

Introduction

Pág. 02

Description of Study Cases

Pág. 04

Factors enabling or hindering Reading Clubs

Pág. 11

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Pág. 21

Participants' Perceptions of the Benefits of Reading Clubs

Pág. 23

Conclusions

Pág. 30

IMPROVING LITERACY OF CHILDREN THROUGH SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY NETWORKS



Executive Summary

Nicaragua, November 2022

IMPROVING LITERACY OF CHILDREN THROUGH SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY NETWORKS

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Improving Literacy of Children through Support of Community Networks, known as the Unlock Literacy Learning Network (ULLN) project¹ is funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and the Knowledge Exchange and Innovation (KIX) and includes research led by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UofT), the Foro Social para la Deuda Externa y Desarrollo de Honduras (FOSDEH), and the School of Education and Leadership (SEL) of the University of Ghana (UdG).

Objectives of the grant

As one of IDRC's 12 Global Grants, the grant aims to support the adaptation and scaling of proven innovations in Global Partnership for Education (GPE) partner countries by generating knowledge and evidence. Ghana, Honduras, and Nicaragua, as members of the GPE, are implementing the Unlock Literacy (UL) program, an innovation led by World Vision, as the implementing partner, with the aim of strengthening of educational systems through the promotion and maintenance of quality literacy in each country.

[1] The results of the community component are obtained from the study "Improving Child Literacy Through the Support of Community Networks. A consolidated report of results of the ULLN Nicaragua project 2021-2022"

Research objectives

The research uses a comparative study approach. **The research** research explores the community-based literacy activities of **UL** model in 10 communities in Nicaragua with a focus on how community actors (including teachers, principals, and officials of the Ministry of Education, parents, community leaders, and local organizations) work in partnership to implement activities that promote learning literacy skills among young girls and boys (grades 1 to 3). The research is guided by the main research question How can community actors and networks, with distinct and contextualized social issues, be enabled and strengthened to create their adaptive systems to support student literacy at scale, in particular the implementation of the Unlock Literacy program, and its impact on literacy outcomes?

What is ULLN?

World Vision's Unlock Literacy (UL) model is a literacy program that complements and supports the efforts of the Ministries of Education with a focus on the promotion of five crucial reading skills: 1) letter knowledge, 2) phonological awareness, 3) reading fluency, 4) vocabulary, and 5) reading comprehension. The UL program has 4 components: 1) Reading Assessment, 2) Teacher training, 3) Community Action, and 4) Teaching and learning materials. The Community Action component focuses on establishing and strengthening networks of key stakeholders, including a wide range of community members, who support and conduct reading camps in community spaces to enable and reinforce literacy skills for children.

UL and Reading Clubs

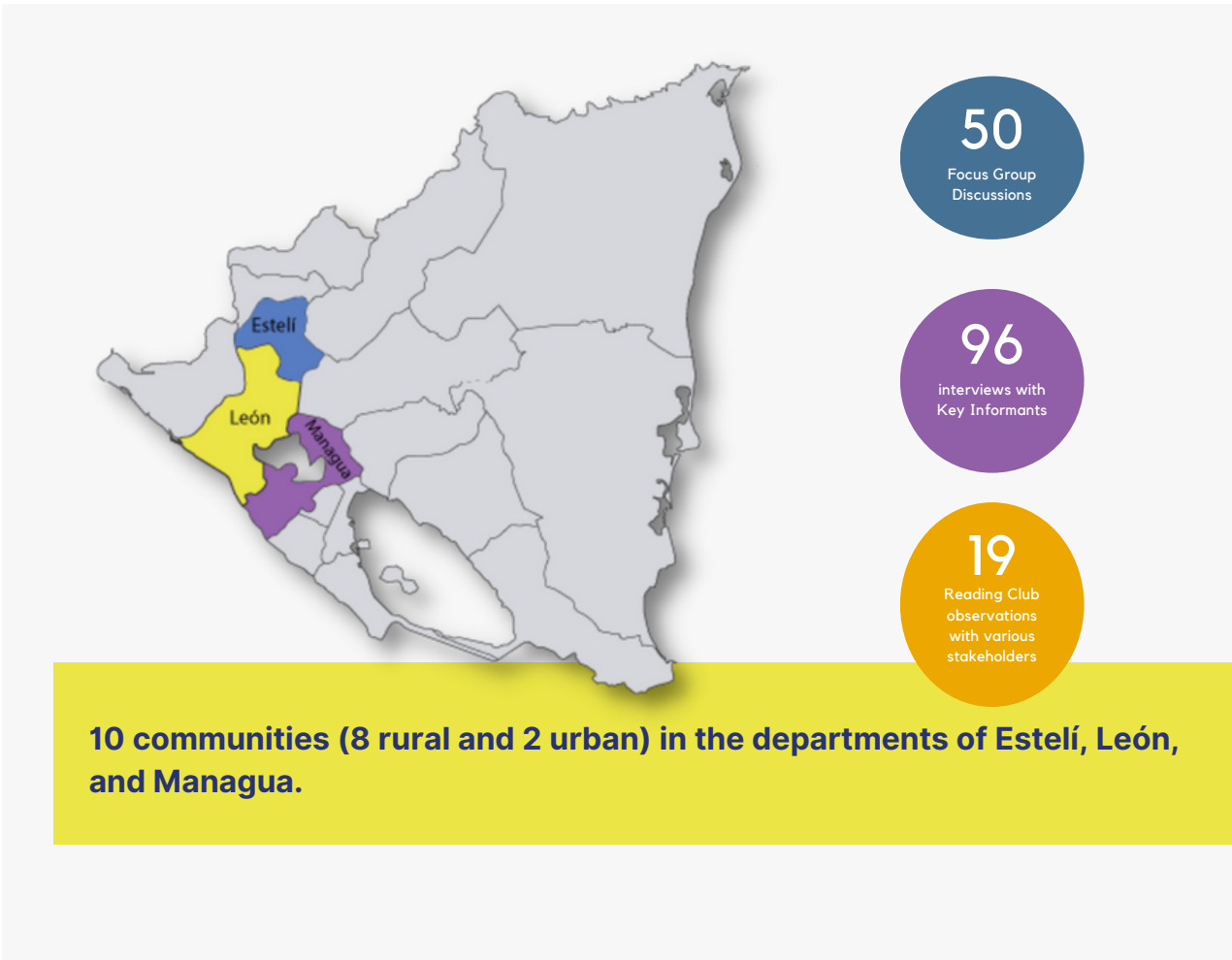
As part of the UL Community Action component, Reading Clubs are weekly sessions for young children (who are the ages of children in grades 1 to 3), where community actors conduct fun reading activities in their own homes or spaces managed by faith leaders in churches. According to the context of the premises and the human resources that each Reading Club hosts, learning environments are adapted, and the development of didactic materials that accompany and stimulate the acquisition and reinforcement of literacy skills is promoted. Reading Camp facilitators conduct the following activities in the Reading Club as per the UL model: 1) agenda; 2) free play time; 3) singing time; 4) story time; 5) time of activity; 6) make and take and; 7) the diary.

Nicaragua: A Case Study

Nicaragua's education system and its Strategic Plan maintain as an imperative the commitment to guarantee the right to education: no child, adolescent, or young person should be left without the opportunity to access quality education. The country has achieved that 9 out of 10 children attend school nationwide (MINED, 2021). Complementing this important effort, World Vision has been implementing the UL program in 4 departments of Nicaragua since 2019, where 232 Reading Clubs are currently being run. Approximately 15 children are participating in each of these Reading Clubs, reaching more than 3400 girls and boys.

Given this overview, the research studies 10 representative communities of the UL intervention areas, each with particular characteristics that affect how Reading Clubs are implemented and how community networks collaborate to adapt to their respective contexts. Caregivers, children, community members, faith leaders, among others, as well as teaching staff, education officials, and World Vision staff were participants in this research.

Figure 1. Nicaragua's Regional Information Collection Division



The research is a qualitative study primarily of the community component complemented by the teaching perspective . Data was collected in two phases at the community level: Phase 1 in August and September 2021 and Phase 2 in June 2022, Data was collected through 165 instruments. After the field visits, the data was analyzed to generate of findings about how community members implement activities to promote reading and writing, which can also inform educational policies to continue guaranteeing access, efficiency, and quality education for children, especially the most vulnerable.

Data was collected from the teaching perspective in May 2022 when 41 Key Informant Interviews were conducted with teachers, directors, MINED officials as well as 10 focus groups with parents of school children.

Table 1. Number of data collected at the education level by type of tool and participant

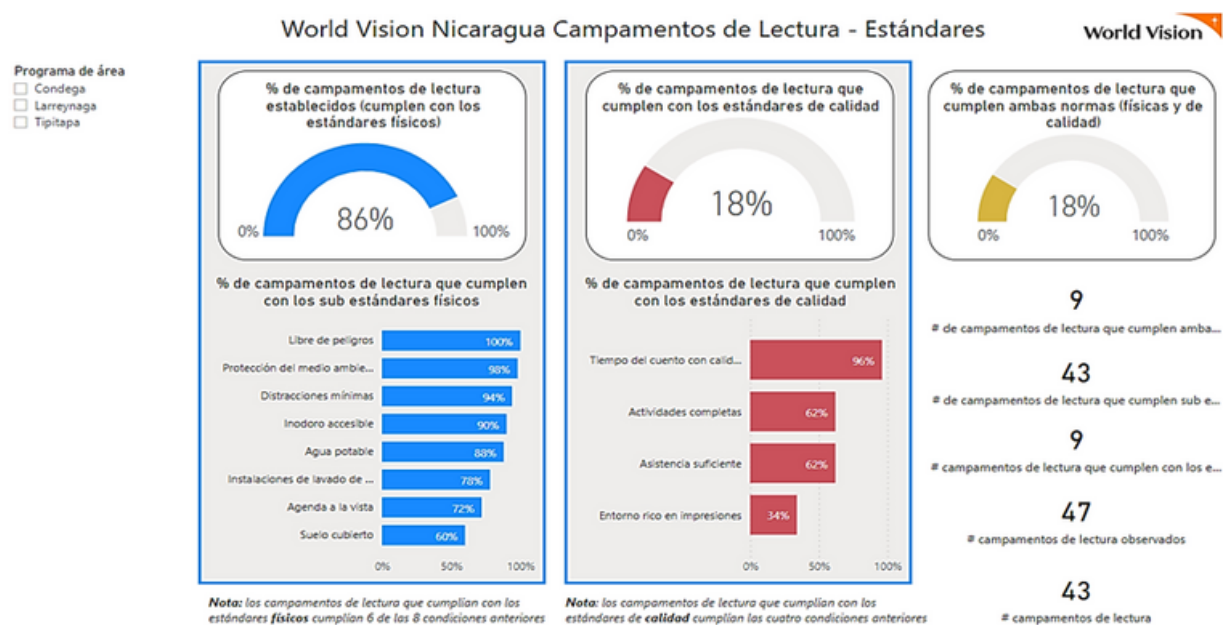
Table 1. Number of data collected at the education level by type of tool and participant		
Tool Type	Type of participant	Number Conducted
Focus Group	mothers, and fathers of the School Support Committee	10
	school principals	8
Key Informant Interview	teachers from 1st to 3rd grade	29
	MINED officials	4
	Total	51

UL and Assessment and Monitoring Systems: Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Measuring Evidence of Quality Achieved (MEQA)

In 2021, the children who participated in EGRA read an average of 68.37 words in 60 seconds (World Vision Nicaragua; Initial Reading Assessment Study, 2021). Meanwhile, 86% of the Reading Clubs comply with the physical standards of the project (environmental protection, minimal distractions, free of hazards, drinking water, and accessible facilities, among others).

[2] The results from the teaching perspective are presented in the report "Improving Child Literacy through the Support of Community Networks in Nicaragua. A consolidated report of results at the level of the teaching component 2022"

Figure 2. MEQA data for the communities of Condega, Larreynaga, and Tipitapa



Source: Taken from World Vision MEQA, 30 October 2022

Description of Study Cases

Region: Estelí-Condega

Community 1	
Zone	Rural
Context	The local economy of subsistence farming, agricultural production, poverty, exposure to COVID-19 outbreaks, and climate vulnerability due to storms.
Reading Camp Facilities	Churches, home of a community leader.
Collaborative Network involved in the Reading Club.	Reading Buddies (12-year-olds+ children who assist and younger boys and girls), mothers, church members, church leaders, WV volunteers, water committee, health brigade member, local school teachers, and youth volunteers.

Community 2	
Zone	Rural
Context	Poverty, forced displacement, a local economy of subsistence farming, production of basic grains and livestock, exposure to outbreaks by COVID-19, climate change-food crisis, and child labor.
Reading Camp Facilities	Churches, home of a community leader.
Collaborative Network involved in the Reading Club.	Mothers, WV volunteers, health brigade member, church members, Parent's Association, family members, local school teachers, and volunteers of other Reading Clubs.

[2] The results from the teaching perspective are presented in the report "Improving Child Literacy through the Support of Community Networks in Nicaragua. A consolidated report of results at the level of the teaching component 2022"



Community 3	
Zone	Rural
Context	The local economy of subsistence farming, production of basic grains and livestock, forced displacement, and exposure to COVID-19 outbreaks.
Reading Camp Facilities	Home of the community leader.
Collaborative Network involved in the Reading Club.	Faith leaders, mothers and fathers, Reading Club promoters, and teachers from the local school.

Region: Oyanca-La Trinidad

Community 4	
Zone	Rural
Context	A local economy of subsistence farming, forced displacement, underemployment, outbreaks of COVID-19
Reading Camp Facilities	Home of community leader, Community Kindergarten Center
Collaborative Network involved in the Reading Club.	Mothers, WV Volunteers, Church Members (catechist), Teachers, Reading Buddies (boys and girls 12 years + who assist younger boys and girls).

Community 5	
Zone	Rural
Context	The local economy of subsistence farming, unsafe road infrastructure, outbreaks of COVID-19
Reading Camp Facilities	School
Collaborative Network involved in the Reading Club.	Mothers (pastor, faith leaders, church members, Sunday School Teachers), Reading Club promoter, school director, and teachers.

Region: León-Larreynaga

Community 6	
Zone	Rural
Context	Transnational mining, underemployment, forced displacement, family disintegration, child labor, outbreaks of COVID-19
Reading Camp Facilities	Church
Collaborative Network involved in the Reading Club.	WV Promoters, mothers, Sunday School Teachers, Pastor, Principal school.

Community 7	
Zone	Rural
Context	Poverty, migration, weather vulnerabilities due to storms, road insecurity, COVID-19 outbreaks
Reading Camp Facilities	Church, home of community leaders
Collaborative Network involved in the Reading Club.	Volunteers, Mothers, Church Members, Parents Committee, university students, community action committee, reading buddies (boys and girls 12 years + who assist younger children), School director, Mayor's Office, local business.

Community 8	
Zone	Rural
Context	Violence, socioeconomic inequalities, poverty, underemployment, climatic vulnerabilities due to storms, road insecurity, and COVID-19 outbreaks.
Reading Camp Facilities	Church, home of the community leader.
Collaborative Network involved in the Reading Club.	Mothers, Church, Sunday School Teachers, Pastors, Faith Leaders Volunteers, and elementary teachers.

Region: Managua-Tipitapa

Community 9	
Zone	Urban
Context	Violence, socioeconomic inequalities, poverty, underemployment, climatic vulnerabilities due to storms, road insecurity, COVID-19 outbreaks
Reading Camp Facilities	Church, home of community leader
Collaborative Network involved in the Reading Club.	Promoters of the Reading Club (Members of the Church, preachers, daughter of the Pastor) mothers, Youth

Community 10	
Zone	Urban
Context	Violence, Migration, socioeconomic inequalities, poverty, underemployment, climatic vulnerabilities due to storms, COVID-19 outbreaks
Reading Camp Facilities	Home of community leader
Collaborative Network involved in the Reading Club.	Sunday School Teacher, health brigade member, Pastors, Parents



Factors enabling or hindering Reading Clubs

Factors enabling Reading Clubs

1. The Reading Club represents a space for learning and interaction outside of school for girls and boys.



Yes, the girls and boys are improving a lot, when we started reading, they did not read very well, and now they are doing better, they are enjoying it equally. Some tell me that their parents help them at home.

Club Facilitators, Community 3, 2021

2. The involvement of committed volunteers in the implementation of Reading Clubs.



I have become empowered and mastered this, although I already had a feeling of being a reader, I didn't want it to be just for me, but also for others, and it has enriched me, I have strengthened my knowledge, I have realized that I can help children in another space.

Club Facilitators, Community 7, 2022

3. Faith leaders engaging effectively in activities to support children's literacy.



(The church) has the children's church, they also have a little school for the children that are divided, one for each child. So, what has motivated more moms to come? They are bringing their children more frequently, so the children are coming more often; when their moms don't come, they come on their own or I go to pick them up, I go by and pick up each child so that neither the child nor the mom becomes discouraged so that they can join the Reading Club and so that, as we always do in the churches, we teach the children on Sundays, Sunday School class, so I motivate them to bring the.

Club Facilitators, Community 6, 2022

4. Mothers' participation and involvement in children's literacy activities.



Some mothers used to say, "I used to tell my child to do his homework and that was it", if the child did it well, OK, if he did a poor job, the teacher would check it at school. And now they say, well, that they have seen changes because the child arrives, I give them two sheets, take them away, let them read them, those who can read, read them, and I am going to ask them what the sheets said, so some children come back and say things like: "mom, read this reading to me", "wait, maybe later I will read it to you", "no, right now I was going to learn what it says for when I have to go to the club... I already know what I am going to say". So, the parents are getting involved with the children because they get involved with them with the sheets they take home.

Club Facilitators, Community 8, 2022

5. Community leader's involvement in activities to support Reading Clubs.



The leader provides her house, her space so that 15 or 20 children can come to a club, so they are perceiving the space as something relevant for the children, even though in a club that I know of, a lady is providing her house even when she has no children in the club, she shares the space.

Local World Vision Official, Community 2, 2022

6. Reading Club facilitators' ability to effectively conduct Reading Clubs which increases children's attendance



Another relevant aspect is the methodology they are implementing in the Reading Clubs and the training provided by the World Vision education specialist to the volunteers, which has allowed them to learn the methodology, create and facilitate the club with stories, songs, dynamic activities, more fun for the children, and that allows the child to feel more joy, more excitement.

World Vision local official, Community 3, 2021

7. The effective training and sensitization of key stakeholders



We had received 6-7 initial training sessions as training facilitators. Strategies, dynamics, ways of working, theater, singing, phonetics. Learning to develop creativity, and imagination, taking initiative, and adapting materials to the conditions (this regarding quarantine, self-initiative). We work with an agenda, and a theme, and from there everything is done according to that.

Club Facilitators, Community 2, 2022



8. Building effective community networks



Interviewer: And this Community Action Committee, who is in it?

Interviewee: There is a structure, each one of them has parents, and there are members of institutions and religious leaders. It is intended that each of the... (Committees) have representation in each of the parents' spaces so that they can be aware of each of their roles and can work together.

(Local World Vision Officer, Community 6, 2022)



9. Reading Club as a mechanism for child protection



It brings joy and enthusiasm to them, you can see change between a child from the street and one who has arrived here, it helps them a lot and it is very good

Mothers/Parents/Caregivers, Community 6, 2022

10. How the UL program is established in close coordination and in alignment with Nicaragua's Educational Policy.



We have assumed as the Ministry of Education this challenge of comprehensive reading among the little ones in the early grades. The impulse of reading comprehension should be done from preschool. Because the reading has a lot to do with the motivation from the teacher. For every preschool child, we put them a story and the task of creating figures, since they can build them imaginatively. They are reading the story according to the figure and they are narrating that story, according to the drawings made in their minds. And for that, reading is fundamental. If we want to write well, the basis is in reading, if we want to have good writing, the basis is reading and if we want to have good oral expression, the basis is reading. The fundamental basis is in reading.

Ministry of Education Official, 2022

11. How the UL Reading Club model complements children's literacy learning in schools



It is a model that encourages children to develop their abilities and skills concerning literacy. Learning through play with creative, dynamic, interactive activities that allow children, and students to learn by doing.

Ministry of Education Official, 2022

Factors hindering Reading Clubs

1. Volunteers and other community members need constant and specific training.



First, we received the first training with [name], but [name] was assigned to another area, so we continued the Reading Club with another World Vision specialist and got a very nice experience.

Club Facilitators, Community 6, 2022

2. Extensive need of materials for Reading Club activities



The expendable material runs out quickly and especially when you are very active with the group.

Teachers, 2022

3.Challenges regarding Reading Club schedules and children’s availability.



One of the challenges that we consider a little heavy, is related to being able to coordinate the children's time because most of them go to school, and we have found that some attend school in the morning, others in the afternoon, and what we do is try, try here and there, and that is why there is a group in the morning, to give the children who attend school in the morning a chance, and another group in the afternoon, which is the largest.

Faith Leader, Community 9, 2021

4. The need for new Reading Club volunteers when others leave



Because many young people, once they get a job, leave this activity and also migrate to other places in search of better opportunities.

Club Facilitators, Community 8, 2021

5. Ongoing monitoring and support for sustainability



There should be more frequent follow-ups by World Vision to ensure quality in the implementation of the Reading Club. The program does not have an exclusive facilitator assigned to the communities.

Club Facilitators, Comunidad 8, 2021

6. Some inadequate spaces for Reading Clubs



In my opinion, I would need a bigger table, more chairs, and an acrylic board, because some of the children like to write and they like to write, so we would like that support, yes, that support.

Club Facilitators, Community 8, 2021

7. Far distances between girls' and boys' homes and their Reading Clubs



Only through the river, yes, because of the distance, as I said, I come to drop them off and bring them back, it is not a problem because you know how far away we live, so there is no option, I am the one who has to find a way to bring them, I go with them every morning, taking them to school at 7 am, they go to my mom's and I return at 1 to leave with them around 5.

Mother/father/caregiver, Community 5, 2021

8. Low participation of fathers (males) in Reading Club activities.



To be honest, the one who brings her is my daughter, an older one, she is the one who brings her (to the Reading Club), here the girl I almost don't... no well, I don't get involved in this, but my girl does, really.... she loves to draw, she says that she comes here to draw, and she tells me, "Daddy, I like to draw" and she starts to draw a little dog, everything that she imagines and I say, "it's good, my daughter" -I tell her- she should learn more so it.

Mothers/fathers/caregivers, Community 6, 2022

9. Violence and insecurity in some communities



Sometimes we have cases where the father since he is not involved at all, does not care if the child goes to school or not and sometimes he says, don't go to school, better come to work with me, he doesn't think it's important at all, so World Vision is struggling with that, at least the father should let the child go to school and not take him out.

World Vision Regional Official, Community 2, 2022

10. Effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and Hurricanes Eta and Iota



Well, the pandemic is one of the challenges, because there were many days when there were no meetings because of that problem. There was a very strong outbreak here in the community, so they decided that the children should not leave their homes, and there were no meetings. So that was something that changed because when they were able to get together, it was hard for them to concentrate in the group, and another issue was that they would be in one group one day, and another group the next, because of the number of children she works with, she chose to have one group one day and another group the next. She practically sacrificed her time to be able to have the children there with her.

Faith Leader, Community 1, 2022

11. Effects of poverty and migration



The issue of migration... Neither the granny nor the aunt shows the same attention or care for the necessary time that these children require to advance in their learning... Because the first challenge I mentioned was the absence from class, the second I mentioned was indiscipline, the third one is the situation of the father or the family communication; so, is the intertwining of these challenges that don't allow us to improve in 100% of the children.

Directors, 2022



Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

When analysing the gender dimensions, Reading Clubs are most commonly conducted by young women volunteers, housewives, religious leaders, Sunday school teachers, and preachers; although in three communities the Reading Clubs are supported by young men, students, university students or preachers, who are committed to their communities, to children and the Church. The Volunteers of the Reading Club commented that there are no differences between the participation of girls and boys within the sessions, the treatment among all key informants (girls, boys, volunteers, mothers, faith leader) is respectful, polite, and cheerful.

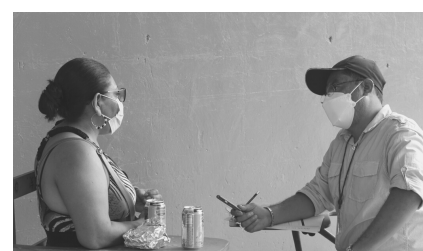
TABLE 2. Number of Reading Club Facilitators, by Sex and Community

Community	Phase 2 data collection		
	Women	Men	Total
1	1	0	1
2	1	0	1
3	1	0	1
4	1	0	1
5	1	0	1
6	1	0	1
7	1	0	1
8	2	0	2
9	2	0	2
10	2	0	2
Total	13	0	13

Table 3. Number of Children Participating in Reading Clubs

Community	Phase 2 data collection		
	Girls	Boys	Total
1	10	7	17
2	8	8	16
3	13	5	18
4	11	7	18
5	6	8	14
6	3	6	9
7	5	8	13
8	6	10	16
9	12	12	24
10	11	5	16
Total	85	76	161

Data indicates that there are very few cases of this children with disabilities among the Reading Club participants. Reading Camp Facilitators stated that they have not received any special training to support children with special needs such as those with disabilities and they try to inform themselves on their own and have an egalitarian attitude towards all children.



Participants' Perceptions of the Benefits of Reading Clubs

1. Girls and boys who attend Reading Clubs improve their reading and writing skills and other academic skills.



I feel that the biggest change is that she is learning to read.

Mother/Father/Caregiver, Community 5, 2022

2. Girls and boys who attend Reading Clubs develop other skills



We have seen the changes because there was a time when many older children could not draw, and there are children in preschool also, I have a girl in one of my groups that if you tell her to sign, she can sign, so there is progress because children are improving.

Local official World Vision, Community 4, 2022

3. Reading Clubs provide an alternative learning space to school.



My little girl can't wait for club day because early in the morning she's telling me, "Mom, it's time, it's the time!", she loves it, and she's excited about the club. And it's nice that they spend time with each other too, even if it's not an hour of class, but it's a moment here, and you see that they talk, when my little girl comes back she sings all the songs she likes.

Mother/father/caregiver, Community 6, 2022

4. Children's academic performance is improving as a result of the Reading Club.



Yes, her teacher called me right now and told me that the girl was doing very well academically, it's just that she talks a lot, but she is doing well, thank God.

Mother/father/caregiver, Community 2, 2021

5. Reading Club facilitators are acquiring new skills and community recognition.



Well, the knowledge we have acquired is good and we have taken them to practice and it is evident. Of course, there are weaknesses, and not everything is easy, but it is a matter of doing things... I am not an expert with children, but you can see that the child is having fun, and the nice thing is that the child has fun and does not feel like it's all a straight line.

Club Facilitators, Community 4, 2021

6. Parents'/caregivers' providing support to their children is at the core of the community network.



Sometimes when we have to do crafts some children come and support us so we finish faster with their help. When we ask them for example to bring boxes, the parents of the children bring them. Additionally, they support us because they guide the children to come to class, and tell them to attend the Reading Club. Also, the teacher of the school supports us and she is from the community.

Club Facilitators, Community 5, 2021

7. Reading Clubs enable community members to work together to help the community.



When there is a project or a model that you want to implement, from the point of view of complementarity, the first thing is that it responds, then, to the needs of the interests of educational policy such as in this case, because I believe that this articulation has been quite positive. But in addition to being positive, I think it has had its impact on the Community, on the educational communities, that is, on the school communities. Because a whole movement of motivation has been generated, but also of exercise by the habit of the reader. So it articulates all the 3 components of the Community, which are teachers, students, and family.

School Director, 2022





8. Sensitization in the education of children in the communities.



Yes, the Facilitators, the parents, we as a community and the World Vision organization, the change has been great, because we have seen it, from the moment the Facilitator leaves his house he is already contributing because he is eager to teach, there is a great interest in helping the children, besides they are people that one at least has a degree, the other lady has been a catechist for years.

Community member, Community 4, 2021

9. Children attending Reading Clubs build confidence in themselves and the community.



In the children, I have seen changes, some children were embarrassed to go to the blackboard, they said 'I am embarrassed, they are going to laugh at me', they are now able to have better interactions with the children of the club, then there is a change, they have learned, they ask what is that some children have had trouble reading, the mothers tell me that they have made good progress, they tell me with our help they have learned, a child in one of my groups tells me: Sister, what are we going to do, how do we make that flower, how are we going to sing? Since they don't know, I write on the blackboard so they can see, those who don't sing only listen, but there has been a big change. I tell them that they come here to learn, I have learned to make crafts, and sometimes you have an idea, but I have learned to have more love, and more patience with the children, I was a Sunday School teacher, and it has never been difficult for me to talk to the children, I like them to participate, so I have to help them, I have them work and help each other, the one who knows with the one who does not know, so they can see and in this way, they learn.

Club Facilitators, Community 9, 2022

10. Children attending Reading Clubs create their own stories, organize contests, and participate in school activities .



Well, the children I have seen in school, well, they are the most participative and some parents told me that they didn't like those "kids" who go out reciting poems and now, the teacher who is currently there, because the children I have are ... most of them are third graders and preschoolers. So the teacher tells me because as the teacher, she is my godmother too, so sometimes there is a group in which I am also involved. In this one, in a teacher's group. And then the teacher said to me, some of these children, some children didn't like to participate in declamation and folkloric dance and all that, now she says, she even surprises me, she says, because there was a child, she says that she couldn't get him to participate, in the dances. And now, he is the first one, he asks and wants to be included in everything and so I feel that we have been able to reach that point. And many children are like this, who want to discover more. So, it is true that they have been awakening every day.

Club Facilitators, Community 7, 2022

11. Participation of children of different ages in activities at the Club



Some children read fast to me, they read fast! I also have younger children and what do I do with the younger ones who don't understand the Reading Club yet, what do I do with them? I do dynamic activities, and I even have another promoter help me, as you know I can't handle so many children because it's not that it's difficult for me, it's just that there are times when the children read, the younger children are more hyperactive, so we do a kind of dynamic activity for them, we have drawings, that's what attracts their attention, we draw pictures, we color with them, and with the older ones who can already read, some had difficulties reading, I measured the time for them to adapt. When they were reading, they looked slow, but when they kept practicing, they went faster, as if they grasped the questions quickly.

Club Facilitators, Community 6, 2022

12. Attendance of children at the Club generates opportunities to open new community clubs.



I would like that, in addition to us, who have three Reading Clubs here, other communities can also have them. So that this would allow us to have a relationship, both with the community and the parents, and this would help the school daily. Because the truth is that, it is little, it is little what is given to the child and we should like her, I like her idea, she says; twice a week.

Club Facilitators, Community 8, 2022

13. Credibility and legitimacy in the network of Reading Clubs promoters at the community level.



In my opinion, excellent, because if I tell the children - we have a Reading Club on Saturday- and they are ready, at 2:30 in the afternoon the children are here, and from there they (mothers) are participating, others come to see them, to take care of them, so the support is good.

Club Facilitators, Community 6, 2022

Conclusions

Community Component: Among the changes that stand out in children who attend Reading Clubs, are the following: improvement in literacy, improvement in communication, and oral expression; improvement in imagination, creativity, and social skills; encouraging them to be more sensitive, and helpful and to share what they know with other children; children excel in painting and reading competitions in the communities, obtaining first places in contests in which they participate, being a reason to be proud of their parents, volunteers, and community leaders.

The volunteer Reading Club facilitators value that some older children, (10 to 12 years old, whose parents do not send them to school because they are assigned homework), participate in the Reading Clubs, which has allowed them to advance in their reading level. In Phase 2 of this study, participants' testimonies corroborate again the impact of the Reading Club sessions as an opportunity to reinforce the learning of the girls and boys, in a complementary way to what they learn in school. It was notable the positive validation by the children who attend Reading Clubs, who express emotions linked to joy, motivation, and satisfaction, benefiting from the interaction with other children and developing their communication and social skills. The playful nature of the Reading Club sessions is a key condition; there is also validation of the content and interactive nature of the Reading Club activities and games.

The volunteer Reading Club promoters are acquiring new skills and aspirations, as they find new ways to participate in the service of their community and the protection of their children. The willingness of female leaders in the communities to provide space in their home and to conduct the Reading Camp activities is notable, as is the role of the Parents Committee identified in three communities, integrated by mothers of children attending the Reading Club; they provide logistical support to the Volunteers. Additionally, volunteers' sensitization has allowed greater awareness about the importance of children's literacy from a young age. In some cases, caregivers are broadening their vision with a greater commitment that transcends the duty just to send their children to school by providing their children with literacy support at the home

Teaching Component: The UL model has been established in Nicaragua as a methodological alternative to complementary teaching, merging the technical proposal with the didactic work of the Ministry of Education of Nicaragua, specifically related to the Phonetic - Analytical-Synthetic FAS method, as a single, official and consistent method for learning initial literacy. The UL model provides additional tools to enhance children's learning in early grades (1-3). Most of the teachers interviewed recognized that the use of these techniques facilitates their work, both for the success of stimulating the child and for the support of material resources they receive from World Vision since these materials have been high quality, appropriate to the use of the language of children, and adjusted to the FAS method with its stages.



