%), while antibiotics were the most common treatment option in Grand Bassa (57%).

Exhibit 35. Treatments Received by Students for Diarrhea



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 75$ at baseline and 65 at midterm. Questions about treatment of diarrhea were only asked to those who had recently experienced it. Responses under 3% were omitted from the graph.

Disability

Like baseline, at midterm, we assessed visual, auditory, or physical impairments that may impede students' ability to learn in the classroom by asking students a shortened set of questions from the Washington Group Questions (2020). These questions reflect current thinking and measurement of child functioning. There were marginal increases in students reporting disabilities at midterm relative to baseline, with a 1 percentage point increase in students reporting difficulty hearing (0% vs. 1%, $p < 0.05$) and a 2 percentage point increase in students reporting difficulty walking or climbing steps (2%, vs. 4%, $p < 0.05$). There were no differences by gender, grade, or county.

Nutrition Knowledge

To gauge students' nutritional knowledge, we asked students if they knew what a balanced diet was and if they could identify different types of foods by food groups. To pass a balanced diet test, students had to describe go, grow, and glow food groups. Only 3% of students said they knew what a balanced diet meant at midterm, up marginally from 2% at baseline. Further, like baseline, at midterm, fewer than 1% were able to prove it.¹⁶ Among students who said they knew what a balanced diet was, there was a 26 percentage point decline in students being able to identify what "go" foods (foods that give us energy) were from baseline to midterm ($p < 0.10$). Like baseline, about half could identify "grow" foods (food that help us grow) at midterm, and 45% could identify "glow" foods (foods that protect us from disease) at midterm compared to 27% at baseline. Grade 6 students were significantly more likely to say they knew what a "balanced diet" is (7% vs. 1%, $p < 0.01$). When it came to defining a balanced diet, they were significantly more likely to mention protection from disease (glow foods) (52% vs. 0%, $p < 0.10$) and were more likely to be able to give an example of glow foods (64% vs. 52%, $p < 0.01$).

We then asked all students to name foods that belong to each of these nutritional groups. For "go" foods, students overwhelmingly named grains (90%), followed by roots (57%). In fact, just 1% of students could not name any "go" foods. Students gave a wider variety of answers for "grow" foods, including beans (30%), red meat (20%), fish (14%), poultry (10%), and eggs (4%). Additionally, 4% named other foods, which included mostly rice, fruits (especially bananas), and tubers. Thirteen percent of students could not name any "grow" foods. Similar to the balanced diet test, students demonstrated the least knowledge of "glow" foods; 17% could not name any at all. The most common "glow" foods cited were green leafy vegetables (37%) and fruits (35%).

¹⁶ There were delays in the validation of the simplified Nutrition Guide which led to a delay in activities promoting nutrition knowledge in LEARN II.

The confusion that students exhibit in understanding which foods belong to the three nutritional groups highlights a lack of knowledge of the nutritional benefits of protein among some students. Another challenge is the terminology used in the survey, which may not be used consistently throughout schools. Save the Children used to train students using the “Go, Glow, and Grow” terms; however, in many cases, schools used the Ministry of Health guidance, which uses different terminology.

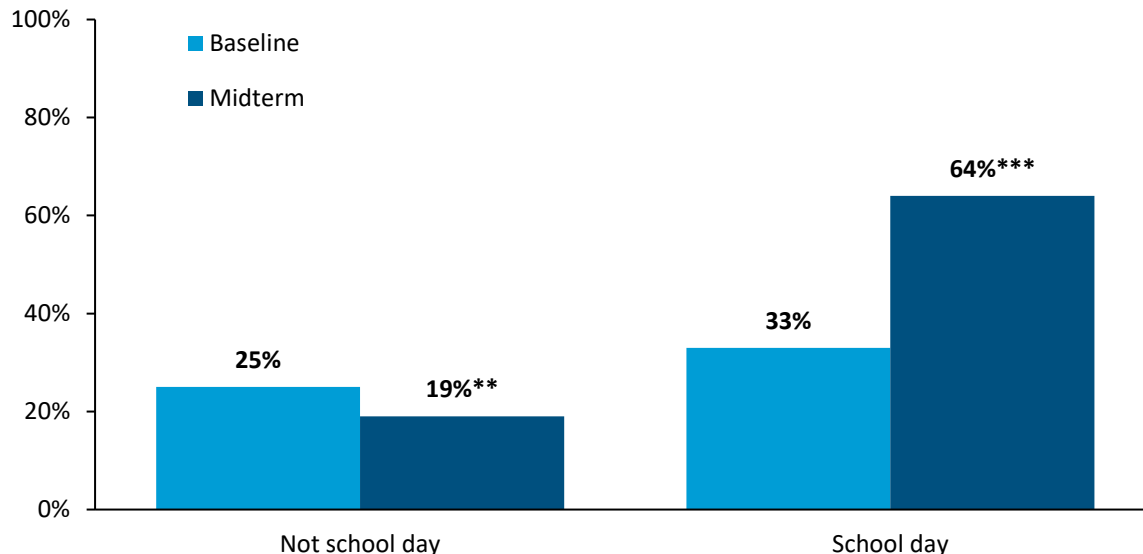
As at baseline, qualitative data suggested that nutrition education was generally not provided across schools, and conversations about nutrition were uncommon. No student across all FGDs mentioned that nutrition education was part of SHN activities¹⁷, and just two of the principals noted anything about nutrition when prompted (one said that he learned about it; another said he taught about diversifying one’s diet).

Food Intake

Next, we asked students about their food consumption. We first asked them how many meals they typically eat on a school day and on non-school days (e.g., weekends, holidays). They were more likely to eat three meals per day on school days, an indication that the school meals were helping several students meet their minimum consumption needs. Overall, at midterm, 48% of the students reported eating two meals on non-school days and three on school days, a 32 percentage point increase from baseline ($p < 0.01$). There was a large 31 percentage point increase in the proportion of students reporting getting three meals on school days ($p < 0.01$). There was a 6 percentage point decline in the proportion of students reporting getting three meals on non-school days ($p < 0.05$) (Exhibit 36). In terms of county-level differences, Rivercess saw an improvement from baseline to midterm. At baseline, Rivercess was the main driver of the school day/non-school day gap, with 61% of students receiving three meals on school days but only 11% on non-school days. This gap reduced at midterm, with an 18 percentage point increase in students receiving three meals on non-school days. Both Grand Gedeh and Grand Bassa saw a significant increase in students receiving three meals on school days by 43 percentage points ($p < 0.01$), and 32 percentage points ($p < 0.01$), respectively. Looking at the different grades, Grade 2 students were less likely to report eating at least three meals per day on non-school days (16% vs. 24%, $p < 0.01$) but more likely to get at least three meals on school days (66% vs. 60%, $p < 0.05$).

¹⁷ Not all schools have SHCs, while all schools are supposed to have SHN Champions that work with the PTAs to support SHN activities in schools.

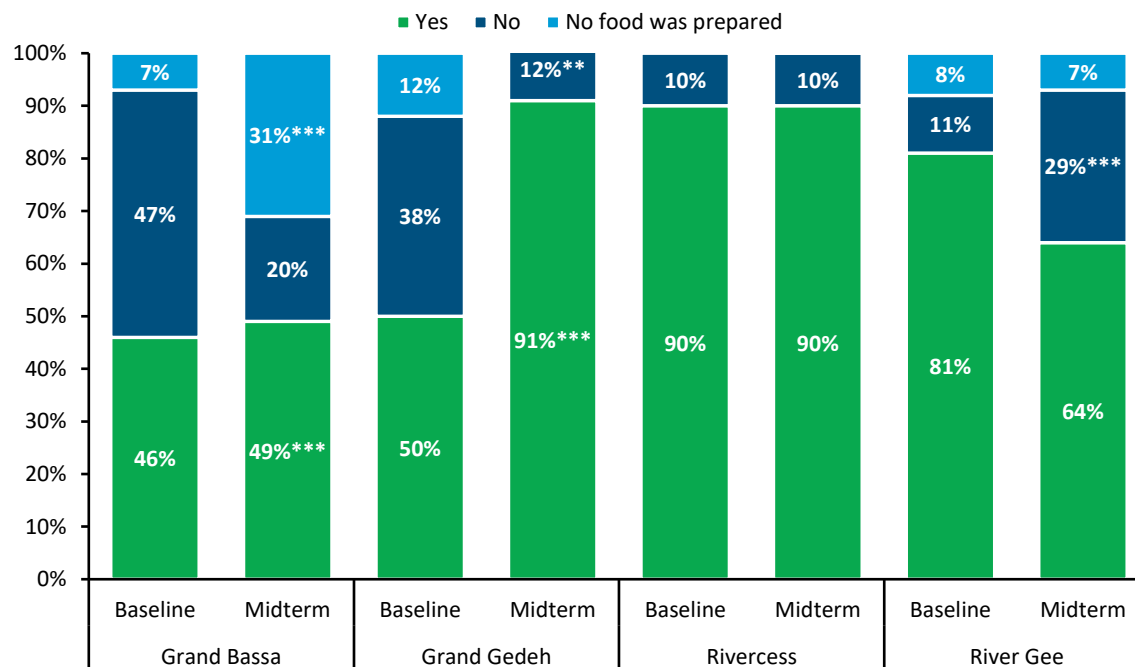
Exhibit 36. Proportion of Students Who Ate Three Meals per Day



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 1,007$ at baseline and 996 at midterm.

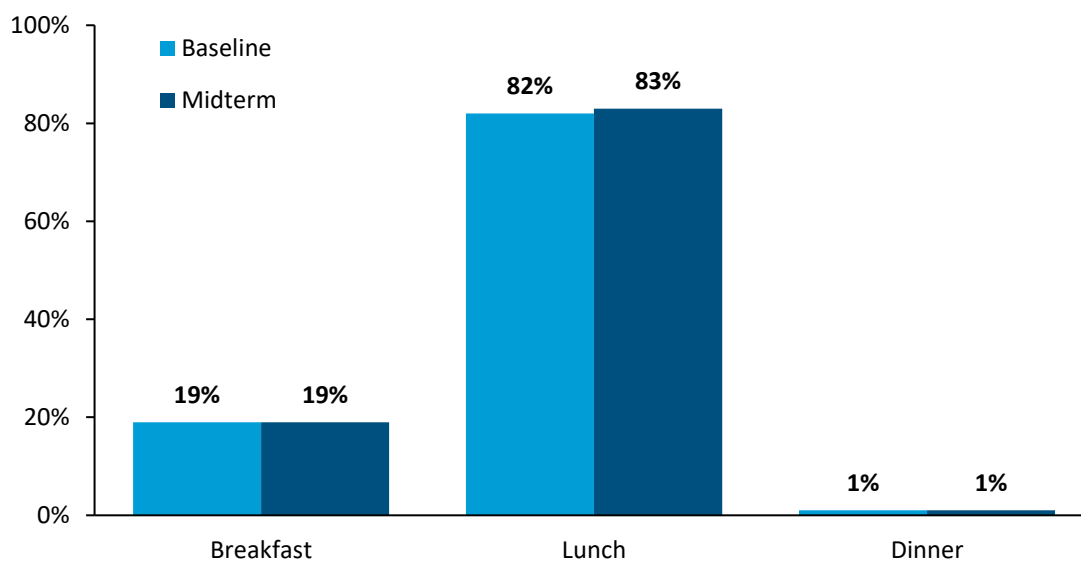
There were no significant differences from baseline to midterm in the proportion of students eating the meal provided by their school, with almost 70% of students doing so at midterm. Exhibit 37 shows this finding by county. In Grand Bassa and Grand Gedeh, there were significant increases in the proportion of students eating the school meal, by 3 and 41 percentage points, respectively. Meanwhile, in River Gee, more students reported not eating the school meal at midterm (29%) than baseline (11%, $p < 0.01$). In Grand Bassa, almost one-third of students said there was no food prepared, a significant increase from baseline and a much larger proportion compared to the other counties. Among those who said they ate a meal at school, like baseline, at midterm, most said it was lunch (83%), while 19% said it was their breakfast (Exhibit 38).

Exhibit 37. Proportion of Students Who Ate the Provided School Meal Yesterday



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 380$ in Grand Bassa, 260 in Grand Gedeh, 102 in Rivercess, and 259 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 397$ in Grand Bassa, 224 in Grand Gedeh, 162 in Rivercess, and 194 in River Gee.

Exhibit 38. Proportion of Students Who Ate Breakfast and/or Lunch at School

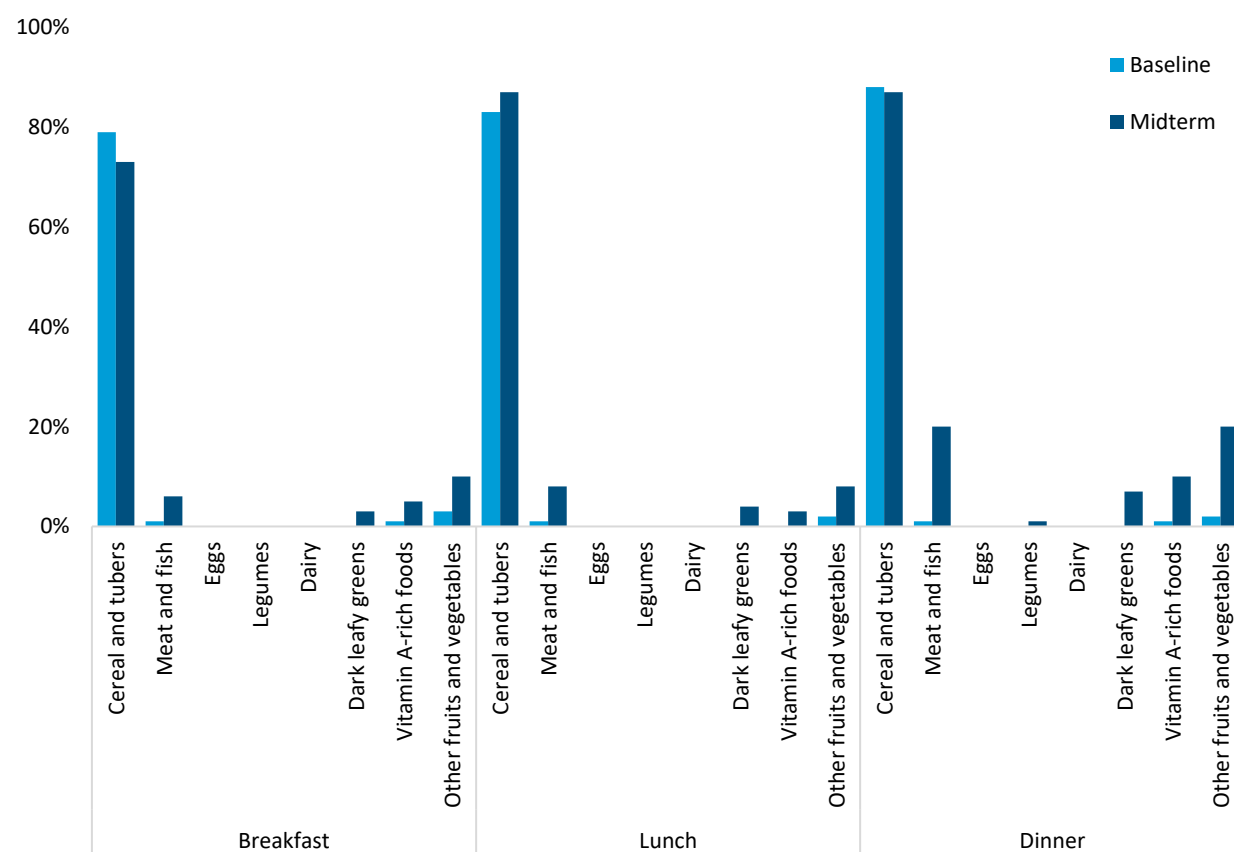


Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 825$ at baseline and 930 at midterm.

There was a significant increase in the number of foods eaten by students for breakfast, lunch, and dinner from baseline to midterm ($p < 0.01$). We also asked students what they ate for each meal, if anything. The food with significant mentions were different types of soups, with 26%

saying they had soup for breakfast and 51% for dinner. Students did not mention eating Power Gari until asked specifically about it. Overall, minimum dietary diversity, defined as consuming at least four of the nine FAO food groups, increased significantly from baseline (1%) to midterm (18%, $p < 0.01$). On average, at midterm, students ate 2.1 different food groups each day compared to 1.3 at baseline ($p < 0.01$). Diversity did not vary considerably by county, grade, or gender at midterm. After carbohydrates, “other vegetables and fruits” were students’ most common sources of dietary diversity (38%), followed by meat or fish (30%), and vitamin A-rich vegetables and fruits (26%). At midterm, students were most likely to add diversity to their diet during dinner. Dairy, legumes, eggs, and organ meat are also parts of the FAO definition of dietary diversity but very few students mentioned consuming any of them (Exhibit 39).¹⁸

Exhibit 39. Food Groups Consumed by Meal



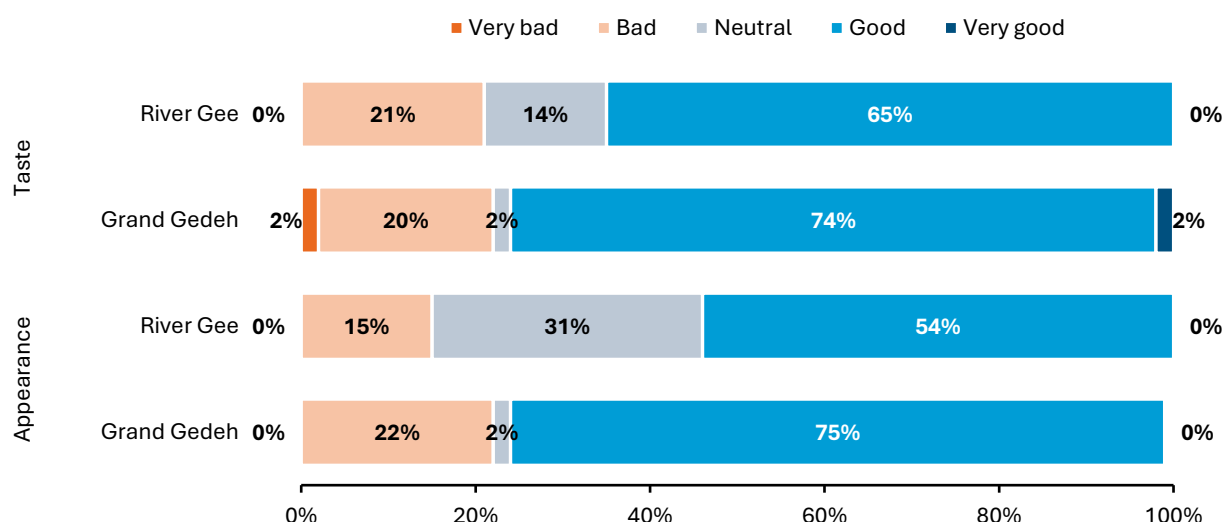
Source: Student survey. Authors’ calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 1,007$ at baseline and 996 at midterm. Dairy, legumes, organ meat, and eggs are also part of the dietary diversity calculation however, fewer than 3% of students reported eating them at baseline and endline so they are omitted from this graph.

¹⁸ We use the FAO’s Women’s Dietary Diversity Score, which is relevant for children. It includes starchy staples; dark green leafy vegetables; other vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables; other fruits and vegetables; organ meat; meat and fish; eggs; legumes, nuts, and seeds; and milk and milk products. https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/wa_workshop/docs/FAO-guidelines-dietary-diversity2011.pdf

In terms of locally and regionally procured food, 42% of students in Grand Gedeh and 34% in River Gee said they ate Power Gari the day of data collection and 58% and 45%, respectively, said they have been served it previously. A majority of students felt that Power Gari's taste and appearance was either good or were indifferent to it. About a fifth of students in both counties felt the taste and appearance was bad or very bad (Exhibit 40). At midterm, in both counties, on average, students received Power Gari twice a week.

Overall, in terms of food intake, there was an improvement in dietary diversity from baseline to midterm. At baseline, only 1% of students ate a diverse diet (i.e., students ate at least four out of the nine World Health Organization (WHO) food groups), and this increased significantly to 17% at midterm ($p < 0.01$). All counties witnessed an improvement in dietary diversity, with Rivercess and River Gee witnessing the largest increases (19 percentage points for both counties, $p < 0.01$). The number of WHO food groups eaten also increased from baseline to midterm (1.95 vs. 1.28, $p < 0.01$), with girls witnessing a marginally significant increase relative to boys (2.03 vs. 1.89, $p < 0.10$).

Exhibit 40. Student Rankings of Power Gari's Taste and Appearance, by County



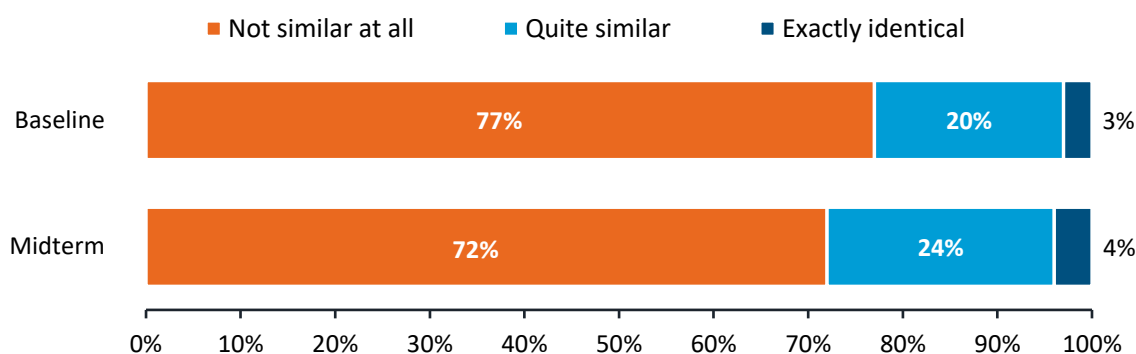
Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. Taste $N = 133$ for Grand Gedeh and 85 for River Gee. Appearance $N = 134$ for Grand Gedeh and 85 for River Gee. Only those who reported eating Power Gari are included.

Cultural Appropriateness of School Meals

To better understand whether school meals were suitable for the students' cultural practices, we asked how the school meals compared to what they ate at home. Like baseline, at midterm most students (72%) said the school meals were not similar at all to their meals at home (see Exhibit 41). There was a significant increase from baseline to midterm in students reporting that different

types of foods were served to them (24% vs. 8%, $p < 0.01$). Students in Grand Gedeh and River Gee reported increases in the variety of foods being served during school meals from baseline to midterm, which makes sense since LRP was introduced in these two counties. At midterm, Grade 2 students were 6 percentage points more likely to say that they were being served different foods at school (26% vs. 20%, $p < 0.05$). Further, 70% said that they enjoyed the school meals. There were some regional differences, ranging from 52% in River Gee to 74% in Rivercess.

Exhibit 41. Similarity of School Meals to Meals Eaten at Home



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 956$ at baseline and 978 at midterm.

The qualitative data suggest that while there is broad appreciation for school meals, and they enjoy the diversity that comes with the increased provision of garden produce and Power Gari, they are often disappointed that the Power Gari in particular, and sometimes the beans, is spoiled or has bugs in it.

4.4 Teacher Outcomes

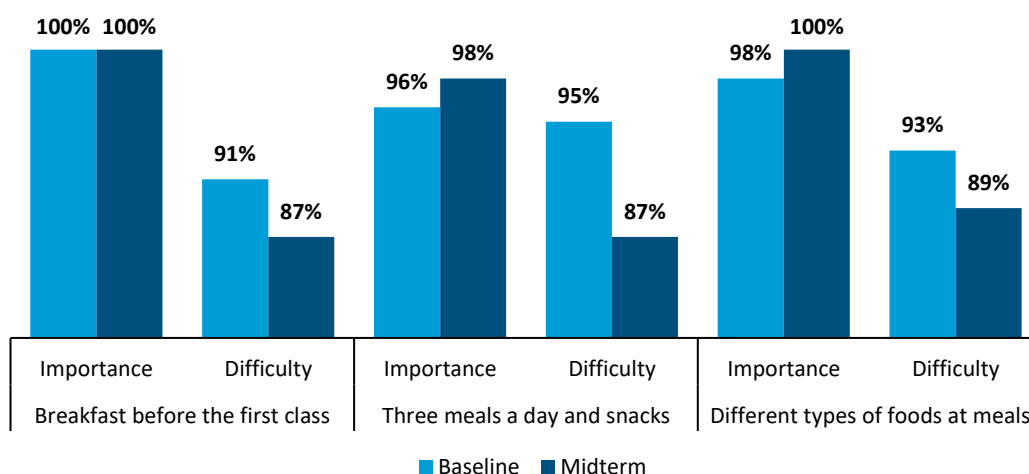
This section delineates teachers' KAP regarding nutrition, WASH, and other health matters and compares baseline and midterm outcomes. The teacher survey specifically sought to elicit this information to identify domains in which teachers might undermine, reinforce, or otherwise influence student health-related outcomes. Where relevant, we disaggregate teacher responses by county, highlighting areas where we observe notable county-level trends in teacher KAP and differences between baseline and midterm. However, the small sample size limits interpretation and generalizability of these findings; county-level differences may simply reflect individual-level differences among respondents rather than systematic differences across counties.

Nutrition

At baseline, teachers demonstrated strong support of recommended nutrition practices for children, namely, minimum meal frequency and dietary diversity, yet cast doubt on the feasibility of following such practices. At midterm, teachers maintained their strong support of nutrition

practices for children, and there were no significant differences between baseline and midterm. At midterm, among surveyed teachers, nearly all indicated the importance of children eating breakfast before their first class (100%), having three meals a day and snacks (98%), and consuming different types of foods at meals (100%) (Exhibit 42). However, fewer teachers between baseline and midterm perceived barriers that undermine children’s ability to follow these recommended practices. Among surveyed teachers, 87% perceived difficulty in children consuming breakfast before class, 87% perceived difficulty in children maintaining minimum meal frequency, and 89% perceived difficulty in children maintaining dietary diversity (Exhibit 42).

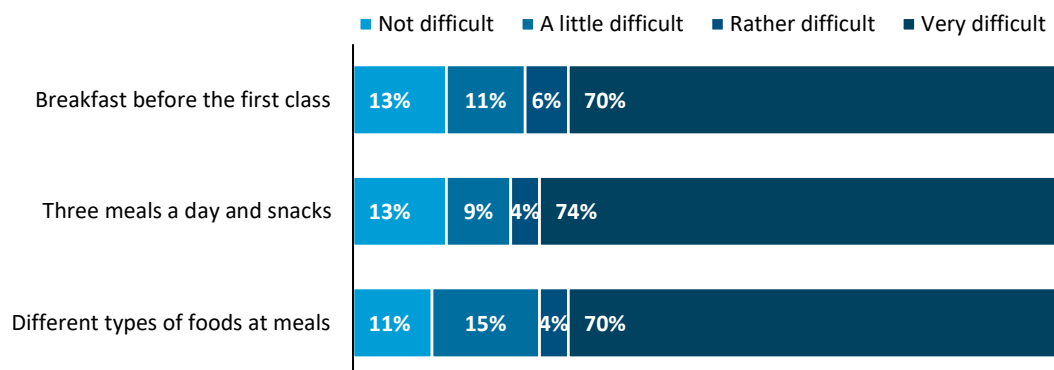
Exhibit 42. Perceived Importance and Difficulty of Recommended Nutrition Practices



Source: Teacher survey. Authors’ calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm.
 Note: Affirmative responses on importance counted if respondents indicated at least “a little important.” Affirmative responses on difficulty counted if respondents indicated at least “a little difficult.”

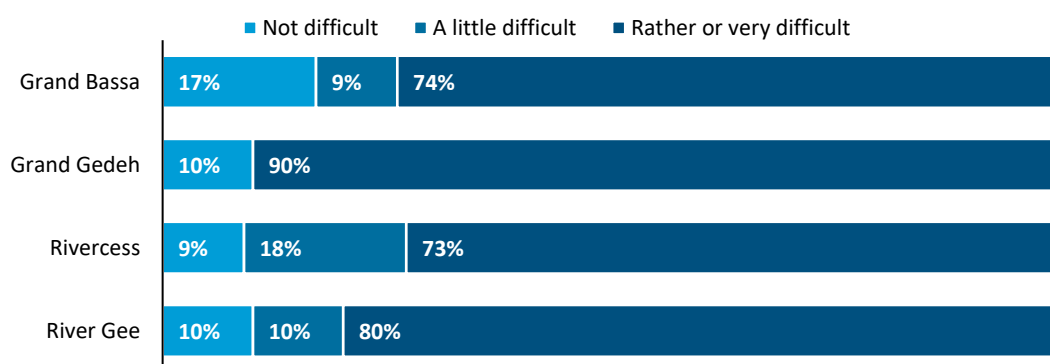
While marginally fewer teachers indicated difficulty in children following recommended practices, those that did perceive barriers perceived a high degree of difficulty, regardless of the recommended nutrition practice. At midterm, over three-fourths of surveyed teachers perceived this practice as very or rather difficult for children (78%) (Exhibit 43); by county, this perception was more prevalent among teachers in Grand Gedeh (90%) and River Gee (80%). In Grand Bassa and Rivercess, by contrast, more teachers perceived this practice as slightly difficult (9% and 18%, respectively) or not difficult (17% and 9%, respectively) for children to follow (see Exhibit 44).

Exhibit 43. Degree of Perceived Difficulty, by Recommended Nutrition Practice



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 54.

Exhibit 44. Degree of Perceived Difficulty: Students' Ability to Consume Three Meals a Day and Snacks, According to Teachers, County-Level Differences



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 23 in Grand Bassa, 10 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

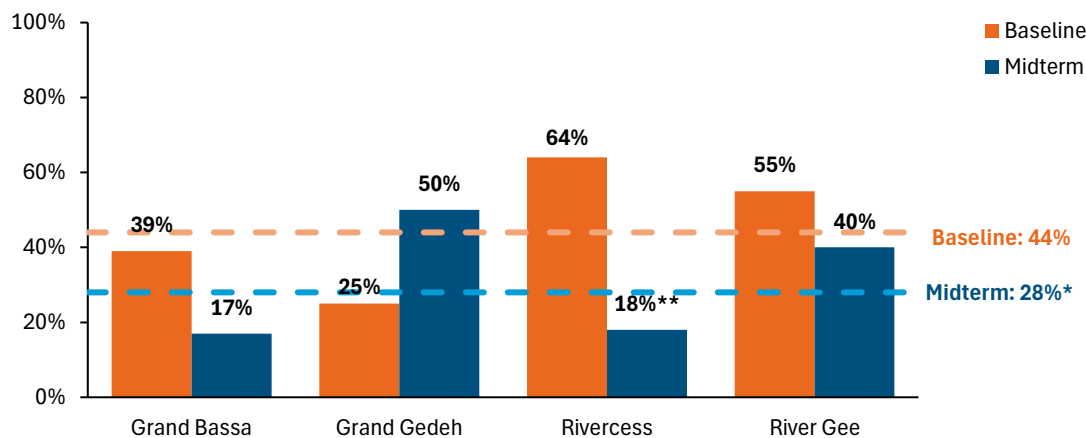
Although teachers indicated widespread support for recommended nutrition practices among children, the extent of their knowledge of these practices varied widely across domain and by county and there was, in general, a decline from baseline to midterm¹⁹ (Exhibit 45). For instance, at baseline, less than half of teachers (44%) could accurately cite components of a nutritious meal as defined by the go, grow, and glow food groups,²⁰ and this declined significantly to 28% at

¹⁹ This finding is consistent with the LEARN program implementation context. Between LEARN I and LEARN II, training modalities changed, and according to SC staff, teacher training for LEARN II is not yet complete. In LEARN I, teachers received training on the national manual in a cascaded model, but only 64 schools established SHCs. In LEARN II, the remaining 170 teachers are currently receiving training, but due to delays in validating and finalizing the LEARN Nutrition Guide, these 170 LEARN II teachers have only received the SG training to-date.

²⁰ To determine whether teachers knew the components of a nutritious meal and thereby passed the balanced diet test, the survey asked teachers to identify the three components of a nutritious meal, defined as a meal that contains protein (i.e., "grow" foods), starches and carbs (i.e., "go foods"), and vitamins and minerals (i.e., "glow foods").

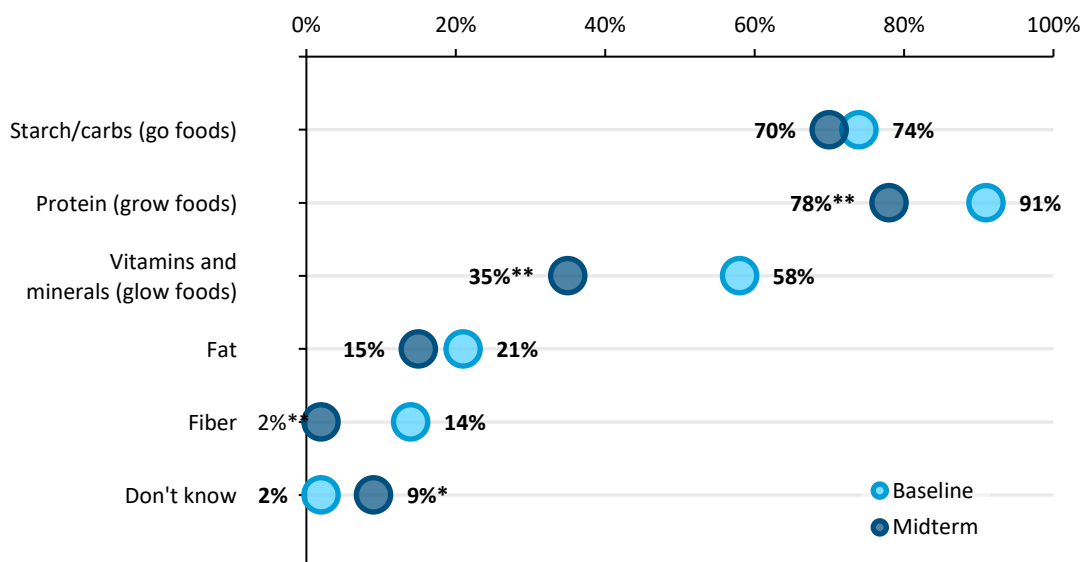
midterm ($p < 0.10$), with Rivercess witnessing the largest decline (46 percentage points, $p < 0.01$). At baseline, on average, teachers could only cite two important nutritional practices for a child's growth, and this declined to 1.28 at midterm ($p < 0.01$). There was also a significant decline in the total foods that teachers could cite that are good for a child's blood from baseline to midterm (1.46 vs. 1.96, $p < 0.01$). As seen in Exhibit 46, there was a decline in the knowledge of all food groups that are necessary for a nutritious meal from baseline to midterm and an overall decline in the list of foods reported by teachers that are helpful for children to grow.

Exhibit 45. Teacher Knowledge of the Three Food Groups for a Nutritious Meal, by County



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 23$ for Grand Bassa, 12 for Grand Gedeh, 11 for Rivercess, and 11 for River Gee. Midterm $N = 23$ Grand Bassa, 10 for Grand Gedeh, 11 for Rivercess, and 10 for River Gee.

Exhibit 46. Teacher Knowledge of the Three Food Groups for a Nutritious Meal

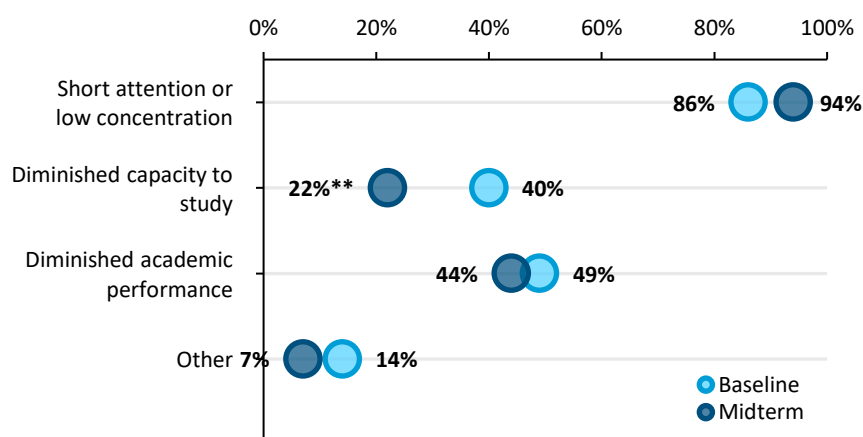


Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm.

At the county level, findings point to the potential widening of nutrition knowledge gaps. While most teachers within each county reported starch/carbohydrates and protein as key food groups for nutritious meals, teachers in Grand Bassa were less inclined to do so over time for protein (91% vs. 65%, $p < 0.05$) and more likely to report not knowing any of these food groups (0% vs. 17%, $p < 0.05$). Likewise, though about two-thirds of teachers in Rivercess cited vitamins and minerals as a key food group for nutritious meals at baseline (64%), less than a quarter did so at midterm (18%) ($p < 0.01$). By contrast, half the teachers in Grand Gedeh and River Gee reported this food group at midterm. Additionally, teachers in Grand Gedeh and River Gee reported more foods, on average, that are good for a child's blood (2 vs. 1 food), and teachers in Grand Gedeh were able to cite more foods that are good for the eyes (2 vs. 1 food), on average. Though illustrative, these trends suggest that teachers in Grand Gedeh and River Gee have a deeper understanding of fundamental nutrition topics—in this case, the role of micronutrients in minimum dietary diversity.

Nevertheless, like baseline, at midterm, teachers' ability to identify signs of hunger in school children was promising insofar as all teachers could identify at least one potential side effect if a child forgoes breakfast before school. Across all counties, teachers were able to identify 1.7 out of four signs of hunger, on average. This number was lower in Grand Bassa, with teachers identifying 1.5 signs, a statistically significant decline relative to baseline (1.9). Grand Gedeh experienced an increase compared to baseline, where teachers successfully identified an average of 2.2 signs of hunger. Specifically, most teachers recognized that missing breakfast before school can diminish children's concentration (94%), an 8 percentage point increase relative to baseline. However, fewer teachers recognized that missing breakfast could undermine children's academic performance (44%), a 9 percentage point decline compared to baseline, and capacity to study (22%), a significant decline of 18 percentage points ($p < 0.05$) relative to baseline (Exhibit 47).

Exhibit 47. Teacher Knowledge of Signs of Hunger in School Children

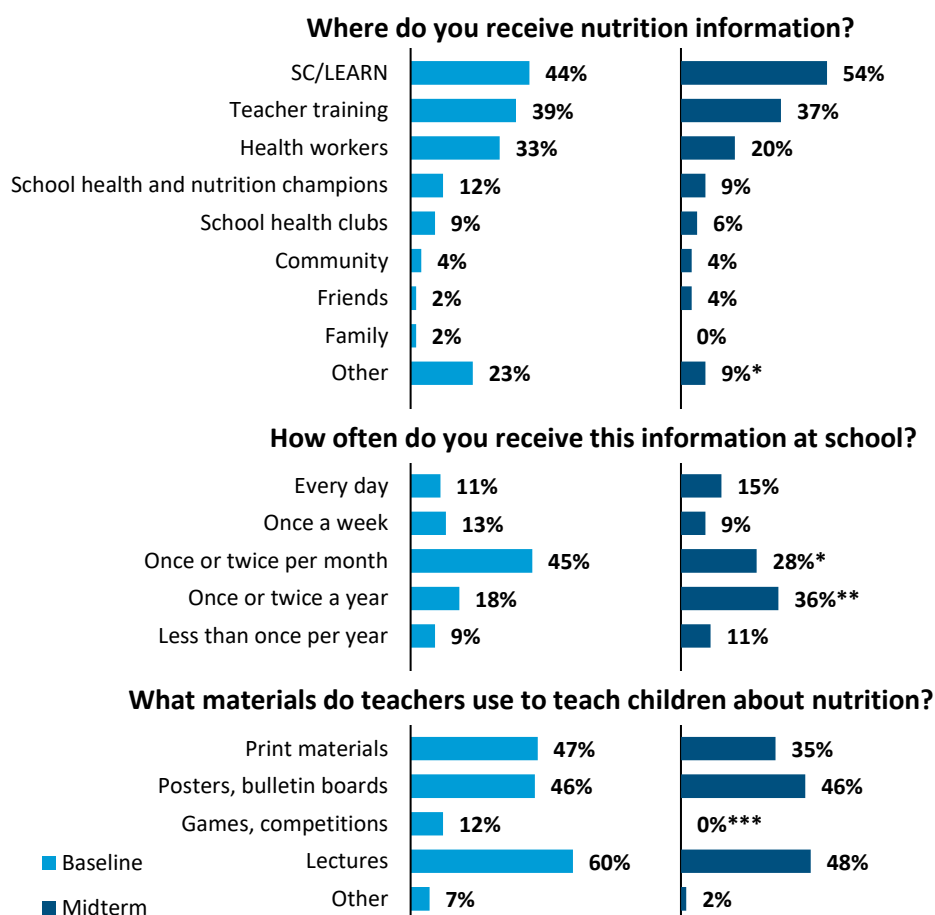


Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm.

As at baseline, the qualitative data show relative inattention to nutrition awareness or practices among teachers, including principals who have been part of SHN activities through LEARN (just two of nine interviewed mentioned nutrition at all, and only briefly). Rather, they emphasized WASH activities (e.g., school cleaning, handwashing stations); WASH advocacy (e.g., promoting handwashing and hygiene); and, less frequently, food safety.

In terms of nutrition information teachers received at midterm, about half received it from Save the Children staff,²¹ with another third receiving it from teacher training (Exhibit 48). Training was held once or twice a year (an 18 percentage point increase from baseline, $p < 0.05$).

Exhibit 48. Teachers' Access to and Use of Nutrition Information

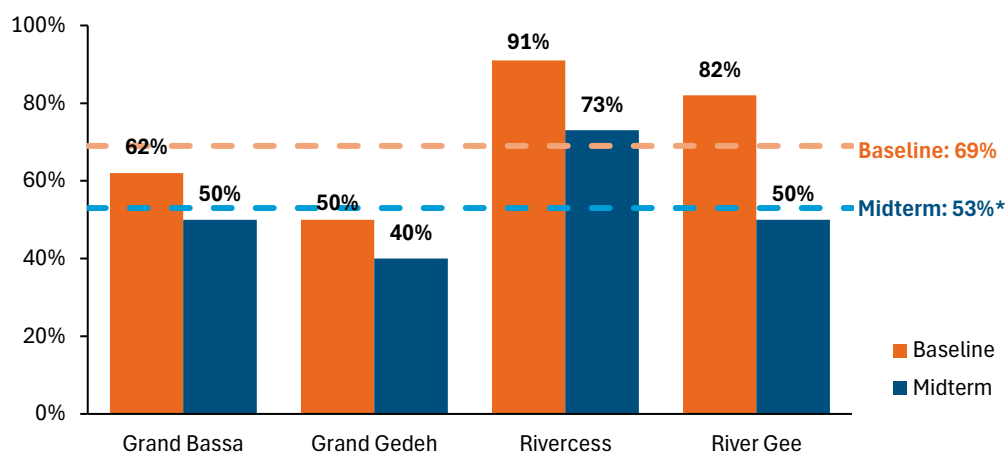


Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm for teachers' sources of and materials to disseminate nutrition information and 55 at baseline and 53 at midterm for the frequency with which teachers receive this nutrition information at school.

²¹ According to SC staff, not all LEARN II schools have SHCs yet, which could partially explain the small proportion of teachers who reported receiving nutrition information from SHCs (6%) at midterm. This may also explain why just over half of surveyed teachers reported receiving nutrition information from SC staff as of midterm.

By county, teachers in Grand Bassa and Grand Gedeh received nutrition information less often, on average, relative to teachers in Rivercess and River Gee (Exhibit 49). County-level differences in the frequency of information dissemination can potentially explain why less than half of teachers in Grand Bassa and Grand Gedeh could cite the three components of a nutritious meal, unlike their counterparts in Rivercess and River Gee.

Exhibit 49. Proportion of Teachers Who Received Nutrition-Related Information at Least Once a Month



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 21$ in Grand Bassa, 12 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 11 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 22$ in Grand Bassa, 10 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

WASH

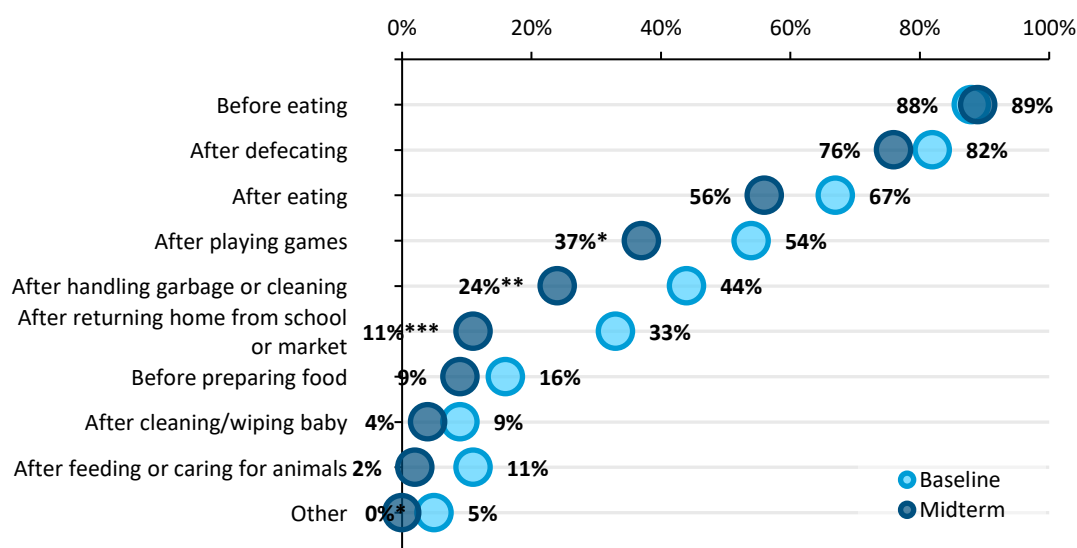
Teachers' WASH knowledge mirrored trends in their nutrition knowledge: teachers demonstrated basic knowledge of WASH topics yet also exhibited differing perceptions on knowledge-based questions across counties and there were significant differences across baseline and midterm. Specifically, teachers demonstrated basic handwashing and water treatment knowledge, but within these domains, they emphasized different practices.

At midterm, most surveyed teachers (87%) were able to describe at least one recommended handwashing practice (e.g., washing hands under running water rather than still water, washing hands with soap or ash). However, the total handwashing moments teachers cited, on average, declined since baseline (4.09 vs. 3.07, $p < 0.01$). There were some county-level differences; most notably, only teachers in Grand Bassa and Rivercess witnessed statistically significant declines in the total handwashing moments they could cite, on average. In Grand Bassa and Rivercess, the average handwashing moments cited decreased from four at baseline to three at midterm ($p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.05$, respectively). In River Gee, teachers cited an average of five handwashing

moments at baseline and four at midterm, but this difference was not statistically significant. In Grand Gedeh, teachers cited an average of three handwashing moments at both baseline and midterm.

On average, at midterm, the most frequently cited handwashing moments included before eating (89%), after defecating (76%), after eating (56%), and after playing games (37%) (Exhibit 50). Interestingly, teachers' ability to identify handwashing moments declined across almost all recommended practices. Compared to baseline, washing hands after playing games declined by 17 percentage points ($p < 0.10$), after handling garbage or cleaning declined by 20 percentage points ($p < 0.05$), and after returning home from school or market declined by 22 percentage points ($p < 0.01$). Washing hands before eating was the only handwashing practice that increased at midterm relative to baseline. However, this was a 1 percentage point increase and not statistically significant. Finally, there was also a significant decline from baseline to midterm in the total reported reasons for handwashing importance cited by teachers (out of nine), from three to two reasons ($p < 0.01$).

Exhibit 50. Moments Students Should Wash Their Hands, According to Teachers

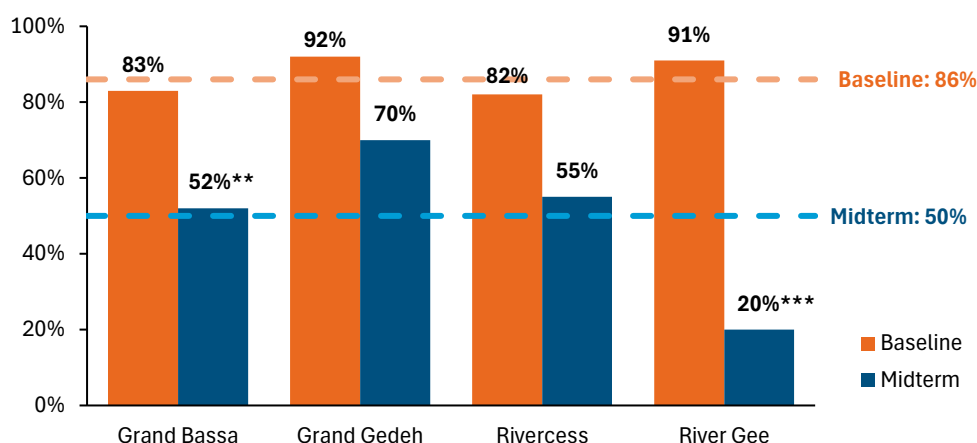


Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm.

In general, teachers reported that more than 70% of students wash their hands at critical moments like after using the bathroom and before meals. However, there were county-level differences in students' handwashing regularity at critical moments (as reported by teachers). In River Gee, at baseline, teachers reported that most students washed their hands after using the bathroom and before meals, while at midterm, this significantly declined to only some students doing so ($p < 0.01$). This variation appears to be weakly associated with access to functional handwashing stations or inputs for handwashing, namely, soap and water (Exhibit 51). Access to

a functional handwashing station declined in all counties, with the overall average declining by 36 percentage points ($p < 0.01$), and River Gee witnessing the largest decline from 91% at baseline to 20% at midterm ($p < 0.01$).²²

Exhibit 51. Proportion of Teachers Who Report There Are Functional Handwashing Stations at School, by County

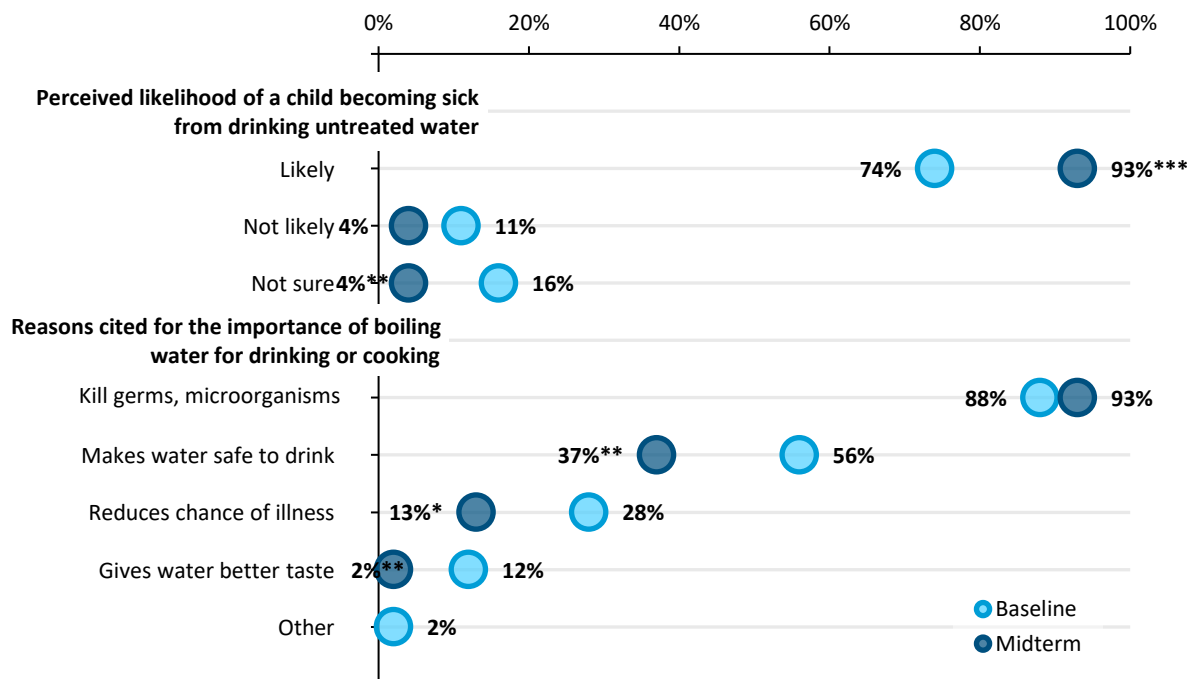


Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 23$ in Grand Bassa, 12 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 11 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 23$ in Grand Bassa, 10 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

In general, like baseline, at midterm, teachers recognized the importance of boiling water for cooking and for drinking. On average, there was a significant increase from baseline to midterm in most surveyed teachers viewing boiling water prior to cooking as rather or very important (98% vs. 88%, $p < 0.01$). Likewise, there was an increase in most teachers acknowledging that a child could become sick from drinking untreated water from baseline to midterm ($p < 0.01$), despite holding differing perceptions on the likelihood of this occurring (Exhibit 52). However, there was a significant decline in the total reasons (out of four) cited for the importance of boiling water for cooking from baseline to midterm ($p < 0.05$). As seen in Exhibit 52, the increase in viewing killing germs as important and the decline in boiling to keep water safe could reflect teachers having a greater understanding of the underlying reasons why recommended practices of boiling water are important.

²² This finding is consistent with the LEARN program implementation context. Before baseline, LEARN and MOE supplied handwashing materials to all LEARN schools before the distribution of take-home rations during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Save the Children staff, most of the handwashing materials have been damaged since then, and staff are encountering challenges in working with the PTAs to replace these materials.

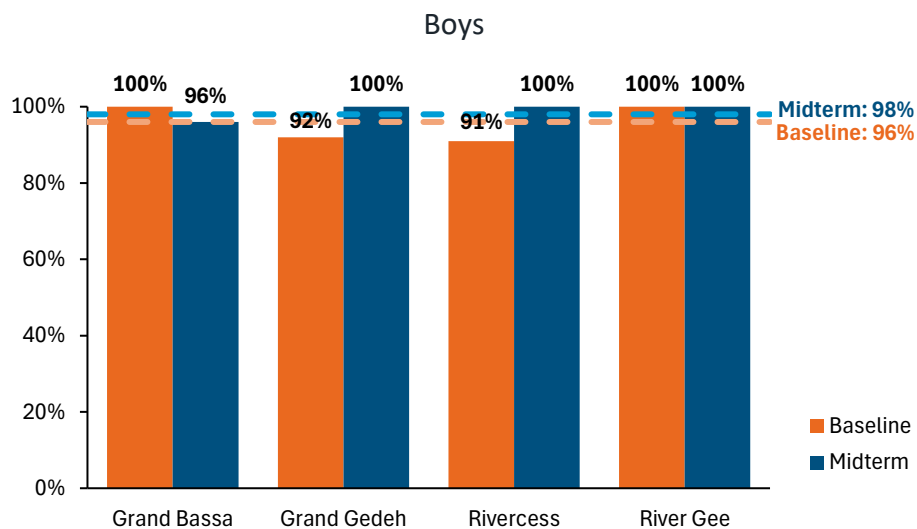
Exhibit 52. Perceived Likelihood of a Child Becoming Sick From Drinking Untreated Water and Reasons Cited for the Importance of Boiling Water for Drinking or Cooking

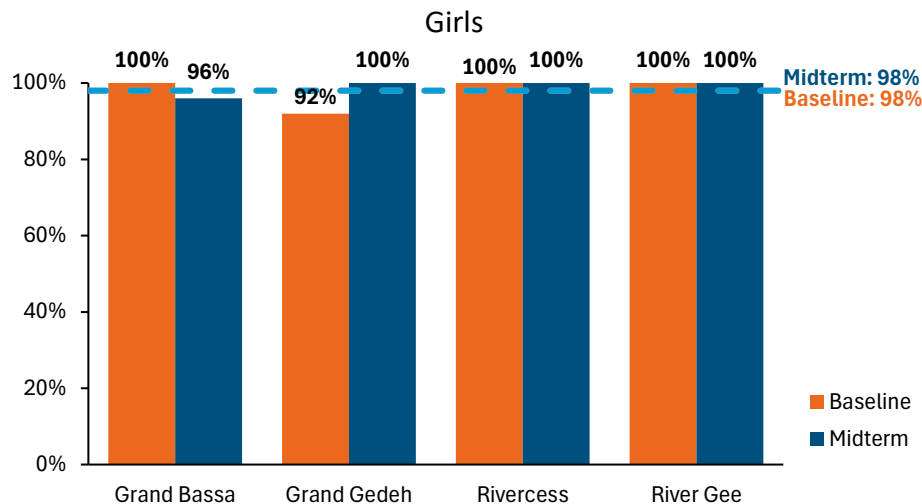


Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm.

With respect to sanitation, across counties, nearly all teachers reported that students use toilets at school, which varies little by student gender (96% for boys and 98% for girls) (Exhibit 53).

Exhibit 53. Proportion of Teachers Who Report Children Use Toilets at School, by County and Student Gender

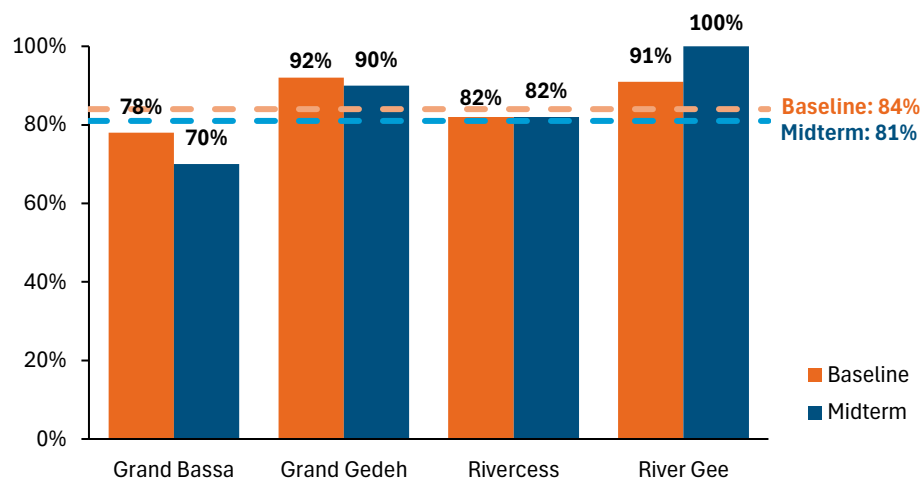




Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm.

Similar to baseline, at midterm, most teachers reported access to an improved drinking water source at school (81%) (Exhibit 54). At the county level, access was lowest among schools in Grand Bassa (70%) and highest among schools in River Gee (100%), according to teachers. Among improved drinking water sources, teachers most cited hand pumps (56%), piped water (13%), and wells (7%); unimproved water sources most frequently included surface water (e.g., creeks, streams). Regardless of water source, similar to baseline, at midterm, no teachers reported receiving boiled water in school.

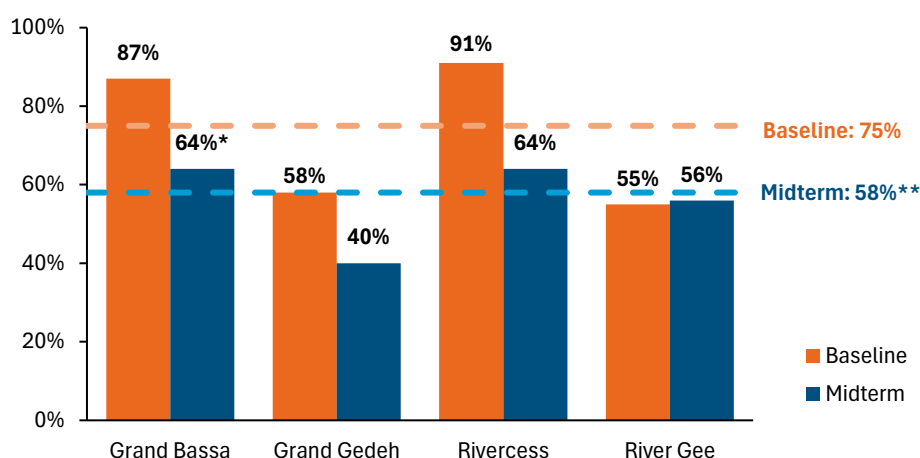
Exhibit 54. Proportion of Teachers Who Reported Access to at Least One Improved Drinking Water Source at School, by County



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 23$ in Grand Bassa, 12 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 11 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 23$ in Grand Bassa, 10 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

In general, from baseline to midterm, there was a decline in teachers receiving WASH information at least once a month by 17 percentage points (Exhibit 55). Teachers in Grand Gedeh (40%) and River Gee (56%) received WASH knowledge less often than their counterparts in Grand Bassa (64%) and Rivercess (64%). Even with these differences in receiving information, a vast majority of teachers shared WASH materials with PTA members (77%).

Exhibit 55. Proportion of Teachers Who Received Water and Sanitation-Related Information at Least Once a Month



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 23$ in Grand Bassa, 12 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 11 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 22$ in Grand Bassa, 10 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 9 in River Gee.

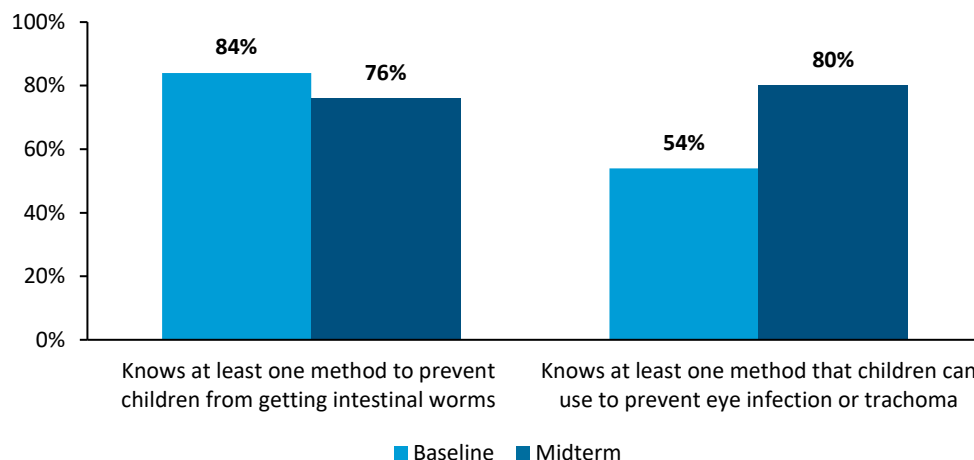
Disease Knowledge

In contrast to their basic knowledge of nutrition and WASH topics, surveyed teachers demonstrated highly selective awareness of specific diseases. Consistent with baseline findings, a small proportion of teachers at midterm were aware of trachoma (23% baseline vs. 19% midterm) or dengue fever (7% baseline vs. 13% midterm); however, in keeping with baseline findings, most were aware of intestinal worms (55% baseline vs. 61% midterm). Differences in awareness levels between baseline and midterm were not statistically significant.

Conditional to knowing of these diseases, teacher knowledge of disease-specific preventative health measures generally remained high between baseline and midterm. Among teachers who were aware of trachoma at midterm ($n = 10$), most could cite at least one symptom (90%), one prevention method (80%), and one cause (70%) of the disease. The share of teachers who could cite at least one prevention method and one cause of trachoma increased by a large margin since baseline (54% vs. 80% and 38% vs. 70%, respectively)—though differences are not statistically significant and should be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size. Likewise, most teachers who were aware of intestinal worms at midterm ($n = 33$) were able to cite at least one

cause (76%) and one method to prevent (76%) intestinal worms; differences in these knowledge levels relative to baseline (81% and 84%, respectively) are not statistically significant.

Exhibit 56. Teacher Knowledge of Disease-Specific Preventative Health Measures



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 13$ at baseline and 10 at midterm for knowledge of methods to prevent eye infection or trachoma, and 31 and 33 for knowledge of methods to prevent intestinal worms. For each topic, teachers were only asked about their knowledge of preventative measures if they reported "hearing of" the topic in question (e.g., "Have you heard of intestinal worms?").

Menstruation Resources and Education

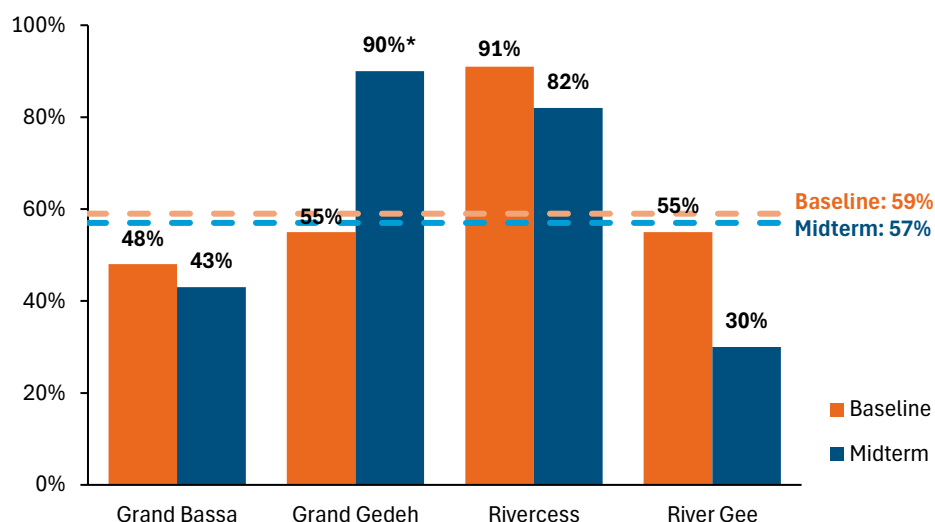
According to teachers, access to menstruation-related information in school diverges across counties. At baseline, under a quarter (18%) of teachers reported that menstrual management materials were available at their school in case of an emergency, while this number declined to 9% at midterm. This difference is insignificant. At midterm, there was a decline in the availability of these materials in Grand Gedeh (36% baseline vs. 10% midterm), Grand Bassa (13% baseline vs. 0% midterm), and Rivercess (27% baseline vs. 10% midterm). In River Gee, on the other hand, there was an increase in the availability of these materials, from 0% at baseline to 30% at midterm.

In addition to the declining availability of menstrual management materials at school, the share of teachers who reported their school provides menstrual education declined since baseline: while all teachers reported as such at baseline, about a third less did so at midterm (71%) ($p < 0.10$). While the share of teachers reporting that their school provides menstrual education for both girls and boys (50%) remained constant between baseline and midterm, the share of teachers reporting that their school offers menstrual education exclusively for girls declined by nearly 30 percentage points from baseline (50%) ($p < 0.10$).

Despite varying access to these resources in schools across counties, at midterm, most teachers received training on menstruation as part of their pre-service or in-service training (57%) (Exhibit

57), potentially suggesting that most teachers were knowledgeable of menstruation even if their school did not provide menstruation-related information. River Gee was the exception, where only 30% of teachers reported receiving this training.

Exhibit 57. Proportion of Teachers Who Received Training on Menstruation, by County



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 23$ in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 11 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 23$ in Grand Bassa, 10 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

4.5 School Meal Provider Outcomes

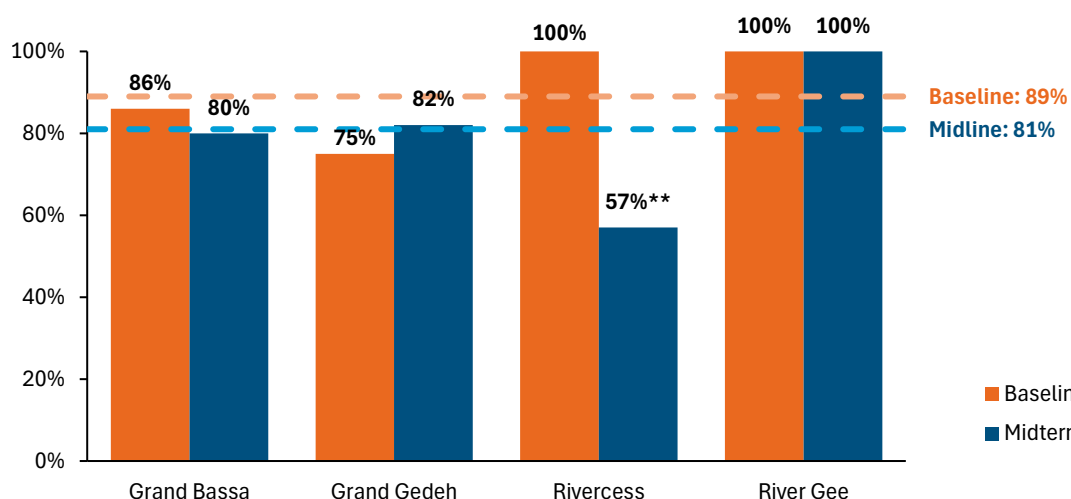
This section details changes from baseline to midterm in SMPs' KAP regarding nutrition and food safety, which could potentially influence student nutrition and health outcomes. Through the survey, we attempted to gauge the depth of SMPs' nutrition knowledge, particularly as it relates to micronutrients and macronutrients pertinent for school meal composition. For food safety, we asked SMPs about a range of topics, focusing on potential threats to food safety through departures from recommended food preparation and food storage practices. Where relevant, we disaggregated SMP responses by county, but as with the teacher sample, the small sample size limits interpretation and generalizability of these results.

Nutrition

During the week of their survey date at midterm, only 33% of SMPs were serving any kind of vegetable in school meals, a significant decline from 38% of SMPs at baseline ($p < 0.10$), with Rivercess witnessing the largest decline (73% vs. 30%, $p < 0.01$). In Rivercess, there was a large decline from baseline to midterm in SMPs who said they provide schools meals based on MOE school feeding and nutritional guidelines at least sometimes (100% vs 57%, $p < 0.05$). While the overall number dropped from 89% to 81%, it was not a statistically significant change. At midterm,

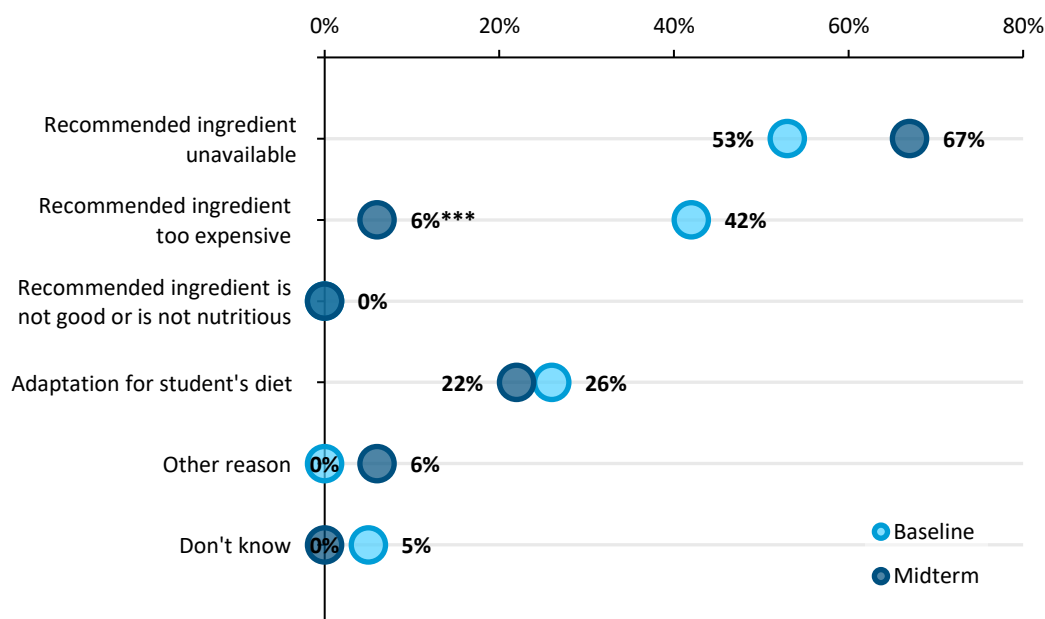
a small proportion of SMPs in Grand Gedeh (18%) and Grand Bassa (20%) reported that their school meals never adhered to these guidelines. In addition, at midterm, 41% of SMPs reportedly made adaptations to the MOE recommended menu. There was a significant decline in SMPs making adaptations because the ingredients were too expensive from baseline to midterm (6% vs. 42%, $p < 0.01$). However, adaptations were more often made at midterm because the recommended ingredient was unavailable (67% vs. 53%) (Exhibit 59).

Exhibit 58. Frequency With Which SMPs Provided School Meals Based on the MOE’s School Feeding Food and Nutritional Guidelines From the National School Feeding Policy, by County



Source: Teacher survey. Authors’ calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 21$ in Grand Bassa, 12 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 9 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 20$ in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 7 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

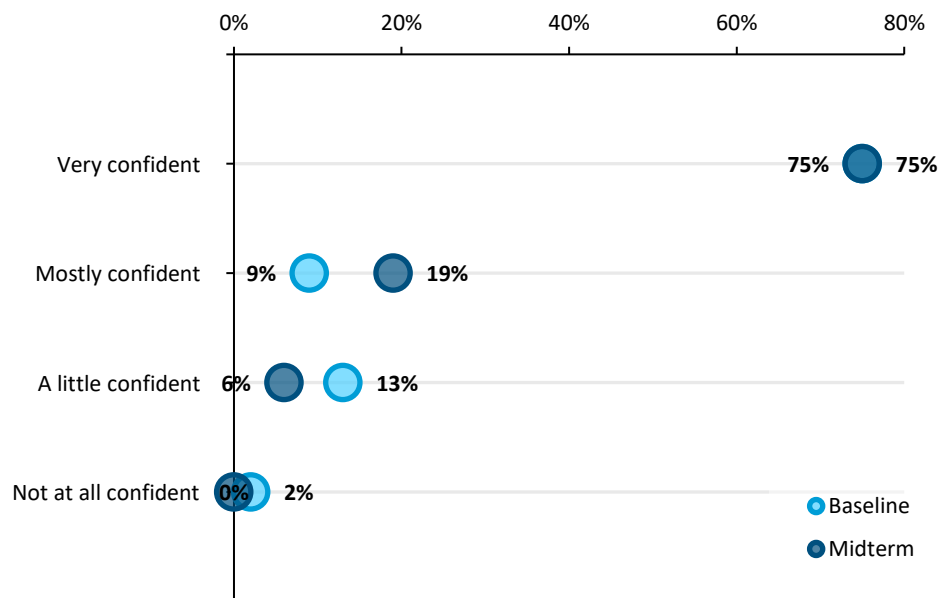
Exhibit 59. Reasons for Making Adaptations



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 19$ at baseline and 18 at midterm. SMPs were only asked this question if they reported making adaptations to the MOE recommended menu.

Despite the barriers SMPs encountered in preparing diverse school meals, like baseline, at midterm, a majority felt confident preparing healthy and nutritious meals for school children (94%) (Exhibit 60). Given that most SMPs recognized challenges in providing nutritious meals, these confidence levels perhaps indicate a sense of self-efficacy in their ability to prepare nutritious meals—even if they lack resources (e.g., knowledge, inputs) to do so. At midterm, SMPs who received compensation for their work (95%), mostly received in-kind compensation (92%) rather than cash (4%). This trend of in-kind compensation was similar across counties, aligning with the LEARN II compensation strategy. The main challenge they noted in the qualitative interviews was that they sometimes received beans or gari that was spoiled or had bugs inside, so were faced with the challenge of throwing it out and having insufficient food, or serving food that was not safe or did not taste as good.

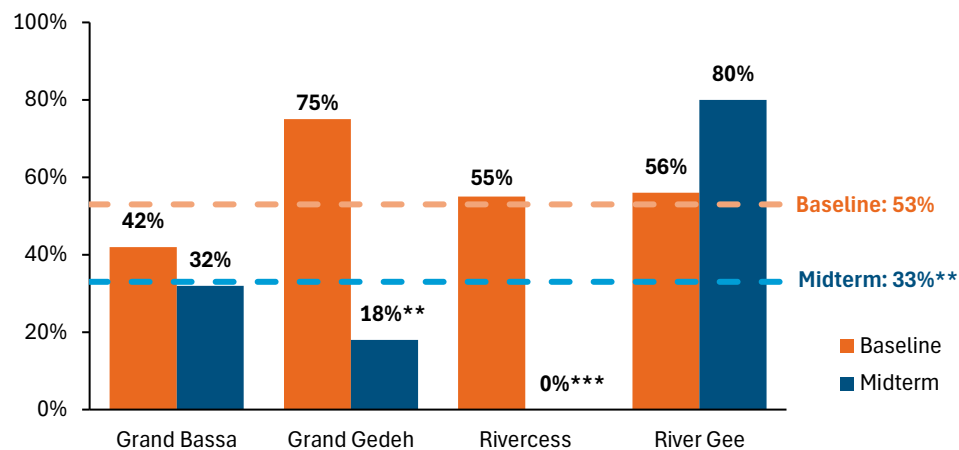
Exhibit 60. SMP Confidence Levels in Preparing Healthy and Nutritious Meals for School Children



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 53$ at baseline and 48 at midterm.

While SMP confidence levels were generally high, their sense of job satisfaction was mixed: only a third (33%) indicated that their compensation was fair compensation for the work they do (a significant decline from the baseline proportion of 53%, $p < 0.01$) (Exhibit 61), suggesting that a fairly large proportion of SMPs believe that they should receive additional or alternative compensation. Grand Gedeh and Rivercess witnessed the largest declines from baseline to midterm in SMPs viewing their compensation as fair (57 percentage points and 55 percentage points, respectively, $p < 0.01$). There was also a 22 percentage point increase from baseline to midterm in SMPs reporting that their food preparation work interfered with their other responsibilities ($p < 0.01$).

Exhibit 61. Proportion of SMPs Who Perceive Their Compensation for Work as a Food Preparer Is Fair



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 19$ in Grand Bassa, 8 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 9 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 19$ in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 9 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

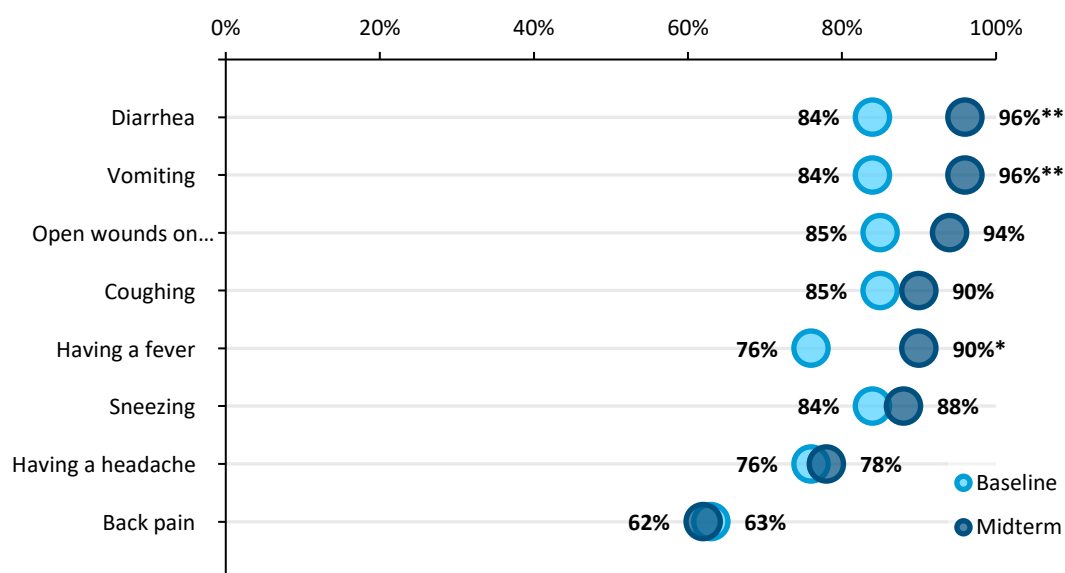
In terms of effort levels, on average, at midterm, SMPs reported spending nearly 4 hours each day (3.76 hours per day) on food preparation, a significant decline from just over 3 hours daily at baseline (3.15 hours per day) ($p < 0.05$). River Gee witnessed the largest decline in hours spent on food preparation (2.83 vs. 4.18, $p < 0.01$). There was also a decline in the overall hours SMP spent per week working in general from 20 hours per week at baseline to 11 hours per week at midterm ($p < 0.01$), with Grand Bassa and River Gee witnessing the largest declines. There was also a concomitant significant increase in SMPs reporting that food preparation interferes with their other responsibilities (22% vs. 44%, $p < 0.05$), perhaps indicating that these SMPs substituted their time away to different tasks.

Food Safety Knowledge

There was a 25 percentage point increase from baseline to midterm in SMPs reporting missing days of meal preparation because of illness ($p < 0.01$), with over 70% of SMPs in Rivercess and River Gee reporting having to miss work due to illness at midterm. At midterm, SMPs exhibited basic food safety knowledge and expressed support for recommended food safety practices. There was an increase from baseline to midterm with most SMPs accurately identifying factors that affect food safety at midterm (Exhibit 62) in general. In addition, all SMPs recognized the importance of basic food preparation practices such as wearing clean clothes when preparing meals (94%) and maintaining a clean cooking space (96%). Similar to baseline, at midterm, SMPs also expressed strong support for practices that reduce food contamination, reinforcing the importance of ensuring flies do not touch prepared food (94%); storing meat and cooked food in a clean place (96%); using separate, clean utensils to handle different types of food (86%); and

cleaning food preparation surfaces after handling raw meat and before handling fruits and vegetables (100%).

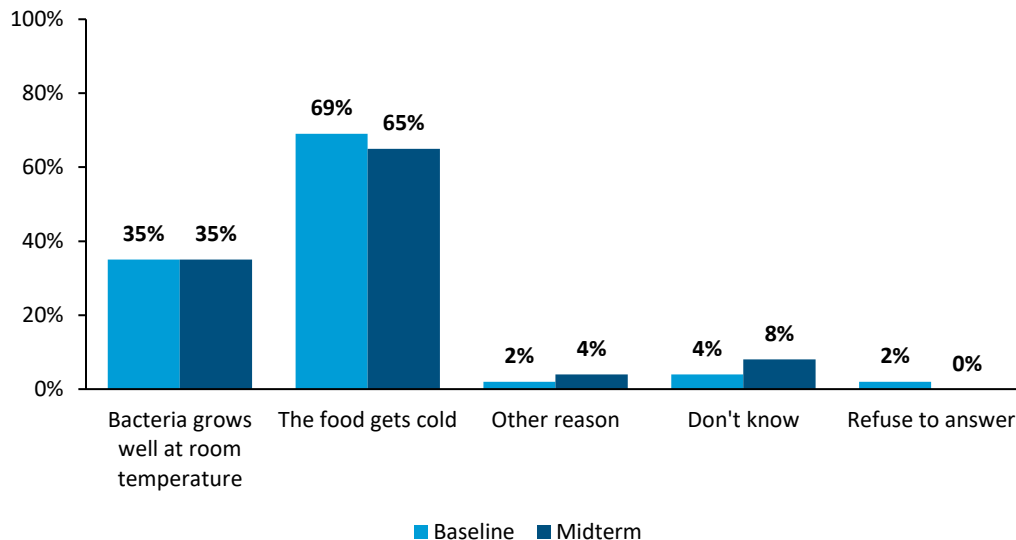
Exhibit 62. Factors That Affect Food Safety, According to SMPs



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 55$ at baseline and 52 at midterm.

In addition to knowledge gaps on food safety practices, SMPs were not always cognizant of the underlying importance of these recommended practices, particularly as it relates to serving food. While most SMPs could cite at least one consequence of not refrigerating leftovers (100%), frequently mentioning that the food was no longer safe (90%), there was a decline in any SMP mentioning that food gets spoiled if not refrigerated (23 percentage points from baseline to midterm, $p < 0.01$) and a 11 percentage point decline from baseline to midterm in reporting that children would likely get sick from eating food that was improperly stored. In explaining the underlying importance of not leaving food out for too long before serving, like baseline, at midterm, just over a third mentioned the risks of bacteria growth (35%). Most SMPs simply emphasized that it was important to avoid doing so since the food gets cold (65%). This reasoning was particularly notable among SMPs in Grand Gedeh (Exhibit 63).

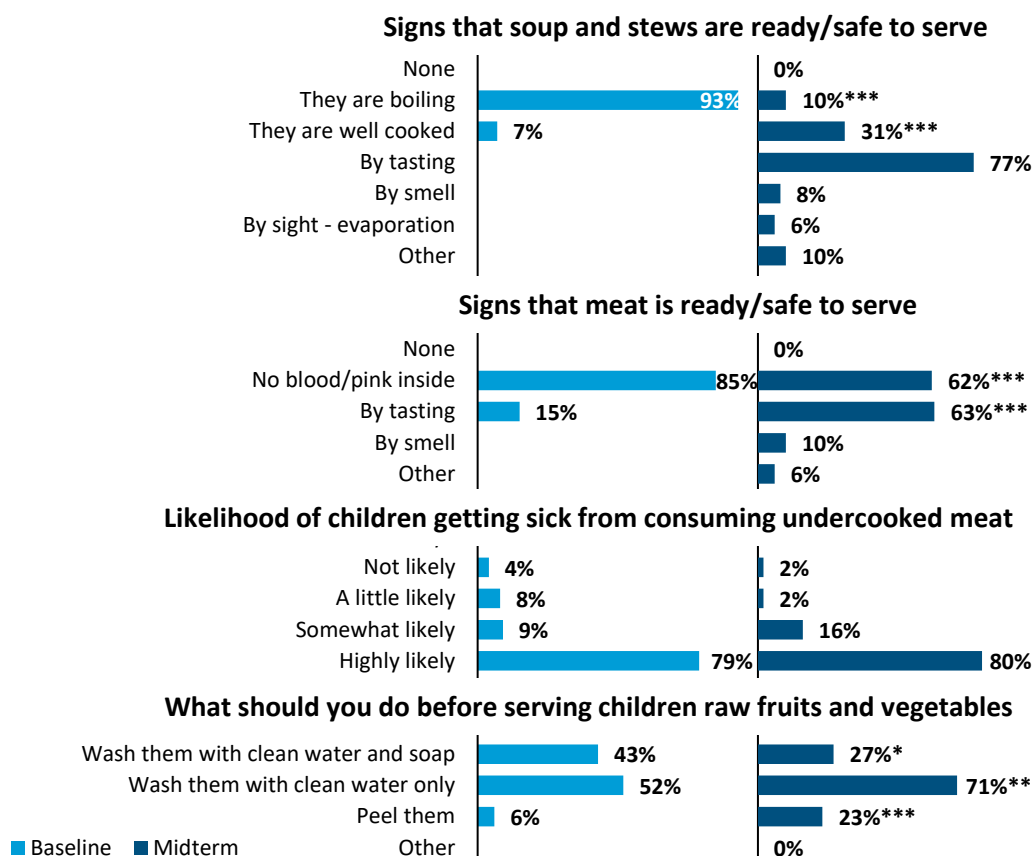
Exhibit 63. Importance of Not Keeping Food Out for Too Long Before Serving



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 55$ at baseline and 52 at midterm.

In terms of specific knowledge, the majority of SMPs at midterm (77%) reported that they know a soup/stew is ready to serve by tasting it (Exhibit 64). The two most common signs of whether meat is safe to serve reported by SMPs included tasting the meat (63%) or by noting that the meat is not pink inside (62%). SMPs lacked clarity on specific food preparation topics; for example, to ensure produce is safe to serve, 71% of SMPs thought they should wash raw fruits and vegetables with clean water only (a significant 19 percentage point increase from baseline, $p < 0.01$), while 27% thought they should use both clean water and soap (a significant 16 percentage point decline from baseline, $p < 0.01$).

Exhibit 64. SMP Knowledge of When Foods Are Ready and Safe to Be Served



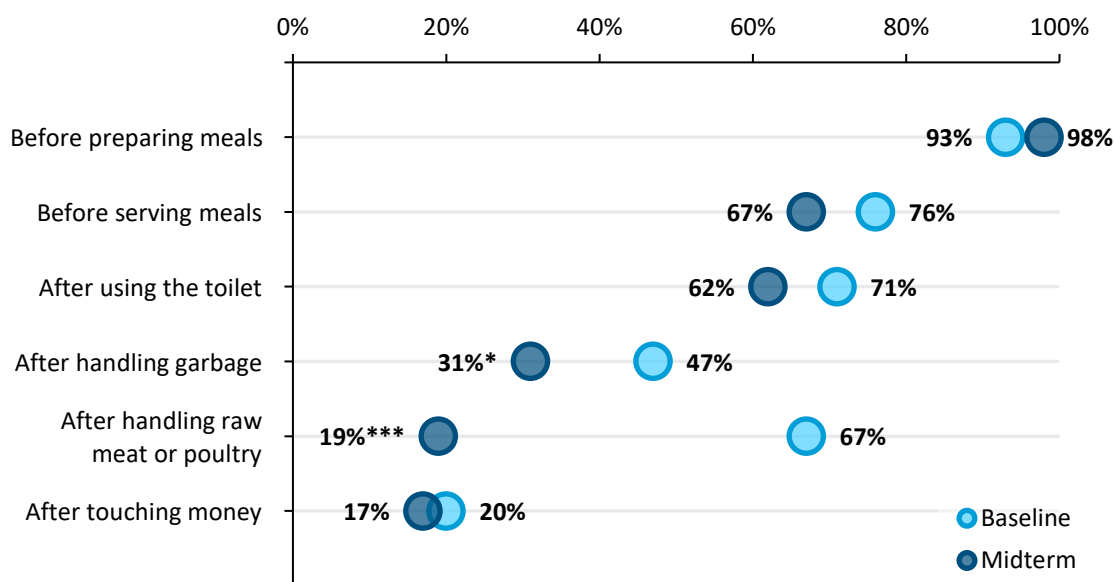
Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 54$ at baseline and 52 at midterm. The graph does not include refused and don't know responses. At baseline, 2% of SMPs refused to answer the questions on signs that soup and stews are ready/safe to serve and signs that meat is ready/safe to serve.

Note: Apart from the question on the likelihood of children becoming sick from consuming undercooked meat, respondents were only allowed to select one option at baseline; at midterm, however, respondents were allowed to select several options. Therefore, comparability between baseline and midterm levels is imperfect.

Food Preparation Safety Practices

Handwashing practices were generally widespread among SMPs but faltered at some key recommended handwashing moments. On average, SMPs reported handwashing at four recommended moments, which included handwashing before preparing meals (98%), before serving meals (67%), and after using the toilet (62%) (Exhibit 65). There was a significant decline from baseline to midterm in SMPs reporting washing hands after handling garbage (by 16 percentage points, $p < 0.01$) and after handling raw meat or poultry (by 48 percentage points, $p < 0.01$). Across the board, all counties saw a decline from baseline to midterm in handwashing after handling raw meat. There was also a 41 percentage point reduction from baseline to midterm in Rivercess in handwashing before serving meals ($p < 0.01$).

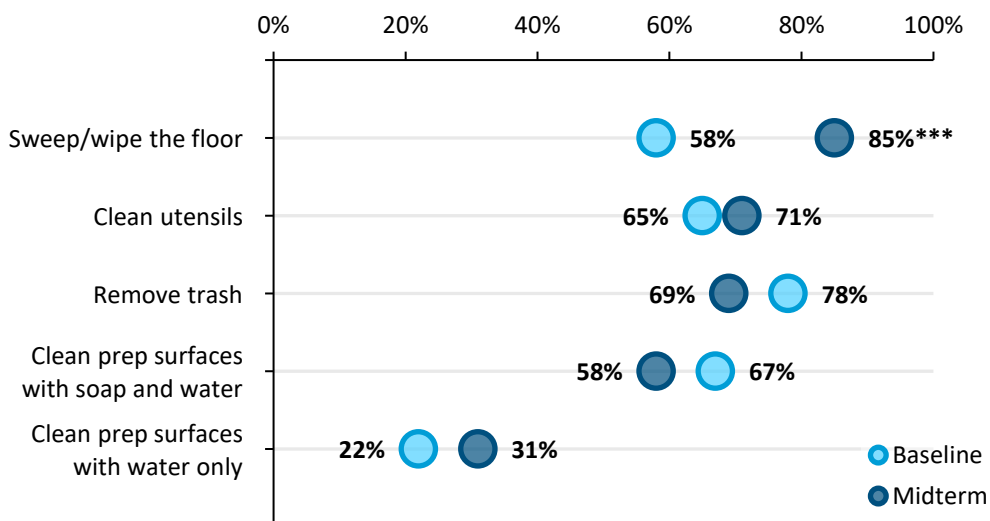
Exhibit 65. Handwashing Moments Among SMPs



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 55$ at baseline and 52 at midterm.

In terms of food safety practices, to clean their food preparation area, most SMPs removed any trash from the area (69%), cleaned surfaces with soap and water (58%), cleaned utensils (71%), and cleaned the floor (85%) (Exhibit 66). Yet, at the county level, SMPs adhered to these practices to varying degrees. For example, the share of SMPs who reported cleaning the food preparation area with soap and water declined from baseline to midterm in Rivercess by 44 percentage points, while in Grand Gedeh SMPs were more likely to report only cleaning the food preparation area with water (46 percentage point increase from baseline, $p < 0.01$).

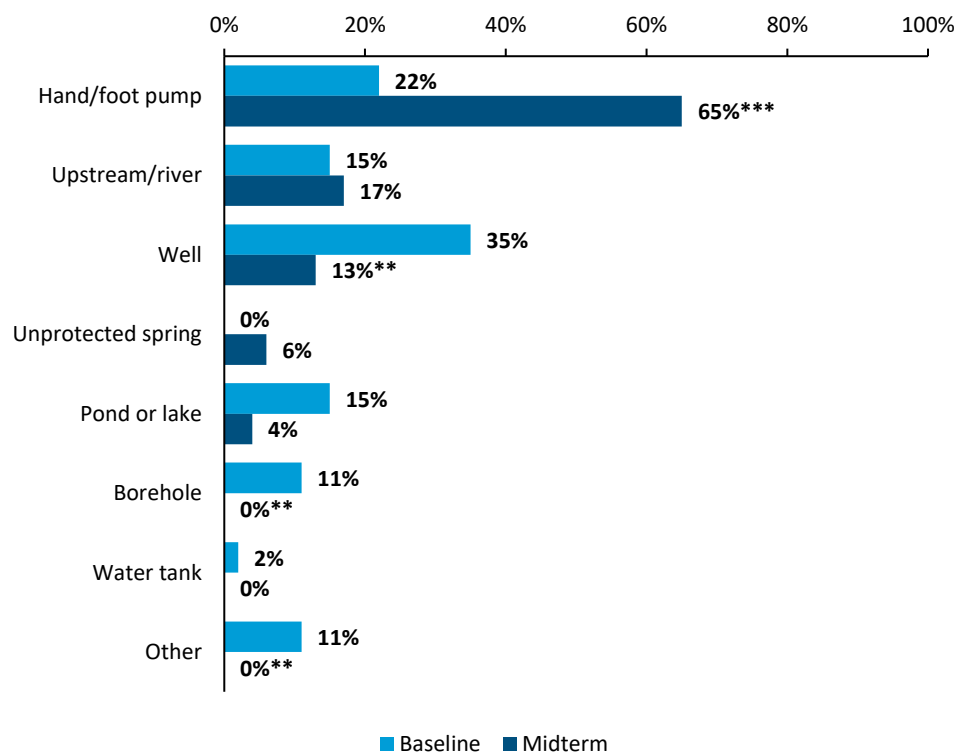
Exhibit 66. Measures to Prepare the Food Preparation Area



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 55$ at baseline and 52 at midterm.

On average, access to improved water sources for cooking was less challenging than access to resources for food storage, as reported by SMPs (Exhibit 67). Most SMPs had access to an improved water source for cooking (81%), a significant increase from baseline levels (65%) at the 5% level; at midterm, access was strongest among SMPs in River Gee (100%), Grand Gedeh (80%), and Rivercess (80%). Regardless of their specific water source, like baseline, at midterm, most SMPs indicated it was at least a little important to treat water before drinking (98%), citing the importance of killing germs (85%) and making water safe to drink (40%) in doing so.

Exhibit 67. Water Source for Cooking

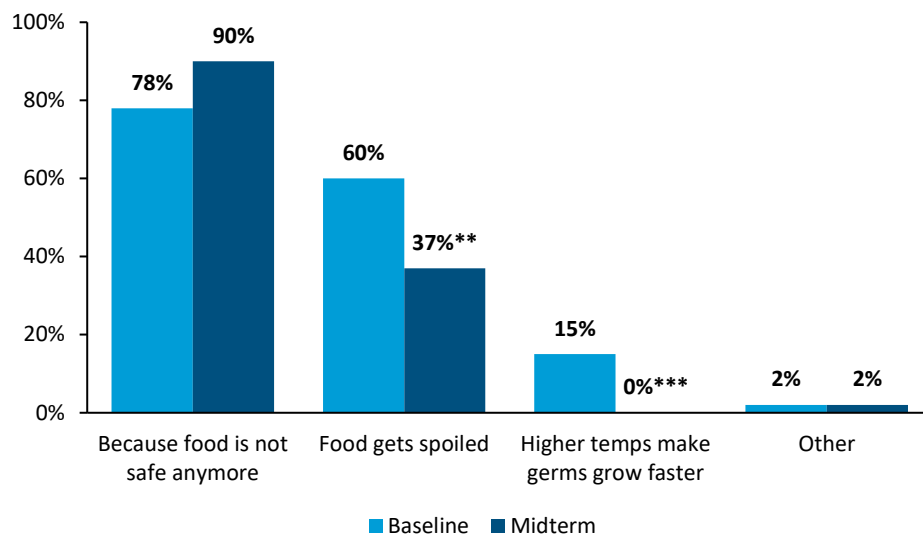


Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 55$ at baseline and 52 at midterm.

Food Storage Safety Practices

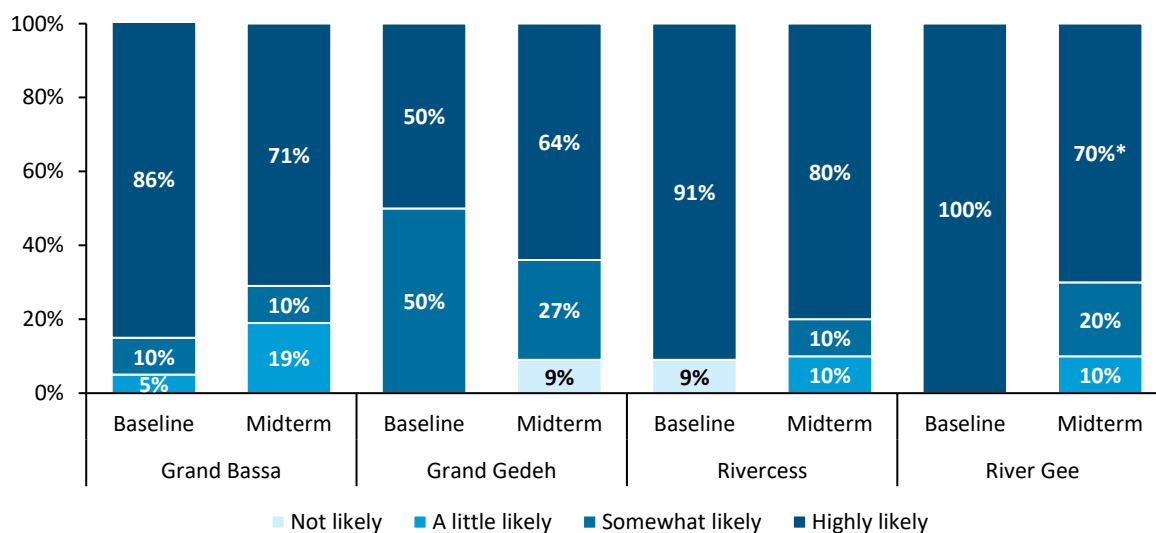
When asked about food storage beliefs, SMPs predominately cited that it was important to refrigerate leftovers because food was no longer safe (90%). Compared to baseline, fewer SMPs cited preventing spoiled food (37%, $p < 0.05$) and germ growth (0%, $p < 0.01$) as reasons to refrigerate leftovers (Exhibit 68). At the county level, fewer SMPs in River Gee indicated that it was highly likely to get sick from eating improperly stored food, a 30 percentage point decline relative to baseline ($p < 0.10$) (Exhibit 69).

Exhibit 68. Reasons for the Importance of Refrigerating Leftovers



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. $N = 55$ at baseline and 52 at midterm. The exhibit does not include "don't know" responses. About 2% of surveyed SMPs reported "don't know" at baseline and at midterm, respectively.

Exhibit 69. Likelihood of Getting Sick From Eating Improperly Stored Food, by County

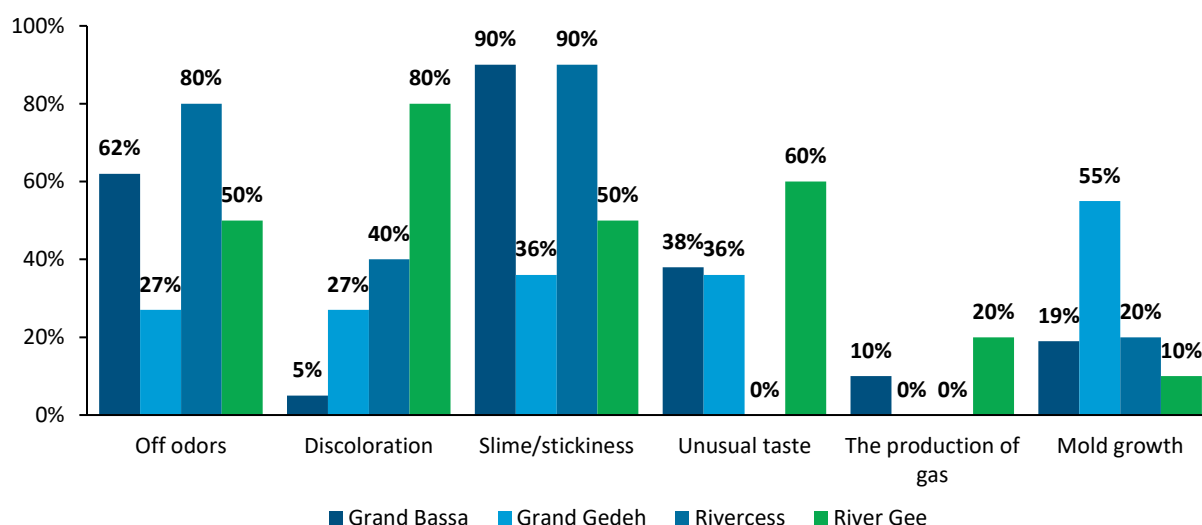


Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 21$ in Grand Bassa, 12 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 11 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 21$ in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 10 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

At midterm, SMPs varied in their ability to identify signs of spoiled food by county. Most SMPs in Grand Bassa (90%) and Rivercess (90%) identified slime or stickiness as a sign of spoiled food.

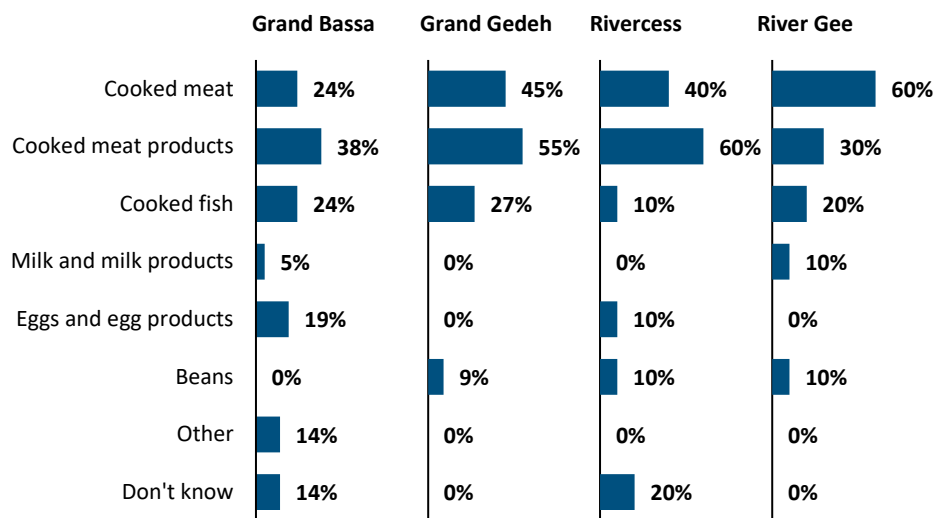
Discoloration was the most commonly cited sign from SMPs in River Gee (80%), while only 5% of SMPs in Grand Bassa cited the same. Mold growth was the most commonly cited sign among those in Grand Gedeh (55%). However, less than a quarter of SMPs in the other three counties identified mold growth as a sign, and 0% of SMPs in Grand Gedeh and Rivercess noted the production of gas as a sign of food spoilage (Exhibit 70). When asked to list the types of foods that are most at risk of spoiling, SMPs across all counties most frequently cited cooked meat or cooked meat products (Exhibit 71). Alternatively, milk and milk products were the least cited foods that SMPs identified as a high risk of spoiling.

Exhibit 70. Signs That Food is Spoiled, by County



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 21 in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 10 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

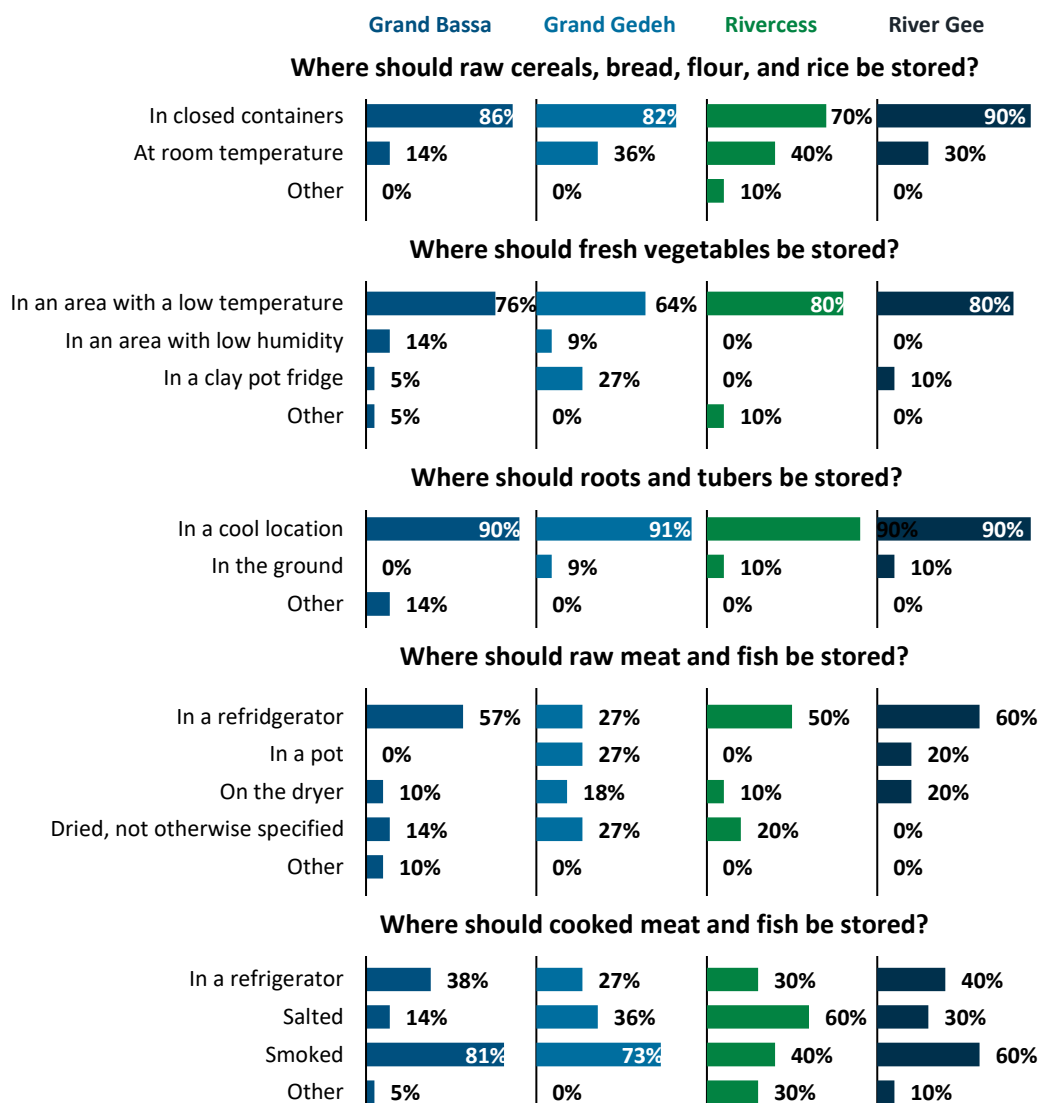
Exhibit 71. Types of Foods Most at Risk of Spoilage, by County



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 21 in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 10 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

Most SMPs agreed on where roots, vegetables, and grain products should be stored across all counties (Exhibit 72). However, answers varied when it came to storing raw or cooked meat and fish. More than half of SMPs in Grand Bassa, Rivercess, and River Gee primarily said raw meat and fish should be stored in a refrigerator (57%, 50%, and 60%, respectively), whereas those in Grand Gedeh noted refrigerator storage (27%), inside a pot (27%), and on a dryer (27%). SMPs had alternative views on refrigerator storage for cooked foods. SMPs in Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, and River Gee predominantly said cooked meat or fish should be smoked, and most SMPs in Rivercess said cooked foods should be salted.

Exhibit 72. Where Food Should be Stored, by County

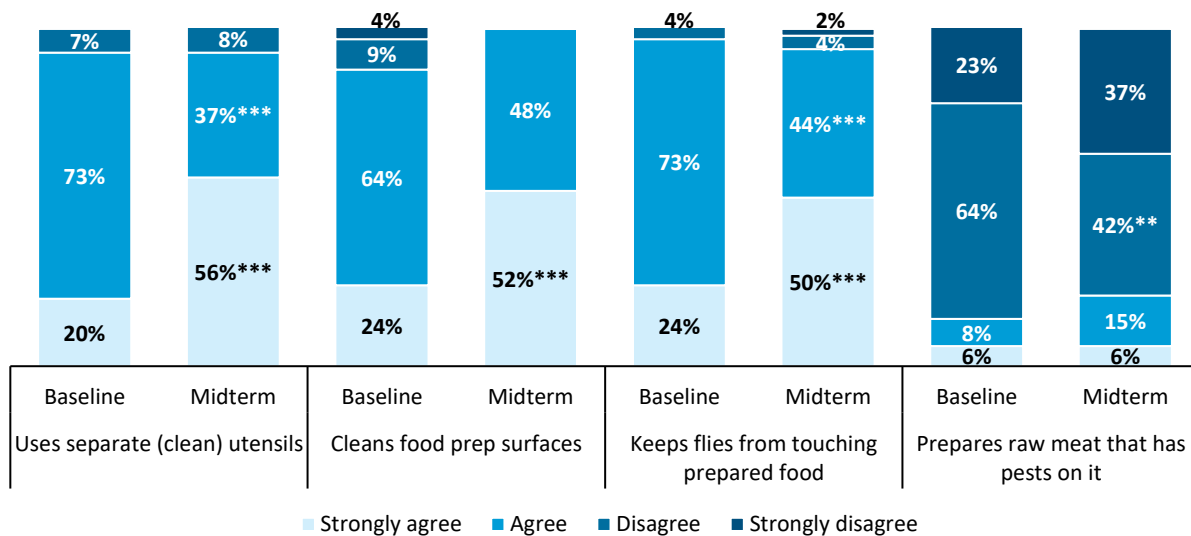


Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 21 in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 10 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee. The exhibit does not show "don't know" or "refused responses." Overall, 6% of SMPs did not know where fresh vegetables should be stored, and 2% of SMPs did not know where raw cereals, bread, flour, and rice should be stored.

SMPs noted stronger compliance to most recommended food storage practices (Exhibit 73). More than half strongly agreed about using separate and clean utensils (56%, $p < 0.01$), cleaning food preparation surfaces (52%, $p < 0.01$), and preventing flies from coming in contact with prepared food (50%, $p < 0.01$). However, fewer SMPs (42%) disagreed about preparing raw meat that had pests on it than at baseline (64%, $p < 0.05$). Although most SMPs thought it was important to store cooked foods in a cool place, nearly all (96%) reported difficulties in doing so (Exhibit 74). While

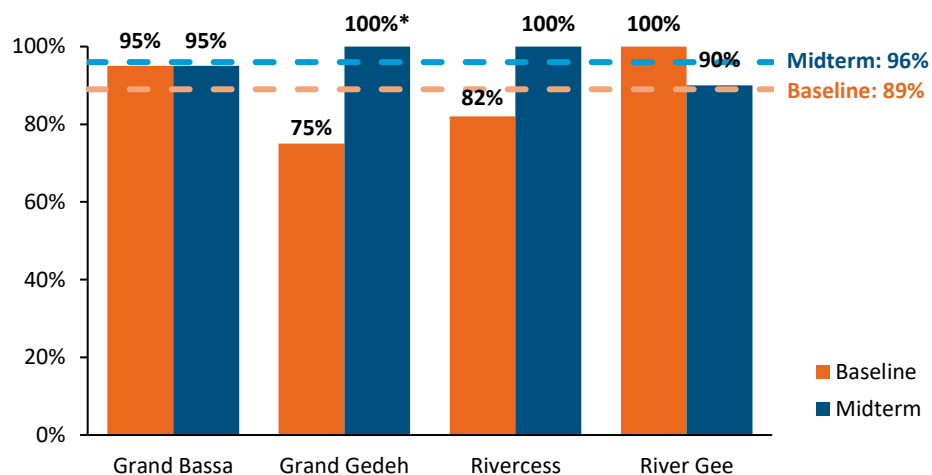
fewer SMPs in River Gee perceived difficulty at midterm, all SMPs in Grand Gedeh ($p < 0.10$) and Rivercess reported difficulty with keeping food in a cool place.

Exhibit 73. SMP Perceived Compliance With Recommended Practices to Prevent Contamination



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 55$ at baseline and 52 at midterm.

Exhibit 74. Perceived Difficulty of Keeping Foods in a Cool Box, by County



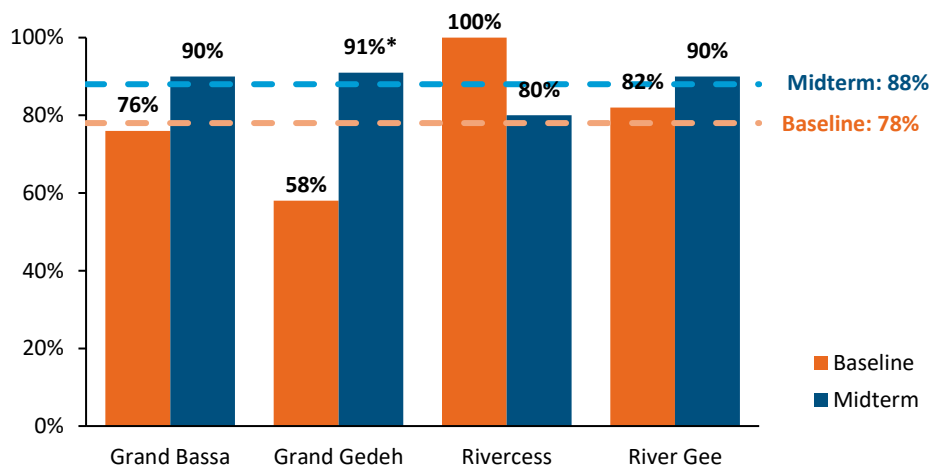
Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 19$ in Grand Bassa, 12 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 11 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 21$ in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 10 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

Qualitative data suggested that cooks and storekeepers felt adequately trained for their duties, were able to give examples of some of their responsibilities, and applied those practices regularly. They also, in contrast to findings at baseline and LEARN I evaluations, did not complain about lack of materials or poor-quality kitchens. Rather, they were generally happy with the status of their kitchens and available resources.

Accountability

Overall, most SMPs, on average, reported being previously supervised while they prepared meals at midterm (88%) (Exhibit 75). At the county level, significantly more SMPs in Grand Gedeh reported prior supervision (91%, $p < 0.10$). Those in Grand Bassa (90%) and River Gee (90%) also increased relative to baseline. However, fewer SMPs in Rivercess (80%) reported prior supervision.

Exhibit 75. Proportion of SMPs Who Had Been Supervised as They Prepared Meals, by County

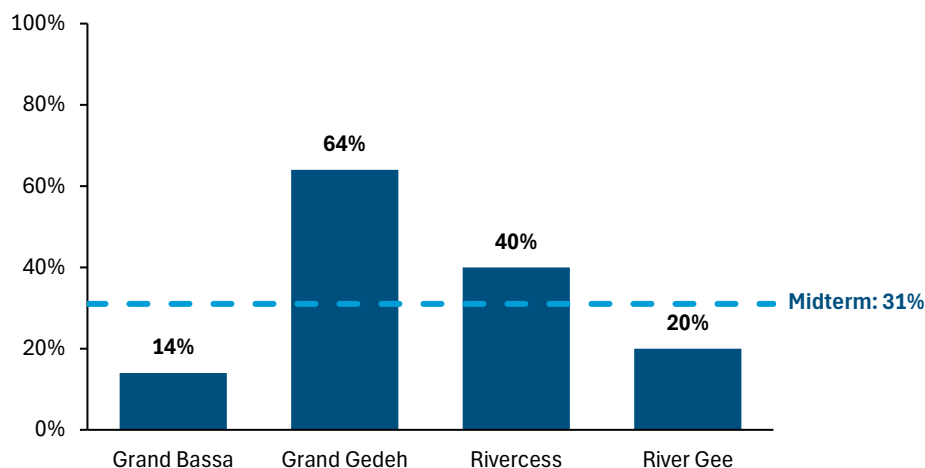


Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 21$ in Grand Bassa, 12 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 11 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 21$ in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 10 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

SMP Perceptions of Diversity of Meals and Views on Power Gari

As previously mentioned, there was a significant increase from baseline to midterm in students reporting that different types of foods were served to them in school meals (24% vs. 8%, $p < 0.01$). To compare student perceptions with SMP perceptions, we also asked SMPs whether they serve different types of foods in their school meals. Overall, less than a third of SMPs, on average, reported they served different types of foods in their school meals (Exhibit 76). This perception varied by county, with less than half of SMPs in Grand Bassa (14%), Rivercess (40%), and River Gee (20%) indicating serving different types of food. Alternatively, most SMPs in Grand Gedeh (64%) believed they served different types of foods in their school meals. This aligns with reports from the student survey, with 59% of students reporting in Grand Gedeh that they were served different types of foods in school meals, and 30% of River Gee reporting the same.

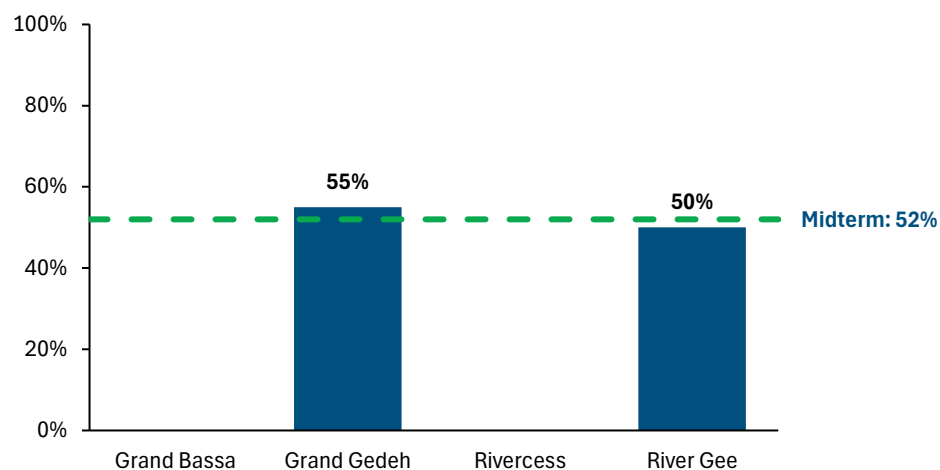
Exhibit 76. SMP Perceives That They Serve Different Types of Foods in School Meals, by County



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 21 in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 10 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

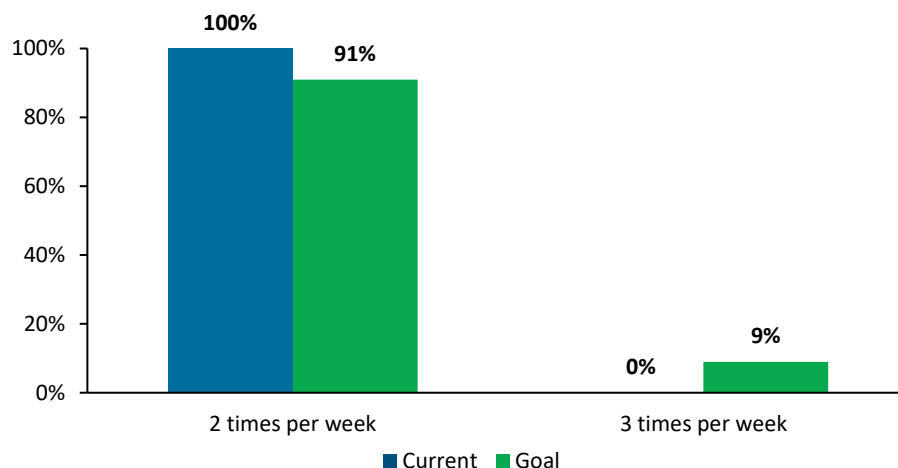
SMPs were also asked whether they ever served Power Gari at their school. Under LEARN II, Power Gari distribution only occurs in Grand Gedeh and River Gee. Among SMPs in those two counties, just over half, on average, reported at midterm that they ever served Power Gari (52%) (Exhibit 77). On average, a slightly larger proportion of SMPs in Grand Gedeh reported ever doing so (55%) relative to their counterparts in River Gee (50%). Of the SMPs in Grand Gedeh and River Gee who reported ever serving Power Gari, all reported serving Power Gari twice per week, which, for the most part, aligned with their frequency goal (91%). However, one SMP indicated a desire to serve Power Gari at least three times per week (Exhibit 78).

Exhibit 77. SMPs Ever Serve Power Gari at This School, by County



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 11 in Grand Gedeh and 10 in River Gee. There is no Power Gari distribution in Grand Bassa and Rivercess, so the exhibit does not include values for those counties.

Exhibit 78. Number of Times per Week SMPs Serve Power Gari and Number of Times per Week SMPs Would Like to Serve Power Gari

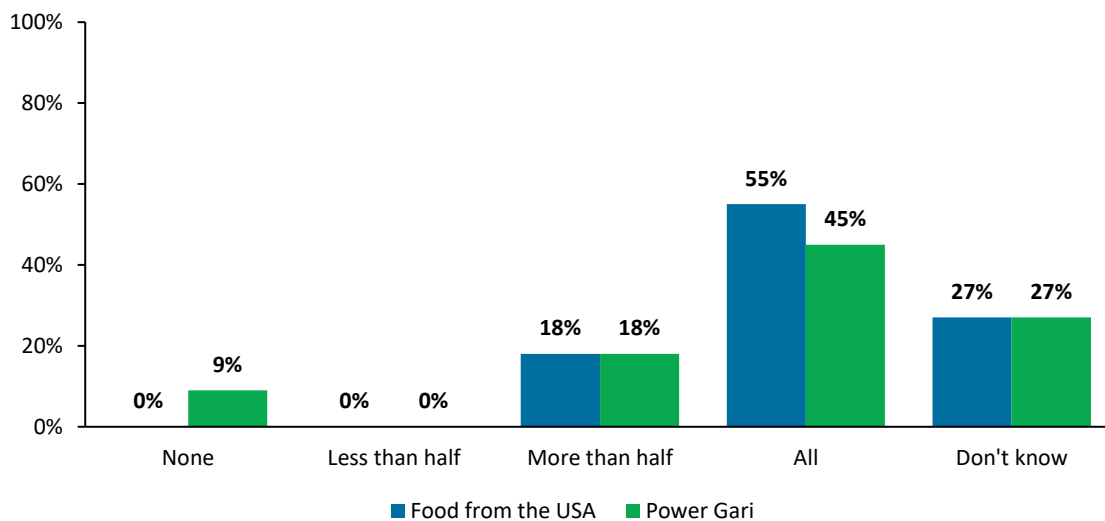


Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 11 (six from Grand Gedeh and five from River Gee).
 Note: SMPs were only asked these questions if they indicated that they ever serve Power Gari at this school.

Among the SMPs who reported ever serving Power Gari (n = 11), nearly half reported that all Power Gari deliveries arrived on time within the past school year (45%) and just over half reported that all food deliveries from the United States arrived on time within the past school year (55%, n = 11)²³ (Exhibit 79). When asked to compare the timeliness of deliveries of Power Gari compared to food from the U.S., 55% of SMPs reported that food is delivered at approximately the same speed, followed by 27% reporting Power Gari is delivered faster than U.S.-donated food (Exhibit 80).

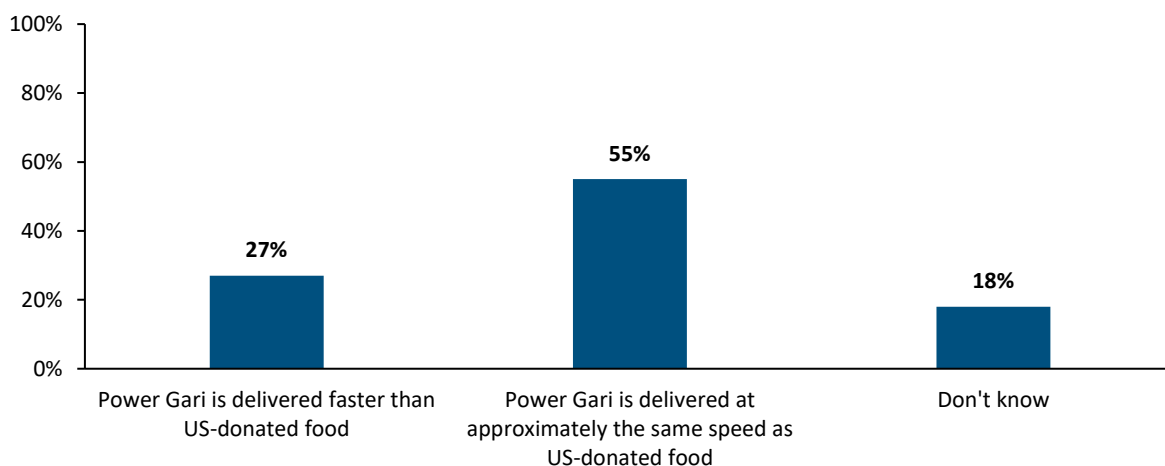
²³ Among all surveyed SMPs at midterm (n = 52), just under half reported that all food deliveries from the United States arrived on time (46%) whereas a comparatively smaller share reported more than half but not all (15%) or less than half (10%) arrived on time. Over a quarter reported they did not know (29%).

Exhibit 79. Share of Deliveries for School Meals That Arrived on Time During the Past School Year



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 11.

Exhibit 80. In terms of timeliness, is Power Gari delivered faster or slower than U.S.-donated food?



Source: School Meal Provider survey. Authors' calculations. Midterm N = 11.

Note: SMPs were only asked this question if they reported ever serving Power Gari at this school.

School Gardens and Local Resource Procurement

Compared to LEARN II baseline and LEARN I evaluations, school gardens are becoming more successful and common across LEARN communities, including those in Grand Bassa that do not have the formal school gardens initiative as part of LEARN II. Just one of the communities visited during midterm (in Grand Gedeh) said they had no garden at all, which contrasts with past evaluations for LEARN and baseline for LEARN II where gardens were relatively uncommon, and,

if they existed, were generally said to be unsuccessful in providing substantial help for school feeding activities. Now, many respondents said their gardens are not only helpful but have the potential to contribute to sustained school feeding activities at the end of LEARN II. Of course, there is some variety in the degree to which the community perceived gardens as successful: in seven communities, respondents generally said the gardens were well-established and had potential to be sustained past LEARN II; in the remaining five (including the one community whose gardens was not presently active at all), they were said to be struggling and not adequately providing for the school at that point. Among those who described their success, respondents said they used the produce for their own school meals and sometimes sold extra produce for cash to help fund school feeding initiatives. The main reasons for struggling gardens, as reported during qualitative interviews, were lack of adequate tools and seeds, lack of land, and lack of parents to help.

Still, across all communities, there was evident appreciation for and understanding of the importance of school gardens and larger farming initiatives for sustained school feeding; this stands out from baseline when not all communities saw the potential of gardens and local procurement of food and rather expressed reliance on USDA commodities. Promisingly, some of the communities that had more recently established or improved their gardens said that while the garden was not presently in a state to sustain the school, they were working toward it.

None of the schools in River Gee or Grand Gedeh have yet established ties with large local farms because of the difficulty Kawadah Farm has had in procuring a processing facility in the target counties. However, some school communities there and in the non-LRP communities recognized the potential of such partnerships and have been successful in establishing relationships with existing local farms or starting their own larger farm separated from the school garden. These activities help supplement cassava, rice, and other staple foods that they use in their school feeding. Of the 12 schools visited, five had no activities with local farms; five had recently procured or were in the process of procuring land to start a school farm; one had already established a farm; and three had relationships with local farmers to procure food (one of those had also recently procured land of its own). Models used by communities without formal ties to farms may be helpful stories that could be applied to other communities where local procurement remains a challenge: in Rivercess, the community works with local farmers to provide labor (by parents and teachers) and in return, they get produce. As with the gardens, participants noted similar challenges when it came to establishing larger farms near schools to supplement school feeding needs, noting lack of adequate labor and tools, though it is important to note that under LEARN II there is no budget allocation for the provision of tools and seeds in Rivercess. Schools are expected to raise their own seeds through PTA contributions in the absence of project support.

4.6 Safe School Stories

One of the educational activities under LEARN II is to promote awareness of the National Teacher Code of Conduct among teachers, school administrators, students, and parents, so that all know their rights and responsibilities, what they can do to promote safety and respect for all children, and what action they should take if the code is violated. The LEARN II team aims to apply a social behavior communication approach to change knowledge, perception, and practices around the key themes in the code, to improve school culture and make schools safe, happy places where all children and adults can thrive and achieve their potential. Under the safe school stories intervention, LEARN II developed a series of stories that touch on themes included in the National Teacher Code of Conduct that are often not respected by teachers (e.g., the use of corporal punishment; the use of humiliating language; sexual harassment/grooming/abuse; discrimination; gender stereotyping; punctuality and attendance; drug and alcohol use; and abuse of school resources). As part of the intervention, a rotation of the safe school's stories will be read across 12 sessions to all school staff and students during daily morning announcements. Additionally, safe school stories will be transmitted through radio to further reinforce their messages and to reach school stakeholders outside of the school, such as parents and caregivers.

At midterm, we report on student and teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior around sexual and gender-based violence and gender norms, and examine any changes from baseline.

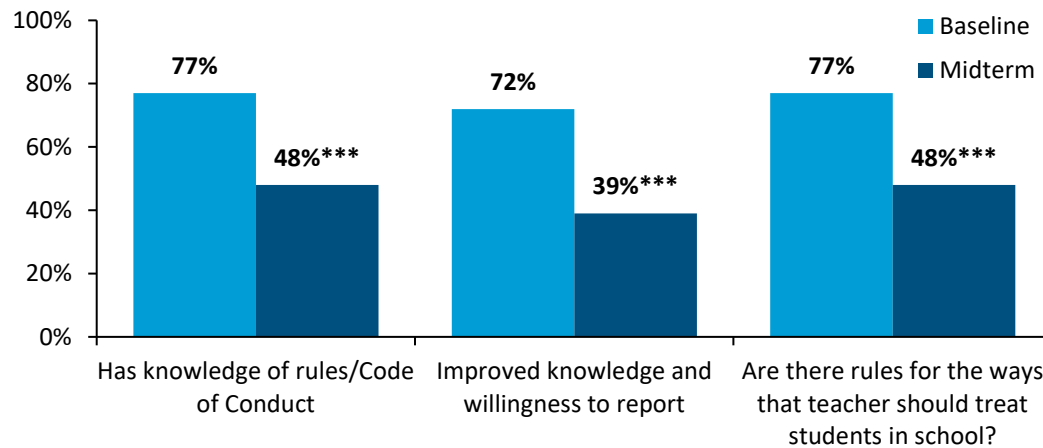
Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Like baseline, at midterm, to better understand gender differentials in the school setting and evaluate potential risks for sexual and gender-based violence, we asked students about school rules and gender norms. In doing so, we specifically sought to identify: (a) knowledge gaps in terms of teachers' code of conduct, which could exacerbate power differentials in the classroom environment, and (b) prevailing gender norms within and outside the classroom.

There was a significant decline from baseline to midterm in student knowledge of the code of conduct by 29 percentage points ($p < 0.01$). There was a decline in students' knowledge of general rules for teacher conduct from baseline to midterm by 20 percentage points ($p < 0.01$). There were also major declines in students' specific knowledge around teacher–student interactions (29 percentage points, $p < 0.01$), as well as in the proportion of students showing improved knowledge and willingness to report misconduct (33 percentage points; $p < 0.01$) (Exhibit 81). River Gee and Rivercess witnessed the sharpest decline in the proportion of students showing improved knowledge and willingness to report misconduct by 52 percentage points ($p < 0.01$) each, with the declines in Grand Gedeh and Grand Bassa being relatively smaller but still statistically significant

at the 1% level (17 percentage points and 23 percentage points, respectively). Exhibit B3 in Appendix B notes county-level differences at midterm.

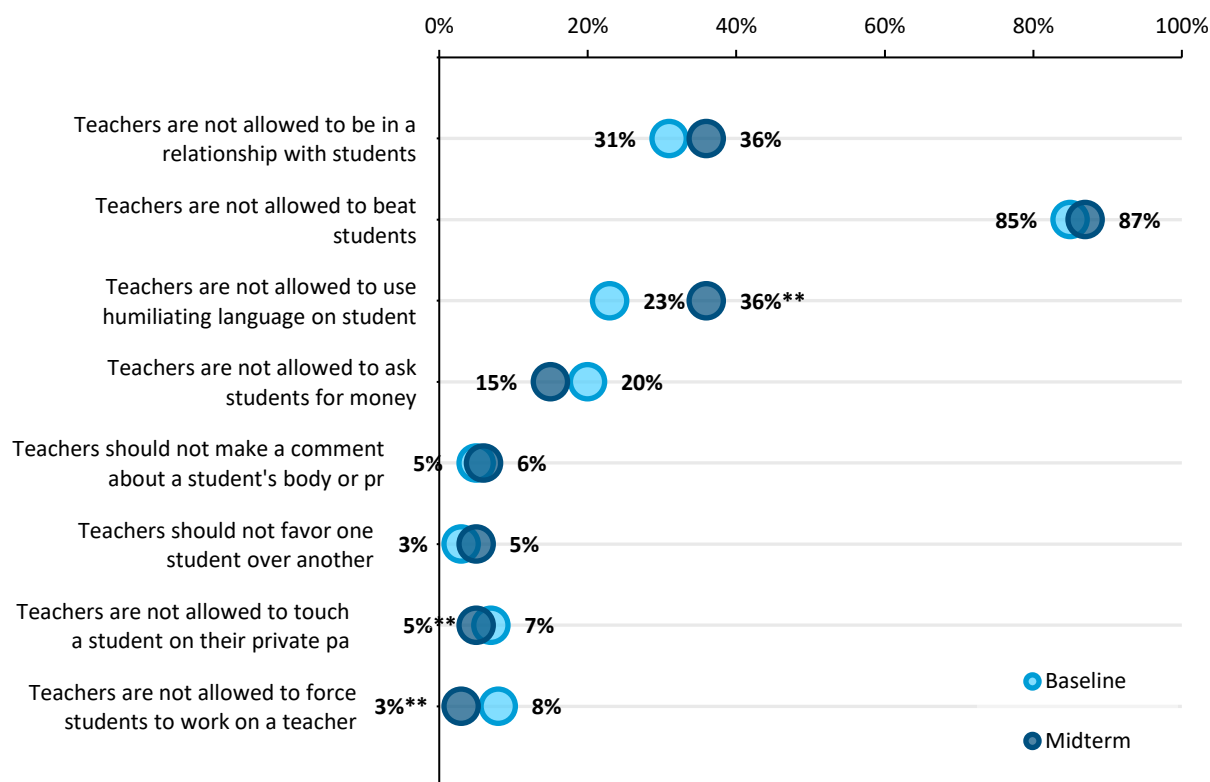
Exhibit 81. Student Knowledge of Rules for Teachers



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Knowledge of Code of Conduct $N = 945$ at baseline and 805 at midterm. Improved knowledge $N = 1,007$ at baseline and 996 at midterm. Knowledge of rules $N = 945$ at baseline and 805 at midterm.

There were minor differences from baseline to midterm for how students reported that teachers should treat students. Like baseline, at midterm, a majority (87%) of students mentioned rules that prohibit beating (Exhibit 82). There was a significant increase from baseline to midterm in students reporting rules that teachers are not allowed to use humiliating language on students by 13 percentage points ($p < 0.01$). There was also a significant decline from baseline to midterm in students acknowledging that sexual abuse is prohibited by 2 percentage points ($p < 0.05$), with River Gee and Rivercess witnessing the largest declines. It is important to note that sensitive survey questions may also be affected by some measurement error or response bias because students may be embarrassed to mention rules related to sexual harassment and sexual abuse.

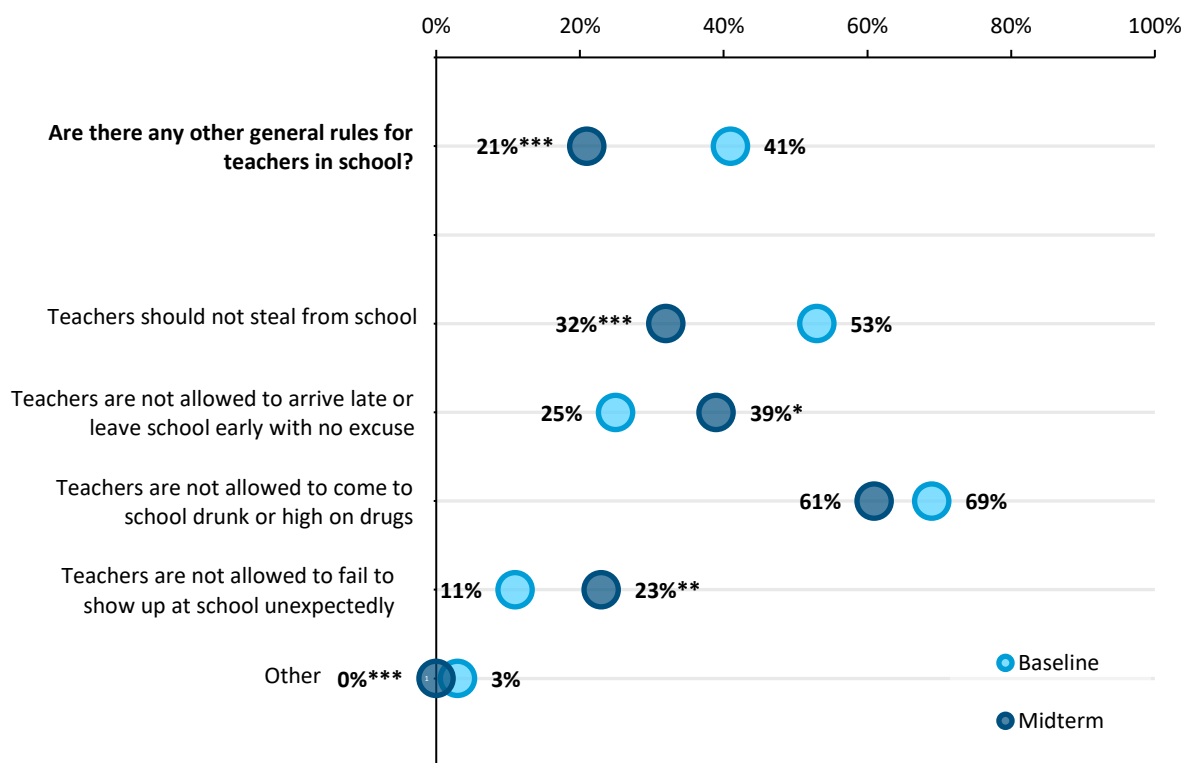
Exhibit 82. Student Knowledge of Rules for How Teachers Treat Students



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 726$ at baseline and 338 at midterm. Responses under 3% are omitted from the graph.

There was a significant decline from baseline to midterm in students reporting knowledge of general rules for teachers from 41% to 21% ($p < 0.01$). In specifying general rules for teacher conduct in school, like baseline, at midterm, most students noted that teachers should not come to school intoxicated on alcohol or drugs (61%) (Exhibit 83). There was a significant decline in students mentioning that teachers should not steal from school (32% vs. 53%, $p < 0.01$). There was an increase from baseline to midterm in the proportion of students reporting that teachers are not allowed to arrive late at school of 14 percentage points ($p < 0.10$).

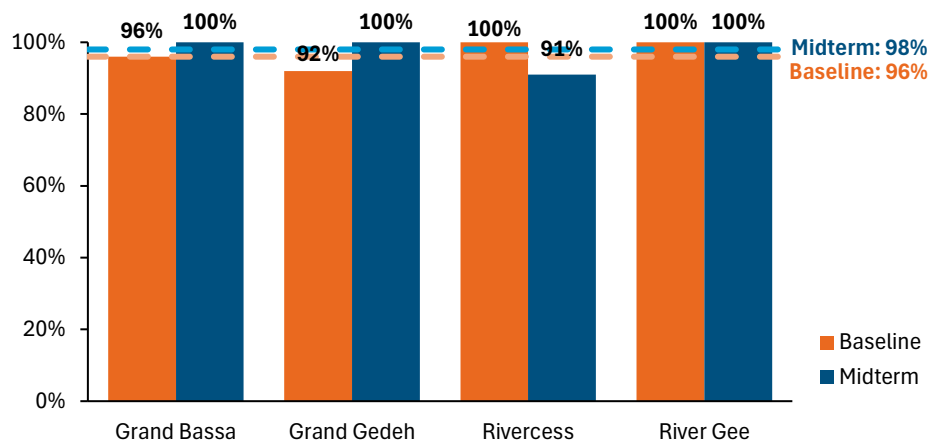
Exhibit 83. Student Knowledge of General Rules for Teachers



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 816$ at baseline and 755 at midterm. The types of rules were only asked of two students who acknowledged that there were other rules for teachers at school.

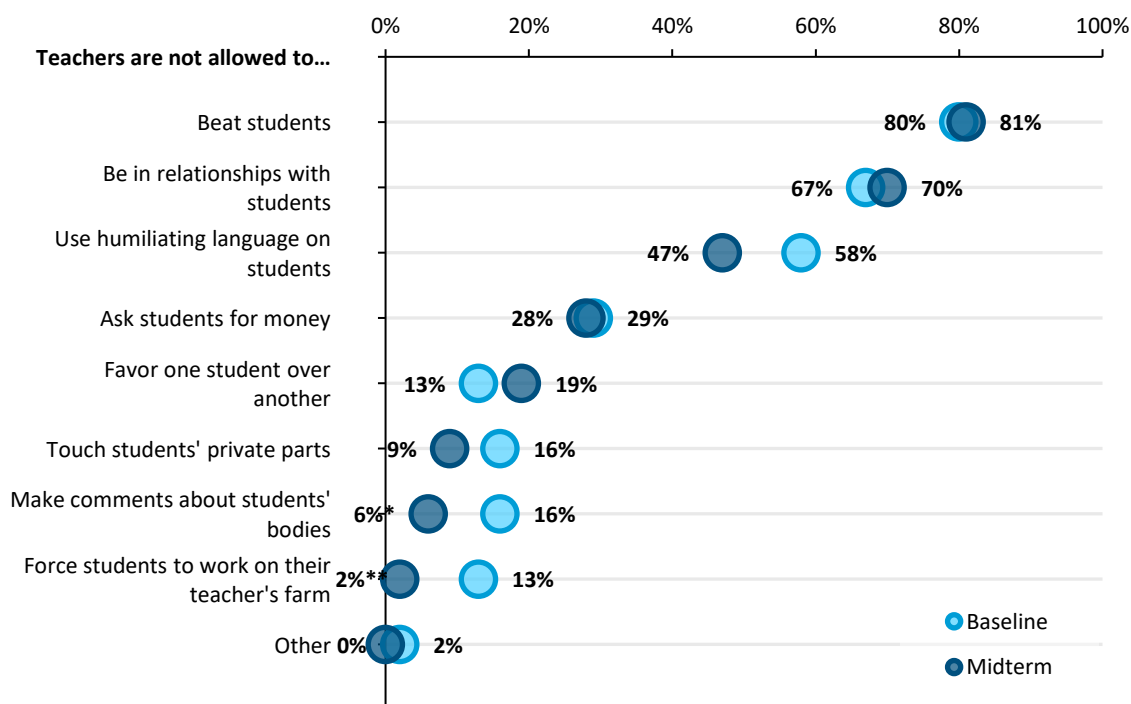
A clear gap exists between students and teachers in their awareness of the rules that teachers must adhere to regarding student treatment. While a large share of students were not aware of such rules, most teachers were (98%) (Exhibit 84). However, students and teachers showed similar negative trends in some areas (Exhibit 85). Like students, fewer teachers indicated that touching students' private parts (9%) or forcing students to work on their farm (2%, $p < 0.05$) is against the rules. There was also a significant decline in teachers acknowledging that commenting on students' bodies (6%, $p < 0.10$) is against the rules. Alternatively, while significantly more students stated that teachers could not use humiliating language on them compared to baseline, a smaller share of teachers noted the same at midterm (47%) compared to baseline (58%).

Exhibit 84. Knowledge of Rules for Teacher Treatment of Students, by County and According to Teachers



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 23$ in Grand Bassa, 12 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 11 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 23$ in Grand Bassa, 10 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee.

Exhibit 85. Rules for the Ways Teachers Should Treat Students in School, According to Teachers

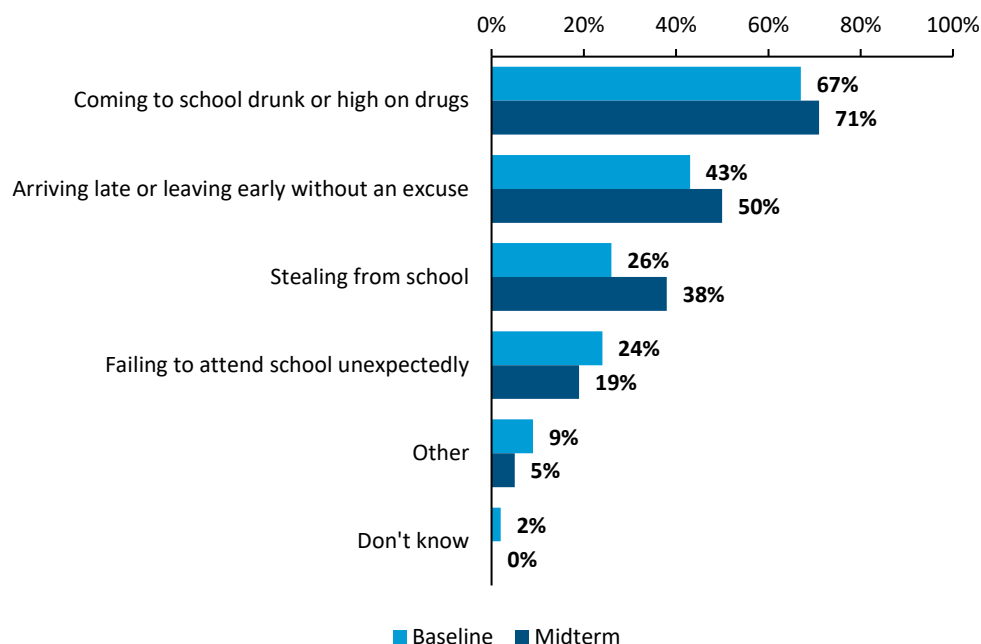


Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 55$ at baseline and 53 at midterm. Teachers were asked to cite specific rules only if they confirmed there are rules for the ways that teachers should treat students in school.

Teachers and students had opposing views on prohibited behaviors exhibited by teachers. While a significantly higher share of students at midterm noted it was prohibited for teachers to be absent unexpectedly, fewer teachers (19%) acknowledged the same relative to baseline (Exhibit

86). Likewise, while there was an increase in teachers noting stealing from school was prohibited (38%), there was a significant decline in students reporting the same.

Exhibit 86. Prohibited Behaviors for Teachers in School, According to Teachers

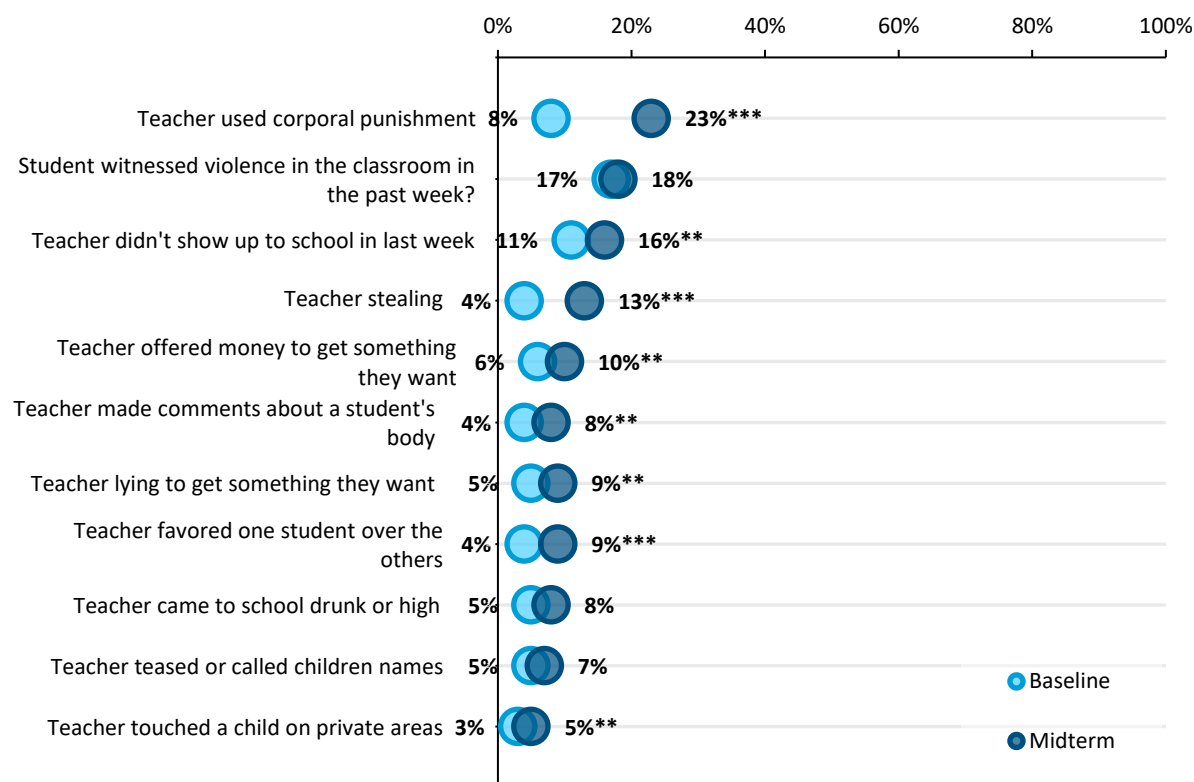


Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 46$ at baseline and 42 at midterm. Teachers were asked to cite general rules only if they confirmed there are such rules for teachers in school.

With respect to actual practice, from baseline to midterm, there were increases in students reporting that they witnessed a teacher lying to get out of trouble (4 percentage points, $p < 0.01$), a teacher stealing things from school (9 percentage points, $p < 0.01$), teacher favoring one student over the other (6 percentage points, $p < 0.01$), teacher using corporal punishment (15 percentage points, $p < 0.01$), sexual harassment by a teacher (4 percentage points, $p < 0.05$), and sexual abuse by a teacher (2 percentage points, $p < 0.05$) (Exhibit 87). There was also a 5 percentage point increase in teachers not showing up to school in the last week from baseline to midterm ($p < 0.05$). In terms of county-level differences, Rivercess witnessed significant increases from baseline to midterm on most behaviors noted in Exhibit 86, including lying (14 percentage points, $p < 0.01$) and coming to school drunk in the last week (15 percentage points, $p < 0.01$). The other three counties did not witness any changes from baseline to midterm.

With respect to safe school stories, at baseline, 4% of students reported having listened to at least two safe school stories in the past week, while at midterm, this declined significantly to 1% ($p < 0.01$).

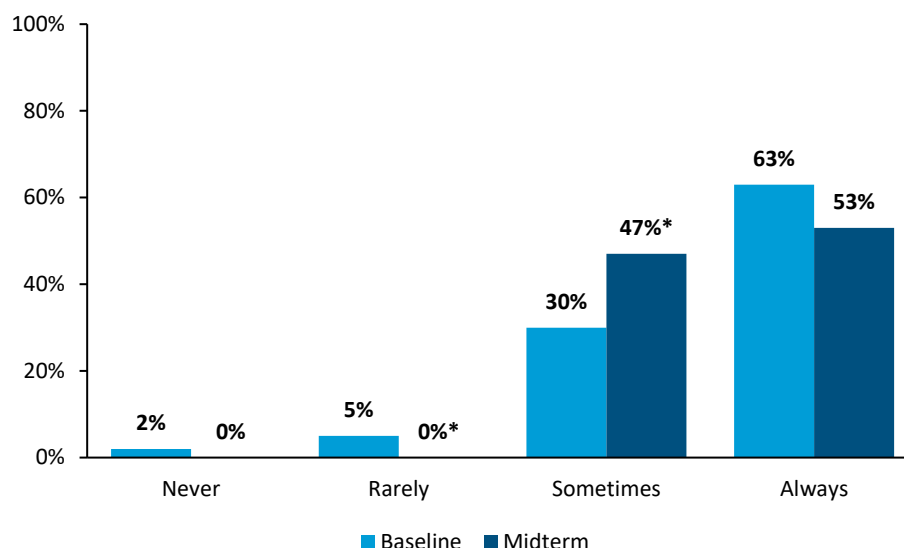
Exhibit 87. Behaviors Witnessed at Schools by Students



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 956$ at baseline and 978 at midterm.

If teased or touched in a way they found discomforting, students often reported incidences to teachers (78%), followed by school principals (53%) and parents (21%). As reported by students, confiding in teachers was more common in River Gee (90%) relative to the other counties where approximately three quarters of the students stated they would report an incidence to their teachers. In addition, while most students in Grand Gedeh (60%) and River Gee (60%) would report to their school principal, only around half would do so in Grand Bassa (45%) and Rivercess (50%). According to teachers, only around half the time (53%) is action taken when students report violence (Exhibit 88), a decline from 63% at baseline.

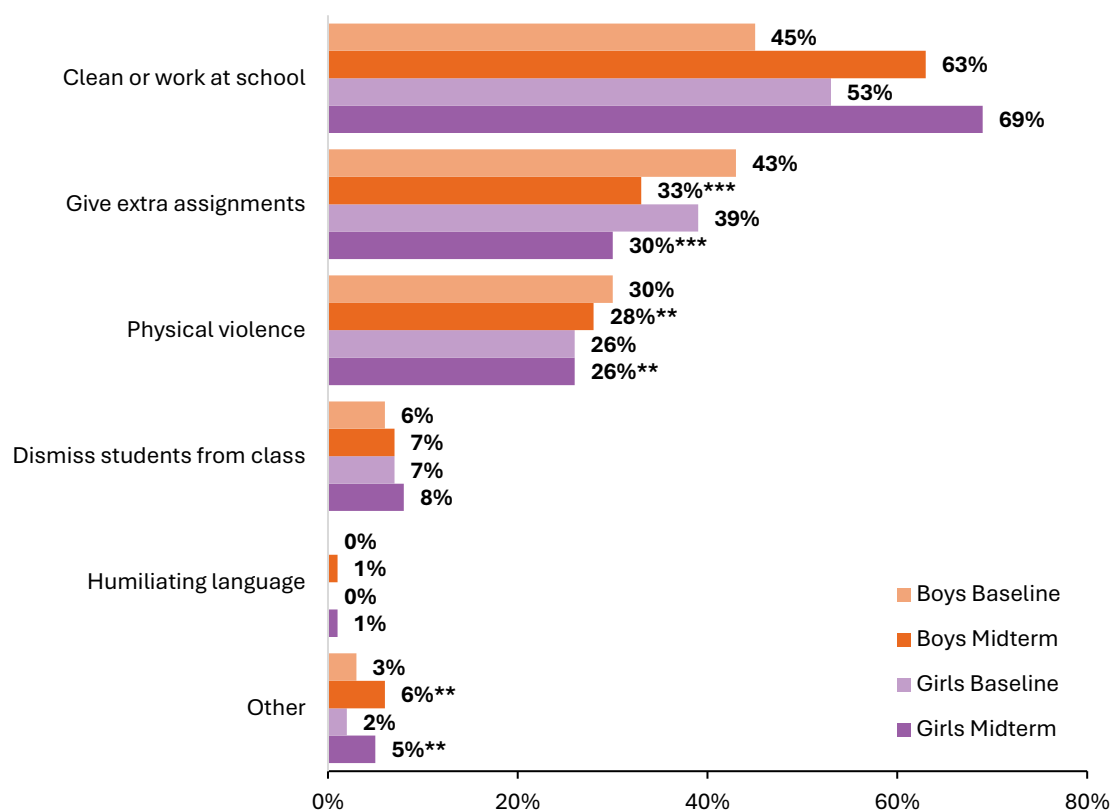
Exhibit 88. Frequency Teachers or Other Officials Take Action When Students Report Violence, According to Teachers



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm.

As reported by students, teachers' methods for disciplinary action often included having students clean or work at school and giving students additional assignments. We asked students how teachers disciplined students of each gender. At baseline, girls were more likely to be asked to clean or work at school while boys were slightly more likely to be given additional schoolwork or physically punished. However, at midterm, boys were equally likely to be asked to clean or work at school or given extra assignments, and physical violence was also roughly equivalent in both genders (Exhibit 89). There were almost no differences in the perception of how students of both genders were punished.

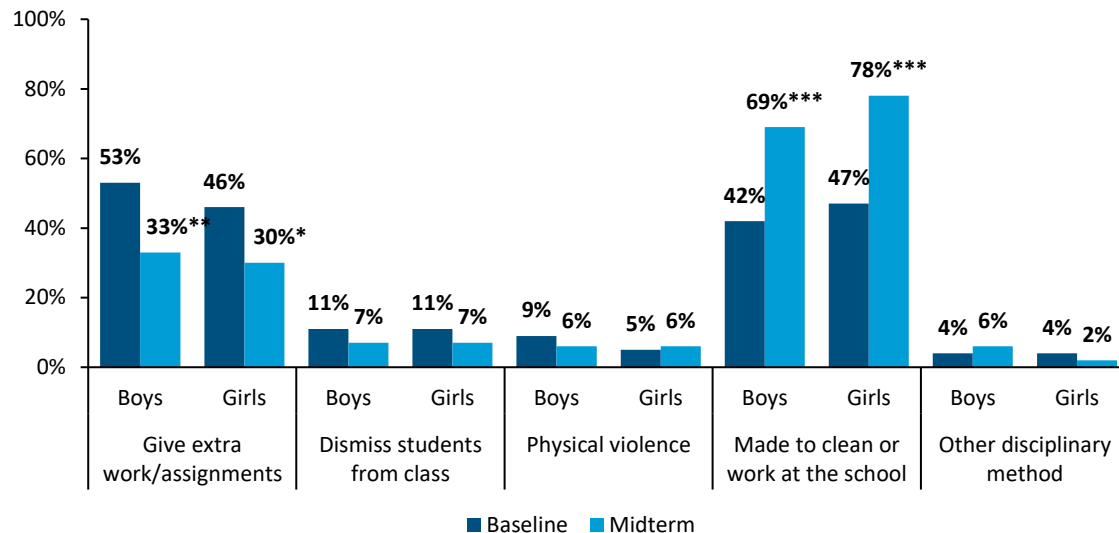
Exhibit 89. How Teachers Discipline Each Gender at School According to Students



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 1,007$ at baseline and 996 at midterm.

Cleaning/working at school and giving extra work/assignments were also common discipline techniques reported by teachers (Exhibit 90). In terms of county-level differences, since baseline, fewer teachers in Grand Bassa reported giving extra work/assignments to boys (43% at baseline and 9% at midterm, $p < 0.01$) and girls (39% at baseline and 4% at midterm, $p < 0.01$), respectively. However, teachers in Grand Bassa more frequently reported making girls clean or work at the school at midterm (57% baseline and 96% midterm, $p < 0.01$). Relative to baseline, teachers in Rivercess less frequently reported giving extra work/assignments as a form of punishment for boys (73% baseline and 27% midterm, $p < 0.05$). Teachers in Rivercess more frequently reported making boys and girls clean or work at school as a form of punishment at midterm (boys: 27% at baseline and 91% at midterm, $p < 0.01$; girls: 36% at baseline and 91% at midterm, $p < 0.01$).

Exhibit 90. Disciplinary Methods Teachers Use at School According to Teachers



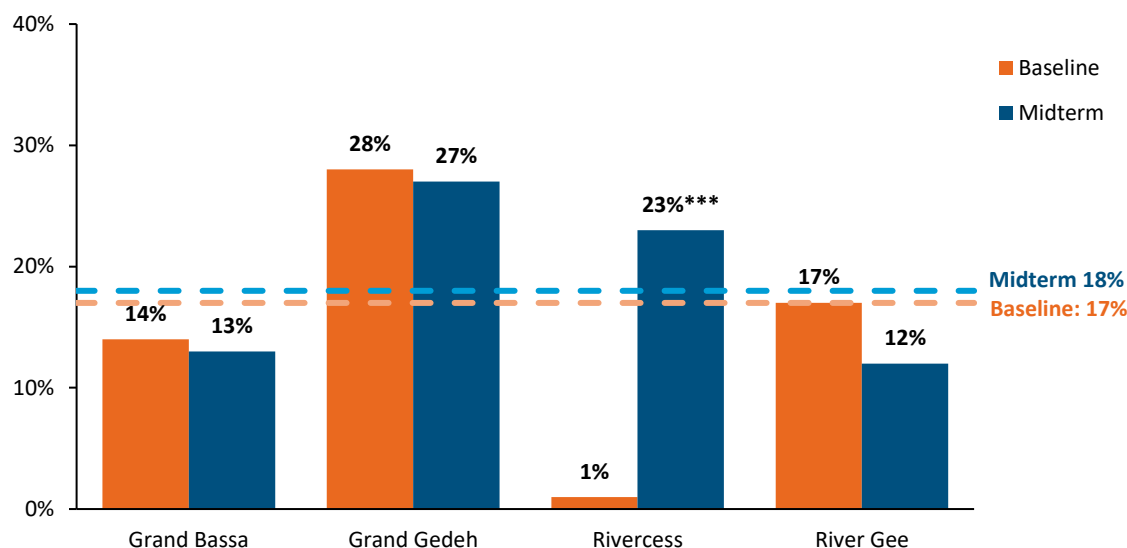
Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm. The option "humiliating language" is not included in the graph because no teacher reported using this method at baseline or at midterm. Statistically significant differences compare baseline and midterm, not methods used for boys and girls.

While the qualitative data showed that students, caregivers, teachers, and principals overall had good basic knowledge of the teacher code of conduct, and were able to clearly articulate some of the things that teachers should not do: use bribes with students (for example, "love on girl students," come to work drunk, "beat on" students, make students do work other than schoolwork or stand outside as forms of discipline,), there is evidence in alignment with the quantitative data that deeper knowledge and application may be limited. This was particularly evident with respect to some reservations from parents and teachers about eliminating corporal punishment entirely.

More positively in the qualitative data, there was a marked increase from baseline in teachers' use of positive discipline strategies. For example, there were multiple explanations about how they effectively established clear classroom rules to avoid discipline issues in the first place. Also, unlike baseline, there were no reports of teachers sending students outside during class time as a form of discipline. However, there is evidently still room for improvement in terms of consolidating some alternative discipline approaches advocated by LEARN II. For example, though teachers are not sending students out of the classroom, there are multiple reports of having students stand or kneel in the classroom for a period of time or do physical labor like fetch water or clean the classroom or school grounds after class. Only principals articulated strategies involving nonphysical approaches to discipline, such as speaking to children or having them write letters of apology for bad behavior.

As shown in Exhibit 91, the quantitative data back this up. Overall, 18% of students at midterm reported witnessing violence in the classroom in the past week (no change from baseline). There were substantial differences by county, with Rivercess witnessing a significant jump at midterm by 22 percentage points ($p < 0.01$), while the other counties witnessed no significant changes from baseline to midterm.

Exhibit 91. Proportion of Students Who Witnessed Violence in the Classroom in the Previous Week



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Grand Bassa $N = 379$ at baseline and 394 at midterm. Grand Gedeh $N = 260$ at baseline and 222 at midterm. Rivercess $N = 100$ at baseline and 163 at midterm. River Gee $N = 261$ at baseline and 201 at midterm.

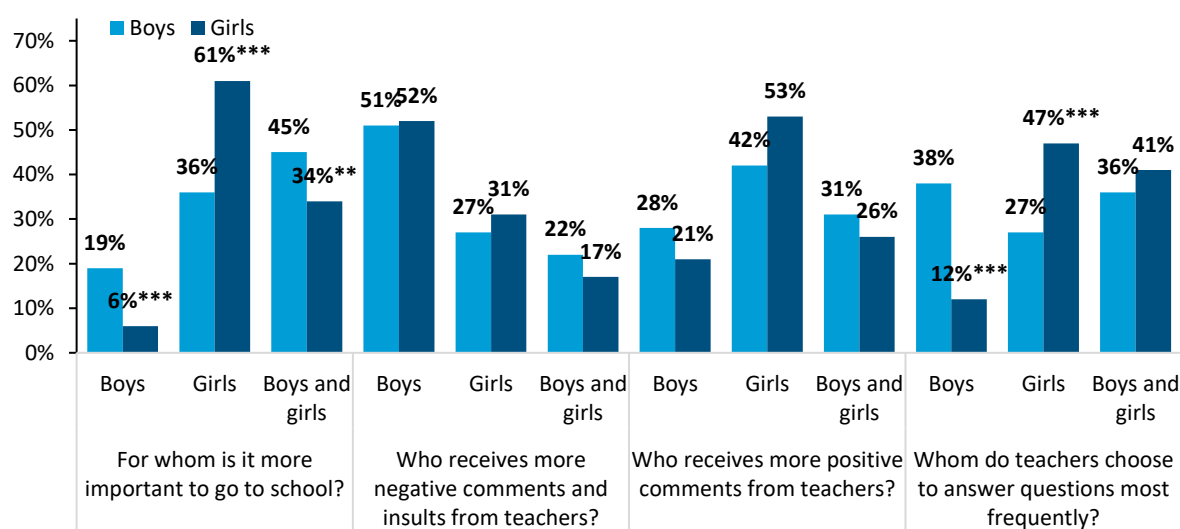
In terms of reporting violations of the code of conduct, qualitative data suggested that parents and students do not have a clear idea about the appropriate way to report certain violations, with approaches including reporting to principals, the PTA, DEOs, and complaint boxes and even, in one case, directly to the Ministry of Gender. As a result, many students expressed fear of reporting because it could lead to repercussions from the teacher, and both parents and students frequently said that reporting is ineffective.

Gender Norms

In the classroom environment, at midterm, more than half (61%) of female students and a third of male students felt it was more important for girls to attend school ($p < 0.01$); 6% of females and 19% of males indicated it was more important for boys ($p < 0.01$); and 34% of females and 45% of males believed school attendance was equally important for both genders ($p < 0.05$) (Exhibit 92). When it came to students' perceptions of teacher treatment, students of both genders indicated that teachers were more likely to give girls positive feedback (42% of boys and 53% of girls),

whereas boys were more often the recipient of negative comments or insults (51% of boys and 52% of girls). Over half of the students in Grand Gedeh (56%) and River Gee (64%) thought that boys receive more negative comments and insults, whereas only 45% thought so in Grand Bassa and Rivercess. When asked whether teachers addressed female or male students' questions more often, students were more likely to report that their own gender was prioritized. Forty-seven percent of females ($p < 0.01$) and 27% of males felt that teachers addressed questions from girls more frequently, whereas 38% of males and 12% of females ($p < 0.01$) felt teachers answered boys' questions more often.

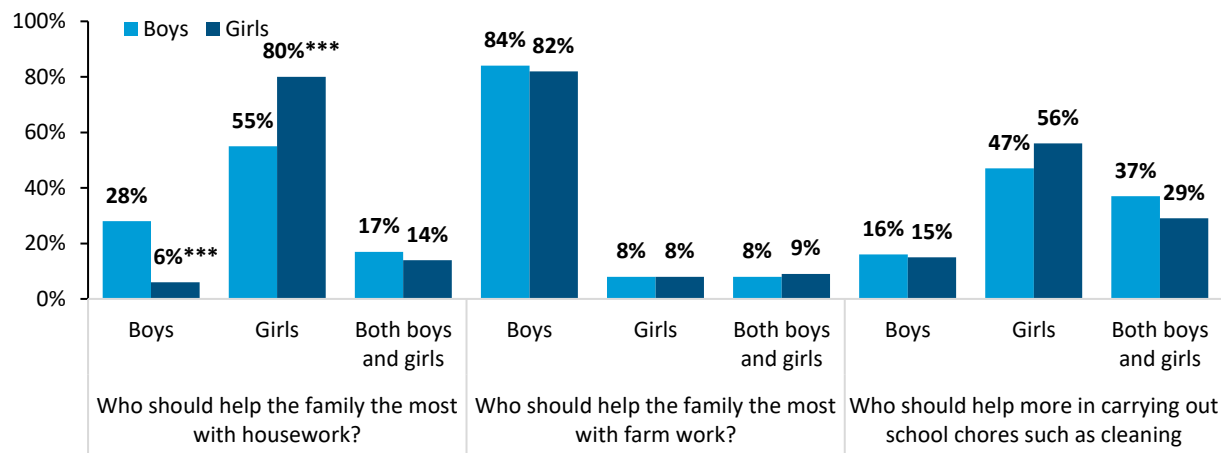
Exhibit 92. Students' Perceived Gender Norms at School, by Gender



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 201$ for boys and 180 for girls. Note: This question was only asked of Grade 6 students.

Outside of the classroom, boys and girls perceived their gender roles more traditionally. The majority of students from both genders felt that girls should focus on housework (55% of boys and 80% of girls, $p < 0.01$), as well as school chores (47% of boys and 56% of girls) (Exhibit 93). However, at the county level, only 51% of students in Rivercess thought girls should do most of the housework while the other counties ranged from 60% in Grand Bassa to 86% in River Gee. The majority of both boys and girls reported that boys should help the family the most with farm work (84% of boys and 82% of girls).

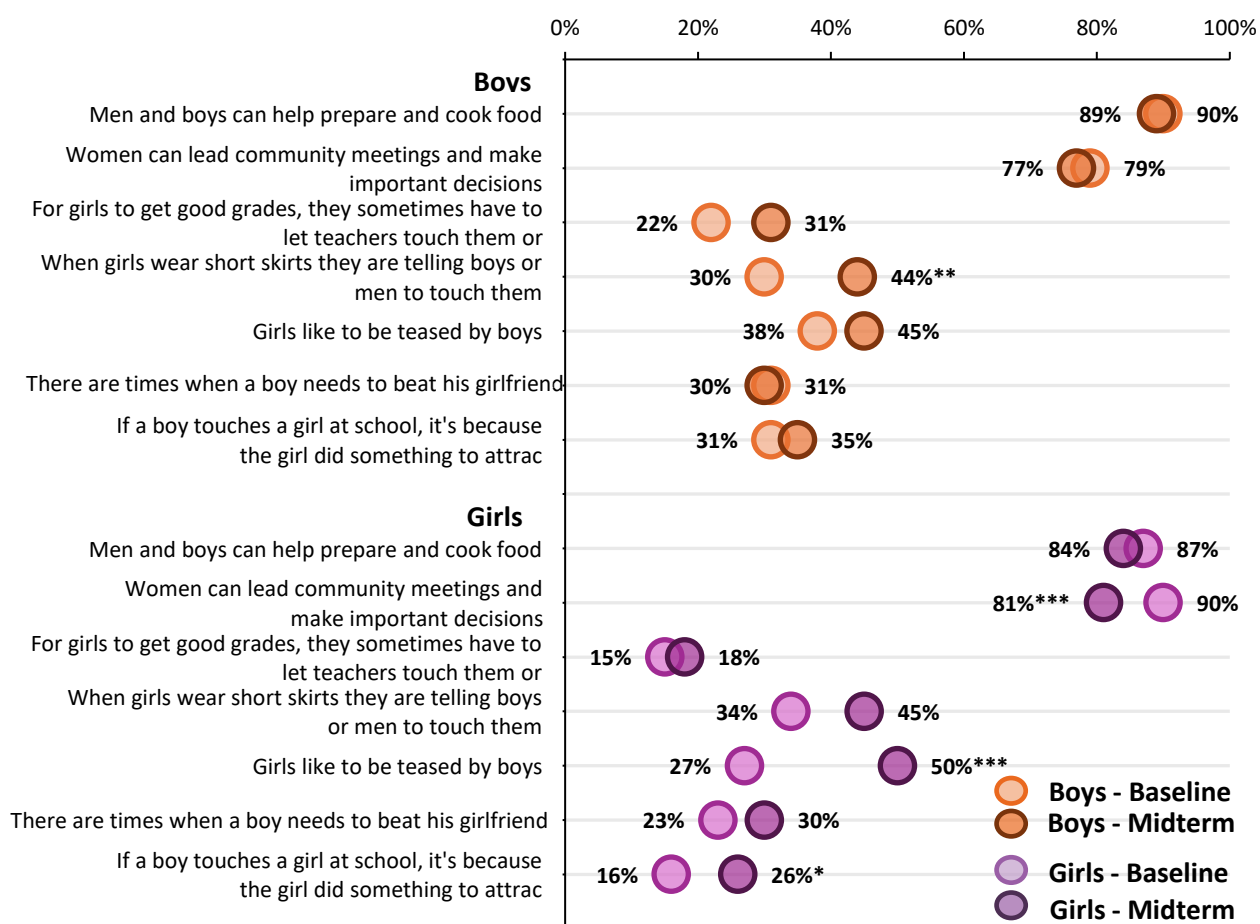
Exhibit 93. Students' Perceived Gender Roles, by Gender



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 201$ for boys and 180 for girls. Note: This question was only asked of Grade 6 students.

Students were also asked to respond to some yes or no questions about gender norms at school. As shown in Exhibit 94, there were some notable changes in perception by gender at midterm. Belief that women can lead meetings remained relatively the same among boys; however, girls were less likely to believe women can lead meetings relative to baseline ($p < 0.01$). More concerning, boys were more likely to believe that if a girl wears a short skirt she is asking for boys or men to touch her, a nearly 15 percentage point increase compared to baseline (30% vs. 44%, $p < 0.05$). From the girls' perspective, girls were more likely to indicate that if a boy touches a girl at school, it's because they did something to attract him (16% vs. 26%, $p < 0.10$). Girls were also more likely to indicate that girls like to be teased by boys (27% vs. 50%, $p < 0.01$) relative to baseline. In Grand Gedeh and River Gee, there was a 27 percentage point increase from baseline to midterm in students reporting that girls like to be teased by boys ($p < 0.01$). In general, River Gee witnessed the largest increase from baseline to midterm in students reporting perverse gender attitudes including if a boy touches a girl at school, it's because the girl did something to attract him (25 percentage points, $p < 0.01$), when girls wear short skirts they are telling boys to touch them (28 percentage points, $p < 0.01$), and for girls to get good grades they sometimes have to let teachers touch them (28 percentage points, $p < 0.01$).

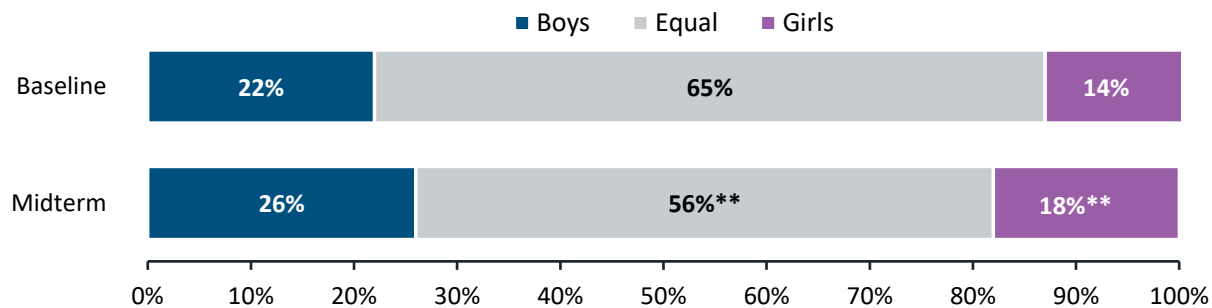
Exhibit 94. Students' Perceived Gender Norms at School



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Boys $N = 183$ at baseline and 201 at midterm. Girls $N = 199$ at baseline and 180 at midterm.

Students generally agreed that boys and girls should receive equal priority to food, with 56% saying food should be divided equally, though this was a 9-percentage point decline from baseline ($p < 0.05$). At midterm, 26% of students believed boys should be prioritized and 18% believed girls should be prioritized, an increase relative to baseline ($p < 0.05$) (Exhibit 95). In both River Gee and Rivercess, there was a 12-percentage point increase in students reporting that girls should be prioritized for feeding from baseline to midterm ($p < 0.01$), while Grand Bassa and Grand Gedeh did not report changes from baseline to midterm.

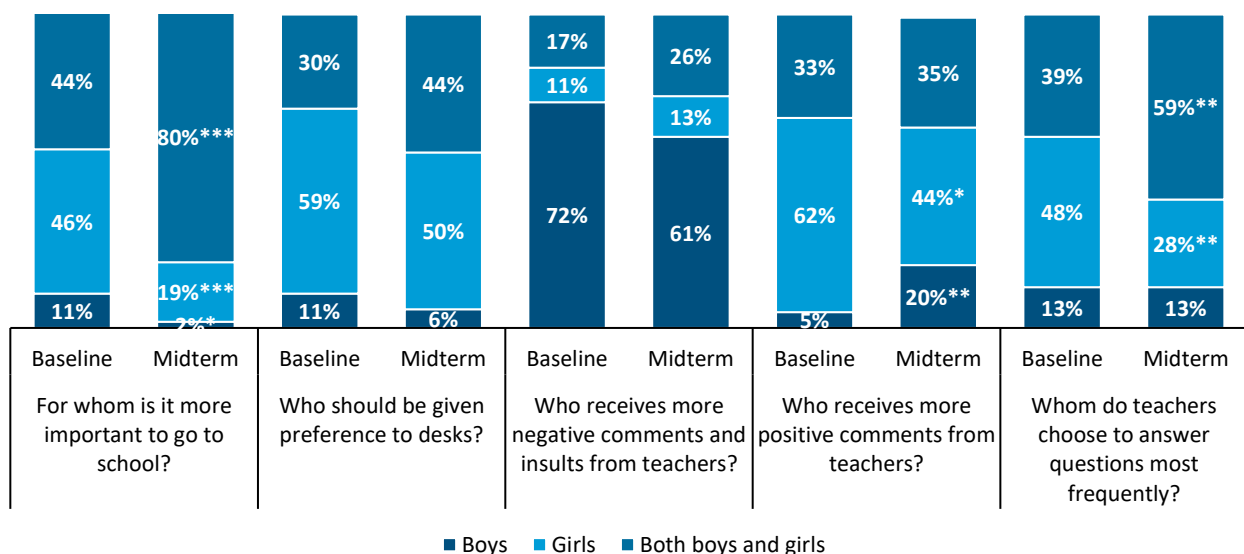
Exhibit 95. Students' Perceived Gender Priority for Feeding



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 996$ at baseline and 968 at midterm.

Teachers aligned with students' perspective on feedback at midterm (Exhibit 96). Most teachers indicated that girls were the recipients of positive comments (44%, $p < 0.10$) and boys most often received negative feedback (61%). However, their views differed from students in other areas. Teachers were more likely to believe it equally important for both genders to attend school at midterm than at baseline (80% vs. 44%, respectively, $p < 0.01$). Most teachers also felt that they answered girls' and boys' questions equally, a 20 percentage point increase from baseline ($p < 0.05$).

Exhibit 96. Teachers' Perceived Gender Norms at School

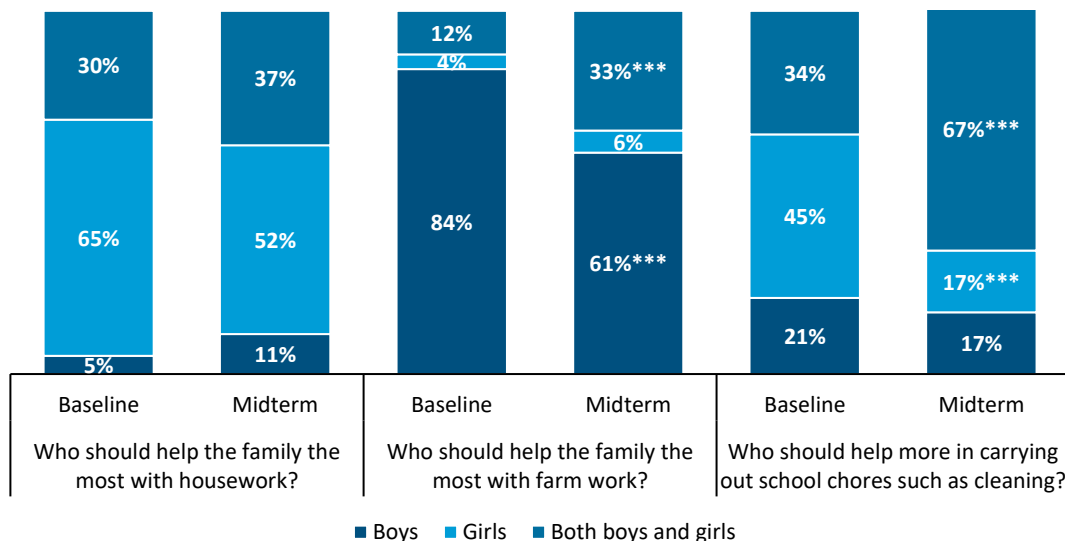


Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm.

There was a notable shift in teachers' perceptions regarding chores (Exhibit 97). While most teachers maintained their belief that primarily boys should help with farm work (61%), this was a

significant decline from baseline (84%, $p < 0.01$) and a significantly larger proportion believed farm work should be shared equally by both genders (33%, $p < 0.01$). Further, more than half of teachers (67%) indicated that school chores, such as cleaning, should be carried out by both boys and girls, an increase from 34% at baseline ($p < 0.01$). However, when it came to household work, the majority of teachers still believed that the responsibility should fall primarily on girls (52%).

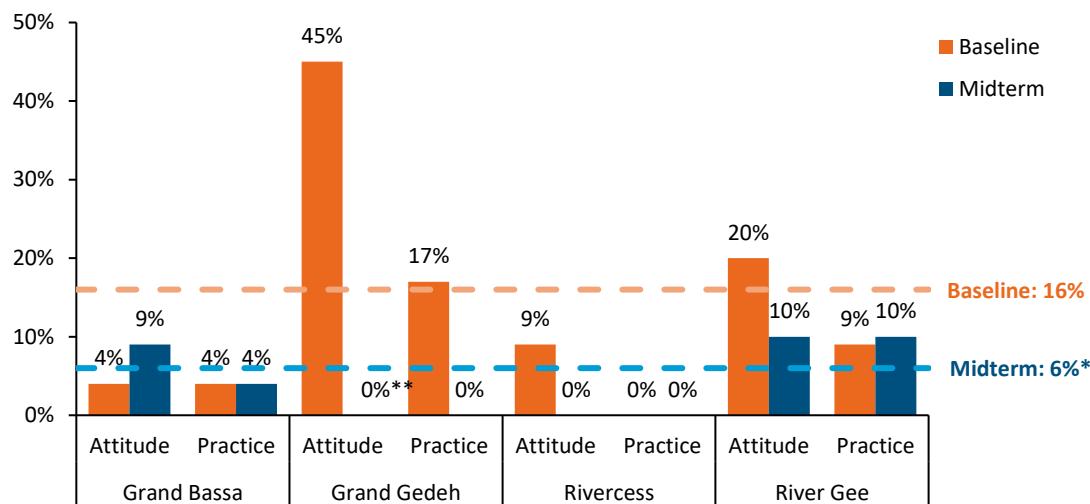
Exhibit 97. Teachers' Perceived Gender Roles for Students



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. $N = 57$ at baseline and 54 at midterm. At baseline, one teacher in Grand Gedeh did not respond to the question regarding school chores.

On average, teachers showed improvement in their attitudes towards feeding (Exhibit 98). Only 6% of teachers believed boys should receive certain food before girls at midterm, a 10 percentage point decline from baseline ($p < 0.10$). At the county level, teachers in Grand Gedeh showed the most improvement in this area, with a significant decline from 45% at baseline to 0% at midterm ($p < 0.05$). However, when it came to feeding practices, teachers across all counties showed no significant changes in prioritizing feeding boys over girls.

Exhibit 98. Proportion of Teachers Who Think Boys Should Receive Certain Foods Before Girls and Who Prioritize Feeding Boys Over Girls, by County



Source: Teacher survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 23$ in Grand Bassa, 11 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee. Midterm $N = 22$ in Grand Bassa, 10 in Grand Gedeh, 11 in Rivercess, and 10 in River Gee. A small proportion of teachers responded that they did not know when asked about their attitude. They are excluded from this graph. The attitude question asked, "Are there certain foods boys should get before girls?" The practice question asked, "Do you prioritize feeding boys over girls?"

Section 5. Impact Evaluation Midterm Findings

This section presents the midterm findings from the impact analyses. First, we describe the sample of schools and students who participated in the midterm data collection for the impact evaluation of LRP in Grand Gedeh and River Gee.²⁴ Then, we present the results from the ex-post baseline equivalence analysis to assess how similar the treatment and comparison groups were at baseline. Next, we present the estimated impacts on the main outcomes of interest including dietary diversity, nutrition, literacy, and health outcomes, and on perceptions of cultural appropriateness and timeliness of the food assistance. Finally, we examine any gender and county-level differences. When possible, we complement the quantitative findings with evidence from the qualitative data.

5.1 Impact Evaluation Samples

As explained in Section 2, the impact evaluation component of LEARN II was redesigned after the baseline evaluation was conducted. As part of this redesign, 80 schools across 19 geographic clusters in Grand Gedeh and River Gee were randomly assigned to treatment and comparison groups. At midterm, one treatment school was no longer operating as an elementary school. Another treatment school only included one Grade 2 student and was excluded from the analyses to preserve the integrity of the data. The final sample size for the impact evaluation at midterm includes 78 schools.

In each school, we sampled all Grade 2 students with consent forms present at school on the day of data collection. Exhibit 99 breaks down the impact evaluation sample in terms of geography and treatment group. While the goal was to collect data from 1,440 students across 80 schools, based on the number of students present in schools on the day of data collection with signed parental consent forms, we managed to reach 573 treatment group and 377 comparison group students across 78 schools.

Exhibit 99. Student and School Sample Sizes for the Impact Evaluation at Midterm, by County

County	Treatment (schools)	Comparison (schools)	Total (schools)
Grand Gedeh	459 (34)	267 (22)	726 (56)
River Gee	114 (12)	110 (10)	224 (22)
Total	573 (46)	377 (32)	950 (78)

Source: Student survey. Authors' calculation.

²⁴ As of October 2023, given implementation delays in the school garden rollout, in consultation with Save the Children, it was decided that the impact evaluation at midterm would assess the impact of just LRP, as opposed to LRP + school garden as was initially envisioned.

5.2 Baseline Equivalence Results

As discussed in Section 2.2, random assignment of clusters of schools to treatment and comparison groups was conducted after the baseline evaluation of LEARN II had already been completed. No aggregate baseline school data were available at the time and baseline evaluation survey data on students' DDS were available for only 42 of the 80 schools because the LEARN II baseline evaluation covered different schools for the impact evaluation than were eventually part of the redesign. After randomization, we imputed missing values of student DDS at the school level with average school DDS and conducted baseline tests to assess whether the treatment and comparison schools were similar in terms of DDS at the time of randomization.

At midterm, we obtained M&E records from Save the Children on 2022 school characteristics including total school enrollment, teacher enrollment, student-to-teacher ratio, and girl-to-boy ratio. Using these school-level variables, we reassessed the baseline equivalence ex-post at midterm. Measuring baseline equivalences helps us assess the validity of the RCT design and identify any observed differences to control for in the regression analysis to improve the precision of the estimated program impacts.

School Characteristics

Exhibit 100 presents results from the ex-post baseline equivalence analyses. The treatment schools were larger, on average, than the comparison schools (119.12 students vs. 82.69 students, $p < 0.10$). However, the schools appeared very similar in their girl-to-boy ratio. Despite being bigger in size, the two groups were also very similar in total number of teachers and in the student-to-teacher ratio (Exhibit 100). Although we conducted random assignments of clusters of schools within blocks to mitigate the influence of existing school gardens and prior LEARN activities, a higher proportion of Block 2 schools were treatment schools (24% vs. 6%, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that comparison schools were more likely to have had prior LEARN activities or existing school gardens than the treatment schools. Under further examination, the single largest cluster of schools near the town of Zwedru, the capital of Grand Gedeh, which was assigned to the treatment group, may be contributing to the observed differences between the two groups (see Exhibit 4 with a map of schools in the impact evaluation).

Exhibit 100. Baseline Equivalency of School Characteristics

Variable	Treatment	N	Comparison	N	Difference
School enrollment	119.12	42	82.69	32	36.43*
Teacher enrollment	6.10	39	5.75	32	0.35
Student-to-teacher ratio	20.46	38	23.26	32	-2.79

Variable	Treatment	N	Comparison	N	Difference
Girl-to-boy ratio	1.01	42	0.93	32	0.08
Schools with existing school gardens (Block 1)	0.20	46	0.34	32	-.15
Schools with prior LEARN activities but no gardens (Block 2)	0.57	46	0.59	32	-.03
Schools with no prior LEARN activities (Block 3)	0.24	46	0.06	32	.18**

Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

As discussed earlier, student baseline survey data were only available for 42 schools. To examine how similar students were across the treatment and comparison groups, Exhibit 101 presents the mean differences by treatment group of key exogenous variables (i.e., variables that are unlikely to have been affected by the treatment between baseline and midterm). At midterm, treatment and comparison students were very similar in terms of age, gender, languages spoken at home, and household size. Grade 2 students were, on average, 11.7 years old and half of them were girls. The majority reported speaking multiple languages (97%), and two-thirds indicated that they speak English as their main language (67%). Students came from households with approximately seven members. There were significant differences in household possession of two assets: students in the treatment group were more likely to report having a TV (15 % vs. 6%, $p < 0.01$) and less likely to report having a radio (50% vs. 61%, $p < 0.01$), possibly indicating differential household asset composition.

Exhibit 101. Student Demographics by Treatment Group at Midterm

Variable	Treatment	N	Comparison	N	Difference
Girls	50%	377	49%	573	1%
Age	11.70	377	11.63	572	0.07
English is the student's main language	68%	377	67%	573	1%
Multilingual speaker	93%	377	96%	573	-3%
Number of household assets	2.60	377	2.56	573	0.04
TV	15%	377	6%	573	9%***
Radio	50%	377	61%	573	-12%***
Household members	6.78	377	6.95	573	0.17

Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

The baseline equivalence analysis showed that there were some school and student differences between the treatment and comparison groups, which we control for in the regression analyses. The full list of covariates includes student gender, age, English as main language, multilingual speaker, household possession of radio, household possession of a TV, school enrollment, student-to-teacher ratio, girl-to-boy ratio, and baseline DDS.

5.3 Impact Evaluation Results

Next, we present the statistical results of the impact evaluation directly attributable to the LRP program activities in Grand Gedeh and River Gee. These results were obtained using regression analysis as described in Section 2.4. For a given outcome measure, we present the mean for the treatment group, mean for the comparison group, estimated program effect, and sample size used in the analysis. We report any significant impacts from subgroup analysis, and the corresponding tables are included in Appendix B, Exhibits B4 (differences by gender) and B5 (county-level differences).

Dietary Diversity and Nutrition

The program had a positive effect on student DDS²⁵ and minimum dietary diversity score²⁶ in the treatment group relative to the comparison group; however, the effect was not statistically significant (Exhibit 102). What this means is that we see an indication of positive impacts on students reporting improved dietary diversity in school meals resulting from LRP, but we would need more data or a large sample size to confirm this positive effect with greater confidence. It is important to interpret such findings cautiously and consider further qualitative evidence to determine the true impact of the intervention. For instance, these moderate positive effects may be coming from the program activities related to the school gardens rather than the provision of LRP. According to qualitative interviews with program implementers, Save the Children was not able to purchase building/facility and partner with local Kawadah Farm as initially planned, leading to delays in the procurement of locally sourced Power Gari. To address this challenge, Power Gari was shipped to treatment schools from further away than intended, which runs counter to the goal of LRP to boost local involvement and make it more cost-effective with a longer shelf-life once it reached the school. At the same time, focus groups with parents confirmed that PTAs were actively involved in the school gardens and that some PTAs were able to produce vegetables for the school canteens and thus contributed to more nutritiously diverse lunch meals being prepared.

Subgroup Analysis. The positive effect on student dietary diversity was driven by girls and by students in River Gee. Girls in the treatment group reported consuming 1.38 more food groups than girls in the comparison group. Similarly, students in the treatment group in River Gee reported consuming .88 more food groups and were 26 percentage points more likely to meet

²⁵ Dietary Diversity Score (DDS) is the measurement of the number of food groups taken by a student in the previous day. It is calculated by the sum of the number of food groups: starchy staples; dark green leafy vegetables; other vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables; other fruits and vegetables; organ meat; meat and fish; eggs; legumes, nuts, and seeds; and milk and milk products. https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/wa_workshop/docs/FAO-guidelines-dietary-diversity2011.pdf

²⁶ Indicator defined as consuming at least four of the nine food groups in DDS.

minimum dietary diversity than students in the comparison group in River Gee. By contrast, we find a negative effect on minimum dietary diversity in Grand Gedeh, where students in the treatment group were 73 percentage points less likely to meet minimum dietary diversity. These regional differences are puzzling, because River Gee was badly affected by rains in 2023 and was practically cut off for several months.

We find a negative but insignificant effect in the reported frequency of eating meals between the two groups (Exhibit 102). A plausible interpretation could be that parents in the treatment group are relying more heavily on school meals and may be providing fewer meals at home, leading to a lower overall percentage of students reporting that they eat three or more meals on a typical day. This is also consistent with the lower average number of meals reported by students in the treatment group relative to average number of meals reported by students in the comparison group (2.44 vs. 2.66).

Subgroup Analysis. We find a negative effect on reported frequency of eating meals for boys. Boys in the treatment group were 85 percentage points less likely to report they were eating three or more meals per day than boys in the comparison group. We also find a positive effect on the typical number of meals consumed on a school day in River Gee. Students in the treatment group in River Gee reported eating .68 more meals on a school day than students in the comparison group in River Gee.

Exhibit 102. Impact On Dietary Diversity and Meal Frequency

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
Dietary diversity score	1.73	1.95	.75	950
Minimum dietary diversity score	15%	22%	.04	950
Typical number of meals on a school day	2.44	2.66	-.19	950
Typical number of meals on a non-school day	2.11	2.10	-.08	950
Student usually eats three or more meals per day	67%	78%	-.33	949

Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$. Standard errors are clustered at the school level.

We find a positive impact of the program on knowledge of foods, such as green leafy vegetables, that protect students from diseases (Exhibit 103). Treatment activities led to a 56-percentage point effect. At the same time, we find a negative effect on reported knowledge of foods that help students grow. Treatment students were 36 percentage points less like to report that protein-rich foods help them grow than students in the comparison group. It is important to note that students in both the treatment and comparison groups had common knowledge of the different types of foods, which leaves limited opportunity for improvement. For example, almost all students knew foods that give them energy to play and learn. Rather than interpreting these findings as mixed causal impact, a more likely interpretation could be that the program maintained nutrition

knowledge at a relatively high level. By contrast, there seemed to be confusion to the meaning of what constitutes a “balanced diet,” or most students did not recognize the term and found this survey question difficult to answer.

Subgroup Analysis. The positive effects on student nutrition knowledge were driven by boys and by students in River Gee. Boys in the treatment group were 78 percentage points more likely to know at least one food that protects them from diseases and were relative to boys in the comparison group. At the same time, boys in the treatment group were 62 percentage points less likely to name at least one food that helps them grow than boys in the comparison group. Treatment students in River Gee were 14 percentage points more likely to know foods that give energy and 16 percentage points more likely to know foods that help them grow than comparison students in River Gee.

Exhibit 103. Impact on Nutrition Knowledge Outcomes

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
Knowledge of “balanced diet” meaning	0.01	0.01	-.01	944
Named at least one food that gives energy	0.98	0.99	-.02	950
Named at least one food that helps grow	0.71	0.59	-.36*	950
Named at least one food that protects from disease	0.78	0.79	.56**	950

Source: Student survey. Authors’ calculations. ** $p < 0.05$. Standard errors are clustered at the school level.

Handwashing Outcomes

We find no impacts on handwashing knowledge or self-reported handwashing behavior (Exhibit 104).

Subgroup Analysis. We find a positive effect on handwashing for girls. Girls in the treatment group were 25 percentage points more likely to report that they wash their hands at critical times during the day than girls in the comparison group. In contrast with the positive effects on dietary diversity, frequency of school meals, and knowledge of nutrition in River Gee, we find negative effects on handwashing in the county. Treatment students in River Gee were 39 percentage points less likely to know when they should wash their hands and 33 percentage points less likely to self-report doing so than comparison students in River Gee. These findings suggest that the benefits of improved nutrition may come with reduced attention to handwashing in River Gee.

Exhibit 104. Impact on Health Outcomes

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
Student knowledge of handwashing behavior	40%	40%	-.09	950
Student self-reported handwashing behavior	20%	26%	.06	950

Source: Student survey. Authors’ calculations. Standard errors are clustered at the school level.

Literacy and School Attendance

While the focus of the impact evaluation was on LRP and its effects on dietary diversity and nutrition, we also conducted impact analyses on literacy outcomes (Exhibit 105). We find a positive significant effect on early reading. Students in the treatment group were 20 percentage points more likely to read five words of a passage in 30 seconds and answer 80% of the comprehension questions correctly than students in the comparison schools. However, we find no effects on letter knowledge by correctly identifying letters or passing the threshold of identifying at least 90% of letters. We also find a positive but not significant effect on student attendance.

Subgroup Analysis. We find that the effect on student reading and comprehension is positive both for both boys and girls but appears stronger for boys. Boys in the treatment group were 24 percentage points more likely to read and comprehend grade level text relative to boys in the comparison group. The effect for girls was 20 percentage points. Across counties, the positive literacy effect is driven by students in River Gee. Treatment students in River Gee identified 15 percent more letters and were 23 percentage points more likely to identify at least 90% of the letters relative to comparison students in the county. Treatment students in River Gee attended .53 fewer days during the previous week of school than comparison students there.

Exhibit 105. Impact on Literacy and School Attendance

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
Percent of students that identified at least 90% of the letters	42%	43%	.02	950
Percent of letters correctly identified by children	82%	80%	-.05	950
Percent of students who can read and comprehend	3%	4%	.20***	950
Number of days attended in the previous week	4.63	4.44	.50	950

Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. *** $p < 0.01$. Standard errors are clustered at the school level.

Perceptions About School Meals and Cultural Appropriateness

Receiving Power Gari as part of the school lunch meals was strongly perceived by students as different. Students in the treatment group were 41 percentage points less likely to report that the food at school was similar or identical to what they eat at home. They were also 31 percentage points less likely to report that the school meals' appearance was "good" or "very good." These findings are consistent with reports from focus groups indicating that children did not always enjoy meals prepared with Power Gari, usually because it was spoiling or had bugs in it because of the long time it took to reach the schools (being sent from Nimba County, rather than produced in the school's county as planned as part of LRP).

Subgroup Analysis. The negative effect on student cultural appropriateness was driven by boys and by students in River Gee. Boys in the treatment group were 78 percentage points less likely to report that the food at school was similar or identical to what they eat at home, and they were 33 percentage points less likely to agree that the school meal’s appearance was “good” or “very good” than boys in the comparison group. Treatment students in River Gee were 18 percentage points less likely to rank the appearance of their meal at school as “good” or “very good” than comparison students in the county.

Exhibit 106. Impact on Perceptions About School Meals and Cultural Appropriateness

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
Food is similar or identical to what children eat at home	30%	34%	-.41**	950
School meal’s appearance was “good” or “very good”	85%	85%	-.31*	946
School meal’s taste was “good” or “very good”	84%	82%	-.15	947

Source: Student survey. Authors’ calculations. *p < 0.10; *** p < 0.01. Standard errors are clustered at the school level.

To further examine program effects on cultural appropriateness and timeliness of the food assistance, we conducted exploratory impact analyses using survey data from SMPs and teachers (Exhibit 107). None of the estimated effects are significant because of the small sample sizes. In each school, we sampled one SMP and one teacher for a total of 78 meal providers and 77 teachers. However, their responses add additional insight to our understanding of the effectiveness of LRP.

SMPs were far more likely than students to indicate that the school meals they prepare at school closely resemble or match what children typically eat at home. This finding underscores the need to consider student perspective when evaluating school meal programs. SMPs in treatment schools were also much more likely to agree that they served different types of foods in the school meals than SMPs in comparison schools. Finally, SMPs in treatment schools reported more timely delivery of the food commodities for school meals than did SMPs in comparison schools. Teachers, while involved in supporting student nutrition at school, provided more muted responses than SMPs.

Exhibit 107. SMPs’ and Teachers’ Impacts on Cultural Appropriateness and Timeliness

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
SMPs:				
Food is similar or identical to what children eat at home	93%	84%	.70	78
Serve different types of foods in school meals	74%	44%	.67	78
More than half of the U.S. food commodities arrived on time	4%	22%	-.41	78
All the U.S. food commodities arrived on time	72%	47%	-.81	78

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
Teachers:				
More than half of the U.S. food commodities arrived on time	13%	16%	-.57	77
All the U.S. food commodities arrived on time	63%	65%	.59	77

Source: School Meal Provider and Teacher survey. Authors' calculations.

Section 6. Qualitative Discussion

The research team assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, perceived impact, and sustainability of the LEARN interventions with respect to the research questions related to literacy, nutrition, WASH, and SRGBV themes (i.e., relevant to the McGovern-Dole results framework). The findings are based on qualitative data collection (KIIs and FGDs) and analysis from 12 intervention communities visited (three per county) that had different variations of the LEARN packages, and from national-level interviews with project implementers and partners. Findings are presented in detail within this section; key takeaways are integrated within the quantitative findings, above.

6.1. Relevance

The research team assessed the relevance of LEARN II interventions, asking whether project activities were appropriately addressing needs and the extent to which stakeholder voices were considered in improving activities to better address those needs through interviews and FGDs with project implementers, national and local government officials, and community level stakeholders and beneficiaries. This section discusses the following indicators related to relevance:

Exhibit 108. Relevance-Related Indicators and Findings

Category	Activity	Indicators	Key findings
Enhancing school quality through school feeding and teacher support	Advocating for prioritizing education	Student and parent support for education	As at baseline, students and parents wanted education for all; the main challenge is ensuring it is prioritized given limited money and other livelihoods-related challenges.
	School feeding	Agreement from stakeholders on need	As at baseline, there was agreement that meals contribute to increased enrollment, attention, and performance, and are highly popular.
	School gardens	Agreement from stakeholders on need	Local produce makes school meals more appealing to youth, and minimizes disruptions in food supply.
Improving literacy	Training teachers	Agreement from teachers and students on need	As at baseline, teachers needed additional support and materials (books) for teaching reading.
	Literacy champions/reading clubs	Agreement from students on need	As at baseline, students needed support outside of school and often what they can access at home is limited; support outside of school is very helpful
School health and nutrition	SHN champions and SHCs	Agreement from stakeholders on need	As at baseline, a clean school is important to students, caregivers, and teachers; without specific intervention, school grounds become dirty; there is a clear need for a system to ensure cleanliness.

Category	Activity	Indicators	Key findings
Reducing SRGBV/following school codes of conduct	Sensitization on codes of conduct	Knowledge of, agreement with, and following of code	As at baseline, SRGBV is prevalent, and some parents continue to disagree with elimination of corporal punishment.
Crosscutting	Empowering PTAs to sustain LEARN activities	Agreement on the importance of PTAs to continue the work	As compared to baseline, there is increasing agreement across communities of the value of PTAs in helping to maintain and sustain all gains made by LEARN. Work toward building their capacity is critical and relevant.

As noted in all previous evaluations for LEARN I and LEARN II, the program is overall highly relevant for Liberian youth and communities, meaning it is meeting critical needs in ways that are locally appropriate as confirmed by stakeholders in the communities.

School Meals

All stakeholders were positive about the need for children to have healthy and filling meals at school and welcomed resources to allow for that. This was a similar finding to LEARN II baseline and all LEARN I evaluations. At midterm, as the project shifts towards empowering local communities to sustain the school feeding, stakeholders across communities continue to see the necessity of shifting the model in this direction to ensure sustainability.

Two of the 12 qualitative communities noted one challenge with respect to the types of seeds and materials that could contribute to those sustained activities.

“The challenges we are face[d] with is that the vegetables that we really needed, it’s not what they’ve given us. ...By right if you want to supply something that people need, the first thing is to go and ask for the things the people need. You can’t just go and buy anything.”

- (Principal, Grand Gedeh).

Literacy

As seen at baseline, providing teachers and parents with resources and encouragement to support children’s literacy was very welcome, given the widespread agreement that such skills were critical for children’s futures. However, in many cases, stakeholders said that the types and levels of books were not relevant to youth, which limited their ability to have a positive impact on literacy. All twelve communities said they needed books that went above Grades 1 and 2, while five communities said they needed books that covered topics that were more interesting to children, such as science and social studies.

Clean School Environment and Nutrition

It was clear that a clean school environment was important for students, teachers, and caregivers; unclean environments contributed to an overall negative school climate and in some cases could cause disease. As such, all stakeholders welcomed initiatives to enhance the cleanliness of the school and the health of students, especially via school cleaning (in particular, cleaning of latrines), and teaching students and cooks' good hygiene. Less relevant, though, was LEARN II's emphasis on nutrition. This was also noted at baseline. Across all the qualitative data at midterm, just two SHN champions noted nutrition with just two passing sentences in direct response to work they did on nutrition; others said nothing, which suggests the instructional content is not, in its present form, relevant to the needs of local stakeholders.

Reducing School Related Gender Based Violence

The need to prevent and address school related gender-based violence remains evident, as it was at baseline. Reports of teachers using corporal punishment, sex for grades, and other harmful behaviors endured in project schools. Also, reliable and trustworthy reporting mechanisms are lacking. LEARN II's recommended methods for reporting code of conduct/SRGBV violations are either unknown by people in the community, or said to be unreliable or, worse, result in repercussions, limiting people's likelihood of reporting at all:

"The people said when the Teachers do anything wrong, we should write letter and put it in that box and put the Teacher[s] name there; but when you put the letter in the box, we that are in this school, we are the ones the Teachers are depending on (for their living). So when they take the job from there, our name will go (or reputation for reporting the teacher)"

– (Girl Grand Bassa).

Crosscutting

Crosscutting these three main areas of intervention, LEARN II is highly relevant in its efforts to mobilize and strengthen PTAs to take ownership of school-related needs so there is less reliance on outside or government support, which is generally sporadic and inadequate. Overall, the program has evolved to become even more relevant as it pursues realistic and timely steps toward sustainability, which demand that project activities meet specific needs for local populations that will encourage full buy-in and eventual ownership of those types of interventions:

“We also work with PTA. We have the PTA structures, where they are trusted with the commodities, from the different activities at the field level, functional PTA and functional Food Management Committee to help manage the food and LEARN activities at the field level. What LEARN is doing at the community level are all things that the community need that will improve their lives at the community level and is taking ownership. For example, the school garden activity where the PTAs see it as their own project.”

– (Community Mobilizer, Grand Gedeh).

6.2. Efficiency

The research team used interviews with project implementers and community-level stakeholders to assess efficiency and timeliness for achieving objectives, including internal and external factors affecting implementation of project activities. This section discusses the following indicators related to efficiency:

Exhibit 109. Efficiency-Related Indicators and Findings

Category	Activity	Indicators	Key findings
Enhancing school quality through school feeding and teacher support	PTA activities	Building capacity of PTAs	Increasing PTA capacity and motivation to take ownership of LEARN II activities has been carried out widely and efficiently
	School feeding	On-time delivery of commodities; adequate supplies in kitchens	Generally on time, but multiple reports of food arriving spoiled and/or with bugs, rendering it unfit to serve or, if served, displeasing students. Kitchens are adequately stocked and cooks are well-trained
	Farming partnerships	Partnerships with local farms for commodities	Efforts have been slow and difficult, but continue, in establishing local branches of Kawadeh Farms; as such, Power Gari is still distributed from Nimba County.
	School gardens	Agreement from PTAs to establish and maintain gardens	Excellent progress toward establishing productive school gardens across all communities; some gardens are further along than others, but all are progressing
Improving literacy	Training and equipping teachers	Teachers equipped and willing to teach literacy	Teachers are trained but lack adequate materials. Many book shipments have been delayed or not adequately synced with training to maximize impact of training.

	Literacy champions/reading clubs	Literacy champions adequately trained and delivering activities	Six of eight expected literacy champions are missing in the project communities visited; difficulty replacing them and high turnover cited as problematic; activities are limited
School health and nutrition	SHCs	SHCs trained and equipped	SHCs are trained, active and generally well-equipped and well-known by communities
	SHN champions	SHN champions trained	SHN champions have been trained and are working across communities
SRGBV	Codes of conduct	Safe school stories produced	New safe schools stories will be developed and delivered across all counties
	Reporting mechanisms	Clear and reliable reporting mechanisms used	No work to this end has been reported, despite evident need

Overall, LEARN II has continued to efficiently deliver comprehensive packages of interventions to the four counties to enhance literacy, provide school feeding, and improve school climate. The core components were delivered generally as planned. However, multiple national implementing stakeholders described three key contextual factors to consider in understanding the efficiency of all components of LEARN II:

- a) Climate change is contributing to severe weather and increased inaccessibility of some regions of Liberia, especially River Gee (a location for Literacy Boost and LRP – full packages of LEARN II), which was inaccessible for nearly six months at one point and severely limited all activities;
- b) The 2023 Liberian presidential elections leading to school closures for the presidential elections and runoffs (multiple weeks of closures), and to an unstable political climate in which Save the Children and other partners could not work with government on implementation and sustainability; and
- c) Save the Children and partner staff turnover of key roles.

Additional intervention-specific strengths and challenges are provided below.

Literacy

National SC staff described challenges in distribution of reading materials, which is critical for the literacy packages. However, the training of trainers was successful: *“Despite the fact that we had challenges related to procurement of teaching and learning materials with READ approach, which we were supposed to roll out from start, we were successful in the TOT to include master trainers from MoE” (Save the Children National Staff KII).*

Accordingly, three principals and two FGDs of boy students indicated they had only recently received their books, for example one principal explained that *“just recently we received these*

books. We just started using it this academic year, less than 8 months” (Principal, Grand Gedeh), and an FGD with boys described how, “[Person 3] The reading books, they haven’t shared [them] yet....[Person 5] they said they will share it in this period” (Boys, Grand Gedeh).

Accordingly, teachers and principals across all communities said they had received training on literacy instruction as part of LEARN I and LEARN II initiatives that included guidance on how to implement certain techniques like quizzing games in the classroom. Although some newer teachers had not yet been trained, this was expected given the cadence of trainings and the common challenge of maintaining teachers in schools. Still, LEARN strategies for literacy instruction have evidently made it to the classroom: students said they had benefited from literacy activities like quizzing games, group reading, and competitions.

There have been some limitations in the efficient delivery of interventions designed to enhance reading activities and support for students outside of the classroom. Most notably, the transition for using volunteer Literacy Champions to support students outside of school was envisioned to have been replaced by Read Liberia activities, where PTAs would support community-level reading clubs. However, those interventions had not been launched as of the midterm evaluation data collection. As such, there were expectedly few community-level literacy activities occurring in the sites visited for midterm qualitative research. There was one community, however, that still had an active volunteer Literacy Champion (not formally linked to LEARN II at that point) who was leading a reading club. Also, the “I Help My Child to Read” tool, meant to provide caregivers with tools to support and encourage their children to read, was not well-known in the qualitative communities: caregivers in only one of the twelve communities said they actively used the tool at that point. Eight communities said they did not know about it at all, and three said that they’d seen it previously (two in Grand Gedeh, one in Grand Bassa), but not recently (those communities specified that it was a “Read Liberia” tool), as one group of caregivers discussed: “[Seven respondents agree] no we have never seen the learn tool I help my child to read... [Person 6] I saw it last year, but they have taken it from the children” (Caregivers, Grand Gedeh).

Parent Teacher Associations

Save the Children acknowledged that there had been substantial progress toward establishing and/or strengthening PTAs since baseline:

“I am proud of PTA engagement compared to where we started at baseline for LEARN II. We have seen increased PTA engagement in terms of dedicating times for activities, supporting school feeding, and above all in terms of providing their time and materials for improvement of kitchens and other school infrastructure”

– (Save the Children National Staff KII).

Accordingly, all communities in the qualitative research indicated having an active and helpful PTA. Their effectiveness is further elaborated in Section 6.3, below.

School Feeding

USDA commodities provided to schools were said to be effectively managed, cooked, and served to students in schools. Students and teachers reported that there were rarely interruptions in school feeding as a result. However, SC acknowledged that the local resource procurement component of LEARN II had been delayed due to difficulties securing a processing facility for the Kawadah Farms partnership. As such, Power Gari continued to be delivered via Nimba County, quite a distance to River Gee and Grand Gedeh where Power Gari is provided and would sometimes arrive spoiled.

“We feed students with Power Gari twice a week; however, we originally planned Kawadah farms to have a processing plant in river gee but that never happened. Since last year, they have been looking for a facility in Zwedru – it didn’t happen until just now. They found one facility, and we’ve assessed it in terms of safety and security. Last discussion with landlord, he didn’t conclude the agreement. Even to find a facility for Kawadah farms to be, closer to our sites, it’s not easy. This of course impacts our logistics in terms of cost, organization, feeding, everything... So it was difficult to show progress”

– (Save the Children National Staff KII).

The delayed procurement, as detailed in the Effectiveness section (Section 6.3), put the positive impact of school feeding from prior evaluations at risk. Still, Save the Children said much effort is going toward establishing local resource procurement to avoid these challenges during LEARN II and beyond.

Despite the challenges in LRP, communities said the school garden component has made notable progress to further enhance school feeding. All communities except one (in Grand Gedeh) confirmed there was an active school garden. Some communities reported on how they efficiently managed using the produce from the garden to feed children as well as earn money to supplement other needed items for school feeding:

“We have this system that schools report monthly on the produce from the school garden. We have a monthly tracker, and when they are ready to harvest the products from the school garden, and if it’s enough to sell, they have a scale to measure how much to sell. They sell some and eat some...If they sold it, we would know the amount monthly that was spent, and the money being used to get the other ingredients like the vita, pepper, and salt... Yes, it’s been effective.”

Importantly, cooks and storekeepers felt adequately trained to provide school meals and have examples of their responsibilities and how they applied those practices. In contrast to findings at baseline and LEARN I evaluations, they were generally happy with the status of their kitchens and available resources.

School Related Gender Based Violence

Data indicate that the continued rollout of the School Code of Conduct may be less efficient than planned. As noted by Save the Children, activities included continued awareness-raising in schools via dialogues with communities, students, and PTAs, and sharing the safe schools stories already developed. Additional safe schools stories have will be developed and delivered across counties. Currently, few respondents reported any activities they had participated in or heard of related to the school code of conduct. At the school level, there appeared to have been no additional work in establishing reliable and anonymous reporting mechanisms for those who witnessed or experienced a code of conduct violation.

School Health

Qualitative data confirmed that SHN champions and SHCs have been efficiently established at project schools. SHN champions were present across the twelve communities, though students were not aware of an SHN champion in three of those (presence was confirmed by a principal or teacher who was the SHN champion). All schools confirmed having SHCs that were active and generally effective in maintaining the school cleanliness (elaborated in Effectiveness section). Notably, most SHN Champions work (as reported by the Champions along with teachers and students) related to managing school cleaning activities and ensuring compliance protocols for hygienic preparation of school meals. Nutrition was mentioned in only two locations as SHN champions themselves reflected on their training and expectations.

Regarding the work on deworming campaigns with the Ministry of Health, one staff member from MoH reported that it was overall efficient. The main barrier was in efficiently providing medication at the community level when children or their parents resist medication for lack of understanding or believing it is meant to harm their children (an issue that arose during the 2023 elections). Resolving this, according to a MoH staff working on the campaign, requires work with community leaders to alert their community members in advance that the campaigns are safe and effective:

“Overall, [community members] are happy [to receive the deworming medication]. But in November 2023, there had just been an election, and some of the counties were on the losing side of the former president. So [regarding the deworming medication we were distributing], they said the new president is now giving them medicine to kill them... a new way of the new president getting at them... But with the help of the community chief, we make it clear that the [deworming] medicine is something we’ve been giving for over 15 years now; there’s no way a particular president can give medicine to harm a particular community.”

– (Ministry of Health KII).

6.3. Effectiveness and Impact (Perceived)

The midterm evaluation examined perceived impacts of the project’s key intervention activities, including school feeding, literacy, WASH, and SRGBV. Interview topics focused on the successes and challenges of program implementation in achieving its desired outputs and outcomes. This section discusses the following indicators related to effectiveness and perceived impact.

Exhibit 110. Effectiveness and Perceived Impact-Related Indicators and Findings

Category	Activity	Indicators	Key findings
Enhancing school quality through school feeding and teacher support	PTA activities	Activities completed related to LEARN and other school tasks	Improvement from baseline from PTAs across multiple areas. Increased commitment and activity, especially working on school garden initiatives, supplying schools with food or infrastructure/materials donations, compensating volunteer or poorly paid teachers, and monitoring teacher and student attendance. Evident growing ownership of LEARN II initiatives.
	School feeding	Perception that feeding has helped	Widespread agreement that school feeding has enhanced enrollment, attendance, and achievement among students, though sometimes food arrives spoiled or has bugs, or has a short shelf-life and is unappealing to students. In the case of Power Gari, this is due to the time it takes for transporting the commodity from Nimba; plans are in place to establish nearby farm partnerships to try to resolve this. In the meantime, some schools have partnered with local farms to supplement commodities that they know will not be delivered forever.
	School gardens	Establishment of gardens to supplement school lunches	Excellent progress toward establishing productive school gardens across all communities; some gardens are further along than others, but all are moving forward with vision of supplying supplementary produce for school feeding

Improving literacy	Training teachers	Improved teacher morale and quality of literacy instruction	Overall teachers appreciate and have applied training; students demonstrate appreciation for quizzing games, competitions and group work. Teachers suggest better alignment with book delivery alongside their training and teaching tasks.
	Reading clubs	Improved community-level support for literacy instruction	There were no reading clubs except in one community where a literacy champion remained active and even that reading club was not widely known (only mentioned by the literacy champion).
	Literacy at home	Culture of reading at home is increased	Parents and other community members appear to be less active in supporting their children; “I help my child to learn” tool is not widely used or even known about. Parents, as in earlier evaluations, are saying they cannot help for lack of literacy and only students who have a literate parent and/or financial resources for “home tutor” are getting the support.
School health and nutrition	WASH Knowledge and Practice	School is clean and students have good hygiene practices	As compared to baseline, schools are much cleaner and SHCs and SHN champions more active. At times, latrines are not clean for lack of supplies or a janitor on staff, but overall there is improvement which is appreciated by students and teachers.
	Nutrition Knowledge and Practice	Students are knowledgeable about nutrition	As at baseline, there is little work as it relates to nutrition; few respondents commented on this component of SHN activities. Nutrition seems to have dropped in priority compared to hygiene.
SRGBV	Codes of conduct	Codes are agreed with and adhered to	As in previous evaluations, code of conduct is generally known and considered good, though some parents and teachers still support corporal punishment. Work toward SRHBV appears to be effective only insofar as letting students and teachers know what is allowed and not; it has not been effective in helping students and teachers know and apply realistic and responsive reporting mechanisms in the event of infractions.
	Alternative discipline	Teachers use appropriate alternative discipline strategies	Increasingly since baseline and LEARN I evaluations, teachers report using appropriate alternative discipline strategies. Rather than sending students out of the classroom during class time, or assigning them hard physical labor jobs, typically they ask students to stand in the classroom, do extra writing tasks, sweep the classroom after class session, or have conversations with them about their behavior and how to improve it.

Parent Teacher Associations

PTAs are active and helpful with respect to multiple types of school initiatives and needs across nearly all communities; this is a notable change from baseline LEARN II and prior evaluations of LEARN I, where PTAs were often very weak, inactive, or non-existent. PTAs in 11 of the 12

communities indicated ownership of tasks within their school communities, verified by caregivers, teachers, and principals, as one caregiver stated: *“If we have problem in this school – we the PTA – it’s our duty to solve [the] problem.”* (Caregiver, Grand Gedeh).

In just one community, parents and school staff reported that the PTA existed but was weak as a result of parents not having adequate time to participate. With respect to the 11 active PTAs, respondents most often named four areas where PTAs were most helpful: 1) providing supplementary food or resources to facilitate school feeding (e.g., giving vegetables from home gardens, salt, or Maggi cubes), helping maintain and provide materials (or pool funding) for school gardens and kitchens; 2) pooling funds to pay for volunteer teachers’ time; 3) cleaning the school and helping repair infrastructure; and 4) monitoring teacher and student attendance and performance.

Supporting School Feeding

Critically, PTAs have helped establish or improve school gardens, enhancing the effectiveness and potential sustainability of school feeding initiatives. Multiple principals and teachers were very positive about this, a huge contrast from prior evaluations, as reported by a teacher: *“The PTA have been our backbone in this school.... The PTA also help in the formation of the school garden. The PTA were the one that constructed the storeroom where the food is now kept”* (Teacher, Rivercess).

Another principal elaborated on the way the PTA took on multiple roles around procuring land for school feeding, and managing school food distribution, even overcoming barriers they faced from the community, as one principal explained: *“When we went to make our school garden, the community people tried to drive us from there, because they said it was their land. That’s how we involved the PTA, and the garden is there now. They [PTA] helped us to do that.”* (Principal, Grand Gedeh).

Others noted how PTAs helped supplement food, as a teacher and cook explained:

“In the past year of the LEARN program, the PTA helped provide the necessary things needed for the food to be decent. Like vita, pepper, onions. Sometimes, the PTA provides different kind of soup that will change the children diet from beans to potatoes greens, sometimes to palm butter.”

– (Teacher, Grand Bassa).

Compensating Volunteer Teachers

Multiple schools noted that PTAs supplemented teacher income or provided income to volunteers in the school:

“For the teachers, we were only depending only on government paid teachers. But Government retired them and haven’t replaced them. So, we had a meeting with the PTA and they decided to give at least \$4,000 [Liberian Dollars] every month for the volunteer teachers.”

– (Principal, River Gee).

One group of caregivers noted that PTAs were not only compensating teachers, but they were also advocating local education officials to get teachers on the payroll:

“[Person 2] One main thing the PTA is doing – because in this school we have a lot of volunteer teachers – is paying those volunteer teachers \$5,000 every month... [Person 1] We have eight (8) volunteer teachers and three (3) paid teachers with over 200 students...so, we are working with the DEO so Government can put them (volunteer teachers) on pay roll.”

– (Caregivers, Grand Bassa).

Improving School Infrastructure

Principals and teachers also explained that PTAs were active in helping schools with infrastructure needs like desks, doors, and fences.

“Since I took over (as Principal) in 2019, I have not received one chair from the school. It is the parents who have been helping... the renovation of this school, it is the parents. When school is about to open, the painting of this school, it is the parents. Even buying the school materials, like the ingredients (salt, pepper), it is the parents. So, they have really been working; the biggest work they have ever done, because the school was founded in 1950 and [it is] somebody else’s building, is to secure one acre of land for this school relocation.”

– (Principal Grand Bassa GM).

“The wire fence as you can see, we didn’t have that here. So, the parents decided that the money that is being sent for development of the town, they decided to do the wire fence as a project for the school.”

– (Principal, Grand Gedeh)

Monitoring Teachers and Students Attendance and Performance

PTAs took on the role of monitoring student and teacher attendance and, as needed, performance:

“For the children’s attendance, if the student’s attendance is poor, we can call [parents] into a meeting and we can explain it to them, so they [parents] can go and encourage their children to come to school... When a teacher doesn’t come to school for 1 or 2 days, [PTAs] can ask questions [and] come and check [on] the teacher.”

– (Teacher, Rivercess).

School Feeding

School meals are overall very popular. All stakeholders said the meals contributed to increased attendance and improved attention at school. Schools describe progress in establishing their own gardens, which comes with improvements in their ability to supplement school meals with produce. They also noted new relationships with community and PTA members who supplement food from their own household gardens or, in two cases, from larger community-based farms that exchange food for labor or credit. The addition of garden produce increases students’ enjoyment of the food and helps diversify their diet. Also, this increases the likelihood that the school feeding could be maintained without outside support. However, schools still rely on SC distributions of staple foods; most say that if those disbursements were to stop, school feeding would not be sustained. Also, given the challenges in establishing local farming cooperatives, schools still receive their Power Gari from Nimba county, which increases the likelihood that schools have to feed children old or completely spoiled food, or else miss meals, negating the positive effects of regular school meals.

Overall Effectiveness of School Meals

In general, students, teachers, and parents widely appreciate hot school meals. Often, it is said that the provision of school meals increases attendance and performance - parents are more likely to send their children to school if they know that they will be fed; teachers are more likely to see alert students if they have had nutrition.

“[Participant 6] When the children are served, they can pay attention in class... It creates a happy learning environment. Teachers have good attendance rates and active participation in the lesson. [Participant 4]. It makes the school have more enrollment. Kids love eating.”

– (Teachers, Grand Bassa).

“Before, when there was no food on the campus the children would feel reluctant, feel weak, sleep in class and some would go home. But since the food is here, they want to eat it before going home so it keeps them on the campus. The power gari gives the children power...”

– (Principal, River Gee TM).

However, there were frequent reports that the food was spoiled or had bugs – usually beans were said to have bugs in them, and Power Gari was spoiled and/or had bugs – which could certainly be a contributing factor to reduced satisfaction and impact on attendance and performance. The fact that Power Gari was arriving spoiled was well-known by SC staff, as described in the “Efficiency” section above²⁷. Respondents also sometimes said the amount of food provided was not always adequate for students. This may be related to spoiled food, though respondents did not directly note as much.

“My food at the house can satisfy me more than food here; [Person 6] the food at home better than campus food; [Person 2] The food at home got taste more than the food here...[Person 8]- my home food is better than the food here at school...yes we know about super gari... the smell is bad...[Person 1] the gari expired... the gari is dirty and has a bad scent; [Person 2] It has bugs inside”

– (Boys, Grand Gedeh).

“The children can be happy when they have the power gari. But I have a conjunction there, sometimes when the power gari stays longer time in the water, a lot of bugs can be inside the power gari. Then the taste of it can change to bitterness. So, at that time, when you give it to the children, it can’t be best to their taste.”

– (Teacher, Grand Gedeh).

School Gardens

Compared to LEARN II baseline, school gardens are becoming more successful and common across LEARN communities, including those in Grand Bassa that do not have the formal School Gardens initiative as part of LEARN II. Just one of the communities (Grand Gedeh JE) said they had no garden at all, which stands out from past evaluations where gardens were relatively uncommon and were generally unsuccessful in providing substantial help for school feeding activities where they did exist. Now, many respondents said their gardens are not only helpful, but also have the potential to contribute to sustained school feeding activities at the end of LEARN II. There is some variation by community in the degree to which gardens were successful: in seven communities, respondents said the gardens were well-established and had potential to be sustained past LEARN

²⁷ Respondents often referred to the food they were getting as ‘super gari’, a different commodity that is sometimes used in school meals, though it was confirmed by the researchers that they were actually getting ‘power gari’ at the intervention schools.

II; the remaining five (including the one community whose gardens was not presently active at all), said the gardens were struggling and not adequately providing for the school at that point.

For successful gardens, which were seen across all counties, respondents said they would both use the produce for their own school meals, and sometimes sell extra produce for cash to help fund school feeding initiatives:

“Yes, we have a garden a very big garden... Yes, we planted so many things and we are watching them grow... Yes, it’s enough for our school, we can eat some and sell some... We can just use the garden to supplement our food gets finished.”

– (Principal, Grand Bassa).

“Yes the school garden can really help us...When the things are growing we can cook some and sell some so we can have enough money to buy things that we also do not have or we can’t grow on our garden”

– (Cook, Rivercess).

The main reasons given for struggling gardens were a) lack of adequate tools and seeds; b) lack of land; and c) lack of parents to help. Still, across all communities there was evident appreciation and understanding of the importance of school gardens and larger farming initiatives for sustained school feeding; this stands out from baseline when not all communities saw the potential of gardens and local procurement of food and rather expressed reliance on USDA commodities. Promisingly, some of the communities that had more recently established or improved their gardens said that while the garden was not presently in a state to sustain the school, they were working toward it, as a cook said, *“Yes, the school garden is big it can produce food to help us supplement food. We are really focusing on it now. We will keep working on it so that it can be able to sustain the children and that we can feed them as well”* (Cook, Grand Gedeh); and a community mobilizer said: *“We are still on local farming for now... As we progress, we will get a farm that will sustain us... We will be able to sell the things and work with PTA to assist us to maintain the farm.”* (Community Mobilizer, Grand Bassa).

Local Resource Procurement/Farming Cooperatives

As explained in the Efficiency section, none of the schools in River Gee or Grand Gedeh had yet established ties with large local farms because of the difficulty Kawadah farms had in procuring a processing facility in the target counties. However, some school communities there and in the non-LRP communities have been successful in establishing relationships with existing local farms, or starting their own larger farm separated from the school garden. These activities help

supplement cassava, rice, and other staple foods that they use in their school feeding. Of the twelve schools visited, five had no activities with local farms; five had recently procured or were in the process of procuring land to start a school farm; one had already established a farm, three had relationships with local farmers to procure food (one of those had also recently procured land of their own) (Exhibit 111). Models used by communities without formal, LEARN-initiated ties to farms may be helpful stories that could be applied to other communities where local procurement remains a challenge: In Rivercess, the community works with local farmers to provide labor (by parents and teachers) and in return, they get produce: *“Sometimes we can help the farmers to plant their rice then they can call us to cut it [and use it for the school]”* (Cook, Rivercess). The status of organic (that is, not implemented by LEARN as part of LRP activities) farm partnerships is provided in Exhibit 111, below.

Exhibit 111. Status of organic (not LEARN-implemented) farm partnerships and initiatives, by community and county

County	Status of farm partnerships and initiatives, by community
Grand Bassa	Community 1: Get food in credit from local farmers; pay back with garden produce or cash Community 2: Recently purchased land for farming Community 3: Use community people’s farms as they can and just started own school farm
Grand Gedeh	Community 1: Established farm but far from school; worked on by parents Community 2: None Community 3: None
Rivercess	Community 1: Help local farmers plant and harvest; get food in return Community 2: Just starting to make own farm Community 3: None
River Gee	Community 1: None Community 2: 3 acres procurement in process; seeking materials Community 3: None

Participants noted similar challenges to gardens when it came to establishing larger farms nearby schools to supplement school feeding needs, noting lack of adequate labor and tools.

Literacy

Overall, children enjoy reading and understand its importance; similarly, caregivers want their children to read and are supportive of literacy activities. Children and teachers reported a variety

of reading activities in school that they find both fun and helpful. However, the main barriers to ongoing and improved literacy included a) lack of reading resources to use at home and in school; and b) limited support from people or groups outside of school (e.g. caregivers, older youth, literacy champions, reading clubs) to encourage and assist in reading.

Materials/Books in School

Overwhelmingly participants indicated that providing books is necessary and the books delivered were helpful, particularly for grades 1 and 2: “[Person 4] They brought reading books. It was helpful.... [Person 2] It helps many students to read well. It helps the teachers to be active. ... It motivates the teachers to see the children reading like that” (Teacher, River Gee).

However, as noted in “Efficiency”, several sites indicated that the books did not arrive on time, which was an impediment to improved literacy instruction and achievement. Additionally, as noted in “Relevance”, because the books were geared towards Grades 1 and 2 they were less useful for older students as the content wasn’t age appropriate. Similarly, respondents said they would benefit from reading materials for subjects other than reading (i.e., textbooks for social studies, science, etc.) “The provision of materials is one of the things that will keep the project running because like I said, once the materials are available the activities will continue. So, I would advise that provision of materials should be one of the key things, they should focus on” (Principal Grand Gedeh). Given the importance of books for effective literacy instruction, the delayed delivery and distribution of materials in many sites likely contributed to the relatively poor literacy outcomes reported in the quantitative sections above.

Relatedly, teachers noted that the training they received was not well-aligned with the distribution of materials, limiting the degree to which they could apply their training effectively:

“But the mistake they made was, after the training, they didn’t bring the books. For now, we have these books, and we just need some refreshers trainings for the teachers because there were some people that were selected they were not on that program before and so they didn’t really get that knowledge well.”

– (Principal, Grand Gedeh).

Outside-School Support for Literacy

In prior evaluations, literacy champions provided an invaluable resource to children in supporting their reading outside of school through additional instruction and providing supplementary reading materials. However, as mentioned in the “Efficiency” section, more information is needed to determine whether the Literacy Champion approach has lost momentum since LEARN I and

LEARN II baseline. Two of the sites that were expected to have literacy champions reported that the position was vacant and/or children and parents did not indicate knowledge of their presence (suggesting inactivity); the other two sites where literacy champions were found only had one each, where in prior years they had two. In one of those communities, the literacy champion was new, but said there was good support and adequate training. In the other, the literacy champion noted feeling inadequately supported: *“I need more training yes those that brought the training when they came we told them that we need more training. Yes, they were responsive to my request, but they said they had to go to the next county”* (Literacy Champion, Grand Gedeh).

Importantly, LEARN II has aimed to empower caregivers and others in the community to help children to read, regardless of their literacy levels and even without the presence of literacy champions. The “I help my child to read” tool was developed for this purpose and showed good potential during prior evaluations. However, as noted in the Efficiency section, as of midterm there appears to have been little to no work geared toward helping parents with this tool in the twelve communities visited. In just one community caregivers were well-aware of and positive about it:

“[Person 7] The tool can really help the children because I didn’t go to school to help them...[Person 4] the tool helps my son to read ... [Person 5] one of my sons can write now because of this tool ... [Person 6] the ones in higher grades are reading well because of the tool ... [Person 4] my two children can understand well because of the LEARN tool.”

– (Caregivers, Grand Bassa).

Even in prior evaluations when the tool had not yet been developed, caregivers and students elaborated on the ways parents supported their children’s schooling and reading. For example, parents in LEARN II baseline and LEARN I endline explained how they’d ask their children whether they’d finished their work or check in with teachers to learn of their child’s progress. At midterm, such narratives were notably less frequent. Instead, parents and children said outside support for literacy was limited to families who had already-literate family members with adequate time – which was not common – or who could hire a ‘home tutor’ which was often prohibitively expensive:

“Some of us, we don’t know books and that’s what suffering some of us. Maybe, we if we knew book, we would them to take their copy book and we sit near them... One of our brothers that live in this town said he will have a study class in the night, and we will be giving him small thing, but money business is hard and if the man is teaching your child and if we are not giving him anything, he will not be willing to continue it.”

– (Caregiver, Grand Bassa).

“[Person 1] No, my child can’t read because I don’t have anyone to teach her... [Person 5] my children [are] struggling to read because I can’t teach them ... [Person 7]reading, I can’t help my kids with that one... no one can help the children to read.”

– (Caregivers, Rivercess).

The one community in River Gee with an active literacy champion had caregivers and students who more frequently indicated caregiver support, and a reading club. The literacy champion explained:

“They [in literacy champion training] told us how to handle the children, how we should teach them. We should not beat them. Those that can’t write, we should hold their hands. We should praise them so they can be encouraged. Yes, the training was helpful. I made suggestions for them to bring reading books, Jersey etc. They were responsive and they brought some of us.... Yes [I will continue on as literacy champion]. Because I love it. The way the children can embrace it can encourage me.”

– (Literacy Champion, River Gee).

The principal of that school confirmed the strong role of the Literacy Champion, further demonstrating the effectiveness of this approach:

“One of their roles is to make sure that little kids come to school to learn how to read and write. They always encourage parents whose children are part of the reading club to make sure that the children come to school on time and be neat. We have two of them here, but they are new. Yes. It has been useful. The children being less busy in the community is limited. They are reading well.”

– (Principal, River Gee)

School Cleanliness

As described in the “Efficiency” section, SHN Champions and School Health Clubs were said to be active across all communities. While generally effective in helping schools to be cleaner, a positive change since baseline, there though there was some variation across all the schools. A summary of challenges found in each community is provided in Exhibit 112, below (no challenges listed indicates that SHN Champions and SHCs were established and said to be doing well by all respondents):

Exhibit 112. Status of SHN Champions and SHCs

County	SHN and SHC Status
Grand Bassa	Community 2: Mostly clean; sometimes bathrooms are dirty Community 3: SHN Champion is present but others are not aware of position
Rivercess	Community 2: SHN Champion is present but others are not aware of position
River Gee	Community 1: SHN Champion is present but others are not aware of position Community 2: SHC active but school is not too clean, especially toilets Community 3: SHC established but not active; school is not clean

Students and teachers elaborated on the effectiveness of the SHCs and that SHN Champions were effective in helping mobilize and organize the SHCs for the purpose of school cleaning activities:

“After the training, we established the health clubs making up 30 students and also helped them to guide them in setting up their leadership. We then scheduled the various activities and trained them on personal hygiene and scheduling of who all supposed to bring water for that day and also who supposed to speak to the students on the devotion line.”

– (Teacher / SHN Champion, Grand Gedeh).

“They [SHCs] help us clean our bathrooms, help us to make the campus very clean. Yes, (their activities have been helpful) very helpful. Because at the time they were not very involved, you could see me as a Principal checking the bathroom all the time making sure the bathroom is very clean. But the since the health club came with the supervisory role the Teachers are playing, it’s really helping us.”

– (Principal, Grand Bassa).

The limitations to adequately clean schools were mainly attributed to lack of adequate soap and other materials for cleaning. Also, there were instances where there was not sufficient help for cleaning latrines (meant to be a task for a hired school janitor who was not always available), such that students were required to clean bathrooms, sometimes as a form of punishment.

Notably, there was almost no mention of nutrition activities other than two SHN Champions describing that they learned the importance of diversifying diet and eating healthy foods, and

others noting that a role of the SHN champion was ensuring improved hygiene practices with handling food to avoid illness.

School Related Gender Based Violence

General Acceptance of Code of Conduct; Remaining Support for Corporal Punishment

Despite widespread knowledge about the content of the code of conduct, and also general agreement with its importance, parents and some teachers varied in their agreement the rules against corporal punishment. First, some parents in three FGDs (of 12) said that they would prefer teachers to beat their children if they were not behaving appropriately: *“Yes, I know the rule says the teacher should not what the children on campus. But I’m against it they need some beating to get disciplined...yes, I know, some of the kids are hard-headed they don’t listen”* (Caregiver, Grand Gedeh). Two teachers across two FGDs (of 12) indicated that they preferred being able to use corporal punishment, but did not admit doing as such: *“Some of the challenges we face here as the ECD teachers, the NGOS within our schools says (NGOs working with the school), don’t beat on the children. So, with this command, it makes the children behavior a bit challenging”* (Teacher, Grand Bassa)”. More often, however, parents, teachers, and principals agreed that it was important to find other ways to discipline children other than violence.

Classroom Management and Discipline Strategies

Positively, a notable change from prior evaluations is teachers’ and principals’ articulation of classroom management strategies to minimize the need to discipline students in the first place. Nearly all teachers and principals showed awareness and use of some sort of classroom management. These strategies included setting up clear rules and regulations for students to follow, and teachers who articulated these strategies were overall positive in such approaches:

“As a teacher, you must have classroom management skills, and once you have classroom management skills, then definitely, the class will be in order and effective learning will take place. ...positive discipline have to do with a discipline, in which when the child is doing something, you draw the child attention and explained to the child what you are doing is not fine and the child will also realize that they are doing is not fine but the negative side is to beat on the child. It will make the child not feel fine and not go to that school.”

– (Principal, Grand Gedeh).

Two teachers shared specific approaches to reorganizing a classroom as part of classroom management to avoid students’ misbehavior: *“The strategy I can use is to redirect. For example, if 2 children are sitting together and they are disturbing, I can change one of them seat”* (Teacher, Rivercess). Still, teachers were clear that at times individuals or groups of students caused

problems in the classroom and required some form of discipline. All teachers were aware that they were not supposed to use violence, and two (of 12) explicitly said that this made their job more difficult: *“some kids can challenge teachers so it can be hard at times: “They can talk back we always have to find a way to keep them calm because we can’t be violent” (Teacher, Grand Gedeh).*

While teachers and principals also show good knowledge of the code of conduct, and attest to following it, there is evidence that they are violating some of its regulations unknowingly. Most often, they note that they continue to give youth manual labor tasks as a form of discipline, for example hauling water to the latrines and cleaning the school grounds or classroom.

Marking a change from prior evaluations, none of the teachers say that they ask students to leave the classroom as a form of punishment. Rather, they have them stand up or kneel down inside the classroom, sometimes facing the wall, so that they do not miss instruction.

Most often, though, teachers shared stories of their alternative discipline strategies knowing that they could not use violence. However, while they did not generally involve beatings, approaches in general did not reflect the alternative discipline approaches advocated by LEARN II. Just two informants of 24, both principals, clearly reflected on the importance of using discipline that involved talking to the child, noting that “harshness” could deter their attendance:

“If the child does wrong, I call them first to advise them, I take them out of that environment to have conversation so they can better understand....When I apply harshness, they sometimes leave school and that’s not what I want it to intend I only what to discipline them.”

– (Principal, Grand Bassa).

“Positive discipline has to do with a discipline, in which when the child is doing something, you draw the child attention and explained to the child what you are doing is not fine and the child will also realize that they are doing is not fine but the negative side is to beat on the child. It will make the child not to feel fine and not go to that school.”

– (Principal, Grand Gedeh).

One principal noted asking the students to write letters of apology to “not disturb again in class”. Teachers did note that they were aware of some advocacy and materials around alternative discipline, but none of them explained how they put this into action and requested “more training”. Most often, teachers said their forms of punishment included having the child(ren)

stand in front of the class or back of the class and face the wall; kneeling on the floor for a long period; cleaning the classroom or drawing water.

“Because we go by the rule, we can’t beat them, so we punish them. We put them in the naughty corner because we don’t want to put them out to miss lesson. Or after the lesson you will brush.”

– (Teacher, Rivercess).

“The strategy I can use is to redirect. For example, if 2 children are sitting together and they are disturbing, I can change one of their seats. Or you can ask one to stand or the two of them to stand for about 1 or 2 minutes. When he or she still disturbing, then we can go to the academic manager, which is the Principal... you can send the child to the academic manager office for counseling.”

– (Teacher, Rivercess).

Reporting Mechanisms are Unclear

Some students offered that their teachers followed the code of conduct: *“the teachers are good”* (FGD Girls, Grand Gedeh). Students were not asked directly as to whether their teachers, or teachers at their school, violated the code of conduct (for ethical reasons), though in one community the students reported that their principal often came to school drunk:

“[Person 2] The principal your sent here, before he comes on campus, he can pass to the shop and drink (alcohol), before he come. He can make the students to be shamed... [Person 5] sometimes when the principal drunk, he can pee on himself.”

– (Boys, Rivercess).

Also, when asked as to whether there was a way to report violations, students revealed some areas where there could be much improvement in terms of ensuring safe reporting mechanisms. For example, students were varied in terms of how they would respond to a teacher violating the code of conduct. Many of them said that they’d report to a principal and did not indicate any direct fears of repercussions as a result of that. However, many others, both boys and girls, said that they would not report at all because of fear of repercussions from the teacher:

“Sometimes I can be afraid to report before they fail me...No. I can’t feel safe to report because if we report the teacher can hold it against us. We can just leave it.”

– (Girl, Rivercess).

"[Person 3] When the teachers go against the code of conduct) we can't do anything. Because they will punish you.... [Person 2] When you do any wrong thing and you try to take action, the other staff there can say it's your grade will feel it or sometimes they will look at you bad...If you report, any small thing you do, he (teacher) will give you punishment."

– (Boys, Grande Gedeh).

In three interviews across three of the 12 schools, students reported having access to a complaints box where they could report anonymously or as a next step if reporting to the principal was not effective, as one boy said, *"We can tell the principal but if the principal doesn't take action, we can write and put it in the box"* (Boy, Rivercess), and girls' FGD agreed *"I will feel free to report. I will write and put it in the suggestion box [all agree]"* (Girl, Grand Bassa).

However, one student in another school said they still feared repercussions using such a complaints box:

"The people said when the Teachers do anything wrong, we should write letter and put it in that box and put the Teacher name there; but when you put the letter in the box, wet that are in this school, we are the ones the Teachers are depending on (for their living). So when they take the job from there, our name will go (or reputation for reporting the teacher)."

– (Girl, Grand Bassa).

One student said that there was a number that could be called, as instructed by Save:

"Save the Children say that if they go against it, we should call them on their number (8833)" (Girl, River Gee); another said that when a representative from another NGO visited, she would talk to her about any issues at the school.

Importantly, among parents describing what they would do in the event their child told them a teacher had violated the code of conduct, there were widely varied responses. Some said they'd report to head of PTAs or principals, some said they'd contact the police, while others had ideas such as 'call the Ministry of Gender,' as revealed across FGDs with caregivers, for example in one: *"[Person 1] I will report the person to the police... [Person 3] I will call the gender ministry.... [Person 4] I will report the person to the PTA chairman... [Person 4] I will report the teacher to the CEO"* (Caregivers, River Gee) and in another: *"[Person 2] Complain to the DEO...[Person 1] When it happens I'll come and talk about it , if it happens again I will call DEO... [Person 4] I will call police ... [Person 3] I will report to principle."* (Caregivers, Rivercess);

Only one parent in one FGD indicated using a complaint box (in Rivercess). This indicates that parents also are unclear about the appropriate response that they could take, and what that response could be depending on the exact nature of the violation. The ability for parents to know what to do in the event of violations is especially important given that children themselves indicated (described above) that they didn't always feel comfortable reporting themselves.

Further, some caregivers noted that their efforts to report violations went unanswered, as multiple respondents in one FGD reported:

“No they [teachers] are not following any rules here... When the parent hears [about an infraction] they can come complain to the principle [but there is] no solution...when we come to PTA meeting and talk, they can't change anything.”

– (Caregiver, River Gee).

Respondents in just one of the 12 schools indicated that there was a clear process for reporting violations, and seemed overall satisfied with it:

“[Person 1] If anything happens in the school, you the parents, they have to report the complaint to you. The parents will then reach the PTA to tell them what happened on the campus. The PTA have the right to come on the campus and look into it and if there's anything working, you put everything into place... [Person 3] They can report to the PTA... [Person 4] If it happened like that (that a teacher or school administrator becomes abusive to the student), then when the PTA can't handle it, we will turn you over to high authority.”

– (Caregivers, Grand Bassa).

6.4. Sustainability

To assess the sustainability of project interventions, the research team asked stakeholders about necessary inputs and systems required for sustainability, as well as factors likely to influence sustainability. Interviewers also asked respondents to recommend strategies for continuing activities after the project ends.

Exhibit 113. Sustainability-Related Indicators and Findings

Category	Activity	Indicators	Key findings
Enhancing school quality through school feeding and teacher support	PTA activities	PTA ownership of tasks; adequate financial and human resources	PTA activities will likely continue given the strong momentum they have gained at endline and evident ownership of key initiatives around school gardens, feeding, and supporting teachers.
	School Feeding	School and local MOE ownership of task	School feeding will not continue without outside support to provide the major commodities needed locally. With those commodities, though, schools (through PTAs) demonstrate the ability to carry out the school feeding including providing supplemental condiments, on their own.
	School gardens	School and PTA ownership of task	PTAs have made huge progress in establishing and expanding gardens and see the benefit for the school. They may struggle in obtaining needed supplies, though, if garden produce does not adequately provide income to purchase such materials, or if pooling funds from community people is not effective.
Improving literacy	Literacy champions/reading clubs	Commitment of literacy champions to stay	There is evident loss of progress in the community and home-based reading initiatives, indicating that they were not adequately set up to be sustainable. The literacy champion role is effective but requires funding to encourage literacy champions to remain in their roles.
School health and nutrition	SHCs and SHN champions	Degree to which they will sustain after LEARN	Unlike at baseline, when there was little evidence of sustained SHC and SHN champion work, there appears to have been increased ownership of those components and recognition from students and others that it is good to have a clean and hygienic school. PTAs have taken good ownership of this. Lack of resources will continue to be an issue, so budgeting for those resources should become more intentional at the school level.
School-related gender-based violence	Codes of conduct	Codes of conduct continue to be well-	The evidence suggests that the existing work on codes of conduct has been effective in helping sensitize teachers,

Category	Activity	Indicators	Key findings
		known and are consistently applied	caregivers, and students about what is right and wrong within school; however, it has not evolved toward schools taking ownership of the next steps toward consistently applying and maintaining those standards. Without further work on the need to institutionalize not just the code of conduct, but viable reporting and monitoring mechanisms, violations could become more regular.

Literacy

Given the limitations observed already with respect to parent engagement with their children's literacy, and relatively (compared to baseline) inactive literacy champions, the sustainability of literacy activities needs to be seriously considered. Some communities that had previously had literacy champions even said that they didn't think literacy would continue because of the absence of a literacy champion, as one principal stated clearly: *"No [literacy activities will not be sustained]. We don't have a literacy champion."* (Principal, Grand Gedeh). In Non-literacy Boost communities, teachers and principals also advocated for more work to be done at the community level to support literacy more purposefully than they had seen it in the past.

"One of the things I'm looking at is more awareness and engage the community, it will be alright. Because most for people, they don't understand what we are doing. So, if we can have more awareness, more stakeholders to be involved, the program will proceed successfully."

– (Teacher, Rivercess)

Save the Children appears to be aware of the need to shift from direct implementation to working with communities, in the way they've successfully done with PTAs for school gardens, to sustain literacy initiatives, as one national staff explained:

"Talking about sustainability of activities ... we tried to engage the communities themselves in all packages of activities. For example, those involving parents, not just PTA... We continue distributing the pamphlets 'I help my child to learn'; we continue activities on broadcasting key messages, and above all our approach has changed from 'ok let's disseminate the policy' to focusing more on the impact of this policy – social behavior change linked to this policy. To be transformative instead of just sharing knowledge."

– (Save the Children National Staff KII)

One principal provided a suggestion on how community-based literacy activities could be realistically sustained after LEARN II, given the clear importance of such support for children yet the difficulty in adequately maintaining literacy champions and continued difficulty enabling all parents to reliably and effectively provide this for their children. The model proposed may be particularly effective given the strong gains made with PTAs who have increasingly taken ownership of school-based projects:

“The recommendation I have is for the parents ... to create a room in the town where someone can read and write to help children drill them through their lesson... a constant study classes in the town... Because some of the materials will still remain in the school even when the project ends, and we will continue to those materials.”

– (Principal, Grand Gedeh)

Another principal similarly suggested engaging PTAs more purposefully toward sustaining literacy activities around storing books:

“When the project ends, texts books that have been supplied to the schools will still be there. So the reading component will continue. What can be done to ensure that this component is maintained is, the school should also try to have a Library where the books can be safe to make sure that this program is continue. The PTA can also support that.”

- (Principal, Grand Gedeh)

School Feeding

While schools have made evident progress toward establishing and maintaining their own gardens, in some cases expanding their activities to community-based farms, when asked outright whether they would be able to sustain ongoing school feeding initiatives without outside support at the state they were in during the midterm evaluation, nearly all (10 of 12) said it was not likely or definitely not going to happen:

“I’m not too sure, I know the garden is there, but we are still depending on LEARN. If there’s no more food from learnt the children will go home first before they can eat. LEARN should continue to provide for our children we beg them.”

– (Cook, Rivercess)

“No, our children will not be able to eat, because the garden can’t even produce rice yet so the children will not be able to eat anything at all. We are reminding Save the Children to continue to bring the food here for us.”

– (Storekeeper, Grand Gedeh)

Also important to note was that multiple cooks or storekeepers complained about receiving less take-home commodities than they were used to, which was clearly affecting their morale and, assumedly, could lessen their likelihood of continuing on in their role:

“They used to give us oil, rice and beans but this time they can give us only rice. It’s not okay.”

– (Cook, Grand Gedeh)

“Before they used to pay I and the cooks 8kilo of beans, 21 kg of rice, two gallons of oil after every three months. Now they have changed it. No beans, no oil, only eight kilos of rice. We were not told from the beginning. You are one of those. We always asked about who to carry our complain to, but no response.”

– (Storekeeper, River Gee)

To reiterate a point made in prior sections, though, all communities saw the *potential* of school gardens for sustainable school feeding initiatives, but it would require more work. This provides an important point in which LEARN II can work with those communities to provide relevant and effective support to maximize the potential of sustainable school feeding.

“Because our school [has a] garden so when the things grow, we will be able to change the soup it will be very sustainable.... Yes, it will continue when LEARN goes.... We are really focusing on it now. We will Keep working on it so that it can be able to sustain the children and that we can feed them as well.”

– (Cook, Grand Gedeh)

“The farm, the school is making farm they started planting in the farm. So, when LEARN leaves we will still be able to feed the children from the food that grows on our farm. It will be sustainable because will Keep planting and harvesting food for them to eat.”

– (Cook, Grand Bassa)

Often, government support was noted as critical in helping to sustain school feeding initiatives:

“We have rehabilitated some of the storerooms so if they are committed to the school gardens, I believe that they can use the school garden to continue. It might not be one hundred percent to LEARN II but I believe that the school garden support they can push it for some time. Maybe the government might come into support.”

– (Community Mobilizer, Rivercess)

One government stakeholder provided a thoughtful approach toward establishing sustainability:

“We need to provide support to the people with cutlasses, hooks, with other materials, that will be used with the seeds because when the time comes the program will not continue. So when the time comes, they will be able to sustain themselves for one month. One of things that I suggested was, Save the Children should stop the ration for some time and give the schools that are pet of feeding organ should feed themselves for one month. And then based on the evaluation, if you cannot feed yourself for one month, then. That will be a competition and you will see whether this program can be sustained.”

– (DEO, Grand Gedeh)

Save the Children has demonstrated full awareness of the need to continue engagement with government, which has been ongoing since inception but finally seeing some promising steps forward:

“Looking at how difficult it was during LEARN I to collaborate with government, we have it made a long way... now the government officials themselves initiate meetings themselves. They approach this as a true partnership; they have contribution to make, we have ours to make, instead of ‘please provide us with this’. I think there is progress in that sense.... When we raised the question [with the new government] about our wish to see the contribution of government in school feeding, in financial support or providing a warehouse, times for monitoring., I think that it is understood... They said that ‘yes, this is part of our plan’. So, we are in the right direction for capacity building of government.”

– (Save the Children National Staff KII)

School Health

There is evident ownership, often by PTAs, of school hygiene and cleanliness initiatives at the school level, and appreciation from students as a result. Lack of resources continues to be an issue with a clear need for more purposive budgeting for those resources, perhaps via the PTA or via advocacy with local government for resources, given current reliance on LEARN for materials.

Notably, local government actors in interviews rarely commented on school hygiene initiatives and were mainly concerned with school feeding, indicating potential areas for enhanced advocacy.

School-Related Gender-Based Violence

The evidence suggests that the existing work on codes of conduct has been effective in helping sensitize teachers, caregivers, and students about what is right and wrong within school; however, it has not evolved toward schools taking ownership of the next steps toward consistently applying and maintaining those standards. Without further work on the need to institutionalize not just the code of conduct, but viable reporting and monitoring mechanisms, violations could become more regular. Also, local government actors in interviews, when reflecting on their work with LEARN, tended to not describe work around codes of conduct but rather commented mainly on sustainability around school feeding.

Section 7. Conclusions

7.1 Summary of Key Outcomes

In this section, we highlight key findings from the project and impact evaluations at midterm.

Literacy

The performance evaluation found that key literacy outcomes for students did not improve, and in some cases were significantly lower compared to baseline. Students' reading comprehension fell from 4% to 2% ($p < 0.10$), and while there was a slight increase in the percentage of students that were classified as readers (9% vs. 12%), though this increase was not statistically significant. Of the students in the sample that were classified as readers, reading comprehension declined by 41 percentage points (67% vs. 26%, $p < 0.01$), and fluency fell from 21% to 16% ($p < 0.10$). For students classified as non-readers, listening comprehension fell from 13% to 8% ($p < 0.05$). The gender gap in early literacy skills declined from baseline to midterm, with around half of both boys and girls being able to identify letters proficiently at midterm, relative to 51% of boys and 39% of girls at baseline.

Literacy outcomes also varied by county. In Grand Bassa, reading comprehension declined from 68% to 24% ($p < 0.05$) for students classified as readers, and listening comprehension declined from 12% to 4% ($p < 0.01$) for students classified as non-readers. In Rivercess, fewer students were able to successfully identify invented words (2% vs. 1%, $p < 0.05$) compared to baseline. In River Gee, reading comprehension fell from 6% to 2% ($p < 0.10$), and for students classified as readers, ability to accurately read words from a passage declined by 36% percentage points ($p < 0.05$) and fluency of words per minute fell by 15 percentage points ($p < 0.10$). In Grand Gedeh, both positive and negative changes in literacy outcomes were not statistically significant. When asked about students' self-reported ability to read, a higher proportion agreed that they considered themselves to be a good reader (65% vs. 73%, $p < 0.01$), whereas a lower proportion strongly agreed (7% vs. 2%, $p < 0.01$) and strongly disagreed with that statement (2% vs. 0%, $p < 0.01$) compared to baseline.

The qualitative data suggest that there has been less emphasis on literacy interventions across communities, including Literacy Boost communities, particularly in terms of: (a) late supply of books for classroom use, and, where books are available, they are limited only to Grades 1 and 2 and on subjects that teachers say are not always of interest to learners; (b) few reading clubs; and (c) limited work with parents and other community members to provide community or household-level literacy support to students in need.

The impact evaluation found a statistically significant positive impact on students' ability to read and comprehend within the treatment schools. Students in treatment schools were 19 percentage points more likely to read five words in 30 seconds and answer 80% of comprehension questions accurately than in the comparison schools. This effect was influenced by both genders but was moderately larger for male students compared to female students and was driven by students in River Gee.

Home Environment

Overall, there were mixed results regarding students' home literacy environments. While more than half of the students reported being read to by someone (54%), this was a 10 percentage point decline from baseline. Further, only 25% of students said that someone at home told them a story. There were regional differences, with home literacy environments improving in Rivercess and declining in River Gee. The qualitative data indicates few resources for learners outside of school, with few elaborating on ways that parents could support learners unless they had prior literacy abilities or financial means to hire a "home tutor" for their child.

At midterm, there was a lack of readily available age-appropriate, non-school books for students to read at home: just 29% reported having any storybooks or comic books at home. About a quarter (23%) of students said that they had access to coloring books, with a higher proportion doing so in Rivercess (24%).

The baseline equivalency test found that students in the treatment group were more likely to have a TV at home, and less likely to have a radio, relative to students in the comparison group. This may indicate a difference in household income or asset composition between the two groups.

School Environment

Overall, most students said they enjoy coming to school, with the majority (90%) citing learning new things or enjoying lessons as a reason, and fewer (14%) citing that they liked their teacher compared to baseline. The qualitative data confirmed that students enjoyed school and needed little convincing of its value. Students also revealed high expectations about what they could achieve in the future provided they were able to continue their schooling. There was also a 16 percentage points increase in students agreeing that they felt valued and respected at school. The most cited school-related dislikes concerned physical or mental abuse at the hands of other students (29%) or teachers (26%).

The baseline equivalency test found that schools in the treatment group tended to be larger than those in the comparison group. Additionally, comparison schools were more likely to have had prior LEARN activities or school gardens compared to treatment schools. This could be attributed to the large cluster of treatment schools located near the town of Zwedru in Gedeh.

Health and Hygiene Knowledge and Practices

When tested on handwashing knowledge, 26% of students were able to successfully identify critical moments they should wash their hands, about the same as baseline (26%). This knowledge varied by county. Students showed significant improvements in handwashing knowledge in both Grand Gedeh (29% vs. 46%, $p < 0.05$) and River Gee (19% vs. 40%, $p < 0.10$). Alternatively, fewer students were able to identify critical handwashing moments in Grand Bassa (22% vs. 11%, $p < 0.01$), while students in Rivercess did not show a significant change in their handwashing knowledge. Students were also more likely ($p < 0.05$) to identify critical handwashing moments if the primary language spoken at home was English. There was no significant change between Grade 2 and Grade 6. The qualitative data show that SHN champions and SHCs are active and effective across all sites visited in terms of providing school cleaning activities, though there were noted challenges in some schools in keeping latrines adequately cleaned.

Nutritional knowledge did not improve compared to baseline. Three percent (3%) of students reported knowing what a balanced diet is, and fewer than 1% could prove they knew. However, Grade 6 students were more likely to say they knew what a “balanced diet” is (1% vs. 7%, $p < 0.01$), and were more likely to mention protection from disease (0% vs. 52%, $p < 0.10$) and identify the associated “glow” foods (52% vs. 64%, $p < 0.01$). Most students could identify foods that provide energy (99%), and 83% could identify foods that protect against disease. As with prior evaluations, qualitative data show that SHCs and PTAs pay little to no attention to nutrition despite nutrition being part of SHN champion and SHC activities implemented previously through LEARN.

A key project success was that more students report eating three meals each school day. Overall, school meals are very popular, and all qualitative stakeholders said that meals contributed to increased attendance and improved attention in school. More than half of students (64%) reported eating three meals on school days, a 31 percentage point increase compared to baseline ($p < 0.01$), whereas only 19% reported the same on non-school days, a decline from 25% at baseline ($p < 0.05$). Responses varied by county when asked whether students ate the provided school meal yesterday. In Grand Gedeh, 91% of students reported eating the school-provided meal the previous day, a significant jump from baseline (50%, $p < 0.01$). Alternatively, students in River Gee were more likely to report they didn’t eat the school provided meal compared to baseline (11% vs. 29%, $p < 0.01$), and significantly more students in Grand Bassa reported that no food was prepared at midterm (7% vs. 31%, $p < 0.01$).

A key finding is that students’ meals included more dietary diversity at midterm, increasing from 1% at baseline to 18% at midterm ($p < 0.01$), and were more likely to add diversity to their diet

during dinner. The impact evaluation found a positive effect on student DDS²⁸ and minimum dietary diversity score²⁹ in the treatment group relative to the comparison group; however, the effect was not statistically significant. Girls in treatment schools showed significant positive effects on dietary diversity relative to boys. Qualitative data showed that school meals remain very popular and are said by all stakeholders to be contributing to increased attendance and improved attention at school. Schools described huge progress in establishing their own gardens, which comes with improvements in their ability to supplement school meals with produce. They also noted new relationships with community people and PTA members who can supplement food from their own household gardens and, in two cases, from larger community-based farms that exchange food for labor or on credit. These additions of garden produce both increase students' enjoyment of the food and diversify their diet. Also, this contributes to the likelihood that the school feeding could be maintained without outside support. However, schools still rely on Save the Children distributions of staple foods and most say that if those disbursements were to stop soon, the school feeding would not be sustained. Also, given the challenges in establishing local farming cooperatives, schools still receive their Power Gari from Nimba county, which increases the likelihood that schools have to feed children old or spoiled food, or else miss meals, thus negating the positive effects of regular school meals.

The impact evaluation did not find significantly different effects for handwashing knowledge or behavior outcomes. Additionally, while treatment students showed a positive trend in dietary diversity and minimum dietary diversity, they were not statistically different from the comparison group.

In terms of nutritional knowledge, students in the treatment group were 48 percentage points more likely to name at least one food that protects from disease. This effect was primarily driven by male students and students in River Gee. **However, the evaluation found a negative impact on the frequency of meals eaten by a student per day.** Students in the treatment group were 45 percentage points less likely to report eating three or more meals each day. Additionally, students in the treatment group were 32 percentage points less likely to report that the appearance of school meals were good or very good, and 39 percentage points less likely to report that school meals were similar or identical to what they consume at home. Upon further investigation, these effects were driven by male students and students in River Gee.

²⁸ Dietary Diversity Score (DDS) is the measurement of the number of food groups taken by a student in the previous day. It is calculated by the sum of the number of food groups: starchy staples; dark green leafy vegetables; other vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables; other fruits and vegetables; organ meat; meat and fish; eggs; legumes, nuts, and seeds; and milk and milk products. https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/wa_workshop/docs/FAO-guidelines-dietary-diversity2011.pdf

²⁹ Indicator defined as consuming at least four of the nine food groups in DDS.

Parent–Teacher Associations

The qualitative data suggest that PTAs are active and helpful across nearly all communities visited and with respect to multiple types of school initiatives and needs; this is a notable change from baseline LEARN II and prior evaluations of LEARN I, where PTAs were often weak, inactive, or non-existent. Now, PTAs in 11 of the 12 communities indicate ownership of tasks within their school communities, verified by caregivers, teachers, and principals. With respect to the 11 active PTAs, respondents most often named four specific areas where PTAs were most helpful: (a) providing supplementary food or resources to facilitate school feeding (e.g., giving vegetables from their home garden, salt, or Maggi cubes), helping maintain and provide materials to (or pool funding for) school gardens and kitchens; (b) pooling funds to pay for volunteer teachers' time; (c) cleaning the school and helping repair infrastructure; and (d) monitoring teacher and student activities regarding attendance and performance. Their work in these areas is promising for the sustainability of LEARN II.

School-Related Gender-Based Violence and Gender Norms

Teachers were more aware of school rules at midterm. However, students were less knowledgeable about rules for teachers overall, with less than half having knowledge of a code of conduct for teachers (48%) or rules surrounding teacher–student interaction (48%). Teachers were more aware of school rules than students, on average. Nearly all teachers were aware of the rules intended to govern their interaction with students (98%). In addition, students were less willing to report misconduct (39%) even though more students reported witnessing teacher misconduct at school. This result varied by county, with 22 percentage points more students in Rivercess witnessing violence in the classroom the prior week. **While most teachers indicated rules were in place regarding student treatment, less than 10% acknowledged that touching students inappropriately, commenting on students' bodies, or forcing students to work on their farm were against the rules.**

Qualitative data on the contrary showed that students, caregivers, teachers, and principals overall had good knowledge of the teacher code of conduct and were able to clearly articulate some of the things that teachers should not do. There was also general acceptance of the code of conduct, yet remaining reservations among parents and some teachers that teachers should never be able to use corporal punishment. Also contrary to the quantitative findings, teachers and principals in FGDs and KIIs showed improvements from LEARN II baseline in terms of their utilization of positive discipline strategies and establishing clear classroom rules at the outset in order to avoid behavior issues in the first place.

There is much room for improvement in terms of reporting violations of the code of conduct. Qualitative data and quantitative data agree that parents and students do not have a clear idea

about the appropriate way to report certain violations, with approaches noted in the qualitative ranging from reporting to principals, the PTA, DEOs, and complaint boxes and even, in one case, directly to the Ministry of Gender. As a result, many students expressed fear of reporting because it could lead to repercussions from the teacher, and both parents and students often said that reporting is ineffective.

Teachers and students held different views with respect to gender norms. However, they shared a perception that girls have a more positive experience at school. Both groups were more likely to say that girls received more of the teachers' positive comments, while boys received the bulk of the negative comments and insults. However, compared to baseline, a larger share of teachers felt that it was equally important for both boys and girls to attend school and that they answered students' questions equally. Teachers also showed some improvement in their view of students' gender roles, with a larger share believing both genders should be responsible for school chores and farm work. Students did not show improvement in perceived gender norms and in some areas, showed a decline towards a more traditional viewpoint. Both boys and girls were more likely to believe that girls wearing short skirts was an invitation for males to touch them, and they were more likely to say girls liked to be teased by boys. Students were also less likely to believe that both genders are prioritized equally regarding feeding.

Teachers' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices

Teachers' knowledge of recommended nutrition and WASH practices varied by county and reflected different views about which practices were most important for children's health. For nutrition, while all teachers were able to identify at least one sign of hunger in a child, nearly 20% less were able to identify reduced capacity to study as a sign of hunger. Teachers were also less likely to cite components of a nutritious meal, dropping by 16 percentage points at midterm. This decline was most prevalent in Rivercess, which dropped by 46 percentage points at midterm. Further, there was an overall decline in teachers' knowledge of all food groups required for a nutritious meal and specific foods that help children grow.

For WASH, most teachers, on average, were able to identify at least one recommended handwashing moment; however, their ability to identify handwashing moments declined across almost all recommended practices compared to baseline. In addition, fewer teachers (50%) reported a functional handwashing station at their school compared to baseline (86%). When it came to hygiene practices regarding water, teachers were more likely to report that a child would likely become sick from drinking untreated water at midterm. However, they were less likely to indicate that boiling water makes it safe to drink or that it reduces the chance of illness. Teachers were also less likely to have knowledge of at least one recommended cough/sneezing practice.

Regarding information access, teachers noted a decline in the frequency they receive nutrition and WASH information. Fewer teachers reported receiving nutrition information at school once or twice per month (28% at midterm, compared to 45% at baseline). Similarly, fewer teachers reported receiving water and sanitation-related information at least once a month (58% at midterm, compared to 75% at baseline).

School Meal Providers' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices

There were mixed results with respect to SMPs' food safety knowledge. All SMPs recognized the importance of basic food preparation practices such as wearing clean clothes when preparing meals (94%) and maintaining a clean cooking space (96%). SMPs also expressed strong support for practices that reduce food contamination, reinforcing the importance of ensuring flies do not touch prepared food (94%); and storing meat and cooked food in a clean place (96%). However, there was no change in SMPs' responses regarding the importance of not leaving food out for long periods, and fewer SMPs cited food spoiling and faster germ growth as important reasons to refrigerate leftovers. Responses also varied on specific signs that foods are safe to be served. While a larger share indicated that soups and stews need to be well cooked before serving, only 10% of SMPs (compared to 93% at baseline) reported boiling soups or stews as an indicator they are safe to be served. Further, compared to baseline, a significantly smaller share noted that meat is safe when there is no blood or pink inside, while a significantly larger share reported tasting the meat as their method of evaluation. Lastly, more SMPs indicated they would wash fruits and vegetables with water only, as opposed to water and soap, which declined relative to baseline.

SMPs also varied in their food safety, storage, and hygiene practices. While most (75%) SMPs felt very confident in their ability to prepare healthy and nutritious meals, only 31% provided school meals that reflected recommended guidelines, a significant 58 percentage point drop from baseline. Further, none of the SMPs served fruits or eggs in school meals and only 33% of SMPs served any kind of vegetable. More SMPs on average also reported being previously supervised during meal preparations (88%). Similarly, while more SMPs strongly agreed to following recommended food storage practices to prevent contamination, a significantly smaller share disagreed with preparing raw meat infected with pests. Additionally, SMPs on average showed a decline in handwashing practices at recommended moments, with only 19% reporting washing their hands after handling raw meat.

At the county level, more SMPs in Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, and River Gee noted prior meal prep supervision, the largest increase being in Grand Gedeh, but fewer SMPs in Rivercess reported the same. Of the SMPs in Grand Gedeh and River Gee who reported ever serving Power Gari, nearly half expressed that all of the Power Gari deliveries arrived on time.

7.2 Limitations

Some potential limitations of the LEARN II midterm evaluation include the following:

Reliance on Self-Reported Data. The main limitation is that the quantitative approach relied on self-reported data from children for several socially and culturally sensitive subjects such as school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). Although AIR adopted best practices in eliciting this information, the data could still have some degree of measurement error, like data collected in other contexts on sensitive topics. To mitigate this limitation, prior to the baseline data collection in 2018 for LEARN, AIR devoted considerable attention to cognitive testing of the survey instrument with students in Grades 2 and 6. In consultation with local partners, AIR adjusted question phrasing to ensure children understood the questions and felt comfortable answering. To further improve data reliability at midterm, AIR incorporated some sensitive topics in qualitative interviews to triangulate with quantitative data. Even then, the qualitative data may be unreliable if respondents have an interest in slanting what they say, potentially including cooks reporting on their hygiene practices, teachers reporting on their use of corporal punishment, and parents reporting on the frequency of reading with their children.

Internal Validity of Impact Evaluation. One limitation of the impact evaluation arises from the lack of individual student-level baseline data necessary to check that the treatment and comparison groups were balanced in terms of dietary diversity score (DDS), and to include baseline DDS as a covariate in the regression analysis to improve the precision of the treatment effect estimate. To mitigate this limitation, we imputed missing values of student DDS at the school level with average school DDS and conducted baseline tests to assess whether the treatment and comparison schools were similar in terms of DDS. Furthermore, in the impact regression analysis, we controlled for baseline DDS using the imputed values. Finally, the impact evaluation used intent-to-treat design, which compared the treatment group to the comparison group of schools regardless of how much program activities were delivered to the treatment group. As such, another limitation of the impact analysis is that it can be conservative in its estimate of treatment effect because we included participants who did not receive the planned interventions (e.g., school gardens), which can make the treatment and comparison groups appear similar.

Internal Validity of Qualitative Findings. As with all qualitative research, results are not generalizable, but rather show the broad spectrum of types of perspectives that may be encountered across project beneficiaries and stakeholders. Because of this, the communities chosen purposefully represented the broad types of community covered by the LEARN II project (rural, peri-urban, and urban; the combined package vs. the base package).

7.3 Recommendations

Below, AIR presents recommendations based on key project outcomes, limitations, and lessons learned from the midterm evaluation.

Overall

- **Track fidelity of implementation systematically using detailed quantitative data to help contextualize findings and recommendations based on what has happened.** As suggested at baseline, Save the Children should conduct regular assessments to identify gaps in implementation and work to fill those gaps appropriately. A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that provides robust and detailed quantitative data at the individual school level throughout project implementation should be used to closely track fidelity of implementation and will lead to a more refined evaluation of the project's impacts during the final evaluation. This is critically important for all project components to understand why activities might or might not have their intended impact, including key literacy and LRP activities.

Literacy

- **Renew attention to literacy activity implementation, including customizing literacy interventions, to effectively meet the needs of non-readers and existing readers.** At midterm, we found a significant decline in the percentage of children reading outside school and the percentage of children who can read at grade level by the end of two grades. Reading clubs were conducted in only one of the sites sampled for qualitative data collection. Knowledge of the “I help my children learn” tool and similar support aids, which had been robustly used by participants over the last LEARN project, **was** largely absent from the qualitative sample. Save the Children can more systematically track fidelity of implementation of the literacy component to ensure all key literacy activities are taking place in the four counties. Additionally, as at baseline, the data suggest increased/renewed attention to literacy activities, including targeting non-readers and facilitating their access to Literacy Boost activities. Working with PTAs to support literacy initiatives (e.g., **to establish reading clubs**) could help consolidate gains at the school level. Alternatively, if non-readers are supported with such activities but still do not improve, then providing customized instruction based on their skill level may help less advanced students to progress.
- **Produce innovative and locally made reading materials.** Given the decline in the key indicator of percentage of children reading outside of school, it is critical to empower students and parents to create their own reading materials when there is a lack of content to read. At baseline, literacy champions provided good examples of how children can use locally made materials (e.g., flashcards and transcribed stories narrated by community members) to enhance literacy; as we did not find evidence of this at midterm, we would encourage

strengthening this component after re-mobilizing literacy champions or similar actors.

- **Address ways to mitigate or overcome high rates of teacher turnover with the government from now until the final evaluation to ensure sustainability.** At midterm, teacher turnover continued to be a major concern. It is critical to communicate to the government the degree to which teachers lament being underpaid and overworked and feel the government does not consider their concerns. Advocacy in this regard would need to come from multiple partners regularly, as has been done already through the Education Sector Development Committee; however, in the meantime, instituting strategies to acknowledge teachers' work and provide supplementary compensation (e.g., through PTA or the STAR teachers intervention) could enhance teacher morale, attendance, and performance. Consider also holding in-depth dialogues and engagements at county and district levels for deeper understanding of contextually specific issues related to government-paid teachers and volunteers. Finally, there is a fundamental need to address the frequent transfer of teachers to other schools, particularly those who have been trained under LEARN as literacy champions or SHN champions. One successful model, initiated by communities, is to pool PTA resources to help supplement teachers' incomes. While not a replacement for adequate government support, the qualitative data showed its utility.
- **Continue to emphasize the importance of parents' engagement in their children's education and facilitate dialogues between parents and teachers about the challenges parents face in engaging with their children's education.** As done through LEARN via radio, SMS (texting), and home learning cards, teachers and principals can continue to emphasize to parents the critical and constructive role they play in enhancing their children's education even without being educated themselves. This will also enable teachers to better understand parents' challenges and what they need to support their children. Together with teachers, Save the Children should develop realistic strategies that parents and caregivers can use to encourage their children to ensure that literacy indicators do not decline further. Save the Children should also consider using social media and other technology to encourage parent engagement. LEARN II staff could also facilitate PTA meetings and use meetings to educate parents on the important role they play in their children's education. Additionally, staff could mentor and coach parents in using the "I Help my Child to learn" tool, and also monitor its use.

Feeding and LRP

- **Ensure schools have adequate materials and infrastructure to maintain a healthy and safe environment, in addition to ensuring higher compensation for SMPs.** Like at baseline, midterm data showed that while cooks and storekeepers demonstrate adequate understanding of food safety procedures, they lament lack of materials or poor infrastructure in the school kitchen to meet those standards. Job satisfaction among SMPs is low and they

do not believe they are fairly compensated for their work. Save the Children can potentially tackle this advocating for higher pay if paying SMPs is not part of Save the Children scope, to ensure greater motivation from SMPs to ensure hygiene and cooking of nutritious meals.

- **Separate water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and nutrition components, rather than grouping them as SHN, and task different parties to manage each.** SHCs demonstrated willingness and capacity to engage in school cleaning activities, and some were active in teaching fellow students about handwashing. However, improving nutrition was rarely mentioned, likely because of the already difficult task SHCs and SHN champions had in maintaining school cleanliness. Having separate individuals responsible for the nutrition component (e.g., dividing an SHC into two “wings”) may help prevent nutrition from being sidelined. Also, emphasis on small-group training that is more interactive and practical may help SHN champions and SHCs better apply the skills learned during the large-group training.
- **Focus on strengthening the LRP component to ensure that it is truly local and cost-effective and can be sustained at the end of LEARN II.** Qualitative interviews with program implementers revealed that Save the Children was not able to **set up a processing plant with Kawadah Farms** as initially planned, leading to delays in the procurement of Power Gari at the school-level. To address this challenge, Power Gari was shipped to treatment schools from further away than intended, **reducing cost effectiveness**. Across multiple FGDs in the qualitative sites, students and other stakeholders also reported that, currently, Power Gari spoils very quickly (most likely due to delays in shipping from longer distances) and does not taste very appealing when it is served spoiled. Meanwhile, some communities had taken their own initiative in working with local farms to supplement staple foods like cassava and rice, though the supplements are not nearly at the level to sustain school feeding without the donated commodities. Addressing these issues and working actively within the community to resolve land procurement challenges, including forging relationships with farmers, in the next two years, will be critical to sustaining the LRP component.
- **Continue rolling out and strengthening school gardens to ensure sustainability at the end of LEARN II.** At midterm, showed positive reactions to the school gardens and progress in establishing and expanding them such that they were often able to help supplement school lunches, enhancing enjoyment and nutrition of the meals. Dietary diversity has also increased from baseline to midterm, a result that could be related to the school garden component. While PTAs showed increased ownership of school gardens at midterm, there were concerns about the sustainability of school gardens in the absence of Save the Children given challenges in accessing quality seeds and materials. Some schools said they sold produce to purchase necessities, but it was challenging to do so regularly. Given the high potential of school gardens in supplementing school meals, it is important for Save the Children to ensure the

sustainability of this component at the end of LEARN II. At the same time, there is room to sensitize PTA members to the role that school gardens can play beyond supplementing school feeding activities. For example, a larger garden could generate more income for PTA activities or help individual PTA members cover their children's educational expenses, as demonstrated in some cases where PTAs have sold produce for supplementary income. Accordingly, providing PTAs with training on business management and marketing as part of the village savings and loan associations (VSLA) intervention could be helpful.

SRGBV

- **Refocus attention on strengthening activities related to SRGBV, including ensuring there are clear guidelines on redressal mechanisms.** At midterm, there was a significant decline in student knowledge of the Teacher Code of Conduct and a decline in students' knowledge of general rules for teacher conduct. Qualitative interviews also noted that there was confusion about to whom complaints should be reported. Additionally, some stakeholders reported that, given the lack of consensus on who to report to and the fact that redressal was rare, complaints were often not raised. Given this, it is essential to refocus attention on strengthening knowledge on rules and the code of conduct to ensure all students are up to date. It is also important to institute a process to clarify to whom students and parents should report complaints for each type of complaint and communicate it to each school. Information sessions clarifying reporting chains and redressal mechanisms, including a clear roadmap for redressing each complaint, would be useful.
- **Give ample attention towards providing students with Safe Schools where students are safe to learn and develop among their peers and teachers, teachers role-model pro-social behavior, and within a positive school climate.** To help achieve this, consider community dialogues as part of the scale-up of the LEARN Safe School interventions in four counties so stakeholders better respect and enforce the school code of conduct and students can learn in a safe environment. Revising the school code of conduct will open opportunities for widespread sensitization on its content, including dialogues with school personnel, caregivers, and students. Dialogues can elucidate whether misunderstanding of the content, disagreement with rules, or lack of alternative disciplinary strategies in accordance with the code (e.g., strategies that could replace corporal punishment) is limiting enforcement.

Appendices

- A. References
- B. Additional Tables
- C. McGovern-Dole Performance Indicators
- D. Inter-rater Reliability
- E. Survey Instruments
- F. Results Framework
- G. Terms of Reference

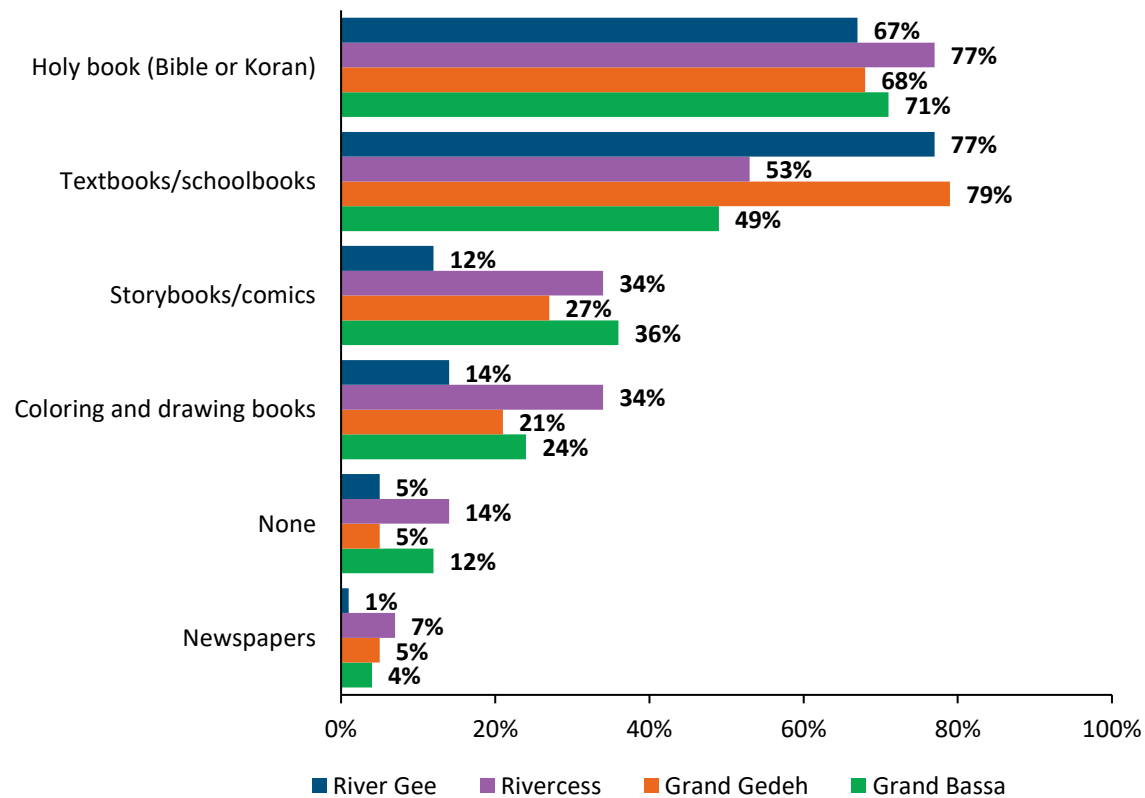
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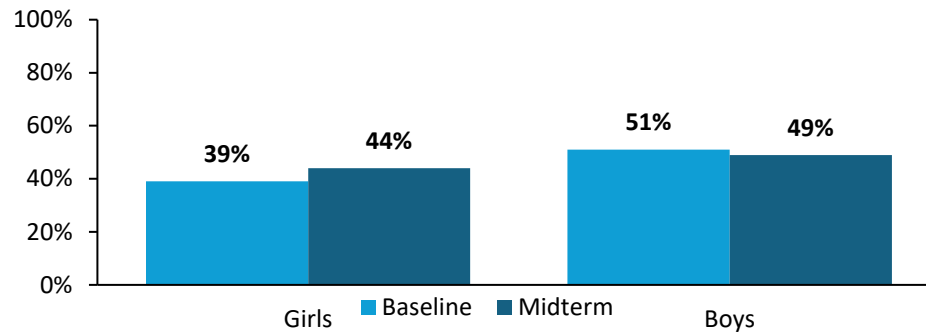
Appendix B. Additional Tables

Exhibit B1. Access to Non-Textbook Reading Materials in School, by County



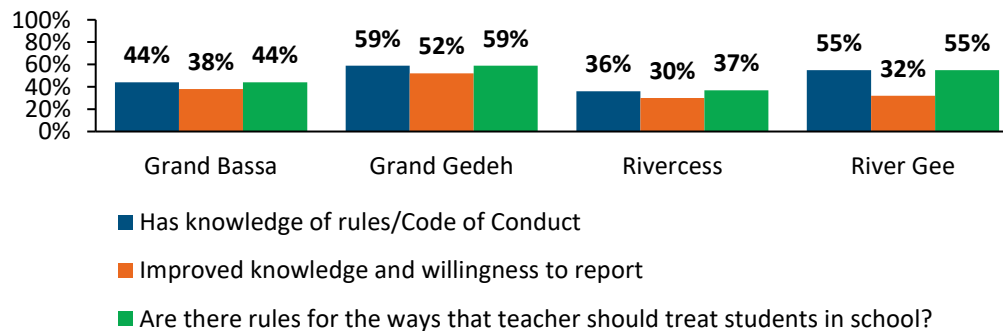
Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. N = 398 in Grand Bassa, 231 in Grand Gedeh, 164 in Rivercess, and 203 in River Gee.

Exhibit B2. Student Letter Knowledge by Gender



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Baseline $N = 292$ for girls and 333 for boys. Midterm $N = 319$ for girls and 296 for boys.

Exhibit B3. Student Knowledge and Use of Rules for Teacher Conduct, by County at Midterm



Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. Code of conduct $N = 347$ in Grand Bassa, 206 in Grand Gedeh, 136 in Rivercess, and 116 in River Gee. Knowledge of rules $N = 398$ in Grand Bassa, 231 in Grand Gedeh, 164 in Rivercess, and 203 in River Gee. Rules for treating students $N = 347$ in Grand Bassa, 206 in Grand Gedeh, 136 in Rivercess, and 116 in River Gee.

Exhibit B4. Impact Results by Gender

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
Boys				
Panel A: Dietary outcomes				
Dietary diversity score (DDS)	1.89	1.79	-.21	476
Minimum dietary diversity score (DDS)	0.21	0.16	-.36	476
Typical number of meals on a school day	2.59	2.44	-.29	476
Typical number of meals on a non-school day	2.04	2.06	-.31	476
Student usually eats 3 or more meals per day	0.74	0.66	-.85***	475
Panel B: Nutrition outcomes				
Knowledge of 'balanced diet' meaning	0.01	0.01	.01	476
Named at least one food that is in a healthy diet	0.37	0.49	.24	476
Named at least one food that gives energy	0.99	0.98	0	476
Named at least one food that helps grow	0.54	0.71	-.62***	476
Named at least one food that protects from disease	0.82	0.78	.78**	475
Panel C: Handwashing outcomes				
Student knowledge of handwashing behavior	0.36	0.38	-.15	476
Student self-reported handwashing behavior	0.28	0.21	-.14	476
Panel D: Literacy outcomes				
Percent of students that identified at least 90% of the letters	0.44	0.42	.33	476
Percent of letters correctly identified by children	0.8	0.83	.08	476
Percent of students who can read and comprehend	0.03	0.03	.24***	476
Number of days attended in the previous week	4.41	4.56	.03	476
Panel E: Cultural appropriateness outcomes				
Food is similar or identical to what children eat at home	0.38	0.29	-.78***	476
School meal's appearance was "good" or "very good"	0.9	0.88	-.33**	475
School meal's taste was "good" or "very good"	0.88	0.87	-.08	476

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
Girls				
Panel F: Dietary outcomes				

Dietary diversity score (DDS)	2.01	1.67	1.38**	474
Minimum dietary diversity score (DDS)	0.23	0.13	.29	474
Typical number of meals on a school day	2.73	2.45	-.2	474
Typical number of meals on a non-school day	2.16	2.16	-.06	474
Student usually eats 3 or more meals per day	0.83	0.68	-.04	474
Panel G: Nutrition outcomes				
Knowledge of 'balanced diet' meaning	0.02	0	-.02	474
Named at least one food that is in a healthy diet	0.4	0.49	.12	474
Named at least one food that gives energy	0.99	0.98	-.01	474
Named at least one food that helps grow	0.64	0.71	-.1	474
Named at least one food that protects from disease	0.76	0.78	.34	474
Panel H: Handwashing outcomes				
Student knowledge of handwashing behavior	0.43	0.41	-.02	474
Student self-reported handwashing behavior	0.24	0.19	.25*	474
Panel I: Literacy outcomes				
Percent of students that identified at least 90% of the letters	0.42	0.41	-.17	474
Percent of letters correctly identified by children	0.8	0.81	-.16	474
Percent of students who can read and comprehend	0.05	0.03	.2*	474
Number of days attended in the previous week	4.46	4.7	.85	474
Panel J: Cultural appropriateness outcomes				
Food is similar or identical to what children eat at home	0.3	0.31	-.05	474
School meal's appearance was "good" or "very good"	0.81	0.83	-.26	471
School meal's taste was "good" or "very good"	0.75	0.8	-.13	471

Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. Standard errors are clustered at the school level.

Exhibit B5. Impact Results by County

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
Grand Gedeh				
Panel A: Dietary outcomes				
Dietary diversity score (DDS)	2.07	1.69	-1.12	726
Minimum dietary diversity score (DDS)	0.24	0.13	-.73*	726
Typical number of meals on a school day	2.84	2.56	1	726

Typical number of meals on a non-school day	2.11	2.11	.19	726
Student usually eats 3 or more meals per day	0.82	0.68	-.38	726
Panel B: Nutrition outcomes				
Knowledge of 'balanced diet' meaning	0.01	0.01	-.01	726
Named at least one food that is in a healthy diet	0.42	0.52	-.58	726
Named at least one food that gives energy	1	0.99	-.02	726
Named at least one food that helps grow	0.47	0.65	-.17	726
Named at least one food that protects from disease	0.95	0.86	-.38	726
Panel C: Handwashing outcomes				
Student knowledge of handwashing behavior	0.42	0.4	-.57	726
Student self-reported handwashing behavior	0.33	0.2	-.27	726
Panel D: Literacy outcomes				
Percent of students that identified at least 90% of the letters	0.45	0.42	-.07	726
Percent of letters correctly identified by children	0.8	0.82	-.12	726
Percent of students who can read and comprehend	0.04	0.04	.16	726
Number of days attended in the previous week	4.59	4.63	-.99	726
Panel E: Cultural appropriateness outcomes				
Food is similar or identical to what children eat at home	0.42	0.33	-.62	726
School meal's appearance was "good" or "very good"	0.93	0.89	-.38	724
School meal's taste was "good" or "very good"	0.91	0.88	-.21	724

Outcome	Treatment	Comparison	Effect	N
River Gee				
Panel F: Dietary outcomes				
Dietary diversity score (DDS)	1.65	1.85	.88**	224
Minimum dietary diversity score (DDS)	0.16	0.23	.26*	224
Typical number of meals on a school day	2.22	1.96	.68*	224
Typical number of meals on a non-school day	2.07	2.11	.03	224
Student usually eats 3 or more meals per day	0.71	0.66	.04	223
Panel G: Nutrition outcomes				
Knowledge of 'balanced diet' meaning	0.01	0	.02	218
Named at least one food that is in a healthy diet	0.31	0.39	.44**	224
Named at least one food that gives energy	0.98	0.94	.14***	224

Named at least one food that helps grow	0.89	0.95	.16***	224
Named at least one food that protects from disease	0.39	0.45	.27	224
Panel H: Handwashing outcomes				
Student knowledge of handwashing behavior	0.34	0.39	-.39**	224
Student self-reported handwashing behavior	0.08	0.18	-.33***	224
Panel I: Literacy outcomes				
Percent of students that identified at least 90% of the letters	0.39	0.41	.23***	224
Percent of letters correctly identified by children	0.8	0.82	.15**	224
Percent of students who can read and comprehend	0.05	0.01	.05	224
Number of days attended in the previous week	4.05	4.66	-.53*	224
Panel J: Cultural appropriateness outcomes				
Food is similar or identical to what children eat at home	0.13	0.17	.08	224
School meal's appearance was "good" or "very good"	0.66	0.69	-.18*	222
School meal's taste was "good" or "very good"	0.61	0.68	-.06	223

Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. Standard errors are clustered at the school level.

Appendix C. McGovern-Dole Performance Indicators

McGovern-Dole Indicators (MGD)	Data Collection Methods	Data Source	Baseline (Percentage or Number)	Midterm Target	Midterm (Percentage or Number)	Life of Project Target
MGD 1: Percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text	Evaluation	LBRA	Boys: 4%	Boys: 20%	Boys: 1%	20%
			Girls: 4%	Girls: 10%	Girls: 2%	
			Overall: 4%	Overall: 15%	Overall: 2%	
MGD 30: Number of individuals participating in USDA food security program	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	101,365	95,644	176,958
MGD 31: Number of individuals benefiting indirectly from USDA-funded interventions	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	210,216	193,768	361,402
MGD 32: Number of schools reached as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	234	232	234
Custom: Percentage of children reported reading outside of school in the last week	Evaluation	Student Survey	Boys: 22%	Boys: 14%	Boys: 14%	25%
			Girls: 21%	Girls: 17%	Girls: 17%	
			Overall: 22%	Overall: 15%	Overall: 16%	
MGD 2: Average student attendance rate in USDA supported classrooms/schools	SC/Monitoring	SC	54%	70%	67.31%	80%
Custom: Number of schools with a strengthened support structure for a code of conduct policy	SC/Monitoring	SC	220	234	232	234
Custom: Percentage of children in target schools who demonstrate improved knowledge and practices toward SRGBV prevention and response	Evaluation	Student Survey	Boys: 73%	Boys: 80%	Boys: 37%	90%
			Girls: 71%	Girls: 90%	Girls: 40%	
			Overall: 72%	Overall: 85%	Overall: 39%	
MGD 19: Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	1,224	453	95

McGovern-Dole Indicators (MGD)	Data Collection Methods	Data Source	Baseline (Percentage or Number)	Midterm Target	Midterm (Percentage or Number)	Life of Project Target
MGD 20: Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	936	910	936
MGD 16: Number of daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) provided to school-age children as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	10,010,000	5,301,904	50,049,750
MGD 17: Number of school-age children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	50,069	44,973	85,129
MGD 14: Quantity of take-home rations provided (in metric tons) as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	97.3 MT	86.95 MT	819.6 MT
MGD 15: Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	1,638	1,140	1,126
MGD 18: Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	53,345	46,113	88,405
MGD 24: Number of children under five (0–59 months) reached with nutrition-specific interventions through USDA-supported programs	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	26,295	19,385	61,355
LRP 5: Cost of commodity procured as a result of USDA assistance (by commodity and source country)	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	\$ 248,433.00	\$ 99,000.00	\$914,929.00
LRP 6: Quantity of commodity procured (MT) as a result of USDA assistance (by commodity and source country)	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	194.09 MT	55 MT	714.79

McGovern-Dole Indicators (MGD)	Data Collection Methods	Data Source	Baseline (Percentage or Number)	Midterm Target	Midterm (Percentage or Number)	Life of Project Target
LRP 4: Cost of transport, storage and handling of commodity procured as a result of USDA assistance (by commodity)	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	\$150,447.00	\$39,528.00	\$532,436
LRP 7: Value of annual sales of farms and firms receiving USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	\$22,400	TBD	\$99,00.00	TBD
LRP 8: Volume of commodities sold by farms and firms receiving USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	80 MT	TBD	55 MT	TBD
LRP 9: Total increase in installed storage capacity (dry or cold storage) as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	TBD	0	TBD
LRP 11: Number of individuals who have received short term agricultural sector productivity or food security training as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	0	217	100
LRP 12: Number of individuals in the agriculture system who have applied improved management practices or technologies with USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	34	80	248	80
Custom: Number of days in the past month school meals have included LRP commodities	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	2	8	2
Custom: Number of schools receiving school meals with locally procured commodities as result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	95	63	95
MGD 12: Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	0	1	1
MGD 11: Value of new USG commitments, and new public and private sector investments leveraged by USDA to support food security and nutrition	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	\$165,000	\$279,170	\$660,000
Custom: Number of school gardens established as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	64	0	99	95

McGovern-Dole Indicators (MGD)	Data Collection Methods	Data Source	Baseline (Percentage or Number)	Midterm Target	Midterm (Percentage or Number)	Life of Project Target
MGD 22: Number of individuals trained in safe food preparation and storage as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	0	0	52
MGD 8: Number of educational facilities (i.e. school buildings, classrooms, and latrines) rehabilitated/ constructed as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	TBD	232	TBD
MGD 23: Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	2,240	166	2,240
Custom: Percentage of Grades 2 and 6 students in target schools who can identify the components of a healthy diet	Evaluation	Student Survey	Grade 2: 0%	Grade 2: 65%	Grade 2: 0%	75%
			Grade 6: 1%	Grade 6: 90%	Grade 6: 2%	95%
MGD 29: Number of students receiving deworming medication(s)	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	50,069	12,365	85,129
MGD 28: Number of schools with improved sanitation facilities	SC/Monitoring	SC	220	TBD	228	TBD
MGD 3: Number of teaching and learning materials provided as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	570	25,132	1,710
MGD 4: Number of teachers/educators in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	842	380	1,030
MGD 5: Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	0	576	1,872
Custom: Percentage of teachers in target schools who attend and teach at least 90% of the scheduled school days	SC/Monitoring	SC	83%	90%	67%	95%
MGD 9: Number of students enrolled in schools receiving USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	48,458	50,069	44,973	85,129

McGovern-Dole Indicators (MGD)	Data Collection Methods	Data Source	Baseline (Percentage or Number)	Midterm Target	Midterm (Percentage or Number)	Life of Project Target
MGD 6: Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	234	232	234
MGD 7: Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	0	183	234
MGD 13: Number of Parent–Teacher Associations (PTAs) or similar school governance structures supported as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	234	232	234
Custom: Number of Village Savings and Loans Associations formed and supported as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	0	0	30	95
Custom: Number of government officials trained as a result of USDA assistance	SC/Monitoring	SC	39	0	24	70

Appendix D. Inter-rater Reliability

Reading Assessment

To measure the reliability and level of homogeneity of enumerators' scores on children's literacy skills, 10% of the midterm performance sample (61 out of 615) of Grade 2 students were assessed by two different enumerators simultaneously. Long one-way Analysis of Variance techniques, which is used to determine whether the mean of a dependent variable is the same in two or more unrelated and independent groups, were used to calculate the intra-class correlation within pairs of assessors for a measure of inter-rater reliability. Adapted from Fleiss et al. (1973), we interpreted the intra-class correlations as it follows:

- Less than .40 – Poor
- Between .40 and .75 – Good or fair
- Greater than .75 – Excellent

Exhibit D1 shows the percentage of agreement between the raters, as well as inter-rater reliability (IRR) ratings for the project evaluation sample. Overall, the IRR across the project evaluation sample was excellent for all of the literacy skills measures showing high internal validity of the scores. For literacy, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension there were no variations in the proportion of children who were able to answer at least 80 percent of comprehension questions. Therefore, the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test could not calculate the IRR. Given that this means the results were identical, it is a positive result.

Exhibit D1. Inter-rater Reliability by Literacy Skill Subtest for Performance Sample

Literacy Skill Subtest	IRR	Rating
Letter Knowledge	94%	Excellent
Word Recognition	100%	Excellent
Reader	n/a	n/a
Fluency	100%	Excellent
Accuracy (out of the whole passage)	100%	Excellent
Accuracy (out of the words attempted)	99%	Excellent
Reading Comprehension	n/a	n/a
Listening Comprehension	n/a	n/a

Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. N = 61 Grade 2 students.

Exhibit D2 shows the IRR results for the impact sample. The enumerators conducted paired interviews for 6% of the treatment group and 6% of the comparison sample. Similar to the project

evaluation sample, the IRR was excellent for all measures. Again, there was no variation in the literacy or reading comprehension measure.

Exhibit D2. Inter-rater Reliability by Literacy Skill Subtest for Impact Sample

Literacy Skill Subtest	IRR	Rating
Letter Knowledge	83%	Excellent
Word Recognition	100%	Excellent
Reader	n/a	n/a
Fluency	99%	Excellent
Accuracy (out of the whole passage)	99%	Excellent
Accuracy (out of the words attempted)	92%	Excellent
Reading Comprehension	n/a	n/a
Listening Comprehension	96%	Excellent

Source: Student survey. Authors' calculations. N = 99 Grade 2 students.

Appendix E. Survey Instruments

Student Survey

Student survey & LBRA



MIDTERM DATA COLLECTION FOR USDA FOOD FOR EDUCATION (LEARN II) IN LIBERIA IMPACT AND PROJECT EVALUATION

Student Survey

Start Time

Date

INTRODUCTION

This section is for enumerators to fill		
County	1. Grand Bassa 2. Grand Gedeh 3. Rivercess 4. River Gee	
Districts	Enter the name of the district -----	
School Name	Enter the school name -----	
School ID	Enter the school's ID number (EMIS) _____	
enum	Enter your name -----	
Enum_fem	What is the gender of the enumerator? 0. Male 1. Female	
Consent	Has the principal and/or teacher given consent for the child to participate in this survey? 0. No → thank them and terminate the survey and select the next child on your list. 1. Yes → stcode1	☐
If Principal/teacher says No, thank them, and terminate the survey and proceed to the next child on your list.		
Please get the student code from the team leader. It is very important to use the correct student code, so please enter the code twice. If you are unsure, please check again with the team leader		
stcode1	Please enter the student code CAREFULLY-----	
stcode2	Please enter the student code CAREFULLY again -----	

Reliab	Is this an individual assessment or a pair assessment? 0. Individual à “nickname” 1. Pair assessment à “reliabtype”	I__I
Reliabtype	Talking enumerator or observing enumerator? 0. Observing 1. Talking	I__I

Dear student:

Hello my name is ____, and I am with Center for Action Research and Training. I am here asking some questions from children like you to understand more about a reading program. Your answers will help us make Liberia's education system better. Your parents, your classmates and your teachers will not know your answers to the questions. Everything you say will be kept a secret. There aren't any right or wrong answers. I want you to answer honestly and as best as you can. It will take only 35 minutes. Do you have any questions for me? You can interrupt me to ask a question at any time. Also, if you don't know the answer to a question or don't want to answer it, just let me know and we can skip it. I will just start with a few questions to know you better, and then we will play a reading game. Are you ready to begin?

 Ask students' assent from <i>everyone</i>			
assent	Do you agree to answer the questions I have? 0. No, thank him/her, terminate the survey, and proceed to the next child on your list. 1. Yes, continue to the background section.	I__I	
 If child says No, thank him/her, terminate the survey, and proceed to the next child on your list.			

Background information [DON'T READ TO THE CHILD]

 Ask this section from students in <i>both</i> grades (Second and Sixth)			
Fname	What is your first name?		
Lastname	What is your last name?		
Caregivername	What is the name of the person that takes care of you at home most of the time?		
Caregiver	Who is (caregivername)'s to you? 1. Mother 2. Father 3. Older sister 4. Older brother 5. Grandmother 6. Grandfather 7. Other female relative 8. Other male relative 9. Female non-relative 10. Male non-relative 11. Other (Specify) 888. Don't know		
Caregiverschool	Did (caregivername) go to school when she/he was small? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know/No response		*Select only one option
female	0. Male 1. Female	I__I	*Ask only if necessary
age	How old are you?	.....	*RECORD AGE >=5 & <25 *Mark 888 if no response/don't know
Newsch2	When did you start in this school? 1. Before 2018 2. 2018 3. 2019 4. 2020 5. 2021 6. 2022 7. 2023 8. 2024	I__I	*Select only one option *You can probe with asking students which semester they start

Newsch3a	Which school did you attend before the current school? School name: School ID: Write “Not listed” if it is not on the list, and add 888 as the school ID and pass to Newsch4.	I__I	NOTE: Find the school mentioned by child on your own tablet and select. If a paper survey, find the school on your school list, and write the full school name and ID on the survey.
Newsch3b	For how many years did you study in “newsch3a” school?	....	*Add a number from 1 to 6 *Enter 888 if no response/don’t know
Newsch4	When you started at this school, which grade were you in? 1. Preschool/ABC 2. KG 3. Grade 1 4. Grade 2 5. Grade 3 6. Grade 4 7. Grade 5 8. Grade 6 888. Don’t know	I__I	*Select only one option *This is regarding the present school that they are enrolled. *It has to be asked from all students across four counties.
grade	Which grade/class are you in? 1. Grade 2 2. Grade 6 3. Other → Thanks the child and terminate the survey	I__I	*Select only one option
everrpt	Did you repeat any grades? 0. No → studattend 1. Yes → everrpt_b 888. Don't know/ No response → studattend	I__I	*Select only one option
Everrpt_b	Which grades have you repeated? 0. KG → Everrpt_kg 1. Grade 1 → Everrpt_c1 2. Grade 2 → Everrpt_c2 3. Grade 3 → Everrpt_c3 4. Grade 4 → Everrpt_c4 5. Grade 5 → Everrpt_c5 6. Grade 6 → Everrpt_c6 888. Refuse to answer	I__I	*Select all that apply
Everrpt_c0	How many times did you repeat Kindergarten?	...	*Enter the frequency *Select if everrpt_b=0

Everrpt_c1	How many times did you repeat Grade 1?	...	*Enter the frequency *Select if everrpt_b=1
Everrpt_c2	How many times did you repeat Grade 2?	...	*Enter the frequency *Select if everrpt_b=2
Everrpt_c3	How many times did you repeat Grade 3?	...	*Enter the frequency *Select if everrpt_b=3
Everrpt_c4	How many times did you repeat Grade 4?	...	*Enter the frequency *Select if everrpt_b=4
Everrpt_c5	How many times did you repeat Grade 5?	...	*Enter the frequency *Select if everrpt_b=5
Everrpt_c6	How many times did you repeat Grade 6?	...	*Enter the frequency *Select if everrpt_b=6
studattend	During the last week of school, how many days did you attend school?	....	*Make sure there was a normal week without a test or a holiday or a cultural ceremony. *Record attendance ≥ 0 & < 5 for one week *Mark 888 if the child does not know the answer/refuse to answer *If Grand Bassa, make sure that count Friday as working is part of their school activity.
mainlang	What language do you speak at home most often? 1. English 2. Kpelle 3. Grebo 4. Krahn	I__I	*Do not read options *Select only one option

book	At home do you have:	☐	*Please read all the options to the child and select all that apply
	1. TEXTBOOKS/SCHOOLBOOKS	☐	
	2. NEWSPAPERS	☐	
	3. STORYBOOKS/COMICS	☐	
	4. COLORING AND DRAWING BOOKS	☐	
	5. HOLY BOOK (BIBLE OR KORAN)	☐	
	6. None	☐	
888. Don't know			

WASH [DON'T READ TO THE CHILD]

Okay, now I have some questions about hygiene.

Ask this section from students in *both* grades (Second and Sixth)

Hand1	Did you wash your hands at all <i>yesterday</i> ? 0. No → hand4 1. Yes 888. Don't know	☐	*Select only one option
Hand2	At what point did you wash your hands <i>yesterday</i> ? 1. After using the toilet (poo poo) 2. After using the toilet (pee pee) 3. Before eating food 4. When they were dirty 5. After eating 6. After playing 7. Before preparing food 8. After helping someone else use the toilet 9. Right after coming home 10. After coughing or sneezing 11. Other 888. Don't know/ No response	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	* Probe if the child refers to the time s/he washed he/his hands, ask them why they washed their hands at that time *Do not read the options to the child. *Select all that apply.
Hand3	What did you use to wash your hands <i>yesterday</i> ? 1. Water only 2. Water and soap 3. Ash 4. Hand sanitizer 5. Other 888. Don't know/ No response	☐	*Do not read the options to the child. *Select only one option
Hand4	At what point should you wash your hands? 1. After using the toilet (poo poo) 2. After using the toilet (pee pee) 3. Before eating food 4. When they were dirty 5. After eating 6. After playing 7. Before preparing food 8. After helping someone else use the toilet 9. Right after coming home 10. After coughing or sneezing 11. Other	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	*Do not read the options to the child. *Select all that apply.

	888. Don't know/ No response		
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Food Security [DON'T READ TO THE CHILD]

Thank you! Now, I would like to ask you some questions about food.



Ask this section from students in *both* grades (Second and Sixth)

eatfreq	How many times do you eat per day? 1. More than three times per day 2. Three times per day 3. Twice per day 4. Sometimes two times, sometimes one time 5. Once per day 6. I eat once a day and sometimes not eat at all 888. Don't know/ No response	I ☐ I ☐	*Select only one option
diet1	Do you know what does a "balanced diet" mean? 0. No → diet3 1. Yes → diet2 888. Refuse to answer → diet3	I ☐ I ☐	*Do NOT probe if the child does not understand *Select only one option
diet2	Can you explain to me what a balanced diet is? 1. Eating foods that give us energy to play, work, learn (Go) 2. Eating foods that help us grow (Grow) 3. Eating foods that protect us from disease (Glow) 4. None of the above 888. Don't know/ No response	I ☐ I ☐ I ☐ I ☐ I ☐	*Probe if needed but do NOT read the options to the child *Select all that apply *For programming purpose - restrict selection of None of the above and 888 with other options.
diet3	Can you name foods that give you energy to play and learn? 1. Grains like maize (corn), rice, fufu, bulgur, or pasta 2. Sweet foods like sugarcane, sugar, or honey 3. Roots like potato, yam, cassavas, eddos, or sweet potato 4. Fats like margarine (butter), or oils 5. Other (Specify) 888. Don't know/ No response	I ☐ I ☐ I ☐ I ☐ I ☐ I ☐	*Probe if needed but do NOT read the options to the child *Select all that apply

diet4	Can you name foods that help your body grow? 1. Dairy products like milk, yogurt, and cheese 2. Red meat 3. Poultry (chicken) 4. Fish 5. Eggs 6. Beans, peas, legumes/pulses like seeds and nuts 7. Other (specify) 888. Don't know/No response	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	*Probe if needed but do NOT read the options to the child *Select all that apply
diet5	Can you name foods that protect your body from disease? 1. Green leafy vegetables like potato greens, spinach, collard green, cassava greens, watergreens 2. Fruits like mango, banana, pawpaw, oranges, pineapple, watermelon, or cucumber 3. Okra 4. Cauliflower 5. Pumpkin 6. Other (specify) 888. Don't know/ No response	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	*Do NOT read the options to the child *Select all that apply
diet6	How do you think the food should be divided between boys and girls? 1. Boys should get more 2. Girls should get more 3. Boys and girls should get equal amounts 888. Don't know/ No response	☐	*Select only one option *Probe if necessary but do not lead them to an answer *Do not read the options to them
canteen1	Did you eat a meal that was prepared at school for free <i>yesterday</i>? 0. No 1. Yes → canteen2 2. No food was prepared 888. Don't know/ No response	☐	*Select only one option *Probe if necessary *If the interview is on Monday, ask the child about Friday or the last time the child was at school. If the child was absent yesterday, ask about the last time the child was at school.



Examples of Power Gari.

Note that the bags have the Save the Children and USDA logos.

Canteen2	Did this meal include Power Gari? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know/ No response	☐	*Select only one option *Ask if canteen1 = 1
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SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND PARTICIPATION [DON'T READ TO THE CHILD]

That's great! You did a good job! Now I want to ask you a couple of questions about your school.



The following questions are *only* for Grade 2 students.

Enviro0	Do you like coming to school? 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	|_|	*Select only one option *Read the options
enviro1	What do you like best about your class and school? 1. Like teacher 2. Learning new things/enjoy lessons 3. Participate in classroom games and activities 4. Playing a sport at school 5. Access to water 6. Access to clean toilet 7. Food is provided 8. Being with my friends 9. Other (specify) 888. Don't know/ No response	|_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_|	*Select all that apply. *Do not read the options to the child.
enviro2	What do you not like about your class and school? 1. Teacher is mean to me/other students 2. S/he punishes me/ hits me/other students 3. Teacher asks for money 4. Lessons difficult to understand/learn 5. Not learning much at school 6. Poor toilet conditions/lack of toilets 7. No access to water 8. No food is provided/the food is bad 9. Other students tease me/fight with me/other students 10. I don't feel safe at school 11. Lack of uniform 12. Lack of learning materials 13. Lessons are boring 14. Other (specify) 888. Don't Know/ No response	|_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_|	* Do not read the options to the child * Select all that apply *Note to enumerators: Mean can be yelling, laughing at students, or humiliating them, etc.

Enviro2a	Do you feel valued and respected at school by teachers? 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	*Select only one option
enviro3	How many times in the last week did your teacher come to class? 1. Every day (5 days) 2. A few times during the week (2-4 days) 3. Once during the week 4. Never → enviro5 888. Don't know/No response	I__I	*Read the list to the respondent, but don't read 'don't know' *Select only one *Make sure there was a normal week without a test or a holiday or a cultural ceremony. *Don't ask if the child did not attend school for the full week last week
enviro4	How many times in the last week did your teacher come late or miss a portion of the class? 1. EVERY DAY (5 DAYS) 2. A FEW TIMES DURING THE WEEK (2-4 DAYS) 3. ONCE DURING THE WEEK 4. NEVER 888. Don't know	I__I	*Read the list to the respondent, but don't read "don't know" *Select only one *Don't ask if the child did not attend school for the full week last week
enviro5	Does your school have books other than textbooks/schoolbooks for you to borrow? If yes, is it free, or do you have to pay money? 0. No → nhhold 1. Yes, we can take books, but not off campus → nhhold 2. Yes, we can take books home and it is free → enviro5a 3. Yes, we can take books home, but it costs money → enviro5a 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option

enviro5a	How many times in the last week did you borrow books other than textbooks/school books from school to take home to read? 1. EVERY DAY 2. A FEW TIMES DURING THE WEEK; 3. ONCE DURING THE WEEK; 4. NEVER 888. Don't know	_	*Read the list to the respondent, but don't read 'don't know' *Select only one
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Household Environment [DON'T READ TO THE CHILD]

We are almost done! We have a few more questions about your home.

 The following questions are <i>only</i> for Grade 2 students.			
Nhhold	How many people are there in your household, including yourself?	.....	*Define the household for the child as a place where its members live with each other, eat out of the same pot *Record the number > 0 & < 40
Nhhold3	Among all these people that you named, how many are able to read and write?	.....	*Enter 0 if they have none in any of the categories *Enter 888 if do not know *Record the number >= 0
Nhhold2	Can you tell me the total number of sisters and brothers who live with you in the same house? 1. Older sisters 2. Younger sisters 3. Older brothers 4. Younger brothers	..... ..... ..... .....	*Enter 0 if they have none in any of the categories *Enter 888 if do not know *Record the number >= 0
hh1	In the last week, did you see anyone in your house reading? 0. No → hh2 1. Yes → hh1a 888. Don't know	☐	*Select only one option
hh1a	Who did you see reading last week? 1. Mother 2. Father 3. Older sister 4. Younger sister 5. Older brother 6. Younger brother 7. Grandmother 8. Grandfather 9. Other female relative 10. Other male relative 11. Female non-relative 12. Male none-relative 888. Don't know	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	*Select all that apply *Do not read the options to them
hh2	In the past week, did anyone in your house help you with your studies/school work? 0. No → hh3 1. Yes → hh2a 888. Don't know	☐	*Select only one option
hh2a	Who helped you study? 1. Mother	☐ ☐	*Select all that apply

	2. Father 3. Older sister 4. Younger sister 5. Older brother 6. Younger brother 7. Grandmother 8. Grandfather 9. Other female relative 10. Other male relative 11. Female non-relative 12. Male none-relative 888. Don't know	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	*Do not read the options to them
hh3	In the past week, did anyone in your house read to you? 0. No → hh4 1. Yes → hh3a 888. Don't know	☐	*Select only one option.
hh3a	Who read to you? 1. Mother 2. Father 3. Older sister 4. Younger sister 5. Older brother 6. Younger brother 7. Grandmother 8. Grandfather 9. Other female relative 10. Other male relative 11. Female non-relative 12. Male none-relative 888. Don't know	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	*Select all that apply *Do not read the options to them
hh4	In the past week, did anyone in your house tell you a story? 0. No → readout1 1. Yes → hh4a 888. Don't know	☐	*Select only one option.
hh4a	Who told you a story? 1. Mother 2. Father 3. Older sister 4. Younger sister 5. Older brother 6. Younger brother 7. Grandmother	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	*Select all that apply *Do not read the options to them

	8. Grandfather 9. Other female relative 10. Other male relative 11. Female non-relative 12. Male none-relative 888. Don't know	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
readout1	During the last week, did you read books other than textbooks/schoolbooks outside of school? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	☐	*Select only one option
readout2	Outside of your school or home, where else can you go to read or borrow books (other than textbooks)? 1. Community library 2. Church/Mosque or any other religious building 3. Reading clubs 4. Friends or relatives 5. Other 888. Don't know → readout2_enum 999. No response → readout2_enum	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	*Select all that apply *Do not read the options to them
readout2_enum	FOR ENUMERATORS ONLY [DO NOT ASK THE CHILD] Why did you choose "888" in the previous question? 1. The child did not know the answer/refused 2. The child mentioned s/he has nowhere to go outside of school for reading 3. Other (Specify)	☐	*Select only one option *After this question, skip readout 3 and move to gbv1
readout3	Did you read books (other than textbooks) in any of those places you mentioned before [readout2 option]? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	☐	*Select only one option
readenjoy1	Do you enjoy reading? 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know	☐	*Select only one option

	999. Refuse to answer		
Readenjoy2	Do you consider yourself to be a good reader? 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	*Select only one option
Readenjoy3	Have you used the 'I help my child to learn' tool with your parent/caregiver? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Readenjoy4	Do you feel supported by your parents/caregivers in your learning and well-being? 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	*Select only one option

Sexual and Gender-based Violence [DON'T READ TO THE CHILD]

Thank you! Now, I would like to ask your opinion about something. There is no right or wrong answer.

 Ask this section from students in <i>both</i> grades (Second and Sixth)			
Conduct1	Have you ever heard of a teacher lying to get something they want or to get out of trouble? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct1a	Have you ever heard of a teacher stealing things from school? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct2	Have you ever heard of a teacher offering money to get something they want, or taking money from someone to give them what they want? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct3	Have you ever heard a teacher make a comment about a student's body, or their in-front part, or behind part, or their chest part? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct4	Have you ever heard about a teacher touching a child on their behind part, chest part, or their front part? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct5	Did you hear of any teachers coming to school drunk or high on drugs last week? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct6	Did you hear of any teachers teasing/calling children names in the last week? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct6_a	In the last week, how many times did you hear about this happening to boys?	....	

Conduct6_b	In the last week, how many times did you hear about this happening to girls?	....	
Conduct7	Did you see a teacher treating one student better than any of the other students last week? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct8	Last week, did any teacher fail to show up at school? 0. No → Conduct9 1. Yes 888. Don't know → Conduct9	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct8_a	In the last week, how many teachers in your school were absent, including your own teacher?	....	*Enter a number and add 888 if the students do not know the answer
Conduct9	Did you see a teacher use corporal punishment last week? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct9_a	In the last week, how many times did you see this happening to boys?	....	
Conduct9_b	In the last week, how many times did you see this happening to girls?	....	
Conduct10	If a teacher or school administrator acted violently towards you, would you tell anyone? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Conduct11	Did you witness any violence in the classroom in the past week? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option *Explain that violence can include hitting, verbal abuse, humiliation, sexual comments
sgbv1	Are there rules for the ways that teachers should treat students in school? 0. No → sgbv3 1. Yes → sgbv2 888. Don't know	I__I	Probe if needed
sgbv2	What are they? 1. Teachers are not allowed to be in a relationship with students 2. Teachers are not allowed to beat students	I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I	* Do not read the options to the child * Select all that apply *Note that this is an illustrative list and their answers do not need to follow the exact

	3. Teachers are not allowed to use humiliating language on students 4. Teachers are not allowed to ask students for money 5. Teachers should not favor one student over the other 6. Teachers are not allowed to make a comment about students' body, or their private parts (sexual harassment). 7. Teachers are not allowed to touch a student on their private parts (sexual abuse). 8. Teachers are not allowed to force students to work on their teacher's farm as a punishment 9. Other (specify) 888. Don't know		wording. For example, if a child respond teachers should not love students, this can go under "Teachers are not allowed to be in a relationship with students".
Sgbv2_c	Are there any other general rules for teachers in school? 2. No→sgbv2_b 3. Yes→sgbv2_d 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Srgbv2_d	What are they? 1. Teachers are not allowed to come to school drunk or high on drugs 2. Teachers should not steal from school 3. Teachers are not allowed to arrive late or leave school early with no excuse 4. Teachers are not allowed to fail to show up at school unexpectedly 5. Other 888. Don't know		
Sgbv2_b	How did you learn about the rules? 1. Rules posted in the school 2. Head teacher/principal 3. Your teacher 4. Parents 5. Other students 7. Safe school stories during daily devotion 8. Safe school stories on the radio 6. Other (Specify)	I__I	*Select only one option

	888. Don't know		
sgbv3_boys	How do teachers discipline boys at school? 1. Give extra work/assignments 2. Dismiss students from class 3. corporal punishment (hitting students) 4. Shouting or shaming 5. Made to clean or work at the school 6. Other (specify) 888. Don't know/No response	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	* Probe if needed *Do not read the options to the child * Select all that apply
Sgbv3_b_boys	In your opinion, are boys afraid to go to school for fear of punishment? 0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Some of the time 3. Always 888. Don't know/No response	☐	*Select only one option
sgbv3_girls	How do teachers discipline girls at school? 7. Give extra work/assignments 8. Dismiss students from class 9. corporal punishment (hitting students) 10. shouting or shaming? 11. Made to clean or work at the school 12. Other (specify) 888. Don't know/No response	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	* Probe if needed *Do not read the options to the child * Select all that apply
Sgbv3_b_girls	In your opinion, are girls afraid to go to school for fear of punishment? 4. Never 5. Rarely 6. Some of the time 7. Always 888. Don't know/No response	☐	*Select only one option
sgbv4	If children are teased or touched in a way they don't like at school, what do they do? 1. Tell their teacher 2. Tell the principal or registrar 3. Tell their parents 4. Tell Management Committee 5. Tell the Police 6. Tell the Community leader (Village chief leader)	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	* Probe if needed *Do not read the options to the child * Select all that apply

	7. Tell Child services NGO (UN hotline, WONGOSOL, or LEARN Orange hotline) 10. Tell a friend 11. Tell a family member (besides their parents) 8. Nothing 9. Other (specify) 888. Don't know/No response		
Sgbv5	Do teachers or school officials take action when students report violence? 0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Some of the time 3. Always 888. Don't know/No response	I__I	*Select only one option *It could be any violence that may happen in school (gender based or physical or any other types)
Sgbv7	Have you heard of safe school stories? 0. No→gender1 1. Yes 888. Don't know→gender1	I__I	*Select only one option
Sgbv6	Have you listened to at least 2 safe school stories on the radio in the past week? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option

Gender norms

I'm going to read you things that some children agree with and some children disagree with. After I read each one, please tell me if yes you agree or no you disagree.

 The following questions are only for Grade 6 students.			
gender1	If a boy touches a girl at school, it's because the girl did something to attract him 1. Disagree 2. Agree 888. No response/Not sure	I__I	*Select only one option
gender2	There are times when a boy needs to beat his girlfriend/female friend 1. Disagree 2. Agree 888. No response/Not sure	I__I	*Select only one option
gender3	Girls like to be teased by boys 1. Disagree 2. Agree 888. No response/Not sure	I__I	*Select only one option
gender4	When girls wear short skirts, they are telling boys or men to touch them 1. Disagree 2. Agree 888. No response/Not sure	I__I	*Select only one option
gender5	For girls to get good grades, they sometimes have to let their teachers touch them or love them 1. Disagree 2. Agree 888. No response/Not sure	I__I	*Select only one option
Gender6	Women can lead community meetings and make important decisions 1. Disagree 2. Agree 888. No response/Not sure	I__I	*Select only one option
Gender7	Men and boys can help prepare and cook food 1. Disagree 2. Agree 888. No response/Not sure	I__I	*Select only one option
Gender8	Who should help the family the most with housework/chores? 0. Boys 1. Girls 2. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option

Gender9	Who should help the family the most with farm work? 0. Boys 1. Girls 2. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Gender10	For whom is it more important to go to school? 0. Boys 1. Girls 2. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Gender11	Who should help more in carrying out school chores such as cleaning classrooms and toilets? 0. Boys 1. Girls 2. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Gender12	Who receives more negative comments and insults from teachers? 0. Boys 1. Girls 2. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Gender13	Who receives more positive comments from teachers? 0. Boys 1. Girls 2. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Gender14	Whom do teachers choose to answer questions most frequently? 0. Boys 1. Girls 2. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option

Disability [DON'T READ TO THE CHILD]

Thank you! You are doing a great job!

 Ask this section from students in <i>both</i> grades (Second and Sixth)			
dis1	Do you have difficulty seeing? For example, is it difficult to see the chalkboard when you are at school, even if you sit near the front of the classroom, or when you wearing your glasses (mention this example if they wear glasses)? What about when you sit at the back of the classroom? 0. No – no difficulty 1. Yes – some difficulty 2. Yes – a lot of difficulty 3. Cannot do at all 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option ***Make sure difficulty is not because students are blocked by taller students in front of them
dis2	Do you have difficulty hearing? For example, if you were in the main room of your house, could you hear someone talking in a normal voice on the other side of the room, or even when you wearing your hearing aid (only ask if you see they have hearing aid)? 0. No – no difficulty 1. Yes – some difficulty 2. Yes – a lot of difficulty 3. Cannot do at all 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
dis3	Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps? For example, is it difficult to move around in your home? 0. No – no difficulty 1. Yes – some difficulty 2. Yes – a lot of difficulty 3. Cannot do at all 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Dis4	Are there some children in your community with disabilities who don't come to school? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Dis5	Are there children in your school who cannot see, hear, or walk very well? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option

Diarrhea Disease Recall [DON'T READ TO THE CHILD]

You are doing a great job! We are almost done!



Ask this section from students in *both* grades (Second and Sixth)

diar1	Have you had diarrhea in the last 2 weeks? 0. No → cult1 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
diar2	When you had diarrhea, did you eat as much as usual, less than usual, more than usual, or nothing? 1. Much less 2. Somewhat less 3. About the same 4. More 5. Stopped food 6. Never ate food 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option **If less, probe: less than usual or somewhat less?
diar3	Did you seek advice or treatment for the diarrhea from any source? 0. No → diar5 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
diar4	Where did you seek advice or treatment? 1. Government hospital/health center/health post 2. Community health worker 3. Private hospital/clinic/doctor/pharmacy 4. NGO hospital/clinic 5. Other source including traditional practitioner/shop/market 888. Don't know	I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I	*Select all that apply
diar5	Were you given any of the following at any time since you started having diarrhea? 0. No treatment was given 1. Increased fluids 2. ORS packet/pre-packaged ORS liquid 3. Zinc tablets or syrup 4. Government recommended homemade fluids (RHF) 5. Antibiotics	I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I	*Select all that apply **If "0" is chosen, no other option can be chosen

	6. Home remedy 888. Don't know		
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Cultural appropriateness of school meals [DON'T READ TO THE CHILD]

Thank you! You are doing a great job! We are almost done! Then we can play the reading game!



Ask this section from students in *both* grades (Second and Sixth)

cult1	How similar is the school meal you receive to what you eat at home? 1. Not similar at all 2. Quite similar 3. Exactly identical 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
cult2	Are you served different types of foods in your school meals? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
cult3	Are you served anything at school which your parents tell you to not eat for cultural/religious reasons? 0. No à cult5 1. Yes 888. Don't know → cult5	I__I	*Select only one option *Examples include: catfish, honey, pumpkin, palm kernel, oil, duck
cult4	Can you name these items?	-----	*Enter 888 if don't know
Cult5	Do you enjoy the meals that you are served at school? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Cult6	How do you rank the appearance of the meal that you receive at school? 1. Very bad 2. Bad 3. Neutral 4. Good 5. Very good	I__I	*Select only one option
Cult7	How do you rank the taste of the meal that you receive at school? 1. Very bad 2. Bad 3. Neutral 4. Good 5. Very good	I__I	*Select only one option
Cult8	Do you receive Power Gari in your meals at school on any day of the week? 0. No → foodintake1 1. Yes 888. Don't know → foodintake1	I__I	*Select only one option

	999. No response → foodintake1		
Cult9	Now think only about Power Gari. How do you rank the appearance of Power Gari that you receive at school? 1. Very bad 2. Bad 3. Neutral 4. Good 5. Very good	I _ I	*Select only one option
Cult10	Now think only about Power Gari. How do you rank the taste of Power Gari that you receive at school? 1. Very bad 2. Bad 3. Neutral 4. Good 5. Very good	I _ I	*Select only one option
Cult11	Do you want the school to add other soup to the power gari? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I _ I	*Select only one option
Cult12	How many times per week do you currently eat Power Gari? 1. 1 time per week 2. 2 times per week 3. 3 times per week 4. 4 times per week 5. 5 times per week 888. Don't know	I _ I	*Select only one option
Cult13	How many times per week would you like to eat Power Gari? 1. 1 time per week 2. 2 times per week 3. 3 times per week 4. 4 times per week 5. 5 times per week 888. Don't know	I _ I	*Select only one option

Food intake recall [DON'T READ TO THE CHILD]

Thank you! You are doing a great job! We are almost done! Then we can play the reading game!

 Ask this section from students in <i>both</i> grades (Second and Sixth)			
foodintake1	How many meals do you usually have each day on a school day (i.e. weekday during the school year)?	—	*Enter 888 if don't know
foodintake3	Do you eat any of your meals at school? 0. No 1. Yes	|_|	*Select only one option
foodintake2	How many meals do you usually have each day when you are not in school (i.e., weekend, school holiday)?	—	*Enter 888 if don't know
foodintake4	Which meals do you eat at school? 1. Breakfast 2. Lunch 3. Dinner 4. Snack 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	|_| |_| |_| |_|	*Select all that apply Ask only if foodintake3 = Yes
foodintake5	Who provides the meals you eat at school? 1. School 2. Caregiver àfoodintake5b 3. Self 4. Other, specify 888. Don't know	|_| |_| |_| |_|	*Select all that apply Ask only if foodintake3 = Yes
Foodintake5b	Is this person a man or a woman? 1. Man 2. Woman 888. Don't know	|_|	*Select only one option Ask only if foodintake5 = "Caregiver"
foodintake6	What food and drinks did you consume for breakfast yesterday? 1. Jolloff rice 2. Fufu 3. Dumboy 4. Mango 5. Pawpaw 6. Banana 7. Plantain 8. orange 9. Breadfruit 10. Butter pear 11. Yam 12. Eddo 13. Carrots 14. Peach		*Select all that apply *Read out options to students

	15. Apricot 16. Cassava/cassava leaves 17. Watermelon 18. Pumpkin 19. Peanut soup 20. Goat meat soup 21. Potato greens 22. Palava sauce 23. Fish/other sea food 24. Rice bread 25. Chicken gravy 26. Torborgee 27. Kanyah 28. Palm butter soup 29. Pepper soup 30. Spinach 31. Collard greens 32. Okra 33. Potatoes 34. Eggs 35. Milk 36. Power Gari 37. Butter 38. Other, specify 888. Don't know		
foodintake7	What food and drinks did you consume for a snack yesterday? 1. Jolloff rice 2. Fufu 3. Dumboy 4. Mango 5. Pawpaw 6. Banana 7. Plantain 8. orange 9. Breadfruit 10. Butter pear 11. Yam 12. Eddo 13. Carrots 14. Peach 15. Apricot 16. Cassava/cassava leaves		*Select all that apply *Explain that snacks are foods that are eaten in between meals, breakfast, lunch, and dinner

	17. Watermelon 18. Pumpkin 19. Peanut soup 20. Goat meat soup 21. Potato greens 22. Palava sauce 23. Fish/other sea food 24. Rice bread 25. Chicken gravy 26. Torborgee 27. Kanyah 28. Palm butter soup 29. Pepper soup 30. Spinach 31. Collard greens 32. Okra 33. Potatoes 34. Eggs 35. Milk 36. Power Gari 37. Butter 38. Other, specify 888. Don't know		
foodintake8	What food and drinks did you consume for lunch yesterday? 1. Jolloff rice 2. Fufu 3. Dumboy 4. Mango 5. Pawpaw 6. Banana 7. Plantain 8. orange 9. Breadfruit 10. Butter pear 11. Yam 12. Eddo 13. Carrots 14. Peach 15. Apricot 16. Cassava/cassava leaves 17. Watermelon 18. Pumpkin		*Select all that apply

	19. Peanut soup 20. Goat meat soup 21. Potato greens 22. Palava sauce 23. Fish/other sea food 24. Rice bread 25. Chicken gravy 26. Torborgee 27. Kanyah 28. Palm butter soup 29. Pepper soup 30. Spinach 31. Collard greens 32. Okra 33. Potatoes 34. Eggs 35. Milk 36. Power Gari 37. Butter 38. Other, specify 888. Don't know		
foodintake9	What food and drinks did you consume for dinner yesterday? 1. Jolloff rice 2. Fufu 3. Dumboy 4. Mango 5. Pawpaw 6. Banana 7. Plantain 8. orange 9. Breadfruit 10. Butter pear 11. Yam 12. Eddo 13. Carrots 14. Peach 15. Apricot 16. Cassava/cassava leaves 17. Watermelon 18. Pumpkin 19. Peanut soup 20. Goat meat soup		*Select all that apply

	21. Potato greens 22. Palava sauce 23. Fish/other sea food 24. Rice bread 25. Chicken gravy 26. Torborgee 27. Kanyah 28. Palm butter soup 29. Pepper soup 30. Spinach 31. Collard greens 32. Okra 33. Potatoes 34. Eggs 35. Milk 36. Power Gari 37. Butter 38. Other, specify 888. Don't know		
foodintake10	Was yesterday a typical day in terms of the types of food you consumed? 0. No 1. Yes	|_|	*Select only one option

 The literacy assessment is <i>only</i> for Grade 2 students.			
 Observational Questions This Question is for the enumerator – DO NOT ASK THIS QUESTION FROM THE CHILD If a Grade two student, check this question at the end of the literacy assessment.			
Canteen1_obs	DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE A CANTEEN?		
	0. No, there is no canteen available in the school	|_|	*An inactive canteen means it is no longer functional not that it is temporarily closed because it is not meal time at the moment
	1. Yes, there is an inactive canteen		
	2. Yes, there is an active canteen		
3. Other (Specify) -----			

LITERACY BOOST ASSESSMENT

Understanding Letters

1. Give the child the list of letters and say to the child:
2. Say: *Let's look at some letters. Can you start here* (point to first letter) *and tell me what these letters are moving in this direction?* (indicate left to right direction) *Do you understand? Ok, you can begin.*
3. Mark the letters correct or incorrect as the child reads.
4. Correct letters are:
 - the letter name in the home language or language of instruction
 - any sound that is acceptable for in the home or instructional language
 - a response which says "It begins like..." giving a word for which the letter is the initial letter
5. If the child read the letters out of order, then remember to bring his/her attention to the ones they might have skipped.
6. Make sure you marked all of the letters
7. Move to the Most Used Words section.

What to do if a student is struggling:

- If the student is struggling, and hesitates at any letter for five seconds, ask to follow up questions: *Do you know its name? What sound does it make? Do you know a word that starts with this letter?*
- If the student still hesitates for five seconds, ask: *Can you tell me any of these letters?*
- If the student still hesitates for five seconds, then stop and thank him/her for trying his/her best.
- Mark letters not identified or not attempted as incorrect.
- Move to the Most Used Words section.

x	v	s	o	a
k	g	c	f	b
p	l	h	d	z
t	q	m	i	e
w	u	r	n	j
y				

Most Used Words

1. Give the pupil the laminated copy of the "Most Used Words" list.
2. Say: *I would like you to read some words to me. They are words from your textbook. Please point to and say each of these words starting here (point to first word) and moving across each line like this (indicate left to right direction). Do you understand? Ok, you can begin.*
3. Mark the words correct or incorrect as the child reads
4. Remember that pronunciations of words with local accent are acceptable.
5. If the child read the words out of order, then remember to bring his/her attention to the ones they might have skipped.
6. Make sure you marked all of the words.
7. Move to the Decoding Section.

What to do if a student is struggling:

- If the student is struggling, and hesitates at any words for five seconds ask the child, *Are there any words on the list that you know? Tell me or say the words you know.* Repeat the request to encourage the child to continue.
- If the student still hesitates for five seconds, then stop and thank him/her for trying his/her best.
- Mark words not identified or not attempted as incorrect.

your	his	uncle	we
school	girls	want	help
and	said	story	room
go	she	will	ask
not	was	mother	did

Invented words

1. Give the pupil the laminated copy of the "Invented Words" list.
2. **Say:** *I would like you to read another list of words to me. These words are not real words, rather they are words that we made up ourselves. But they can still be read. Please point to and say each of these words starting here (point to first word) and moving across each line like this (indicate left to right direction). Do you understand? Ok, you can begin.*
3. Mark the words correct or incorrect as the child reads.
4. Remember that pronunciations of words with local accents are acceptable.
5. If the child read the words out of order, then remember to bring his/her attention to the ones they might have skipped.
6. Make sure you marked all of the incorrect words.
7. Move to the Reading Passage section.

What to do if a student is struggling:

- If the child hesitates at any word for five seconds, ask the child, *Are there any words on the list that you know? Tell me or say the words you know.* Repeat the request to encourage the child to continue.
- If the student still hesitates for five seconds, then stop and thank him/her for trying his/her best.
- Mark words **not identified or attempted as incorrect**.
- Move to the Reading Passage section.

jour	mir	undle	ne
sprood	kirls	vakt	gelb
alt	baid	flory	koom
vo	phe	yill	asb
dok	sar	rothem	thu

COMPREHENSION PASSAGES AND QUESTIONS

1. Give the pupil the reading passage.

2. **Say:** *I am going to give you a reading passage to read. When I say 'begin,' start reading aloud from the title on this page. Try to read each word. If you come to a word you don't know, I'll tell it to you. Be sure to try to do your best reading. Do you understand what I want you to do?*

1. **Say:** 'Begin' and when the pupil begins to say the first word of the title press **START**.

2. As the pupil reads, follow along on your screen. Click on words read incorrectly (they will turn with a line through them).
3. If the pupil stops reading before the end of the passage, encourage the pupil to keep reading. Show the pupil where he/she stopped, if necessary. Follow along on your copy. If the child does not want to or cannot read anymore, stop the timer and select the last word the child read. Thank the child for reading it and read it out to him/her.
4. After 30 seconds, a message will flash, "Please mark the item being attempted." Mark the word that the child was reading when the message came, and a blue box will appear around it.
5. When the screen flashes at the end of 30 seconds, do a quick count of the correct words.
 - If the pupil has read less than 5 words correctly, then:
 - **Politely stop the child and Press "Finish" box to stop the timer. Say: Thank you.**
 - **Read the passage to them.**
 - **On the next page, mark NONREADER**
 - **And ask them comprehension questions.**
 - If the pupil has read 5 or more words correctly, then:
 - Select the box under the word being read/attempted by the child at 30 seconds.
 - Allow the pupil to finish the passage.
 - Continue marking which words are read incorrectly by clicking on them.
 - As soon as the pupil finishes the last word of the passage, click the FINISH button. Say: Thank you.
 - On the next page, for the question, 'Was the student a reader or nonreader?' mark READER.
 - Move to the Reading Comprehension questions

What to do if a student is struggling:

- If the pupil is struggling and fails to correctly pronounce a word within five seconds, **tell him/her the word and mark it as an error by clicking on it** (the word should appear with a line through it).

.....
The Lone Star Kite! One hot day, all the children were outside playing. Many were flying kites high in the sky. Moses looked at the kite that his older sister Mary made for him. It had red and white stripes and a

blue lone star at the top. It looked great. Moses was proud of his kite. He ran up the hill. Moses ran so fast that he fell down and broke his kite. Moses began to cry. Mary came down from the hill. “Why are you crying?” she asked. “My kite is broken,” said Moses. “I will fix it,” said Mary. Moses trusted his sister. Mary fixed the kite with glue. She handed it to Moses. “Try it now!” Moses ran and the wind carried the kite in the air. All the children came running to look at the beautiful Lone Star kite. Moses was right – his big sister always knew what to do.

 Question to enumerator – DO NOT ASK THIS QUESTION FROM THE CHILD			
reader	Is child a reader or a non-reader? 0. A non-reader read fewer than 5 words accurately 30 seconds) à reader_confirm 1. A reader (read correctly 5 per 30 seconds) à nonreader_confirm	I__I	Select only one option
Reader_confirm	What kind of reader did you survey? 1. A perfect reader who finished the passage in less than 6 minutes on her/his own 2. A reader who was not able to finish the passage in 6 minutes, and I read the remainder of the passage to her/him after 6 minutes 3. A reader who could not read the entire passage or gave up in the middle and I read the remainder of the passage to her/him	I__I	Select only one option
nonreader_confirm	What kind of non-reader did you survey? 1. A non-reader who was not able to read at all and I read the passage to her/him after 30 second 2. A non-reader who was only able to read 1-4 words and I read the passage to her/him after 30 second	I__I	Select only one option

Comprehension Questions

Comp1	What happened in the story? 1. Moses wants to fly the kite that his sister made 2. Moses falls and breaks his kite 3. Moses’s sister fixes the kite 4. Moses is able to fly the kite 5. None	I__I	mark every main point mentioned by the child
Comp2	Who made the kite for Moses? (His older sister, Mary) 0. False 1. True	I__I	Don’t read the answer to them

Comp3	What did the kite look like? (Lone Star/red and white stripes with blue star) 0. False 1. True	I__I	Don't read the answer to them
Comp4	How did the kite break? (Moses tripped and dropped it) 0. False 1. True	I__I	Don't read the answer to them
Comp5	Who fixed Moses's kite? (his sister, Mary) 0. False 1. True	I__I	Don't read the answer to them
Comp6	How did Mary fix the kite? (with glue) 0. False 1. True	I__I	Don't read the answer to them
Comp7	Does the kite fly at the end of the story? (yes) 0. False 1. True	I__I	Don't read the answer to them
Comp8	Why was Moses proud of his kite? (his sister made it for him/it was a Lone Star kite) 1. Student could explain their answer with information from the story 2. Student could NOT explain their answer with information from the story	I__I	Don't read the answer to them
Comp9	How did Moses feel after he broke his kite? (Sad or depressed) 0. False 1. True	I__I	Don't read the answer to them
Comp10	Why do you think Mary was a good sister? 0. False 1. True		True if student can support opinion with details from story
Thank you very much for answering my questions.			

End time Comment

Teacher Survey



MIDTERM DATA COLLECTION FOR USDA FOOD FOR EDUCATION (LEARN II) IN LIBERIA IMPACT AND PROJECT EVALUATION

Nutrition and Food Safety KAP (Teacher)

Start Time _____

Date _____

INTRODUCTION

This section is for enumerators to fill

County	5. Grand Bassa 6. Grand Gedeh 7. Rivercess 8. River Gee
Districts	Enter the name of the district -----
school name	Enter the school name -----
enum	Enter your name -----

Dear teacher:

Hello my name is ____, and I am with Center for Action Research and Training. I am here asking some questions from teachers to understand more about teachers' knowledge of nutrition and food safety in Liberia. Your participation in this interview is voluntary. The survey will take approximately 30-40 minutes. If, at any time, you wish to discontinue participation, you may do so without penalty. If you accept, please respond to all questions as honestly as possible. If you do not know the answer to a question, you may simply say so. All responses will be kept strictly confidential.



Ask for the respondent's assent

assent	Do you agree to answer the questions I have? 2. No, thank him/her, terminate the survey, and proceed to the next respondent on your list. 3. Yes, continue to the background section.	I__	
--------	---	-----	--



If respondent says No, thank him/her, terminate the survey, and proceed to the next respondent on your list.

Background information

Fname	What is your first name?		
Lastname	What is your last name?		
female	Is the respondent a man or a woman? 0. Man 1. Woman	I__I	*Ask only if necessary
Age	How old are you?	I__I	Enter age in years Enter -888 if they do not know Enter -999 if they refuse to answer
Exp1	How many years have you been a teacher?	I__I	Enter -888 if they do not know Enter -999 if they refuse to answer
Exp2	How many years have you lived in this community?	I__I	Enter -888 if they do not know Enter -999 if they refuse to answer Enter 777 if they don't live in the community
Training	Have you ever participated in a gender equity training? 1. Yes 0. No	I__I	Select only one answer Enter 888 if they do not know Enter 999 if they refuse to answer

Module 1: Nutrition [DON'T READ]**Okay, now I have some questions about nutrition.**

Nut1a	Are there certain foods boys should get before girls? 1. Yes 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Nut1b	Which foods? 1. Starch/carbohydrates (Go foods) 2. Protein (Grow foods) 3. Fiber 4. Fat 5. Vitamins and minerals (Glow foods) 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I	Ask if Nut1a = Yes Select all that apply Do not read.
Nut1c	Do you prioritize feeding boys over girls? 1. Yes 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Nut2	How important do you think it is for children to have breakfast before the first class/period? 1. Not important 2. A little important 3. Rather important 4. Very important 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	- "Not important" means you do not have to have breakfast before class - "A little important" means you could have breakfast before class, but it is not that important - "Rather important" means you should have breakfast before class if you can - "Very important" means you should try your very best to have breakfast before class Select only one option
Nut3	How difficult is it for children to have breakfast before the first class/period? 1. Not difficult 2. A little difficult 3. Rather difficult 4. Very difficult 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Nut4	How important do you think it is for children to have three meals a day? 1. Not important	I__I	Select only one option

	2. A little important 3. Rather important 4. Very important 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer		
Nut5	How difficult is it for children to have three meals a day and snacks? 1. Not difficult 2. A little difficult 3. Rather difficult 4. Very difficult 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Nut6	How important do you think it is for children to have different types of foods at meals? 1. Not important 2. A little important 3. Rather important 4. Very important 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Explain that eating different types of foods means eating not only grains or only vegetables, but eating, for example, some grains, some vegetables, some meat or tofu, some dairy and some fruits. Select only one option
Nut7	How difficult is it for children to have different types of foods at meals? 1. Not difficult 2. A little difficult 3. Rather difficult 4. Very difficult 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Nut8	What can happen if children do not have breakfast before school starts? 1. Have short attention/have low concentration 2. Cannot study well 3. Do not do as well at school as you could 4. Other, specify_____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I I__I I__I I__I	Select all that apply. Do not read response options.

Nut9	Which three food groups should a nutritious meal consist of? 1. Starch/carbohydrates 2. Protein 3. Fiber 4. Fat 5. Vitamins and minerals 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐	Select three options. Do not read response options.
Nut10	What kind of diet helps a child grow? 1. Different kinds of foods, diverse diet 2. Enough food 3. Food rich in vitamins 4. Balance meals (vegetables + starch + meat or fish) 5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read response options.
Nut11	Which foods are good for your eyes? 1. Pumpkin 2. Squash 3. Carrots 4. Orange/yellow sweet potatoes 5. Dark green vegetables 6. Ripe mangoes (not green) 7. Ripe papayas (fresh or dried) 8. Palm oil 9. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read response options.
Nut12	Which foods are good for your blood? 1. Organ meat (liver, heart, kidney) 2. Flesh meat 3. Insects 4. Fish/Seafood 5. Soybeans 6. Dark leafy greens 7. Potatoes 8. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read response options.
Nut13	Why should children avoid too much of sticky and sugar-rich foods, such as sweets and candies? 1. Because they can cause tooth decay 2. Because they are not nutritious 3. Because they interfere with appetite	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read response options.

	4. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer		
I am going to ask you about where you got information about nutrition. Nutrition information includes information about foods that are good for you, frequency of meals, the importance of certain meals for growing and performing well in school.			
Nut_Info1	Where did you receive information about nutrition? 1. Teacher training 2. Health workers 3. Community 4. Family 5. Friends 6. Save the Children/LEARN 7. School health and nutrition champions 8. School health clubs 9. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply.
Nut_Info2	How often do you receive nutrition information at school? 1. Every day 2. Once a week 3. Once or twice per month 4. Once or twice a semester 5. Once or twice a year 6. Less than once per year 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option Either in regular lessons or in Health Clubs.
Nut_Info3	What materials does [teacher/staff] use to teach children about nutrition? 1. Print materials (leaflets, books) 2. Posters/bulletin boards 3. Games, competitions (active learning) 4. Lecture 5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Either in regular lessons or in Health Clubs. Select all that apply.

Module 2: Water and Sanitation

Thank you! Now, I would like to ask you some questions about water and sanitation.

Toilet1_b	Do boys generally use toilets at school when they need to go to the bathroom? 1. Yes àtoilet1_g 0. No 888. Don't know à toilet1_g 999. Refuse to answerà toilet1_g	I__I	Select only one option
Toilet1_why_b	Why not? 1. There is no toilet 2. No toilet paper 3. No soap in the toilet 4. No water in the toilet 5. No privacy 6. Out of order 7. Smells bad 8. Dirty 9. Not safe 10. Mixed with students of opposite gender 11. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ask if Toilet1_b = 0 Select all that apply. Do not read response options.
Toilet1_g	Do girls generally use toilets at school when they need to go to the bathroom? 1. Yes àtoilet2 0. No 888. Don't know à toilet2 999. Refuse to answerà toilet2	I__I	Select only one option
Toilet1_why_g	Why not? 1. There is no toilet 2. No toilet paper 3. No soap in the toilet 4. No water in the toilet 5. No privacy 6. Out of order 7. Smells bad 8. Dirty 9. Not safe 10. Mixed with students of opposite gender 11. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ask if Toilet1_g = 0 Select all that apply. Do not read response options.
Toilet1_where	Where do children go when they need to urinate/defecate if they do not use the toilet?	I__I	Select only one option

	1. Bush 2. River 3. Went home to use latrine 4. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer		
Toilet2_where	Where do adults go when they need to urinate/defecate if they do not use the toilet? 1. Bush 2. River 3. Went home to use latrine 4. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I _ I	Select only one option
Water1	Where do you get your water for drinking from at school? 1. The school give us boiled water 2. The school give us unboiled water 3. Piped water 4. Tank 5. Well 6. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I _ I I _ I I _ I I _ I I _ I I _ I	Select all that apply.
Water2	How important is it to boil water that will be used for drinking or cooking? 1. Not important 2. A little important 3. Rather important 4. Very important 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I _ I	Select only one option
Water3	Can children become sick, such as having stomachache or diarrhea, from drinking unboiled water? 1. Not likely 2. Not sure 3. Likely 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I _ I	Select only one option
Water4	Why is it important to boil water that will be used for drinking or cooking? 1. Kills germs, microorganisms 2. Makes water safe to drink 3. Reduces chance of illness (diarrhea) 4. Gives water better taste	I _ I I _ I I _ I I _ I I _ I	Select all that apply. Do not read response options.

	5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer		
Water5	How long does water need to be boiled to ensure it is safe? 1. Less than 1 minutes 2. 1-5 minutes 3 More than 5 minutes 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
I am going to ask you about where you got information about sanitation and safe water. Information about sanitation includes information on using latrines, and what water is safe to drink.			
Water_info1	Where did you receive information about water and sanitation? 1. Teacher training 2. Health workers 3. Community 4. Family 5. Friends 6. Save the Children/LEARN 7. School health champions 8. School health clubs 9. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I	Select all that apply.
Water_info2	How often do you receive water and sanitation information at school? 1. Every day 2. Once a week 3. Once or twice per month 4. Once or twice a semester 5. Once or twice a year 6. Less than once per year 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Either in regular lessons or in Health Clubs. Select only one option
Water_info3	What materials do you use to teach children about water and sanitation? 1. Print materials (leaflets, books) 2. Posters/bulletin boards 3. Games, competitions (active learning) 4. Lecture 5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I	Select all that apply.

Water_info4	Do you share any of the materials regarding water and sanitation information with PTA members? 1. Yes 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	_	Materials could be print materials, books, posters, etc. regarding water and sanitation information Select only one option
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Module 3: Handwashing

Thank you! Now, I would like to ask you some questions about handwashing.

Hand1	Is it important for children to wash their hands throughout the day? 1. Not important 2. A little important 3. Rather important 4. Very important 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Hand2	Can you describe how students should wash their hands? 1. Washes hands in a bowl of water (sharing with other people) — poor practice 2. With someone pouring a little clean water from a jug onto one's hands — appropriate practice 3. Under running water — appropriate practice 4. Washes hands with soap or ashes 5. Hand sanitizer 6. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read response options.
Hand3	At which moments should students wash their hands? 1. Before eating 2. After eating 3. After defecation 4. After playing games 5. After throwing out the garbage or cleaning 6. After coming home from school or market 7. After feeding or caring for animals 8. After cleaning/wiping baby brother or sister 9. Before preparing food 10. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply Do not read response options.
Hand4	Are there functional handwashing stations at school? 1. Yes 0. No 888. Don't know	☐	A handwashing station can be a sink, a tap with a bucket, a tippy tap - anything that provides clean running water.

	999. Refuse to answer		Select only one option
Hand5	Are both soap and water currently available at the handwashing facilities? 1. Yes, soap and water 2. Water only 3. Soap only 0. Neither water nor soap 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option Ask if hand4=yes
Hand6	What portion of your students wash hands after using the bathroom? 1. None 2. Some 3. Most 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option Ask if hand4 = Yes
Hand7	What portion of your students wash hands before meals? 1. None 2. Some 3. Most 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option Ask if hand4 = Yes
Hand8	Why is it important to wash hands? 1. Prevents from getting sick 2. Cleans hands/removes dirt 3. Is good hygiene 4. Prevents dirt from getting into mouth 5. Prevents dirt from getting into food 6. Removes germs 7. Smells good 8. Looks/feels clean 9. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	If the respondent says "because they are dirty", probe e.g. "Why? What's wrong with dirty hands?" Select all that apply. Do not read response options.
hand_info1	Where did you receive information about handwashing? 1. Teacher training 2. Health workers 3. Community 4. Family 5. Friends 6. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply.
hand_info2	How often do you receive handwashing information at school?	☐	Select only one option

	1. Every day 2. Once a week 3. Once or twice per month 4. Once or twice a semester 5. Once or twice a year 6. Less than once per year 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer		
hand_info3	What materials do you use to teach children about handwashing? 1. Print materials (leaflets, books) 2. Posters/bulletin boards 3. Games, competitions (active learning) 4. Lecture 5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply.

Module 4: Health

Thank you! Now, I would like to ask you some questions about health and diseases.

Health1	What do you do when you cough or sneeze? 1. Cover mouth or nose with hand 2. Cover mouth or nose with elbow 3. Cover mouth or nose with tissue or handkerchief 4. Nothing 5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Do not read the response options Select only one option
Mhm1	At the time of the survey, are menstrual management materials available at the school in case of an emergency? 1. Yes, at a cost 2. Yes, for free 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Mhm2	Does your school provide menstrual education? 1. Yes for girls only 2. Yes for girls and boys 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Mhm3	At what grade do students start getting menstrual education? 1. Grade 1 2. Grade 2 3. Grade 3 4. Grade 4 5. Grade 5 6. Grade 6 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option Ask if Mhm2=1 or Mhm=2
Mhm4	What is the age range in this grade? Low: ____ High: ____	I__I	Ask if Mhm2=1 or Mhm=2
Mhm4	Do teachers receive training on menstruation education as part of pre-service training or in-service trainings? 1. Yes 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option

Eye1	Have you ever heard of trachoma? 1. Yes 0. No à fever1 888. Don't know à fever1 999. Refuse to answer à fever1	☐	Select only one option
Eye2	What causes trachoma or other eye infections? 1. Dirty face/not washing face 2. Dirty hands / not washing hands 3. Flies 4. Using a dirty towel/sharing a towel 5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Ask if eye1=Yes
Eye3	How can you tell if a child has trachoma or another eye infection? 1. Eye pain/itch/discomfort 2. Blindness 3. Cannot see well 4. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ask if eye1=Yes Select all that apply.
Eye4	What can a child do to prevent eye infection or trachoma? 1. Wash face in the morning 2. Keep face clean throughout the day 3. Wash hands with soap 4. Avoid flies 5. Use clean towels/don't share towels 6. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ask if eye1=Yes Select all that apply.
Fever1	Have you heard of dengue fever? 1. Yes 0. No à Worms1 888. Don't know à Worms1 999. Refuse to answer à Worms1	☐	Select only one option
Fever2	What causes dengue fever? 1. Mosquitoes 2. Lack of hygiene 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option Ask if fever1 = Yes
Fever3	How can you tell if a child has dengue fever? 1. Fever 2. Headache 3. Shivering-feeling cold	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read the response options.

	4. Sweating 5. Joint or muscle pains 6. Vomiting nausea, don't want to eat, diarrhea 7. Weakness and tiredness 8. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ask if fever1 = Yes
Fever4	How can a child prevent getting dengue? 1. Window screens 2. Sleep under bed nets 3. Burning mosquito coils 4. Insect repellent / spray 5. Destroying all standing water around the house 6. Drain mosquito breeding sites, like pools of standing water 7. Take medicine 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply Ask if fever1 = Yes
Fever5	How can a child be treated for dengue? 1. Give the child rest 2. Take the child to the clinic/hospital 3. Give the child paracetamol 4. Give the child aspirin or ibuprofen 5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply Ask if fever1 = Yes
Worms1	Have you heard of intestinal worms? 1. Yes 0. No → Worm 4 888. Don't know → Worm 4 999. Refuse to answer → Worm 4	☐	Select only one option
Worms2	What causes intestinal worms? 1. Unwashed fruit and vegetables 2. Untreated water 3. Walking barefoot 4. Eating without washing hands 5. Not cooking food thoroughly 6. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Ask if worms1=Yes Do not read the response options.
Worms3	How can you prevent children from getting intestinal worms? 1. Wear shoes 2. Use latrines	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Ask if worms1=Yes

	3. Wash hands before eating 4. Wash food before eating 5. Cook food thoroughly 6. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐	Do not read the response options.
Worms4	Have children at your school ever received deworming treatment? 1. Yes 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
I am going to ask you about where you got information about these diseases.			
health_info1	Where did you receive information about diseases/health issues? 1. Teacher training 2. Health workers 3. Community 4. Family 5. Friends 6. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply.
health_info2	How often do you receive diseases/health issues at school? 1. Every day 2. Once a week 3. Once or twice per month 4. Once or twice a semester 5. Once or twice a year 6. Less than once per year 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
health_info3	What materials do you use to teach children about diseases/health issues? 1. Print materials (leaflets, books) 2. Posters/bulletin boards 3. Games, competitions (active learning) 4. Lecture 5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply.

Module 5: Sexual and gender-based violence and gender norms

Thank you! Now, I would like to ask you some questions about sexual and gender-based violence and gender norms

tsgbv1	Are there rules for the ways that teachers should treat students in school? 2. No →tsgbv3 3. Yes 888. Don't know	☐	Probe if needed
tsgbv2	What are they? 12. Teachers are not allowed to be in a relationship with students 13. Teachers are not allowed to beat students 14. Teachers are not allowed to use humiliating language on students 15. Teachers are not allowed to ask students for money 16. Teachers should not favor one student over the other 17. Teachers are not allowed to make a comment about students' body, or their private parts (sexual harassment). 18. Teachers are not allowed to touch a student on their private parts (sexual abuse). 19. Teachers are not allowed to force students to work on their teacher's farm as a punishment 20. Other (specify) 888. Don't know	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	* Do not read the options * Select all that apply *Note that this is an illustrative list and their answers do not need to follow the exact wording. For example, if someone responds that teachers should not love students, this can go under "Teachers are not allowed to be in a relationship with students".
tsgbv3	Are there any other general rules for teachers in school? 4. No →tsgbv_coc 5. Yes 888. Don't know	☐	*Select only one option
tsgbv4	What are they? 6. Teachers are not allowed to come to school drunk or high on drugs 7. Teachers should not steal from school 8. Teachers are not allowed to arrive late or leave school early with no excuse	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	* Do not read the options * Select all that apply

	9. Teachers are not allowed to fail to show up at school unexpectedly 10. Other 888. Don't know		
Tgbv_coc	Have you heard of the teachers code of conduct (TCOC)? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	|_|	*Select only one option
tsgbv5	If children are teased or touched in a way they don't like at school, what do they do? 10. Tell their teacher 11. Tell the principal or registrar 12. Tell their parents 13. Tell Management Committee 14. Tell the Police 15. Tell the Community leader (Village chief leader) 16. Tell Child services NGO (UN hotline, WONGOSOL, or LEARN Orange hotline) 21. Tell a friend 11. Tell a family member (besides their parents) 17. Nothing 18. Other (specify) 888. Don't know/No response	|_| |_| |_| |_| |_|	* Probe if needed *Do not read the options * Select all that apply
Tsgbv18	If you see children are teased or touched in a way they don't like at school, what do you do? 1. Tell their teacher 2. Tell the principal or registrar 3. Tell their parents 4. Tell Management Committee 5. Tell the Police 6. Tell the Community leader (Village chief leader) 7. Tell Child services NGO (UN hotline, WONGOSOL, or LEARN Orange hotline) 8. Nothing 9. Other (specify) 888. Don't know/No response	|_| |_| |_| |_| |_|	* Probe if needed *Do not read the options * Select all that apply

tsgvb6	Do you or other school officials take action when students report violence? 4. Never 5. Rarely 6. Some of the time 7. Always 888. Don't know/No response	|_|	*Select only one option *It could be any violence that may happen in school (gender based or physical or any other types)
Tsgvb6_a	If you see another teacher using corporal punishment or shouting at children, what should you do? 1. Nothing, not get involved 2. Tell the principal or registrar 3. Tell Management Committee 4. Tell the Police 5. Tell the Community leader (Village chief leader) 6. Tell Child services NGO (UN hotline, WONGOSOL, or LEARN Orange hotline) 888. Don't know/No response		* Probe if needed *Do not read the options * Select all that apply
tsgbv7_b	How do you discipline boys at school? 13. Give extra work/assignments 14. Dismiss students from class 15. Physical violence/corporal punishment (hitting students) 16. Use humiliating language 17. Made to clean or work at the school 18. Other (specify) 888. Don't know/No response	|_| |_| |_| |_| |_|	* Probe if needed *Do not read the options * Select all that apply
tsgbv7_g	How do you discipline girls at school? 1. Give extra work/assignments 2. Dismiss students from class 3. Physical violence/corporal punishment (hitting students) 4. Use humiliating language 5. Made to clean or work at the school 6. Other (specify) 888. Don't know/No response	|_| |_| |_| |_| |_|	* Probe if needed *Do not read the options * Select all that apply

Tsgbv8	Teachers have the right to shout at pupils, insult them, and call them names 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Tsgbv9_b	Do you whip boys to maintain discipline in school or class? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Tsgbv9_g	Do you whip girls to maintain discipline in school or class? 0. No 1. Yes 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Tsgbv10	Who should help the family the most with housework/chores? 3. Boys 4. Girls 5. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Tsgbv11	Who should help the family the most with farm work? 3. Boys 4. Girls 5. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Tsgbv12	For whom is it more important to go to school? 3. Boys 4. Girls 5. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Tsgbv13	Who should help more in carrying out school chores such as cleaning classrooms and toilets, raising the flag, and cleaning the board? 3. Boys 4. Girls 5. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option

Tsgbv14	Who receives more negative comments and insults from teachers? 3. Boys 4. Girls 5. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Tsgbv15	Who receives more positive comments from teachers? 3. Boys 4. Girls 5. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Tsgbv16	Whom do teachers choose to answer questions most frequently? 3. Boys 4. Girls 5. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option
Tsgbv17	Who should be given preference to desks? 0. Boys 1. Girls 2. Both boys and girls 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option

Module 6: Cultural appropriateness of school meals

Thank you! Now, I would like to ask you some questions about the locally procured food for school meals.

Powergari	Do you ever serve Power Gari at this school? 0. No→cult6 1. Yes 888. Don't know→cult6	|_|	*Select only one option
Cult4a	How many times per week do children currently receive Power Gari? 1. 1 time per week 2. 2 times per week 3. 3 times per week 4. 4 times per week 5. 5 times per week 888. Don't know	|_|	*Select only one option *Ask only if powergari = Yes
Cult5	Do you believe that integrating Power Gari into school meals has helped increase dietary diversity for children in the school? 1. Yes 2. No 888. Don't know	|_|	*Select only one option *Ask only if powergari = Yes
Cult6	How often did commodities for school meals from the United States arrive on time during the past school year? 1. None of the deliveries 2. Less than half of the deliveries 3. More than half of the deliveries 4. All the deliveries 888. Don't know/Refuse to answer	|_|	* Select only one option
Cult7	How often did the locally procured foods/commodities for school meals arrive on time during the past school year? 1. None of the deliveries 2. Less than half of the deliveries 3. More than half of the deliveries 4. All the deliveries 888. Don't know/Refuse to answer	|_|	* Select only one option *Ask only if powergari = Yes
Cult8	In terms of timeliness, is food delivered through local regional procurement faster or slower than food delivered through US commodities? 1. Local regionally procured foods are delivered faster 2. Local regionally procured foods are delivered approximately the same time 3. Local regionally procured foods are delivered slower	_	*Select only one option

	888. Don't know		
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Food Preparer Survey



MIDTERM DATA COLLECTION FOR USDA FOOD FOR EDUCATION (LEARN II) IN LIBERIA IMPACT AND PROJECT EVALUATION

Nutrition and Food Safety KAP (Food preparer)

Start Time _____

Date _____

INTRODUCTION

This section is for enumerators to fill	
County	9. Grand Bassa 10. Grand Gedeh 11. Rivercess 12. River Gee
Districts	Enter the name of the district -----
school name	Enter the school name -----
enum	Enter your name -----

Dear Food Preparer:

Hello, my name is ____, and I am with Center for Action Research and Training. I am here asking some questions from food preparers to understand more about food preparers' knowledge of nutrition and food safety in Liberia. Your participation in this interview is voluntary. The survey will take approximately 20-25 minutes. If, at any time, you wish to discontinue participation, you may do so without penalty. If you accept, please respond to all questions as candidly as possible. If you do not know the answer to a question, you may simply say so. All responses will be kept strictly confidential.

 Ask for the food respondent assent			
assent	Do you agree to answer the questions I have? 4. No, thank him/her, terminate the survey, and proceed to the next respondent on your list. 5. Yes, continue to the background section.	I__I	
 If respondent says No, thank him/her, terminate the survey, and proceed to the next respondent on your list.			

Background information [DON'T READ]

Fname	What is your first name?		
Lastname	What is your last name?		
female	Is the respondent a man or a woman? 0. Male 1. Female	I__I	*Ask only if necessary
Age	How old are you?	I__I	Enter age in years Enter 888 if don't know Enter 999 if refuse to answer
Exp1	How many years have you been a food preparer?	I__I	Enter 888 if they do not know Enter 999 if refuse to answer
Exp2	How many years have you lived in this community?	I__I	Enter 888 if they do not know Enter 999 if they refuse to answer

Module 1: Work [DON'T READ]**Thank you, now I'm going to ask you some questions about your job**

Hours1	On average, how many hours do you work as a food preparer <u>each week</u> ?	I__I	Enter 888 if they do not know Enter 999 if they refuse to answer
Hours2	How many hours does the food preparation take <u>each day</u> ?	I__I	Enter 888 if they do not know Enter 999 if they refuse to answer Enter number between 0 and 24
Hours3	Does working on the food preparation interfere with your other responsibilities? 1. Yes 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Paid1	Are you compensated for your work as a food preparer? 1. Yes, I am paid money 2. Yes, I receive in-kind payment 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Paid2	Do you feel that this is fair compensation for the amount of work that you do? 1. Yes 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option Ask if paid1=1 or paid1=2

Menu1	Do you provide school meals based on the Ministry of Education's (MoE) school feeding food and nutritional guidelines from the national school feeding policy? 1. Yes, always 2. Yes, most of the time 3. Yes, sometimes 0. No, never 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	|_|	Select only one option
Menu2	Do you make adaptations to the Ministry of Education's recommended menu? 1. Yes 0. No → Menu4 888. Don't know → Menu4 999. Refuse to answer → Menu4	|_|	Ask if Menu1 = 1 or 2 or 3 Select only one option
Menu3	Why did you make adaptations to the Ministry of Education's recommended menu? 1. Recommended ingredient unavailable 2. Recommended ingredient too expensive 3. Recommended ingredient is not good/not nutritious 4. Adaptation for student's diet (e.g., for vegetarian students) 5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	|_| |_| |_| |_| |_|	Ask if Menu2 = 1 Select all that apply. Do not read.
Menu4	Which vegetables are you serving <u>this week</u> ? 0. None 1. Green leafy vegetables 2. Okra 3. Cauliflower 4. Pumpkin 5. Potato 6. Sweet potato 7. Cassava 8. Bitter balls 9. Cassava leaf 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	|_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_|	Select all that apply. Do not read.
Menu5	Which fruits are you serving <u>this week</u> ? 0. None 1. Bananas 2. Oranges 3. Plantains 4. Mango 5. Papaya/papaw	|_| |_| |_| |_| |_|	Select all that apply. Do not read.

	6. Pineapple 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer		
Menu6	How many chicken eggs did you typically provide to <u>each student each day in the last school year</u> ? [enter integer]	—	Enter an integer Enter 0 if no eggs are served Enter -888 if they do not know Enter -999 if they refuse to answer
Bev1	Do you serve beverages with school meals? 1. Yes 0. No à healthymeal1 888. Don't knowàhealthymeal1 999. Refuse to answeràhealthymeal1	|__|	Select only one option
Bev2	What kind of beverages do you serve? 1. Water 2. Juice 3. Milk 4. Tea 5. Powdered drink 6. Soft drinks 7. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	|__| |__| |__| |__| |__|	Ask if Bev1 = Yes Select all that apply. Do not read.
Healthymeal1	A healthy meal includes a balance of foods containing starch/carbohydrates (go foods), protein (grow foods), and vitamins and minerals (glow foods). How confident do you feel preparing healthy and nutritious meals for school children? 1. Not at all confident 2. A little confident 3. Mostly confident 4. Very confident 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	|__|	Select only one option
Train1	Did you ever attend a training on child health and nutrition? 1. Yes 0. No àModule2 888. Don't know àModule2 999. Refuse to answer àModule2	|__|	Select only one option
Train2	When was the last time you attended one? 1. In the past week 2. In the past month 3. In the past 6 months	|__|	Select only one option Ask if train1 = yes

Module 3: Food Safety

Thank you! Now, I would like to ask you some questions about food safety.

Mealprep1	Did you miss any days of meal prep because you were sick in the school year? 1. Yes 0. No à Mealprep2 888. Don't know à Mealprep2 999. Refuse to answer à Mealprep2	I__I	Select only one option
Mealprep1_why	If yes, why did you miss days when you were sick? 1. I felt bad 2. It affects food safety 3. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I I__I I__I	Select all that apply. Ask if mealprep1=Yes Do not read options.
For the following statements, state how much you agree or disagree with the statement:			
Mealprep2	My staff always help me to prepare meals even when they are sick (i.e., with flu, cold, diarrhea, coughing, etc.). 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Hygiene1	Sneezing can affect the safety of the food being prepared. 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Hygiene2	Coughing can affect the safety of the food being prepared. 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Hygiene3	Back pain can affect the safety of the food being prepared. 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree	I__I	Select only one option

	888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer		
Hygiene4	An open wound on fingers/hand that comes in contact with food can affect the safety of the food being prepared. 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Hygiene5	Having a fever can affect the safety of the food being prepared. 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Hygiene6	Having a headache can affect the safety of the food being prepared. 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Hygiene7	Vomiting can affect the safety of the food being prepared. 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Hygiene8	Diarrhea can affect the safety of the food being prepared. 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Handwash1	At what moments do you wash your hands? 1. Before preparing meals 2. Before serving meals	I__I I__I I__I I__I	Select all that apply. Do not read options.

	3. After handling raw meat or poultry 4. After touching money 5. After using the toilet 6. After touching / taking out garbage 7. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐	
Handwash2	How long do you wash your hands for? In seconds. [enter a number]	—	Enter a number greater than zero. Enter 888 if they do not know or 999 if they refuse to answer
cleanclothes	How important is it to wear clean clothes (or clean apron) when you cook? 1. Not important 2. A little important 3. Rather important 4. Very important 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Preparea1	Describe the area where you prepare meals. 1. Separate (dedicated) room in school 2. Shared (not dedicated) room in school 3. Outside area at the school 5. Off campus 4. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Preparea2	Describe how you clean the area where you prepare meals. 1. Clean prep surfaces with soap and water 2. Clean prep surfaces with water only (no soap) 3. Sweep/wipe the floor 4. Remove trash 5. Clean utensils 6. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read options.
Preparea3	When do you clean the area where you prepare meals? 1. Before preparing each batch of meals 2. After preparing each batch of meals	☐	Select only one option

	3. Both before and after preparing each batch of meals 4. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer		
Prepara4	How important is it to maintain a clean cooking environment? 1. Not important 2. A little important 3. Rather important 4. Very important 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Foodstore1	How do you store cooked foods ? 1. In the refrigerator (below 5 °C)/cool box 2. Covered (protected from insects, rodents, pests and dust) 3. Uncovered 4. Separated from ready-to-eat foods 5. Combined with all other food items (cooked or uncooked) 6. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I I__I I__I I__I I__I	Select all that apply. Do not read options.
Foodstore2	How important is it to keep meat, poultry, fish, seafood or cooked food in a cool place, for example in a cool box or in the refrigerator? 1. Not important 2. A little important 3. Rather important 4. Very important 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Foodstore3	How difficult is it for you to keep foods in a cool box or in the refrigerator? 1. Not difficult àfoodstore9 2. A little difficultàfoodstore9 3. Rather difficult 4. Very difficult 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Foodstore3_why	Why? 1. Do not have a fridge/cool box 2. Fridge/cool box is expensive 4. Do not have electricity	I__I I__I I__I	Ask if foodstore3 = 3 or 4 Select all that apply. Do not read options.

	5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐	
Foodstore4	How much time usually passes between preparing hot food (from when it is cooked and ready) and delivering it to students? 1. Less than 30 minutes 2. Less than 1 hour 3. Between 1 and 2 hours 4. Over 2 hours 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Foodstore5	Does this time differ depending on the weather (i.e., if it is >30C)? 1. Yes 0. No 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Foodstore6	Why is it important to not keep hot food out at room temperature before serving for too long? 1. Bacteria grows well at room temperature 2. The food gets cold 3. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read options.
Foodstore7	Why should you avoid serving leftovers that were not kept in a cool place [if stored for more than 2 hours or 1 hour if it's warmer than 30C]? This does not apply to uncut fruit or breads. 1. Because food is not safe anymore 2. Food gets spoiled (germs multiply very quickly and can cause illness) 3. Higher temperatures make germs grow faster 4. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read options.
Foodstore8	How likely are children to get sick from eating food that was not stored properly? 1. Not likely 2. A little likely 3. Somewhat likely 4. Highly likely 888. Don't know	☐	Select only one option

	999. Refuse to answer		
Foodstore9	What are some signs that food is spoilt? 1. Off odors 2. Discoloration 3. Slime/stickiness 4. Unusual taste 5. The production of gas 6. Mold growth 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply
Foodstore10	Which types of food are most at risk for spoilage? 1. Cooked meat 2. Cooked meat products (gravy, stews, etc.) 3. Milk and milk products 4. Eggs and products made from raw eggs 5. Cooked fish 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply
Foodstore11	Where should raw cereals, bread, flour, and rice be stored? 1. In closed containers 2. At room temperature 3. Other 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply
Foodstore12	Where should fresh vegetables be stored? 1. In an area with a low temperature 2. In an area with low humidity 3. In a clay pot fridge 4. Other 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply
Foodstore13	Where should raw meat and fish be stored? 1. In a refrigerator 2. Other 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐	Select all that apply
Foodstore14	Where should cooked meat and fish be stored? 1. In a refrigerator 2. Salted 3. Smoked 4. Other	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply

	888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer		
Foodstore15	Where should roots and tubers be stored? 1. In a cool location 2. Other 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐	Examples of tubers are cassava, sweet potatoes, etc. Select all that apply
Contamination1	Why should you prevent raw meat, offal, poultry and seafood from touching other foods such as those that are cooked or ready to eat? 0. No reason given 1. Raw animal food often contains germs (which may be transferred to cooked and ready-to-eat foods) 2. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐	Select all that apply
For the following statements, state how much you agree or disagree with the statement:			
Contamination2	I use separate (clean) utensils to handle different types of food. 1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Contamination3	I use the same (dirty) utensils to handle raw meat / poultry and other foods (e.g., fruit or vegetables). 1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Contamination4	I prepare raw meat / poultry that has pests on it (i.e., flies, roaches, insects). 1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option

Contamination5	I clean the food prep surface (table, counter, chopping board) after cutting raw meat or poultry and before cutting fruits or vegetables. 1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Contamination6	I make sure that flies do not touch the prepared food. 1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Ready1	When cooking soups and stews, what sign shows that these are ready and safe to be served? 0. None 1. They are boiling 2. Well cooked 3. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select all that apply Don't read the options
Ready2	When cooking flesh meat, organ meat, or seafood, what sign shows that these are ready and safe to be served? 0. None 1. No blood/pink inside 2. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select all that apply Don't read the options
Ready3	How likely are children to get sick from eating undercooked meat or poultry? 1. Not likely 2. A little likely 3. Somewhat likely 4. Highly likely 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	I__I	Select only one option
Ready4	What should you do before serving children raw fruits and vegetables? 1. Wash them with clean water and soap	I__I	Select only one option

	2. Wash them with clean water only 3. Peel them 4. Other, specify_____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer		
Transport0	Do you cook the meals at the school or somewhere else? 1. At schoolàcleanup1 2. Away from school 888. Don't knowàcleanup1 999. Refuse to answeràcleanup1	|_|	Select only one option
Transport1	When do you deliver the meals to the school? 1. Before 7:30am 2. Between 7:30 and 8:30am 3. Between 8:30 and 10:00am 4. After 10:00am 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	|_|	Select only one option
Transport2	How long does it take you to deliver the meals to students (in minutes)?		Enter integer. Enter 888 if don't know Enter 999 if refuse to answer
Cleanup1	After you have prepared a school meal, kitchen surfaces, pots, pans, plates and utensils are dirty. Can you describe how you clean them usually? 1. Scrape excess food into rubbish bin 2. Wash with clean or hot water 3. Wash with detergent 4. Other, specify_____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	|_| |_| |_| |_|	Select all that apply. Do not read options.
Water1	Where do you get water for cooking? 1. Pond, lake 2. Dam 3. Stream/river 4. Unprotected spring 5. Protected spring 6. Well 7. Borehole 8. Water tank 9. Roof catchment 11. Hand/foot pump 10. Other, specify_____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	|_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_| |_|	Select all that apply. Do not read options.

Water2	Who fetches/provides the water? 1. Women 2. Men 3. Girls 4. Boys 5. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read options.
Water3	Where do you get water for children's beverages (e.g., for powdered drinks)? 1. Pond, lake 2. Dam 3. Stream/river 4. Unprotected spring 5. Protected spring 6. Well 7. Borehole 8. Water tank 9. Roof catchment 11. Hand/foot pump 10. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read options.
Water4	How important is it to boil or filter water that will be used for drinking? 1. Not important 2. A little important 3. Somewhat important 4. Highly important 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Water5	Why is it important to boil or filter water that will be used for drinking? 1. Kills germs, microorganisms 2. Makes water safe to drink 3. Reduces chance of illness 4. Gives water better taste 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply. Do not read options.
Water6	How likely are children to get sick from drinking unboiled or unfiltered water? 1. Not likely 2. A little likely 3. Somewhat likely 4. Highly likely 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option

Water7	How long does water need to be boiled to ensure it is safe? 1. Less than 1 minute 2. Between 1 and 3 minutes 3. 3 minutes 4. More than 3 minutes 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Foodpoison1	What are common symptoms of food poisoning? 1. Abdominal pain 2. Diarrhea 3. Vomiting 4. Fever 5. Dizziness 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply
Foodpoison2	How do you treat a student with food poisoning? 1. Tell them to stop eating solid foods while nauseous 2. Encourage them to drink fluids/hydrate 3. Give them oral rehydration solution (ORS) 4. Other, specify 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Select all that apply
Attitude1	Cooks are responsible for preventing food poisoning or foodborne illness. 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Attitude2	Servers are responsible for preventing food poisoning or foodborne illness. 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option
Aware1	Has anyone ever come to supervise you as you prepare school meals? 1. Yes	☐	Select only one option

	0. No àAware3 888. Don't know àAware3 999. Refuse to answeràAware3		
Aware2	If yes, who has supervised you? 1. Public health inspector 2. Ministry official 3. School principal or head teacher 4. Parent of students 5. LEARN staff 6. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ask if Aware1 = 1 Select all that apply
Aware3	How often do they come to supervise you? 1. Daily 2. About once a week 3. About once a month 4. Every 3 months 5. Every 6 months 6. Once a year 7. Less than once a year 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Ask if Aware1 = 1 Select only one option
Aware4	When somebody comes to supervise you do they arrange it with you or is it a random drop in? 1. Arranged supervision 2. Random drop in 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Select only one option Ask if Aware1 = 1
Info1	Have you ever received information about food safety techniques? 1. Yes 0. No àinfo4 888. Don't know àinfo4 999. Refuse to answer àinfo4	☐	Select only one option
Info2	When was the last time you received food safety information? 1. This week 2. Last week 3. This month 4. Within past 6 months 5. Within the past year 6. Over a year ago 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Ask if info1 = 1 Select only one option
Info3	Who did you receive food safety information from?	☐ ☐	Select all that apply Ask if info1=1

	1. Public health inspector 2. Ministry official 3. School principal or head teacher 4. Parents of students 5. Save the Children/LEARN Staff 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐	
Info4	Did you ever attend a training on food safety? 1. Yes 0. No àcult1 888. Don't know àcult1 999. Refuse to answer àcult1	☐	Select only one option
Info5	When was the last time you attended one? 1. In past week 2. In past month 3. In past 6 months 4. In past year 5. Over a year ago 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Ask if info4 = Yes Select only one option
Info6	Where did you receive information about food safety? 1. School Meal Provider training 2. Public health inspectors 3. Other School Meal Providers 4. Ministry of Health (MoH) materials 5. Ministry of Education (MoE) materials 6. Save the Children/LEARN staff 7. Other, specify _____ 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ask if info4 = 1 Select all that apply. Do not read options.
Info7	Did you have any difficulty understanding the content or training materials? 1. No difficulty 2. A little difficulty 3. Some difficulty 4. A lot of difficulty 888. Don't know 999. Refuse to answer	☐	Ask if info4 = 1 Select only one option

Module 4: Cultural appropriateness of school meals

Thank you! Now, I would like to ask you some questions about the locally procured food for school meals.

cult1	How similar is the school meal you prepare to what children usually eat at home? 4. Not similar at all 5. Quite similar 6. Exactly identical 888. Don't know	|_|	*Select only one option
cult2	Do you serve different types of foods in your school meals? 2. No 3. Yes 888. Don't know	|_|	*Select only one option
Powergari	Do you ever serve Power Gari at this school? 2. Noàcult6 3. Yes 888. Don't knowàcult6	|_|	*Select only one option
Cult3	How long does it take to prepare the power gari? 1. Less than 1 hour 2. About 1 hour 3. About 1.5 – 2 hours 4. More than 2 hours 888. Don't know	|_|	*Select only one option * Only ask if powergari = Yes
Cult4a	How many times per week do you currently serve Power Gari? 1. 1 time per week 2. 2 times per week 3. 3 times per week 4. 4 times per week 5. 5 times per week 888. Don't know	|_|	*Select only one option * Only ask if powergari = Yes
Cult4b	How many times would you like to serve Power Gari per week? 1. 1 time per week 2. 2 times per week 3. 3 times per week 4. 4 times per week 5. 5 times per week 888. Don't know	|_|	*Select only one option * Only ask if powergari = Yes
Cult5	Has including Power Gari in school meals improved the variety of foods children eat at school? 3. Yes 4. No	|_|	*Select only one option * Only ask if powergari = Yes

	888. Don't know		
Cult6	How often did food for school meals from the United States arrive on time during the past school year? 5. None of the deliveries 6. Less than half of the deliveries 7. More than half of the deliveries 8. All the deliveries 888. Don't know/Refuse to answer	I__I	* Select only one option
Cult7	How often did the Power Gari for school meals arrive on time during the past school year? 5. None of the deliveries 6. Less than half of the deliveries 7. More than half of the deliveries 8. All the deliveries 888. Don't know/Refuse to answer	I__I	* Select only one option * Only ask if powergari = Yes
Cult8	In terms of timeliness, is Power Gari delivered faster or slower than US-donated food? 1. Power Gari is delivered faster 2. Power Gari is delivered approximately the same time 3. Power Gari is delivered slower 888. Don't know	I__I	*Select only one option * Only ask if powergari = Yes

School Observations



School Assessment for USDA FOOD FOR EDUCATION (LEARN II) IN LIBERIA

Start time	
End time	
Date	

County			
District			
School name			
gps	GPS coordinates		

Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
Enrollment Information			
Enrollment	Please see the principal for the enrollment list for 2023-2024		
enrollABCb	What is the number of boys enrolled in ABC?		*Use registration lists to populate
enrollABCg	What is the number of girls enrolled in ABC?		*Use registration lists to populate
enrollKGb	What is the number of boys enrolled in KG?		*Use registration lists to populate
enrollKGg	What is the number of girls enrolled in KG?		*Use registration lists to populate
enroll1b	What is the number of boys enrolled in 1st grade?		*Use registration lists to populate
enroll1g	What is the number of girls enrolled in 1st grade?		*Use registration lists to populate
enroll2b	What is the number of boys enrolled in 2nd grade?		*Use registration lists to populate
enroll2g	What is the number of girls enrolled in 2nd grade?		*Use registration lists to populate
enroll3b	What is the number of boys enrolled in 3rd grade?		*Use registration lists to populate
enroll3g	What is the number of girls enrolled in 3rd grade?		*Use registration lists to populate
enroll4b	What is the number of boys enrolled in 4th grade?		*Use registration lists to populate
enroll4g	What is the number of girls enrolled in 4th grade?		*Use registration lists to populate

Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
enroll5b	What is the number of boys enrolled in 5th grade?		*Use registration lists to populate
enroll5g	What is the number of girls enrolled in 5th grade?		*Use registration lists to populate
enroll6b	What is the number of boys enrolled in 6th grade?		*Use attendance lists to populate
enroll6g	What is the number of girls enrolled in 6th grade?		*Use registration lists to populate
Note	Insert your comment if any, especially if the enrollment list is not available		
grade6_comp_b	Number of boys successfully completing Grade 6 last year (2022-2023)		
grade6_comp_g	Number of girls successfully completing Grade 6 last year (2022-2023)		
Dropout information for students in 2021-2022			
dropout_abc_b_19	Number of boys who dropped out of ABC during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_abc_g_19	Number of girls who dropped out of ABC during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_kg_b_19	Number of boys who dropped out of KG during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_kg_g_19	Number of girls who dropped out of KG during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g1_b_19	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g1_g_19	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g2_b_19	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 2 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g2_g_19	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		

Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
dropout_g3_b_19	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 3 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g3_g_19	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g4_b_19	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 4 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g4_g_19	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g5_b_19	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 5 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g5_g_19	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g6_b_19	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 6 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
dropout_g6_g_19	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2021-2022)		
Note	Insert your comment if any, especially if the dropout list is not available		
Dropout information for Teachers for 2021-2022 school year			
dropout_abc_t	Did the teacher in ABC drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
dropout_g1_t	Did the teacher in Grade 1 drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
dropout_g2_t	Did the teacher in Grade 2 drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
dropout_g3_t	Did the teacher in Grade 3 drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
dropout_g4_t	Did the teacher in Grade 4 drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
dropout_g5_t	Did the teacher in Grade 5 drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
Dropout information for students in 2022-2023			

Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
dropout_abc_b	Number of boys who dropped out of ABC during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_abc_g	Number of girls who dropped out of ABC during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_kg_b	Number of boys who dropped out of KG during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_kg_g	Number of girls who dropped out of KG during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g1_b	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g1_g	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g2_b	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 2 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g2_g	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g3_b	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 3 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g3_g	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g4_b	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 4 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g4_g	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		

Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
dropout_g5_b	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 5 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g5_g	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g6_b	Number of boys who dropped out of Grade 6 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
dropout_g6_g	Number of girls who dropped out of Grade 1 during the last academic year (2022-2023)		
Note	Insert your comment if any, especially if the dropout list is not available		
Dropout information for Teachers in 2022-2023 school year			
dropout_abc_t_20	Did the teacher in ABC drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
dropout_g1_t_20	Did the teacher in Grade 1 drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
dropout_g2_t_20	Did the teacher in Grade 2 drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
dropout_g3_t_20	Did the teacher in Grade 3 drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
dropout_g4_t_20	Did the teacher in Grade 4 drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
dropout_g5_t_20	Did the teacher in Grade 5 drop-out?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
Attendance Information			
Attendance	Please ask the Principal first if they have the attendance if not talk to the teacher in each grade		
attend1b	How many boys in 1st grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
attend1g	How many girls in 1st grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
attend2b	How many boys in 2nd grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
attend2g	How many girls in 2nd grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate

Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
attend3b	How many boys in 3rd grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
attend3g	How many girls in 3rd grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
attend4b	How many boys in 4th grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
attend4g	How many girls in 4th grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
attend5b	How many boys in 5th grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
attend5g	How many girls in 5th grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
attend6b	How many boys in 6th grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
attend6g	How many girls in 6th grade attended school last Thursday?		*Use attendance lists to populate
Note	Insert your comment if any, especially if the attendance list is not available		
Additional Interventions			
intervention1	Are there other similar (education, health, or nutrition) programs operating in this school?	0. No → Enrollment 1. Yes	*Select only one option

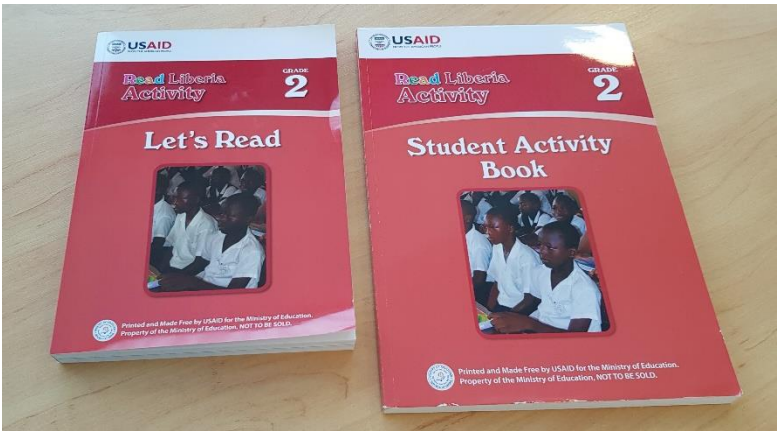
Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
Intervention3	Please list the names of the other interventions and the year the program started in this school	Name1_____ Year1_____ Name2_____ Year2_____ Name3_____ Year3_____ Name4_____ Year4_____ Name5_____ Year5_____ Name6_____ Year6_____ Name7_____ Year7_____	*Add responses based on intervention2
Note	Insert your note if there are more programs or there are any other important information regarding these programs		
OBSERVATIONS			
structure	Is this school a permanent or temporary structure?	1. Permanent 2. Temporary	*Select only one option
type	What type of structure is the school?	1. Concrete/block 2. Mud 3. Mat 4. Open air 5. Other (specify)	*Select only one option
clean1	Are the school grounds free from standing water?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
Clean2	Are the school grounds free from trash and feces?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
Clean3	Are the school grounds free from sharp objects?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
Clean4	Is the grass within the school grounds kept short?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
expansion1	Has there been any expansion of existing buildings in the past year (since March, 2023)?	0. No →expansion2 1. Yes	*Select only one option * Confirm the expansion with the principal
expansion1b	Is this school a permanent or temporary structure?	1. Permanent 2. Temporary	*Select only one option

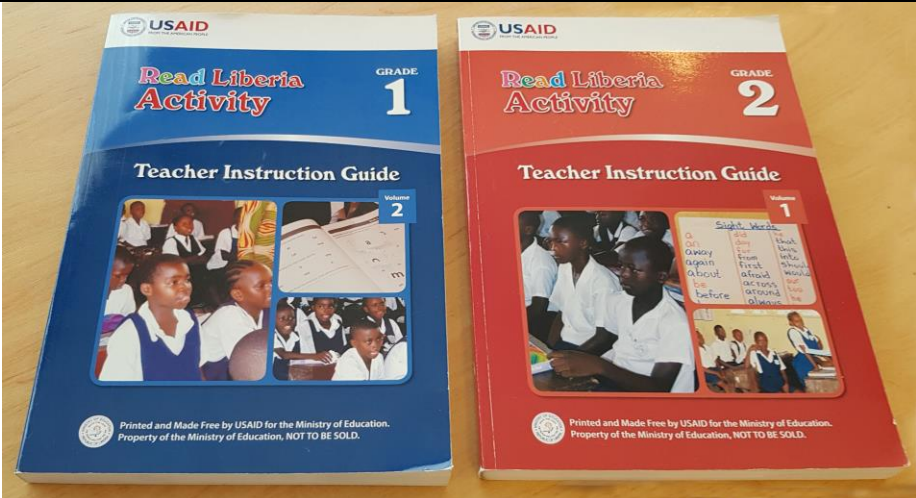
Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
expansion1c	What type of structure is the school?	1. Concrete/block 2. Mud 3. Mat 4. Open air 5. Other (specify)	*Select only one option
Expansion2	Has there been any addition of new buildings in the past year (since March, 2023)	0. No →toilet1 1. Yes	*Select only one option *Confirm the addition with the principal
expansion2b	Is this school a permanent or temporary structure?	1. Permanent 2. Temporary	*Select only one option
expansion2c	What type of structure is the school?	1. Concrete/block 2. Mud 3. Mat 4. Open air 5. Other (specify)	*Select only one option
Sanitation Information			
toilet1	How many toilets are there? toilet2-toilet5 is repeated for each toilet in school (up to 6 toilets)	.....	* Record the number of toilets between 0 and 10 *If there are more than 10 toilets in the school just make a note at the end in the comment box
toilet2-toilet5 has to be repeated for each toilet in school (up to 6 toilets)			
toilet2	Who is this toilet for?	1. Girls 2. Boys 3. Not designated by gender	*Select only one option
toilet3	What type of toilet is this?	1. Flush or pour-flush 2. Pit latrine with slab 3. Composting toilet 4. Pit latrine (without slab) 5. Hanging latrine 6. Bucket latrine 7. Other (Describe...)	*Select only one option

Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
toilet6	How would you rate the cleanliness of the inside of the latrine?	1. Very clean 2. Clean 3. Dirty 4. Very Dirty	*Select only one option *Very clean=Completely free from feces outside the pit, completely free from used paper outside the pit/bin, recently washed Clean= Mostly free from feces outside the pit, mostly free from used paper outside the pit/bin, recently washed Dirty=Some feces outside the pit, some used paper outside the pit/bin, not recently washed Very dirty=Much feces outside the pit, much used paper outside the pit/bin, not recently washed"
toilet4	Is the toilet accessible?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option *Doors are unlocked or key is available
toilet5	Is the toilet private?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option *Walls that protect the user from view -- may be a sheet of plastic in the form of an L that allows someone to walk in and not be seen
toilet 7	Are there locks to close the toilets from the inside when in use and outside when not in use?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option *The locks can be a rope or a metal lock that does not allow anyone to walk in.
Note	Insert your comment if any, especially if the number of toilets are more than 10		
Hygiene Information			

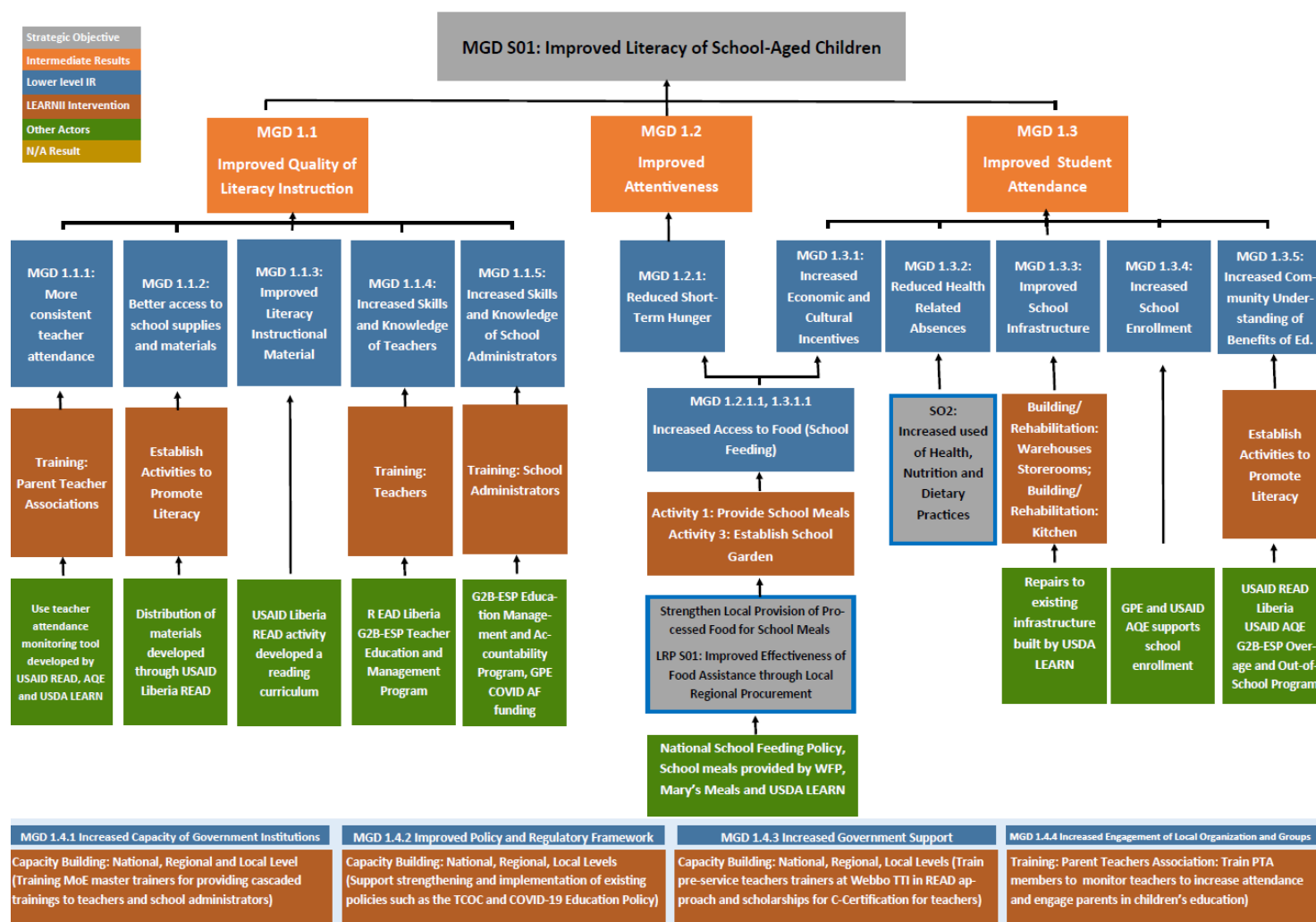
Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
			
washstation1	Is there a handwashing station available near the toilets? (see the picture above for an example of what a handwashing station looks like)	0. No --> go to washstation4 1. Yes	*Select only one option
washstation1_b	Does this handwashing station have water to wash hands?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
washstation2	Is this wash station within 10 paces of a toilet?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
washstation3	Is there soap at this wash station?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option *only soap is yes -- ash or mud is no
Washstation4	Is there a wash station before entering the school?	0. No →water1 1. Yes	*Select only one option
Washstation5	Does this handwashing station have water to wash hands?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
Washstation6	Is there soap at this wash station	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option *only soap is yes -- ash or mud is no

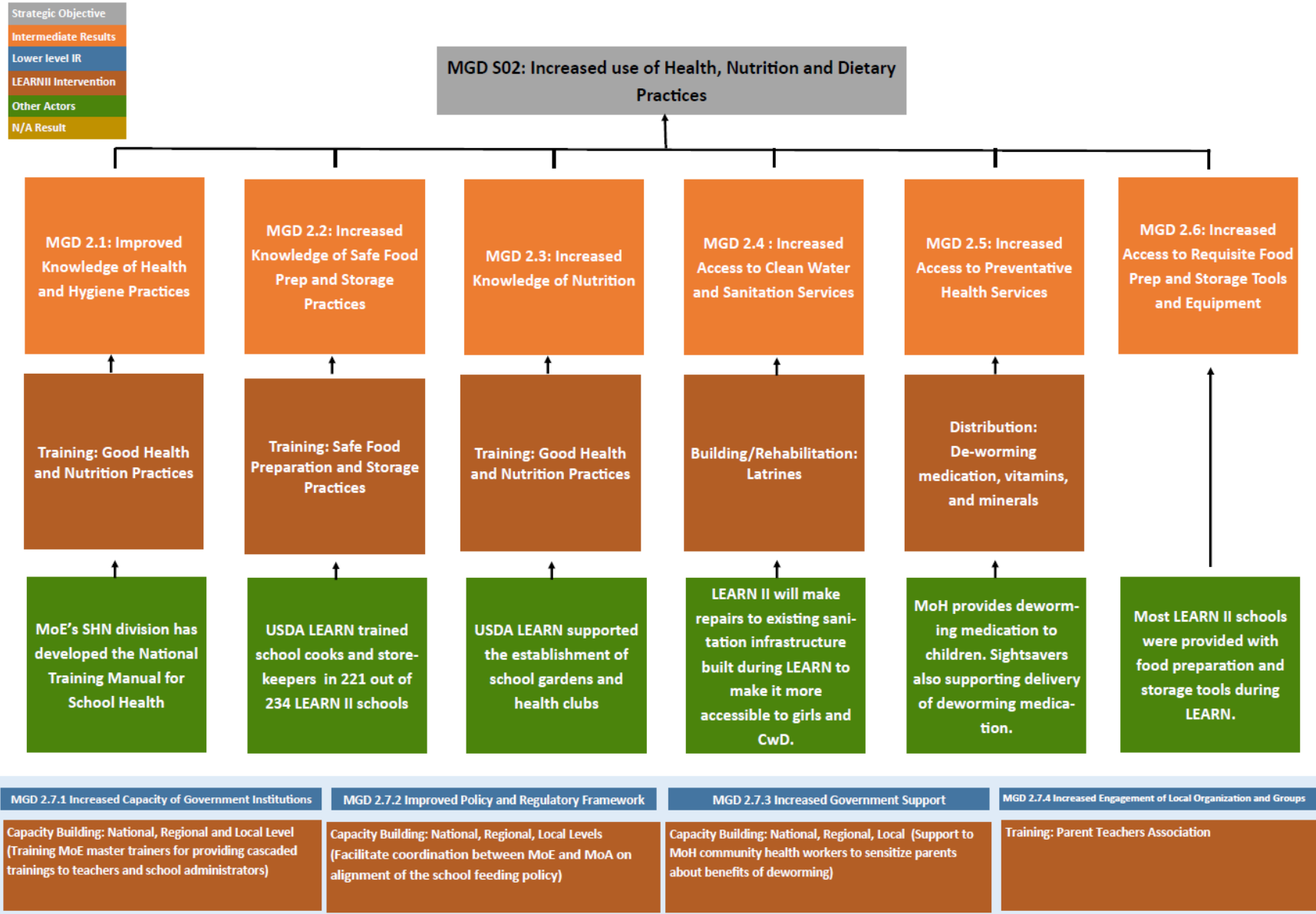
Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
water1	Is there water available for drinking?	0. No 1. Yes, but not treated (untreated surface water, tanker trucks) 2. Yes, treated water (bottled, chlorine, boiled, Water Guard)	*Select only one option
Canteen Information			
canteen1	Is there a place for food preparation at this school?	0. No --> go to library 1. Yes	*Select only one option
canteen1_b	Is the canteen functional?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
Canteen1_c	Is the canteen clean and/or disinfected?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
canteen2	Do you see the following related to food preparation?	1. Food storeroom with lock 2. Food on pallets 3. Food securely closed in bags 4. Place for cook to wash hands 5. Place for cook to wash vegetables 6. Cooked food protected from flies 7. Leftover food stored at school	*Check all that apply
canteen3	How many cooking stations are open fire?	0. 0 1. 1 2. 2 3. 3 4. more than 3	*Select only one option
canteen4	How many cooking stations are energy saving stoves?	0. 0 1. 1 2. 2 3. 3 4. more than 3	*Select only one option

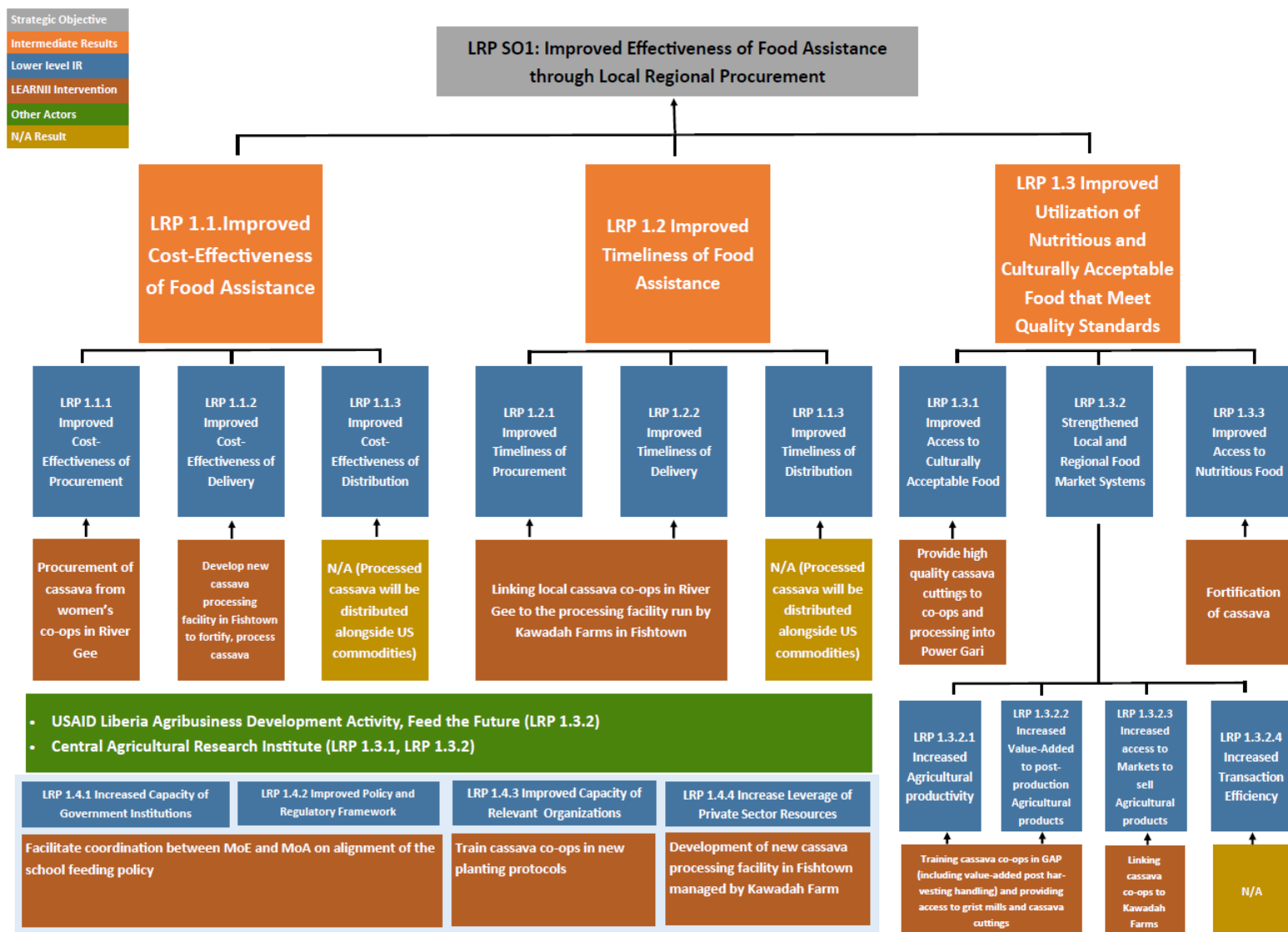
Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
canteen5	Does the kitchen have a table for the stocking of clean dishes, spoons, and cooking utensils?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option
Canteen6	Do students share the same cups and utensils for eating and drinking without adequate washing?	0. No 1. Yes 888. Not lunch time	*Select only one option *ONLY APPLICABLE IF THE OBSERVATION IS BEING CONDUCTED DURING LUNCH TIME
Notes	Assessor comments		
Learning material in class			
For the following observations, ask permission from the principal to visit the classroom in Grade 1 and 2 and politely explain to the teachers that you want to check the availability of the learning materials in their classroom			
			
lets_read_g1	Are there Grade 1 “Let’s Read” books available in the classroom?	0. No 1. Yes	*They should be located in plastic trunks/containers *Remember the Let’s read book is blue for Grade 1 and red for Grade 2
lets_read_g2	Are there Grade 2 “Let’s Read” books available in the classroom?	0. No 1. Yes	*They should be located in plastic trunks/containers *Remember the Let’s read book is blue for Grade 1 and red for Grade 2
activity_book_g1	Is there a Grade 1 student activity book for each student in the classroom?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option *Remember the student activity book is blue for Grade 1 and red for Grade 2

Variable	Item	Response Options	Instructions
activity_book_g2	Is there a Grade 2 student activity book for each student in the classroom?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option *Remember the student activity book is blue for Grade 1 and red for Grade 2
			
instruct_guide_g1	Is there a Grade 1 teacher instructional guide in the classroom?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option *Remember the instructional book is blue for Grade 1 and red for Grade 2
instruct_guide_g2	Is there a Grade 2 teacher instructional guide in the classroom?	0. No 1. Yes	*Select only one option *Remember the instructional book is blue for Grade 1 and red for Grade 2
library_note	Insert any comments about the library, if any		
Notes	Assessor comments		

Appendix F. Results Framework







1. Narrative Articulation of the Project Theory of Change

LEARN II is designed around the theory that *if* children access the educational and nutritional resources needed for their well-being and learning; *if* parents are empowered to support children's learning and hold schools and teachers accountable; *if* teachers are motivated, trained, and supported to help all children learn; *if* schools create safe, nurturing environments with adequate hygiene and sanitation facilities and practices for both girls and boys; *if* governments, communities, and private sector stakeholders are more engaged in feeding, educating, and protecting all boys and girls, including the most vulnerable; and *if* food assistance is cost-effective, timely and culturally acceptable and nutritious; *then* communities will see improved literacy of school-age children and increased use of health, nutrition, and dietary practices.

LEARN II's results framework responds to issues raised in the strategic analysis through the following education, nutrition, and health strategies:

SO1: Improved Literacy of School Aged Children

1.1 Improved Quality of Literacy Instruction

- **1.1.1 More Consistent Teacher Attendance:** LEARN II will strengthen PTA members' capacity to monitor teacher attendance and recognize high performing teachers. This will promote increased accountability amongst teachers to attend school and classes regularly.
- **1.1.3 Better Access to School Supplies and Materials:** To improve literacy instruction, LEARN II will supply schools with USAID Read Liberia materials, place a book bank in 57 schools and provide the most vulnerable children in each school with learner kits³⁰.
- **1.1.4 Increased Skills and Knowledge of Teachers:** In line with the USAID Reading Matters Framework, LEARN II will support MoE master trainers to train teachers on the Read Liberia approach and child-centered positive pedagogy to improve the quality of literacy instruction.
- **1.1.5 Increased Skills and Knowledge of School Administrators:** LEARN II will train school principals on school leadership, coaching and child-centered positive pedagogy and to support teachers in delivering effective literacy instruction and establishing safe learning environments.

³⁰ Multiple evaluations of early grade reading programs show that improved instructional materials and teacher training have improved children's literacy outcomes: "Graham, Jimmy; Kelly, Sean. 2018. How Effective Are Early Grade Reading Interventions?: A Review of the Evidence. World Bank Working Paper 8292.

1.2 Improved Attentiveness

- **1.2.1 Reduced Short Term Hunger/1.3.1 Increased Economic and Cultural Incentives (or Decreased Disincentives):** Through a combination of US food commodities, locally procured cassava (LRP SO1), and school garden produce, LEARN II will feed 85,129 children. These meals will meet children's nutrition needs, reduce short-term hunger, improving attentiveness and thereby, improve children's literacy outcomes.³¹

1.3 Improved Attendance

- **1.3.2 Reduced Health-Related Absences:** LEARN II will reduce health-related absences by increasing the use of good health, nutrition, and dietary practices (SO2).
- **1.3.3 Improved School Infrastructure:** LEARN II will support PTAs in managing minor repairs and rehabilitation of existing school infrastructure and support 13 new schools in procuring building materials to build or rehabilitate school infrastructure.
- **1.3.5 Increased Community Understanding of Benefits of Education:** LEARN II will broadcast content through radio to sensitize communities about the importance of education and support PTAs in organizing community reading events and engaging parents in children's learning.

SO2: Increased Use of Health, Nutrition and Dietary Practices

- **2.1 Increased Knowledge of Health and Hygiene Practices:** LEARN II will train MoE officials and ESHN mobilizers on MoE's National Training Manual for School Health, who will further train teachers in managing health clubs and develop COVID-19 IEC materials.
- **2.2 Increased Knowledge of Safe Food Preparation and Storage Practices:** LEARN II will train kitchen staff in safe food storage and preparation to increase use of nutrition practices.
- **2.3 Increased Knowledge of Nutrition:** LEARN II will support health club members in learning about food groups, components of a balanced diet and meeting one's nutritional needs.
- **2.5 Increased Access to Preventative Health Service:** LEARN II will increase children's access to deworming medication by providing the food (school meals) necessary for administering medication, supporting MoHSW health workers and organizing the Annual Deworming Partners meeting.³²

³¹ Evidence shows that school feeding is a successful strategy for improving early grade reading as highlighted in 'How effective are food for education programs? A critical assessment of the evidence from developing countries / Sarah W. Adelman, Daniel O. Gilligan, and Kim Lehrer. IFPRI Policy Review 9'

³² Evidence shows that deworming medication has a positive impact on school attendance. Miguel, Edward, and Michael Kremer. 2004. "Worms: Identifying Impacts on Education and Health in the Presence of Treatment Externalities." *Econometrica* 72(1): 159-217.

LRP SO1: Improved Effectiveness of Food Assistance through Local and Regional Procurement

1.1 Improved Cost-Effectiveness of Food Assistance

- ***1.1.1 Improved Cost-Effectiveness of Procurement:*** LEARN II will procure fortified cassava powder (Power Gari) from a local cassava processor (Kawadah Farms) in River Gee saving shipping and logistics costs required for US commodities.
- ***1.1.2 Improved Cost-Effectiveness of Delivery:*** Kawadah Farms will develop a new cassava processing facility in Fishtown to produce Power Gari. Local procurement and the short distance between producers, processing facility, and schools make the delivery cost-effective.

1.2 Improved Timeliness of Food Assistance

- ***1.2.1 Improved Timeliness of Procurement & 1.2.2 Improved Timeliness of Delivery:*** LEARN II will link cassava cooperatives to a local processing facility that will provide fortified cassava powder to schools, ensuring that cassava cooperatives have a predictable and regular demand for their produce. This will reduce the risk of unexpected delays in commodity supply.

1.3 Improved Utilization of Nutritious and Culturally Acceptable Food that Meet Quality Standards

- ***1.3.1 Improved Access to Culturally Acceptable Food:*** The processing facility will fortify cassava procured from cassava cooperatives and process it into Power Gari. As a result, LEARN II will improve school's access to nutritious and culturally acceptable commodities.
- ***1.3.2 Strengthened Local and Regional Food Market Systems***
 - 1.3.2.1 Increased Agricultural Productivity/ 1.3.2.2 Increased Value Added to Post-Production Agricultural Products: LEARN II will train cassava cooperative members in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) (including value-added post-harvest handling). In addition, they will also be provided with high quality cassava cuttings and access to gristmills.
 - 1.3.2.3 Increased Access to Markets to Sell Agricultural Products: LEARN II will link cassava cooperatives with Kawadah Farms for processing cassava into Power Gari to be supplied to schools, creating an expanded and stable market for growers to sell their produce.
- ***1.3.3 Improved Access to Nutritious Food:*** Kawadah Farms will fortify and process cassava into Power Gari to be supplied to 85 schools. The development of the processing facility will improve children's access to a fortified and more nutritious cassava.

Foundational Results

- **MGD & LRP 1.4.1/ MGD 2.7.1 Increased Capacity of Government Institutions:** LEARN II will build the capacity of MoE trainers, CEOs/DEOs, and MoHSW officers to coach school principals and teachers to support children's learning, health and nutrition through local systems.
- **MGD 1.4.2/ 2.7.2/ LRP 1.4.2 Improved Policy and Regulatory Framework:** LEARN II will support the strengthening and implementation of GoL policies such as the Teacher's Code of Conduct and the Girls', Inclusive, and COVID Education Policies. Government pre-service teacher trainers at Webbo TTI will be trained in the Read Liberia approach and 50 teachers will get scholarships for C-Certification. LEARN II will also support coordination between the MoE and MoA to include LRP school feeding models in the School Feeding Policy.
- **MGD 1.4.3/ 2.7.3 Increased Government Support & LRP 1.4.3 Improved Capacity of Relevant Organization:** LEARN II will work with MoA to improve cassava producers' productivity by training them in GAP and providing them with high quality cassava cuttings and gristmills.
- **MGD 1.4.4/ 2.7.4 Increased Engagement of Local Organizations and Groups & LRP 1.4.4 Increased- Leverage of Private-Sector Resources:** LEARN II will strengthen PTAs to monitor teacher attendance and form VSLAs, and leverage Kawadah Farm's experience in cassava processing.

Critical Assumptions

- School meals are delivered in a timely manner. LRP will ensure a continued supply of meals in the event of a delayed delivery of U.S. commodities.
- Key stakeholders view LEARN II and USDA McGovern-Dole as non-controversial. Political changes in the program areas, or Liberia, will not adversely impact program operations.
- The spread of COVID-19 decreases in the coming months and schools remain open. If schools shut down, all activities will be implemented such that COVID-19 guidelines are followed.
- Commodities can move throughout the country without unexpected delay due to weather-related disruptions. Whenever possible, commodities will be transported during the dry season.
- Project activities to engage PTAs and parents are sufficient to maintain continued interest in LEARN II. LEARN II is working with several stakeholders to foster mutual accountability.

Explanation of non-linked results:

- **1.1.3 Improved Literacy Instruction Materials & 1.3.5 Increased School Enrollment:** LEARN II will not directly address these results since other partners such as USAID Read Liberia (1.1.3), GPE³³ (1.3.5), and USAID AQE (1.3.5) have made significant investments in achieving them.
- **2.6 Increased Access to Requisite Food Prep and Storage Tool and Equipment:** LEARN II provide utensils in 13 school that were not covered by LEARN but not make additional investment in this area.
- **LRP 1.1.3 Improved Cost-Effectiveness of Distribution & LRP 1.2.3 Improved Timeliness of Distribution & LRP 1.3.2.4 Increased Transaction Efficiency:** To distribute US and LRP commodities, LEARN II will leverage the same distribution channels as those already established under LEARN for U.S. commodities. Thus, LEARN II will not contribute to them.

³³ GPE through its [COVID-19 accelerated funds](#) will invest in student enrollment and retention in Liberia.

Appendix G. Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference Baseline, Midline, Endline Evaluation Liberia Empowerment through Attendance, Reading, and Nutrition II (LEARN II) Program

Donor: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Start Date: October 1, 2021
End Date: September 30, 2026

I. Introduction

Save the Children's work leading the USDA Liberia Empowerment Through Attendance, Reading, and Nutrition (LEARN) program, with partner Mercy Corps, has achieved significant successes in school feeding, literacy, school health and nutrition, and child health over the past four years. Save the Children will build on that success through a five-year, \$25 million second phase, LEARN II, focused on reinforcing local capacity at every level to address Government of Liberia (GoL) and USDA objectives to provide nutritious school feeding and quality literacy education in a healthy, supportive environment. LEARN II will lead 265,830 direct beneficiaries along a sustainable path toward graduation, targeting 85,129 pre-primary and primary school children in 234 schools, along with educators, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), government, the private sector, and communities.

LEARN II will build on LEARN's one-team approach, with Save the Children leading implementation in Grand Gedeh and River Gee and Mercy Corps leading implementation in Grand Bassa and River Cess, and technical support coming from both organizations. Kawadah Farms will serve as a partner on a new local and regional procurement activity in which women-led farming cooperatives will be trained in improved techniques for cassava production and linked to local partner Kawadah Farms, that will purchase, process, and fortify their products into cassava-based Power Gari for preparing nutritious porridge. LEARN II schools in the four target counties are grouped into six cohorts according to both their starting point from LEARN participation and their programming pathway envisaged under LEARN II, to build capacity at all 234 target schools. As in the LEARN project, LEARN II will implement a different package of activities depending on the target county. See **Annex A** and **Annex B** for further details.

Figure 1: LEARN & LEARN II Activities



To achieve the program's primary objective of carrying out school feeding to reduce hunger and improve literacy and primary education, LEARN II will implement 14 activities to achieve complementary and often mutually reinforcing results in the areas of school feeding, school health and nutrition (SHN), literacy, and capacity building (see **Figure 1**).

1. *Provide School Meals* – Provide 5,030 MTs of U.S. commodities and 715 MTs of locally procured commodities to 234 schools in 4 counties. Mentor Food Management Committees (FMCs) and train county and district education officers (CEOs and DEOs).
2. *Strengthen Local Provision of Food for School Meals* – Develop a new cassava processing and fortification facility in River Gee through public-private partnership, strengthening women's cooperatives for sustainable supply and schools' capacities to finance demand.
3. *Establish School Gardens* – Train teachers and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) to grow nutritious local produce in 95 school gardens, to augment U.S. donated and local and regional procurement (LRP) commodities as part of Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) priority.
4. *Training: Food Preparation and Storage Practices* – Train, mentor, and encourage cooks to use safe food storage and preparation techniques.
5. *Building/Rehabilitation: Kitchens and Storerooms* – Ensure adequate kitchens and storerooms are constructed to include 13 additional schools and encourage all school PTAs to make infrastructure repairs and upgrades to ensure minimum quality standards.
6. *Training: Good Health and Nutrition Practices* – Support rollout of the MoE's National Training Manual for School Health with a Training of Trainers (ToT) supporting School Health Club formation to 168 schools not trained in LEARN, also developing COVID-19 outreach materials and celebrating international days to promote healthy practices.
7. *Distribution: De-worming Medication, Vitamins, and Minerals* – Facilitate coordination, mobilization, and data collection for the government's annual de-worming campaign.
8. *Building/Rehabilitation: Latrines, Wells, and Water Stations/Systems* – Construct latrines and water stations at 13 newly targeted schools. Support all PTAs and communities to

make minor repairs on water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure, ensuring access for children with disabilities and separate latrines for female and male students.

9. *Establish Activities to Promote Literacy* – Continue USAID Read Liberia program in 57 LEARN schools and roll out to the remaining 174 target schools, including providing Read Liberia materials; complementary in-class, extracurricular, family, and radio-based literacy support through PTA-led reading clubs and events and supplies for the most vulnerable.
10. *Training: Teachers* – Facilitate master trainers to train grade 1 and 2 teachers from 174 LEARN II schools and refresh teachers from 57 target schools in the Read Liberia approach for teaching reading effectively (including to students with disabilities), as well as modules supporting MoE policies such as the Teacher Code of Conduct and Child-Centered Positive Pedagogy including child safeguarding, child rights, gender equality, inclusive education, positive discipline, and classroom management.
11. *Training: School Administrators* – Train school principals in the same content as teachers, as well as in coaching and leadership to build a positive school culture.
12. *Training: Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs)* – Train PTAs on their roles under MoE policy, emphasizing teacher accountability, literacy, and action and resource planning.
13. *Raising Awareness on the Importance of Education* – Participate in finalization of MoE policies and promotion through a radio-based social and behavior change (SBC) strategy.
14. *Capacity Building: Local, Regional, and National Levels* – Facilitate MoE master trainers to train teacher trainers at the government's Webbo Teacher Training Institute (TTI) for the Southeast and local MoE staff in the USAID Read Liberia approach, distance learning, student-centered teaching, and MoE policies. Build qualifications and capacity of female teachers and administrators through scholarships and practical experiences.

II. Scope of Work for Evaluator

Save the Children is seeking a consultant or research consulting firm to lead its external evaluation process from baseline to endline. Given the follow-on nature of LEARN II, the endline for LEARN will be conducted at the same time and by the same evaluator as the baseline for LEARN II. The midterm and final evaluation contracts will be dependent on satisfactory completion of the baseline. The midterm and final evaluations will be re-competed if the baseline does not meet quality standards. The methodology and sampling detailed below may require revision based on the results of the baseline and suggestions from the consulting entity.

Evaluation Approach and Methodologies

LEARN II will be evaluated through performance evaluation and an impact evaluation. For LEARN II's performance evaluation baseline study in Year 1, the evaluation team will use a mixed-methods approach and will replicate the approach for the midterm and final evaluations in Year 3 and Year 5, respectively. The evaluation team will use quantitative and qualitative methods with repeated cross-sections of project stakeholders to establish baseline values and track progress for targeted performance indicators throughout the life of the project. Additionally, a subset of schools in the four counties will serve as the site for a quasi-experimental impact evaluation to assess the impact of LRP and school gardens on children's literacy, health, and nutrition outcomes; and cost-effectiveness, timeliness, and perceived cultural appropriateness of the food assistance. The impact evaluation baseline and final study will take place alongside the performance evaluation studies.

Tools

The evaluation will include the following quantitative data collection tools to establish baseline indicator values and measure outcomes at the midterm and final evaluation stages:

- **Literacy Boost Reading Assessment of students in grade 2 in all counties.** The evaluation team will administer a one-on-one oral emergent literacy assessment to a sample of children. The assessment will assess students on five competencies: letter awareness, single word recognition, reading fluency and accuracy, and a set of comprehension questions linked to the passage. The team will use the same assessment used in LEARN. This tool will capture information about students' home and school learning environment.
- **School-Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) questionnaire administered to** children to assess their knowledge of SRGBV behaviors, perceived gender norms and safety in school, awareness of the teachers' code of conduct, and reporting mechanisms.
- **A health and nutrition assessment of students in grades 2 and 6 in all counties.** The project will assess all sampled students on age, individual food intake recall, and incidence of diarrheal disease recall. A questionnaire to assess perceived cultural appropriateness of meals will also be administered to all sampled students.

- **A health and nutrition knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) assessment** of a sample of grade 2 and 6 students, teachers, and school meal providers in all four counties.
- **A school observation checklist, including** WASH resources, safe food preparation, and classroom learning environment observation assessment.

In addition to quantitative data collection, LEARN II will conduct focus group discussions with children, parents, teachers, cooks, and kitchen storekeepers as well as key informant interviews with County Education Officers (CEOs), District Education Officers (DEOs), principals, PTA members, cassava cooperative members, INGOs, partner organizations and county government officials to gain a better understanding of where the greatest health, literacy, and local producer needs remain in LEARN II communities.

The evaluation team will submit the evaluation protocol (including all tools) to the University of Liberia Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation Institutional Review Board to ensure that the proposed evaluation complies with the local research ethics standards. In addition, approval will be sought from Save the Children's Ethics Review Committee that oversees all research and evaluations taking place at Save the Children and ensures that they comply with appropriate research ethics standards with a special focus on child safeguarding. The Ministry of Education Department of Planning, Research, and Development will be engaged to obtain an authorization letter to conduct data collection.

Data Collection and Analysis

For quantitative data collection, the evaluation team will collect the literacy, protection, health, and nutrition data on tablets using the electronic data collection software Kobo Toolbox (developed by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and Brigham and Women's Hospital). Save the Children has extensive experience programming surveys in Kobo and training internal and external staff on their use. The evaluation team will clean and analyze quantitative data using Stata or similar software. The contracted external evaluator will produce summary statistics and indicator data according to a pre-specified analysis plan. For qualitative data collection, the focus group discussion and key informant interviews will be recorded on tablets. Following the recording, the qualitative data will be transcribed by transcribing assistants and subsequently analyzed by the evaluation team using Atlas.ti or similar software.

All data collection will take place in gender-safe spaces. The data collection team will consist of equal number of men and women. The data collection will take place separately with girls, boys, women, and men. All respondents will also have the option to be assessed/interviewed by an enumerator of the same sex and the data collection will take place in a location and time that is most convenient for the respondent, taking into account the gendered preferences that respondents may have. The data collection team will also follow all COVID-19 guidelines. Data collectors will receive SC Child Safeguarding and Safe Programming policy training.

Research Design and Sampling

The quantitative portion of LEARN II's performance evaluation approach allows for tracking trends over time in children's literacy skills, health and nutrition status, and KAP about health, hygiene, and nutrition, as well as in school meal provider (i.e., cooks) KAP about meal preparation. The impact evaluation provides an estimate of the differential impact of different

intervention modalities on children’s health and education outcomes. The research design and sampling for the performance evaluation and impact evaluation are explained separately below:

Performance Evaluation. For the broader performance evaluation, the evaluation team will collect literacy, health and nutrition status, and KAP data from children in schools across the four counties in order to track changes in indicators over time. Save the Children will use a two-stage clustered sampling approach to select a cross-section of grade 2 students for the literacy, health and nutrition status, and KAP assessments. For the health, hygiene, and nutrition KAP assessment, the evaluation team will also select a sample of grade 6 students. The evaluation team will randomly select a sample of project schools from each county proportional to the total number of project schools participating in LEARN II (see Table 1 below). Subsequently, the team will randomly choose 10 students each (five girls and five boys) from one randomly chosen grade 2 and grade 6 classroom each.

The sample size for the literacy, health and nutrition, and KAP assessments was derived using the recommendations from the USAID EGRA³⁴ Toolkit to confirm the sample size of 1,140 children (570 children in grades two and four each). The sample size was calculated using the following formula:

$$n = 4 \left(\frac{CL_{value} DEFT SD}{CI_{Width}} \right)^2$$

Where CLtvalue is the critical value corresponding to a 95% confidence level (set to 1.96), DEFT is the square root of $[1 + (k-1)*ICC]$, k stands for the number of children in the cluster (10 per school), and ICC is the inter-class correlation (set to 0.5 based on previous EGRA studies). SD is the estimated standard deviation (set to 26 based on previous EGRA studies), and CIwidth is the width of the confidence interval (set to 10). The formula yields a desired sample size (n) of 571, which has been adjusted downward to 570 children to allow the school sample size in each county to be proportionate to the number of project schools in the counties.

Table 1: Sample Sizes from Each County for the Project Evaluation

County	Number of Schools	Number of schools selected for performance evaluation	Total Grade 2 students	Total Grade 6 students
Grand Gedeh	56	12	120	120
River Gee	39	11	110	110
Grand Bassa	95	23	230	230
River Cess	44	11	110	110
Total	234	57	570	570

Impact Evaluation: To estimate the impact of the local procurement of commodities and school garden produce on children’s literacy, health and nutrition outcomes and cost-effectiveness, perceived cultural appropriateness, and timeliness of food assistance, LEARN II will employ a quasi-experimental impact evaluation alongside the performance evaluation. The impact evaluation will follow a quasi-experimental design and take place in 70 schools across the four counties. The evaluation team will assign 70 schools into two treatment arms:

- Arm 1 (Local Procurement of Commodities and School Gardens): 35 schools that receive school meals prepared with locally procured commodities and school garden produce in

³⁴ RTI International. 2016. Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) Toolkit, Second Edition. Washington, DC: United States Agency for International Development. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00M4TN.pdf

addition to meals prepared with U.S. food commodities in River Gee and Grand Gedeh counties. 35 out of the 95 schools in River Gee and Grand Gedeh will be randomly selected for the impact evaluation.

- Arm 2 (U.S. commodities only): A matched sample of 35 comparison schools, that do not receive local commodities (LRP or school gardens) for preparing meals, will be drawn from Grand Bassa.

Detailed information about the impact evaluation sample can be found in Table 2:

Table 2: Impact Evaluation Treatment Groups

Treatment Arm	Sample	Mode of Selection	Counties	LEARN II Intervention
Intervention	35 schools	Random selection within River Gee and Grand Gedeh LEARN II schools	River Gee, Grand Gedeh,	School Meals (USG + LRP + School Garden commodities)
Comparison	35 schools	Matched LEARN II schools	Grand Bassa	School Meals (USG commodities only)
Total	70 schools			

The evaluation team will use propensity score matching, or similar matching technique, to identify the comparison schools that most closely match the set of treatment schools. This will minimize threats to internal validity such as the presence of external factors that result in schools in River Gee and Grand Gedeh receiving local commodities to prepare school meals. The evaluation team will use a difference-in-difference approach to estimate the difference in the literacy, health, nutrition, and food assistance outcomes between the intervention and comparison groups.

Data collection for the impact evaluation will coincide with the performance evaluation data collection. The evaluation team will randomly select 20 Grade 2 students (10 girls and 10 boys) from each of the 70 schools to participate in the literacy, health and nutrition, and KAP assessments. This yields a total sample size of 1,400 grade 2 students. This sample size was calculated using the user-written “clustersampsi” command in Stata 15.1, assuming a power level of 80% and an intra-cluster correlation of 0.25. The team will assess the same students in the midterm and endline evaluations. The evaluation team will administer the school meal provider KAP and cost survey to all school meal providers for the schools sampled as part of the student-level assessments. A questionnaire to assess perceived cultural appropriateness of school meals will also be administered to all sampled students for the impact evaluation.

Key Informants

The key informants for the evaluation are students, teachers, school meal providers (school cooks and storekeepers), PTA members, CEOs and DEOs, school principals, district/county government officials, and cassava cooperative members. Students will be assessed on their reading skills; health and nutrition status; and health, hygiene, and nutrition KAP. School meal providers’ KAP will also be captured through the baseline, midline, and endline studies. PTA members, school principals, district/county government officials, and cooperative members will participate in focus group discussions and key informant interviews to provide deep insight about the status of the school meal, learning, and school health systems.

Key Audiences and Stakeholders

Save the Children will consult key stakeholders in both the design and results dissemination phases of performance evaluations and the impact evaluation. Save the Children will plan the evaluation in collaboration with the project implementing and technical partner (Mercy Corps), Kawadah Farms, local and national government partners (MoE, MOH and MoA), research institutions such as local universities (e.g., Cuttington University), and USDA. Stakeholder groups to be consulted as key audiences include students, parents, teachers, PTAs, school meal providers, school administrators, government county/district officials, and community leaders. LEARN II will keep all stakeholders, including children and parents, informed of the evaluation findings in appropriate ways.

Alignment with the McGovern-Dole Learning Agenda

LEARN II's evaluation plan and questions are closely aligned with the McGovern-Dole Learning Agenda. The evaluation results will deepen the evidence base about school meals, literacy, and health and nutrition interventions by contributing responses to the following key questions from the Learning Agenda:

How do the impacts of local procurement models and other community and nationally sourced models compare with those that rely on international food sources?

LEARN II will compare the cost-efficiency of school meals between schools that receive both locally procured and international food commodities and schools that only receive international food commodities to prepare school meals. The quantitative evaluation is embedded in a mixed-method evaluation that includes key informant interviews and focus-group discussions with school cooks and storekeepers. The qualitative inquiry will allow the evaluation team to understand how school cooks' and storekeepers' experiences vary depending on whether they work in schools that receive both locally procured and international food commodities and schools that only receive international food commodities to prepare school meals. The evaluation will also allow the evaluation team to compare operational efficiency and kitchen staff's experiences between the two procurement models.

How are nutritional outcomes affected by different food sourcing modalities of school meal programs? Outcomes to consider may include iron deficiency, body mass, and other measurements or behavior changes related to nutritional intake and dietary diversity.

Through a quasi-experimental impact evaluation, the evaluation team will assess whether health and nutrition outcomes differ for children receiving school meals through different sourcing modalities. In this two-arm impact evaluation, children in arm 1 will receive school meals prepared with both locally procured commodities and U.S. commodities. In arm 2, children will only receive school meals prepared with U.S. commodities. The primary outcomes of interest are children's KAP towards health and nutrition, perceived cultural appropriateness of the meals, and nutritional diversity of children's diets.

LEARN Endline Evaluation

*Note LEARN Endline and LEARN II Baseline will be conducted in parallel

A. Methodology

The LEARN endline evaluation will follow the same sampling methodology as at midterm for both the project and impact evaluations. The same data collection tools and protocols will be used with some revisions to accommodate the research questions for the LEARN II project and impact evaluations.

B. Key Evaluation Questions

Like the midterm evaluation, the final evaluation will focus on questions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Key evaluation questions for the final evaluation include the following:

Relevance

- Did stakeholders feel that their voices were heard and their needs considered throughout the program?
- Have activities to support literacy and improved nutrition been integrated in culturally appropriate ways in the target communities?

Effectiveness

- To what extent has the program achieved its output and outcome targets?
- What factors have inhibited or facilitated the achievement of program goals, objectives, and expected results?

Efficiency

- Were intervention components delivered within their planned timeline?
- Which commodity management strategies were most efficient for quick delivery and reduction of waste and theft?
- Did school gardens produce enough food to supplement school meals adequately?

Sustainability

- Do schools have the necessary infrastructure and food management plans in place to continue feeding after the program concludes?
- Do school-communities have the necessary systems in place to recruit and maintain volunteers for reading camps?
- What are the necessary components for successful school handover of activities to the government and local community, as modeled by this program? What were the lessons learned?
- Is there evidence that LEARN program activities and benefits are likely to continue or to scale up after the project ends?

Impact

- Has LEARN improved access to and quality of early grade reading materials in Liberia?
- How has the home literacy environment in target communities changed in the LEARN program areas?
- Have literacy skills of school-age children improved in the LEARN program area?

- Has LEARN contributed to increased enrollment of school-age children and attendance of children and teachers?
- Have nutrition, dietary, and food safety practices in schools improved in the LEARN program area?
- Are PTAs meeting on a regular basis and contributing effectively to schools?
- Have there been any positive or negative impacts in the target areas, besides the realization of the strategic objective-level results?
- How do literacy and health KAP outcomes compare across the two treatment groups and one comparison group in Grand Gedeh County? Is there evidence of a positive impact of LEARN on literacy and health KAP outcomes?

LEARN II Baseline Study

Purpose and Scope

Baseline data will be collected for four purposes:

- To measure pre-implementation values for performance indicators;
- To confirm estimated indicator targets;
- To determine the baseline values for the performance evaluation and confirm the comparability of the intervention and comparison group schools for the impact evaluation; and
- To confirm project design assumptions and identify potential threats to project implementation.
- To conduct gender and power analysis study to inform more gender-sensitive programming

LEARN II project staff will use values obtained from the baseline data collection to update initial indicator targets before the start of any project activities.

Methodology, Tools, Research Design, and Sampling

To ensure comparability of the baseline, midterm, and final evaluation findings, the baseline evaluation will use the same data collection tools and sampling methodology described in the evaluation approach and methodologies section above. In addition, a gender and power analysis study will be completed at baseline to inform greater inclusion of gender-sensitive approaches to programming.

Key Audience and Stakeholders

The project will plan the baseline evaluation in collaboration with Mercy Corps, Kawadah Farms, local, and national government partners, and USDA. The key audience for the baseline study will consist of the same stakeholder groups as described in the evaluation approach and methodologies section above.

Timeline

The baseline study will take place in Year 1 in the middle of the school year, in February-March 2022, prior to the start of project activities. USDA will receive the final baseline report within six

months of finalization of the performance monitoring plan and evaluation plan. Since the LEARN endline and LEARN II baseline performance evaluation will coincide, and given the large (94%) overlap between LEARN and LEARN II schools, LEARN II will use the data collected in the LEARN endline performance evaluation to establish its baseline indicator values.

Table 3: Timeline of Activities for the LEARN Endline/LEARN II Baseline

Baseline Assessment Activity	Month and Year
Finalize Performance Monitoring Plan with USDA	November 2021
Finalize Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluator with USDA	November 2021
Advertise the LEARN II evaluator contract for the baseline, midline, and endline (including impact evaluation)	November 2021
Recruit consultant and finalize contract	Nov. – Dec. 2021
Refine Evaluation Methodology and Data Collection Tools	January 2022
Data Collection - Stage 1 (Quantitative Data Collection) - Stage 2 (Qualitative Data Collection)	February 2022 March 2022
Data Analysis	April 2022
Conduct Stakeholder Meetings to share initial evaluation findings	May 2022
Finalize and submit draft LEARN endline report and LEARN II baseline report to USDA (within 60 days of evaluation fieldwork and within 15 days of report completion)	May 2022
Submit final endline and baseline report and established targets to USDA	June 2022
Discuss actions to address findings and recommendations with USDA	July 2022
Report on implementation of follow-up activities	September 2022

Midterm Evaluation

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the midterm performance evaluation is to assess the progress of LEARN II's implementation, assess the relevance and early effectiveness of the interventions, determine whether the project is on track to meet its objectives, summarize the lessons learned to date, and recommend any necessary changes to project components. The midterm evaluation will use the same data collection tools from the baseline assessment. The evaluation will also include key informant interviews and focus group discussions with students, parents, PTA members, teachers, principals, school meal cooks, storekeepers, local government officials, and cassava cooperative members.

Evaluation Questions

The midterm evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of the key project interventions through the following evaluation questions. The results for all evaluation questions will be disaggregated by sex, age, and socio-economic status:

Relevance

- To what extent are the project education, school feeding, and health practices aligned with Government of Liberia's priorities and policies? If they are different, what are the differences?
- Are the in-school meals perceived as being culturally appropriate by students? Are meals prepared with local commodities perceived as more culturally appropriate than meals prepared with U.S. commodities?
- Do students and teachers perceive educational and instructional materials as culturally- and age-appropriate and empowering for girls and boys?
- Do project stakeholders feel that LEARN II is meeting their needs? Why or why not?

Effectiveness

- To what extent has the project achieved its output and outcome targets? Did these outcomes vary for girls and boys? For children from families with different household income/wealth? For children with disabilities?
- What factors have inhibited or facilitated the achievement of project goals, objectives, and expected results?
- Have project interventions been effective in making the school environment safe and inclusive for all students and teachers? Is it different for girls, boys, men and women?

Efficiency

- Were intervention components delivered within the planned timeline?
- How often and in what ways are schools utilizing produce from local producers to supplement and/or substitute donated food?

Sustainability

- Do schools and school meal providers have the necessary infrastructure and food management plans in place to continue feeding after the project concludes?

- What are the current barriers to achieving sustainability according to the different stakeholders?
- What are the necessary resources (financial, physical, knowledge, partnerships) for schools to successfully continue activities currently supported by the project, once project support ends?

Impact

- Have literacy skills of school-age children improved in the LEARN II project area? What factors are associated with children showing more or less improvement?
- Have nutrition and health outcomes of school-age children improved in the LEARN II project area? What factors are associated with children showing more or less improvement?
- Have nutrition, dietary, and food safety practices in schools improved in the LEARN II project area?
- Have there been any positive or negative impacts of LEARN II intervention in the target areas, besides the realization of the strategic objective-level results of the project?
- How do literacy, health and nutrition, and Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) outcomes compare across the intervention and comparison group?

Methodology, Tools, Research Design, and Sampling

To ensure comparability of the midterm evaluation findings with the baseline, the midterm evaluation will use the same data collections tools and sampling methodology described in the evaluation approach and methodologies section above.

Key Audience and Stakeholders

The project will plan the midterm evaluation in collaboration with Mercy Corps, Kawadah Farms, local and national government partners, and USDA. The key audience for the midterm evaluation will consist of the same stakeholder groups as described in the evaluation approach and methodologies section above.

Timeline

Preparation for the midterm evaluation will commence at the end of Year 2 in August 2023, with data collection in March 2024 and a final report submitted to USDA in June 2024.

Table 4: Timeline of Activities for the Midterm Evaluation

Midterm Evaluation Activity	Month and Year
Submit draft ToR for the midterm evaluation to USDA	August 2023
Finalize midterm evaluation ToR with USDA and evaluator	October 2023
Revise and finalize evaluator contract	November 2023
Prepare for midterm evaluation • Finalize internal project evaluation team • Finalize evaluation design with firm and government	Dec. 2023 – Feb. 2024
Data collection	March 2024
Data analysis	April 2024

Conduct stakeholder meetings to share initial evaluation findings	April-May 2024
Finalize and submit draft midterm report to USDA (within 60 days of evaluation fieldwork and within 15 days of report completion)	May 2024
Submit final midterm report and established targets to USDA	June 2024
Discuss actions to address findings and recommendations with USDA	July 2024
Result dissemination and learning event	July 2024
Report on implementation of follow-up activities	September 2024

Final Evaluation

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the final evaluation is to assess whether the project achieved the results outlined in LEARN II's results framework. In addition, the evaluation team will compare cost efficiency, and perceived cultural appropriateness between the different school meals. The team will use a quasi-experimental impact evaluation design to determine the impact of LRP school meals on children's health and nutrition outcomes. The final evaluation will use the same quantitative and qualitative methods as the baseline and midterm evaluations to explore questions related to project design, implementation, management, lessons learned, sustainability, and impact. The evaluation team will explore the pathways through which local producers satisfy the food demand of schools with a focus on the sustainability and national-level scaling up of the current feeding model. LEARN II will invite stakeholders to participatory workshops to review and reflect on project findings and to offer input for ensuring the continuity of LEARN II approaches.

Key Evaluation Questions

Like the midterm evaluation, the final evaluation will focus on questions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The results for all evaluation questions will be disaggregated by sex, age, and socio-economic status. The key evaluation questions for the final evaluation include:

Relevance

- Did stakeholders feel that their voices were heard and needs considered throughout the project?
- Has the project integrated activities to support literacy and improved nutrition in culturally appropriate ways in the target communities?

Effectiveness

- To what extent has the project achieved its output and outcome targets?
- What factors have inhibited or facilitated the achievement of goals, objectives, and expected results?
- Has the classroom environment changed with respect to safety and inclusivity in LEARN II supported schools? If so, how?
- Was the project's Take Home Ration component effective in incentivizing reading club facilitators, school cooks, and storekeepers?
- Are the Parent Teacher Associations more inclusive, empowered, and engaged in school management activities?

Efficiency

- Did the project deliver intervention components within their planned timelines? If not, why?
- Which commodity management strategies were most efficient for quick delivery and reduction of waste?
- Did school gardens produce enough food to supplement school meals? If yes, to what extent?

Sustainability

- Under which conditions are local producers able to satisfy food demand of schools for the feeding program? What are the pathways that lead to successful sale and delivery of food by local producers to processors and/or schools?
- Do schools have the necessary infrastructure, food management plans, and systems in place to continue feeding and literacy activities after the project concludes?
- What are the necessary components for successful handover of activities to schools, as modeled by this project? What were the lessons learned?
- Was the local commodity procurement model successful in providing schools with nutritious and cost-effective school meals? What is required to scale this model to other schools in Liberia? Is this model sustainable after LEARN II ends? Which commodity procurement modality is more sustainable to deliver school meals in Liberia?

Impact

- Have literacy skills of school-age children improved in the LEARN II schools?
- Have nutrition, dietary, and food safety practices improved in the LEARN II schools?
- Have teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices about teacher code of conduct, norms related to corporal punishment, and abuse changed?
- Has parental engagement with children's learning and development changed?
- Has LEARN II contributed to regular attendance of school-age children?
- Is there a significant impact of LRP and school gardens on children's health and nutrition outcomes?
- Does the LRP component of the project improve the, timely delivery, and cultural appropriateness of the school meals provided to children?
- Have there been any positive or negative impacts in the target areas, besides the realization of the strategic objective-level results since the midline assessment?

Methodology Tools, Research Design, and Sampling

The LEARN II final evaluation will use the evaluation methodology detailed in the research design and methodologies section.

Key Audience and Stakeholders

The key audience and stakeholders for the final evaluation will be the same as the key audience and stakeholders described in the research design and methodologies section above.

Timeline

Preparation for the final evaluation will commence at the end of Year 4 in August 2025, with data collection in March 2026 and a final report submitted to USDA in June 2026.

Table 5: Timeline of Activities for the Final Evaluation

Final Evaluation Activity	Month and Year
Submit draft ToR for the final evaluation to USDA	August 2025
Finalize final evaluation ToR with USDA and evaluator	October 2025
Revise and finalize evaluator contract	November 2025

Prepare for final evaluation • Finalize internal project evaluation team • Finalize evaluation design with consultant/firm and government	Dec. 2025 – Feb. 2026
Data collection	March 2026
Data analysis	April 2026
Conduct stakeholder meetings to share initial evaluation findings	April-May 2026
Results dissemination and learning event	July 2026
Finalize and submit draft final evaluation report to USDA (within 60 days of evaluation fieldwork and within 15 days of report completion)	May 2026
Submit finalized final evaluation report to USDA	June 2026

III. EVALUATION MANAGEMENT

A. Roles and Responsibilities

LEARN II MEAL staff in Liberia will manage the monitoring and evaluation of the project. Save the Children's U.S.-based education and MEAL technical advisory staff will provide technical input on the development of tools, sampling plan, electronic data collection instruments, assessor training, and piloting of tools. For the baseline, midterm, and final evaluations and the impact evaluation, Save the Children will contract an independent third-party consultant firm to collect baseline, midterm, and final evaluation data that is reliable, accurate, valid, and timely. Save the Children will support the independent consultant firm through review of the survey plan, survey instruments, sampling methods, and the development of a data analysis plan based on the project indicators.

MEAL staff in Liberia will be responsible for managing the commodity monitoring system as well as maintaining the M&E monitoring system used for internal data collection and semi-annual reporting to USDA. MEAL staff will conduct monthly visits to project communities to monitor and collect data on project activities. The Senior MEAL Coordinator and technical team will review all data in the M&E monitoring system before submitting evaluation reports to USDA. See Table 13 below for additional details on roles and responsibilities.

Table 6: Roles and Responsibilities

Save the Children
Senior MEAL Coordinator: Draft and revise baseline, midterm, and final evaluation ToR for external evaluator; support selection of external evaluator; review draft evaluation methodology and tools; review data in monitoring system; finalize and submit donor reports; coordinate dissemination events with regional MEAL staff and external evaluator.
Chief of Party: Recruit and contract external evaluator; review ToR for baseline, midterm, and final evaluations; review draft evaluation methodology and tools; review evaluation reports.
MEAL Officers: Obtain necessary permits for evaluation activities, collect and input data in monitoring system, contribute to and review donor reports, and coordinate dissemination events.
Save the Children Research Team: Revise assessment tools as necessary, support Senior MEAL Coordinator and external evaluator to conduct data collection, review evaluation reports.
External Evaluator
Draft and finalize tools and methodology, train enumerators and field test tools for evaluations, manage data collection and ensure data quality, analyze evaluation data, facilitate reflection event for participatory analysis of preliminary results, co-facilitate evaluation dissemination events, prepare draft and final reports. The independent evaluator will be free to draw their conclusions devoid of organizational or political pressure.
Local University/Research Partner
The external evaluator consultant/team will be required to work with a local university/research partner or data collection agency based in Liberia. The local knowledge and data collection partner will play a critical role in supporting the external evaluation consultant/team to adapt the evaluation questions and data collection tools to the local context to ensure that the performance and impact evaluations are culturally relevant.
Government Partners

County and District Education Staff, MoH Staff, MoE Staff, MOA staff: Contribute to design of ToR and interpretation of evaluation findings, and participate in reflection and dissemination workshops.

USDA

Comment and approve evaluation ToRs and reports and participate in a stakeholder phone call with the third-party evaluator.

B. Learning

Save the Children will share the learnings from LEARN II evaluations with stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, local authorities, government agencies in Liberia, other local or regional organizations working in the education and nutrition sector, USDA, and other USG-funded education projects. LEARN II will use varied strategies and formats to disseminate the evaluation findings and facilitate learning with LEARN II stakeholders.

The evaluation team and the LEARN II MEAL staff will share the results of the evaluation and performance monitoring with the LEARN II programming teams to adaptively manage the implementation of LEARN II activities. These findings will also be shared with GoL (including MoE, MoH, and MoA) and other in-country development partners to inform education, feeding and health priorities in Liberia. The project will also hold dissemination events after the baseline, midterm, and final evaluations to present findings to community members, including project beneficiaries such as students, parents, teachers, school principals, PTAs, local producers, and VSLA members. These opportunities will also be used to collect feedback from project beneficiaries to ensure that their feedback is incorporated in the project implementation. This will ensure that LEARN II stays accountable to project beneficiaries and is managed adaptively to continue to meet beneficiaries' needs throughout its implementation.

Save the Children will ensure that results are shared in appropriate formats (e.g., stakeholder workshops and on Save the Children's external website) and at various venues, including government partnership meetings, internal Save the Children presentations and workshops, and externally facing conferences such as the Comparative International Education Society annual conference. Additionally, USDA will be notified and invited to attend key events where evaluation results will be presented.

C. Evaluation Budget

The LEARN II evaluation budget is \$709,276. Additional details can be found in **Table 7** below.

Table 7: Evaluation Budget

Budget Line	Cost (in USD)
Baseline	\$154,935
Midline	\$270,535.59
Endline	\$283,805.41
Total	\$709,276

D. Deliverables

The consultant should submit the following deliverables for each stage of the evaluation process (baseline³⁵, midterm, endline) during the evaluation process:

- A research protocol that includes at a minimum: Principal Investigator, Country/Location, Objectives, Research Questions, Research Design, Sample, Data Collection Methods, Data Analysis Methods and Plan, Quality Assurance Plan, Data Handling and Confidentiality, Consent and Assent Forms, Translation Services (if needed), and Data Collection Tools. The research protocol will be submitted to Save the Children US Ethics Review Committee (ERC) and the consultant will incorporate ERC's input.
- Data collection tools developed for primary data collection.
- A draft report
- A final report submitted in English that incorporates Save the Children's feedback into the draft report (public and internal versions, where relevant)
- Raw data (both qualitative and quantitative) and appropriate data documentation including a data dictionary
- Cleaned datasets
- Presentation of key findings to be delivered at an evaluation stakeholders' meeting (x2 - in-country and to USDA Washington)
- Standalone summary³⁶

As noted, the deliverables will be reviewed and approved by the Save the Children team, which will include the SC/Liberia Chief of Party, the Senior MEAL Coordinator, SC/Washington technical advisors, as well as USDA/Washington.

Save the Children expects that the final reports will include the following sections, at a minimum:

- Cover Page
- Acronym List
- Executive Summary
- Project Background
- Objectives of the Evaluation
- Key Evaluation Questions
- Evaluation Methodology
- Evaluation Results
- Conclusions (successes and challenges)
- Recommendations
- Lessons Learned
- A minimum of two success stories (not relevant for baseline)

³⁵ A baseline report for LEARN II as well as an endline report for LEARN will be expected at the same time

³⁶ A two to three-page stand-alone summary describing the evaluation design, key findings and lessons learned. This document will serve to inform any interested stakeholders of the final evaluation, and should be written in a language easy to understand by non-evaluators and with appropriate graphics and tables.

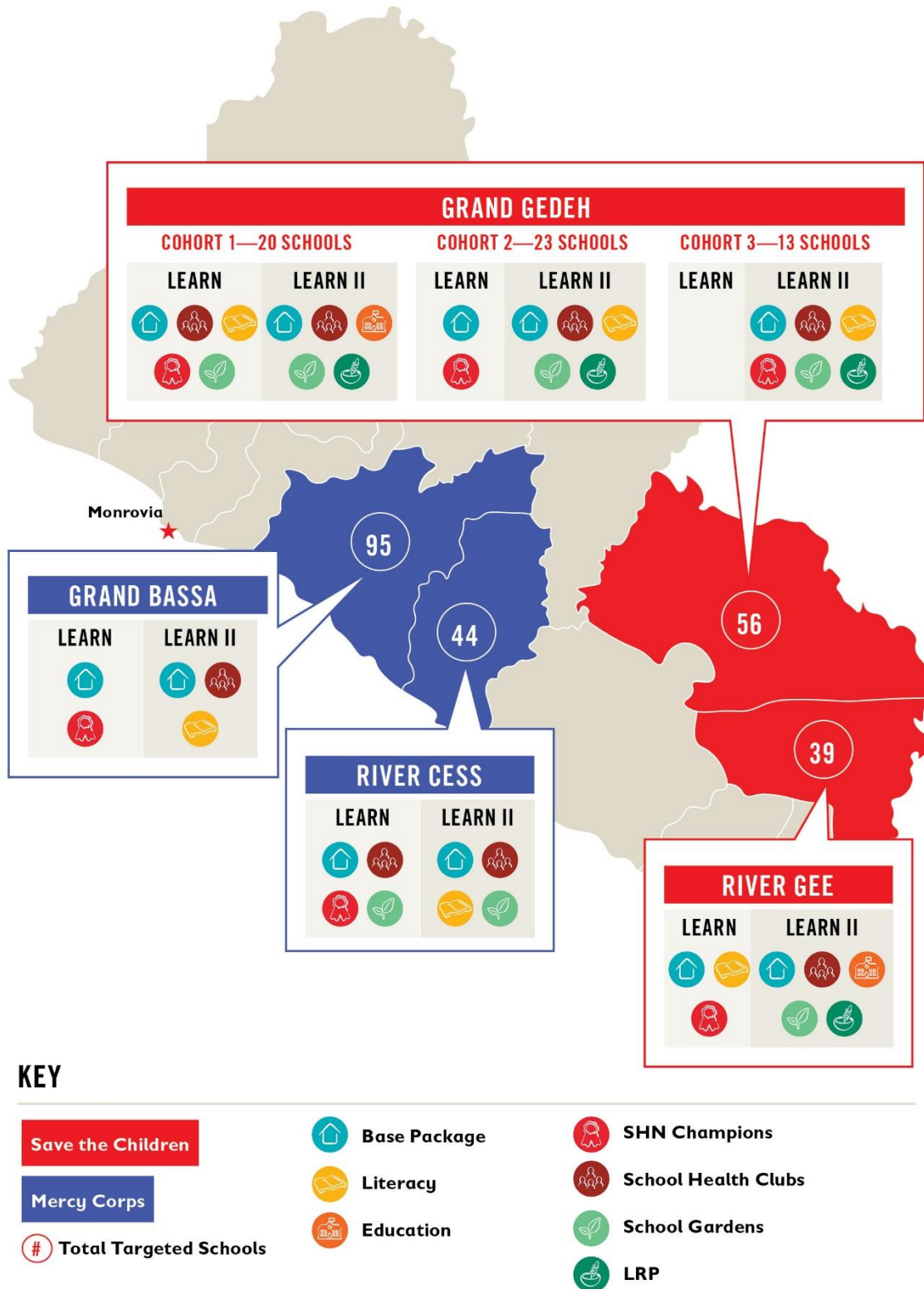
- Performance indicator tables including custom and standard indicators and updated values
- Attachments (photos, charts, graphs, regression analysis results)³⁷

The final versions of the baseline, midterm, and final evaluation reports must be submitted in two hard copies and in electronic format.

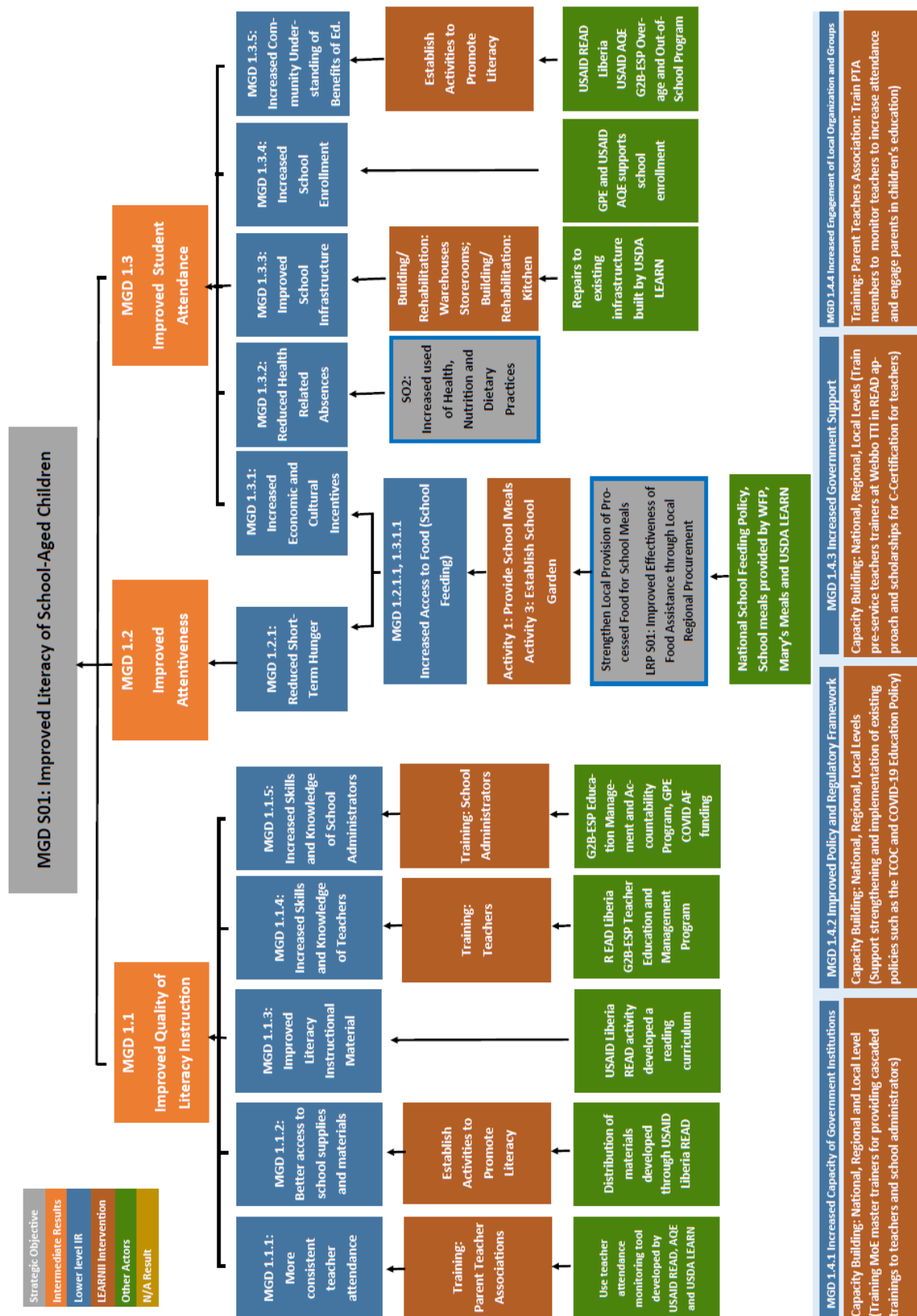
³⁷ Any photos, particularly of children, must be accompanied by a parental media consent form in the annexes.

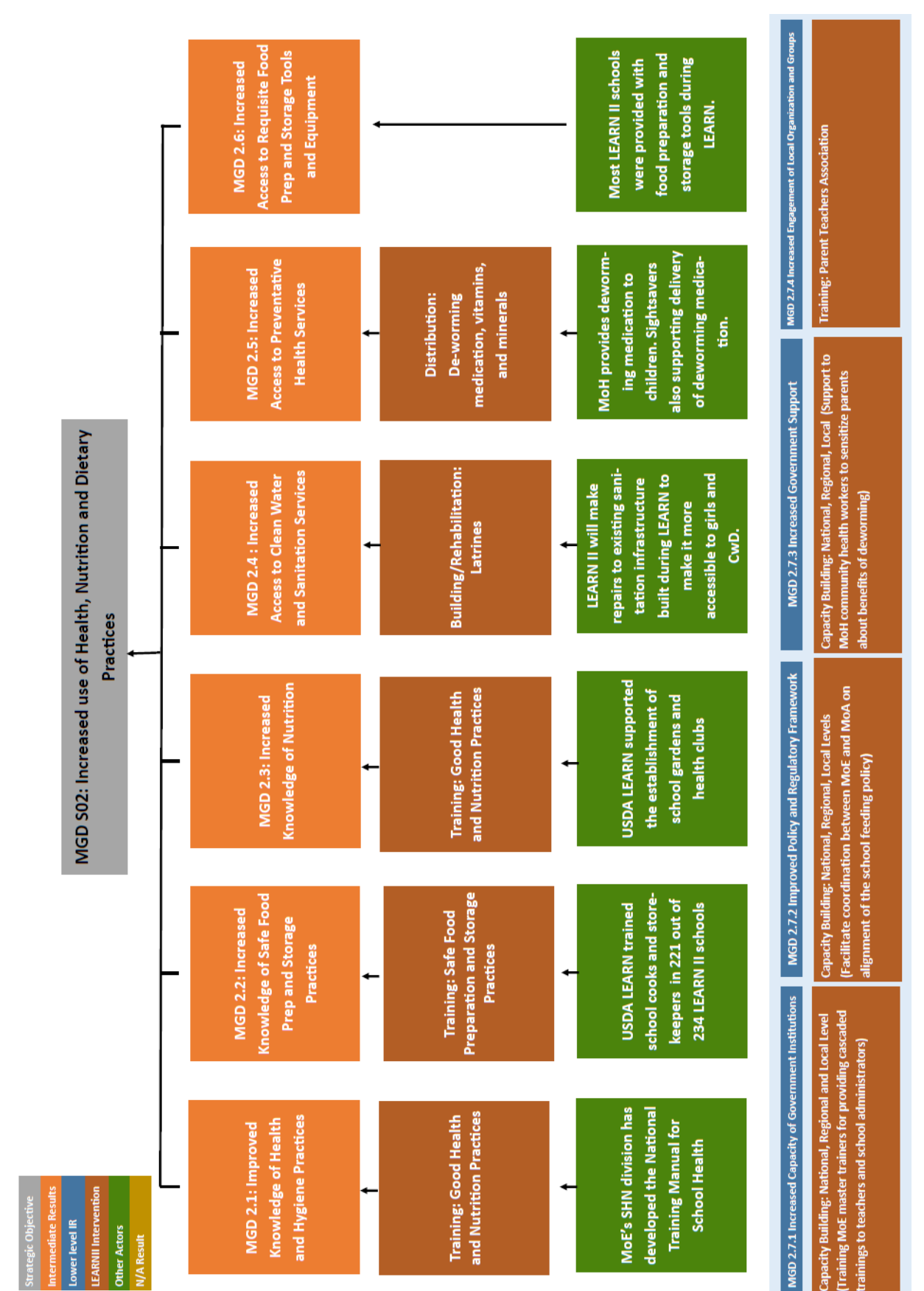
IV. Annex

A. Project Map

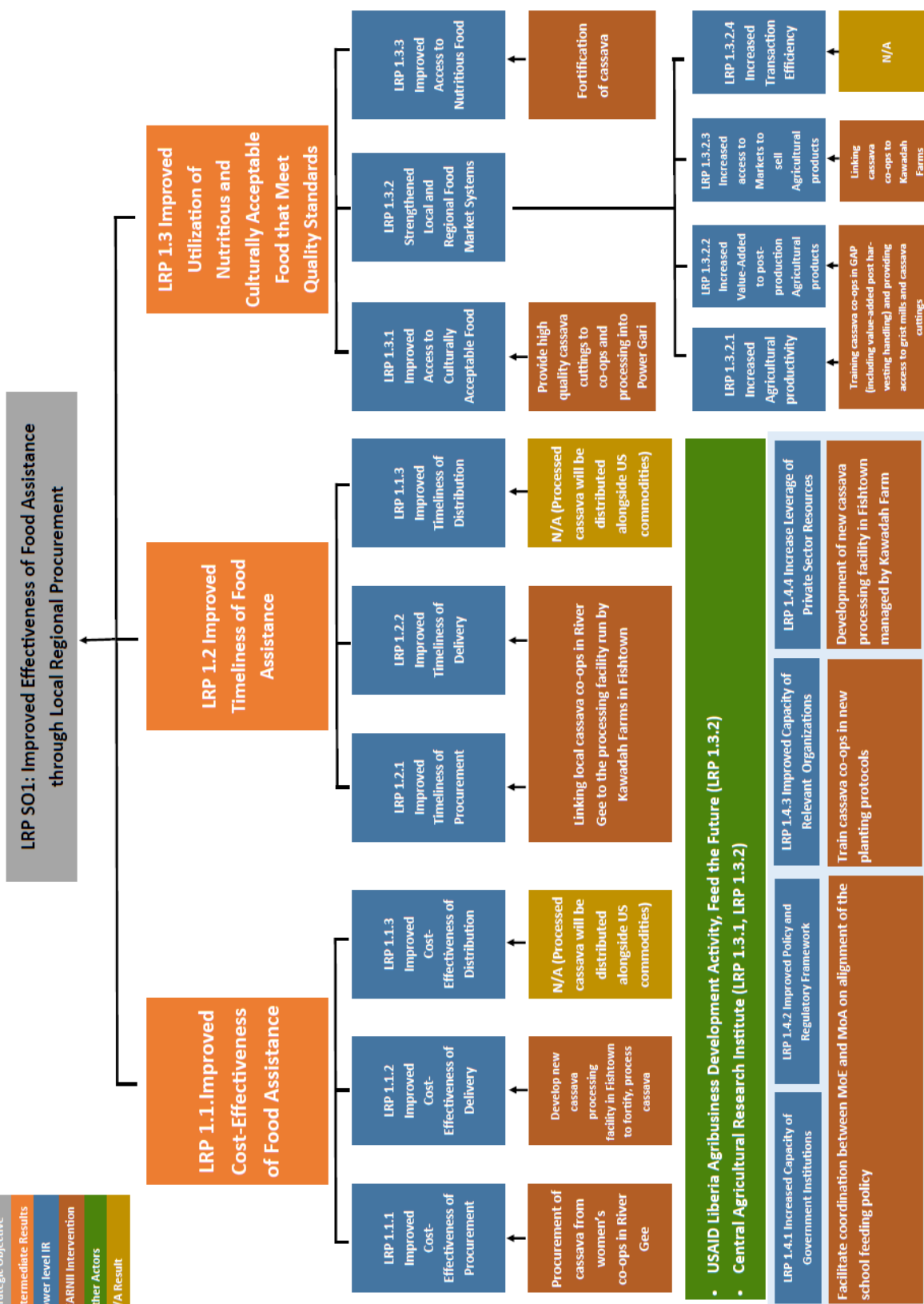


Annex B: LEARN II Project-Level Results Framework





Strategic Objective
Intermediate Results
Lower level IR
LEARN Intervention
Other Actors
N/A Result



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