

Enabling Writers

When children are acquiring reading skills, good teaching is critical but just as critical is the opportunity to practice reading. Practice allows children to apply skills learned in class and to expand their vocabulary and content knowledge through reading.

Unfortunately, children's reading materials are rare in developing countries. When they do exist, they are usually in languages most children do not understand or are at a level far too difficult for primary school students. There are many reasons for this dearth of appropriate materials, but one vital cause is that local publishers and authors lack a simple and efficient way of producing multiple titles in mother tongue languages that are suitable for and interesting to children in early primary school.

This is why [All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development](#) (ACR GCD), established in 2011 as a partnership between [USAID](#), [World Vision](#) and the [Australian Government](#), is hosting [Enabling Writers](#), a \$100,000 prize competition aimed at finding technology-based solutions to improve reading skills for children in developing countries. The global competition seeks to spur the development of software solutions that allow authors to easily create and export texts in mother tongue languages to help early-grade students to read. The *Enabling Writers* challenge, powered by [InnoCentive](#), a global leader in crowdsourcing innovation problems, is one of several technology-for-literacy competitions being launched throughout Round 2 of ACR GCD



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After the submission period closes on 1st October 2014, three finalists will receive awards of \$12,000 each. They will receive feedback from our judging panel and their innovations will then be piloted and reviewed in three countries with ACR GCD partner programs. The highest performing software will win a grand prize of \$100,000.

Solvers' software should provide the two types of reading materials that early primary school children need:

1. Decodable readers for the earliest stages of reading acquisition that employ words using only the sounds and letters children have already learned.
2. Levelled readers that are controlled for vocabulary, word length, sentence length and other characteristics.



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Both types of materials can be fiction and non-fiction. Successful software will allow writers to use an easy step-by-step process on a computer or mobile device and create texts that follow tested early-grade reading instruction methodologies. The software should:

- Work for writers who know a story they want to write or a subject matter they want to present but also provide less prepared writers with existing stories and nonfiction text that they could adapt for their audiences
- Ensure writers are kept within technical boundaries appropriate for the target reader and reading level
- Provide directions and prompts in a common national language but allow authors to write in both national and local languages.

For further information about All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development, please visit <http://bit.ly/1jRqBJ1> or follow us @[ReadingGCD](#) on Twitter.