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USAID's Early Grade Reading Program II (EGRP II) in Nepal

Year 1 Annual Progress Report: June 1, 2020–May 31, 2021 (including April–May 2021 Quarterly Report)



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USAID's Early Grade Reading Program II (EGRP II) in Nepal

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Cover photo: A mother joins her daughter in an after-school learning activity supported by EGRP II in Parsa District to help mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on children's learning. (Photo credit: Avash Karmacharya)

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List of Abbreviations

AWP	Annual Work Plan
CB-EGRA	Classroom-Based Early Grade Reading Assessment
CDC	Curriculum Development Center
CEHRD	Center for Education and Human Resource Development
CIES	Comparative and International Education Society
CLA	Central-Level Agency
COP	Chief of Party
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DCC	District Coordination Committee
EDCU	Education Development and Coordination Unit
EGR	Early Grade Reading
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EGRP	Early Grade Reading Program
EGRP II	Early Grade Reading Program II
ERO	Education Review Office
ETC	Education Training Center
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (U.K.)
FY	Fiscal Year
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GON	Government of Nepal
HRDD	Human Resource Development Division
IC	Integrated Curriculum
IEMIS	Integrated Education Management Information System
IND	Indicator
IR	Intermediate Result
IT	Information Technology
JICA-IMEN	Japan International Cooperation Agency's Project for Improving Mathematics Instruction in Nepal
JMV	Joint Monitoring Visit
L1, L2	First Language (Mother Tongue), Second Language
LEU	Local Education Unit
LOP	Life of Program
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MEP	Municipal Education Plan
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology
MOSD	Ministry of Social Development
MTOT	Master Training of Trainers
NARN	National Assessment for Reading and Numeracy
NEGRP	National Early Grade Reading Program
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization

NPR	Nepali Rupee
OLE	Open Learning Exchange
ORF	Oral Reading Fluency
RISE	Research on Improving Systems of Education Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEC	Surveys of Enacted Curriculum
SRM	Supplementary Reading Material
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TPS	Teacher Professional Support
U.K.	United Kingdom
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
U.S.	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	U.S. Government
VAT	Value-Added Tax

1 Introduction

1.1 Program Overview

Program name:	USAID’s Early Grade Reading Program II (EGRP II) in Nepal
Program start date and end date:	June 1, 2020 – May 31, 2022
Name of prime implementing partner:	RTI International
Cooperative agreement number:	72036720CA00001
Names of subcontractors:	Not applicable
Major host-country counterpart organizations:	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST), Curriculum Development Center (CDC), Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD) [which includes the Human Resource Development Division [HRDD] and Education Review Office (ERO)]
Geographic coverage:	Kathmandu and the following 38 districts: Achham, Baglung, Banke, Bara, Bardiya, Bhaktapur, Bhojpur, Dadeldhura, Dailekh, Dang, Dhankuta, Dhanusha, Dolpa, Doti, Kailali, Kapilvastu, Kanchanpur, Kaski, Khotang, Mahottari, Manang, Mustang, Myagdi, Nawalparasi West, Parsa, Rasuwa, Rautahat, Rolpa, Rupandehi, Salyan, Saptari, Sarlahi, Sindhuli, Sindhupalchok, Siraha, Surkhet, Taplejung, Tanahun
Reporting period:	Year 1: June 1, 2020 – May 31, 2021 (including the April–May 2021 quarter)

1.2 Executive Summary

This report provides a progress update for the Early Grade Reading Program II (EGRP II), covering June 1, 2020–May 31, 2021. EGRP II is a 2-year, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded program of technical assistance to the Government of Nepal (GON) that is being implemented from June 1, 2020, through May 31, 2022. Similar to USAID’s first EGRP in Nepal, EGRP II is continuing to support the GON to scale up the National Early Grade Reading Program (NEGRP) in coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders so that all grade 1–3 students in community schools in the 38 current NEGRP target districts demonstrate improved reading outcomes. EGRP II is achieving its goals through four main outcomes, focusing on support for development and rollout of an integrated curriculum (IC) in the early primary grades; capacity development for subnational government education systems in a context of increasing decentralization; assistance for implementation of a revised approach to teacher professional support; and support to promote continuity of learning in the context of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Year 1 of EGRP II was a time of significant achievements coupled with ongoing uncertainty and adaptation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects in Nepal. An overview of key achievements during the year is provided in *Figure 1*.

Figure 1: Key EGRP II achievements in Year 1

Key Year 1 achievements	Reached 122,299 grade 1-3 children (51% girls) in 2,927 schools
	Supported rollout of IC teacher professional development (TPD) master trainings of trainers (MTOTs) and creation of training resource materials covering all subjects in grades 1-3
	Completed 80 local capacity development workshops with 1,462 government officials to strengthen education sector planning across 396 municipalities
	Distributed 551,001 supplementary reading materials (SRMs) to 2,927 schools in 22 NEGRP expansion districts
	Supported revision of teacher professional support (TPS) procedures and guidelines; and assisted district and local education officials to conduct joint monitoring visits (JMV) to 273 schools and analyze data from 823 monitoring forms
	Rolled out a home- and community-based learning model in 219 schools across 16 municipalities in Province 2 to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on children's learning

Through Objective 1, EGRP II provided technical support to the GON on developing the IC training package and training resource materials. EGRP II also supported IC orientations and cluster-level teacher professional development (TPD) trainings that rolled out following the first rounds of master trainings of trainers (MTOTs) funded by the GON in November 2020—an effort that will continue in Year 2.

EGRP II originally intended to fund IC TPD MTOTs for 50 master trainers in Year 1. However, scheduling was delayed due to competing Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD) priorities and COVID-19 restrictions in April and May 2021. As a result, training for all 200 planned trainees has been rescheduled to Year 2, and EGRP II will work with CEHRD to switch to virtual training modalities for at least part of the trainings.

Terms of reference (TOR) for an operational research study on the IC were drafted and shared with the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) and USAID for feedback. EGRP II also established a research partnership with the Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE) Programme to utilize the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SEC) methodology in the study. Further preparatory work will take place in Year 2, with data collection occurring after teachers have had the opportunity to implement some of the IC during the 2021–2022 school year.

To support policy making and use of data for decision making related to early grade reading (EGR), EGRP II provided technical assistance to the Education Review Office (ERO) on data analysis, reporting, and dissemination for the 2020 National Assessment of Reading and Numeracy (NARN)—and spearheaded dissemination of the EGRP endline findings—at national, provincial, district, and local levels. Through briefing papers, meetings, and written comments, the team shared inputs on EGR practices in the new education sector plan for 2021–2030 that is currently under development by the GON. In addition, EGRP II supported formation of a task team to revise Nepal's national EGR benchmarks to align more

appropriately with student skill levels and started work on literature review, data analysis, and creation of the benchmark document outline. In Year 2, these policy- and data-related activities will continue through inputs on the sector plan and support to review the NEGRP minimum package,¹ if requested. EGRP II will also continue to support the GON to finalize the revised EGR benchmarks.

Under Objective 2, EGRP II implemented a series of steps to build capacity development of subnational education structures in education planning and management in support of EGR. The process began with introductory meetings to explain EGRP II's objectives and priorities with each of the NEGRP's 38 target districts and 396 palikas,² followed by palika review meetings to discuss the status of EGR as well as NEGRP and IC rollout in each municipality. EGRP II also coordinated district and local officials to establish District Coordination Committees (DCCs) in the 22 NEGRP expansion districts outside of EGRP's 16 target districts where DCCs had not previously been established. During Year 1, the program supported 43 DCC meetings to promote effective coordination on NEGRP implementation, and 6 extended DCC meetings, which raise awareness and engagement among locally elected representatives who have decision making and budget allocation authority in the education sector.

These efforts were then complemented by design and rollout of Round 1 and Round 2 of the planned local capacity development workshops, with Round 1 targeting all 396 palikas and Round 2 aiming to support the 251 palikas in the 22 NEGRP expansion districts. During Year 1, EGRP II worked closely with CEHRD, the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) Technical Assistance team, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency's Project for Improving Mathematics Instruction in Nepal (JICA-IMEN) to develop the capacity development approach and coordinate on workshop implementation.

By April 2021, 69 Round 1 workshops had been completed, building capacity for education sector planning of 1,247 government officials and across all 396 target palikas. In April 2021, EGRP II completed training of trainer (TOT) events for selected GON officials who were slated to facilitate the Round 2 workshops. The training team then managed to complete 11 out of the 78 planned Round 2 workshops (reaching 215 participants) the same month before widespread lockdowns were reimposed due to COVID-19. Round 2 emphasized municipal education plan (MEP) development, NEGRP and IC implementation, and teacher professional support (TPS) rollout at the local level. As a result of these efforts, work commenced at the local level on use of the Integrated Education Management Information System (IEMIS) and education profiles, as well as tracking of resource allocations to education.

Local capacity development efforts will be ongoing in Year 2 as EGRP II continues to roll out the remaining Round 2 workshops and other supportive activities, such as Local Education Unit (LEU) review meetings, DCC meetings, and routine follow-up with LEU officials. Working closely with selected district and local GON officials, the program will

¹ The *minimum package* is a costed set of interventions designed to improve EGR, including curriculum development, teaching and learning materials, teacher training and support, community and parent engagement, and monitoring and learning assessment. EGRP assisted the GON in developing the minimum package.

² Palika is a Nepali term equivalent to "municipality."

also implement a third round of capacity development workshops for targeted palikas that require additional assistance with education planning and delivery at the local level.

Lastly under Objective 2, in early 2021, EGRP II successfully completed distribution of more than half a million supplementary reading materials (SRMs) to 2,927 schools in 22 NEGRP expansion districts. EGRP II team members then followed up to ensure proper display and use of the SRMs in schools through engagement with local officials in the capacity development workshops and other coordination events. The program will continue this effort in Year 2 to encourage children's reading practice.

Through Objective 3, EGRP II coordinated closely with CEHRD to revise the TPS approach in response to research conducted under EGRP as well as the evolving decentralization of governance in Nepal. As a result, a revised TPS management procedure (an official GON procedural document) and TPS guideline (a less formal and more detailed document to guide TPS actors) were finalized and prepared for printing. These documents will be distributed and utilized during TPS-related trainings, joint monitoring visits (JMV), and other follow-up activities in Year 2.

Based on planning with CEHRD, EGRP II expected that the MTOTs for TPS master trainers and for establishing a system of local TPS roster experts would be conducted before the end of Year 1. However, this could not be completed due to competing government priorities and COVID-19-related disruptions. As such, EGRP II moved these activities into Year 2 in coordination with CEHRD and will support virtual training modalities as needed if lockdowns or limits to in-person events continue.

Support to LEUs on TPS provision continued to roll out through the local capacity development TOTs and orientation and coordination meetings with LEUs under Objective 2, in addition to development of TPS monitoring tools for use during school visits. JMV began in Year 1, and visits were completed in 273 schools as of May 2021. These visits generated useful feedback about the status of EGR instruction and materials use as well as IC, NEGRP, and TPS rollout at local levels—feedback that was shared and discussed during Round 2 capacity development workshops.

However, because of the ripple effects of delays in rolling out the local-level workshops and TPS-related trainings, progress on this outcome was not as advanced as originally planned by the end of Year 1. EGRP II will intensify the focus on TPS piloting in Year 2 in order to achieve the planned outcomes, but this process may be in question if COVID-19 disruptions continue.

Finally, under Objective 3, EGRP II began drafting the TOR for the operational research study on TPS and expects to roll out the study in Year 2, as originally planned.

Efforts under Objective 4 focused on supporting the GON's response to COVID-19 in the education sector through a partnership with Open Learning Exchange (OLE) Nepal to develop new digital early grade learning content for upload to CEHRD's online learning portal. As of the end of Year 1, 95 new digital learning lessons in the subjects of Nepali, mathematics, science, social studies, and Nepali Sign Language, as well as lessons for children with dyslexia were nearly finalized for upload to the portal.

The intensive effort required to review and revise the contents based on GON feedback meant that contents had not yet been uploaded to the portal as of the end of Year 1 as originally planned. However, OLE expects to complete the remaining 24 lessons—for a total of 119—in June 2021. EGRP II redoubled efforts to support OLE, CDC, and CEHRD to review and finalize the already-produced lessons so that the OLE subaward can be closed out as planned by June 30, 2021. However, the review and finalization process takes time, and there is a risk that this activity will not be completed on time.

The EGRP II team members also provided ongoing COVID-19 support in the education sector at the national, provincial, district, and local levels. This outcome was achieved through regular participation in planning and coordination mechanisms at all levels, including emergency education clusters, and through local capacity development workshop sessions focusing on pandemic response.

In addition, a robust, well-targeted community- and home-based learning approach was rolled out in Province 2, reaching 219 schools across 16 of the most disadvantaged palikas in the country. EGRP II completed orientations for local government and school officials on the activity, and trained teachers to set up and run small learning clusters to help children catch up on education lost during the pandemic. First-tranche payments of small grants were completed, and the EGRP II team set up all paperwork to make the second (and final) tranche of payments in early June 2021.

Tablets, decodable readers, and stationery packs were distributed by EGRP II and put into use in the target schools. Monitoring of “catch-up” learning activities continued, conducted by program staff as well as LEUs, school management committees or parent–teacher associations, and head teachers. COVID-19 lockdowns in April and May 2021 disrupted learning cluster activities, but EGRP II supported schools and teachers to adjust so they could continue reaching students through alternative means. During Year 2, these efforts will be continued and scaled up, with some adjustments for lessons learned in Year 1.

EGRP II planned to support ERO with a study of learning loss during Year 1. However, after follow-up discussions were held with ERO on learning-loss research, EGRP II was required to adjust this activity because ERO did not receive the expected budget allocation for the study during the 2020–2021 GON fiscal year. In response, EGRP II has allocated funds to support the study in Year 2.

To help guide alternative learning approaches in the face of COVID-19 disruptions, EGRP II supported CDC to develop, print, and prepare to distribute grades 1–3 flexible learning guidelines for parents and teachers in Year 1, with distribution expected to happen from June–July 2021. EGRP II teams also started district-level orientations on the flexible learning guidelines, which will continue in June 2021. Furthermore, the team effectively integrated COVID-19 response information into the local capacity development workshops in Round 1 to build awareness of emerging best practices in the education sector. A key priority in Year 2 will be to document and share these lessons with wider audiences for the benefit of more students.

Throughout Year 1, the EGRP II team built a solid monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plan and system. This effort resulted in creation of online forms and user-friendly dashboards to support tracking of monthly activities and outputs as well as overall program

outcomes. In addition, the MEL team conducted internal capacity building of other team members to ensure data quality and timely reporting based on the MEL Plan that was approved in early 2021. A learning review with regional teams also revealed important lessons related to maintaining collaboration and team morale during prolonged “work from home” arrangements due to COVID-19.

The MEL team provided technical assistance for activities under Objectives 1–4 as needed, and successfully led implementation of the program baseline evaluation. This evaluation utilized an innovative, low-cost approach that tapped into the GON’s classroom-based early grade reading assessment (CB-EGRA) as well as the more traditional early grade reading assessment (EGRA) methodology. The baseline evaluation identified substantial challenges related to learning loss in comparison with CB-EGRA findings from previous years, pointing to the long-term implications that the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have on learning outcomes in Nepal.

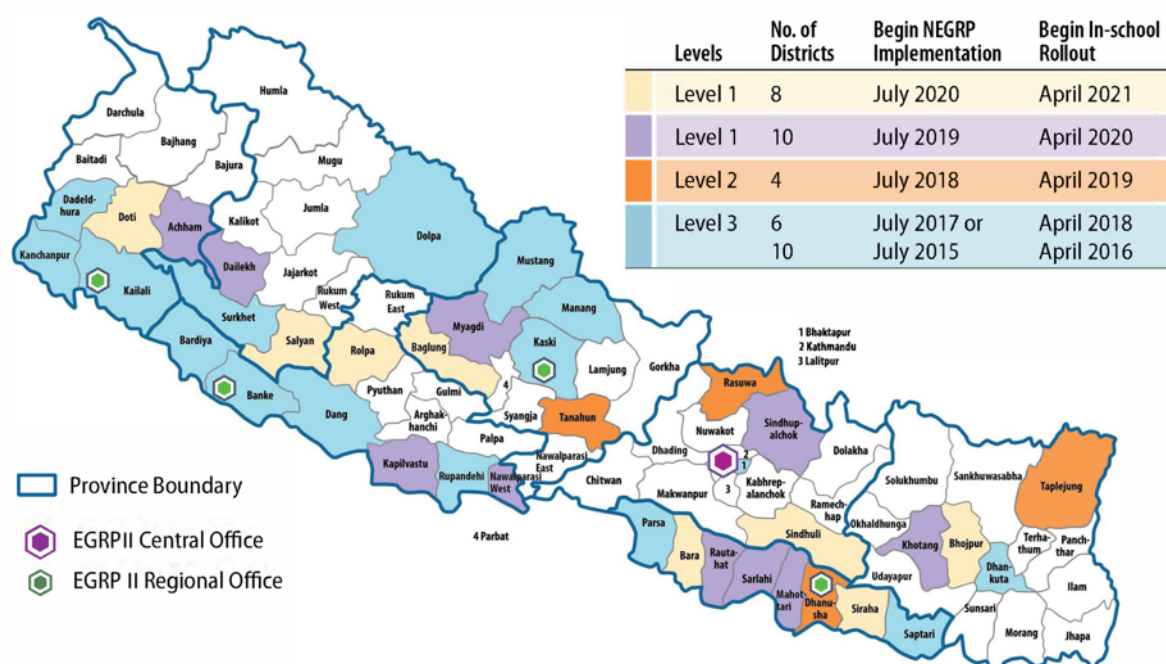
Lastly, the EGRP II team collaborated closely with the GON at all levels and with development partners active in the Nepal education sector in pursuit of mutual goals. The program also promoted gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) in hiring practices and staff capacity development and reflected GESI principles in areas such as local capacity development and materials creation. Communications products and activities such as a briefing paper, a “landing page” on RTI’s website, social media stories, and a virtual site visit to Province 2 by the USAID/Nepal Mission Director helped EGRP II spread information among a range of audiences about program objectives and outcomes.

The EGRP II team celebrates these Year 1 achievements, has learned much from responding to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic situation, and looks forward to a successful Year 2.

1.3 Program Description

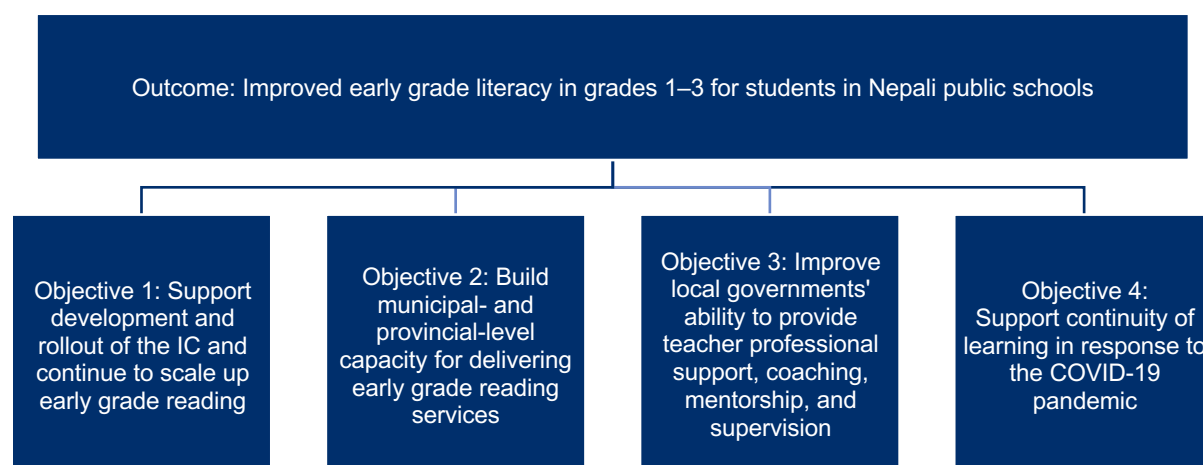
EGRP II is a 2-year, USAID-funded program of technical assistance to the GON that is being implemented from June 1, 2020, through May 31, 2022. Similar to USAID’s EGRP, EGRP II is continuing to support the GON to scale up the NEGRP in coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders so that all grade 1–3 students in community schools in the 38 current NEGRP target districts (see *Figure 2* plus alphabetical list in Section 1.1) demonstrate improved reading outcomes.

Figure 2: EGRP II target districts



EGRP II support is being provided in the context of (1) the shift from a subject-based curriculum to an IC in the early grades, (2) the transition from a centralized to a decentralized governance system, and (3) ongoing and potential future disruptions to teaching and learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, EGRP II is achieving its goal through four objectives, as captured in *Figure 3*.

Figure 3: EGRP II program goal and objectives



Objective 1 focuses on offering technical assistance to the CDC and CEHRD as they develop and roll out a 10-day training package for the IC nationwide. In particular, this technical assistance will enable the eight new NEGRP target districts that have not yet received TPD training to meet NEGRP minimum package training requirements.

In Year 1, EGRP II offered technical assistance for quality monitoring of MTOTs that CEHRD carried out for 120 trainers. EGRP II had also expected to fund an MTOT for 50 additional trainers for the nationwide IC training package in program Year 1 and 150 in Year 2. However, the training could not be completed in Year 1 due to COVID-19 delays, and as such, training for 200 participants is planned for Year 2. The program is also providing technical assistance for quality monitoring of the training rollout at the cluster level. In addition, EGRP II is helping CDC and CEHRD to design research on effective strategies for implementing the IC.

Furthermore, the program has assisted the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MOEST) and its central-level agencies (CLAs), including the ERO, to analyze and disseminate assessment outcomes from the first EGRP. The program has also supported ERO to analyze and report on data from the NARN and CB-EGRAs. These data are being used to inform policy making and practice around early grade learning, including reporting for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4),³ potential revisions to the NEGRP minimum package, a new education sector plan reflecting EGR best practices, and revised national EGR benchmarks.

Outcomes under Objective 1 include the following:

- Technical support is offered on EGR best practices in developing the nationwide, 10-day IC training package and MTOTs.
- MTOT is funded for 200 master trainers for the nationwide IC training package, in agreement with the GON.
- Operational research on the IC is conducted to inform future implementation.
- Assessment data are analyzed and utilized to inform education sector policy and programming.

Through **Objective 2**, EGRP II focuses on helping municipalities formulate education policies and costed action plans that reflect NEGRP minimum package expectations around EGR under the IC. EGRP II is supporting LEUs to use data for decision making by developing and maintaining LEU profiles with information on learning outcomes, EGR teacher training status, coaching frequency, and teacher and student language profiles. In addition, the program is helping local governments document and report information on allocation and use of discretionary budget resources in education. The above is being achieved through a set of workshops delivered at the LEU level as well as supportive follow-up meetings and monitoring efforts. Finally, EGRP II continued where EGRP left off at contract close at the end of October 2020, by overseeing the remaining distribution of SRMs to schools in all 22 NEGRP expansion districts.

Outcomes under Objective 2 include the following:

- All LEUs in 38 districts are using the updated IEMIS and education profiles.
- All LEUs in 38 districts are tracking and reporting discretionary resources dedicated to education.
- All schools in 38 districts have at least one book corner for grades 1–3.

³ SDG 4 focuses on ensuring inclusive and equitable high-quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Objective 3 focuses on assisting LEUs with TPS implementation. Based on the research findings and experience from EGRP, EGRP II supported CEHRD to prepare the revised TPS management procedure and guideline, incorporating a menu of TPS implementation options for LEUs. The program will then support CEHRD and Education Training Centers (ETCs) to design, roll out, and monitor MTOTs for TPS. EGRP II will also support mixed-methods operational research, which will allow MOEST and CEHRD to examine the feasibility and effectiveness of different TPS menu options. Joint monitoring and periodic visits by GON officials and program staff to LEUs and schools are reinforcing best practices in EGR instruction and TPS. EGRP II will also help the government design and implement master training for a roster of experts for TPS. As a result of these efforts, local governments in the 38 districts will have defined and tested an evidence-based model for teacher support, coaching, and supervision.

Outcomes under Objective 3 include the following:

- CEHRD has updated TPS management procedure and guideline to support flexible TPS approach.
- MTOT is completed for TPS.
- All LEUs are piloting an approach to TPS.
- Operational research on the TPS pilots is completed.

Objective 4 focuses on COVID-19 responses in the education sector. This effort entails activities to help central and subnational governments promote EGR engagement for students during extended school closures, prepare for resuming EGR instruction upon schools' re-opening, and plan for possible future school re-closures. This objective is intended to respond flexibly to emerging needs resulting from the pandemic. Activities include supporting CEHRD and CDC to develop new digital early grade learning content for CEHRD's learning portal. EGRP also provided technical assistance to CDC to develop guidelines for teachers and parents, reflecting adjusted curriculum content and flexible learning approaches that can be implemented during a shortened 2020–2021 academic year. EGRP II will also assist ERO with assessing learning loss.

The program is providing direct support to LEUs to implement community- and home-based learning opportunities, targeting rural, disadvantaged municipalities that are heavily impacted by COVID-19; have limited access to online, radio, or television learning opportunities; and may not re-open schools in the foreseeable future. In Year 1, these interventions included small grants to schools, distribution of tablets preloaded with offline learning content, and consumable decodable books and stationery packs. Finally, regional and district program staff are continuing the practice established through EGRP of supporting palikas to utilize funds for local-level COVID-19 responses—particularly printing and distribution of self-learning materials for students—and participating in emergency education cluster mechanisms at provincial, district, and municipal levels to support coordination and planning.

As indicated earlier, EGRP II is implemented in 38 NEGRP districts, covering 396 LEUs. The program provides intensive support for implementation of the NEGRP minimum package in 22 districts where MOEST is expanding EGR activities (Levels 1 and 2) and continued technical assistance for the 16 districts that were targeted under EGRP (Level 3). EGRP II operates from a Kathmandu central office as well as four regional offices. Supported

by other regionally based technical staff, one district coordinator per district works closely with LEUs and other local government staff to plan for and roll out NEGRP activities. The district coordinators are embedded in Education Development and Coordination Units (EDCUs) at the district level to support LEUs in implementing activities such as MTOT rollout, monitoring and use of data for decision making, and building of LEU skills in TPS. In addition, short-term local program officers based in selected LEU offices provide surge capacity to support community- and home-based learning activities for the COVID-19 response.

2 Summary of Programmatic Accomplishments Versus Goals (Annual)

This section lays out a comparison of actual accomplishments by program objective against goals established for the period in the Year 1 Annual Work Plan (AWP) and MEL Plan. The section identifies reasons for activities that were delayed or established goals and indicators that were not met, where applicable. In general, EGRP II activities and goals remained on track, although the program experienced some delays due to factors such as competing GON priorities and COVID-19 disruptions. As such, some adjustments will be required in Year 2 to compensate for delays and changes to core activities. These adjustments are documented in this section and in the approved Year 2 AWP.

Table 1 provides an overview of the status of EGRP II objectives and goals, along with related accomplishments and explanations for any such delays, during Program Year 1. In the “Accomplishments and status” column, items in white experienced delays in Year 1 but are expected to be achieved in Year 2. Items in light blue experienced some delays in Year 1 but are mainly on track. Items in dark blue are fully on track or completed.

Table 1: Programmatic objectives and goals versus accomplishments and status as of May 31, 2021

Objectives and goals	Accomplishments and status
Objective 1: Support development and rollout of the IC and continue to scale up EGR	
Technical support is offered on EGR best practices in development of the nationwide, 10-day IC training package and MTOTs.	Technical support on the IC training package and assistance with finalizing training resource materials were provided; these materials will be completed and printed early in the June–September 2021 period. EGRP II also supported numerous IC orientations and cluster-level TPD trainings that rolled out following the first rounds of MTOTs funded by GON in November 2020—an effort that will continue in Year 2.
MTOT is funded for 200 master trainers for the nationwide IC training package, in agreement with the GON.	EGRP II originally intended to fund IC TPD MTOTs for 50 master trainers in Year 1. However, scheduling was delayed due to competing CEHRD priorities and COVID-19 restrictions in April and May 2021. As a result, training for all 200 planned trainees has been rescheduled to Year 2, and EGRP II will work with CEHRD to switch to virtual training modalities for at least part of the trainings.
Operational research on the IC is conducted to inform future implementation.	The IC operational research study TOR was drafted and shared with CDC and USAID for feedback. EGRP II also established a research partnership with the RISE Programme to utilize the SEC methodology in the study. Preparatory work will take place in the June–September 2021 period, and data collection is expected to begin in November/December 2021 after teachers have had the opportunity to implement some of the IC during the 2021–2022 school year.

Objectives and goals	Accomplishments and status
Assessment data are analyzed and used to inform education sector policy and programming.	Data analysis, reporting, and dissemination were completed for the 2020 NARN. EGRP endline findings dissemination was completed at central, provincial, and local levels. Inputs on the new education sector plan were shared. The benchmarking task team was formed and started work on literature review, data analysis, and creating the benchmark document outline. In Year 2, these activities will continue through inputs on the sector plan and support to review the NEGRP minimum package, if requested. EGRP II will also continue to support GON with the benchmark revision process.
Objective 2: Build municipal- and provincial-level capacity for delivering EGR services	
All LEUs in 38 districts are using the updated IEMIS and education profiles.	Work commenced on development and use of IEMIS and education profiles in Year 1. These activities were disrupted to some extent by the return to COVID-19 lockdowns in 2021. Efforts to support local governments with IEMIS and education profiles will be ongoing in Year 2 as EGRP II continues to roll out Round 2 of the local capacity development workshops and other supportive activities, such as LEU review meetings, DCC meetings, and routine follow-up with LEU officials.
All LEUs in 38 districts are tracking and reporting discretionary resources dedicated to education.	Similar to the outcome above on education profiles, support for tracking and reporting on discretionary resource allocation was started through the Round 1 and 2 local capacity development workshops in Year 1, but this support was disrupted to some extent by COVID-19 conditions. In Year 2, EGRP II will continue to support local governments to track and report on resources allocated to education through remaining Round 2 and Round 3 workshops as well as other supportive follow-up at the local level.
All schools in 38 districts have at least one book corner for grades 1–3.	SRM distribution was completed in all schools in the 22 NEGRP expansion districts. EGRP II team members followed up to ensure proper display and use of the SRMs in schools and will continue this effort in Year 2.
Objective 3: Improve local governments' ability to provide TPS, coaching, mentorship, and supervision	
CEHRD has updated TPS management procedure and guideline to support flexible TPS approach.	The TPS management procedure and guideline were revised, with strong CEHRD support. MOEST approved the management procedure in April 2021 and continued to review and edit the guideline in May 2021. The documents will be printed and distributed early in Year 2 and utilized during TPS-related trainings, JMV, and other follow-up activities.
MTOT is completed for TPS.	Based on planning with CEHRD, EGRP II expected that the MTOTs for TPS and roster experts would be conducted before the end of Year 1. However, this could not be completed due to competing government priorities and COVID-19-related disruptions. As such, EGRP II has moved these activities into Year 2 in coordination with CEHRD and will support virtual training modalities as needed if lockdowns or limits to in-person events continue.

Objectives and goals	Accomplishments and status
All LEUs are piloting an approach to TPS.	<p>Support to LEUs on TPS provision continued to roll out through the local capacity development TOTs and orientation and coordination meetings with LEUs, and the project continued developing TPS monitoring tools.</p> <p>JMVs commenced (completed in 273 schools as of May 2021) and began generating useful feedback about the status of EGR instruction and materials use as well as IC, NEGRP, and TPS rollout at local levels.</p> <p>However, because of the ripple effects of delays in rolling out local capacity development workshops and TPS-related trainings, progress on this outcome was not as advanced as originally planned by the end of Year 1. EGRP II will have to intensify the focus on TPS piloting in Year 2 in order to achieve the planned outcomes, but this process could experience serious challenges if COVID-19 disruptions continue.</p>
Operational research on the TPS pilots is completed.	EGRP II began drafting the TOR for the operational research study on TPS and expects to roll out the study in Year 2, as originally planned.
Objective 4: Support continuity of learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic	
New interactive digital learning content is developed and uploaded to CEHRD's learning portal.	<p>95 new digital learning lessons in Nepali language, mathematics, science, social studies, and Nepali Sign Language, as well as lessons for children with dyslexia were nearly finalized to upload to CEHRD's learning portal by the end of May 2021. The intensive effort required to review and revise the contents based on GON feedback meant that contents have not yet been uploaded to the portal as originally planned.</p> <p>OLE expects to complete the remaining 24 lessons—for a total of 119—in June 2021. EGRP II redoubled efforts to support OLE, CDC, and CEHRD to review and finalize the already-produced lessons so that the OLE subaward can be closed out as planned by June 30, 2021. However, the review and finalization process takes time, and there is a risk that this activity will not be completed on time.</p>
Ongoing COVID-19 response planning support is provided to subnational education offices.	EGRP II team members provided ongoing COVID-19 support in the education sector at the national, provincial, district, and local levels. This outcome was achieved through regular participation in planning and coordination mechanisms at all levels, including emergency education clusters; and through local capacity development workshop sessions focusing on the pandemic response.

Objectives and goals	Accomplishments and status
Support is provided to 16 targeted disadvantaged palikas to implement community- and home-based learning clusters where school re-openings are unlikely and access to technology is limited.	A robust, well-targeted community- and home-based learning approach was rolled out in Province 2. First-tranche payments of small grants were completed, and the EGRP II team set up all paperwork to make the second (and final) tranche of payments in early June 2021. All tablets, decodable readers, and stationery packs were distributed and put into use in the target schools. Monitoring of “catch-up” learning activities continued, conducted by program staff as well as LEUs, school management committees or parent–teacher associations, and head teachers. COVID-19 lockdowns in April and May 2021 disrupted learning cluster activities, but EGRP II supported schools and teachers to adjust so they could continue reaching students through alternative means. During Year 2, these efforts will be continued and scaled up, with some adjustments for lessons learned in Year 1.
Technical assistance is provided to the GON on learning-loss assessment.	Follow-up discussions were held with ERO on learning-loss research, but this activity had to be adjusted when ERO did not receive the expected budget allocation for the study during the 2020–2021 GON fiscal year. EGRP II has allocated funds to support the study in Year 2.
Technical assistance is provided to the GON on materials development and teacher orientation on adjusting the curriculum and instruction for a shortened school year.	<p>Grades 1–3 flexible learning guidelines for parents and teachers were completed, the printing process was finished by May 2021, and distribution is expected to happen in June and July 2021 subject to pandemic conditions. EGRP II teams started district-level orientations on the flexible learning guidelines; these orientations will continue in June 2021.</p> <p>COVID-19 response information was also effectively integrated into the local capacity development workshops in Round 1.</p>

In addition to the updates above on activity status, **Table 2: Progress toward FY2 indicator targets as of May 31, 2021** below provides an overview of EGRP II’s progress toward fiscal year 2 (FY2; October 2020–September 2021) indicator targets as of the end of program Year 1 on May 31, 2021. The “Year 1 status summary” column provides an explanation of indicator status, notes where progress to date towards achieving some of the indicators may be at risk, and provides justifications for limited progress where relevant. The status of some indicators—for example, those related to local capacity development and TPS training activities—has not been reported yet but will be updated after the activities are completed. Indicators related to learning outcomes are likewise not yet reported; they will be updated after the endline is completed in 2022. A more detailed update on performance indicator tracking is provided in **Annex B**. In addition, **Section 6** discusses prospects for performance in Year 2 of the program after reflecting on progress to date.

Table 2: Progress toward FY2 indicator targets as of May 31, 2021

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	FY2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)		Year 1 status summary	Life of program (LOP)
		FY2 Target	Actual through May 2021		Target
Improved early grade reading in grades 1–3 for students in Nepali public schools in the 38 NEGRP target districts					
IND 01_ ES. 1-1	Percent of learners targeted for United States Government (USG) assistance who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of grade 2	Baseline	7.4% (male=7.7%; female=7.2%)	N/A Baseline status identified; endline in 2022 will determine if LOP target has been met.	9.4%
IND 02_ ES. 1-3	Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school-based settings reached with USG education assistance	431,370	94,997 grade 1–3 children (male: 46,491; female: 48,506) Level 1: 88,185; Level 2: 6,812; Level 3: 0	FY2 target 22% met to date. Progress toward meeting the target has been slower than expected because the GON has not yet fully cascaded IC TPD trainings to cluster levels.	452,370
IND 03_ ES. 1-50	Number of public and private schools receiving USG assistance	4,793	2,228 schools Level 1: 1,982; Level 2: 246; Level 3: 0	FY2 target 46% met to date. Progress toward meeting the target has been slower than expected because the GON has not yet fully cascaded IC TPD trainings to cluster levels.	5,083
IND 04_ Custom	Percent of grade 2 and 3 students classified as fluent readers using national benchmarks	Baseline	Grade 2=7.4% (male=7.7%, female=7.2%) Grade 3=12.6% (male=10.5%, female=14.4%)	N/A Baseline status identified; endline in 2022 will determine if LOP target has been met.	Grade 2 = 9.4% Grade 3 = 15.6%
IND 05_ Custom	Percent of grade 2 and 3 students classified as emergent readers using national benchmarks	Baseline	Grade 2=27.8% (male=25.5%) female=30.1%) Grade 3=29.7% (male=28.2% and female=31.0%)	N/A Baseline status identified; endline in 2022 will determine if LOP target has been met.	Grade 2 = 31.8% Grade 3 = 38.7%

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	FY2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)		Year 1 status summary	Life of program (LOP)
		FY2 Target	Actual through May 2021		Target
OBJECTIVE 1: Support development and rollout of the new integrated curriculum and continue to scale up early grade reading					
IND 06_ Sub-IR 1.1_ Custom	Number of master trainers trained on the IC	50	0	This indicator will be reported after master trainings of trainers are completed. Progress toward meeting the target has been slower than expected due to COVID-19 disruptions that required a switch to virtual master trainings.	200
IND 07_ Sub-IR 1.1; 3.3 (ES. 1-6)	Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	3,522	1,394 participants (male: 829; female: 575)	FY2 target 40% met to date. Progress toward meeting the target has been slower than expected due to COVID-19 disruptions that required a switch to virtual trainings, as well as delays in rolling out IC teacher training in general.	4,222
IND 08_ Sub-IR 1.2; 2.1; 3.3_ES. 1-12	Number of education administrators and officials who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	3,198	80 events; 1,462 participants (male: 1,250; female: 212) Brahmin/Chhetri: 827; Janjati: 222; Dalit: 63; Madhesi: 380; Muslim: 14; Others: 18	FY2 target 46% met to date. Progress toward meeting the target has been slower than expected due to COVID-19 disruptions that required a switch to virtual trainings, as well as delays in rolling out IC teacher training in general.	4,143

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	FY2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)		Year 1 status summary	Life of program (LOP)
		FY2 Target	Actual through May 2021		Target
OBJECTIVE 2: Build municipal- and provincial-level capacity for delivering EGR services					
IND 9_ Sub-IR 2.1; 2.2_ Custom	Percent of local governments/levels using IEMIS profiles for planning and budgeting in the education sector	50%	Not reported yet	N/A This indicator will be reported after completion of second round of local capacity development workshops. Progress on rolling out the workshops and supporting local governments with IEMIS profiles has been slower than expected due to COVID-19 related lockdowns and restrictions on the number of participants who can join in-person events.	100%
IND 10 Sub-IR 2.1_ Custom	Percent of local governments validating IEMIS data shared by schools	85%	Not reported yet	N/A This indicator will be reported after completion of second round of local capacity development workshops. Progress on rolling out the workshops and supporting local governments with IEMIS data validation has been slower than expected due to COVID-19 related lockdowns and restrictions on the number of participants who can join in-person events.	90%

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	FY2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)		Year 1 status summary	Life of program (LOP)
		FY2 Target	Actual through May 2021		Target
IND 11_ Sub-IR 2.2; 2.3_ Custom	Percent of municipalities formulating their annual MEPs and budgets that include early grade reading/learning	45%	Not reported yet	N/A This indicator will be reported after completion of second round of local capacity development workshops. Progress on rolling out the workshops and supporting local governments with formulating their MEPs has been slower than expected due to COVID-19 related lockdowns and restrictions on the number of participants who can join in-person events. In addition, it has been challenging for local governments to meet with and obtain buy-in from elected officials on MEP budgets due to the pandemic situation.	55%
IND 12_ Sub-IR 2.2; 2.3_ Custom	Percent of local governments allocating discretionary funds to education sector activities	50%	Not reported yet	N/A This indicator will be reported after the end of the Nepali fiscal year, when local governments have finished their budget planning process for the next fiscal year (2021-2022).	66%
IND 13_ Sub-IR 2.4_ Custom	Number of schools with book corners that include SRMs	2,291	2,228 schools By province and level: Bagmati: 376; Gandaki: 415; Karnali: 351; Province 1: 507; Province 2: 106; Province 5: 139; Sudur Paschim: 334 Level 1: 1,982; Level 2: 246; Level 3: 0	FY2 and LOP targets missed by 63 schools (2.7%). This occurred because the target was originally set based on assumptions of numbers of target schools in IEMIS. Upon distribution of SRMs, EGRP II identified that some of those schools had closed/merged.	2,291

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	FY2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)		Year 1 status summary	Life of program (LOP)
		FY2 Target	Actual through May 2021		Target
IND 14_ Sub-IR 2.4_ Custom	Number of SRMs delivered	456,120	427,278 SRMs By province and level: Bagmati: 71,255; Gandaki: 78,158; Karnali: 66,831; Province 1: 94,442; Province 2: 23,465; Province 5: 29,306; Sudur Paschim: 63,821 Level 1: 378,249; Level 2: 49,029; Level 3: 0 School: 394,356; LEU: 21,240; EDCU: 11,682	FY2 and LOP targets missed by 28,842 SRMs (6.3%). This occurred because the target was originally set based on assumptions of numbers of target schools in IEMIS. Upon distribution of SRMs, EGRP II identified that some of those schools had closed/merged.	456,120
OBJECTIVE 3: Improve local governments' ability to provide teacher professional support (TPS), coaching, mentorship, and supervision					
IND 15_ Sub-IR 3.2; 3.3_ Custom	Number of LEU staff, head teachers, and primary in-charge teachers who receive TPS training	0	Not reported yet	N/A This indicator will be reported after the TPS training program rolls out. Progress has been slower than expected due to COVID-19 disruptions and further delays may occur as GON re-designs trainings for virtual modalities.	1,182
IND 16_ Sub-IR 3.2; 3.3_ Custom	Number of master trainers trained on EGR teacher support, mentoring, and coaching	355	Not reported yet	N/A This indicator will be reported after the TPS training program rolls out. Progress has been slower than expected due to COVID-19 disruptions and further delays may occur as GON re-designs trainings for virtual modalities.	355

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	FY2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)		Year 1 status summary	Life of program (LOP)
		FY2 Target	Actual through May 2021		Target
IND 17_ Sub-IR 3.4_ Custom	Number of schools receiving joint monitoring and coaching support through USG assistance	1,584	273 By province: Bagmati: 30; Gandaki: 53; Karnali: 27; Province 1: 18; Province 2: 39; Lumbini: 63; Sudur Paschim: 43	FY2 target 17% met to date. This indicator is at risk due to COVID-19 disruptions in 2020 and 2021, which limited the number of in-school visits that could be conducted. The target will likely need to be revisited.	2,376
OBJECTIVE 4: Support continuity of learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic					
IND 18_ IR 4_ Custom	Percent of learners who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of grade 3 in targeted 16 local governments of Province 2	Baseline	13.4% (male: 11.9%; female: 14.6%)	N/A Baseline status identified; endline in 2022 will determine if LOP target has been met.	16.4%
IND 19_ IR 4_ Custom	Number of new interactive digital early grade learning lessons created and uploaded to the CEHRD learning portal	94	95 digital lessons have been reviewed by EGRP II but not yet finalized and transferred from OLE Nepal portal to CEHRD portal.	FY2 target 0% met to date due to extensive edits required on draft lessons and delays in receiving CEHRD approval to upload materials to their portal. However, the target is likely to be met by end of FY2.	119
IND 20 IR 4_ ES 1.13	Number of parent–teacher associations or community governance structures engaged in primary education supported with USG assistance	219	219	FY2 and LOP targets 100% met. This target will need to be increased due to scale-up of home- and community-based learning in Province 2.	219
IND 21_ IR 4_ Custom	Number of education stakeholders oriented/ trained to implement community/ home-based learning	11,607	15,637 participants (male: 7,880; female: 7,757) Teachers: 1,212; Parents: 13,662; School management committee or parent–teacher association members: 429; Others: 334	FY2 and LOP targets exceeded by 35% because a larger number of parent and community stakeholders participated than originally estimated. This target will need to be increased due to scale-up of home- and community-based learning in Province 2.	11,607

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	FY2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)		Year 1 status summary	Life of program (LOP)
		FY2 Target	Actual through May 2021		Target
IND 22_ IR 4_ Custom	Number of electronic devices distributed to support community/home-based learning	1,330	1,330 tablets	FY2 and LOP targets 100% met. This target will need to be increased due to scale-up of home- and community-based learning in Province 2.	1,330
IND 23_ IR4_ Custom	Proportion of funding spent on emergency response and recovery plan by the federal and subnational governments	Status reporting	Not reported yet	N/A This indicator will be reported at the end of the Nepali fiscal year.	Status reporting

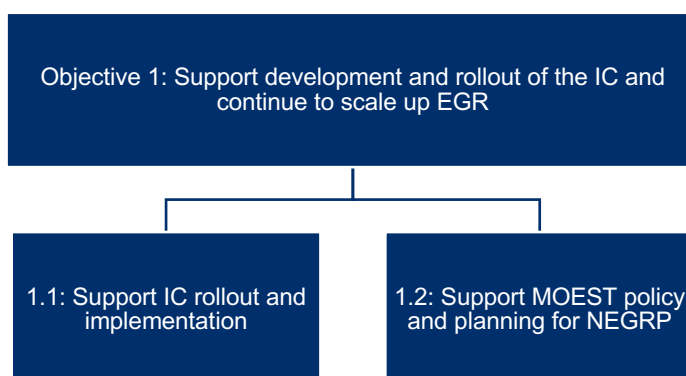
3 Detailed Progress and Key Current and Cumulative Achievements (Annual and Quarterly)

This section describes in more detail EGRP II’s progress toward program outcomes and deliverables during Year 1 from June 1, 2020, through May 31, 2021, including the April–May 2021 quarter (which includes activities that have occurred since the last quarterly report). The section first provides updates of activities and achievements under program Objectives 1–4, related to improved curriculum and instruction, local capacity development, and TPS, as well as the COVID-19 response in the education sector. Next, updates are shared on program MEL efforts as well as liaison with the GON and collaboration with other actors in the sector. The section also delves into activities undertaken to promote GESI and describes communications, branding, and marking efforts. Finally, a summary of programmatic accomplishments compared with goals during Year 1 and specific to the April–May 2021 quarter is provided. In addition, *Annex A* provides a concise summary of progress from April–May 2021.

3.1 Objective 1: Support Development and Rollout of the IC and Continue to Scale Up EGR

Objective 1 focuses on supporting the GON with development and rollout of the IC and policy-related support for scale-up of best practices in EGR in the context of the IC and decentralized governance, as captured in *Figure 4*.

Figure 4: Objective 1 components



3.1.1 Sub-Objective 1.1: Support IC rollout and implementation

Support CEHRD to develop a 10-day IC TPD certification training package for rollout nationwide, incorporating EGR elements (1.1.1)

CDC has replaced the former primary-level curriculum for grades 1–3 with the IC, which is pedagogically and thematically integrated across subjects. To support this effort, EGRP II worked closely with the training section within CEHRD to prepare the teacher training package based on the training curriculum of the 10+5-day TPD module.

In the June–September 2020 quarter, the EGRP II team held a series of virtual consultations with CEHRD regarding plans for revising the TPD package to align with plans for IC rollout. Then, during the October–December 2020 quarter, EGRP II supported CEHRD to develop, review, and finalize the Nepali subject portion of the TPD training content based on the IC. This initiative included several virtual meetings with CEHRD in November 2020 to select training content, develop activities, and identify training delivery approaches. The training content for Nepali language subject covered EGR components; the “I do, we do, you do” gradual-release instructional model; instructional best practices for teaching Nepali to second language (L2) learners; use of instructional materials such as the teacher’s guide and student workbooks; and use of SRMs. Furthermore, the content included some basic guidance related to local materials development, classroom management, student assessment, and evaluation techniques in the generic sessions that were common across all subject areas.

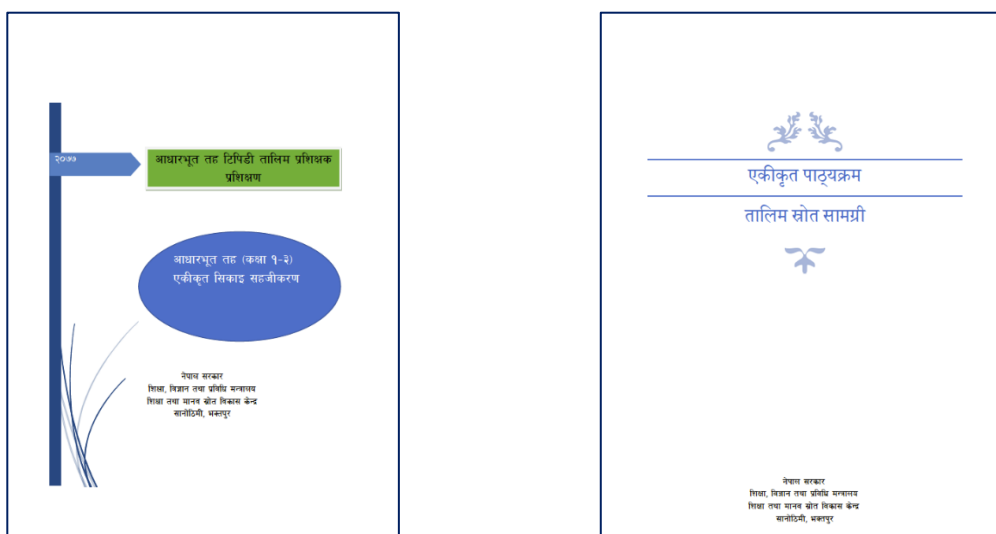
In the October–December 2020 and January–March 2021 quarters, EGRP II supported CEHRD to roll out MTOTs and subsequent cluster-level trainings after the materials were finalized (for further details on the trainings, see Activity 1.1.2 below). During observations of the cluster-level trainings, the facilitators and the trainees requested a training manual and other resource materials that would enable them to roll out the cluster trainings more effectively and with better fidelity. The EGRP II team had previously advised CEHRD to develop training materials and manuals before organizing MTOTs at the central level, as these resources would provide a clear blueprint for the objectives, methods, and outcomes of the subsequent trainings as well. However, the CEHRD team preferred to conduct the MTOTs within the GON’s first trimester (July/August–October/December) as per their plan, to avoid potential delays and adverse impacts on the flow of budgeted training funds.

Once CEHRD agreed to begin working on the requested training resource materials, the EGRP II team supported a 5-day materials development workshop in March 2021. A total of 22 participants joined the workshop, including CEHRD and CDC representatives, teacher trainers, and EGRP II staff. Because of the integrated nature of the curriculum and the 10-day TPD package, the event covered the Nepali, English, mathematics, and Hamro Serophero (mostly science and social studies) subjects. As a result of the first workshop, a guide for trainers and training resource materials for teacher trainees across all subjects were drafted. The trainer guide covers the IC TPD training curriculum contents as well as the training schedule and session plan. The training resource materials include relevant documents and reference materials related to the IC.

In April 2021, EGRP II assisted CEHRD to conduct a 3-day materials finalization workshop with 10 total participants, including representatives from different subject areas within CEHRD and CDC. The workshop focused on reviewing the draft materials and ensuring effective integration of themes across subjects. The EGRP II team also shared the drafts with USAID for feedback in May 2021, and as of the end of Year 1 was working with CEHRD to address the feedback to more effectively address education in emergencies in the materials. Screenshots of the drafts as of the end of May 2021 are provided in *Figure 5*.

During the June–September 2021 quarter, EGRP II will support CEHRD to design, print, and distribute the training resource materials, once print-ready copies are ready, to CLAs, provincial ETCs, EDCUs, and other stakeholders.

Figure 5: Screenshots of the draft IC TPD trainer guide and training resource materials

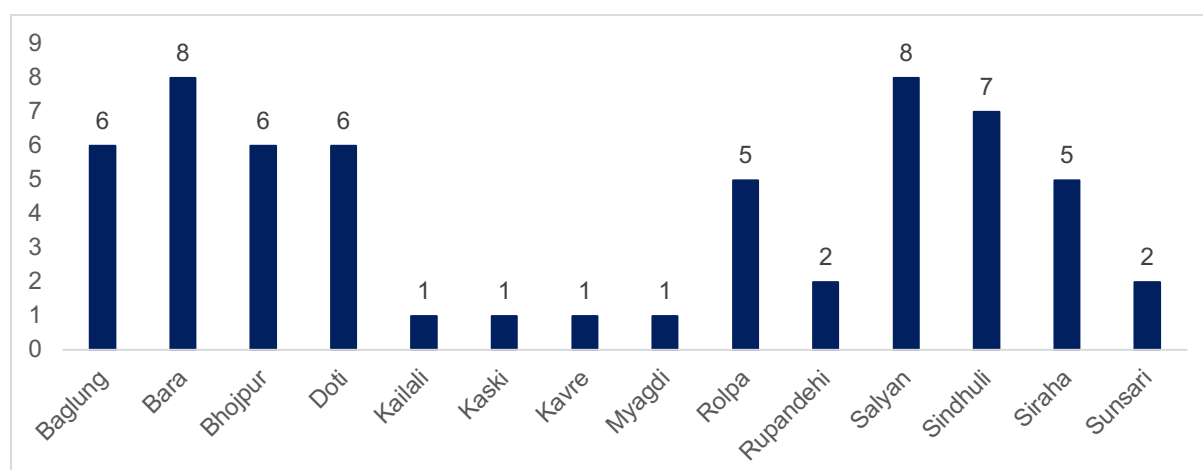


Support CEHRD with implementation of MTOT and training quality monitoring for the IC TPD and IC+EGR TPD packages (1.1.2)

In addition to supporting CEHRD to develop IC TPD training approaches and materials through Activity 1.1.1, EGRP II assisted with design and rollout of IC MTOTs, district and cluster-level IC orientations and teacher trainings, and quality monitoring during the rollout process.

In November and December 2020, EGRP II supported CEHRD to organize two MTOTs in Level 1 districts, with roster trainers from provincial ETCs participating as the trainees. The numbers of MTOT participants by district are presented in **Figure 6**. In total, 59 participants joined the two MTOTs (29 in the first and 30 in the second), including 83% men and 17% women. The EGRP II technical team provided support to CEHRD to finalize the training contents and develop session plans along with activities and facilitation approaches. The training focused on helping participants become familiar with the structure and implementation process for the curriculum in grades 1–3 and build skills in promoting integrated learning within and across different subject areas.

Figure 6: Participants in IC TPD MTOTs, by district (N = 59)



The EGRP II technical team also closely observed the training sessions and shared feedback with the MTOT facilitators on areas needing improvement. Due to COVID-19 concerns, the MTOT sessions were organized virtually through Zoom. Group work and practical sessions took place using “breakout rooms.” The facilitators encouraged participants to take part in interactions, discussions, individual tasks, and group work during the sessions and tried their best to make sessions as participatory and practice based as possible within the functionality of the technology that was used.

Once the first two MTOTs were completed, the ETC roster trainers then began working with EDCUs and LEUs to roll out 3-day IC orientations and 10-day IC TPD trainings at district and cluster levels. EGRP II regionally based team members supported this effort on an ongoing basis throughout the January–March and April–May 2021 periods. Technical assistance focused on helping government officials to plan and organize the events, and to co-facilitate sessions on EGR instruction and materials. In total, the team supported 117 orientations and 48 trainings (**Figure 7**) across 32 of EGRP II’s target districts (**Table 3**) during the 5 months.

Figure 7: Number of district or cluster-level IC orientations and IC TPD trainings supported, by reporting quarter and overall (N = 165)

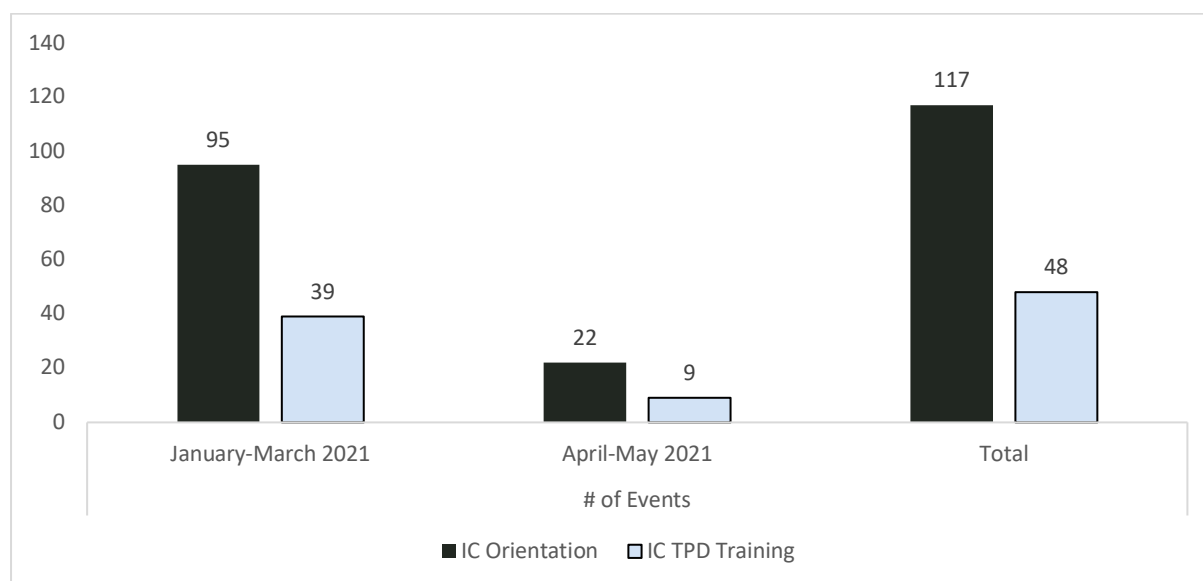


Table 3: IC orientations and TPD trainings supported, by district (N = 165)

No.	District	No. of IC orientations supported	No. of IC TPD trainings supported
1	Achham	3	0
2	Baglung	2	0
3	Banke	2	4
4	Bara	0	1
5	Bardiya	2	0
6	Bhojpur	11	1
7	Dadeldhura	2	0
8	Dailekh	4	0
9	Dang	5	0
10	Dhankuta	8	0
11	Dhanusha	3	0
12	Dolpa	1	0
13	Doti	3	6
14	Kailali	13	0
15	Kanchanpur	2	0
16	Kaski	1	0
17	Khotang	8	0
18	Mahottari	1	0
19	Nawalparasi West	2	0
20	Parsa	2	0
21	Rautahat	11	0

No.	District	No. of IC orientations supported	No. of IC TPD trainings supported
22	Rolpa	0	17
23	Rupandehi	5	5
24	Salyan	0	6
25	Saptari	4	0
26	Sarlahi	1	0
27	Sindhuli	0	7
28	Sindhupalchok	2	0
29	Siraha	1	1
30	Surkhet	8	0
31	Tanahun	3	0
32	Taplejung	7	0
Total	Total	117	48

Beyond supporting the first round of virtual MTOTs and supporting IC orientations and TPD trainings at the local level, another key EGRP II outcome is to provide financial and technical support to CEHRD to train an additional 200 IC TPD master trainers. This training assistance was originally planned to cover 50 trainers in Year 1 and 150 in Year 2. With that aim in mind, the EGRP II team coordinated with CEHRD to plan in-person MTOTs in April and May 2021 to prepare the first set of 50 additional master trainers using the training resource materials described under Activity 1.1.1 above. Two 7-day MTOTs were scheduled with 25 participants at each event. However, as of the end of Year 1, the events had been postponed due to COVID-19-related disruptions. As part of the Year 2 AWP development process, EGRP II consulted with CEHRD and USAID to shift training for all 200 participants to Year 2.

In May 2021, the EGRP II team started preparing alternative arrangements for rolling out some of the MTOT sessions virtually in anticipation that COVID-19-related disruptions would likely continue for at least the first few months of EGRP II's second year. These efforts to pivot to virtual training modalities will build on capacity development instruction provided to the EGRP II and CEHRD teams through EGRP in mid-2020.

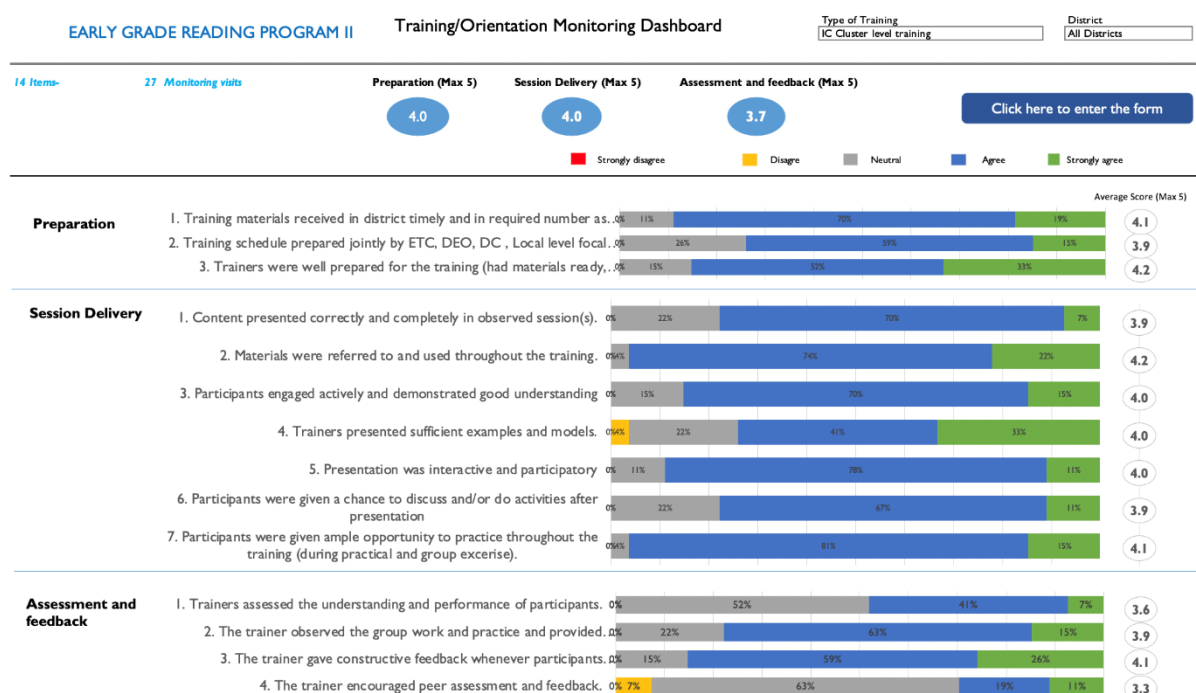
EGRP II expects to begin rolling out the trainings virtually in July and August 2021 after working with CEHRD to identify the ETC-level trainees who will participate and after completing a rapid survey of trainee connectivity and information technology (IT) equipment. EGRP II will also coordinate with CEHRD to identify which online training platforms are familiar to ETC officials and which may be most useful if the ETCs are required to continue using virtual modalities when they roll out subsequent cluster-level trainings (see *Figure 8* for a summary of these and other considerations for virtual IC TPD MTOTs).

Figure 8: Considerations for switching to virtual modalities for IC TPD MTOTs

1. How consistent is Internet connectivity for the ETC trainees? What IT equipment do they have access to during lockdowns (e.g., desktops, laptops, smartphones)?
2. What days of the week and times of the day are most convenient for the ETC trainees to join online sessions and complete asynchronous learning? Does this timing differ for female and male trainees?
3. What online training platforms, such as Moodle and Google Meet, are most familiar to the ETC trainees and most likely to be sustainable for the GON in the future?
4. If subsequent cluster-level IC TPD trainings also need to be rolled out virtually, how does that affect the choice of online training platform?
5. How can we most effectively break up a 7-day training package into smaller chunks and incorporate both synchronous and asynchronous learning?
6. How can we most effectively allocate CEHRD master trainers and divide sessions to cover the different subject areas in the IC?

Another key activity conducted in Year 1 was monitoring the quality of training. As part of the monitoring effort, EGRP II assisted CEHRD to prepare an online quality monitoring tool using KoBo Toolbox (refer to the full tool in *Annex F*). The team also coached district and local education officials on how to prepare and submit data using the online tool and helped to create an Excel-based visualization dashboard to display feedback from the tool (*Figure 9*).

Figure 9: Screenshot of findings from the quality monitoring dashboard for IC TPD trainings



In addition, EGRP II staff supported GON officials to plan and conduct monitoring visits to the trainings conducted at the subnational level. For example, in February 2021, the CEHRD Training Section Director visited a district-level TOT in Bhojpur, organized by the ETC in Province 1. Additional monitoring visits in the company of central-level government officials

were planned for the April–May 2021 period but could not be completed due to the reimposition of lockdowns around the country. EGRP II regional and district staff also conducted training monitoring along with district and local education officials in Banke, Dailekh, Doti, Rautahat, Rolpa, Salyan, and Surkhet, up until the lockdowns were reinstated.

Key strengths and areas for improvement identified during these observations of IC TPD orientations and trainings at district or cluster level included the following.

Key Observations

- Coordination among ETCs, EDCUs, and LEUs on IC TPD planning and rollout was generally effective.
- There was good clarity on session objectives and theoretical aspects of the sessions.
- The balanced mix of group work, use of reference documents, and presentations was helpful in allowing participants to learn about actual instructional practices in the IC in a hands-on way.
- Training participants were visibly engaged during session discussions and role plays.
- Participant reflections at the end of each session were useful in identifying practical applications of the session content as well as areas for improvement.

Recommendations

- Future trainings should focus even more on modeling and practice of skills required to effectively implement the IC in the classroom.
- More extensive and intensive practice on the use of the gradual-release model (“I do, We do, You do”) is needed as part of the training sessions.
- The training quality monitoring tool in particular identified the need to strengthen trainers’ continuous assessment of trainee knowledge and skills gains through the training programs, and to encourage peer assessment between trainees.
- USAID feedback highlighted the importance of addressing training planning and content for education in emergencies.

Follow-Up Actions

- Development of a trainer/facilitator guide and training resource materials for teachers is needed.
- Aspects of education in emergencies will be incorporated into the trainer guide and training resource materials where relevant.
- Ongoing reflection on areas of improvement for future trainings is required.
- Modifying the existing cascade model of training to best suit the context of delivery training through virtual mode

EGRP II began working with CEHRD to address these recommendations through the IC TPD trainer guide and training resource materials as well as MTOT planning and rollout. This effort to strengthen the training approach, based on observations and feedback, will continue in the first few months of Year 2.

Design and conduct operational research on the Integrated Curriculum (1.1.3)

EGRP II aims to support the Nepali government not just in rolling out the IC through trainings and quality monitoring, but also in completing a targeted operational research study on IC implementation. During Year 1, EGRP II regularly consulted with CEHRD and CDC to develop the research questions and design for this operational research and to adjust expectations and timing in line with the COVID-19 pandemic situation across the country. As a result of these discussions, EGRP II and CDC agreed to conduct the study during the 2021–2022 academic session. The main objectives of the study will be:

1. To examine the alignment between the intended IC outcomes and content in the grade 1 Nepali subject area and actual instructional and assessment practices, and to recommend how that alignment could be improved if needed; and
2. To examine how IC teacher training and TPS have functioned in the Nepali subject in grades 1–3, and to recommend areas for strengthening.

During the April–May 2021 quarter, EGRP II explored how the study could incorporate elements of the SEC methodology. Developed in the United States by the Center for Curriculum Analysis, this approach was recently adapted for use in Uganda and Tanzania by the RISE Programme, a global program that seeks to use research to understand how education systems in developing countries can overcome the learning crisis.⁴ The SEC is a set of data collection tools that permit a systematic approach to curriculum analysis as well as research with teachers and other stakeholders on how the curriculum is being applied in everyday practice, and how learning assessment ties in. The Uganda and Tanzania studies⁵ were instrumental in identifying specific ways to strengthen coherence among the curriculum, teacher instructional practices, and student assessment. EGRP II held a preliminary planning discussion with the RISE Programme team in May 2021 to discuss the methodology and its potential adaptation for Nepal, and the program shared the draft TOR for the study with CDC and CEHRD in late May 2021. EGRP II recommends that the SEC study elements focus on the grade 1 Nepali subject in the IC because teachers have had the most time to roll out the curriculum in first grade; the other qualitative elements of the study will cover IC rollout across grades 1–3. The broad timeline of the SEC elements of the study is provided in **Figure 10**.

⁴ World Bank. (2019, January 22). *The education crisis: Being in school is not the same as learning* [News item]. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2019/01/22/pass-or-fail-how-can-the-world-do-its-homework>

⁵ Atuhurra, J., & Kaffenberger, M. (2020). *System (in)coherence: Quantifying the alignment of primary education curriculum standards, examinations, and instruction in two East African countries*. Oxford, U.K.: RISE Programme. <https://riseprogramme.org/publications/system-incoherence-quantifying-alignment-primary-education-curriculum-standards>

Figure 10: Timeline for the SEC process in the IC operational research study



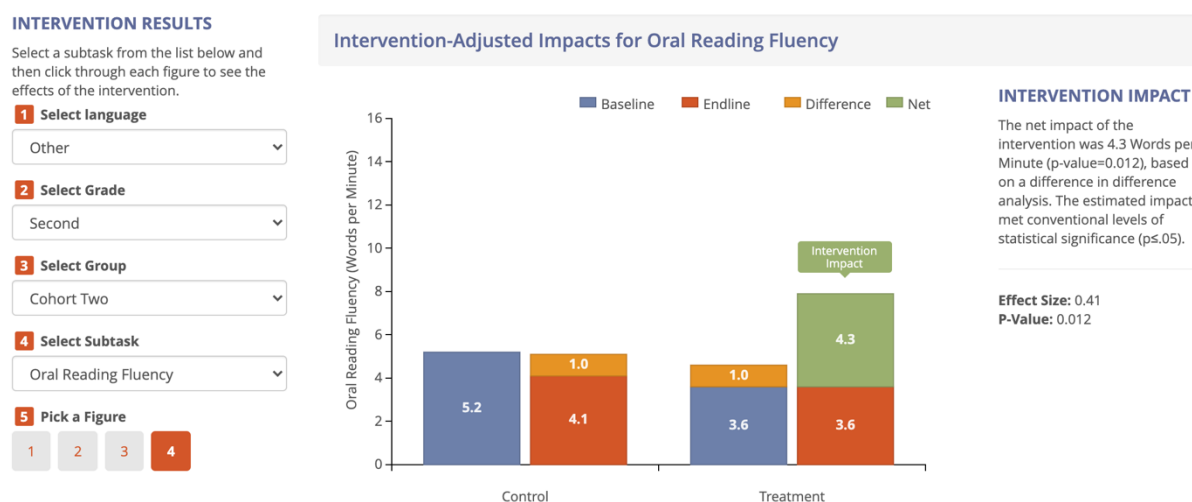
During the June–September 2021 period, EGRP II expects to revise the TOR in response to GON feedback; formalize the planned collaboration with the RISE Programme; and begin rolling out the study in coordination with CDC, CEHRD, and USAID.

3.1.2 Sub-Objective 1.2: Support MOEST policy and planning for NEGRP

Disseminate EGRP endline findings (1.2.1)

In Year 1, EGRP II disseminated EGRP endline findings during a central-level event in October 2020, which drew over 150 GON officials as well as donor and implementing partner representatives and the media. The 2020 endline findings were also prepared for public posting on the Early Grade Reading Barometer and are now available at <https://earlygradereadingbarometer.org/>. The Barometer pages lay out information about the study design and scope; explore relationships between outcomes on different EGRA subtasks; and describe the impacts of EGRP-supported interventions (*Figure 11*), among other topics.

Figure 11: Screenshot of Barometer page for the EGRP endline assessment



Endline dissemination at local levels was a core part of Round 1 of local capacity development workshops described under Objective 2, which reached 1,247 participants from EDCUs, local government representatives, and local education officials. Participants in these workshops learned about the endline findings through a dedicated training session and received a briefing paper on the study as a handout. In addition, endline dissemination at the provincial level was completed through four virtual events in April–May 2021, covering all seven provinces with participants from Ministries of Social Development (MOSDs), ETCs and Education Development Directorates, and EDCUs. Both types of events presented the

overall learning evaluation design and shared successes and challenges identified through the study.

Feedback from participants in general indicated that they found the findings helpful in understanding the extent of the learning challenges facing Nepali children in the early primary grades, and particularly for L2 learners. Participants also remarked that the sessions were useful for increasing understanding of the core elements of the NEGRP. A screenshot of one of the virtual provincial dissemination events is provided in **Figure 12** below. No further activities are planned in Year 2 under this Activity because it was completed in Year 1.

Figure 12: Screenshot from a virtual dissemination event for the EGRP endline results



Support MOEST to develop the new education sector development plan and revise the NEGRP minimum package (1.2.2)

The GON's SSDP covers the period 2016–2022 and will be followed by a new education sector plan implemented from 2021 to 2030. The MOEST conducted a sector plan drafting process in 2020–2021, including forming internal thematic task teams as well as consulting with external stakeholders.

To support this effort and promote integration of evidence based EGR elements within the plan, the EGRP II team carried out a set of activities. First, in November and December 2020, the team reviewed relevant literature, including research and learning assessments from EGRP, to identify priority areas for incorporation into the new sector plan. This process surfaced two core themes that have significant implications for children's EGR in Nepal: language issues in instruction, and TPS. Based on advice from USAID and feedback from MOEST, EGRP II drafted two briefing papers on the two themes during January–February 2021. Both briefing papers followed a similar template, covering the context and the challenges related to each theme, responses that have been implemented and results achieved,

and proposed solutions to include in the new sector plan. A summary of the recommendations in the briefs is presented in *Table 4*.

Table 4: Policy objectives and proposed solutions presented in two briefing papers

Policy objective	Proposed solutions
<p>Brief 1: Schools help to close the learning equity gap by providing tailored instructional support for students who speak Nepali as a second language</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language mapping of teachers and students by local governments to identify and address specific needs related to language of instruction • Use of instructional strategies that support children who speak Nepali as a second language and help them bridge to Nepali as the language of instruction • Materials provision to support Nepali L2 learners to build their reading skills, including locally produced and take-home materials • Municipal administrative actions such as considering teachers' language proficiency during deployments and transfers
<p>Brief 2: Teachers receive regular in-classroom support to adopt and integrate new instructional practice into their teaching routines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial and human resources allocation, including dedicated funding for coaching support in MEPs and budgets; EGR coaching responsibilities assigned to dedicated staff at each LEU; and assignment of experienced resource teachers and teacher trainers as coaches • Capacity development, such as regular training of coaches by ETCs and demand-driven refresher TPS trainings conducted by LEUs/local governments using local financial and human resources • Coordination mechanisms, such as teacher learning groups at palika/cluster and school levels, with checklists that lay out expected TPS activities • Guidelines and tools for lesson observation and feedback coupled with coaching of EGR teachers by head teachers/primary in-charge teachers once a month and periodically by resource teachers

On March 30, 2021, the EGRP II team presented the briefing papers to MOEST representatives who are closely involved in the sector plan development process, including the Joint Secretary of the Planning and Monitoring Division, the Under Secretary, the NEGRP focal person, and a Section Officer who supports NEGRP implementation. The participants indicated that the briefing session was a useful opportunity to learn about NEGRP achievements to date and to consider inputs that will enable the GON to achieve its objectives related to enhancing the quality of education and improving children's learning in the early primary grades.

Second, in addition to sharing the briefing papers, the EGRP II team provided data on the costs for scaling up the NEGRP minimum package in the eight expansion districts to GON representatives through email and through meetings in February 2021. This costing information is key to the GON's planning efforts to scale up evidence-based best practices in EGR through rollout of the minimum package. EGRP II will work closely with CEHRD to finalize cost data to inform future scale up.

Finally, the EGRP II team comprehensively reviewed the draft of the new education sector plan for 2021–2030 that was shared by MOEST in April 2021. The team submitted comments and suggestions to MOEST in May 2021, focusing on elements such as:

- The need to highlight EGR learning outcomes data from recent assessments to underscore the learning needs of children in the early primary grades

- The importance of empowering local levels to produce and distribute learning and reading materials to complement standard, nationally produced materials
- The need to include strategies to help teachers bridge instruction from first language (L1) to L2, for children who do not speak Nepali as their home language
- Indicators related to oral reading fluency (ORF) and comprehension that could be included in the Key Performance Indicator section of the plan

During Year 2, EGRP II will provide additional inputs on the new education sector plan as opportunities arise. In addition, the program team will support review and revision of the NEGRP minimum package, if requested by GON, and has budgeted for a few national-level meetings in Year 2 for this purpose.

Provide technical assistance to ERO to analyze NARN data and support GON to report on SDG 4.1 (1.2.3)

To help the GON improve the use of data for decision making on EGR policy and resource allocation around the country, the EGRP II team offered support for NARN and CB-EGRA data analysis and reporting throughout Year 1. During the June–September 2020 quarter, the EGRP II MEL team continued the work started under EGRP to support ERO with analyzing the NARN data that were collected in early 2020. In August and September 2020, EGRP and ERO organized rounds of virtual meetings to explore and understand the NARN data, develop a data cleaning protocol, and begin the data cleaning and analysis process.

During the October–December 2020 quarter, ERO and EGRP II worked together to analyze and report on the data from the NARN. Through a series of virtual meetings and workshops, the EGRP II MEL team, with assistance from RTI home office statisticians, supported ERO to clean and analyze the data and draft the NARN report. The report was finalized and prepared for dissemination by late 2020.

The NARN findings resembled the EGRP endline findings. On average, students could read only half of the given nonwords (average 4.9 out of 10). The average oral reading fluency of the students was roughly 25 correct words per minute, which falls short of the national benchmark of 45 correct words per minute. More than 10% of students in grade 3 could not read a single word correctly, and more than one-quarter of students could read only between 1 and 15 words correctly. **Table 5** provides details of the percentages of different categories of readers in the study sample. In addition, from the same text used to measure reading fluency, students were asked to answer five questions to demonstrate their comprehension of the text they had just read (80% correct is the MOEST benchmark). On average, students could answer slightly less than half of the given questions correctly (2.4 questions out of 5).

Table 5: Readers at different fluency levels in the NARN, grade 3

Oral reading fluency: No. of correct words per minute	Estimated population	Percentage of learners
0	36,001	10.2%
1–15	96,902	27.6%
16–44	152,117	43.3%
45 or above	66,212	18.9%
Totals	351,232	100.0%

During the January–March 2021 quarter, ERO disseminated the NARN findings—along with reporting from other assessments, including the National Assessment of Student Achievement and the Performance Audit—through provincial-level events. EGRP II provided technical assistance to ERO to summarize and package the NARN findings for the provincial dissemination efforts and began to share the findings during the local capacity development TOTs and workshops that took place under Objective 2 during the April–May 2021 quarter. This dissemination will help provincial and local governments use data for decision making during education planning processes. Based on a request from ERO during the Year 2 AWP consultations, EGRP II will also assist with developing short briefing papers on NARN findings tailored to audiences such as teachers and teacher trainers.

In addition, EGRP II learned that development partners such as the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme will be providing training for ERO on using NARN findings for reporting on SDG 4.1. The capacity development, which is anticipated in June–July 2021, will utilize the “policy linking” approach for education SDG indicator reporting that USAID and other development partners helped to craft.⁶ As of late May 2021, the trainings were slightly behind schedule. However, EGRP II will continue to coordinate with ERO on this effort to inform the GON’s SDG reporting and will keep USAID updated on the planned training. The EGRP II MEL team will participate in the training alongside ERO and later support ERO to analyze and use NARN findings for reporting on SDG 4.1 on the basis of the training contents.

Review benchmarks and determine possible proficiency milestone benchmarks (1.2.4)

EGRP II has been providing ongoing technical assistance to MOEST and the CLAs to review and revise the GON’s existing EGR benchmark. This activity is expected to provide more actionable data to the GON on children’s learning status by grade and proficiency level. As part of this effort, during Year 1, EGRP II supported the revision task team to hold planning meetings and consultations and to start conducting a literature review on benchmarking. The task team consists of representatives from ERO, MOEST, CDC, CEHRD, and the EGRP II MEL team. To help prepare for the benchmark revision process, EGRP II staff also reviewed guidance documents provided by USAID/Nepal. In May 2021, the team participated in an

⁶ Management Systems International. (2020). *Policy linking for Measuring Global Learning Outcomes Toolkit: Linking assessments to the Global Proficiency Framework*. Washington, DC: USAID. <http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/10/WG-GAML-5-Policy-Linking-for-Measuring-Global-learning-Outcomes-Toolkit.pdf>

orientation on the Global Proficiency Framework led by the Senior Literacy Researcher from RTI’s home office, who was part of the framework development committee. Through the orientation, the team learned about the purpose of the framework—to provide a common definition of the minimum knowledge and skills learners must demonstrate for reporting progress on SDG indicator 4.1.1⁷—and its application during national assessment and benchmarking processes.

During the first formal task team meeting in March 2021, the participants agreed on the committee’s working modalities and schedule and designated a four-member subcommittee to draft the revised benchmarks. The task team also suggested establishing four categories of readers—“nonreader,” “emergent reader,” “initial reader,” and “fluent reader”—similar to the categories in the 2020 NARN report. During April–May 2021, the team started reviewing 5 years’ worth of relevant learning outcomes data from Nepal, including from CB-EGRAs; EGRP’s baseline, midline, and endline EGRAs; and the NARN. In addition, the team developed an outline for the benchmark revision report, which tentatively includes the categories listed in *Figure 13*. A TOR to hire a local consultant with expertise in EGR and knowledge of benchmarking, to assist with preparing the literature review and benchmark document, was also drafted.

Figure 13: Draft table of contents for the revised benchmark document

1. Nepali context and education system
2. Components of reading and reading programs
3. Existing data on reading outcomes in Nepal
4. Rationale for revised benchmarks in Nepal
5. Summary of international and national literature on EGR benchmarking
6. Conceptual framework for the revised benchmarks
7. Analysis of existing EGR data to inform benchmark revision
 - CB-EGRAs 2017–2020
 - EGRAs 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020
 - NARN 2020
8. Proposed revised reading benchmarks by grade and proficiency level
9. Implications of the revised benchmarks for policy and practice
10. Conclusions

The committee aims to finalize the task by the middle of July 2021, according to the agreed schedule, shown in *Table 6*. However, as of the end of Year 1, it appeared that some delays would be likely due to the difficulties of convening the task team during the most recent lockdown period. Nevertheless, the EGRP II team will continue to support this effort to ensure it continues moving forward as quickly as possible in the June–September 2021 quarter. During that time, EGRP II will provide both local consultant support (as noted above) and RTI home office technical assistance to draft the revised benchmarks, circulate them for comment within GON, and finalize the document for wider distribution and use.

⁷ The proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3 (b) at the end of primary, and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex.

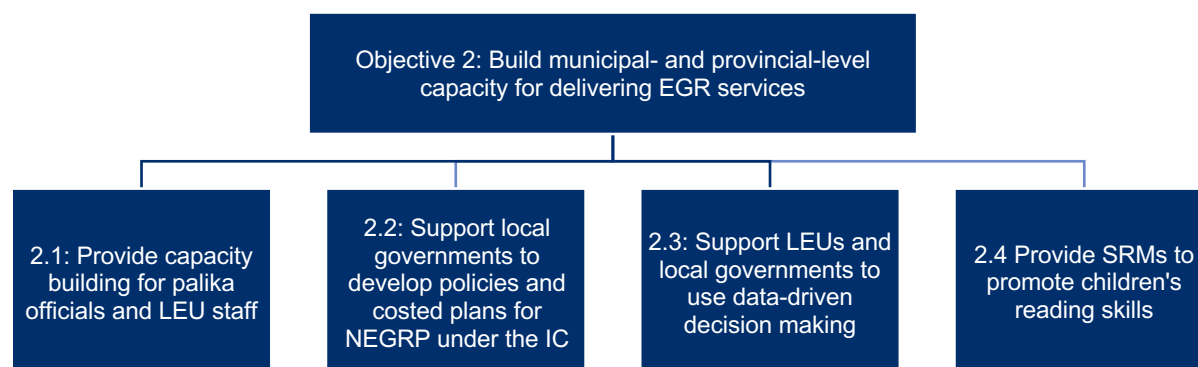
Table 6: Timeline for benchmark revision and finalization

Task	Dates (all in 2021)
Review literature, analyze data, and draft benchmark revision report	March 24–May 15
Hold second and third task team meetings	Weeks of May 17 and 24
Refine the report and hold fourth task team meeting	May 25–June 15
Hold fifth and sixth task team meetings	Week of June 21
Refine report based on final comments	By the end of June
Hold seventh and eighth meetings and submit revised benchmarks to NEGRP Steering Committee for ratification	By July 15

3.2 Objective 2: Build Municipal- and Provincial-Level Capacity for Delivering EGR Services

Objective 2 aims to build municipal and provincial capacity to deliver and scale up EGR services in the context of decentralization and the IC. To achieve this objective, EGRP II will work on building local capacity for NEGRP planning and implementation, supporting the use of data for decision making at the local level, and providing SRMs to target schools in the 22 NEGRP expansion districts, as captured in *Figure 14*.

Figure 14: Objective 2 components



3.2.1 Sub-Objective 2.1: Provide capacity building for palika officials and LEU staff

Design, plan, and conduct TOT for workshops for LEUs in Level 1, 2, and 3 districts (2.1.1)

During June–September 2020, EGRP II designed and deployed a survey of local capacity needs, human resources, Internet connectivity, and IT equipment availability for all 396 of EGRP II’s target LEUs. The survey included questions related to local education sectors’ COVID-19 response activities and resource allocation plans, to help with development of EGRP II’s local-level support activities under Objective 4. It was also set up to identify the extent to which each LEU can pivot to virtual meeting and workshop formats using their existing connectivity and equipment, with the expectation that pandemic conditions will continue to result in restrictions on in-person gatherings.

During the October–December 2020 quarter, the EGRP II team finalized analysis and reporting on the LEU capacity survey that was conducted in the previous quarter. The survey

identified that many LEUs face challenges in Internet connectivity as well as adequate staffing levels to carry out assigned tasks, including limited staffing for IEMIS functions. As shown in **Table 7** below, 82% of LEUs indicating having two staff or fewer overall, with 16% indicating that no staff had been allocated.

Table 7: Overall staffing levels reported by LEUs through the needs assessment survey⁸

No. of staff	% of LEUs	Cumulative % of LEUs
0	16%	16%
1	21%	38%
2	44%	82%
3	14%	96%
4 or more	4%	100%

In a similar vein, only around one-third of LEUs reported having developed an LEU profile or similar document to inform education planning, or having used education data for sector planning purposes. Roughly one-quarter of the palikas reported having incorporated EGR activities into their MEPs. School-level monitoring by LEUs was inconsistent: 17.5% of LEUs reported monitoring once every 6 months, once per year, or never. At the same time, nearly 15% of LEUs that did manage to conduct monitoring visits reported never observing classrooms or providing feedback.

About two-thirds of the respondents were aware of the NEGRP minimum package, and roughly 20% of palikas indicated that they had implemented at least one program related to reading in their catchment area. In addition, with regard to COVID-19 responses, only about one-third of schools were conducting distance or online learning, and approximately half the palikas had provided resources to schools for alternative learning.

The EGRP II team used these key findings to design and plan for local capacity development TOTs and workshops, particularly in areas where the survey indicated gaps at the palika level, such as:

- Limited knowledge on the NEGRP minimum package
- Limited programs related to reading
- Lack of monitoring and professional support
- Need for skills to use data and develop LEU profiles
- Difficulties in continuing students' learning during school closures

Throughout November–December 2020, the EGRP II team conducted detailed content design for the local capacity development workshops. The team also planned and carried out the TOTs for the workshops, and initiated planning and logistics for the subsequent cluster-level workshops. During the content design and development process for the workshops, several consultation meetings were held with MOEST, CEHRD, the SSDP technical assistance team, JICA-IMEN, and the Reading for All program. Based on the feedback received from various

⁸ LEUs were asked to report all staff currently working in the LEU, from the section officer level and above.

stakeholders, as well as recommendations from USAID during the AWP development process and the findings of the capacity assessment survey, the following contents were agreed upon for rolling out the capacity development workshops at the local level (a more detailed description is provided under Activity 2.1.2 below).

- Introduction to the SSDP, NEGRP, and NEGRP minimum package
- Theoretical concepts and practical steps in MEP and budget development
- Use of IEMIS for data-based decision making
- Development of education profiles for each palika to inform MEP development and implementation
- Introduction to the IC and TPS
- Disability and inclusion in EGR
- Alternative learning modalities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The TOT program for preparing facilitators for LEU capacity development workshops at the district and cluster levels was conducted during the last week of December 2020. Altogether, 50 EGRP II team members— including 4 regional managers, 4 regional technical coordinators, 4 regional MEL coordinators, and 38 district coordinators—were trained by Kathmandu-based technical team members. The 5-day TOTs were conducted in two locations: Simara, accommodating participants from the Eastern and Western regional offices; and Nepalgunj, reaching participants from the Kathmandu, Mid-Western, and Far-Western regional offices. COVID-19 mitigation measures, including the use of face masks and well-ventilated conference venues, were followed in both locations.

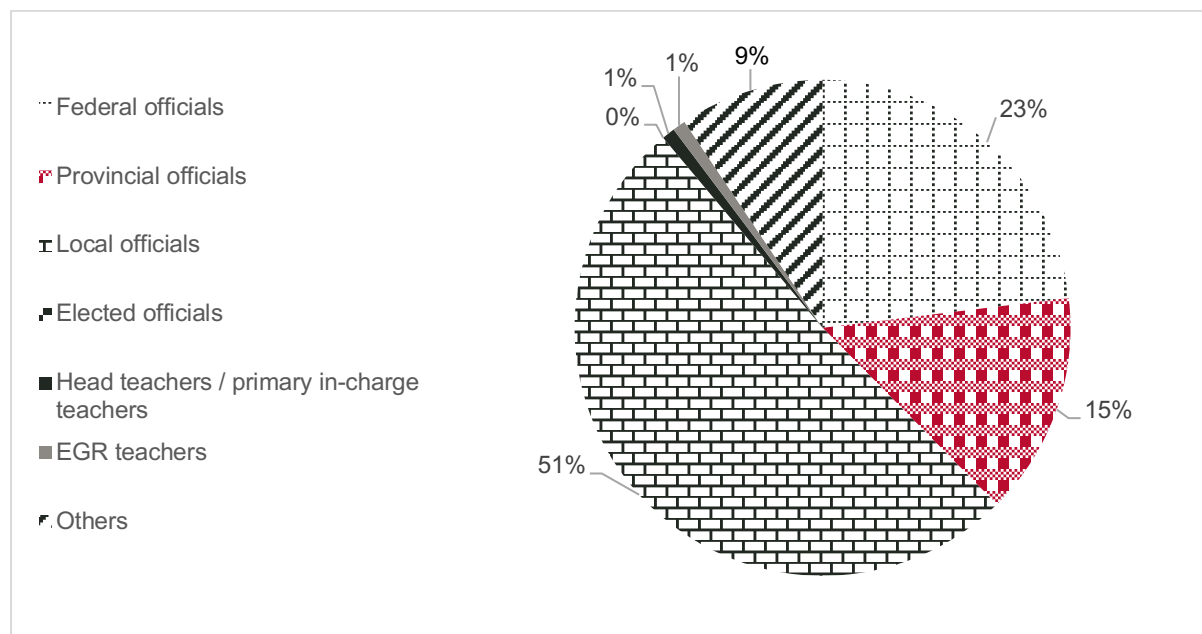
During the January–March 2021 quarter, planning for Round 2 of the local capacity development workshops in 22 Level 1 and 2 districts was carried out in consultation with MOEST and CEHRD, including the officials who would play the role of master trainers with support from EGRP II staff. EGRP II prepared the draft workshop content for Round 2 based on the experiences and needs identified in Round 1, and further discussed and refined the content with MOEST and CEHRD. As a result, it was agreed to include three key areas in the workshops:

1. Review the status of and finalize each palika’s MEP and education profile
2. Plan for local-level support for NEGRP implementation, EGR instruction, and use of EGR materials in schools and classrooms
3. Agree on and plan for local implementation of the menu of TPS options in the revised TPS management procedure and guideline (see Section 3.3.1, Sub-Objective 3.1, for further details).

MOEST and CEHRD conducted five 3-day TOT events for these workshops in two phases. The first phase took place in three locations (Tanahun, Dang, and Doti) during April 10–12, 2021, and the second phase in two locations (Bara and Sunsari) during April 18–20, 2021. Trainees numbered 117 in total (8% women) and included GON officials from EDCUs, LEUs, MOSDs, Education Development Directorates, and ETCs (*Figure 15*). The trained participants were then expected to facilitate district- and cluster-level workshops throughout the remainder of April and May 2021. However, the workshops could only be partially

completed before COVID-19 restrictions were reinstated in late April, as is discussed further under Activity 2.1.2 below.

Figure 15: Participants by organization in the Round 2 TOTs (N = 117)



Deliver workshops for LEUs in Level 1, 2, and 3 districts (2.1.2)

After completing the TOTs described under Activity 2.1.1 above, the EGRP II team then supported rollout of two rounds of local capacity development workshops: Round 1 for all 396 palikas across Levels 1, 2, and 3 districts; and Round 2 for 251 palikas in Levels 1 and 2 districts.

In the January–March 2021 quarter, the EGRP II team supported implementation of 5-day capacity development workshops at the cluster and district levels. The objectives of this first round of workshops were to enable LEU and other local government personnel to develop their MEPs and education profiles using data-driven decision making, and to better coordinate efforts to carry out NEGRP and EGR activities at the local level. The Round 1 workshop sessions aligned with similar 5-day content developed by CEHRD and the SSDP technical assistance team, and covered the topics captured in detail in **Table 8**.

Table 8: Round 1 local capacity development workshop content

No.	Content	Description
1.	Education policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSDP, NEGRP Policy, SDG 4 • Sharing of EGRP-produced documentary about NEGRP • EGRP EGRA endline results
2.	NEGRP minimum package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Components of the NEGRP minimum package • Program Implementation Manual of Nepal Fiscal Year 2077/78 (Gregorian calendar 2020/21)
3.	Teacher professional support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated curriculum and linkage with EGR components and instructional practices • Introduction to and use of teaching and learning materials and SRMs • TPS guidelines and menu of TPS options • Selection of appropriate TPS mechanism by local governments / LEUs
4.	Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results-based monitoring by local governments / LEUs • Tools and protocols for results-based monitoring • Post-monitoring reporting
5.	Concept and principles of planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The basic concepts, features, and principles of education planning • Types of planning: planning by time horizon (long term, medium term, short term); planning by scope (macro, meso, micro); planning by management level (strategic, operational) • Approaches to education planning (participatory approach, consultative approach) • Planning tools • SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) • Problem tree analysis • Logical frameworks
6.	Local-level planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local-level planning following Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration guidelines • Linkages between education planning and other local-level policies and plans • Diversity, disability, and inclusion in local-level planning
7.	Education planning in Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of education sector planning tools in Nepal (MEPs and school improvement plans)
8.	Education planning, implementation, and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education planning for promoting quality education • MEP, budget, and scope • Discretionary resource allocation at palika level • Implementation of the plan: resource identification, partnerships, implementation guidelines

No.	Content	Description
9.	Education planning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a vision • Establishing goals and objectives • Setting targets • Determining results • Establishing a result chain (input, output, outcome, and impact indicators) • Developing strategies • Selecting and prioritizing activities
10.	IEMIS and assessment data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEMIS data, their validation, and their use for decision making • IEMIS data for the development of the LEU profile • CB-EGRA and NARN data for EGR improvement
11.	LEU profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEU profile for education planning • Framework for the development of LEU profile • Integration of EGR into LEU profile
12.	COVID-19 response for education management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuity of EGR promotion following the “Student Learning Facilitation Directive 2077” (Gregorian year 2020) • Contextualizing the “Curriculum Content Adjustment Framework 2077” (Nepali subject portion) • Home- and community-based learning for EGR • Facilitation of virtual meetings or webinars

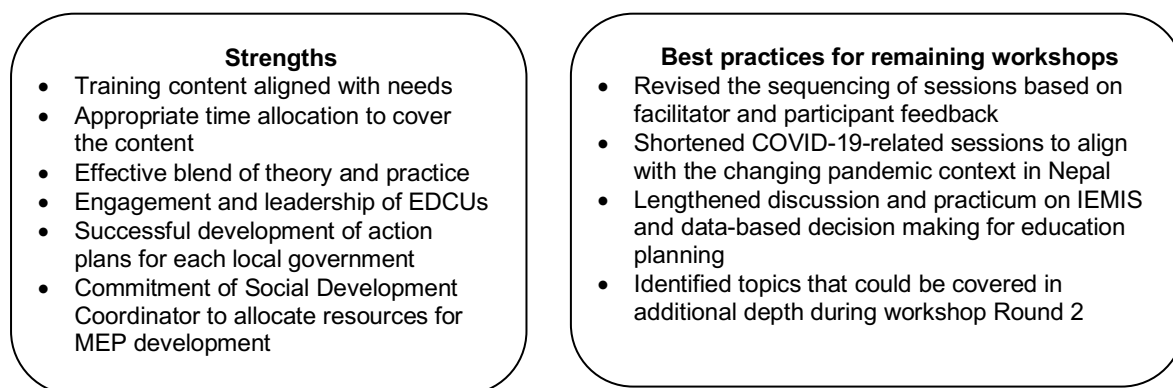
During the January–March 2021 quarter, 67 out of 69 planned workshops⁹ were completed in Level 1, 2, and 3 districts, with 387 local governments across 36 districts participating. These 67 workshops reached a total of 1,220 participants. Two events covering the remaining nine palikas in two districts—one in Bhaktapur and another in Mustang—remained incomplete at that time due to government precautions related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the Kathmandu Valley as well as weather conditions in the Himalayas.

At the Round 1 local capacity development workshops, each LEU head (or designate) was accompanied by a representative from the local government planning section as well as the coordinator of the local government Social Development Committee. Guided by EGRP II team members and EDCU representatives, each palika group developed an action plan to finish preparing their periodic MEP and education profile upon returning to their duty stations. The participants received an LEU capacity development booklet to guide this process; the booklet covered education policies and programs, the local education planning framework, and other relevant information on EGR and NEGRP.

EGRP II conducted a “pause and reflect” session in March 2021 after the completion of 26 local capacity development workshops. This session was organized to identify key strengths and areas needing improvement while the remaining workshops were being rolled out (see **Figure 16** for further details).

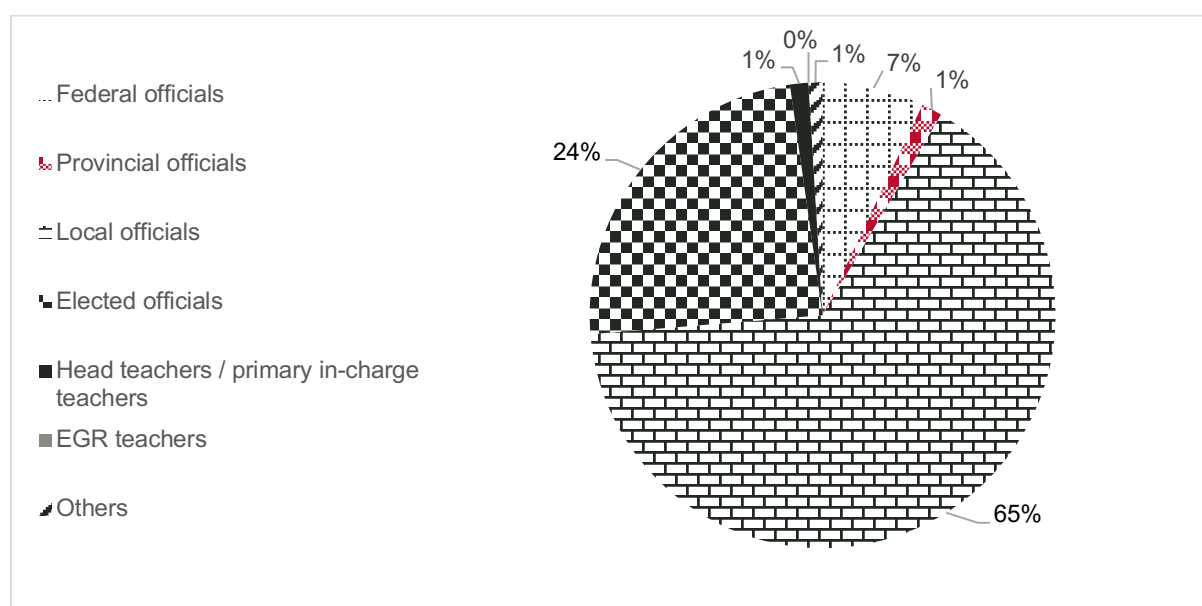
⁹ The original plan was for 96 workshops, but due to declining COVID-19 cases in many parts of the country, under RTI policy, EGRP II could increase the number of participants at each event, thus reducing the overall number of events required.

Figure 16: Strengths and best practices identified during the “pause and reflect” event on Round 1 local capacity development workshops



During April–May 2021, EGRP II worked with the GON to complete the remaining two Round 1 workshops in Mustang and Bhaktapur just before lockdowns were reinstated. The additional participants during these two events numbered 27, bringing the cumulative total figure for Round 1 to 1,247 participants (14% women) (*Figure 17*).

Figure 17: Participants by organization in the Round 1 local capacity development workshops (N = 1,247)



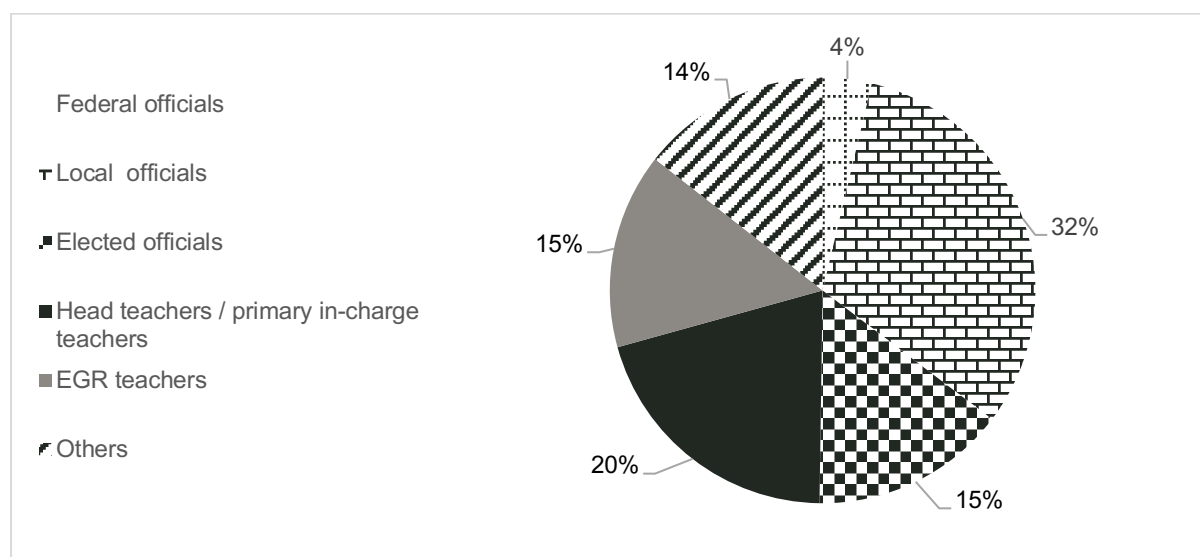
Also in April 2021, EGRP II supported the GON officials who had been trained in the Round 2 TOTs to begin rolling out the second round of local capacity development workshops. Echoing the Round 2 TOTs described above, the major focus of the workshops is on municipal education planning, NEGRP rollout, EGR instruction and materials, and localization of TPS procedures. The content includes sharing guidelines on effective display and use of SRMs in schools and explaining how local government officials can follow up. An overview of the workshop content is provided in *Table 9*.

Table 9: Round 2 local capacity development workshop content

Workshop day	Summary of content
Day 1	<p>Review of municipal education profiles, discussion on possible challenges and solutions related to updating the education profiles, and effective use of the education profile for decision making</p> <p>Review and reflection on progress toward MEP development/implementation since the Round 1 workshops and discussion of possible challenges and solutions related to finalizing and implementing the MEPs</p> <p>Agreement on next steps to finalize/implement the MEPs, including specific EGR activities to be included in the plans</p> <p>Dissemination of NARN findings and action planning for mitigation measures for low learning outcomes</p>
Day 2	<p>Orientation on EGR teaching and learning materials and their uses</p> <p>Demonstration of EGR instructional approach</p> <p>Use of EGR materials in the IC</p> <p>Local reading materials development</p> <p>Dissemination of SRM utilization guidelines and demonstration on effective display and use of SRMs in classrooms</p> <p>Discussion and action planning on palika roles and responsibilities for the continuous use of the materials in schools</p> <p>Mechanism to develop and deliver EGR materials to schools</p>
Day 3	<p>Hands-on orientation to the TPS procedure and monitoring tool developed by CEHRD</p> <p>Case studies of palikas that effectively implemented TPS options across different contexts in Nepal</p> <p>Review and critical discussion on findings from JMV's</p> <p>Review of local data and human resource availability to inform TPS decision making</p> <p>Process to prioritize the most critical needs and the most realistic TPS approaches in the context of each palika</p> <p>Modeling and practice of effective TPS coaching and support by LEU officials based on the selected TPS options (e.g., school visit and classroom observation, discussion on TPS at head teachers' meeting, selection of roster experts)</p> <p>Action planning on the TPS modalities to be adopted in each palika and planning for sustainability of TPS budget and human resources</p>

Six participants from each palika were invited to participate in the workshops, including the Social Development Committee coordinator, the chief administrative officer/planning officer, the LEU head, one selected head teacher, one EGR teacher, and a representative from the local pedagogical/subject-expert group. Before lockdowns occurred in late April 2021, EGRP II was able to complete 11 of the 78 planned events, reaching 215 participants (15% women) from 39 palikas in Baglung, Kapilvastu, Khotang, Myagdi, Rolpa, and Salyan (*Figure 18*).

Figure 18: Participants by organization in the Round 2 local capacity development workshops to date (N = 215)



The EGRP II team conducted a second “pause and reflect” event in May 2021 to discuss progress made during the first 11 workshops and determine how best to complete the remaining workshops under lockdown conditions. Key recommendations from the event are captured in **Figure 19**.

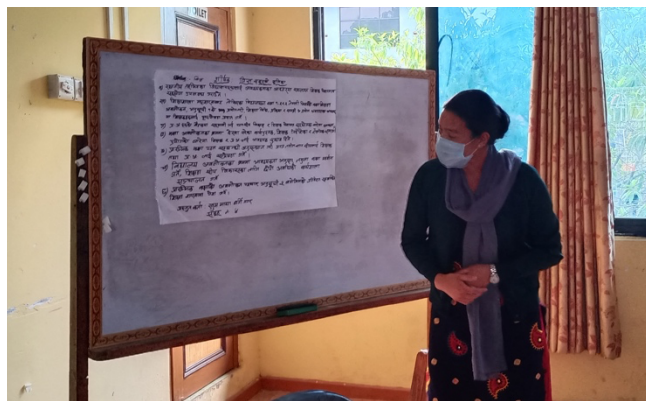
Based on the recommendations, the team created a detailed tool to capture the status of MEP development and implementation, education profile drafting, NEGRP implementation, and TPS provision in each palika. Data will be collected in June 2021 and, as described in the approved Year 2 AWP, will be used to inform targeting of additional support to selected palikas during the Round 3 workshops. District-level task teams made up of officials who already participated in the TOTs and workshops will also be formed to spearhead rollout of the third round of workshops. By the end of May 2021, the EGRP II team had developed a TOR for the task teams, which will be finalized in collaboration with CEHRD in early June 2021. EGRP II expects to conduct orientation sessions for the task team members in July 2021 and then start rolling out Round 3 workshops in August 2021.

Figure 19: Recommendations identified during the “pause and reflect” event on Round 2 local capacity development workshops

- Turnover among government officials who participated in the Round 1 workshops was common, necessitating re-coverage of some of the same content in Round 2.
- Content can be delivered virtually but should be broken up into smaller segments and condensed to reflect core elements.
- Virtual trainings should start with local governments with better Internet connectivity. Additional workshops can then be completed in person in the remaining local governments as needed.
- More detailed categorization of local governments according to the status of their MEP development will enable EGRP II to effectively target additional support where needed most.
- A dedicated task team within each district would be the most effective mechanism for targeted follow-up at the local level.
- Communication is needed from the federal and provincial governments encouraging local governments to finalize and implement their MEPs so that the effort becomes more institutionalized within the education system.

It was also agreed to implement as many of the remaining Round 2 workshops as possible through virtual means in June and July 2021 so as not to lose momentum, and so as to leave adequate time for any necessary follow-up through the Round 3 workshops or other interactions. As such, the team developed a revised virtual workshop agenda and by the end of May 2021 had begun preparing to roll it out in coordination with the Round 2 TOT participants. The virtual workshops will still take place over 3 days, but with shorter sessions that will be more manageable online. The team will also work with district and local officials to consider including additional stakeholders who can play an important role in local education planning, given that the virtual format enables larger groups to gather at the same cost.

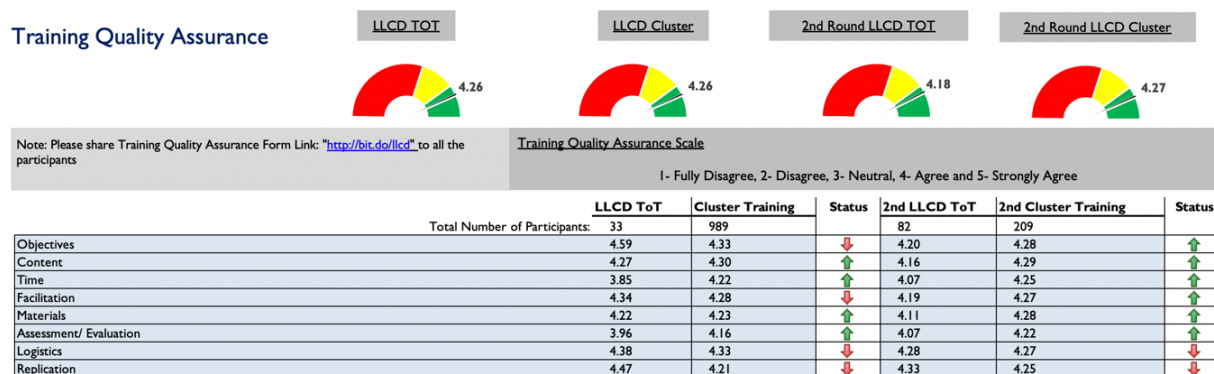
As part of EGRP II’s collaborating, learning, and adapting approach, the team instituted a training quality monitoring system for the local capacity development TOTs and workshops, which can also be used for other future training activities. The approach consists of two main tools: A training quality assurance tool that allows the participants to assess the training quality directly; and a training monitoring tool that monitors can use to rate the training quality based on their observations (the second tool was also discussed under Activity 1.1.2 above). Developed through KoBo Toolbox, the online training quality assurance tool enables participants to rate aspects such as achievement of training objectives and coverage of content, time allocation and management, facilitation approaches and use of materials, assessment of trainee knowledge and skills, overall logistics, and potential for replication of the training by the trainees in the future (refer to *Annex G* for the full tool).



An EGR teacher makes a presentation during a Round 2 local capacity development workshop in Baglung in April 2021. (Photo credit: Buddhi Magar).

As indicated in the Excel-based data visualization dashboard in **Figure 20**, quality measures were very similar between the Round 1 TOTs and trainings as well as the Round 2 TOTs and trainings, indicating good fidelity of implementation in the training cascade. The team reviewed these findings during the “pause and reflect” sessions to note potential areas for improvement in coordination with the GON trainers.

Figure 20: Training quality assurance findings for the Round 1 and 2 local capacity development TOTs and workshops



Conduct follow-up meetings and reviews with LEUs and EDCUs (2.1.3)

In addition to the local capacity development workshops described above, the EGRP II team provided follow-up and support to palikas through ongoing inputs such as introductory meetings, LEU-level review meetings, and DCC meetings.

Introductory Meetings

To kick off collaboration with EDCU and LEU officials in the program’s target areas, regionally based staff held introductory meetings during the June–September and October–December 2020 quarters. The objectives of these meetings were to share key EGRP achievements and to orient local stakeholders on EGRP II objectives and planned activities. Altogether, 506 participants (15% women) joined 38 introductory events covering all 38 target districts.

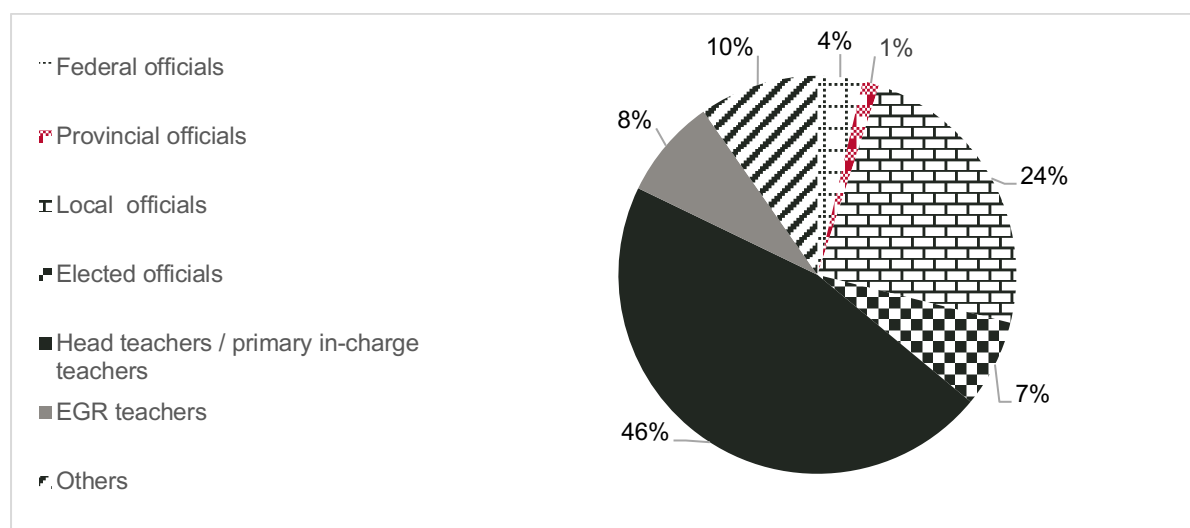
LEU-Level Review Meetings

LEU-level review meetings focused on helping local governments and EGR stakeholders such as head teachers/primary in-charge teachers meet the requirements for the NEGRP minimum package, implement TPS, and ensure adequate access to and use of teaching and learning materials and SRMs. Specifically, EGRP II staff helped LEU officials understand how to incorporate EGR priorities in their MEPs, and how to choose contextually appropriate TPS mechanisms for their palikas. EGRP II staff also advised LEU officials and school officials on how to promote appropriate display and use of the newly distributed SRMs in their schools and classrooms. Finally, EGRP II staff helped local officials conduct planning and budgeting and assisted with access to print-ready copies for printing and delivery of grade 2 and 3 Nepali subject workbooks, as stipulated under the NEGRP minimum package in the SSDP budget. This assistance included encouraging EDCUs and local governments to coordinate printing and distribution of the workbooks to promote efficiency and cost savings.

EGRP II coordinated with CDC to obtain permission for sharing the print-ready copies and shared the copies with EDCUs and local governments upon request. The EGRP II Kathmandu team had also previously encouraged CEHRD to issue guidance to EDCUs on local-level printing and distribution of the student workbooks under the minimum package, based on feedback that this information was unclear to district and local officials. CEHRD shared the guidance with all EDCUs in early February 2021.

In total, EGRP II conducted 324 LEU review meetings across the 38 districts during Year 1, reaching 4,226 participants (22% female) (*Figure 21*).

Figure 21: Participants by organization in LEU review meetings (N = 4,226)



DCC Meetings

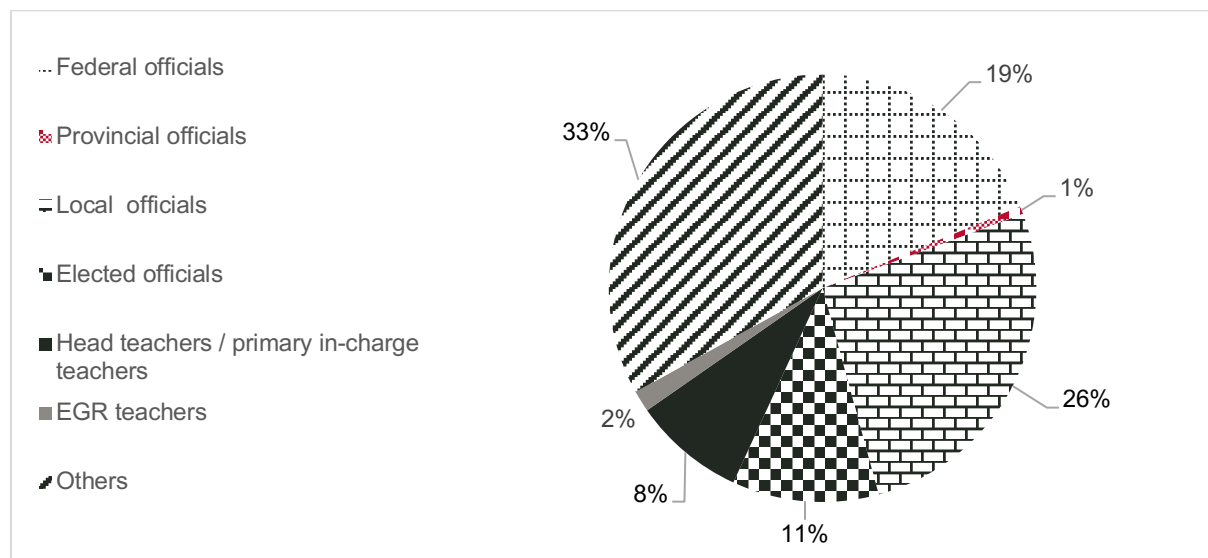
During the Year 1 AWP development process in 2020, the EGRP II team advocated with MOEST and CEHRD to establish DCCs in the new NEGRP target districts, based on experience in the initial 16 districts through EGRP. The NEGRP Steering Committee members agreed, and consequently, CEHRD circulated a letter to the 22 Level 1 and 2 districts to request formation of NEGRP DCCs at the district level. DCCs are responsible for overseeing and coordinating NEGRP rollout within their districts. Each DCC consists of a set membership list, as captured in *Table 10*.

Table 10: District Coordination Committee membership

DCC role	Position holder
Coordinator	1 EDCU head
Member	1 EDCU officer who coordinates with international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) or an EDCU technical assistant
Member	1 representative from the Confederation of Nepalese Teachers
Member	1 representative from the NGO Federation
Member	1 representative from the District Federation of Nepali Journalists
Member	1 representative from a school management committee
Member	1 representative from a parent–teacher association
Member	1 subject expert nominated by the EDCU head
Member	Maximum of 2 officers responsible for education at the local level
Member Secretary	1 NEGRP focal person from the EDCU

By April 2021, all 22 Level 1 and 2 districts had newly formed DCCs to supplement the DCCs that had already been constituted in the 16 EGRP target districts. During Year 1, EGRP II supported district officials to organize 43 total DCC events reaching 494 participants (14% women) (**Figure 22**). These events covered 29 of the 38 target districts, with events still to be conducted in Bardiya, Kaski, Manang, Mustang, Nawalparasi West, Rupandehi, Sindhuli, Sindhupalchok, and Tanahun in Year 2. The key discussion topics included the NEGRP strategy, the NEGRP minimum package, EGRP II objectives and activities, and planning for local capacity development workshops and JMV. The team also supported six extended DCC meetings at which the municipality mayors/deputy mayors, rural municipality chairs/deputy chairs, and LEU heads from all palikas participated. These extended DCC meetings—which reached 141 total participants (20% women)—will help obtain wider buy-in for funding of EGR activities at the local level from the elected officials who oversee planning and budgeting.

Figure 22: Participants by organization in DCC meetings (N = 494)



During Year 2, EGRP II will support implementation of additional DCC meetings in all target districts, to continue assisting district and local officials with education planning, budget allocation, NEGRP rollout, use of teaching and learning materials and SRMs, and effective TPS implementation for the palikas within each district. EGRP II anticipates that one DCC meeting will be conducted in each target district in Year 2. In addition, the 32 out of 38 districts that did not complete an extended DCC meeting in Year 1 will finish them in Year 2. Virtual meeting approaches will be used as much as possible for activities that take place during expected COVID-19 disruptions from June through August 2021.

3.2.2 Sub-Objective 2.2: Support local governments to develop policies and costed plans for NEGRP under the IC

Support local governments to develop/adapt, roll out, and monitor their Municipal Education Plans and budgets (2.2.1)

To support local governments to develop local-level education policies and plans that incorporate EGR activities, EGRP II has been conducting a series of steps. As described in Sub-Objective 2.1 above, the steps include introductory and coordination meetings at the local level, as well as the first round of 5-day capacity development workshops on local-level education planning in Levels 1–3 districts, and the second round of workshops in Levels 1–2 districts.

During the introductory meetings and LEU-level review meetings, discussions were initiated about developing or adapting the MEPs and incorporating EGR best practices demonstrated during EGRP implementation. Budgets and planned activities for the current fiscal year in the respective palikas were reviewed, and the scope of educational activities was identified. After these discussions, local governments expressed interest in incorporating EGR activities into their local-level policies and plans. In addition, sessions on formulating, implementing, and rolling out MEPs were held during the Round 1 local capacity development workshops that were conducted during January–April 2021.

Through the 5-day local capacity development workshops in Round 1, local government participants developed knowledge and skills on municipal education planning approaches. Planning-focused sessions at the workshops covered topics such as:

- Concepts and practices of education planning
- Planning tools, including problem trees, SWOT analysis, and logical framework analysis
- Development of the MEP vision, mission, goals, and objectives
- Identification of high-priority EGR activities to incorporate into the MEP
- Allocation of resources at the local level for the MEP drafting and finalization process.

EGRP II regional and district teams also provided telephone and face-to-face support to LEUs to further develop and update their education plan after the workshops (see sample MEP outline in **Figure 23**). Furthermore, during LEU review meetings and DCC meetings, finalizing MEPs and allocating local resources for EGR activities were two of the core topics. The EGRP II team guided local officials on developing well-designed MEPs and ensuring that

Figure 23: Outline of typical MEP content

1. Municipal context overall
2. Municipal education context
3. Vision
4. Objectives
5. Strategies
6. Priority activities
7. Indicators of success
8. Financial plan
9. Implementation plan
10. Monitoring and evaluation plan

NEGRP priorities are adequately addressed.

During the Round 2 workshops that began in April 2021, MEP development and implementation was a core topic. Sessions focused on reviewing MEP status and troubleshooting common challenges in finalizing and implementing MEPs based on real-world experiences among local government participants.

During June–September 2021, EGRP II will continue supporting MEP development and implementation through the remaining Round 2 workshops as well as the Round 3 workshops and other follow-up opportunities, including DCC meetings.



An LEU official shares tips on developing MEPs and education profiles during a Round 2 local capacity development workshop in Baglung in April 2021. (Photo credit: Buddhi Magar).

3.2.3 Sub-Objective 2.3: Support LEUs and local governments to use data-driven decision making

Support LEUs to develop and maintain IEMIS local education profiles (2.3.1)

Throughout Year 1, EGRP II regularly supported LEUs to implement and update their education profiles and to manage IEMIS data for decision making to improve children’s learning. Updated annually, local education profiles are integral planning documents that cover the educational status of each municipality, local education statistics, and trend analyses. **Figure 24** provides an overview of the benefits of the education profiles for local governments and the education sector as whole.

After program start-up, the EGRP II team began offering technical assistance for local education profile development through courtesy visits, telephone conversations, introductory meetings, and review meetings. During these discussions, EGRP II team members became familiar with the status of IEMIS data management at each local level and supported LEUs to collect, compile, and analyze the IEMIS data and to begin preparing their local education profiles.

Figure 24: Benefits of developing a local education profile

1. Promotes better understanding of the status of education at the local level
2. Helps in formulating and targeting appropriate and equitable policies and interventions to improve education outcomes
3. Assists in monitoring and evaluating educational progress
4. Increases the capacity of local-level stakeholders in planning and implementation

Next, through the Round 1 local-level capacity development workshops, LEU personnel enhanced their skills in developing education profiles using IEMIS data such as student enrollment, intake, and dropout rates, as well as teacher–student ratios. Likewise, EGRP II shared a sample education profile with the LEUs during the workshops and coached them on how to develop their own local education profiles.

Round 2 of the local capacity development workshops, as well as other follow-up events with LEUs, are providing additional coaching on using data to inform planning and on maintaining the education profiles. During the Round 1 workshops, local officials expressed the need to build additional skills on compiling, analyzing, and reporting on local education data. As such, the Round 2 workshops included practical discussions on common challenges in collection and use of data—including limitations on data quality and availability—and shared the specific strategies to address those challenges.

During June–September 2021, EGRP II will continue to support local governments to develop and utilize their education profiles for planning educational policies, interventions, and resource allocation. The program will provide this assistance through the remaining Round 2 workshops, the Round 3 workshops, and other interactions at the local level.

3.2.4 Sub-Objective 2.4: Provide SRMs to promote children’s reading skills

Distribute SRMs to target schools in the 22 NEGRP scale-up districts (2.4.1)

Upon USAID’s request, the first EGRP printed and began distributing Nepali SRMs to the 22 NEGRP expansion districts during July–October 2020. A competitive bidding process had been started in the previous quarter, with Apollo Press selected as the successful bidder. The program team classified the 177 SRMs into three groups based on level of difficulty, which were later packed and labeled for grades 1–3. Before printing began, CDC requested that all print-ready copies be revised to reflect a new GON logo and national map of

Figure 25: Scenes from the SRM printing, packaging, and delivery process



Nepal. This modification was completed as requested in mid-July, and all printing was done by the end of August. Apollo Press began distributing the materials shortly thereafter to the schools in the 22 NEGRP expansion districts (*Error! Reference source not found.*).

To take into account the number of students attending each school, two sets of SRMs were provided to the schools with more than 60 students each in grades 1–3, based on the most recently available IEMIS student data. Likewise, two boxes for each LEU and seven boxes for each EDCU were set up for delivery, to ensure a surplus of SRMs in case they are found to be needed based on corrected enrollment numbers.

With USAID approval, costs for SRMs distributed through October 2020 were covered through EGRP, and therefore the SRMs distributed through that date were tracked within the EGRP indicators. SRMs distributed from November 1, 2020, onward were paid for through EGRP II, and those numbers of SRMs were counted toward the EGRP II target.

During the January–March 2021 quarter, EGRP II completed the SRM distribution across all community schools in the 22 NEGRP districts. EGRP II successfully delivered a total of 10,500 packages of SRMs to schools, ETCs, EDCUs, LEUs, CLAs, and EGRP II Kathmandu and regional offices.

Based on IEMIS data, EGRP II initially planned to deliver SRMs to 9,012 schools across the 22 districts. However, due to school closures, mergers, and additions that had not been properly captured in the IEMIS, only 8,956 schools¹⁰ were actually found to be in existence and therefore received the materials, as captured in **Table 11**. After the distributor, working with project staff and government officials, identified the discrepancies, 61 excess boxes

¹⁰ 72 schools were merged/closed, while 16 schools were added to the original IEMIS list, for a net difference of 56 schools.

were returned to EDCUs and LEUs so that those SRMs could be used for future replenishment in schools as needed.

In Year 2, EGRP II will continue supporting schools and local governments to promote effective display and use of the SRMs in everyday teaching and learning, through JMV, the local capacity development workshops, and LEU review meetings. The new materials are expected to be used by both teachers and students before, during, and after classroom teaching activities to build reading skills and promote a love of reading among students.

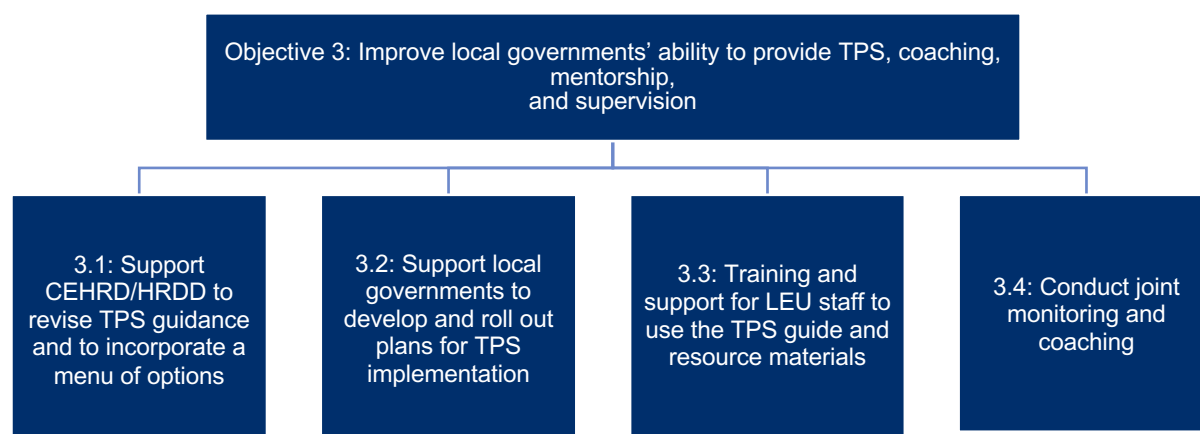
Table 11: Status of SRM delivery in the 22 NEGRP expansion districts

Province	District	No. of schools that received SRMs	No. of SRM boxes delivered to schools	No. of SRM boxes delivered to EDCUs	No. of SRM boxes delivered to LEUs	No. of SRM boxes returned to EDCUs/LEUs due to school merger / closure
Province 1	Taplejung	330	326	15	18	1
	Bhojpur	384	384	15	18	0
	Khotang	485	485	15	20	1
Province 2	Siraha	477	558	12	34	0
	Dhanusha	387	430	12	36	8
	Mahottari	373	469	12	30	0
	Sarlahi	450	528	12	40	1
	Rautahat	379	478	12	36	0
	Bara	431	473	12	32	0
Bagmati	Sindhuli	553	559	15	18	14
	Sindhupalchok	507	514	10	24	12
	Rasuwa	90	90	7	10	0
Gandaki	Tanahun	440	444	12	20	7
	Myagdi	227	227	10	12	1
	Baglung	512	516	10	20	5
Lumbini	Nawalparasi West	204	225	15	14	0
	Kapilvastu	536	584	15	20	7
	Rolpa	402	410	15	20	3
Karnali	Salyan	446	452	10	20	0
	Dailekh	471	471	10	22	1
Sudur Paschim	Achham	485	491	10	20	0
	Doti	387	397	15	18	0
Total		8,956	9,511	271	502	61

3.3 Objective 3: Improve Local Governments' Ability to Provide TPS, Coaching, Mentorship, and Supervision

Objective 3 focuses on building capacity for TPS, which is a key input in helping teachers build and sustain improved practices for EGR instruction. Objective 3 activities include supporting the CEHRD Human Resource Development Division (HRDD) with revising TPS guidance, supporting local governments to roll out TPS, and conducting joint monitoring and coaching side-by-side with GON officials, as captured in *Figure 26*.

Figure 26: Objective 3 components



3.3.1 Sub-Objective 3.1: Support CEHRD/HRDD to revise TPS guidance and to incorporate a menu of options

Support CEHRD to prepare revised TPS guideline and manual (3.1.1)

During Year 1, EGRP II supported CEHRD to review and revise the existing TPS guidance documents, with the aim of updating them for the decentralized context and incorporating a menu of implementable and sustainable TPS options based on experience under EGRP.

During the June–September 2020 period, the EGRP II team focused on laying groundwork with CEHRD, because many of the staff in the teacher training section, including the Director, had newly transferred into their roles at that time. EGRP II held multiple meetings with the CEHRD staff and oriented them on TPS and the need to revise the guidance by sharing the TPS documents that had been developed under EGRP—including the previous TPS guideline, TPS training manual, and TPS resource materials—for their review. The revised documents that the EGRP II team agreed with CEHRD to develop include a management procedure that summarizes overall management of TPS, officially titled *Teacher Professional Support Procedure – 2077* (years 2020–2021 in the Gregorian calendar), and a full guideline document, titled *Teacher Professional Support Manual – 2077*, which is a more detailed handbook that goes into depth on TPS roles, responsibilities, and approaches.

During the October–December 2020 quarter, EGRP II consulted with local government and EDCU officials, head teachers, teachers, and school management committees or parent–teacher associations to share experiences and collect feedback on TPS best practices and sustainability approaches, complementing information that had been gathered through the

TPS operational research study undertaken during the final year of EGRP. In December 2020, EGRP II then supported a virtual inception meeting on TPS at the central level. The meeting focused on sharing the recommendations from the local consultations, discussing findings from the study on TPS that was conducted under EGRP, and planning next steps for revision of the TPS materials.

During the January–March 2021 quarter, CEHRD formed a seven-member task team, led by the CEHRD NEGRP focal person, with CLA and MOEST participation. EGRP II supported the task team to begin revisions in January 2021 by reviewing, rearranging, and/or rewriting the contents of the TPS guidance documents where needed. At the end of February 2021, CEHRD and EGRP II organized a final workshop to review and finalize the draft documents by incorporating feedback received from other



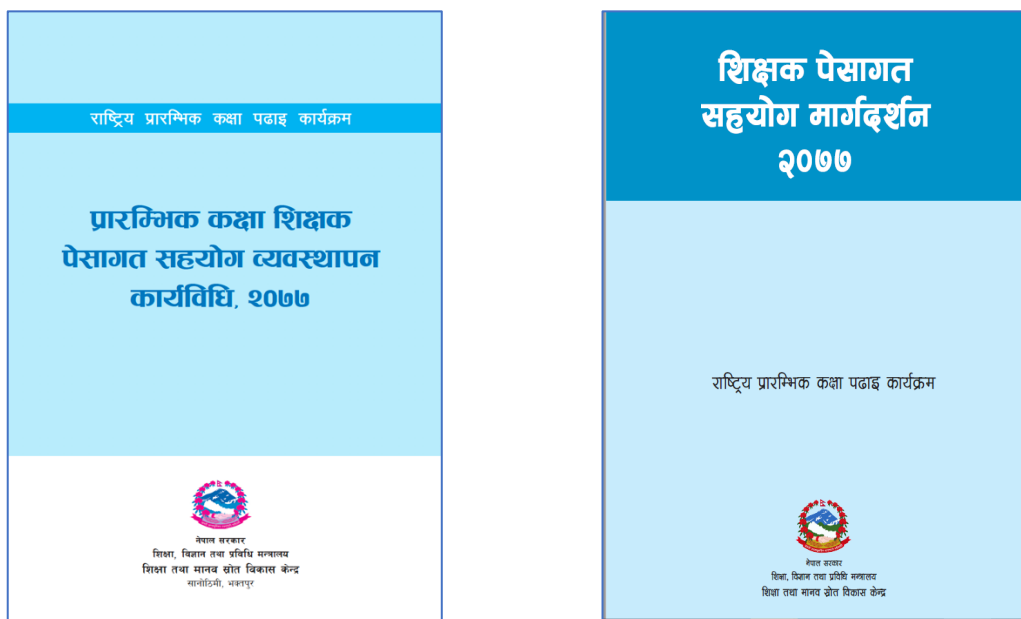
Workshop of the task team revising the TPS management procedure and guideline. (Photo credit: Dinesh Sanjel)

GON officials, USAID, and EGRP II staff. CEHRD submitted the resulting TPS management procedure and TPS guideline to MOEST for further review and approval in March 2021.

EGRP II started procurement of printing and distribution services for the TPS documents during the January–March 2021 quarter as well, in order to ensure that printing could start upon approval of the documents. To promote cost efficiency, the request for proposals combined the TPS documents with the grades 1–3 parent/teacher guidelines for flexible learning and the GON’s Student Learning Facilitation Directive, 2077 (part of Objective 4 activities).

The TPS Procedure was approved by MOEST on April 15, 2021, and printing began in May 2021. The full manual, being a longer document, involved additional design and editing. It was finalized by CEHRD by the end of May, with printing and distribution expected in June and July 2021. **Figure 27** provides thumbnail images of the covers of the management procedure and guideline documents.

Figure 27: Thumbnail images from the approved TPS management procedure and the TPS guideline



Carry out operational research on TPS (3.1.2)

During Year 1, EGRP II began preparing for the TPS operational research study, which will take place in Year 2. The three selected research questions are presented in **Figure 28**.

Planning for operational research on TPS began during the January–March 2021 quarter through a consultative meeting with CEHRD/HRDD. It was agreed that the research would begin after the

start of the 2021–2022 academic year to allow time for the revised TPS approach to reach more teachers and schools. It will be a small-scale, mixed-methods field study focused on understanding how well the approach has been adopted by LEUs and schools and to what extent teachers, head teachers, LEU officials, and cluster-level experts have understood the importance of ongoing teacher support. EGRP II had drafted a TOR for the study by the end of Year 1 and aims to finalize the TOR early in Year 2.

Figure 28: Research questions for TPS operational research study

1. To what extent do TPS stakeholders at the central, provincial, district, local, and school levels understand their role in TPS?
2. To what extent and how effectively are those stakeholders implementing their TPS roles?
3. What are the common challenges faced and solutions/innovative practices implemented by TPS actors at the local level to ensure effective provision of professional support to teachers?

3.3.2 Sub-Objective 3.2: Support local governments to develop and roll out plans for TPS implementation

Support local governments to plan for TPS rollout (3.2.1)

Support to local governments to plan for TPS rollout was provided as part of the local capacity development workshops, discussed under Objective 2, as well as during LEU review meetings and JMV. During Round 1 of the local capacity workshops, held in the January–March 2021 quarter and in April 2021, the main objectives were to raise local government officials’ awareness of the importance of TPS, to increase their understanding of TPS provisions, and to clarify their roles and responsibilities in promoting effective ongoing support for teachers.

Workshop sessions related to TPS covered TPS objectives and procedures as well as the roles of the key stakeholders (including head teachers and LEU and EDCU heads) in planning and rolling out TPS at the municipal and school levels. This rollout scheme included the anticipated menu of TPS implementation options that local governments could consider based on their context.

Each local government team concluded the workshop with an action plan for establishing or strengthening TPS in their municipality, including actions such as updating the local executive board on TPS, discussing TPS during local government education meetings and head teacher meetings, periodically visiting schools and observing classrooms, and helping to form teacher learning groups in schools and at the cluster/palika level for further support to teachers.

Given that MOEST approved the TPS management procedure and guideline, EGRP II was able to incorporate the revised TPS approach into the Round 2 local capacity development workshops, which began in April 2021. Because the content of the guideline, particularly the menu of options, is similar to that shared and discussed during the first round of workshops, it is a good springboard for LEUs to reflect on and further develop their action plans.

Support local governments with capacity development of roster of experts for TPS (3.2.2)

As one of the approaches for ensuring strong ongoing support to teachers through TPS, CEHRD requested EGRP II support to mobilize and train a roster of experts who will be able to support TPS at the local level, as codified in the TPS management procedure.

During the January–March 2021 quarter, EGRP II began discussing options for selecting and mobilizing the roster of experts, as well as planning to train them. During these planning discussions, EGRP II worked jointly with CEHRD to develop and finalize the selection criteria for forming local-level rosters of experts. Each local unit is expected to assemble a roster. It will be coordinated by the LEU head (or delegated officer) and will be composed of Nepali subject teachers from the secondary level and Nepali subject experts from among retired Nepali subject teachers or retired education officials, as nominated by the local education committee. In Year 2, EGRP II will work with CEHRD to circulate guidance on the roster formation criteria and process and will request local governments to take the necessary next steps.

Also during the January–March quarter, the EGRP II technical team collaborated with CEHRD to draft the content for a 2-day training for the TPS roster experts. The draft training

manual was completed by May 31, although review and finalization with CEHRD was delayed due to reinstated COVID-19 restrictions. EGRP II anticipates holding a virtual meeting in June 2021 to finalize the manual. The team is planning for training in collaboration with ETCs and—although TOTs were initially anticipated to take place in May 2021—began discussing options for shifting the training to a virtual modality and starting implementation in June and July 2021 instead.

Reflect on TPS implementation, share lessons learned, jointly solve problems, share operations research results when available (3.2.3)

Work on this activity began with the integration of TPS into Rounds 1 and 2 of the LEU capacity building workshops, discussed above, as well as follow-up LEU meetings and JMV. It will be a particular focus, however, as LEUs begin to implement the new management procedure and guideline documents. These reflections will continue to be carried out in conjunction with other activities, and EGRP II will collect and compile the lessons learned, challenges and resolutions and, eventually, the results of the operational research on TPS.

3.3.3 Sub-Objective 3.3: Training and support for LEU staff to use the TPS guide and resource materials

Conduct orientation of LEU officials on the use of TPS guideline and resource material (3.3.1)

EGRP II began orienting LEU officials on TPS during the October–December 2020 quarter. During that period, EGRP II organized a virtual orientation meeting for EGRP II regional and district teams on the use of the existing TPS management procedure and guideline. The regional and district teams then conducted meetings with LEUs to orient LEU officials on the use of the TPS procedure and guideline documents. These meetings were organized in 16 Level 3 districts. The content covered included an introduction to the existing TPS resource materials and their use in supporting teachers to improve their EGR instructional practices.

As mentioned under Activity 2.3.2, Round 1 of the local capacity development workshops included dedicated sessions on TPS, using hands-on training techniques to cover the importance of TPS; the roles of key stakeholders at the local government and school levels; and the use of the classroom observation form, feedback mechanism, and reporting format. The workshops also previewed the content of the revised TPS management procedure and guideline by discussing the menu of local-level options that each local government could select to enhance teacher skills and confidence in EGR instruction.

During the January–March 2021 quarter, EGRP II regional and district teams further updated LEU officials on the use of the TPS management procedure and guideline during LEU review and head teacher meetings in the target districts. These meetings covered introductions to the TPS support mechanism and the use of TPS resource materials to help teachers improve their instructional practices.

With MOEST having approved the revised TPS management procedure and guideline, Round 2 of the workshops will give EGRP II an opportunity to ensure that LEUs are oriented on the updated guideline.

Implement MTOT to prepare 80 TPS master trainers (3.3.2)

Much of the Year 1 work on Objective 3 focused on revising the TPS management procedure and guideline, discussed under Activity 3.1.1. The development and rollout of both the roster of TPS experts (discussed above under Activity 3.2.2) and the cohort of master trainers was intended to follow from the revised management procedure and guideline. Once those documents were drafted in January–March 2021, EGRP II was able to begin focusing efforts on developing a training manual and accompanying materials and preparing for MTOT rollout.

Although EGRP II began working on the TPS training manual only at the end of the January–March 2021 quarter, the team was able to begin planning and developing the training in earnest after the MOEST approved the TPS management procedure in April. The EGRP II team, together with CEHRD, drafted the training manual and expects to finalize it in June, as mentioned under Activity 3.2.2. As with the planning for training the roster experts, the team began examining possibilities for virtual modalities for training, to begin rolling out in June–September 2021.

3.3.4 Sub-Objective 3.4: Conduct joint monitoring and coaching

Revise, print, and distribute monitoring tools (3.4.1)

In Year 1, EGRP II assisted CEHRD to develop an online quality monitoring tool for JMV's using KoBo Toolbox. The monitoring tool builds on templates and approaches developed through EGRP. The tool (*Annex H*) incorporates 35 questions across three main domains: The school environment; the classroom environment and teaching and learning; and teacher professional support. Before conducting visits, EGRP II district coordinators trained JMV participants on the use of the tool, including how to apply the scoring rubrics from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” for each question.

Collaborate with LEU staff on monitoring and reporting (3.4.2)

JMV's by district and local government officials accompanied by EGRP II staff were a core avenue for building capacity for education monitoring and for identifying areas for improvement in EGR instruction, professional support, and management in Year 1.



Photographs from a monitoring visit to a school in Myagdi District. (Photo credit: Bakhat Bhandari)

Throughout the year, EGRP II supported GON officials to conduct monitoring visits to 273 schools across all seven provinces in the country (*Table 12*).

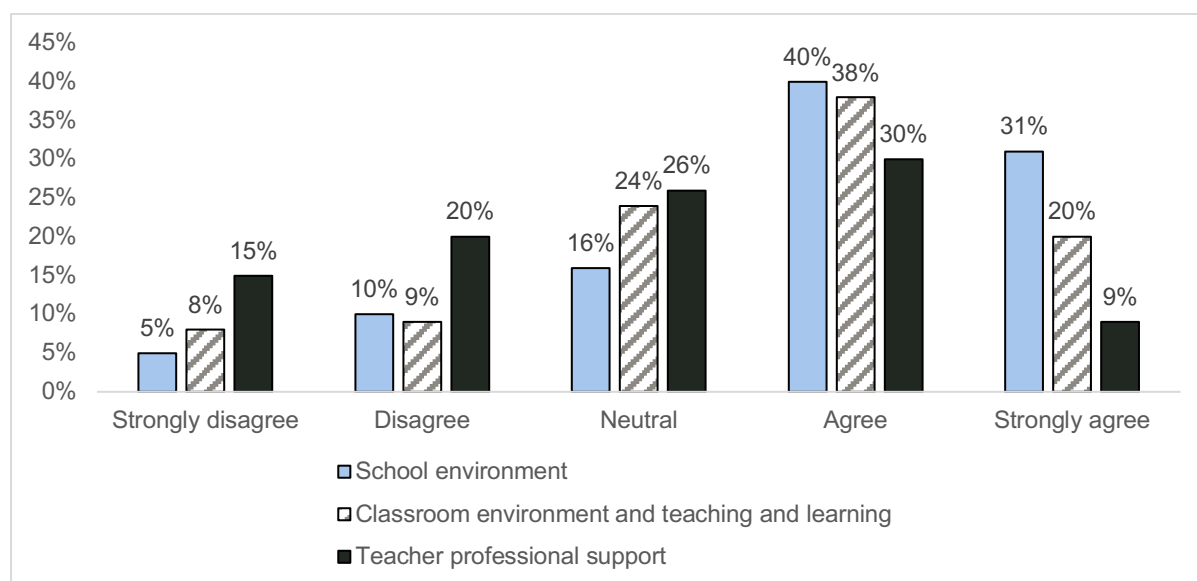
Table 12: Number of schools visited for JMV, by province and district level

Province	No. of schools			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Province 1	9	5	4	18
Province 2	23	8	8	39
Bagmati	13	9	8	30
Gandaki	20	8	25	53
Lumbini	27	N/A	36	63
Karnali	8	N/A	19	27
Sudur Paschim	15	N/A	28	43
Total	115	30	128	273

Note. "N/A" (not applicable) indicates that there are no EGRP II-supported Level 2 districts in that province.

While conducting the visits, observers filled in the monitoring tool described under Activity 3.4.1 with their feedback from the visit. **Figure 29** summarizes the quality ratings provided by 825 observers during the 273 school visits.

Figure 29: Quality ratings of schools by JMV participants, by domain (N = 825)



The overall average scores out of five were 3.8 for the school environment, 3.5 for the classroom environment, and 2.9 for TPS. The lowest average scores on individual quality items were found for the following:

- Integration of EGR within the school improvement plan (average = 3.3)
- Regular implementation of parent–teacher conferences (average = 3.2)
- Display of learning materials on classroom walls (average = 2.9)
- Students’ access to and use of classroom libraries (average = 2.9)

- Interaction between EGR teachers (average = 2.7)
- Interactions between EGR teachers and subject experts (average = 2.7)
- EGR teacher participation in interactions at the local level (average = 2.7)

In general, the JMV findings from Year 1 of EGRP II indicate that stakeholders found the joint monitoring exercise useful for identifying strengths and challenges in EGR implementation at school level. Overall, school and classroom management were functioning well, with a few exceptions, while TPS was limited in rollout. Based on the findings, EGRP II identified several key areas where additional support is needed at the school and local government levels:

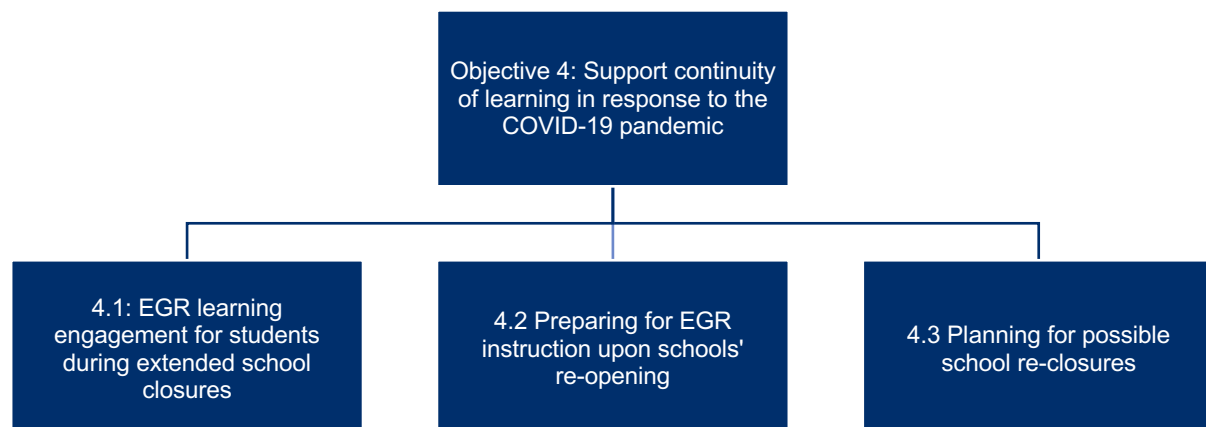
- Technical assistance encouraging schools to integrate EGR more effectively into their planning for school improvement and to conduct parent–teacher conferences more frequently
- Support to teachers on improving classroom displays representing children’s learning and ensuring that students have access to and regularly use library books and other materials to strengthen their learning
- Strengthened rollout of TPS, including regular opportunities for interaction on EGR best practices within the school and local government levels.

In collaboration with GON stakeholders, EGRP II will use planned capacity development and coordination activities to help local governments effectively address these challenges and to roll out effective TPS approaches throughout the schools in their catchment areas.

3.4 Objective 4: Support Continuity of Learning in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Objective 4 entails COVID-19 response activities to help students continue learning during extended school closures, and to help LEUs and schools prepare for school re-opening, as well as potential re-closures, as outlined in *Figure 30*.

Figure 30: Objective 4 components



3.4.1 Sub-Objective 4.1: EGR learning engagement for students during extended school closures

Develop digital content for CEHRD’s online learning portal for grades 1–3 (4.1.1)

To support the COVID-19 response in the education sector and promote continuity of learning, USAID requested RTI to establish a partnership for developing interactive digital learning content. The goal of this partnership was to create additional online learning content to supplement existing lessons on CEHRD’s online learning portal at <https://learning.cehrd.edu.np/>, especially important during times of extended school closures with large numbers of children forced to learn from home.

This effort began during EGRP’s April–June 2020 quarter, with a request for proposals for development of 119 new interactive lessons/activities across the Nepali, mathematics, science, English, Hamro Serophero (science and social studies), and Nepali Sign Language subjects and lessons for children with dyslexia (*Table 13*).

Table 13: List of interactive digital content development, by subject and grade (number of lessons/activities)

Subject	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Total
Nepali	5	4	5	14
Mathematics	6	5	8	19
Science	4	3	5	12
English	5	3	6	14
Social studies	12	13	10	35
Nepali Sign Language	15	0	0	15
Lessons addressing dyslexia	10	0	0	10
Total	57	28	34	119

The drafting of the request for proposals and the procurement process were conducted with support from the USAID-funded Reading for All program, which provided technical assistance on the disability and inclusion aspects of the procurement and continued to contribute technical inputs on content development for Nepali Sign Language and for mitigation of dyslexia. After a competitive application process, OLE Nepal was selected to be the content development partner and started work in early October 2020. Although the procurement commenced under EGRP (with USAID approval), the effort was overseen and fully funded through EGRP II.

During the October–December 2020 and January–March 2021 quarters, EGRP II worked closely with OLE Nepal on designing, developing, and reviewing interactive digital learning content. EGRP II also coordinated with CEHRD, USAID, and OLE to reach mutual agreement on branding and marking of the digital content. Specifically, CEHRD requested that the content not include OLE’s trademark; once this point was agreed among all parties, EGRP II amended OLE’s subaward accordingly. The subaward was also revised to break up OLE’s payments into smaller tranches to ensure that they could receive partial payment for work completed while awaiting final CEHRD approval for upload of content.

As part of the development process, the OLE technical team creates the concepts for each lesson. CDC, CEHRD, and EGRP II review the concepts and provide feedback, after which OLE crafts the digital lessons and uploads them to their internal portal. The digital lessons are then jointly reviewed online by designated CDC and CEHRD technical officials along with EGRP II team members, with OLE making revisions as needed in response to this additional feedback. CDC and CEHRD approval on each lesson is then required before they can be uploaded to the CEHRD-run learning portal at <https://learning.cehrd.edu.np/>.

OLE had prepared 95 lessons by the end of May 2021. OLE also had started producing the remaining 24 lessons for various subjects, which will result in 119 lessons in total. At the same time, EGRP II continued to work with OLE, CEHRD, and CDC to finalize the first 95 lessons based on feedback and upload them to the CEHRD learning portal, and to review the concepts for the 24 additional lessons. All digital learning content was established based on grades 1–3 IC learning outcomes, with assistance and quality review by EGRP II and CDC.

During the July–September 2021 quarter, EGRP II will focus on finishing all 119 digital lessons based on feedback received from CDC and CEHRD. In addition, the team will support OLE and CEHRD to upload all lessons to the CEHRD learning portal. As a result of this collaboration, the new digital content will be available to learners and teachers across multiple subjects.

Table 14 shows the status of the materials developed through March 2021 in the first two phases of OLE’s scope of work.

Table 14: Status of digital lesson development and review

Phase	Subjects	No. of lessons in OLE’s scope of work				No. of lessons uploaded to OLE’s portal				No. of contents reviewed by EGRP II			
		Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Tot.	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Tot.	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Tot.
1	Nepali, mathematics, and Hamro Serophero (science) subjects: 45 activities in total												
	Nepali	8	6	0	14	8	6	0	14	8	6	0	14
	Math	8	11	0	19	8	11	0	19	8	11	0	19
	Hamro Serophero (science)	7	5	0	12	7	5	0	12	7	5	0	12
	Total	23	22	0	45	23	22	0	45	23	22	0	45
2	English, social studies, Nepali Sign Language, and dyslexia lessons: 74 activities												
	English	8	4	2	14	8	4	0	12	8	4	0	12
	Hamro Serophero (social studies)	10	12	13	35	10	12	0	22	10	12	0	22
	Nepali Sign Language	5	5	5	15	5	5	0	10	5	5	0	10
	Dyslexia lessons	2	4	4	10	2	4	0	6	2	4	0	6
	Total	25	25	24	74	25	25	0	50	25	25	0	50

Phase	Subjects	No. of lessons in OLE's scope of work				No. of lessons uploaded to OLE's portal				No. of contents reviewed by EGRP II			
		Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Tot.	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Tot.	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Tot.
	Grand total	48	47	24	119	48	47	0	95	48	47	0	95

All digital lessons are available for viewing on OLE's portal at <https://epaath2020.olenepal.org/> before they are formally transferred to the CEHRD portal. A screenshot of the landing page for the lessons on OLE's portal as of late May 2021 is provided in **Figure 31**.

Figure 31: Screenshot of OLE landing page for digital lessons



Support local governments in COVID-19 response coordination and allocation of resources for continuity of learning (4.1.2)

During Year 1, through ongoing education cluster, orientation, and review meetings, as well as local capacity development workshops, EGRP II oriented LEUs on GON COVID-19 response guidelines for the education sector, including flexible learning approaches, a school re-opening framework, and guidelines for facilitating home-based schooling. The EGRP II team also supported CDC to develop parent/teacher guides for flexible approaches and to print and distribute those to schools (see Activity 4.2.2 below for further details). Additionally, EGRP II prepared guidelines for the use of SRMs to promote learning continuity during prolonged school closures and started disseminating those guidelines through the local capacity development workshops described under Activity 2.1.2 above.

In addition to those coordination efforts, the main activity to support local governments with continuity of learning was the home- and community-based schooling approach. This effort

reached 219 schools across 16 of the most disadvantaged, rural municipalities in Province 2. These target areas were selected using education equity and COVID-19 vulnerability data, among other criteria of need for additional pandemic response support.

The package of activities that EGRP II rolled out to these schools in Year 1 focused on providing home- and community-based learning opportunities for children in small clusters with one teacher each. The effort included remedial support for EGR. To start up the activity, EGRP II staff in Province 2 conducted 31 initial orientation sessions for 480 EDCU and LEU officials, school management committee/parent–teacher association representatives, head teachers, and teachers in January 2021. In addition, the team designed and implemented 38 teacher training events on the cluster-based and remedial education activities for 638 teachers plus 92 other GON officials across the 219 schools.



Children in Parsa District use the stationery and a digital tablet provided through EGRP II during an after-school learning activity. (Photo credit: Jodie Fonseca)

EGRP II also signed agreements with each school for small grants of NPR 41,500 (approximately US\$350) for costs of implementing and monitoring cluster/remedial learning activities and disbursed first-tranche payments to all 219 schools. The team also worked with schools to collect the required paperwork for the second (and final) payments to be issued immediately after the grant period ends in late May 2021. Additional follow-up meetings were held with school officials and community members on aspects such as grants management, quality monitoring, and parent engagement in cluster-based learning activities.

To support children’s learning in the clusters, EGRP II procured roughly two tablets per cluster for a total of 1,330 tablets, plus extras for government administrators and program staff. Each teacher was given more than one tablet so they could facilitate learning activities with small groups of children, following COVID-19 mitigation guidelines. Soft copies of learning materials—including teaching and learning materials, SRMs, audio recordings, classroom videos, and online learning applications—were compiled and uploaded to all tablets, along with a tablet user guide that was printed and distributed to all teachers. EGRP II also completed procurement and distribution of 219 packs of stationery and low-cost decodable readers to each school to complement the tablet-based learning content.

EGRP II local-level program officers, district coordinators, and LEU officials monitored the quality of the cluster-based learning activities from February through May 2021, supplementing the routine monitoring being conducted by head teachers. These monitoring efforts identified that the learning clusters were functioning well and were appreciated by teachers, school administrators, parents, and—most importantly—the students who were participating. In general, the stationery items and decodable readers were most popular

among learners. Teachers found the tablets useful for identifying new content and teaching techniques for EGR, and the tablets’ interactive features motivating. At the same time, they found it challenging to use the tablets during activities with groups of children due to difficulties viewing the screen and hearing the audio while in the outdoor settings where the learning clusters are run. Teachers also reported wanting to learn more about how to link the home- and community-based learning to the IC and how to use the tablets during their regular EGR classroom instruction.

After lockdowns were reimposed in April 2021, the EGRP II team began adjusting the monitoring approach to less frequent in-person visits and more remote follow-up, to reduce COVID-19 risks. The team also worked with LEU officials and head teachers to track which learning clusters were still open in April and May 2021 and which had closed due to COVID-19 restrictions. EGRP II staff supported schools to ensure that SRMs had been sent home with children where possible, and that teachers were aware of alternative approaches for leading learning activities in cases where lockdowns meant that teachers could not access the communities.

Information was also gathered on the alternative approaches that teachers and schools had put in place based on guidance from EGRP II. As indicated in **Table 15**, as of the end of May 2021, 13% of learning clusters were still operating in person, while 87% had closed down. In nearly three-quarters of the closed clusters (480 out of 570, or 73%), teachers had sent SRMs home with children to support at-home reading activities. Other approaches were also being implemented in some locations, including a “clinic” in which parents would bring their children to meet one-on-one with teachers at a central location, teacher door-to-door visits to support children’s home-based learning activities, and distance support through phone calls.

Table 15: Status of home- and community-based learning clusters by the end of May 2021

District	No. of clusters	No. of open clusters	No. of closed clusters	Alternative support for closed clusters (out of 570)			
				SRMs sent home	Clinic approach	Teacher door-to-door visits	Distance/virtual support
Parsa	108	0	108	69	41	9	1
Bara	72	0	72	41	35	6	0
Rautahat	75	22	53	47	1	4	0
Sarlahi	69	9	60	69	0	0	0
Mahottari	96	17	79	47	10	7	0
Dhanusha	57	2	55	27	11	0	1
Siraha	87	0	87	87	2	21	0
Saptari	93	37	56	93	32	24	0
Total	657	87	570	480	132	71	2
Percent	-	13%	87%	73%	23%	12%	0%

In Year 2, EGRP II will continue the home- and community-based schooling approach in the current 219 schools and 16 palikas, while also scaling up the activity to 16 new palikas across

the 8 districts of Province 2, covering approximately 266 additional schools. This decision to scale up was made in response to ongoing COVID-19 disruptions as well as based on lessons learned in Year 1 and USAID requests during the Year 2 AWP development process. The new palikas were chosen through the same process used in Year 1: analyzing equity data to identify the municipalities that most need extra support and are most likely to have limited access to technology-based learning.

During the July–September 2021 quarter, EGRP II will make the final payments and close out the small grants to the first set of 219 schools. The program will also work with district and local government officials in the current and new palikas to plan for continued implementation. In addition, orientations will be provided for district, local, and school officials on the home- and community-based learning model. Teachers in the current schools will receive a refresher training while those in the new schools will receive first-time training, and both trainings will address the questions raised by teachers in the 219 schools related to curriculum linking and effective use of tablets. EGRP II will also procure and distribute tablets and stationery packs for the learning clusters in the new schools, and will promote ongoing monitoring by program staff, head teachers, and LEU officials. The team will also set up a reliable system for transferring expense allowances directly to participating teachers and head teachers in all schools.

EGRP II will also continue discussions about a learning agenda with other development partners interested in alternative/remedial learning models and use of technology, including the World Bank and the U.K.’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The agreed plan is to conduct a symposium on alternative learning experiences and evidence, which could be done virtually or in person as circumstances allow. This plan will be further developed in June and July 2021 in coordination with the interested development partners.

3.4.2 Sub-Objective 4.2: Preparing for EGR instruction upon schools’ re-opening

Support ERO/GON to analyze learning loss (4.2.1)

Based on discussions with ERO during the Year 1 and 2 AWP development processes, EGRP II has planned to support a study of children’s learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This study will incorporate some elements of data analysis using past and currently planned CB-EGRAs as the main learning assessment, combined with some elements of qualitative research to understand the perceptions of teachers, parents, school management committee members, and head teachers about learning loss due to COVID-19 school closures.

During the Year 2 AWP consultations, EGRP II learned that the GON had allocated only a limited budget for ERO’s research activities, including the learning-loss study, and that ERO had concerns about delays in funding release based on past history. Consequently, ERO requested EGRP II technical and budgetary support to conduct the qualitative study, in addition to the technical support that EGRP II will provide to analyze the learning data. The budget allocation was agreed as part of the approved Year 2 AWP. Specific activities to be undertaken during the June–September 2021 quarter will include coordinating with ERO to hire a local data collection firm and finalize data collection tools. EGRP II anticipates that the findings of the learning-loss study, when ready, will inform curriculum rollout and support to teachers based on the extent of learning loss identified.

Support CDC and CEHRD to help teachers deliver EGR instruction during shortened school year (4.2.2)

In addition to the focus on learning loss due to COVID-19, EGRP II has offered technical assistance to CDC and CEHRD on their efforts to adjust the curriculum and instruction in response to lengthy school closures and disruptions. In 2020, the National Curriculum Council approved a *Curriculum Content Adjustment Framework* to guide adjustments to the curriculum and instruction during a shorter academic year. The condensed version of the curriculum in this framework



Flexible learning materials printed and awaiting distribution. (Photo credit: SAMA Printing Press)

includes flexible learning activities that can be supported by parents and teachers, and self-learning activities that students can undertake through their own initiative. Related to this, as part of the Year 1 AWP, EGRP II agreed to help CDC develop learning facilitation materials for students and teachers/parents, focused on the Nepali subject in grades 1–3.

To complete this task, CDC and the EGRP II team developed a framework for designing the parent/teacher guide during a joint workshop in mid-December 2020. Also in December 2020, EGRP II supported CDC with hiring three Nepali subject-expert consultants to create the flexible parent/teacher guide according to the framework.

During the January–March 2021 quarter, the CDC and EGRP II teams, along with the consultants, conducted two rounds of meetings to finalize the contents of the guides. Illustration and design were then completed, and in March 2021, EGRP II initiated the printing procurement process by issuing a request for proposals to shortlisted vendors for printing and distributing the materials to all schools in 38 EGRP districts. This procurement was combined with printing and distribution services for the TPS management procedure and guideline as well as the GON’s Student Learning Facilitation Directive 2077, to promote cost savings and logistical efficiency. Printing was nearly complete as of the end of May 2021, and distribution is expected to take place in June and July 2021.

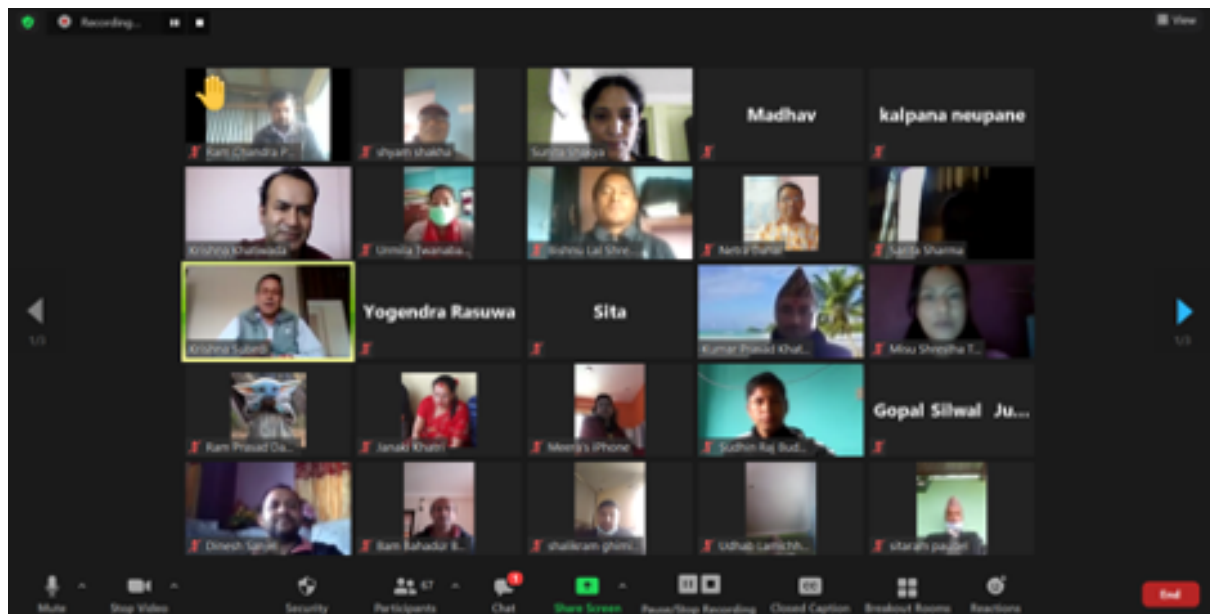
The finalized materials contain the following key features:

- Strategies for parents to support grade 1–3 children based on the Nepali subject in the IC
- Strategies for teachers to connect with students/parents and coordinate learning activities remotely
- Strategies to ensure the students’ flexible learning is recorded by the teacher/school
- Tips for supporting children who have disabilities and children who speak Nepali as a second language
- A sample of additional activities that could be led by parents at home, based on the learning outcomes outlined in the curriculum. These are also useful sample resources for teachers to further design learning activities in line with the IC.

- Possible instructional methods for parents/teachers.

It is expected that these flexible learning materials can be used during school closures in many different types of emergencies, including the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To support wider awareness and use of the materials, EGRP II began conducting orientations for district and local officials in May 2021. Carried out virtually (see **Figure 32** for an example from Bhaktapur) due to the resurgence of COVID-19 in Nepal, these orientations will be completed in June 2021. No further activities are anticipated under this activity once the orientations are finished and distribution of the materials is complete.

Figure 32: Screenshot of a virtual district-level orientation on the parent/teacher guides for flexible learning in grades 1–3



3.4.3 Sub-Objective 4.3: Planning for possible school re-closures

As per the approved Year 1 AWP, no separate activities under this sub-objective were planned in the program’s first year. EGRP II shared the GON’s guidelines on alternative learning approaches with local governments during the capacity development workshops. Having the guidelines enabled local governments to be prepared to launch flexible learning approaches in the event of school re-closures, which did occur in April 2021. This type of orientation will continue as needed during local capacity development workshops in Year 2 and during dissemination of the flexible learning materials and the Student Learning Facilitation Directive 2077.

3.5 Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Adapting

3.5.1 Develop MEL system and dashboards

The EGRP II MEL system forms the backbone of accountability and continuous improvement for the program. Activities related to developing the MEL system in Year 1 included drafting indicators and targets and an indicator tracking database; and developing online monthly planning templates and dashboards to track team activities and outputs.

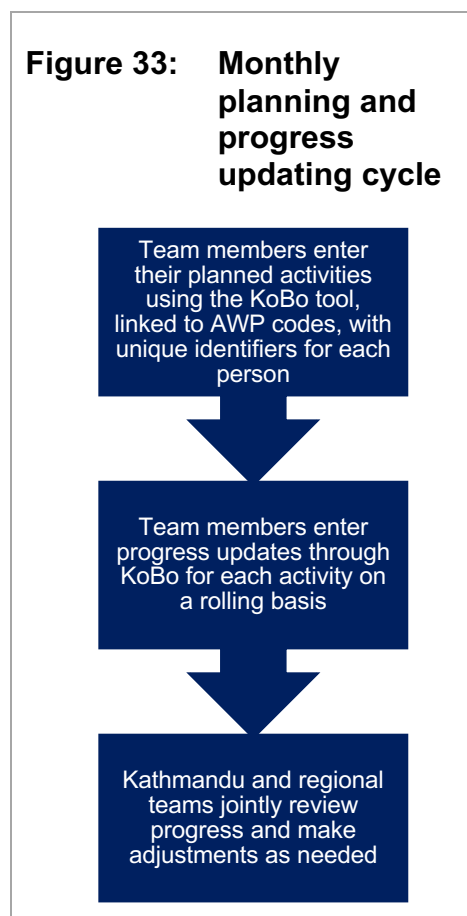
To make monthly planning and reporting more consistent, and to enable real-time tracking of progress toward planned AWP outputs, the MEL team developed an automated monthly planning and progress reporting system. The system utilizes KoBo Toolbox as the data collection interface, with an Excel-based platform using Power Query that graphically displays progress toward monthly objectives. The system links with the objectives and sub-objectives in the Year 1 AWP through drop-down menus, to reduce errors in data entry. In late May 2021, the MEL team also began updating the system to reflect the contents of the Year 2 AWP in anticipation of its approval. The process the team follows to enter, update, and adjust plans using this system is captured in *Figure 33*.

3.5.2 Conduct routine monitoring, reporting, and collaborative learning

Once the program’s MEL Plan was finalized, the EGRP II MEL team began training team members on the MEL system and indicator definitions. The team also began compiling monitoring data using the MEL dashboards as well as information such as district Flash reports¹¹ to collect the school- and student-related information, and SRM distribution tracking sheets for data on SRM-related indicator reporting. The team compiled updates on progress toward MEL Plan indicators for the purposes of the January–March and April–May 2021 quarterly reports.

Five virtual regional-level learning review workshops were also conducted during the January–March 2021 quarter. The main objective was to understand how staff members had been coping with COVID-19 in their day-to-day work and how their achievements—even in the face of adversity—could be useful and inspiring to other team members. Key takeaways from the learning review included practical ways of dealing with stress, remaining focused on

Figure 33: Monthly planning and progress updating cycle



¹¹ Flash reports use IEMIS data to provide snapshots of useful education statistics at the start and end of each school year, as well as consolidated reports to show overall education trends.

the program’s objectives, and creating working relationships with GON counterparts even during pandemic circumstances.

Throughout the June–September 2021 quarter, the MEL team will continue to track and report on progress against output and outcome indicators, and they will lead the program team in reviewing the data from dashboards for monitoring training quality and reporting on JMV’s. Preparations for an internal data quality assessment on selected indicators, as outlined in the MEL Plan, will also get under way in June 2021.

Since 2017, EGRP, EGRP II and ERO have regularly worked together to develop CB-EGRA assessment items, conduct the assessments, and disseminate the results. During Year 1, EGRP II supported local and district education offices to collect, compile, and analyze CB-EGRA data. Nine EGRP-supported Level 3 districts conducted CB-EGRAs in 2020, while the remaining seven could not, due to COVID-19 restrictions. EGRP II received data from all nine of the districts—Banke, Bardiya, Dadeldhura, Dang, Dhankuta, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Kaski, and Rupandehi—and supported district and local officials with data cleaning.

EGRP II district staff also supported EDCUs and local governments to plan and use the SSDP minimum package implementation budget to conduct CB-EGRAs for the end of the 2020–2021 school year. EGRP II had planned to support ERO, EDCUs, and LEUs to conduct CB-EGRAs and to monitor the data collection and compilation process in April–May 2021 quarter. However, this effort could not be completed when schools were re-closed in response to COVID-19 lockdowns and the CB-EGRA assessments were not done.

In response to a request from ERO, the EGRP II team also provided technical assistance on development of CB-EGRA items, focusing on the remaining seven districts (Bardiya, Dolpa, Kaski, Manang, Mustang, Parsa, and Saptari) that could not be covered at the end of EGRP due to the COVID-19 situation in 2020. The team managed to complete a 2-day, combined TOT plus workshop for Kaski district in April 2021 before the new COVID-19 lockdowns were enacted. In total, 18 participants joined the event, including master trainers from ERO as well as representatives from the EDCU and municipal government in Kaski and local EGR teachers. These workshops were useful in helping local officials and teachers to both contextualize CB-EGRA items for their local situation and expand the pool of items available for assessments. EGRP II aims to reschedule the workshops for the remaining six districts in the June–September 2021 quarter, if circumstances allow.

3.5.3 Conduct program learning and evaluation

To measure program outcomes, EGRP II designed an innovative, low-cost learning evaluation that takes advantage of the GON’s CB-EGRA learning assessment approach. In coordination with ERO, EGRP II completed the first phase of the baseline learning evaluation during the January–March 2021 quarter. ERO’s CB-EGRA tools for grades 2 and 3 were the main data collection instrument. In addition, a mini-EGRA was conducted with a subsample of students. The data from the mini-EGRA were used to equate the CB-EGRA scores with the EGRA outcomes that are required for reporting on EGRP II learning outcome indicators.

As a first step, a 2-day TOT was conducted February 2021, led by two ERO officials and two Kathmandu-based MEL staff. All EGRP II technical team members from the Kathmandu office as well as the regional office MEL coordinators were trained on CB-EGRA and EGRA

assessment strategies. The trainees then cascaded the assessment approach through subsequent training of district coordinators in the sample locations.

To ensure the sample was representative, one district from each province was randomly selected and then one municipality from each district also was randomly selected. From within each municipality, the requisite numbers of schools were selected by using the probability proportional to size technique, thereby ensuring adequate statistical power in the study. Based on this approach, 45 schools were selected for the first phase of the study, to collect data for the following outcome indicators:

- **IND 01_ES. 1-1:** Percent of learners targeted for USG assistance who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of grade 2
- **IND 04_Custom:** Percent of grade 2 and 3 students classified as fluent readers using national benchmarks
- **IND 05_Custom:** Percent of grade 2 and 3 students classified as emergent readers using national benchmarks

Twenty students across grades 2 and 3 from each school were selected randomly for the CB-EGRA, and then out of the CB-EGRA sample, five students from each grade were purposively selected to participate in the EGRA. **Table 16** shows the total numbers of sampled schools and students for the first phase of the baseline study.

Table 16: Sample size for the first phase of the baseline study

District	No. of sampled schools	No. of students assessed with CB-EGRA		No. of students assessed with mini-EGRA	
		Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 2	Grade 3
Achham	5	80	84	25	25
Bara	14	319	305	70	70
Bhojpur	6	54	69	30	28
Nawalparasi West	6	88	125	28	30
Rasuwa	3	49	51	21	20
Surkhet	7	101	100	35	35
Tanahun	4	67	70	20	21
Total	45	758	804	229	229
Grand total		1,562		458	

One teacher from each sampled school attended a district-based training and then conducted the CB-EGRA, and EGRP II staff collected the mini-EGRA data using tablets. To ensure the quality and veracity of the CB-EGRA data, EGRP II staff visited all of the sampled schools and ensured that the assessments were conducted in their presence.

To understand the effectiveness of interventions related to COVID-19 under Objective 4, EGRP II conducted a second phase of the baseline study in Province 2 in the first half of April 2021, using CB-EGRAs and an approach that was similar overall to that used in the first phase. This assessment will enable EGRP II to report findings for the Objective 4

learning indicator, **IND 18_IR 4_Custom**: Percent of learners who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of grade 3 in targeted 16 local governments of Province 2.

The schools participating in the home- and community-based schooling activities in Province 2 also were sampled using probability proportional to size to ensure adequate statistical power. This process resulted in a suggested sample size of 47 schools, which were then drawn from four randomly selected districts in Province 2 and one randomly selected municipality implementing the Objective 4 interventions from within each of those districts. **Table 17** provides the breakdown of sampled schools by district and local level.

Table 17: Sample size for the second phase of the baseline study

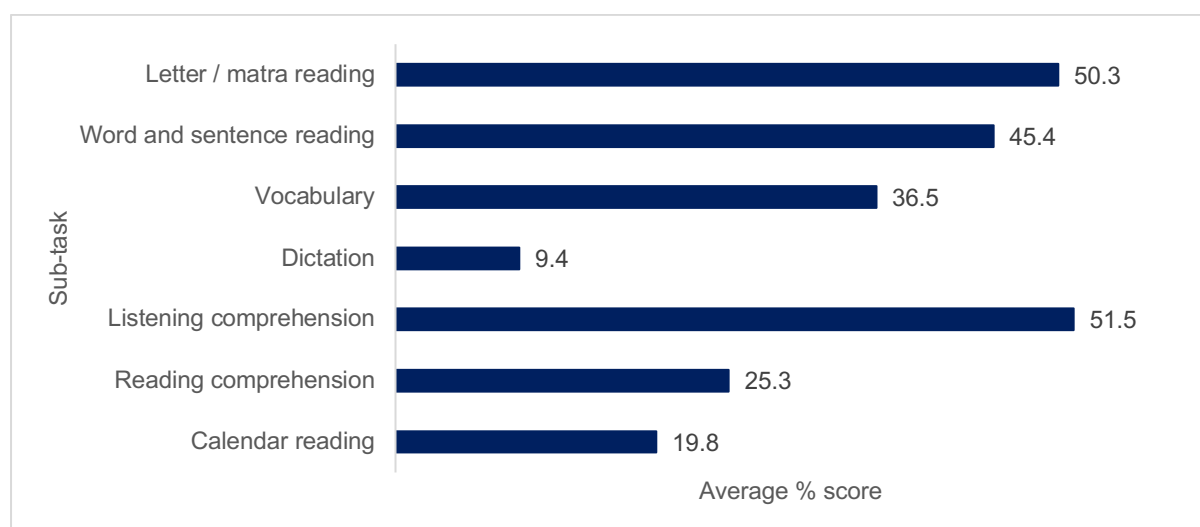
District	Municipality	No. of schools
Dhanusha	Janaknandani Rural Municipality	11
Rautahat	Durga Bhagawati Rural Municipality	12
Sarlahi	Dhankaul Rural Municipality	13
Saptari	Mahadeva Rural Municipality	11
Total		47

A draft report on the first phase was completed in May 2021 and proceeded to undergo internal quality review before wider sharing will take place. Analysis for the second phase was also completed in May and a report will be drafted in June 2021.

The first-phase findings painted an informative picture of student learning outcomes in EGRP II’s target areas and the detrimental effects of COVID-19 on learning levels. For example, in past years, the average scores on grade 2 CB-EGRA assessments have been in the range of 64%–66%, whereas in this year’s baseline assessment, the average was less than half that level at 28.5%. Similarly, the average scores for grade 3 have been between 66% and 68% in past years, but this year the average was substantially lower at 32.2%.

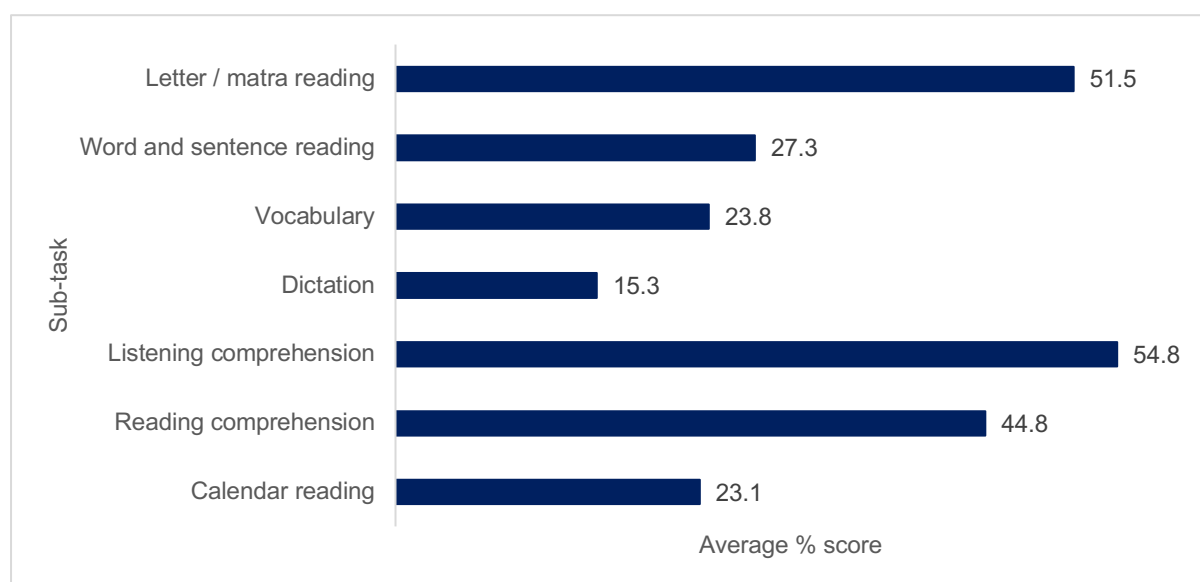
An analysis of subtask average scores by grade revealed areas of relatively stronger or poorer performance. For example, grade 2 scores were markedly low on the calendar reading, reading comprehension, and dictation subtasks, but relatively higher on listening comprehension, letter/*matra* reading, and word and sentence reading (**Figure 34**).

Figure 34: Average CB-EGRA scores, grade 2 (%)



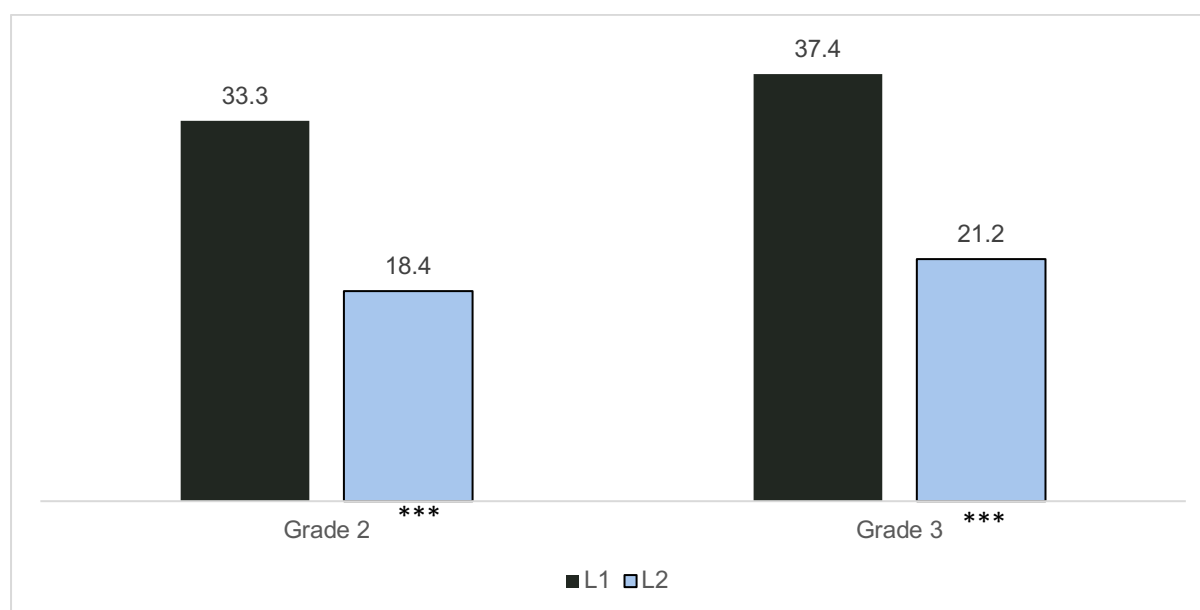
Children in grade 3 also appeared to struggle more with the calendar reading and dictation subtasks, as well as separation of words and vocabulary. At the same time, scores were also relatively stronger on word and sentence reading, listening comprehension, and reading comprehension (**Figure 35**). Nevertheless, average scores never topped 55% on any subtask in either grade, indicating that children in the sample were experiencing severe challenges to their learning.

Figure 35: Average CB-EGRA scores, grade 3 (%)



In line with similar early grade learning assessments in the past, the situation was significantly worse for L2 learners than for children speaking Nepali as their first language (**Figure 36**). No significant differences by sex were found in either grade, however.

Figure 36: Average CB-EGRA scores, by grade and home language (%)



Note. *** denotes that the difference in average score between L1 and L2 learners was significant at the $p < .01$ level.

Using statistical modeling, EGRP II equated children’s scores on the mini-EGRA and CB-EGRA assessments used for the baseline. This process resulted in extrapolated oral reading fluency (ORF) and comprehension scores to facilitate reporting on the USAID standard learning indicators as per the EGRP II MEL Plan. The percentage of readers meeting the current national reading benchmark of 45 correct words per minute with 80% comprehension was 7.4% in grade 2 and 12.6% in grade 3 (**Table 18**). EGRP II has been providing technical assistance on revising the EGR benchmarks, but as of this writing, the GON had not yet defined reading ability levels or categories that would allow for more nuanced analysis of the baseline results. However, ERO assigned readers to four categories for purposes of the 2020 NARN report: nonreaders (ORF = 0), initial readers (ORF between 1 and 15), emergent readers (ORF between 16 and 44), and fluent readers (ORF 45 or more).

Because the CB-EGRA used multiple-choice questions (with five answer options for most items) in most of the subtasks, the likelihood of getting the correct answer just by guessing was 20%. As such, even if a student is classified as a non-reader from an EGRA reading fluency assessment, their score on CB-EGRA is very unlikely to be zero as they would have scored some correct responses by chance or from guessing. Instead, **Table 18** displays the percentages of students categorized as emergent or fluent readers according to the NARN categories.

Table 18: Categories of readers, by grade

Grade	Emergent reader	Fluent reader
Grade 2	27.8%	7.4%
Grade 3	29.7%	12.6%

The EGRP II team will finalize and disseminate the baseline report for both the first and second phases during June–September 2021 and will start preparing to conduct the endline later in Year 2. The team anticipates that the findings will be useful in galvanizing greater attention to the issue of learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for vulnerable L2 learners.

3.6 Government of Nepal Liaison (Annual and Quarterly)

One of EGRP II’s main goals is to provide technical assistance and support to the GON’s MOEST to build capacity for rollout of the NEGRP minimum package under the SSDP and in line with the IC. As such, close coordination and collaboration with government counterparts from the federal to the local levels specified below was a key EGRP II emphasis throughout Year 1.

This goal was achieved through several meetings that focused on overall coordination and management, as well as discussions of specific technical aspects. For example, courtesy meetings were held with the new MOEST Secretary and Joint Secretary, as well as the new Directors General of CEHRD and ERO, to orient them on EGRP II priorities and plans, during the June–September 2021 quarter.

The first NEGRP Steering Committee meeting specific to EGRP II was held virtually in November 2020, chaired by the MOEST Joint Secretary with participation from CLA heads, other joint secretaries, NEGRP focal persons, heads of program and budget sections, USAID representatives, and EGRP II team members. Another quarterly NEGRP Steering Committee meeting took place in March 2021 and covered programmatic updates and discussion on next steps with key activities. As of the end of May 2021, the EGRP II leadership team was coordinating with MOEST to conduct a third Steering Committee meeting to update everyone on progress and review the Year 2 AWP.

EGRP II and EGRP jointly organized a central-level learning and sharing event over 3 days in October 2020, with the aim of disseminating key NEGRP achievements and discussing future implications and recommendations for the Nepal education sector. The event was organized in coordination with MOEST, CDC, CEHRD, and CDC. A wide range of participants, including development partners and implementing agencies, joined from across Nepal’s education sector.

In addition to these broader sharing and coordination meetings and events, EGRP II held numerous planning and technical sharing discussions with CDC on developing materials to guide teachers and parents in helping their children continue to learn in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, in line with CDC’s Curriculum Content Adjustment Framework. EGRP II also coordinated through meetings and discussions with CEHRD in areas such as rollout of IC TOTs and teacher trainings and revision of TPS guidelines; and with ERO on CB-EGRA and NARN data analysis, and EGR benchmarking.

Extensive consultative meetings with central, provincial, district, and local government representatives were held as part of the Year 1 and Year 2 AWP development processes. The dual purposes of these meetings were to share program objectives and to collect feedback to inform drafting of the AWPs.

At the subnational level, the EGRP II teams at the regional and district levels also established (or reestablished) relationships with provincial and district counterparts in the program's target districts, conducted initial courtesy discussions and orientations on NEGRP and EGRP II objectives, and started mapping LEU capacity and connectivity for the purposes of designing the planned LEU capacity development workshops. EGRP II regionally based teams worked closely with provincial MOSDs, contributing technical advice through provincial education planning task teams. In addition, EGRP II staff coordination with EDCUs and LEUs resulted in successful implementation of the local capacity development workshops across the target districts, as well as activities such as JMV and other local-level planning and coordination events.

3.7 Collaboration and Coordination with Similar Interventions in the Sector (Annual and Quarterly)

In Year 1, the EGRP II team was active in establishing new collaborations or strengthening existing coordination that had been built through EGRP. For example, together with CEHRD, CDC, and the Reading for All program, EGRP established a new partnership with OLE Nepal for digital learning content development (described under Activity 4.1.1). EGRP II team members also contributed to discussions on EGR during routine meetings of SSDP technical working groups on EGR; curriculum; and examination, accreditation, and assessment.

During June–September 2020, the team met with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to share information on research methodologies and available data for a planned study on positive deviance (i.e., beneficial instructional innovations introduced by individual teachers) in Nepal's education sector under the Data Must Speak initiative. Through this effort, the team shared findings from EGRP-supported studies on teacher motivation, TPS, and community engagement in reading that used elements of positive deviance research methodology.

Similarly, EGRP II coordinated with the SSDP technical assistance team during the October–December 2020 quarter on developing the content and rollout plans for local capacity development workshops. As part of this process, the team provided feedback to the SSDP technical assistance team on its planned workshop content.

EGRP II teams also continued to participate in federal and provincial education cluster meetings aimed at coordinating COVID-19 responses in the education sector. The program's involvement included participating in periodic cluster meetings and contributing information and progress updates about EGRP II's COVID-19 activities, to promote efficiency and avoid duplication of effort. In a similar vein, EGRP II coordinated with Save the Children to learn more about their best practices in pandemic response in the education sector, including flexible, home-based learning activities.

EGRP II participated in the National Learning Continuity Campaign, an initiative of CEHRD with involvement of other partners, such as UNICEF, the School Management Committee Federation of Nepal, and the Confederation of Nepalese Teachers. The Campaign aims to promote flexible learning strategies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic through assistance to local governments, mobilization of teachers for flexible learning strategies, and parenting education. As described in previous sections of the report, EGRP II has been supporting the Campaign by implementing alternative learning approaches through

community- and home-based learning in selected palikas of Province 2, and by sharing information with local governments across the 38 NEGRP target districts on practical strategies for supporting continuity of learning and mitigating students' learning loss.

Collaboration and coordination with other education sector interventions and partners during the January–March 2021 quarter involved mainly (1) continuously engaging with the SSDP technical assistance team and (2) coordinating with JICA-IMEN on local education planning and capacity development efforts. The three groups worked together on workshop rollout plans and content to ensure synergy and to avoid duplication of effort, particularly in areas of geographical overlap with JICA-IMEN.

In addition, EGRP II leaders worked with NORC at the University of Chicago¹² to plan joint presentations at the 2021 virtual conference of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES; held April 25–May 2). In addition, the team began a dialogue with representatives of the World Bank and the U.K.'s FCDO on how best to capture and share learning from remedial education activities and the use of technology in COVID-19 response.

Finally, with support from RTI home office technical advisors, EGRP II began establishing a joint research effort with the RISE Programme on the operational research related to IC rollout by teachers and other stakeholders (see Section 3.1.1, Activity 1.1.3 for details).

These coordination efforts will continue during June–September 2021 quarter with an emphasis on the World Bank-FCDO coordination on alternative learning strategies and with the RISE Programme on the IC operational research.

3.8 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (Annual and Quarterly)

EGRP II efforts to promote gender equality and social inclusion focused on areas such as MEL planning and performance indicator development, as well as promotion of gender and ethnic inclusion in team composition and formation of a GESI task team. In addition, the program promoted GESI principles in materials development, including digital lessons for online learning and flexible learning materials. EGRP II also incorporated GESI content in the Round 1 local capacity development workshops and applied GESI considerations in targeting of home- and community-based learning activities in Province 2.

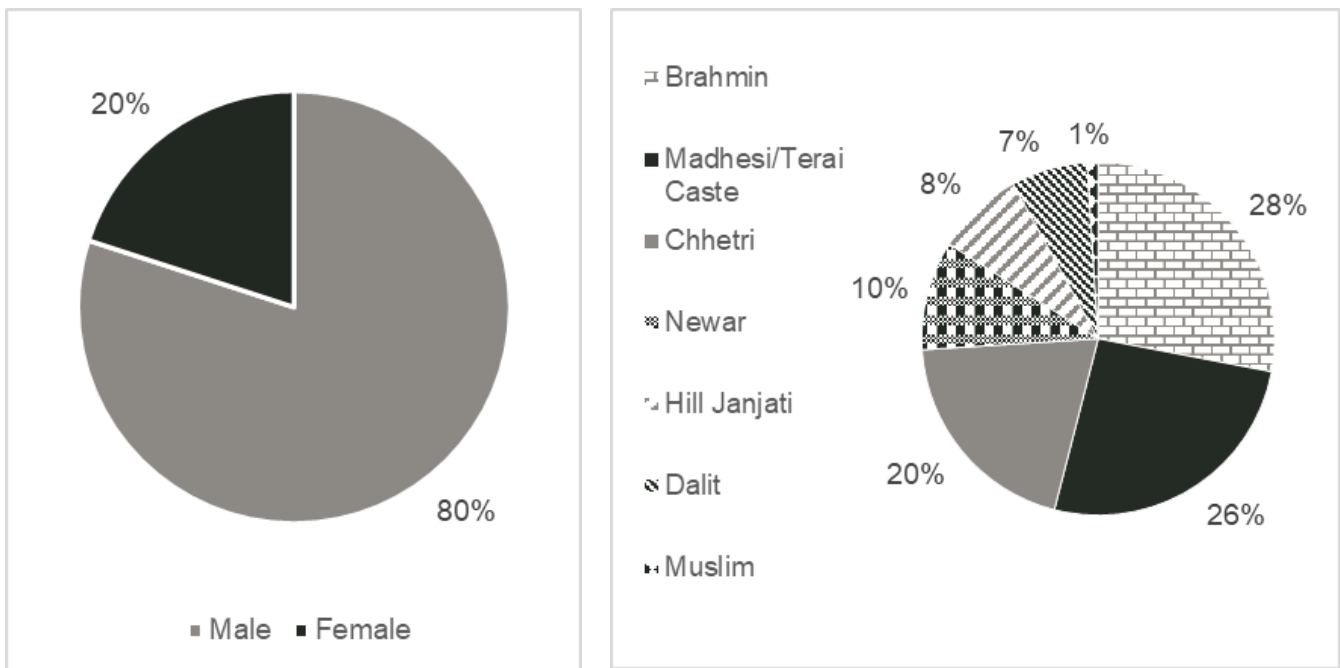
EGRP II's MEL Plan incorporates performance indicator reference sheets with disaggregation by gender and ethnicity where relevant.

With regard to staff composition and recruitment, the EGRP II team includes various social and ethnic communities, as presented in *Figure 37*. However, historically privileged groups still make up a substantial proportion, and achieving gender balance in the team continues to be a struggle. As of mid-2021, women represented 20% of all staff, predominantly in city-based operations roles; men predominated in technical and field-based roles. Addressing these challenges is difficult due to the roots of inequality that long predate EGRP II. At the same time, the team has adopted RTI's new global inclusion lens in all recruitments, and in March 2021 used this initiative to recruit a highly experienced candidate from a historically disadvantaged group with expertise in GESI approaches for an unfilled technical position in

¹² NORC at the University of Chicago is an independent research organization (<https://www.norc.org>).

Kathmandu. The lessons learned from this experience will be valuable for future recruitments as well.

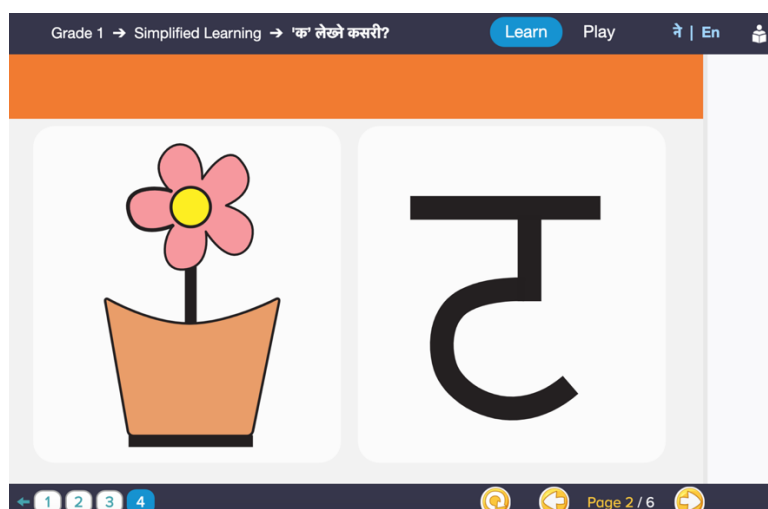
Figure 37: EGRP II staffing as of May 31, 2021, by gender and ethnicity



In addition to these recruiting practices, EGRP II established a task team to promote GESI throughout the project and to help ensure that GESI principles are reflected in key activities. The task team members represent diverse ethnicities, including Newar, Madhesi/Terai, Chhetri, and Dalit; and they include three women and six men from across the Kathmandu and regional offices. The task team’s main objective is to promote knowledge sharing and a learning culture within EGRP II with respect to GESI, including designing and delivering orientation and training sessions on GESI principles and practices to all staff and advising other team members on effective integration of GESI principles during design and implementation of key project activities.

Beyond addressing GESI through the task team and recruiting practices, EGRP II promoted inclusion through the new digital learning content in Nepali Sign Language and for children with dyslexia, developed with advice from the Reading for All Program and other technical advisors on disability and inclusion. As of the end of Year 1, OLE Nepal had developed 10 lessons in Nepali Sign Language and 6 for children with dyslexia. The lessons for Nepali Sign Language covered topics such as the signs for letters and simple vocabulary words. The lessons for dyslexia provided simplified learning content in areas like writing Nepali script and learning basic numbers. An example of the content for dyslexia is provided in **Figure 38**.

Figure 38: Screenshot of simplified digital learning content for children with dyslexia



Flexible learning materials for parents and teachers of grades 1–3 children also used GESI principles throughout, with colorful illustrations representing positive gender roles, people with disabilities, and a diversity of Nepal’s ethnic groups. See **Figure 39** for examples.

Figure 39: Samples of illustrations developed for the flexible learning materials reflecting gender-equality principles



During the October–December 2020 quarter, EGRP II also coordinated with the Reading for All program to ensure that issues of diversity, disability, and inclusion were effectively incorporated into the local capacity development workshop design that will reach all of EGRP II’s target LEUs. To this end, a dedicated session on disability and inclusion in education was developed for the LEU capacity development workshops to encourage local governments to consider the issues of diversity, disability, and inclusion while preparing local-level education policies and plans.

Lastly, EGRP II’s home- and community-based schooling activities for the COVID-19 response targeted 16 palikas that were most disadvantaged according to the GON’s municipal education equity index. These 16 rural municipalities have high percentages of L2 learners from historically marginalized ethnicities. EGRP II also identified 16 additional palikas for expansion of the home- and community-based schooling activities in Year 2, using a similar

set of selection criteria. This equity-driven targeting enabled EGRP II to reach the children who needed it most with catch-up learning opportunities.

EGRP II will continue to implement similar GESI approaches related to staffing and materials development during June–September 2021. In addition, the GESI task team will lead capacity development on gender equality and social inclusion topics.

3.9 Communications, Branding, and Marking (Annual and Quarterly)

3.9.1 Communications activities and updates

To raise the profile of EGRP II’s activities and objectives in line with the approved Branding Strategy and Marking Plan, several activities related to communications, branding, and marking were undertaken in Year 1.

- The EGRP II team produced a short briefing paper in June 2020 to describe the program to GON officials during initial orientations. The briefer described the core program objectives, geographic coverage, and support to NEGRP priorities.
- During the June–September 2020 quarter, the team also developed revised program targeting maps for both internal and external dissemination, to align with the GON’s new national map.
- The team created an orientation package for all EGRP II staff in November 2020 to ensure awareness of the program’s Branding Strategy and Marking Plan and rules for informed consent related to communications products.
- The program also produced PowerPoint templates for use during internal and external communications efforts, which were reviewed and approved by USAID in December 2020.
- EGRP II coordinated with USAID to amend the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to correct the placement of MOEST and RTI logos on communications and technical products. The amended plan was approved by the USAID Office of Acquisition and Assistance on February 9, 2021.
- A new Communications Specialist was onboarded in early January 2021 and underwent orientation to the project design and objectives as well as key activities and communications protocols.
- The Communications Specialist conducted a field visit to Parsa District in March 2021, accompanied by the Chief of Party (COP), to capture success stories, social media posts, and photographs; and to assist in preparations for the USAID/Nepal Mission Director’s virtual field visit on March 31, 2021.
- Social media content capturing key program activities was drafted and shared with USAID/Nepal and posted to their official Facebook and Twitter accounts on an ongoing basis.
- A video of school and community-level activities was developed in March 2021 based on video footage from Bito Mahato School in Jira Bhawani Rural Municipality, Parsa District. This recording was shared with the USAID team during the Mission Director’s virtual field visit.

- The Communications Specialist supported procurement of tools such as software, tripods, and a camera lens to facilitate communications-related activities and products.
- The EGRP II team developed an EGRP II landing page (**Figure 40**) on the RTI website at <https://www.rti.org/impact/usaaid-early-grading-reading-program-nepal> and launched it in March 2021. An expert profile for the Director of Programs was added on the RTI website at <https://www.rti.org/expert/narayan-shrestha> and linked to the EGRP II landing page during the same month.
- Also in March 2021, the team updated the EGRP landing page on the RTI website to reflect the final, publicly released endline evaluation findings and to switch the page from present to past tense now that the program is completed: <https://www.rti.org/impact/reading-their-way-better-future>.
- In April 2021, the Communications Specialist developed a TOR for hiring a local communications firm to create audiovisual products of program activities across different contexts in Nepal. However, this work had to be put on hold when lockdowns were reimposed in late April.

Figure 40: Screenshot of a segment of the new EGRP II landing page on the RTI website



Photo by Avash Karmacharya

Ensuring Learning Continuity in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

As the pandemic forced school closures, flexible learning approaches—such as home-based schooling supported by parents and teachers—and use of information technology became critical to ensure continuity of learning.

EGRP II’s Year 1 AWP included an activity to raise the program’s profile with international education audiences through the 2021 virtual CIES annual conference. EGRP II coordinated with NORC and with three nominated GON officials from MOEST and CEHRD to deliver a

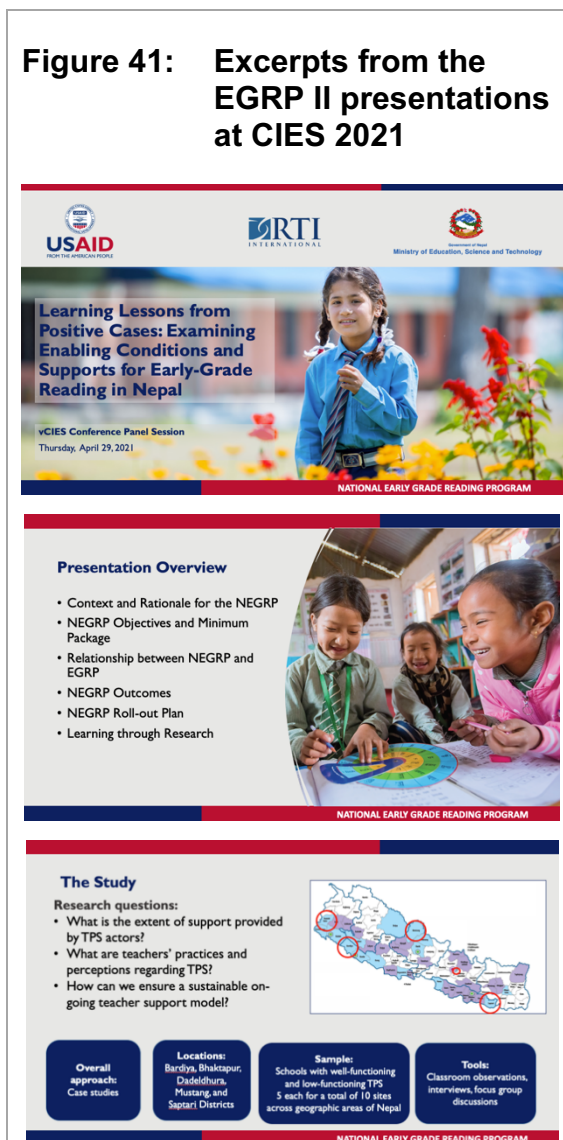
session for the virtual CIES conference on the theme of “Learning Lessons from Positive Cases: Examining Enabling Conditions and Supports for Early Grade Reading in Nepal.”

Presentations (**Figure 41**) shared during the session included:

- Introduction to Nepal’s National Early Grade Reading Program
- Impact Evaluation of the National Early Grade Reading Program – Nepal
- Learning from Positive Cases: Teacher Professional Support for Early Grade Reading in Nepal
- Learning from Positive Cases: Parent and Community Mobilization for Early Grade Reading in Nepal

The session was conducted on April 29, 2021, with attendance from a range of external organizations, including representatives from USAID/Washington; Australian, South African, U.K., and U.S. universities; and other U.S., Nepal, and international implementing agencies. Questions from participants covered areas such as the instructional approach used in the NEGRP, teacher perspectives on NEGRP, and the influence of language issues in the research studies. Participation in the conference enabled the EGRP II team to work closely with GON co-presenters to prepare the presentations and field questions from the audience. In Year 2, EGRP II aims to submit a proposal for a session at the 2022 CIES conference, especially if the conference provides a virtual participation option that will keep the costs of participation low.

Figure 41: Excerpts from the EGRP II presentations at CIES 2021



3.9.2 Media coverage of EGRP II

Media coverage of EGRP II in Year 1, mostly in Nepali, is listed below:

- **Onlinekhabar.com:** Describing the situation of early grade readers studying in the community schools of Parsa District and the positive role played by NEGRP¹³
- **Gorkhapatra Online:** “Growth in Number of Students Writing Fluently and Reading in Nepali”¹⁴

¹³ Available in Nepali at: <https://www.onlinekhabar.com/2020/10/901928>.

¹⁴ Available in Nepali at: <https://gorkhapatraonline.com/education/2021-02-22-32506?fbclid=IwAR3fxPKdKGSwfaQ4a3mdyP7YuhOlaS7-BpKKoh1UmNXyAJxkVXPGkVIEQXk>.

- **Gorkhapatra Online:** “NEGRP II Enhances Learning Capacity”¹⁵
- **Facebook, April 2021:** “USAID/Nepal¹⁶ had a great ‘virtual site visit’ to Bito Mahato Secondary School in Jirabhawani Rural Municipality in Parsa. Mission Director Sepideh Keyvanshad met with one of the parents and schoolteachers, and with first- and third-grade students who shared that learning had become easy and exciting for them now, especially because of the community-based learning program implemented during school closures. USAID’s EGRP II has supported learning clusters in 219 schools across 16 municipalities in Province 2. This community- and home-based learning approach is helping children ‘catch up’ on learning lost due to #COVID19. For more: <https://bit.ly/3dlgwqc> [Impact story on RTI website, “Sustaining Reading Gains in Nepal]”
- **Twitter, April 2021:** “@USAIDNepal’s [<https://twitter.com/USAIDNepal>] EGRP II has supported learning clusters in 200+ schools across Province 2. This community- and home-based schooling approach is helping children ‘catch up’ on learning lost due to COVID-19. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/3dlgwqc> @USAIDEducation @RTI_INTL_DEV @RTI_Intl”



USAID/Nepal Twitter post on home- and community-based learning activities in Province 2

- **Twitter, April 2021:** “@USAIDNepal [<https://twitter.com/USAIDNepal>] joined the Early Grade Reading Program II (EGRP II) for a ‘virtual site visit’ to a school in Parsa. During the visit we were able to interact with students who shared that learning had become easy and exciting for them now! @USAIDEducation @RTI_INTL_DEV @RTI_Intl”

During April–May 2021, EGRP II did not garner any additional media coverage. In late May 2021, the Communications Specialist began discussing the possibility of increasing

media engagement by providing content to Nepali journalists. This coordination effort will continue during June–September 2021.

¹⁵ Available in Nepali at: <https://gorkhapatraonline.com/education/2020-10-13-24634>.

¹⁶ USAID/Nepal Facebook page (scroll to posting for April 2, 2021): https://www.facebook.com/USAIDNepal/?fref=mentions&__xts__%5B0%5D=68.ARBI3vGQG9m31CwbdKo pNGqV82YKDIjZLw8FW62vu74DX84Bbb4neNAoUCjs5CxSybYrC706d7juNjkeRo_11FeSEzflcAmQ3F5h3-pIGSqMP69I_McvO9bESquBYVrO_Z74caNqXlfOqyw-Ao08pWcsMa0vAZnnSHmrRmFnT0rvbS_5zX3h9w5tKhSBBnbWrO07CtKXE8AjTvBD3fWaRVu8y4go2k2UuKBbQob7Jg26ceFJLEsMIw6yyYAIIn3YpaQn_8Z2tlaai6ubtaieciZIQpg_4ya0DK6POuxigOJMrDjHTgjQ2Q&__tn__=K-R

3.9.3 Suggested social media posts

This section provides possible social media posts that USAID could consider using in the future, about activities that took place during April–May 2021.

Post #1:



Participants in the 5-day local capacity development workshop in Madhyapur Thimi Municipality, Bhaktapur District. (Photo credit: Sunita Shakya)

- **Facebook:** It's a wrap! USAID/Nepal's [Early Grade Reading Program II](#) (EGRP II) supported a 5-day workshop to build capacity for education planning in Madhyapur Thimi Municipality, Bhaktapur District in April 2021. This successful event was the final in a series of 69 workshops held for officials from 396 palikas across 38 National Early Grade Reading target districts to support effective education policy making and service delivery at local levels. *Photo: Sunita Shakya*
- **Twitter:** It's a wrap! In Bhaktapur in April 2021, @USAID/Nepal's [Early Grade Reading Program II](#) completed the last in a series of 69 local education capacity development workshops reaching officials from 396 palikas across 38 National Early Grade Reading target districts. *Photo: Sunita Shakya*

Post #2:



The Mayor of Jira Bhawani Rural Municipality in Parsa District observes a reading activity during an after-school learning cluster (Photo credit: Mitradev Yadav)

- **Facebook:** Ram Preet Mahato, Mayor of Jira Bhawani Rural Municipality in Parsa District, observes a reading activity during an after-school learning cluster in mid-April 2021. USAID Nepal’s [Early Grade Reading Program II](#) has supported learning clusters in 219 schools across 16 municipalities in Province 2. This community- and home-based schooling approach is helping children catch up on learning lost due to COVID-19. *Photo: Mitradev Yadav*
- **Twitter:** Ram Preet Mahato, Mayor of Jira Bhawani Rural Municipality in Parsa, observes an after-school reading activity in April 2021. @USAIDNepal’s [Early Grade Reading Program II](#) is helping children catch up on learning lost due to COVID-19 in 219 schools in Province 2. *Photo: Mitradev Yadav*

4 Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Mitigation Strategies (Annual and Quarterly)

Table 19 briefly describes some of the emerging or ongoing challenges, lessons learned, and mitigation strategies over program Year 1 and during April–May 2021.

Table 19: Challenges, lessons learned, and mitigation strategies

Challenges and lessons learned	Mitigation strategies
<p>The overlapping period between EGRP and EGRP II from June to October 2020 resulted in high staff workloads, particularly for central-level staff focusing on EGRP closeout, final activity implementation, and reporting at the same time as EGRP II start-up, AWP design, and MEL Plan development.</p>	<p>Detailed individual and team weekly work planning, frequent check-in meetings, and backstopping by the RTI home office enabled the team to balance tasks between the two programs as well as possible during the overlapping period, although there were some periods when attention had to be focused on one program more than another (for example, the intensive consultation period for the EGRP II AWP, or the period for finalizing all EGRP progress and financial reporting towards the end of the program).</p>
<p>Frequent changes in leadership positions within MOEST resulted in additional time requirements for the EGRP II team to build new relationships.</p>	<p>EGRP II conducted courtesy meetings and program briefings with the new officials in MOEST leadership positions, worked closely with MOEST focal people, and continuously coordinated on scheduling of key activities.</p>
<p>The COVID-19 pandemic caused major disruptions to routine planning, implementation, and tracking of program activities in 2020 and 2021. For example, early in the program, COVID-19-related restrictions on travel and in-person meetings made it challenging to complete key start-up tasks, such as AWP development workshops and introductory meetings with district and local officials. The lack of a centralized, one-stop tracking system for the local-level COVID-19 response in the education sector early in the pandemic required additional time and effort for tracking local-level activities, designing supportive activities, and targeting interventions to the areas with most need.</p>	<p>EGRP II used virtual meeting technology where possible, or smaller in-person meetings with adequate sanitation and social distancing in place. The EGRP II team proactively gathered all available information on COVID-19 response in the education sector from different sources, including CEHRD, the education cluster, the Global Partnership for Education team, and LEUs through the LEU capacity needs and connectivity assessment.</p> <p>As the pandemic situation wore on, the EGRP II leaders continued to monitor public health data and GON guidance and act in accordance with the USAID-approved Risk Mitigation Plan and RTI guidelines on sanitation and social distancing.</p>
<p>In the past, AWPs have typically been developed through in-person workshops with GON stakeholders, in which discussions and negotiations can be conducted efficiently in real time. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, all AWP-related discussions had to be conducted virtually, and a substantial amount of back-and-forth through emails and conference calls was required. This resulted in an AWP finalization process that was longer than anticipated. It also affected the timely completion of the MEL Plan, which depended on finalization of the AWP before all performance indicators could be agreed. By the time the AWP was finalized, the team was facing a high workload related to activity start-up and struggled to find time to complete the MEL Plan.</p>	<p>EGRP II employed a mitigation strategy for the Year 2 AWP development process in 2021 to employ virtual consultation modalities due to continuing pandemic-related restrictions. This allowed for meaningful inputs and buy-in from GON stakeholders at national and subnational levels and ensured that the next AWP was approved in early 2021, at the start of program Year 2.</p>
<p>Based on field-level monitoring and feedback from trainers and participants during IC TPD trainings, CEHRD officials grasped the importance of having training guides and training resource materials to ensure quality and fidelity in cluster-level training rollout.</p>	<p>Training guides and training resource materials were not developed for the first round of MTOTs conducted using GON funds in 2020. However, they were drafted this quarter with EGRP II technical assistance, in time to use them for upcoming EGRP II-funded IC TPD MTOTs and subsequent cluster-level trainings.</p>

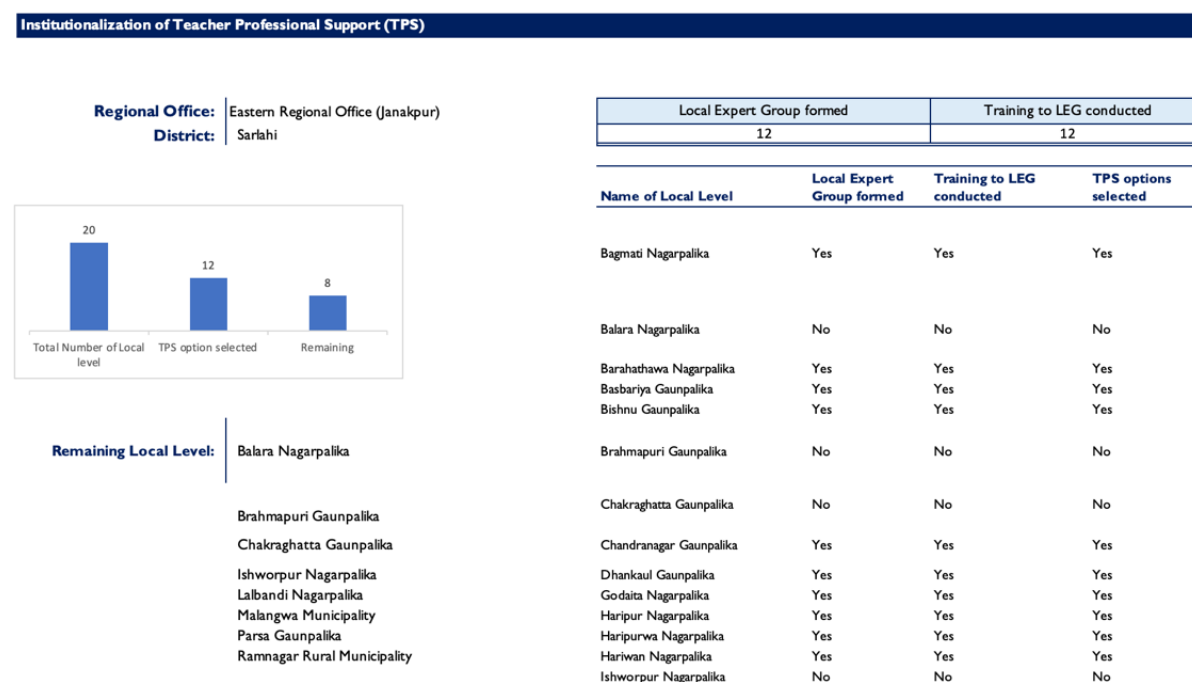
Challenges and lessons learned	Mitigation strategies
<p>The temporary change in policy between EGRP and EGRP II to discontinue payment of facilitation allowances to GON officials necessitated a change in EGRP II's approach to planning and conducting Round 1 of the local capacity development workshops, which may have affected GON ownership of that activity.</p>	<p>Instead of having GON officials as Round 1 workshop facilitators, EGRP II staff took on that role, with GON counterparts involved as participants and contributors rather than as trainers per se. This shift required adjustments to the planning and budgeting for all training-based events, and particularly the local capacity development TOTs and the subsequent local-level workshops. The situation was resolved when coordination between USAID and EGRP II resulted in reinstatement of the former facilitation allowance policy in February 2021.</p>
<p>As a result of Round 1 of the local capacity development workshops, all local governments have prepared action plans to develop their education profiles and MEPs. They have requested EGRP II technical assistance to implement the action plans and orient local government elected officials to gain support for resource allocation for EGR priorities. They have also asked for EGRP II support in gathering and analyzing additional data and consulting with local stakeholders in preparing their profiles and plans. However, there are limits to the frequency and duration of support that EGRP II can provide, with each district coordinator covering an average of 10 palikas.</p>	<p>EGRP II regional and district teams used all available avenues—such as regular head teacher meetings at the local government level, LEU-level review meetings, JMV, and periodic visits to local governments—to provide technical support locally on implementing the action plans developed for preparing their MEP and education profiles. In addition, as part of the Year 2 AWP design process, EGRP II identified approaches to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of support provided to local governments, including support for forming targeted tasks teams made up of district and local officials who had already been trained in Round 1 and Round 2 TOTs or workshops.</p>
<p>EGRP II supported CEHRD to revise the previous TPS management procedure and guideline based on evidence and experience in EGRP. The revised documents were finalized but had to receive high-level approval within MOEST before they could be officially rolled out. Subsequent TPS-related training activities could only be conducted after the TPS materials were formally approved, resulting in a cascade of delays.</p>	<p>EGRP II technical leaders in Kathmandu conducted continuous follow-up with CEHRD and MOEST to ensure that the revised documents will go through the necessary review, revision, and ratification steps as quickly as possible. The EGRP II team also began drafting training materials ahead of formal approvals, to save time later.</p>
<p>Digital content developed as part of EGRP II's COVID-19 response proceeded through multiple rounds of reviews and approvals within CDC and CEHRD to ensure quality and alignment with the curriculum. These iterations resulted in a slower process than originally expected to finalize the content and upload it to the CEHRD learning portal, as well as significant demands on EGRP II technical staff time to complete detailed reviews. In addition, challenges arose related to marking and ownership of the digital content, as well as bandwidth availability for accessing the content outside of Kathmandu.</p>	<p>EGRP II coordinated with CEHRD, CDC, and OLE to ensure a more streamlined review process through a designated team of GON reviewers, with assistance from EGRP II technical staff. EGRP II adopted a "divide and conquer" approach, spreading the workload to conduct final verification of lessons among Kathmandu and regional team members. In addition, EGRP II coordinated closely with CEHRD, USAID, and OLE to resolve questions related to content ownership and branding and marking.</p>
<p>A resurgence in new COVID-19 cases during the "second wave" of the pandemic in 2021, and a return to lockdowns across much of the country in late April 2021, required adjustments to the home- and community-based learning activities under Objective 4. EGRP II was also required to adjust activities and budget allocations in the Year 2 AWP in April and May 2021 in response to the changing pandemic situation—for example, by placing more emphasis on COVID-19 response activities in Objective 4.</p>	<p>EGRP II identified solutions to ensure that home- and community-based learning activities could continue to the extent possible even during lockdowns. These solutions included sending SRMs home with students or encouraging teachers to conduct small-group or door-to-door follow-up with students. In addition, EGRP II worked closely with USAID to balance allocation of activities and resources between Objective 4 and the other activities in the Year 2 AWP.</p>

5 Best Practices (Annual)

This section provides a description of best practices developed during EGRP II Year 1 that could be taken to scale in the future. Two main areas emerged as best practices during the year: Use of no-cost, automated data collection and visualization platforms to track progress and inform decision-making; and implementation of home- and community-based schooling to support children’s learning in response to COVID-19.

The EGRP II team employed a range of different approaches to collect, analyze, visualize, and share information on key activities and outputs. These utilized low- or no-cost data collection platforms – particularly KoBo Toolbox – as well as commonly-available office software tools to store and visualize data. Use of these tools started in earnest with the LEU capacity survey conducted in 2020 to inform decision-making about local capacity development activities and local access to technology for potential virtual work during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Next, the team set up user-friendly online data collection tools for tracking training and workshop quality and gathering data from joint monitoring visits, and oriented GON counterparts on their use. Finally, EGRP II employed various tracking dashboards for key outputs such as small grants provision to schools through Objective 4 and baseline data collection progress. The team also developed a local status tracker for MEP and education profile creation and TPS implementation that helps to identify which palikas have formed local expert groups, conducted TPS-related trainings, and selected TPS options. The Excel-based tool uses a one-stop dashboard that enables disaggregation by region and district (example in *Figure 42*).

Figure 42: Screenshot of part of the local status tracker page focusing on TPS implementation



Overall, the use of these technology-based solutions reduced data entry and cleaning requirements and provided rapid data for guiding decisions as well as real-time updates on key activities as they were happening. These approaches could potentially be useful to other

implementing agencies in Nepal that are required to track and report on project outputs and use data for course adjustments on an ongoing basis. The technology-based approaches could also be helpful for GON counterparts interested in utilizing tested, low-cost tools for tracking a range of activities in the education sector and beyond.

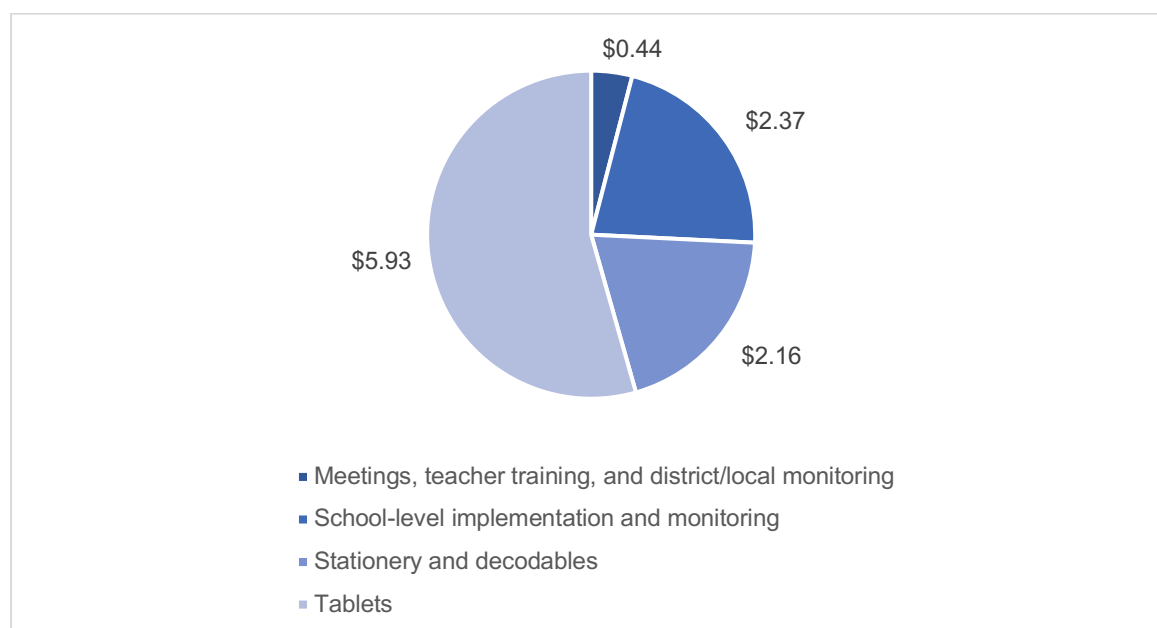
The home- and community-based schooling approach implemented in Province 2 also shows promise for scale-up to other disadvantaged municipalities where children have limited access to online learning opportunities. The model works through local governments, school management committees, and teachers in the selected schools, promoting sustainability within the education system. Teachers utilize hours before or after class or during weekends, depending on local scheduling needs, to deliver additional catch-up instruction for early grade reading. The model is flexible depending on the circumstances. For example, if schools close due to COVID-19 or other emergencies, alternatives can be implemented such as community visits by teachers, telephone follow-up, and/or sending reading and learning materials home with children.

The costs of the model are reasonable for potential scale-up, with an estimated total cost per child of US\$10.89 for five months of implementation in the first set of schools with over 30,000 children participating.¹⁷ Fixed costs such as tablets account for the largest proportion of the total (*Figure 43*), but can be defrayed through use with more children over time or may be considered optional if resources are limited.

Given these factors related to equity, sustainability, and low costs, the catch-up learning approach has strong potential for expansion to other disadvantaged areas of Nepal through GON, development partner, or implementing agency resources. In Year 2, the EGRP II learning assessment design should enable the program to gauge the effects of the model on children's reading skills, which could also lend further evidence to inform potential future scale-up.

¹⁷ Not including labor costs for project staff, teachers, or other education actors.

Figure 43: Estimated cost per child of the home- and community-based schooling model (total=US\$10.89)



6 Prospects for Next Year’s Performance

This section provides a discussion of prospects for EGRP II performance in Year 2. In general, prospects for the final year of the program are strong. EGRP II has built or maintained relationships of trust with all levels of government that will form the foundation for additional achievements in the remaining twelve months. Furthermore, the program has pivoted effectively to virtual and other flexible modalities in response to COVID-19 where possible and will be able to continue doing so in Year 2 when required.

Despite these strong prospects, the unpredictable and sustained nature of COVID-19 pandemic disruptions and the ongoing challenge of competing demands for GON time resulted in some delays in Year 1 that may continue to have ripple effects in Year 2 – and it is also possible that new disruptions will affect progress in Year 2 itself.

For example, in Objective 1, planned IC TPD MTOTs and subsequent subnational-level orientations and trainings that were supposed to start in Year 1 have been delayed so that all allotted MTOT trainees will need to be reached in Year 2. EGRP II has been working with CEHRD to redesign the MTOTs for a virtual training modality in response to the second wave of lockdowns instituted in 2021. If the external context remains stable, EGRP II is likely to be able to complete the scheduled MTOTs (probably through a mix of virtual and in-person modalities) and provide further technical assistance and quality monitoring during subsequent trainings after the MTOTs. However, if the external context is unstable, this may affect the timing of both the MTOTs and the sub-national trainings.

Likewise, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused substantial disruptions in the original intentions for capacity development of local governments on education planning, integrated curriculum and NEGRP rollout, and TPS. EGRP II was able to complete a first round of capacity development activities and start on the second round within Year 1. However, the

return to lockdowns in April 2021 caused delays and required the program team to work with CEHRD, ETCs, EDCUs, and LEUs on shifting to virtual modalities at the start of Year 2. COVID-19 related challenges, as well as limited staffing and frequent turnover of LEU personnel, also affected completion of MEPs, education profiles, and TPS planning at local levels.

The EGRP II team has adapted to these circumstances by switching to partially virtual modalities for the remaining second round capacity development events and TPS-related trainings. The team has also modified the approach for the third round of capacity development efforts to form district-level task teams that will provide targeted support to selected palikas on local-level education planning. These adjustments should enable EGRP II to achieve planned outcomes in Objectives 2 and 3 within the program's second year. However, the ripple effects of disruptions in Year 1 could be substantial if EGRP II, CEHRD, and the ETCs face challenges in rolling out activities through virtual modalities and if local governments struggle to make up for time lost on education planning during the GON's 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Objective 4 was specifically designated to provide flexible avenues for COVID-19 response. The main Year 2 activities in this objective focus on home- and community-based schooling, including a substantial scale up to an additional 16 disadvantaged palikas in Province 2. Prospects for implementing this activity are strong because home and community schooling could be delivered even during lockdowns and periods of restrictions on travel and gatherings if those events were to recur. However, even this approach is potentially subject to some limitations due to the pandemic. For example, setbacks could occur in cases where local government, school officials, and teachers cannot meet for orientations, monitoring, and trainings, and teachers do not live in the same village as the school where they teach and therefore have difficulty accessing their learning clusters in person. EGRP II will work closely with teachers, school administrators, and local government leaders during Year 2 to ensure that such potential challenges are anticipated and planned for in advance to minimize impacts on progress in the final year of implementation.

Finally, with regard to the program's MEL system, indicator achievement in Year 1 was partially on track but was also affected by the COVID-19 situation and by delays in the pace of key activity rollout by GON. EGRP II will place significant effort on achieving all indicator targets by the end of the program in May 2021, but will also coordinate with USAID to determine an appropriate course of action if it appears that some indicators are not likely to be fully met due to extenuating circumstances.

7 Management, Administration, and Safety (Annual and Quarterly)

7.1 Management

Strong leadership and management are the cornerstones of effective program implementation and goal achievement. Management activities undertaken during Year 1 included start-up during June–September 2020, such as staff recruitment, Year 1 AWP development, MEL planning, development of a Risk Mitigation Plan, and oversight of activity rollout.

During the October–December 2020 quarter, management activities focused on finalizing the Year 1 AWP in response to USAID and GON feedback and revising and resubmitting the program’s MEL Plan after addressing a first round of comments from USAID. A revised Emergency Preparedness and Response plan was also submitted to USAID, reflecting aspects of the final approved AWP. The team also revised the COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Plan based on updated guidance from USAID; and obtained approval from the RTI home office to re-open some offices, in line with the Risk Mitigation Plan, RTI guidance, and the local public health situation in each location.

The management team designed and conducted capacity development trainings for all EGRP II staff based on the gaps identified in the staff capacity assessment survey. This training covered operations and compliance topics that are critical to effective program implementation, such as grants and procurement management and IT safety. It also included trainings on core technical topics, such as TPD, the IC, and TPS.

In addition, the EGRP II management team continued to coordinate with GON counterparts through frequent meetings and calls, as described in the GON liaison section above (Section 3.6). This engagement included a quarterly Steering Committee meeting that took place on November 27, 2020. The meeting was an important venue for formally sharing the final Year 1 AWP and obtaining GON support for key activities and working modalities, including new COVID-19 response activities that had been designed in coordination with USAID.

During the January–March 2021 quarter, the EGRP II management team finalized the MEL Plan based on USAID feedback, requested and received approval from USAID for corrections to the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan, and obtained USAID communications team approval for PowerPoint templates. The team also began the Year 2 AWP development process in coordination with USAID and GON.

Another major management priority during the reporting period was the continuation application and oral presentation to USAID, steps that were required per the terms of EGRP II’s cooperative agreement. Completed at the end of February 2021, the application and presentation covered progress and achievements to date against the approved program design and Year 1 AWP. They also provided forward-looking recommendations for priorities in Year 2. The application resulted in USAID approval for continuation of EGRP II into the second project year, from June 2021 through May 2022.

On March 16, 2021, the team conducted a quarterly Steering Committee meeting with officials from MOEST, CDC, CEHRD, and ERO. At this productive meeting, presenters provided updates on EGRP II’s implementation status, shared the proposed Year 2 AWP drafting process for feedback, and discussed the next steps for TPS management procedure and guideline finalization and EGR benchmark revisions. The COP, Director of Programs, and other technical leaders also continued to spend significant time on overall GON representational and coordination tasks, as well as field visits to support activities such as the local capacity development workshops and the baseline evaluation TOT.

Throughout the month of March 2021, the COP, Director of Programs, Director of Operations, Eastern Regional Office Manager, and other field staff completed planning and preparations for a virtual site visit by the USAID/Nepal Mission Director. Conducted successfully on March 31, 2021, this site visit included an overview presentation on EGRP II

and a video capturing school- and community-based EGR activities. In addition, the Mission Director had the opportunity to interact virtually with a teacher, two students, and a mother in a rural school in Parsa District who were participating in after-school “catch up” learning activities to recover from educational setbacks due to COVID-19.

During April–May 2021, the EGRP II leadership team focused significant effort on finalizing the Year 2 AWP in line with feedback from USAID and from GON stakeholders. In addition, the team took quick action to reinstate COVID-19 restrictions on in-person work once the GON began reintroducing prohibitory orders in April 2021. They continued to monitor and respond to the evolving situation in May 2021 as conditions did not improve.

7.2 Human Resources

EGRP II staff completed several activities related to human resources management during April–May 2021.

- Successfully recruited, oriented, and mobilized one RTI local-hire staff member for the MEL team in the EGRP II Kathmandu office. Started up the recruitment process to replace another MEL team member who resigned effective early June 2021.
- Successfully prepared, processed, and maintained documentation related to personnel actions for EGRP II local-hire staff.
- Administered employment contract extensions for eight local-level program officers from June 16, 2021, to December 15, 2021.
- Processed the completion of the probation period for three staff members.
- Issued three short-term independent contractor agreements to provide surge capacity for time-sensitive finance and administration tasks.
- Supported the in-country implementation of RTI’s new employee recognition initiative, the Rise Award program.
- Provided ongoing support to all staff for business continuity while working from home during the lockdown.
- Assisted COP and home office in updating the office re-opening plans for EGRP II regional and district offices that had remained closed due to COVID-19 pandemic circumstances.
- Assisted the Director of Operations and RTI home office in further updating the EGRP II field operations manual for EGRP II.
- Assisted the COP to prepare a proposal to cover COVID-19-related health care costs for EGRP II local national staff in the absence of a GON-mandated insurance policy for COVID-19 coverage.

7.3 Finance and Administration

- Prepared and submitted EGRP and EGRP II quarterly value-added tax (VAT) reports to USAID.
- Received NPR 170,590,417.93 (US\$1,438,600, or 98.73%) of the NPR 172,781,017.22 (US\$1,457,074) VAT reimbursement submitted to Inland Revenue

Department. As of late May 2021, VAT invoices of NPR 899,424.43 (US\$7,585) remained with the Inland Revenue Department for review/reimbursement.

- Submitted VAT invoices of NPR 751,394.77 (US\$6,337) to USAID for endorsement and forwarding to the Inland Revenue Department.
- Entered and verified project leases in RTI's new international lease tracking application.
- Prepared FY 2021 bank audit information.
- Regularly prepared and submitted cash management requests, payroll payments, vendor/grantee disbursements and monthly financial reports.
- Conducted budget tracking and forecasting of future expenditures.
- Prepared the Year 2 AWP budget template.
- Conducted periodic virtual meetings and trainings with the finance team, RTI Asia Regional Office, and RTI home office.
- Conducted financial review and monitoring of one EGRP II regional office.
- Made 856 financial transactions during this reporting quarter.
- Disbursed first small-grant installments to 219 schools.
- Prepared budgets and managed cash advances and payments for various workshops and trainings.

7.4 Procurement and Logistics

- Issued purchase order and administered contract for printing, packaging, and delivery of parent/teacher guide, TPS management procedure, TPS guideline, and Student Learning Facilitation Directive 2077.
- Administered subaward contract for digital early grade learning content development for COVID-19 response.
- Issued change order to COP's residential lease agreement to extend the lease for the period July 1, 2021, to May 30, 2022.
- Accomplished distribution of 1,352 tablet covers to schools in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Arranged and coordinated logistics for the following events:
 - Local-level capacity development workshops (Round 1) in two remaining EGRP II program districts (Bhaktapur and Mustang)
 - Meeting to finalize content for local-level capacity development workshops (Round 2)
 - Five TOTs for local-level capacity development workshops (Round 1) in Bara, Doti, Itahari, Nepalgunj, and Tanahun
 - Eleven local-level capacity development workshops (Round 2) in Baglung, Kapilvastu, Khotang, Myagdi, Rolpa, and Salyan
 - DCC meetings in 10 EGRP II program districts (Banke, Bardiya, Bhaktapur, Dhankuta, Dolpa, Mahottari, Rolpa, Salyan, and Surkhet)

- Extended DCC meetings in four EGRP II program districts (Baglung, Dadeldhura, Kailali, and Myagdi)
- Various JMV's with mayors/chairpersons, deputy mayors/vice chairpersons, EDCUs, LEUs, DCC members, and EGRP staff in 38 program districts
- Workshop to finalize IC TPD trainers' guide and training resource materials
- Benchmark task team meeting
- School grants implementation and closeout meetings

7.5 Information Technology

- Provided ongoing support to the program team to comply with RTI's IT privacy and security policies, as well as any other issues related to computer operation, in coordination with RTI's Asia Regional Office.
- Provided remote IT technical support to all EGRP II staff as required.
- Installed firewalls, virtual private network services, network, printers, Wi-Fi, and other IT systems in the new Janakpur regional office.

7.6 Safety and Security

- Assisted COP in reviewing COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Plan in response to the second COVID-19 pandemic wave.
- Managed work-from-home and work-from-office rosters in line with the COVID-19 situation in specific areas of the country.
- Updated staff contact list, emergency phone tree, and staff Viber security group.
- Continuously provided new information and guidance related to COVID-19 to all staff through the Viber group, emails, and all-staff meetings.
- Monitored any potential escalations such as security incidents and staff illnesses.
- Maintained an up-to-date staff database for COVID-19 health insurance for staff and dependents.
- Procured hand sanitizer and masks and supplied them for all EGRP II workshops, training, and office uses.

7.7 Environmental Compliance

No specific activities/tasks related to environmental compliance were undertaken during the April–May 2021 reporting period.

8 Finance and Expenditure Status (Annual and Quarterly)

8.1 Activities for Next Quarter

Activities during the June–September 2021 quarter will include finalizing, printing, and distributing the IC TPD trainer guide and training resource materials as well as supporting CEHRD to roll out virtual IC TPD MTOTs. The MTOTs may switch back to an in-person

format if circumstances allow. In addition, the EGRP II team will continue to support rollout of IC orientations and IC TPD trainings at the district and cluster levels, to the extent that they continue under lockdowns or other pandemic-related restrictions. The program will implement other activities related to policy making and use of data for decision making, such as producing additional short NARN research briefs and continuing benchmarking activities through the task team and through the hiring of a local expert consultant.

EGRP II will resume rolling out the remaining Round 2 local capacity development workshops, as well as DCC meetings, through virtual means to the extent possible and in person if the situation normalizes. The team will also work with CEHRD as well as district and local officials to form and orient district-level task teams, who will then implement Round 3 capacity development and planning activities in targeted palikas.

During June–September 2021, EGRP II will print and distribute the revised TPS management procedure and guideline and finalize the TPS training package. Subsequently, MTOTs for TPS actors and for development of the TPS roster system will be designed and rolled out, virtually if needed. JMV's will resume if schools re-open, and the EGRP II team will continue efforts to support palikas with planning for TPS implementation and reflection on TPS implementation.

A substantial effort will be required to continue and scale up home- and community-based learning in the current and new schools in Province 2. Activities will include initial orientations; teacher training; stationery, decodables, and tablet distribution; and establishment of a system for paying expense allowances directly to teachers and head teachers. Flexible learning materials for parents and teachers will be distributed, and EGRP II will complete the district-level orientations on those materials that began in May 2021.

In the MEL arena, the team will update activity and indicator planning and tracking tools in line with the approved Year 2 AWP and conduct capacity development, learning reviews, and a data quality assessment of stipulated MEL Plan indicators. The baseline reporting will also be finalized and shared with USAID and GON for review. The MEL team may be required to revise some aspects of the MEL Plan, including indicator definitions and targets, as required by the COVID-19 situation. This revision will be done in coordination with USAID.

Lastly, the team will continue to coordinate routinely with GON through a planned NEGRP Steering Committee meeting in June 2021, as well as other ongoing meetings and events. Communications efforts will continue through traditional and social media outlets, and the effort that was previously started to hire a local communications firm to produce audiovisual products will resume if possible.

8.2 Estimated Expenditures

The total estimated cumulative costs from program inception through May 2021, as well as the projected June–September 2021 expenses for the activities described above, are included in *Table 20*. The costs to date include actual invoiced costs through April 2021 and projected costs for May 2021. The projections assume that extensive in-person activities will not be possible during at least the first few months of the coming quarter due to the COVID-19 situation.

Table 20: Cumulative costs and projected expenses

Cooperative agreement cost categories	Cumulative estimated costs from inception through May 2021	Projected expenses, June–September 2021
Personnel and Fringe Benefits	\$1,367,645	\$814,259
Travel, Transportation, and Per Diem	\$122,098	\$22,452
Equipment, Supplies, and Contractual	\$625,007	\$325,089
Other Direct Costs	\$587,197	\$258,294
Indirect Costs	\$1,138,714	\$653,962
Total	\$3,840,660	\$2,074,055

Annex A: Update on Progress during the April-May 2021 Quarter

Objectives and goals	Accomplishments from April-May 2021
Objective 1: Support development and rollout of the IC and continue to scale up EGR	
Technical support is offered on EGR best practices in development of the nationwide, 10-day IC training package and MTOTs.	Supported CEHRD to edit training resource materials in response to feedback from within CEHRD, from the EGRP II team, and from USAID
MTOT is funded for 200 master trainers for the nationwide IC training package, in agreement with the GON.	Supported government officials to roll out 22 IC TPD orientations and 9 IC TPD trainings sub-nationally Supported CEHRD to plan for two, seven-day ICT TPD MTOTs, which were eventually postponed due to COVID-19. Subsequently, assisted CEHRD to plan for virtual training delivery instead. Could not complete planned IC TPD quality monitoring with GON counterparts due to COVID-19.
Operational research on the IC is conducted to inform future implementation.	Reviewed research TOR with CDC and adjusted the TOR in response to USAID feedback. Solidified collaboration with the RISE Programme to utilize Surveys of Enacted Curriculum methodology.
Assessment data are analyzed and used to inform education sector policy and programming.	Completed provincial level EGRP endline dissemination through four virtual events covering all seven provinces. Provided written comments to MOEST on the draft Education Sector Plan, 2021-2030. Provided technical assistance to ERO to summarize and package 2020 NARN findings for provincial dissemination efforts and began to share the findings during the local capacity development TOTs and workshops that took place under Objective 2. Supported the GON's benchmarking task team to review relevant literature and develop an outline for a revised benchmarking report. Drafted a TOR to hire a local expert consultant to support the benchmarking process.
Objective 2: Build municipal- and provincial-level capacity for delivering EGR services	
All LEUs in 38 districts are using the updated IEMIS and education profiles.	Designed and rolled out five TOTs for Round 2 of the local capacity development workshops.

Objectives and goals	Accomplishments from April-May 2021
All LEUs in 38 districts are tracking and reporting discretionary resources dedicated to education.	<p>Completed two remaining Round 1 local capacity development workshops in Mustang and Bhaktapur that had been previously postponed.</p> <p>Began rolling out Round 2 of the local capacity development workshops, completing 11 events covering 39 palikas before lockdowns were reinstated in April 2021.</p> <p>Developed tool to track status of MEP and education profile development as well as TPS implementation at local levels.</p> <p>Worked with CEHRD and EDCUs to revise the modality for Round 3 of the local capacity development workshops to focus on selected palikas that need more technical support, and form district-level task teams to deliver the technical support where needed.</p> <p>Conducted a “pause and reflect” process as well as training quality monitoring on the local capacity development TOTs and workshops.</p> <p>Conducted 67 additional LEU review meetings and 16 DCC meetings, including 6 extended DCC meetings.</p>
All schools in 38 districts have at least one book corner for grades 1–3.	All SRM distribution activities were completed prior to April 2021. The EGRP II team continued to follow up with local governments on effective SRM display and use through local capacity development workshops, LEU review meetings, and JMV.
Objective 3: Improve local governments’ ability to provide TPS, coaching, mentorship, and supervision	
CEHRD has updated TPS management procedure and guideline to support flexible TPS approach.	The revised TPS materials (management procedure and guideline) were finalized and approved. The printing process for both materials got underway.
MTOT is completed for TPS.	Supported CEHRD to begin drafting TPS training materials based on the revised TPS management procedure and guideline.
All LEUs are piloting an approach to TPS.	<p>The revised TPS materials were shared with local government officials during the 11 Round 2 local capacity development workshops that could be completed before a return to lockdowns in April 2021.</p> <p>EGRP II began working with CEHRD to plan for training of local government officials to help them establish rosters of TPS experts at local level.</p> <p>An additional 61 schools were visited during JMV.</p>
Operational research on the TPS pilots is completed.	EGRP II held discussions with CEHRD and agreed on the overall approach for the TPS operational research. A draft TOR for the study was developed.
Objective 4: Support continuity of learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic	
New interactive digital learning content is developed and uploaded to CEHRD’s learning portal.	27 additional lessons were finalized (bringing the total to 95) and EGRP II supported OLE and CEHRD to begin preparing the remaining 24 lessons to reach the overall total of 119.
Ongoing COVID-19 response planning support is provided to subnational education offices.	No additional activities were conducted in this area during April-May 2021.

Objectives and goals	Accomplishments from April-May 2021
Support is provided to 16 targeted disadvantaged palikas to implement community- and home-based learning clusters where school re-openings are unlikely and access to technology is limited.	<p>The program supported 219 schools in 16 palikas of Province 2 to implement home- and community-based schooling activities, including a pivot to alternative modalities when lockdowns were reimposed in late April 2021.</p> <p>Supported the 219 schools and 16 local governments to prepare all necessary paperwork for school grant closeout.</p>
Technical assistance is provided to the GON on learning-loss assessment.	Conducted technical/planning discussions with ERO on a learning loss study in Year 2, as part of the Year 2 AWP consultation process.
Technical assistance is provided to the GON on materials development and teacher orientation on adjusting the curriculum and instruction for a shortened school year.	<p>Nearly completed printing and packaging of the flexible learning materials for the Nepali subject in grades 1-3 as well as the GON's Student Learning Facilitation Directive 2077.</p> <p>Began conducting orientations for district and local officials on the flexible learning materials.</p>

Annex B: Progress by Indicators (Quarterly Plus Cumulative Through Year 1)

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	Data source	Baseline (date)	Fiscal Year 2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)			Life of program	
				Target	Actual (up to Mar 2021)	Actual (cumulative up to May 2021)	Target	Actual
Improved early grade reading in grades 1–3 for students in Nepali public schools in the 38 NEGRP target districts								
IND 01_ ES. 1-1	Percent of learners targeted for United States Government (USG) assistance who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of grade 2	Sample-based classroom-based Early Grade Reading Assessment (CB-EGRA)	7.4% (Baseline date: Feb/March 2021)	Baseline	This indicator will be reported after the baseline data analysis is completed.	7.4% (male=7.7% and female=7.2%)	9.4%	
IND 02_ ES. 1-3	Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school-based settings reached with USG education assistance	Integrated Education Management Information System (IEMIS); program data	0	431,370	94,997 grade 1–3 children Male: 46,491; female: 48,506 Level 1: 88,185; Level 2: 6,812; Level 3: 0	94,997 grade 1–3 children Male: 46,491; female: 48,506 Level 1: 88,185; Level 2: 6,812; Level 3: 0	452,370	
IND 03_ ES. 1-50	Number of public and private schools receiving USG assistance	IEMIS; program data	0	4,793	2,228 schools Level 1: 1,982; Level 2: 246; Level 3: 0	2,228 schools Level 1: 1,982; Level 2: 246; Level 3: 0	5,083	

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	Data source	Baseline (date)	Fiscal Year 2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)			Life of program	
				Target	Actual (up to Mar 2021)	Actual (cumulative up to May 2021)	Target	Actual
IND 04_ Custom	Percent of grade 2 and 3 students classified as fluent readers using national benchmarks	Sample-based CB-EGRA	Grade 2 = 7.4% Grade 3 = 12.6% (Baseline date: Feb/March 2021)	Baseline	This indicator will be reported after baseline data analysis is completed.	Grade 2 = 7.4% (male=7.7%, female=7.2%) Grade 3 = 12.6% (male=10.5%, female=14.4%)	Grade 2 = 9.4% Grade 3 = 15.6%	
IND 05_ Custom	Percent of grade 2 and 3 students classified as emergent readers using national benchmarks	Sample-based CB-EGRA	Grade 2 = 27.8% Grade 3 = 29.7% (Baseline date: Feb/March 2021)	Baseline	This indicator will be reported after baseline data analysis is completed.	Grade 2 = 27.8% (male=25.5% female=30.1%) Grade 3 = 29.7% (male=28.2% and female=31.0%)	Grade 2 = 31.8% Grade 3 = 38.7%	
OBJECTIVE 1: Support development and rollout of the new integrated curriculum (IC) and continue to scale up early grade reading (EGR)								
IND 06_ Sub-IR 1.1_ Custom	Number of master trainers trained on the IC	Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD) records	0	50	This indicator will be reported after master trainings of trainers are completed.	0	200	

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	Data source	Baseline (date)	Fiscal Year 2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)			Life of program	
				Target	Actual (up to Mar 2021)	Actual (cumulative up to May 2021)	Target	Actual
IND 07_ Sub-IR 1.1; 3.3_ (ES. 1-6)	Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	Provincial Education Training Center (ETC) records; municipality records; program data	0	3,522	1,269 participants Male: 735; female: 534	1,394 participants Male: 829; female: 575	4,222	
IND 08_ Sub-IR 1.2; 2.1; 3.3_ ES. 1-12	Number of education administrators and officials who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	CEHRD records; local-level records; program data	0	3,198	67 events; 1,220 participants Male: 1,046; female: 174 Brahmin/Chhetri: 663; Janjati: 175; Dalit: 53; Madhesi: 305; Muslim: 13; Others: 13	80 events; 1,462 participants Male: 1,250; female: 212 Brahmin/Chhetri: 827; Janjati: 222; Dalit: 63; Madhesi: 380; Muslim: 14; Others: 18	4,143	
OBJECTIVE 2: Build municipal- and provincial-level capacity for delivering EGR services								
IND 9_ Sub-IR 2.1; 2.2_ Custom	Percent of local governments/levels using IEMIS profiles for planning and budgeting in the education sector	Local-level records	0	50%	This indicator will be reported after completion of second round of local capacity development workshops.		100%	

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	Data source	Baseline (date)	Fiscal Year 2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)			Life of program	
				Target	Actual (up to Mar 2021)	Actual (cumulative up to May 2021)	Target	Actual
IND 10 Sub-IR 2.1_ Custom	Percent of local governments validating IEMIS data shared by schools	District-compiled IEMIS data	0	85%	This indicator will be reported after completion of second round of local capacity development workshops.		90%	
IND 11_ Sub-IR 2.2; 2.3_ Custom	Percent of municipalities formulating their annual Municipal Education Plans and budgets that include EGR/learning	Local-level records	0	45%	This indicator will be reported after completion of second round of local capacity development workshops.		55%	
IND 12_Sub-IR 2.2; 2.3_ Custom	Percent of local governments allocating discretionary funds to education sector activities	Local-level records	0	50%	This indicator will be reported at the end of the Nepal fiscal year.		66%	
IND 13_ Sub-IR 2.4_ Custom	Number of schools with book corners that include supplementary reading materials (SRMs)	Program data	0	2,291	2,228 schools By province and level: Bagmati: 376; Gandaki: 415; Karnali: 351; Province 1: 507; Province 2: 106; Province 5: 139; Sudur Paschim: 334 Level 1: 1,982; Level 2: 246; Level 3: 0	2,228 schools By province and level: Bagmati: 376; Gandaki: 415; Karnali: 351; Province 1: 507; Province 2: 106; Province 5: 139; Sudur Paschim: 334 Level 1: 1,982; Level 2: 246; Level 3: 0	2,291	

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	Data source	Baseline (date)	Fiscal Year 2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)			Life of program	
				Target	Actual (up to Mar 2021)	Actual (cumulative up to May 2021)	Target	Actual
IND 14_ Sub IR 2.4_ Custom	Number of SRMs delivered	Program data	0	456,120	427,278 SRMs By province and level: Bagmati: 71,255; Gandaki: 78,158; Karnali: 66,831; Province 1: 94,442; Province 2: 23,465; Province 5: 29,306; Sudur Paschim: 63,821 Level 1: 470,997; Level 2: 80,004; Level 3: 0 School: 394,356; Local Education Unit (LEU): 21,240; Education Development and Coordination Unit (EDCU): 11,682	427,278 SRMs By province and level: Bagmati: 71,255; Gandaki: 78,158; Karnali: 66,831; Province 1: 94,442; Province 2: 23,465; Province 5: 29,306; Sudur Paschim: 63,821 Level 1: 470,997; Level 2: 80,004; Level 3: 0 School: 394,356; Local Education Unit (LEU): 21,240; Education Development and Coordination Unit (EDCU): 11,682	456,120	
OBJECTIVE 3: Improve local governments' ability to provide teacher professional support (TPS), coaching, mentorship, and supervision								
IND 15_ Sub IR 3.2; 3.3_ Custom	Number of LEU staff, head teachers, and primary in-charge teachers who receive TPS training	CEHRD and provincial ETC records	0	0	This indicator will be reported after TPS training program rolls out.		1,182	

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	Data source	Baseline (date)	Fiscal Year 2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)			Life of program	
				Target	Actual (up to Mar 2021)	Actual (cumulative up to May 2021)	Target	Actual
IND 16_ Sub IR 3.2; 3.3_ Custom	Number of master trainers trained on EGR teacher support, mentoring, and coaching	CEHRD records	0	355	This indicator will be reported after TPS training program rolls out.		355	
IND 17_ Sub IR 3.4_ Custom	Number of schools receiving joint monitoring and coaching support through USG assistance	Local-level records; program records	0	1,584	212 schools By province: Bagmati: 21; Gandaki: 46; Karnali: 18; Province 1: 14; Province 2: 34; Province 5: 44; Sudur Paschim: 35	273 By province: Bagmati: 30; Gandaki: 53; Karnali: 27; Province 1: 18; Province 2: 39; Lumbini: 63; Sudur Paschim: 43	2,376	
OBJECTIVE 4: Support continuity of learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic								
IND 18_ IR 4_ Custom	Percent of learners who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of grade 3 in targeted 16 local governments of Province 2	Sample-based CB-EGRA	13.4% (Baseline date: Feb/March 2021)	Baseline	This indicator will be reported after baseline data analysis is completed.	13.4% (male: 11.9%; female: 14.6%)	16.4%	
IND 19_ IR 4_ Custom	Number of new interactive digital early grade learning lessons created and uploaded to the CEHRD learning portal	CEHRD records	0	94	65 digital lessons have been reviewed by EGRP II and will be finalized and transferred from OLE Nepal portal to CEHRD portal.	95 digital lessons have been reviewed by EGRP II but not yet finalized and transferred from OLE Nepal portal to CEHRD portal.	119	

Indicator no.	Indicator and disaggregation	Data source	Baseline (date)	Fiscal Year 2 (Oct 2020–Sep 2021)			Life of program	
				Target	Actual (up to Mar 2021)	Actual (cumulative up to May 2021)	Target	Actual
IND 20 IR 4_ ES 1.13	Number of parent–teacher associations or community governance structures engaged in primary education supported with USG assistance	Program data	0	219	219	219	219	
IND 21_ IR 4_ Custom	Number of education stakeholders oriented/trained to implement community/home-based learning	Program data	0	11,607	13,167 participants Male: 6,608; female: 6,559 Teachers: 1,035; Parents: 11,408; School management committee or parent–teacher association members: 354; Others: 372	15,637 participants Male: 7,880; female: 7,757 Teachers: 1,212; Parents: 13,662; School management committee or parent–teacher association members: 429; Others: 334	11,607	
IND 22_IR 4_Custom	Number of electronic devices distributed to support community/home-based learning	Program data	0	1,330	1,330 tablets	1,330 tablets	1,330	
IND 23_ IR4_ Custom	Proportion of funding spent on emergency response and recovery plan by the federal and subnational governments	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) and Ministry of Social Development (MOSD)	0	Status reporting	This indicator will be reported at the end of this Nepal fiscal year.		Status reporting	

Annex C: List of Key Upcoming Events and Dates (Next Quarter)

Table B-1 indicates tentative dates for key activities and events coming up during the June–September 2021 period. Specific details will be communicated to USAID when available.

Table B-1. List of upcoming events

Date(s)	Event
June 2021	NEGRP Steering Committee meeting
June–July 2021	IC TPD MTOTs
June–July 2021	EGR benchmarking task team meetings
June–July 2021	Round 2 of local capacity development workshops
June–July 2021	Task team orientations for Round 3 of local capacity development workshops
August–September 2021	Round 3 of local capacity development workshops
June–August 2021	Extended DCC meetings
August 2021	TOT for ETC trainers to cascade roster expert training
September 2021	ETC trainers start to cascade roster expert training
June–September 2021	JMVs to schools (subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
July 2021	TPS MTOTs
June 2021	Orientation meetings with new target palikas for home- and community-based schooling in Province 2
July–August 2021	Refresher trainings for existing teachers and initial training for new teachers conducting home- and community-based schooling in Province 2

Annex D: Success Story or Case Study (Annual and Quarterly)

From the April–May 2021 reporting period, three case studies on EGRP II’s local capacity development efforts are captured, from the perspective of local government officials who participated.

Case Study 1: “Local representatives need to work together”

“I thought we all were doing just fine individually at the municipal and ward levels,” noted Mr. Netra Dahal, Section Officer in Madhyapur Thimi Municipality, Bhaktapur. “My perspective changed after I took part in the local-level capacity development workshop held in Bhaktapur right before the latest restrictions due to the pandemic were instituted in late April 2021.”

According to Dahal, “I’ve never before seen local representatives from several wards come together for a week with the same objective—better classroom management and effective teaching techniques for early primary grade learners. As a result, by the end of the workshop, we had a lot to share from our learning and to discuss collectively about the way forward. This workshop also helped us strengthen our networks across the wards. I am very happy that the respective local representatives also shared their takeaways from the workshops with higher level authorities in their municipalities.”

Dahal further noted that the workshop was crucial for the municipality because of the designated education officers in each ward who needed capacity development but had not yet received it.

And what does Dahal plan to do as a result of what he learned from the workshop?

He answered, “We learned several approaches to school and classroom management. We also learned about updating our municipal education plan and revisiting our local education policies. The knowledge and skills from the workshop have led me to focus on high-quality implementation of the plan by increasing monitoring and evaluation. All local representatives need to work together in allocating funds to facilitate monitoring and identify focal persons from the schools who could share monthly evaluation reports on the activities implemented. Some schools are aware of the importance of running 90 minutes of early grade reading classroom activities as advised in the National Early Grade Reading Program model. However, I have observed schools implementing just half of that time (45 minutes) and overlooking the importance of the other half.”



Participants in the 5-day local capacity development workshop in Madhyapur Thimi Municipality, Bhaktapur District—including Mr. Netra Dahal. (Photo credit: Sunita Shakya)

He concluded, “I can speak on behalf of my colleagues that this workshop has definitely given us a fresh approach to collaboration. Yes, we are in trying times given the pandemic now. But as soon as we are past this phase, we need to begin implementing what we learned or else we will just have theories in mind and loopholes in hand.”

Case Study 2: “We need more workshops like this to build skills of local-level trainers”

“The recent local capacity development workshop supported by EGRP II in this rural municipality gave me and my colleagues a fresh outlook on practical mechanisms for effective management of classroom and schools,” shared Mr. Choodamani Regmi, head of the Local Education Unit in Chaubise Rural Municipality, Dhankuta District. “We knew we had to frame new strategies to enhance the reading culture for students and build classroom engagement alongside empowering our teachers. We were missing the right path to implement these steps, though. One of the greatest things I took away from the workshop is that ‘learning by doing’ is the most practical approach to accomplish our academic goals.”

Regmi added that the workshop was highly fruitful for all the participants to understand the need to draft their municipal education plan in the right manner. It also helped the participants understand the importance of channeling their efforts through locally elected representatives in the days to come, to work effectively toward accomplishing shared learning objectives.

However, Regmi also noted that, in the absence of suitable infrastructure for children with disabilities in the palika, as well as the lack of trained trainers to demonstrate best practices for dealing with children with multiple or severe disabilities, it has been difficult for the municipality to implement all of its goals. He would like to see more of these capacity development workshops continuing in phases at the palika level, which he believes would build a pool of local-level trainers with technical expertise in drafting policies, networking, planning for education budget allocation, and sharing knowledge and skills concerning disability and inclusion.

Case Study 3: Building local capacity at the palika level in Achham District

“Previously, we really struggled to design our local curriculum,” shared Mr. Ram Chandra Joshi, head of the Local Education Unit in Banni Gari Jayagadh Rural Municipality of Achham District. “In addition, we needed a mechanism to relay information about the integrated curriculum to teachers who implement it in the classroom. The 5-day capacity development training provided through EGRP II was very useful for us to prepare ourselves for this journey.”

In February 2021, EGRP II helped to implement local capacity development workshops covering several rural municipalities in Achham District. The workshops were organized to build the capacity of local representatives and elected officials to roll out the National Early Grade Reading Program.

Joshi added, “Prior to this training, we were a little lost while drafting our education profile¹⁸ and needed some insights around managerial skills. We needed someone to help us along the way to design our road map and to help us draft our planning document. After 5 days of training and with rich participation of local-level representatives, we at the municipal level now have better clarity on the way forward. In fact, we have already drafted our education profile.”

Echoing similar thoughts, Birendra Khadka, head of the Local Education Unit in Mellekh Rural Municipality in Achham District, noted that after participating in the 5-day capacity development workshop, the palika amended its fiscal year budget and allocated an additional NPR 200,000 (US\$1,680) for the process of developing its municipal education plan.

Khadka said, “We, as local-level representatives, had heard the theories about the integrated curriculum and classroom management, but we did not have enough practical and technical skills to implement them. With this workshop, we have better oversight in monitoring the schools in our areas and we can better coordinate with school management and the teaching faculty. I now have enough knowledge and skills to conduct similar workshops on my own, and I recommend that EGRP II should continue multiplying this effect by training others like me.”

Apart from Mellekh and Banni Gari Jayagadh Municipalities, other rural municipalities in Achham District shared the same sentiments about the EGRP II-supported local capacity development workshops. For instance, after local officials participated in a workshop, the leaders of Rama Roshan Rural Municipality also amended their fiscal year budget by allocating an additional NPR 300,000 (US\$2,520) to organize local-level trainings on early grade reading instruction and classroom management. Municipalities also began allocating funds through their own initiatives to complete the drafting of their municipal education plans.

As Khadka noted, a multiplier effect, indeed.

¹⁸ Education profile: EGRP II developed a digital template that Local Education Units can use to enter information about their education context into the national Integrated Education Management Information System. District and local officials have access to both upload and analyze the profile data. Information on aspects such as learning outcomes, EGR teacher training status, coaching frequency, and teacher and student language profiles can be used to make decisions about language of instruction, the need for teacher support, etc.—decisions that are tailored to the local context.

Annex E: High-Resolution Photo Files with Captions (Annual and Quarterly)

Selected photos taken during EGRP II-related activities are listed in Table D-1, and the original photo files are also attached separately to the version of this report transmitted to USAID. The photographers obtained the required consent from the subjects.

Table D-1. List of high-resolution photos

No.	Photo caption	Date and location	Photo credit
1	Children practicing word formation	March 2021, Achham	Anup Nepali
2	Children reading workbooks provided by the local government	March 2021, Achham	Anup Nepali
3	Student reading workbook provided by the local government	March 2021, Achham	Anup Nepali
4	Education Development and Coordination Unit (EDCU) Chief Mr. Laxman Giri observing children reading during a joint monitoring visit (JMV)	March 2021, Achham	Anup Nepali
5	Classroom visit during a JMV	April 2021, Myagdi	Bakhat Bhandari
6	Participants in a JMV	April 2021, Myagdi	Bakhat Bhandari
7	Student reading supplementary reading material (SRM) (1) during a JMV	April 2021, Rolpa	Surendra Dhakal
8	Student reading SRM (2) during a JMV	April 2021, Rolpa	Surendra Dhakal
9	Group photo during Round 1 local capacity development workshop	April 2021, Bhaktapur	Sunita Shakya
10	Presentation during Round 1 local capacity development workshop	April 2021, Bhaktapur	Sunita Shakya
11	Group work during Round 2 local capacity development workshop	April 2021, Rolpa	Surendra Dhakal
12	Demonstration of SRM display during Round 2 local capacity development workshop	April 2021, Myagdi	Bakhat Bhandari
13	EDCU Chief Mr. Kushma Raj Upadahay, Round 2 local capacity development workshop	April 2021, Baglung	Buddhi Magar
14	Early grade reading teacher Ms. Khum Maya Gharti, Round 2 local capacity development workshop	April 2021, Baglung	Buddhi Magar
15	Local Education Unit Chief Mr. Khem Raj Aacharaya, Round 2 local capacity development workshop	April 2021, Baglung	Buddhi Magar
16	Jira Bhawani Rural Municipality Mayor Mr. Ram Preet Mahoto observes an after-school activity	April 2021, Parsa	Mitra Dev Yadav

Annex F: Training Quality Monitoring Tool

Training Monitoring Form

Date of Monitoring *
yyyy-mm-dd

Section: 1. Training Details

Q 101. Training Title *	Q 102. Trainer(s) Name *
<input type="radio"/> LLCD Training <input type="radio"/> IC Cluster level training <input type="radio"/> TPS palika level training	
Q 103. District *	

Section: 2. Preparation

1. Training materials received in district timely and in required number as planned. *
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree
2. Training schedule prepared jointly by ETC, DEO, DC , Local level focal person and elected representative is satisfactory. *
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree

3. Trainers were well prepared for the training (had materials ready, demonstrated good familiarity with materials, demonstrated knowledge of and confidence in content) *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Section 3: Session Delivery

1. Content presented correctly and completely in observed session(s). *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

2. Materials were referred to and used throughout the training. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

3. Participants engaged actively and demonstrated good understanding *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

4. Trainers presented sufficient examples and models. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

5. Presentation was interactive and participatory *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

6. Participants were given a chance to discuss and/or do activities after presentation *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

7. Participants were given ample opportunity to practice throughout the training (during practical and group exercise). *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Section 4: Assessment and feedback

1. Trainers assessed the understanding and performance of participants. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

2. The trainer observed the group work and practice and provided feedback as needed. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

3. The trainer gave constructive feedback whenever participants practiced/presented lessons or activities. *

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree

4. The trainer encouraged peer assessment and feedback. *

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree

Section 5: Overall impression

Q501 Please mention your overall impression (if any). *

.....

Q502 Please provide your suggestion/comment (if any). *

.....

Section 6: Observation by

Q601 Observation by: *	Q602 Position *
.....

Annex G: Training Quality Assurance Tool

तालिम गुणस्तर मापन फाराम

I agree to let the organizer of this event take the screen shot; record my opinion and presentations given during the meeting; record the chat; and quote my opinion.

Event Details

Name of Event *	Start Date *	End Date *
	2021-06-07	2021-06-07
District *	Venue *	
<input type="radio"/> Accham <input type="radio"/> Baglung <input type="radio"/> Banke <input type="radio"/> Bara <input type="radio"/> Bardiya <input type="radio"/> Bhaktapur <input type="radio"/> Bhojpur <input type="radio"/> Dadeldhura <input type="radio"/> Dailekh <input type="radio"/> Dang <input type="radio"/> Dhankuta <input type="radio"/> Dhanusha <input type="radio"/> Dolpa <input type="radio"/> Doti <input type="radio"/> Kailali <input type="radio"/> Kanchanpur <input type="radio"/> Kapilbastu <input type="radio"/> Kaski <input type="radio"/> Khotang <input type="radio"/> Mahottari <input type="radio"/> Manang <input type="radio"/> Mustang <input type="radio"/> Myagdi <input type="radio"/> Nawalparasi (W) <input type="radio"/> Parsa <input type="radio"/> Rasuwa <input type="radio"/> Rautahat <input type="radio"/> Rolpa <input type="radio"/> Rupandehi <input type="radio"/> Salyan <input type="radio"/> Saptari <input type="radio"/> Sarlahi <input type="radio"/> Sindhuli <input type="radio"/> Sindhupalchok <input type="radio"/> Siraha <input type="radio"/> Surkhet <input type="radio"/> Tanahun <input type="radio"/> Taplejung		

Participant Details

Full Name *	Address *
Name of Office *	Position/Designation *

Phone Number *	Gender *	Age Group *	Ethnicity/ Social Groups *
	<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Other	<input type="radio"/> Below 19 <input type="radio"/> 19- 24 <input type="radio"/> 25 and Above	<input type="radio"/> Brahman/Chhetri <input type="radio"/> Janjati <input type="radio"/> Dalit <input type="radio"/> Madhesi <input type="radio"/> Muslim <input type="radio"/> Others

Training Quality Assurance

»

Objectives

1. The objectives of the training were clear. *

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree
 Don't know/ Refuse

2. The objectives of the training were to make us competent to meet my professional needs. *

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree
 Don't know/ Refuse

»

Content

3. The content of the training adequately inferred the various aspects of my job and functions. *

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree
 Don't know/ Refuse

4. The contents well matched with the intents of the program. *

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree
 Don't know/ Refuse

5. There was a clear linkage between theoretical and practical aspects of the training. *

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree
 Don't know/ Refuse

6. I got an opportunity to learn the emerging trends of educational practices. *

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree
 Don't know/ Refuse

»

Time

7. Time allocation for the training was appropriate.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	
8. Time allocation for the sessions was adequate.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	
9. The sessions started and finished on time as planned.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	

»

Facilitation

10. The facilitation process was supportive to develop reflective thinking and practice both individually and in groups.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	
11. Adequate preparation for learning was provided through various hands-on experiences including simulated practice.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	
12. The inclusive differentiated instruction in the training session was experienced to address the needs of diverse learners regarding gender, disability, social groups, etc.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	
13. The learning experiences were followed by feedback, reflection, and follow-up.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	
14. Each session was helpful on how to use in learning in workplace.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	
15. The training facilitators were self-confident to deliver the content.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	
16. The process of nurturing and mentoring of trainer and trainee was experienced.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	
17. I got adequate opportunity to ask clarifying questions during the training.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	
18. Facilitators well received feedbacks and adopted themselves as per the trainee's expectations.	*
<input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Don't know/ Refuse	

Materials

19. Use of ICT was adequate during the training. *

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

20. The alternative options of ICT were clearly discussed during training. *

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

21. There were sufficient materials to do hands-on activities. *

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

»

Assessment/ Evaluation

22. The formative assessment and evaluation were the parts of the training. *

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

23. The evaluation tools were supportive to inform learning from the sessions. *

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

24. The evaluation protocols were used to assess the trainee's understandings. *

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

»

Logistics

25. The venue was good to do group and individual work and is well lit and ventilated. *

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

26. I was happy with the tea, snacks, and other necessary arrangements. *

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

»

Replication

27. My expectations were met from this training. *

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

28. I am confident that I can use these pedagogical practices/ skill and knowledge that I learned here. *

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

29. I can easily train or coach some people in this technique and methods. *

- Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree Don't know/ Refuse

Annex H: Joint Monitoring Visit Data Collection Tool

Joint Monitoring Form

यो अनुगमन फाराम विद्यालयको समग्र शैक्षिक तथा कक्षाकोठाको सिकाइ बाताबरण, शैक्षणिक क्रियाकलाप, परीक्षण प्रक्रिया र विद्यालयका मुख्य सरोकार पक्षसँग छलफल गरी भर्नुपर्छ। यो फाराम विद्यालय अनुगमनका क्रममा भर्नुहोस्। फारामले विद्यालयको समग्र बाताबरण अभिलेखीकरण, शिक्षक पेशागत सहयोग, कक्षाकोठा अनुगमन तथा सिकाइ लगायतका कुराहरूको मापन गर्दछ।

विद्यालयको विवरण

विद्यालयको नाम	•	IEMIS Number	•
प्रदेश <input type="radio"/> Province 1 <input type="radio"/> Province 2 <input type="radio"/> Province 3 (Bagmati) <input type="radio"/> Province 4 (Gandaki) <input type="radio"/> Province 5 <input type="radio"/> Province 6 (Karnali) <input type="radio"/> Province 7 (Sudurpaschim)			
जिल्ला			
स्थानीय तह			
पालिका केन्द्र रहेको टोल/ गाँउ र बडानं			

1 विद्यालय तथा कक्षाकोठा बाताबरण

1.1 विद्यालय परिसर तथा कक्षा कोठाको सरसफाइ राम्रो थियो।	•
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
1.2 शिक्षक विद्यार्थी नियमितता रहेको पाइयो।	•
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
1.3 शिक्षकहरू समयमै उपस्थित भएका थिए।	•
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
1.4 विद्यार्थी हाजिरी रजिस्टर दुरुस्त थियो।	•
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
1.5 विद्यालय सुधार योजनामा प्रारम्भिक कक्षा पढाइ सम्बन्धी केही कुरा उल्लेख भएको पाइयो।	•
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	

1.6 विद्यार्थी सिकाइ उपलब्धि अभिलेखीकरण अद्यावधिक गरी राखिएको पाइयो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
1.7 विद्यालय व्यवस्थापन समितिको नियमित बैठक बस्ने गरेको पाइयो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
1.8 शिक्षक अभिभावक संघको नियमित बैठक बस्ने गरेको पाइयो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
1.9 विद्यालयमा बालबालिकाको पढाइलाई लिएर शिक्षक र अभिभावकबीच छलफल हुने गरेको पाइयो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	

2 कक्षा अवलोकन (कक्षा अवलोकन गरेमा मात्र भर्ने)

2.1 कक्षामा धेरैजसो विद्यार्थी उपस्थित थिए ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.2 धेरैजसो विद्यार्थीसँग पाठ्यपुस्तक थियो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.3 कक्षा शिक्षकले प्रारम्भिक कक्षा पढाइ कार्यक्रम वा एकीकृत पाठ्यक्रममा तालिम वा अभिमुखीकरण प्राप्त गरेका थिए ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.4 कक्षाकोठा विद्यार्थीको अनुपातमा उपयुक्त उज्यालो र हावा खेल्ने, उचित बसाइ व्यवस्थापन सहितको थियो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.5 शिक्षकसँग वा कक्षाकोठामा शिक्षक निर्देशिका, अभ्यास पुस्तिका र अन्य शैक्षिक सामग्री थिए ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.6 कक्षा शिक्षणका क्रममा शिक्षकले सामग्री प्रयोग गरि आफूले गरेर देखाउने विद्यार्थीसँगसँगै गर्ने गरि छाने र विद्यार्थीहरूलाई गर्न लगाइ आवश्यक पृष्ठपोषण प्रदान गरेका थिए ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.7 कक्षा शिक्षणको क्रममा शिक्षक विद्यार्थीबीच अन्तरक्रिया र सबै विद्यार्थीलाई समान अवसर प्रदान गरिएको थियो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.8 शिक्षकले कक्षा सञ्चालनका क्रममा प्रशस्त मात्रामा उदाहरण, अभ्यास र सामग्रीको प्रयोग गरेका थिए ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.9 विद्यार्थीले एकल वा समूह वा जोडी कार्यमा अभ्यास गर्ने पर्याप्त अवसर पाएका थिए ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	

2.1 कक्षाकोठामा विद्यार्थी तथा शिक्षकद्वारा निर्मित सामग्री प्रदर्शन गरिएको पाइयो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.11 कक्षाकोठामा कक्षागत पुस्तकालयको व्यवस्थापन राम्रो भएको पाइयो । (कक्षागत पुस्तकालय नभए १ मा चिनो लगाउनुहोस् ।)	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.12 कक्षागत पुस्तकालयमा विद्यार्थीको सहज पहुँच भएको र सोको राम्रोसँग प्रयोग भएको पाइयो । (कक्षागत पुस्तकालय नभए १ मा चिनो लगाउनुहोस् ।)	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.13 शिक्षकले कक्षा शिक्षणका क्रममा विद्यार्थीलाई समूह कार्य, जोडी कार्यमा अभ्यास गराइ उनीहरूको सिकाइ मूल्याङ्कन गरेका थिए ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.14 पाठ प्रस्तुतिपछि शिक्षकले बालबालिकाहरूलाई अभ्यासको अवसर दिएका थिए ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.15 शिक्षकले बालबालिकाहरूलाई रचनात्मक पृष्ठपोषण दिएका थिए ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
2.16 कक्षा शिक्षण पश्चात् शिक्षकले विद्यार्थीको मूल्याङ्कन गरेका थिए ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	

3 शिक्षक पेशागत सहयोग सम्बन्धमा (EGR शिक्षकसँग वा प्रअ/ प्रा वि इन्चार्जसँग अन्तरक्रिया गरी तलका सुची भर्ने)

3.1 शिक्षा विकास तथा समन्वय इकाइ, पालिका वा विषय विज्ञ, प्रअ र अन्य कोहीले विद्यालयमा आई नियमित रूपमा कक्षा अबलोकन गर्ने गरेको पाइयो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
3.2 यदि अबलोकन भएको रहेछ भने सो पश्चात् कक्षा शिक्षकसँग छलफल पनि गरेको पाइयो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
3.3 यदि छलफल भएको रहेछ भने ती छलफल एकदमै उपयोगी भएको पाइयो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
3.4 प्रअ वा प्रा वि इन्चार्जले नियमित रूपमा कक्षा अबलोकन गर्ने गरेको पाइयो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	
3.5 प्रअ वा प्रा वि इन्चार्जले कक्षा अबलोकन पश्चात् शिक्षकलाई आवश्यक पृष्ठपोषण दिने गरेको पाइयो ।	*
<input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन / अस्वीकार	

3.6 ती पृष्ठपोषणका आधारमा शिक्षकले शैक्षणिक क्रियाकलापमा समायोजन गरेको पाइयो । <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन /अस्वीकार	*
3.7 प्रारम्भिक कक्षा/ विषय शिक्षकहरु बीचमा नियमित रूपमा बैठक बसी सिक्काइहरु साटासाट गर्ने गरेको पाइयो । <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन /अस्वीकार	*
3.8 पालिकाले प्रारम्भिक कक्षाका शिक्षकहरु बीचमा अन्तरक्रिया नियमित रूपमा गराउने गरेको पाइयो । <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन /अस्वीकार	*
3.9 पालिकाले विषय बिज्ञ र शिक्षकहरु बीच शैक्षणिक अन्तर क्रिया गर्ने गराउने गरेको पाइयो । <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन /अस्वीकार	*
3.10 यस विद्यालयका प्रारम्भिक कक्षाका शिक्षकले ती अन्तरक्रियामा नियमित भाग लिने गरेको पाइयो । <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण असहमत <input type="radio"/> असहमत <input type="radio"/> तटस्थ <input type="radio"/> सहमत <input type="radio"/> पूर्ण सहमत <input type="radio"/> थाहा छैन /अस्वीकार	*
माथिका कथनमा लगाइएका चिनो विषयमा थप केही लेख्न पर्ने भएमा वा अन्य केही टिप्पणी वा समीक्षा भए यहाँ उल्लेख गर्नुहोस् । (उदाहरणको निम्ति भएका राम्रा कामहरु वा समस्या र चुनौतीहरु के के हुन्?)	*

फारम भर्ने व्यक्तिको विवरण

पुरा नाम	*
पद <input type="radio"/> EDCU प्रमुख <input type="radio"/> LUE प्रमुख <input type="radio"/> सामाजिक विकास समिति संयोजक <input type="radio"/> निर्वाचित व्यक्ति <input type="radio"/> अन्य सरकार कर्मचारी <input type="radio"/> अन्य	*
कार्यालयको नाम	*
मिति yyyy-mm-dd	*
फारम प्रविष्टि व्यक्ति	*