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NORC at the University of Chicago, Impact Evaluation Midline Results (2018)

USAID Early Grade Reading Program in Nepal

NEGRP Overview

The USAID Early Grade Reading Program (EGRP) in Nepal aims to improve early grade reading performance of students in Grades 1-3 and build the Government of Nepal's capacity to deliver an EGRP program that can be replicated nationwide by supporting Government of Nepal Ministry of Education, Science and Technology's National Early Grade Reading Program (NEGRP).

The project focuses on improving early grade reading outcomes for both students with Nepali as their first language and students with a non-Nepali mother tongue. To do so, the project supports teachers with coaching and professional development, and provides early grade reading instructional and supplementary reading material to schools. The program also builds the capacity of the Government of Nepal to effectively deliver early grade reading services. EGRP engages local NGOs to work with school management committees and parent-teacher associations to conduct reading awareness and advocacy campaigns and trainings.

Impact Evaluation

NORC at the University of Chicago is conducting a quasi-experimental impact evaluation of the NEGRP. Using early grade reading assessments, the evaluation measures the extent to which the NEGRP improved the reading outcomes of students with Nepali as their first language and students with a non-Nepali mother tongue. The evaluation also employs classroom observations and interviews with teachers, head teachers, parents, and school management committee members to determine whether the NEGRP results in changes in teachers' reading instruction practices in the classroom, and changes in school management and parental support for early grade reading. The results below are an overview of program impacts in six cohort-I districts after two years of project implementation.



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Early Grade Reading Program (EGRP) Districts

Legend

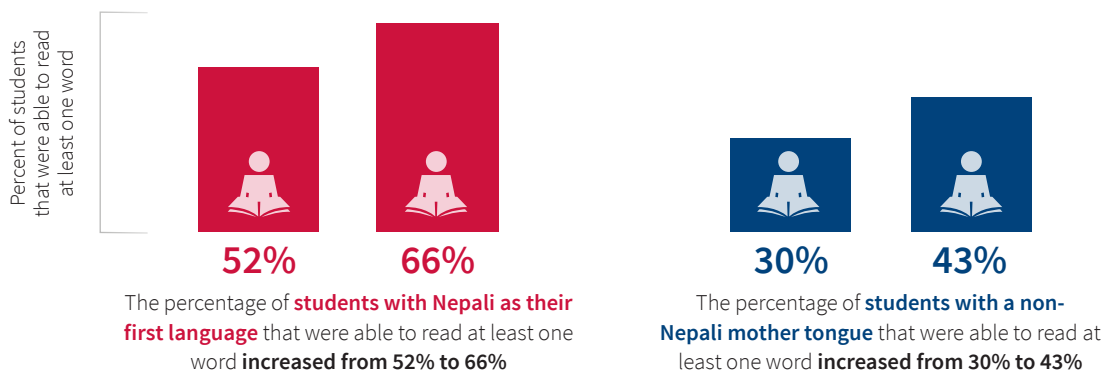
Administrative Boundary
⊙ International ⊙ Provincial ⊙ District

EGRP Districts

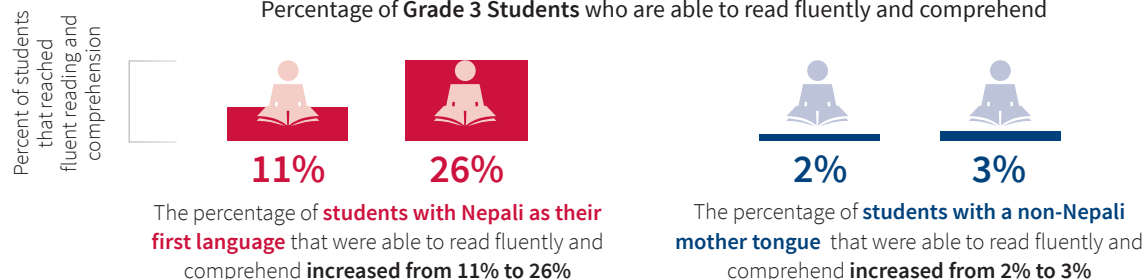
● Program Districts ● Comparison Districts

At midline, in 2018, the program shows a large positive effect on reading outcomes among students for whom **Nepali is their first language** and those **who have a non-Nepali mother tongue**

Percent of students in grades 1-3 who became emergent readers



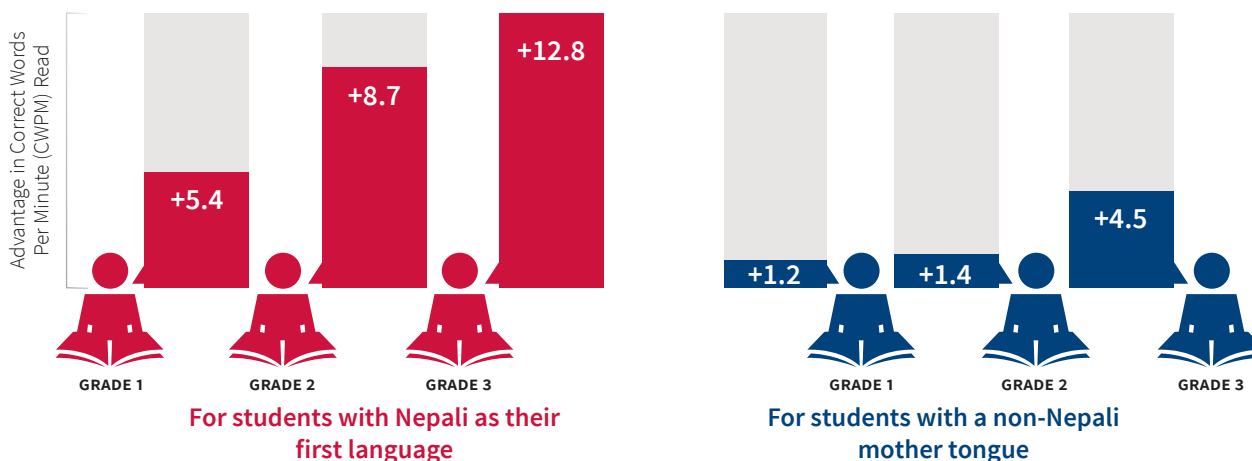
Percentage of Grade 3 Students who are able to read fluently and comprehend



The program increased the number of emergent readers for both **students with Nepali as their first language** and **students with a non-Nepali mother tongue**

The impact of the program is larger for **students with Nepali as their first language** than for **students with a non-Nepali mother tongue**

Advantage in Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) of NEGRP students over comparison students

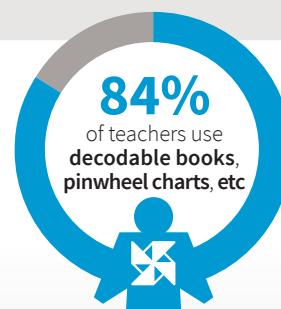
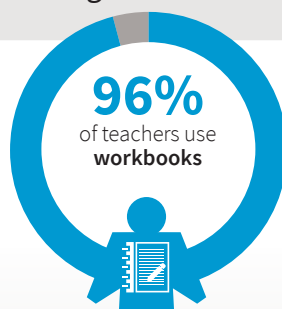
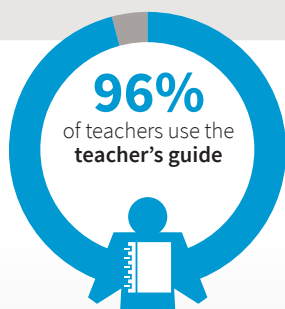


Reading materials reached the schools



91% of the classrooms had workbooks for all or almost all of the students

Teachers are changing their teaching behavior and including desirable practices in their reading lessons due to NEGRP



Conclusions and Next Steps

NORC found that the NEGRP has improved the reading performance of students with Nepali as their first language and students with a non-Nepali mother tongue. NEGRP increased the number of emergent readers for both Nepali and non-Nepali Mother tongue students and doubled the percentage of Nepali first language grade 3 students reading with both fluency and comprehension. However, the disadvantage in early grade reading skills of students with a non-Nepali mother tongue relative to students with Nepali as their first language is evident. The NEGRP should provide training to

teachers on how to provide effective reading instruction for non-Nepali speakers.

The program has been quite successful at ensuring access to materials. NORC found that students had near universal access to Nepali-language textbooks, workbooks, and additional children's reading materials, while teachers now have access to teaching guidelines, materials, and curriculum. Almost all teachers report using these resources. We also find evidence of teachers improving their classroom practices when teaching reading.

For more information about the impact evaluation contact NORC at the University of Chicago:
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