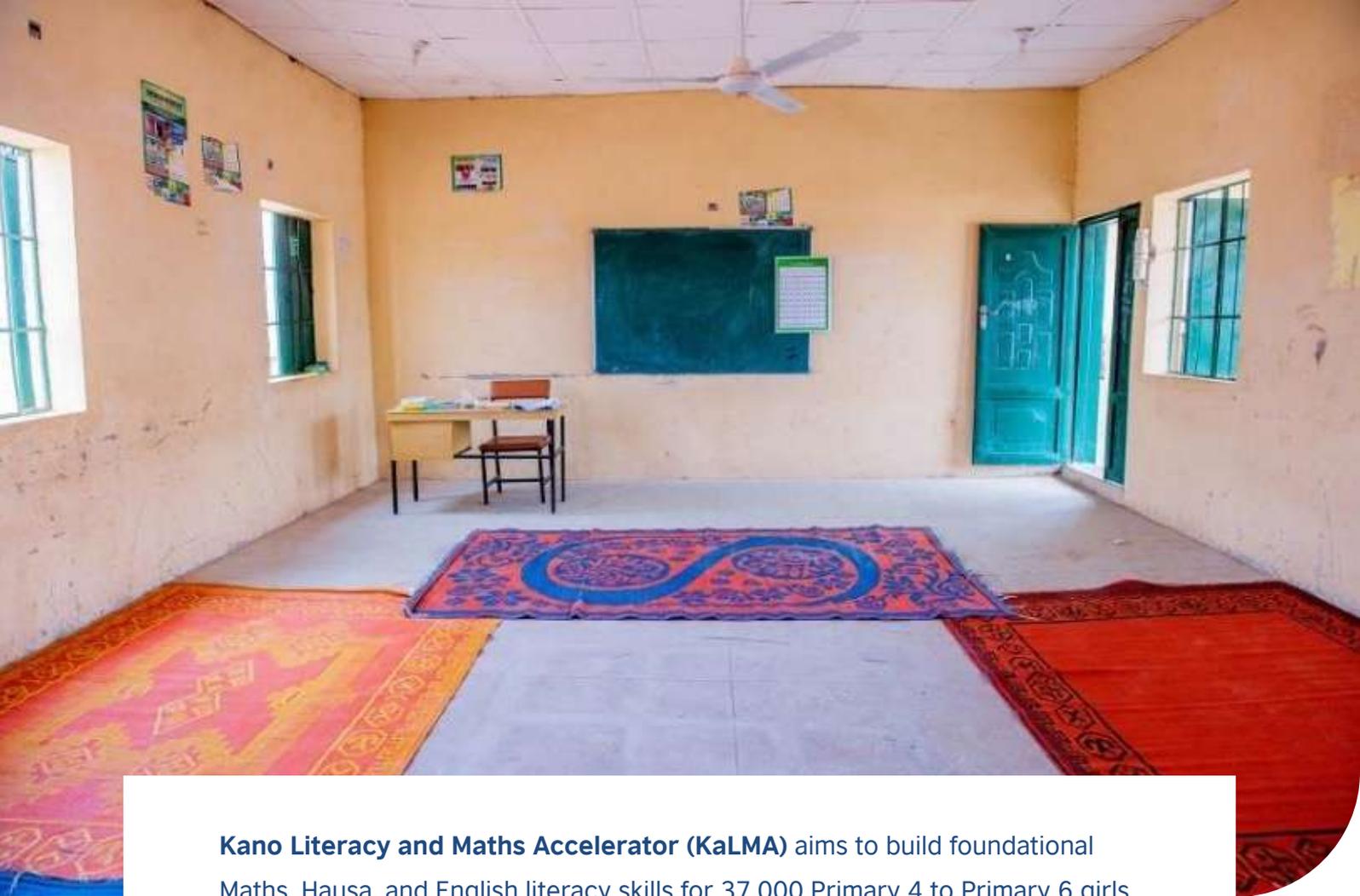




Voices from Kano State

Kano Literacy and Maths
Accelerator (KaLMA) English by Radio



Kano Literacy and Maths Accelerator (KaLMA) aims to build foundational Maths, Hausa, and English literacy skills for 37,000 Primary 4 to Primary 6 girls and boys in Dawakin Tofa and Wudil in Kano State, Nigeria. The project was launched in October 2019 by the Kano State Universal Basic Education Board, Ministry of Education and Sa'adatu Rimi College of Education in collaboration with the British Council and Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) Africa with funding from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). With the closure of all schools across Kano State due to COVID-19 in March 2020, and the halting of project activities, the KaLMA team responded quickly to minimise the pandemic's effects on learning. They also supported the state government in its education-in-emergency response. This included repurposing KaLMA materials, as well as existing British Council, TaRL Africa and other open education resource materials, to suit the delivery of remote learning to the home environment. The case studies describe three different experiences of the dual language approach to foundational skills in English by using Hausa as a bridge to learning English. This means using the children's own language to assist their learning of an additional one.

The KaLMA research team braved flash floods and near impassable roads to reach families in remote areas of Kano State and hear the moving stories of children and caregivers who were determined to keep learning going despite the many challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Case Study 1

Hassana and Umar Ibrahim



“I see this experience as a big surprise. It is unbelievable! I and my daughter have seen real transformation from the KaLMA radio programmes. If not because of the programme, I wouldn't have bought a black board.”

These are the words of Umar Ibrahim Danguwa, father to Hassana, a Primary Five pupil at Danguwa Central Primary School in Dawakin Tofa local government area. Umar has given a lot of support to his daughter, Hassana, so that she can listen to and understand the English by radio programme. Despite the financial hardships caused by COVID-19, Umar bought a blackboard for Hassana to use when they listen to the broadcasts. He writes out words from the radio activities on the board so that the children see the connection between the written and spoken words in both Hausa and English. He explains tasks from the programme that can be a bit difficult for children to do on their own, such as forming a sentence, and has created a study timetable for Hassana and her siblings.

Case Study 2

Fatima Idris



“The use of the dual language approach has grown my interest in learning English.”

These are the words of Fatima, a Primary Six pupil of Dawanau Senior Primary School who is very enthusiastic about learning English and who would like to be a newscaster. Fatima says that the English by radio programme has really improved her English. Before its introduction, she found it very difficult to understand the meaning of English words. However, Fatima says that the dual language methodology used in the radio broadcasts, where her mother tongue (Hausa) is used as a bridge to learning English, has been very helpful. She vividly recalls a sentence in both English and Hausa that she has learned from the radio lessons: “It has two legs and two eyes.” - “Tana da kafafuwa guda biyu da idanuwa guda biyu”. Other bilingual forms she now knows include, “Who is this?” – “Wanene wannan”? and “How old is he?” – “Shekarunsa nawa”?

Case Study 3

Haruna and Yahaya Bako



“I take time to revise the lessons with Haruna, and as a result he has gradually started to understand them.”

Haruna, from Dawakin Tofa Model Primary School, has some speech and language difficulties. Due to these challenges he started school late, at the age of eight. Haruna’s father, Yahaya Bako, says it hasn’t been easy for him to acquire literacy and numeracy skills, so he sets aside time to listen to the KaLMA radio programme together with Haruna and his siblings, making sure that Haruna is included even though he needs more time to understand the lessons. Yahaya adds that *“I take time to revise the lessons with Haruna, and as a result he has gradually started to understand them”*. Yahaya has even bought a mobile phone and some writing materials for Haruna to help him with his radio lessons. When Yahaya is away from home, he asks his brother to listen to the programme with Haruna and give him the support he needs. He adds, *“Whenever I am not around, I instruct his younger brother to go and listen to the programme with Haruna. Sometimes when the brother is also not around, I instruct Haruna’s elder sister to listen to the programme with the boy and sometimes when I return home and if it’s not too late at night, I call Haruna and we do a recap on the programme lessons together”*.