



# Leh Wi Lan Sierra Leone Secondary Grade Learning Assessment 2019



## Key facts about pupil learning, teaching and school management in Koinadugu District

The UKaid-funded *Leh Wi Lan* programme is supporting the Sierra Leone Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) to achieve sustained improvements in girls' education and secondary grade learning outcomes. One part of the *Leh Wi Lan* programme is an annual secondary grade learning assessment (SGLA) survey, conducted to understand and track changes in the school's learning environment, teaching practices and pupil learning achievement. The first SGLA I survey was conducted in 2017, with a follow-up SGLA II survey in 2018, and the latest SGLA III survey in 2019.

**This note focuses on Koinadugu district and presents evidence on school management, teaching and pupil achievement in Koinadugu's secondary schools from the SGLA III. Below are key results from across the secondary school system.**



### Principal characteristics and school environment are measured

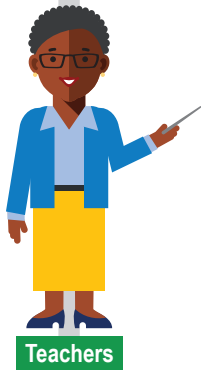
**JSS principals have an average of 6 years of experience as a principal.**  
This is higher than the national average (5).

**SSS principals have an average of 6 years of experience as a principal.**  
This is the same as the national average (6 years).



**Only 3% of JSS principals are female.**  
This is lower than the national average (8%).

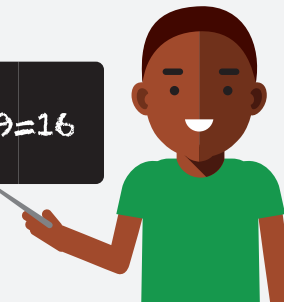
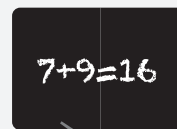
**There are no female principals.**  
This is lower than the national average (6%).



### Teacher characteristics and teaching methods are measured

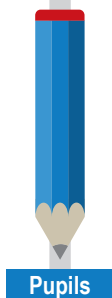
**44% of JSS teachers have a higher teaching certificate (HTC).**  
This is higher than the national average (40%).

**34% of SSS teachers have an HTC.**  
This is similar to the national average (35%).



**Only 2% of JSS teachers are female.**  
This is lower than the national average (6%).

**There are no female SSS teachers.**  
This is lower than the national average (3%).



### Pupils from JSS2 and SSS2 are assessed using an English and maths test

**60% of JSS2 pupils are still at a P6 level or below.**

#### English

**57% of SSS2 pupils are still at a P6 level or below.**



**72% of JSS2 pupils are still at a P6 level or below.**

#### Maths

**74% of SSS2 pupils are still at a P6 level or below.**



## Pupils: What is the level of English and maths skills typically demonstrated by JSS2 and SSS2 pupils in Koinadugu?

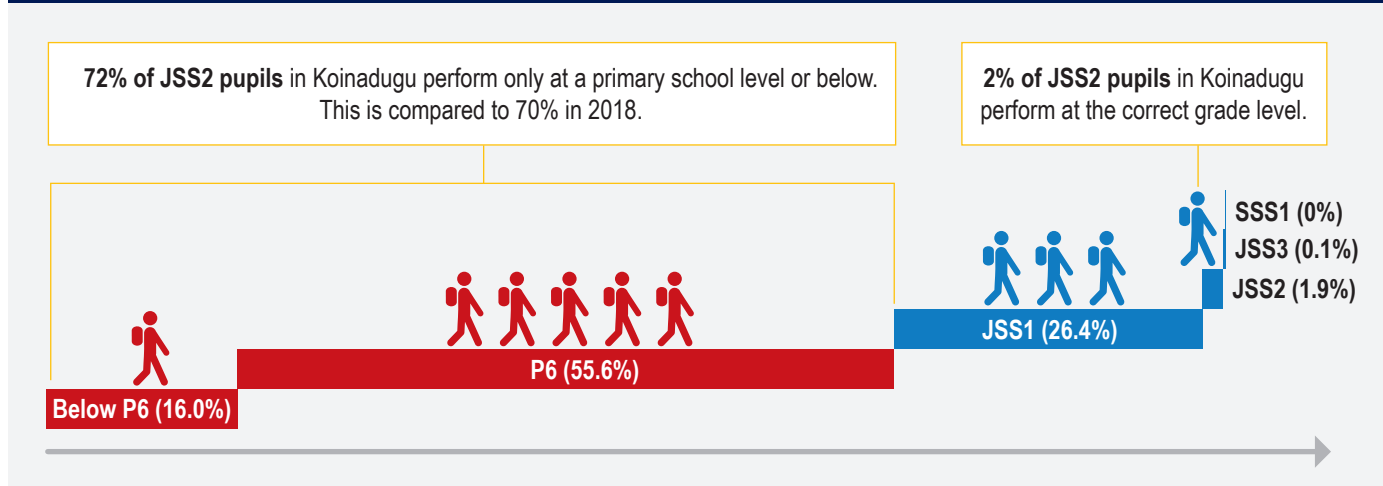
**Koinadugu performs poorly compared to other districts, but better at a JSS level than SSS**

In Sierra Leone overall, the SGLA III reiterates findings from last year’s survey: pupil learning levels in secondary grades are generally low. There is a wide gulf between pupils’ actual skills and competencies, compared to national curriculum expectations. Sierra Leonean pupil performance on maths scores have declined from 2018 to 2019 – with more students only being able to perform at a P6 level or below.

Koinadugu performs below the national average for both maths and English. At an SSS2 level, Koinadugu experienced a decline in maths scores from 2018 to 2019. However, at a JSS2 level, Koinadugu experienced relatively similar scores between 2018 and 2019. In each of these years, 72 per cent of JSS2 pupils performed only at P6 level or below.

English scores in Koinadugu have a similar pattern of decline from 2018 to 2019. In 2018, 59 per cent of JSS2 pupils and 50 per cent of SSS2 pupils performed at a P6 level or below. In 2019, 60 per cent of JSS2 pupils and 57 per cent of SSS2 pupils perform at a P6 level or below.

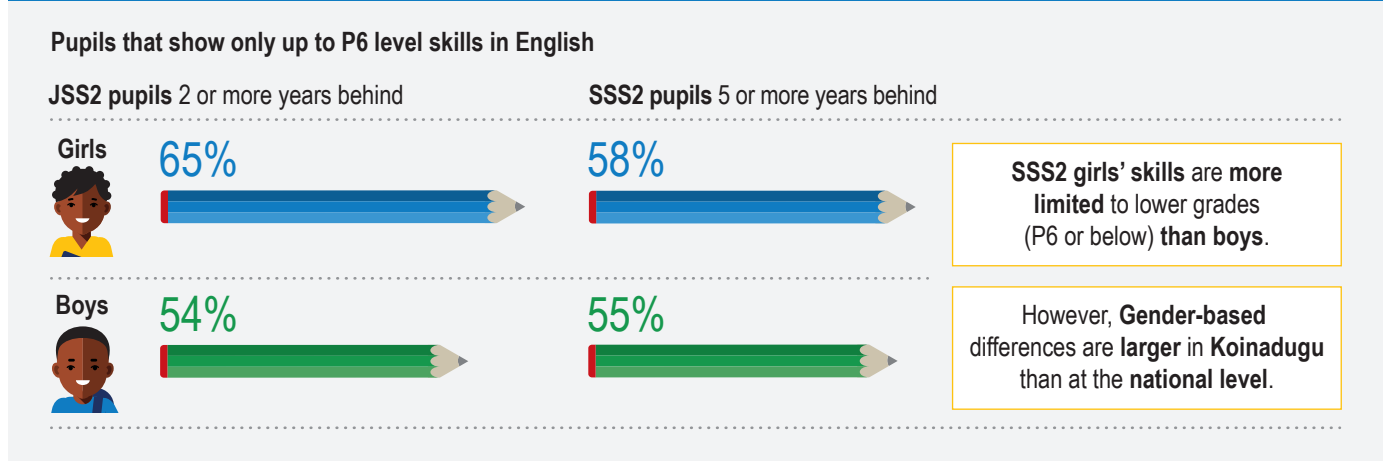
**Figure 1: Maths performance by JSS2 pupils in Koinadugu**

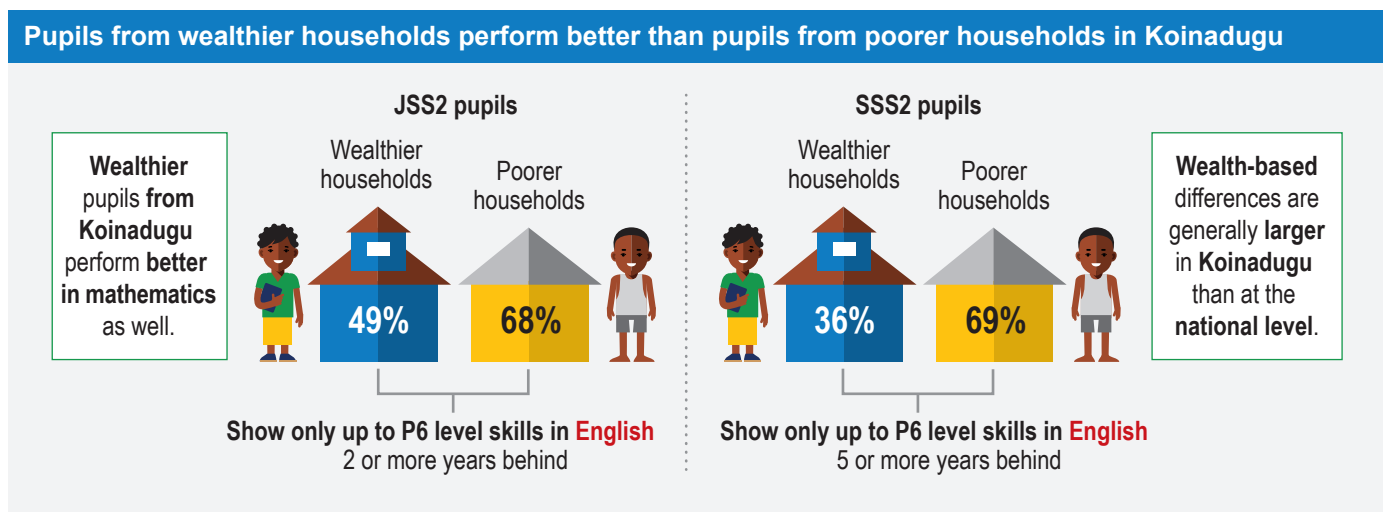


### How does learning vary across types of students?

In Koinadugu, as in most other districts, we see pupil performance differ based on gender, pupil wealth and the remoteness of the school from the district centre.

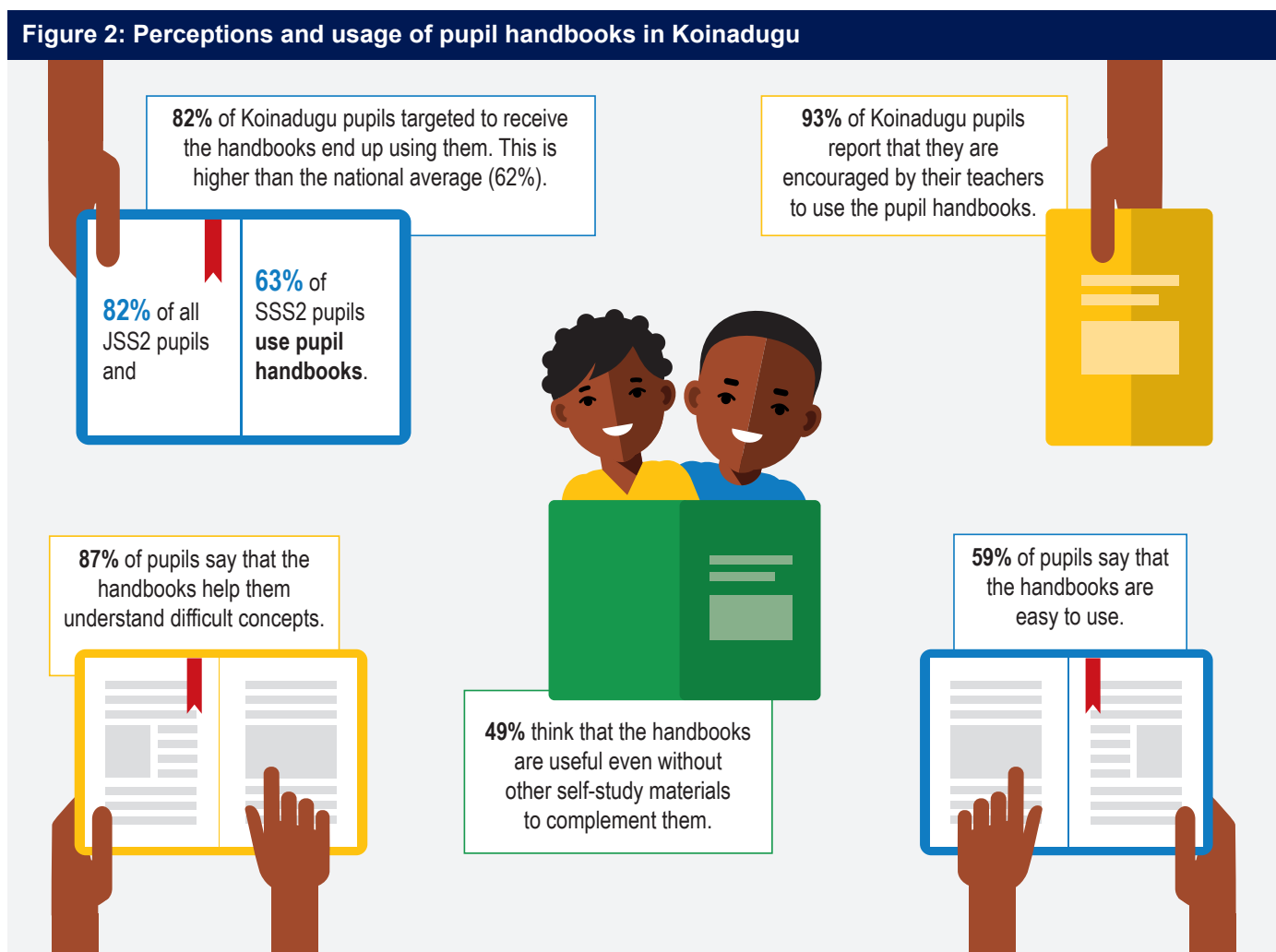
**In Koinadugu, gender-based differences are larger than at the national level**





### How are pupil handbooks being used to assist learning?

Starting in January 2019, pupil handbooks were distributed throughout the country to JSS and SSS pupils in government-owned and government-assisted schools. These handbooks are meant to complement learning which happens in the classroom. As such, there are JSS2 and SSS2 handbooks for English and JSS2 and SSS2 handbooks for maths. The diagram below captures a snapshot of the uptake of these handbooks based on interviews with pupils in Koinadugu.

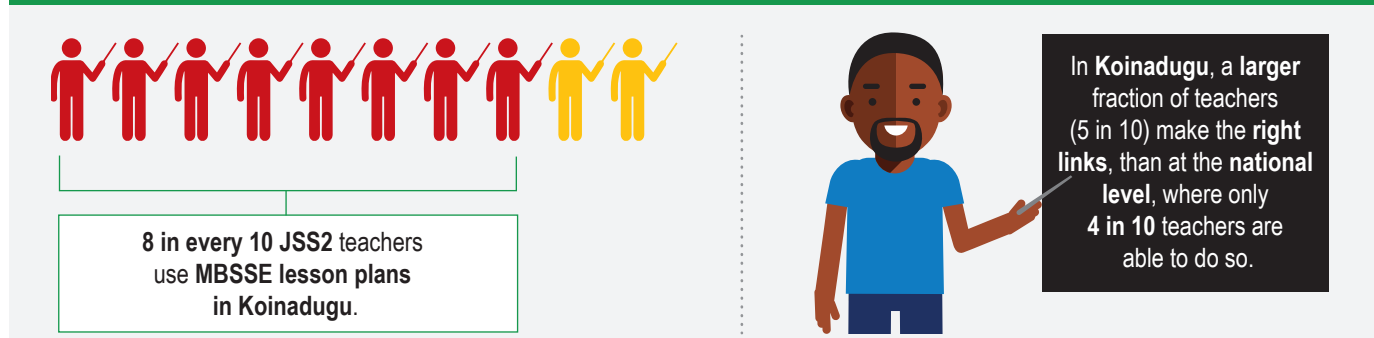


## Teachers: How are lesson plans being used by teachers to support learning in Koinadugu?

Secondary school teachers widely used some form of teaching guide to plan and prepare for their lessons, with a vast majority (80 per cent) of teachers reporting the use of MBSSE lesson plans in Koinadugu. This is higher than the national level (74 per cent).

Teachers generally reported to understand the use and purpose of lesson plans to facilitate learning, however initial evidence on teachers' understanding of lesson plan content does not support this claim. In practice, 50 per cent of teachers in Koinadugu managed to correctly match a set of learning objectives, taken from the lesson plans from their subject, with the appropriate grade.

### A vast majority of Koinadugu teachers are using lesson plans, but their understanding of its contents is still limited



## How much instructional time do pupils receive from their teachers in Koinadugu?

On average, pupils in secondary schools in Koinadugu got limited instructional time from their teachers, less so in JSS (12 hours per week) than SSS (13 hours per week). Teachers did not teach for a large proportion of their time in school, and instructional time in class was also affected by teacher absenteeism, despite quite manageable pupil-teacher ratios (21 for JSS, and 29 for SSS). Instructional time in Koinadugu is higher than the national average for JSS (11 hours) and the same as the national average for SSS (13 hours).

## School management: What leadership practices are used to support the learning environment in Koinadugu?

**Staff meetings were again reported as an established practice in most schools.** All JSS and SSS principals in Koinadugu report holding staff meetings the previous term (January to April 2019).

In Koinadugu, principals report that the items most commonly discussed in these staff meetings are student attendance, teacher absenteeism or lateness, and exams.

**Similarly, schools continued to have fairly regular systems of internal lesson observations, which may have a role in the development of teaching in schools.** The observers were usually the principal or head of department. Over 94 per cent of JSS principals and 88 per cent of SSS principals in Koinadugu confirmed that some form of internal lesson observations was conducted.

**The role of external supervisors, particularly SSOs, in visiting schools, observing lessons and discussing advice on lesson plans and teaching methods was also apparent in SGLA III.** In Koinadugu, 34 per cent of JSS schools and 56 per cent of SSS schools report an MBSSE inspector visiting in the last term. This is below the national average for JSS (37 per cent) and above the average for SSS (52 per cent). School support officers (SSO) visited 83 per cent of JSS schools and 78 per cent of SSS schools in Koinadugu. The SSO visits for schools in Koinadugu are above the national average for JSS (80 per cent) and below the average for SSS schools (80 per cent).

## About the project and contact details

*Leh Wi Lan*/Sierra Leone Secondary Education Improvement Programme (SSEIP) is a five-year (2016-2021) UKaid-funded programme aimed at improving English and maths learning achievement in all secondary schools, especially for girls. This briefing note was produced under *Leh Wi Lan's* monitoring, evidence and research workstream as part of the annual secondary grade learning assessment. Any views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of UK Department for International Development, Sierra Leone Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, Mott MacDonald or Oxford Policy Management.

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