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# Supporting students through culturally responsive teaching and learning materials

## Lessons from Afghanistan

CIES 2020

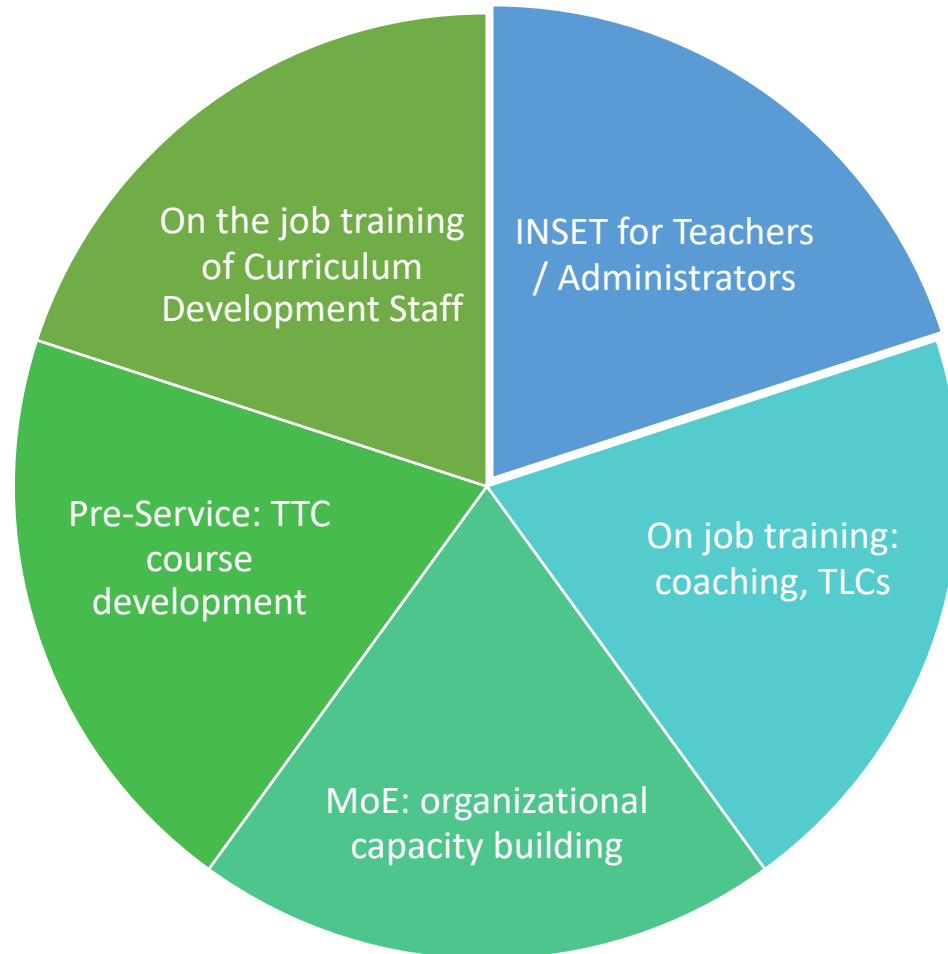
Agatha Van Ginkel and Susan Ayari

# Afghan Children Read

# Afghan Children Read Project

- The Afghan Children Read program is a USAID-funded primary education initiative:
  - To improve equitable access to education and generate measurable reading outcomes for girls and boys in Afghanistan.
  - To build the capacity of the Ministry of Education (MoE) in providing an evidence-based early grade reading (EGR) program (in Dari and Pashto) for students in Grades 1 to 3 in both formal and Community-Based Education (CBE) schools.
  - Implemented in four provinces in Afghanistan: Herat, Nangarhar, Laghman and Kabul

# Building Capacity on Early Grade Reading

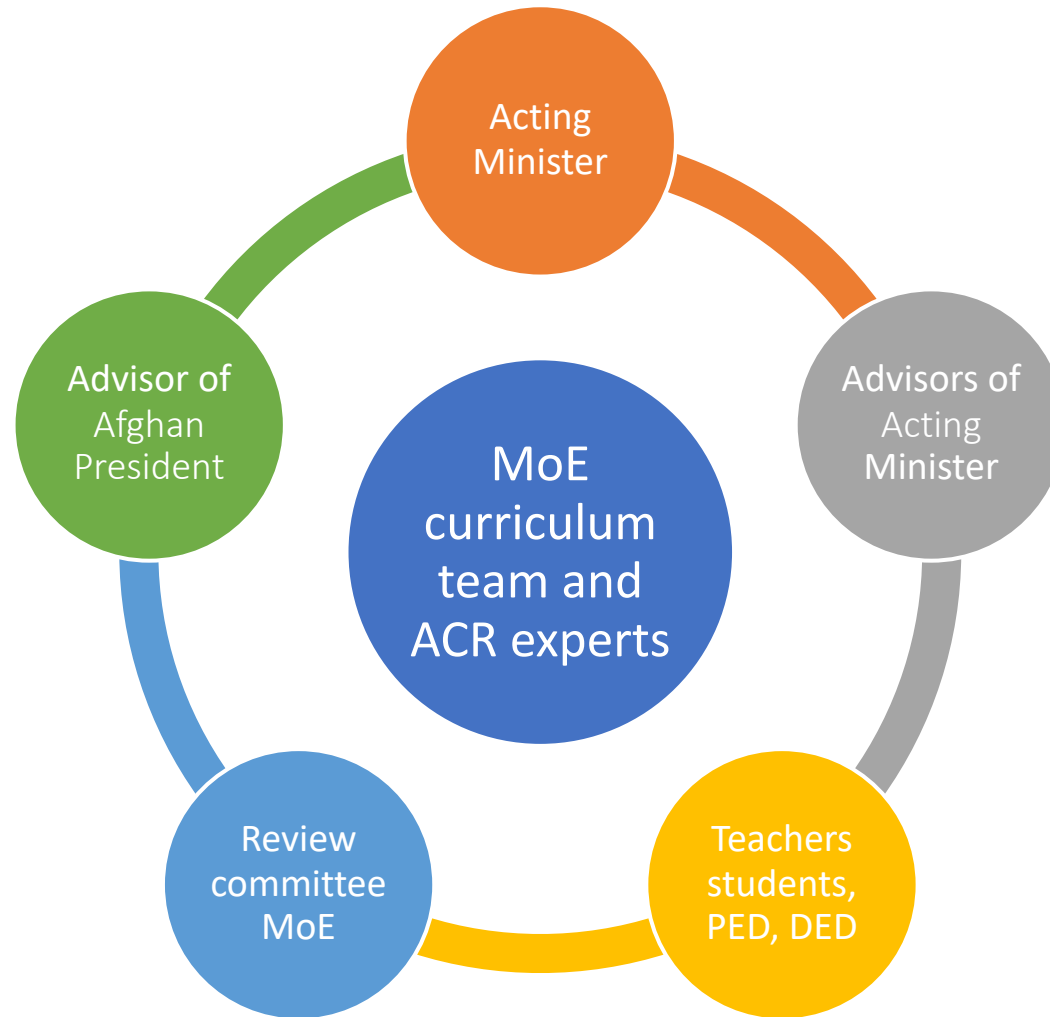


1. On the job training materials developers
2. Inservice Training for Teachers to use the new materials
3. On the job professional development through coaching and teacher learning circles
4. Preservice EGR courses
5. Organizational Capacity Building for MoE staff.



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# Materials Development: Collaborative Process





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# Materials included

1. Teacher's guide
2. Student book
3. Student workbook
4. Continuous assessment book



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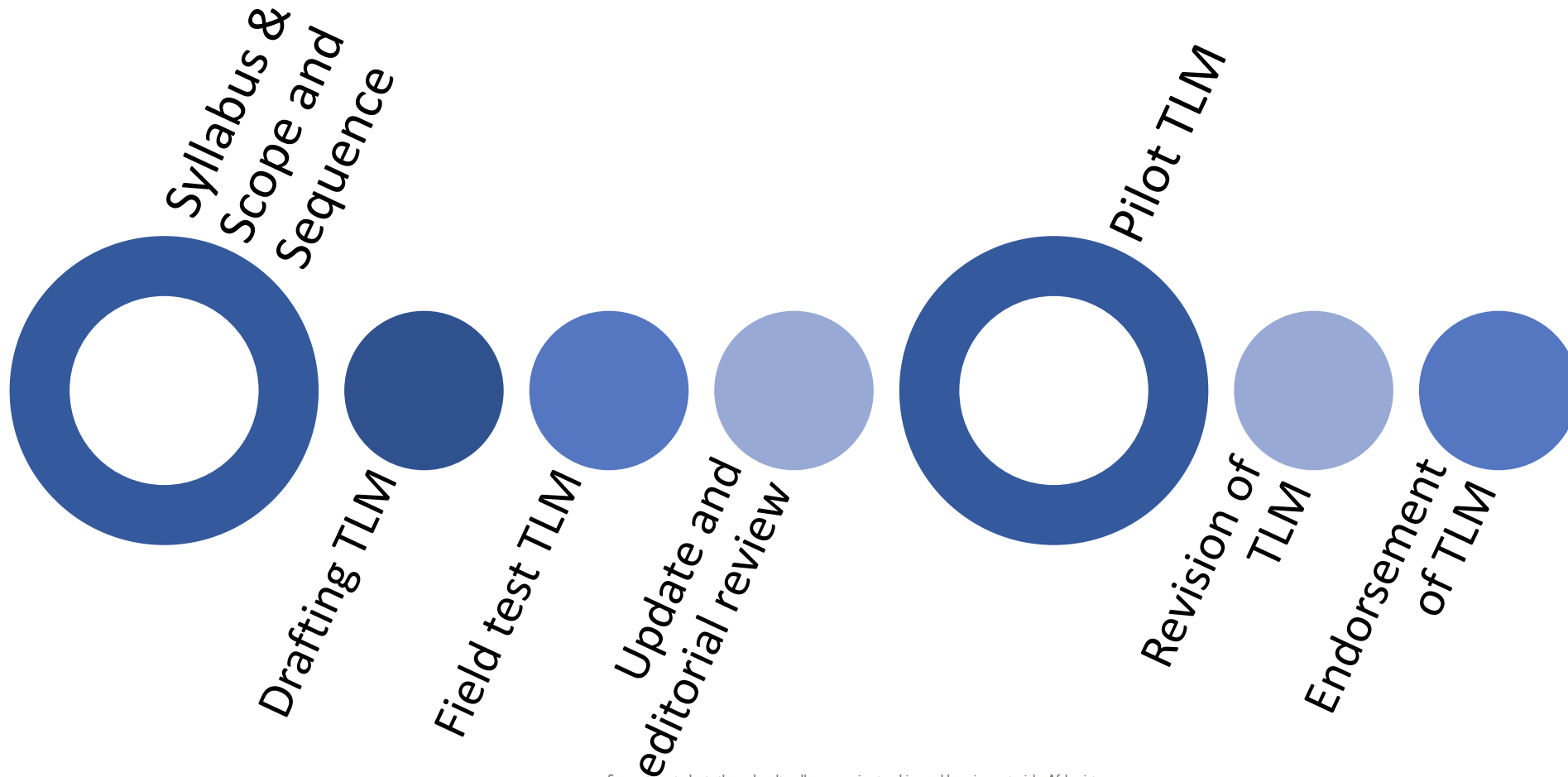
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# Materials Development Process





# Developing culturally responsive teaching & learning materials

# Afghan Children Read's Assessment of its Reading Materials

## Categories of Assessment

- Content of materials
- Use of the materials
- Gender
- SEL
- Disabled students

*'For the first time in the history of education, a written test is given to Grade 3 students. Because of these books, they could give the written test, because they can write now.'*

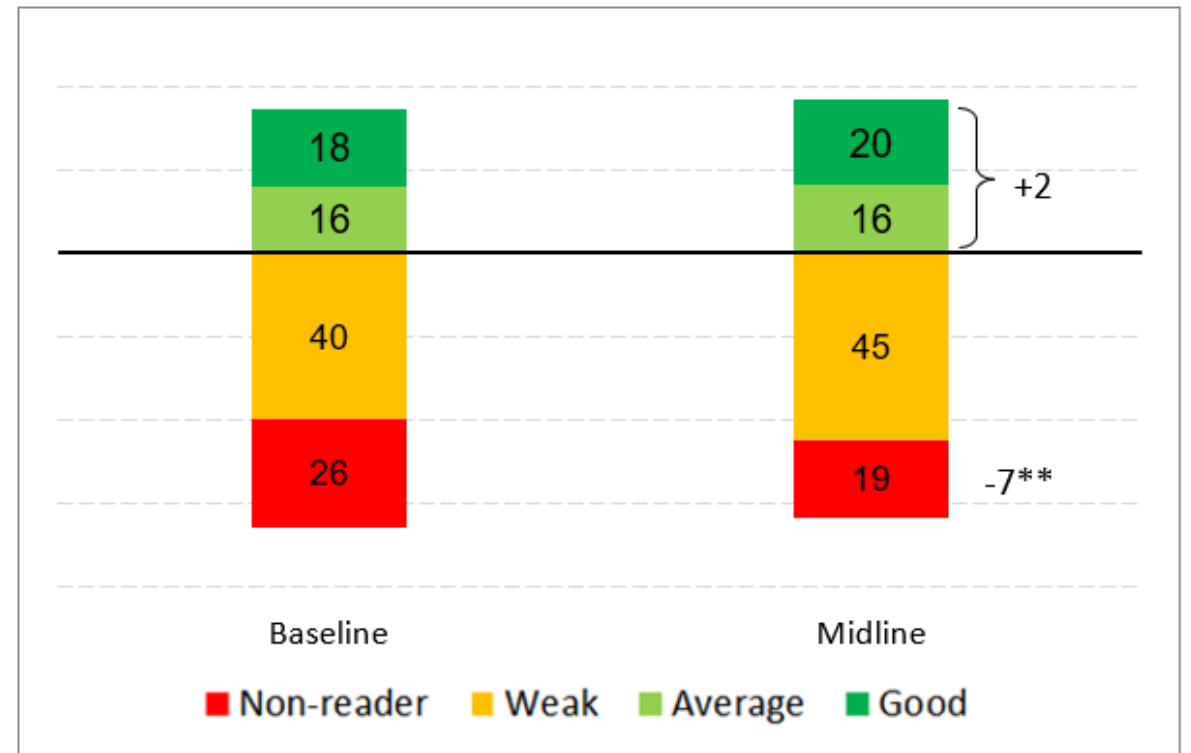
*Each lesson has a cultural and academic message.*

*In these materials there is no content about war, conflict and guns as there were in the previous curriculum. Instead, in these materials there are topics and lessons about unity, peace, friendship, love with the country and other good topics.*



# Academic Impact of TLMs - EGRA Midline

- After one year of implementation, an EGRA midline was conducted and it shows increase of good readers and in significant decrease of nonreaders.





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# Layout changes

هفته دوازدهم: روز اول

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بخوان و بنان

### معلم

روز معلم بود. فرشته مقاله‌ی نوشت و یک دسته گل آماده کرد، سوی مکتب روان شد. در راه گل از دستش افتاد و پَر پَر شد. او گریه کنان به صنف داخل شد. معلم پرسید: چرا دُخترم، فرشته گفت: گلی که به شما آورده بودم پَر پَر شد. حالا فقط مقاله ام را می‌خوانم. معلم عزیزم، تو به من خواندن و نوشتن یاد دادی. دوست دارم، روزت مبارک.

هفته دوازدهم

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روز معلم

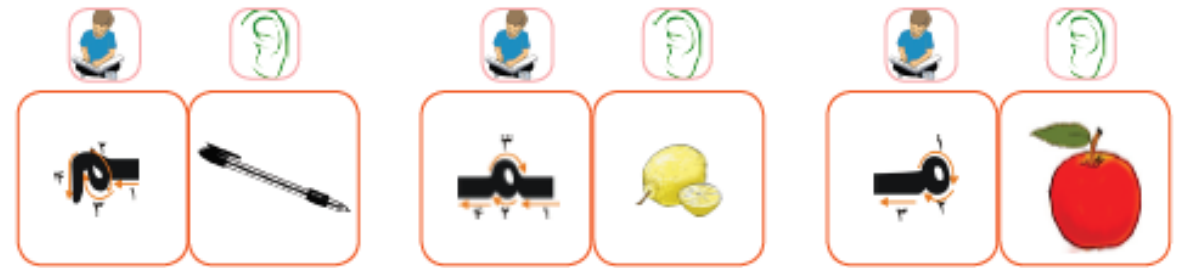
روز معلم بود. شاگردان با شورو شوق مکتب رفتند و گفتند: معلم عزیزم! روزت مبارک. صدف درباره‌ی معلم این ترانه را خواند:

در یک ورق کنار گل  
عکس ترا کشیده‌ام  
به قلب خود به جان خود  
اسم ترا نوشته‌ام  
معلمم عزیز من  
روز خودت مبارک  
روز خودت مبارک

شاگردان، همه کف زدند. به ترتیب گل‌های شان را به معلم دادند. دست‌های معلم را بوسیدند.

# Language and Script Adjustments

- Added list with key vocabulary to Teacher's guide
  - Literacy related
  - Dialectal differences
- Used diacritics to make the script transparent
- Alphabetic script yet syllabic approach



# Curriculum Reform – Merging subjects

- Inclusion of calligraphy in the Early Grade Reading Curriculum
- Calligraphy became part of the scope and sequence
  - Pedagogy
  - Reinforcing letters and words learned



# Inclusion of Social Emotional Learning

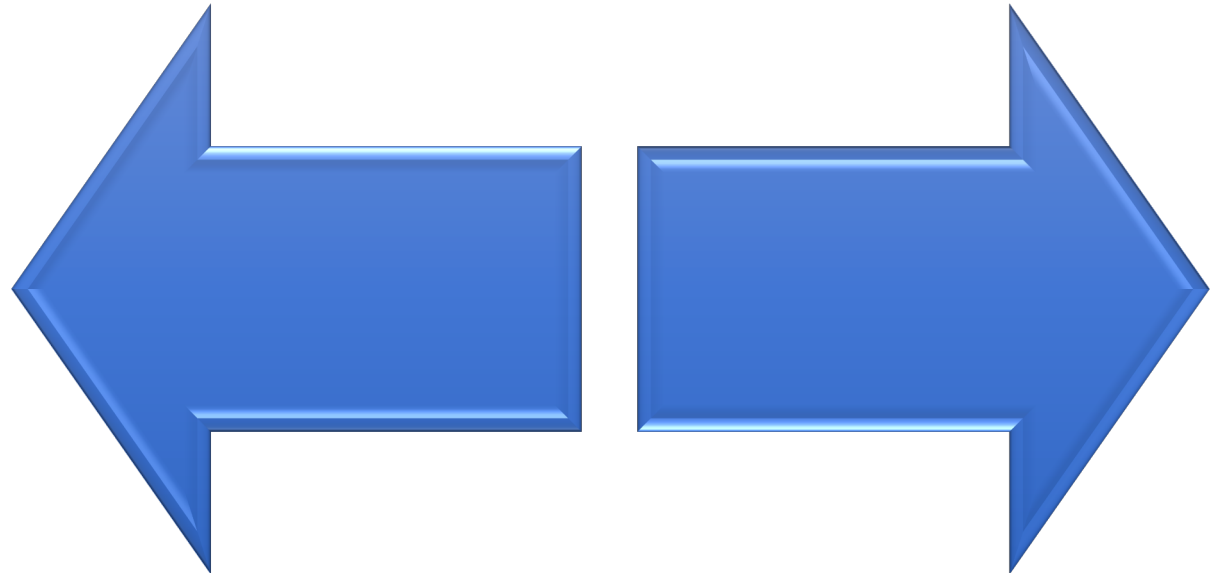
- SEL is included and integrated to respond to context of conflict and crises.
- SEL is included in:
  - Early Grade Reading method
  - Inservice teacher's training
  - Coaching
  - Preservice training for teachers

*"The minds of the children have become stronger – they are alert, more active than before." (FGD participant)*



# Gender Responsive

- Gender sensitive
- Equal representation of genders
- Equity
- Transformative roles



Gender: girls included

Provide model that boys and girls can do the same work and even work together.

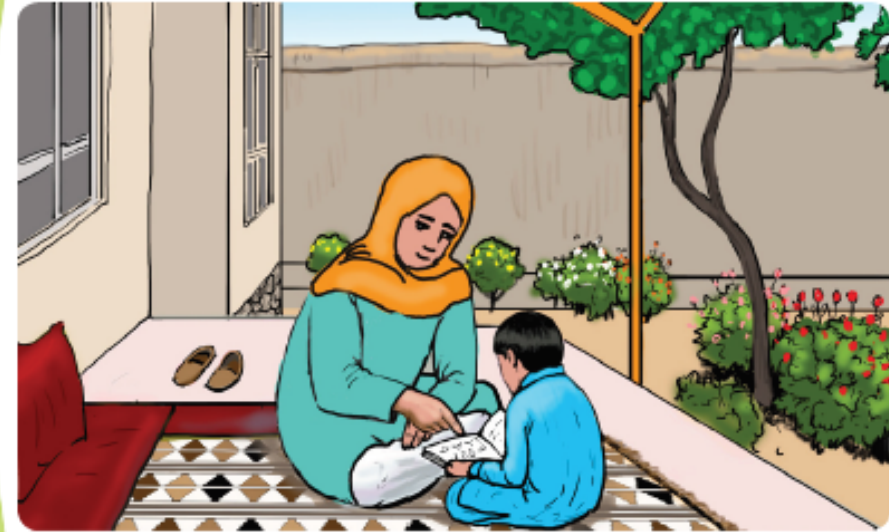




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# Gender: Father replaced by Mother

Provide different role models of females: a mother can also help with schoolwork.







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# Gender: Females as part of meeting

Provide different role models of females: females can also be part of committees and meetings.





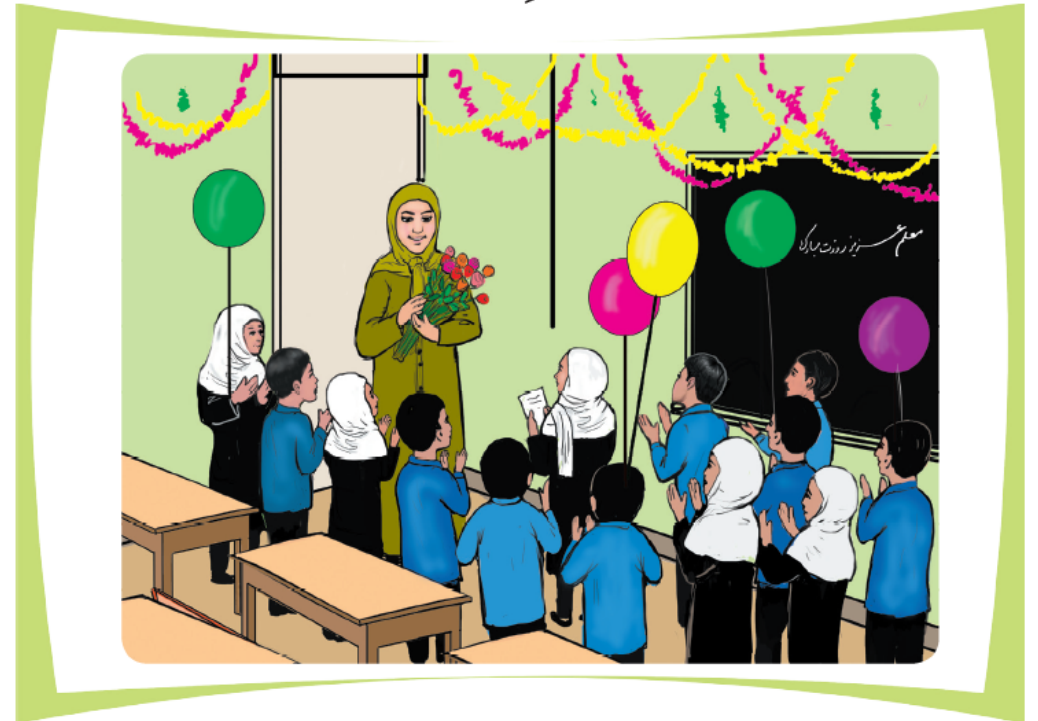
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# Father and daughter interaction



# Gender: Cultural Adjustments

No hair shown of teacher (no female in books) but a happier classroom.





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# Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Materials

- It is a process to develop culturally responsive materials and needs time and input from people from different walks of life
- It requires working with principles and contextualizing them
- It implies context specific cross cutting themes
- In Afghanistan, it was also a capacity building process
  - Each comment and input provided opportunities for interaction and discussion of content, illustrations (purpose), layout
- In Afghanistan it has resulted in the new Early Grade Reading Materials becoming the national materials for teaching reading and writing