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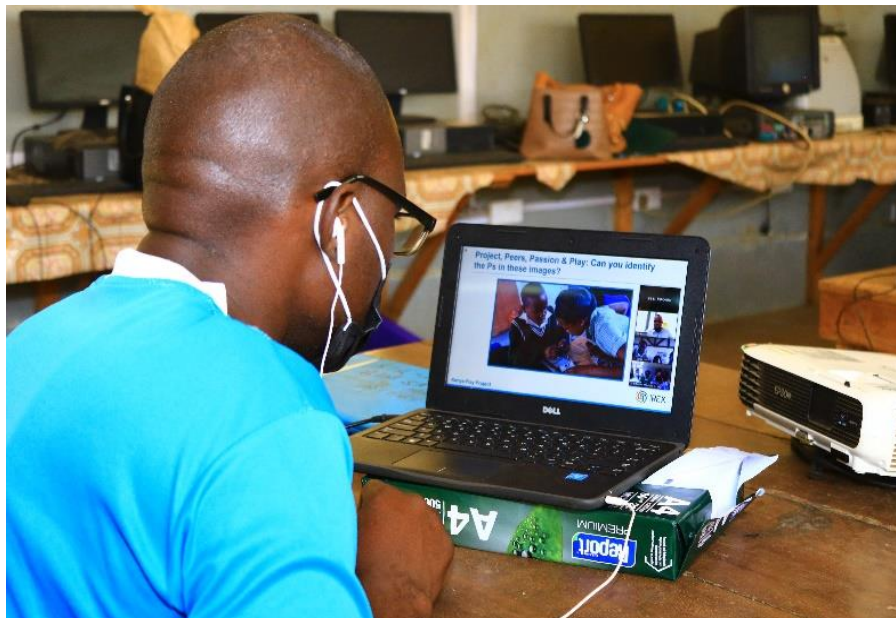


Image 1: Sir Ali Primary School Teacher during the KPLAY Teachers Workshop

Director's Letter

KPLAY has had a robust implementing period in October and November 2021. This Newsletter provides some key highlights from activities and experiences and provides an overview of our next steps as the project winds up its pilot year. Following the confirmation of partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Project has been able to move forward with activities key among them the Steering Committee meetings and conducting the Training of Trainers (TOT) of the System Embedded Coaches (CSOs) as well as Teacher Workshops on Creative Coding.

KPLAY is celebrating the successful selection of 100 schools for scaling 2022 in collaboration with the steering committees (Kilifi & Kwale) whose advice on the school distribution and suitability was valuable. Among the Project's next steps is the establishment of the National Level Working Group, an ongoing process to be initiated by an inspection of the Project by the Ministry of Education (1st to 3rd December 2021).

The project also successfully conducted the 3rd Installment of trainings of System Embedded Coaches and the Teachers Workshops with a focus on Creative Coding using Scratch. This achievement was made possible by KPLAY's collaboration with humans who play and Stem Impact Center.

The project anticipates that with these skills the teachers and school leaders will better undertake ICT integration in CBC in their schools.

The success of the pilot period culminating in December with the launch of the PlayLab Model Prototype has been made possible by support of participants and stakeholders. We especially appreciate the support of the County Governments of Kwale and Kilifi, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Teachers Service Commission (TSC) at County and National levels, our pilot cohort of teachers, headteachers and CSOs of the participating schools in 2021 and the IREX Kenya leadership in Nairobi.

Finally, the project appreciates the Lego Foundation for their financial and technical support. We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2022.

Caroline Amollo,

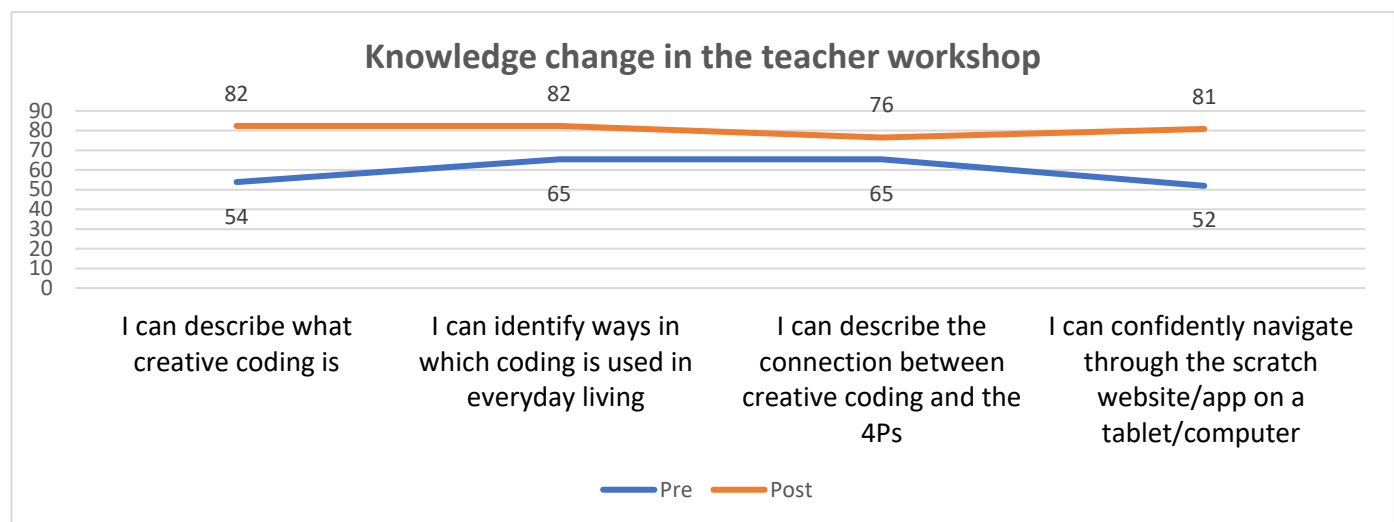


KPLAY Project Director
IREX

Training on Creative Coding

The project has successfully completed training of school leaders and teachers on creative coding. The KPLAY Training team worked in close collaboration with the humans who play team to develop the content for the trainings. This is the third and final instalment of trainings in this pilot year and completes the overall goal of equipping school leaders and teachers on playful learning with technology. The training on creative coding were first conducted with the system embedded coaches (CSOs, Play Ambassadors and Headteachers) in October. A total of 33 System Coaches were trained (18 in Kwale and 15 in Kilifi). The TOT also readied the coaches to be co-facilitators in the teachers' workshops.

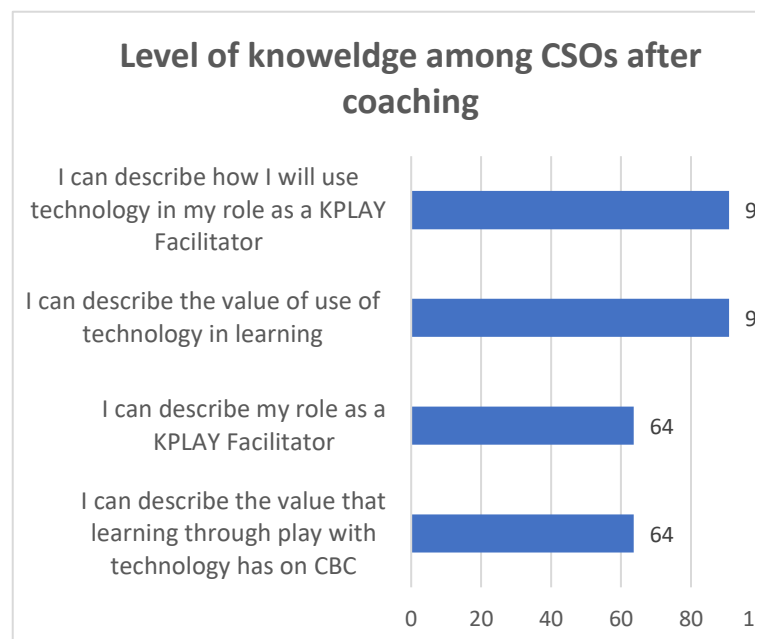
In November, KPLAY trained teachers on creative coding using the hybrid approach. As in the previous trainings, teachers gathered in their schools and interacted with the training facilitators via Zoom. The project provided materials, and internet bundles. The system embedded coaches co-facilitated the sessions, particularly the headteacher and CSOs who led some sessions and supported orienting their teams on the content of the training. All 11 pilot schools participated in the teachers' workshop which saw 63 teachers, 11 head teachers and 4 CSOs participate. In Kwale county, the CSOs were unable to participate due to a Ministry of Education event whose dates coincided with the KPLAY workshop.



Coaching Model Pilot

In November, the project piloted the Coaching Model through 4 virtual coaching sessions with CSOs in Kwale and Kilifi County aimed at preparing them to better play their role as co-facilitators in the teacher workshops. The project provided CSOs with data bundles to enable them to connect virtually from their location. The sessions were held once every week starting 27th October and ending on 17th November 2021. The CSOs reported that they found the sessions very helpful in deepening their understanding of learning through play with technology and its nexus with CBC. In the words of one CSO

"It has opened my mind and made me even embrace CBC more. Wish to introduce play activities and scratch to my teachers in the zone and let them explore and experience how teaching and learning can be enjoyable."



Collaboration and Partnership

The project has also been fortunate to develop meaningful collaborations that will support project implementation. These collaborations are with Aga Khan Foundation and STEM Impact Center. These collaborations are anticipated to continue for the lifetime of the project.

Collaboration with Aga Khan Foundation is through their Tucheze na Kusoma (TUKU) Project in Kwale and Kilifi. The TUKU Project is under the same Tech and Play Initiative as KPLAY and with support from the Lego Foundation. KPLAY and TUKU projects have agreed to collaborate to ensure efficiency and prevent overlaps that could impact negatively on the results of both projects. The two projects have participated in each other's school selections for 2022 ensuring that there are no overlaps in the schools to prevent overburdening teachers with participation in two similar projects. Another area of collaboration is in convening of the Steering Committee, a stakeholder engagement approach used by both projects. The ultimate intention is to combine Steering Committees into one since the membership at each county are very similar. Both TUKU and KPLAY Projects have in their steering committees the same representatives from the County Governments and officials from the Ministry of Education and Teacher Service Commission at County level. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be signed between both projects by the end of this year to firm up the collaboration.

With STEM Impact Center, the collaboration is focused on providing technical support in training of teachers especially in creative coding and in establishment of Play Labs. STEM Impact Center provided two facilitators in the just completed TOTs and Teacher Workshops and provided the much-needed expertise on introducing school leaders and teachers to Scratch.

School Selection for 2022

In preparation for the project upscaling in 2022. The project successfully selected 100 schools to participate in the project's second year of implementation. The selection was made possible by the dedication of the Steering Committees in Kwale and Kilifi who conducted the rigorous process of identifying 50 schools each in their respective counties. The Steering Committee was supported by sub-county Directors of Education who have a more detailed understanding of the school and landscape in their areas of jurisdiction. In Kwale of the 50 Schools selected, two Schools are special schools for the deaf, and three are private schools. In Kilifi of the 50 schools selected, one school is exclusively for learners who are physically disabled.

Next steps

In December the project will focus on the following activities as part of wrapping up of the pilot period.

- Community Engagement Strategy 2022- Strategy to engage with parent associations, local leaders and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to enable them effectively support playful learning.
- Steering Committee Meetings in Kwale and Kilifi Counties to review workplan and identify Community Based Organisations (CBOs) for the Community Engagement Strategy.
- Play Lab Prototype launch at Jomo Kenyatta Primary School in Kwale County on December 11th, 2021.
- Finalizing partnership agreement with Airtel that will see participating schools provided with internet connection even beyond the life of the project.
- National Level Working Group Launch. Project is working with Ministry of Education to convene the first National Level Working Group in February 2022.