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USAID/PHILIPPINES BASA PILIPINAS PROGRAM

FINAL PROJECT REPORT
JANUARY 1, 2013 – JULY 31, 2018

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Program Title:	USAID/Philippines Basa Pilipinas Program
Sponsoring USAID Office:	USAID/Philippines – Office of Education
Contract Number:	AID-492-C-13-00004
Contractor:	Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)
Date of Publication:	July 31, 2018
Author:	Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared by Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC). The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the USAID or the United States Government.

***(Cover page)* In the Philippines, young students are using appropriately leveled books to develop their reading skills.**

USAID is helping young Filipinos succeed in their education through reading.

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ACRONYMS

ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BBF	Brother's Brother Foundation
BLD	Bureau of Learning Delivery
BLR	Bureau of Learning Resources
CID	Curriculum Implementation Division
CLMD	Curriculum and Learning Management Division
CMP	Contract Monitoring Plan
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DepEd	Department of Education
DQA	Data Quality Assurance
DRRMO	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EDC	Education Development Center, Inc.
EdGE	Education Governance Effectiveness
EPS	Education Program Supervisor
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ELLN	Early Language, Literacy and Numeracy
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IR	Intermediate Result
K–3	Kindergarten to Grade 3
K–12	Kindergarten to Grade 12
KG	Kindergarten
KLM	Kindergarten Learner's Material
LAC	Learning Action Cell
LAT-K	Literacy Assessment Tool for Kindergarten
LCPM	Letters Correct Per Minute

LOP	Life of Project
LR	Leveled Reader
LRMDS	Learning Resources Management and Development System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MG	Multigrade
MT	Mother Tongue
MTB-MLE	Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education
MYDev	Mindanao Youth Development Program
NBSFI	National Bookstore Foundation, Inc.
NKTG	National Kindergarten Teacher's Guide
OEd	Office of Education
O&C	Outreach and Communications
PFI	Petron Foundation, Inc.
PBSP	Philippine Business for Social Progress
PhilED Data	Strengthening Information for Education, Policy, Planning and Management in the Philippines (EdData II Task 17)
PMC	Program Management Committee
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
RA	Read Aloud
RRSP	Reading Remediation Support Pilot
RTG	Revised Teacher's Guide
SCOPE-L	Standard Classroom Observation Protocol for Educators in Literacy
SEAMEO INNOTECH	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology
SY	School Year
TLM	Teaching and Learning Material
TOT	Training of Trainers
TWG	Technical Working Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCPM	Words Correct Per Minute

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2013, USAID/Philippines launched Basa Pilipinas (Read Philippines), its flagship basic education activity to support the Philippines' goal of improving the reading skills of one million early grade students by training teachers and school heads on effective reading instruction, producing curriculum-based teaching and learning materials (TLMs) for use in early grade classrooms and strengthening the capacity of the Department of Education (DepEd) to effectively implement the language and literacy component of its K–12 curriculum reforms. The USAID/Philippines, through its Basa Pilipinas program has reached over **1.8 million students** from Kindergarten to Grade 3, trained over **19,000 teachers and school heads** and provided over **10 million units of TLMs** to **3,000 public elementary schools** in the Philippines. After five years of Basa implementation, reading assessments have shown notable improvements in students' reading skills, particularly in Filipino, the national language and one of the official languages of instruction throughout the K-12 cycle.

In order to improve the reading skills of one million Filipino children, Basa's theory of change emphasizes that progress in three key components is critical for achieving the main objective: **1) training of teachers and school administrators on effective reading instruction practices; 2) provision of curriculum-based TLMs and quality supplementary reading materials and (3) strengthened capacity of school administrators and DepEd officials to provide strong management support system-wide.** These components are directly linked to Basa's results framework and have guided project implementation through its life cycle, as summarized throughout this report.

RESULT HIGHLIGHTS AND IMPACT

After five years of Basa implementation, significantly more Grade 2 learners have increased their reading comprehension skills in Filipino—from 28% at baseline to 42% at endline in 2018. With untimed passage reading (allowing children to read the entire passage beyond the 60-second mark), that proportion increased even

further to 48%. **In 2018, 53% of Grade 2 learners met the reading fluency benchmark[1] in Filipino compared to only 45% in 2014. Almost one-third of Grade 2 learners (31.6%) now meet both the fluency and comprehension benchmarks, compared to only 19.9% before Basa.** Using untimed passage reading, an even higher 36.6% of children met both DepEd benchmarks in 2018.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of Grade 3 learners met the Filipino fluency benchmark in 2018 and 89% met the comprehension benchmark (untimed passage reading). Seventy-four percent (74%) of Grade 3 learners met both the fluency and comprehension benchmarks. In English, 70% of Grade 3 learners read at or above 40 wcpm (words correct per minute), 48% answered 3 or more questions correctly, and 46% met both benchmarks. These percentages were more than double those of Grade 2 learners (20.3%) who met both English benchmarks, indicating strong growth from Grade 2 to Grade 3 in classes using the Basa approach. By the end of Grade 3, students are fairly proficient Filipino readers with the majority attaining both the fluency and comprehension benchmarks set by DepEd, though additional support is needed to further boost Grade 3 students' English reading skills.

The following accomplishments have contributed towards Basa's success:

IR 1. IMPROVED READING INSTRUCTION

- Basa trained over **16,000 K–3 teachers** on effective language and literacy instruction. This number exceeded the life of project (LOP) target of 12,894 educators able to complete professional development activities on implementing evidence-based literacy instruction.
- In close collaboration with DepEd, Basa has designed and delivered three rounds of training on Effective Literacy Instruction for Grades 1–3 teachers and two rounds of training for KG teachers. Post-training support provided through online coaching and literacy Learning Action Cell (LAC) was revitalized by Basa at DepEd's request.
- Basa supported DepEd's efforts to target 100 priority schools for each of the 17 regions through DepEd-initiated K–3 Early Language Literacy and Numeracy (ELLN) training, which contributed to an additional estimated **500,000 K–3 students** as direct project beneficiaries of assistance partially funded by USAID.

IR2. IMPROVED READING DELIVERY SYSTEMS

- More than **3,000 school administrators** provided with tools and face-to-face training on K–3 instructional supervision, including tablet-based simplified SCOPE-L (Standard Classroom Observation Protocol for Educators in Literacy) tool and follow-on support through online coaching.
- A corps of more than **500 DepEd staff** trained as K–3 language and literacy trainers able to keep building DepEd capacity as part of Basa's sustainability efforts.
- Nationwide orientation workshops on use of Basa TLMs conducted for all **220 DepEd divisions** and **17 regions**, with a total of **453** Regional Curriculum Learning and Management Division (CLMD) chiefs, Division Curriculum Implementation Division (CID) chiefs, and Division Learning Resources Management and Development System (LRMDS) managers.

[1] Filipino reading fluency (40 wcpm) and comprehension (60% correct answers) benchmarks were established by DepEd in May 2015 to determine what percentage of learners were attaining reading proficiency in the national language.

IR 3. IMPROVED ACCESS TO QUALITY READING MATERIALS

- A total of **10.4 million units of TLMs and supplementary books** in Mother Tongue (Ilokano and Sinugbuanong Binisaya), Filipino and English developed, procured and distributed to nearly **16,000 K–3 classrooms** accompanied with orientation and guidelines on use of materials. This exceeds the original LOP target of providing 5.8 million TLMs.
- An equivalent of **USD$5 million** leveraged from private sector partners, exceeding the anticipated **10%** of total project cost. The counterpart resources included over **860,000** quality supplementary reading materials in English, as well as cash donation equivalent to nearly **USD$165,000** for the procurement of more than **47,000** units of reading materials in Filipino and more than **30,000** school kits for K–3 students.

SUSTAINABILITY AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION

From the beginning, Basa engaged in a lengthy process of vetting and validating its program design and workplan with DepEd. This involved a series of consultation meetings with DepEd officials to align Basa Pilipinas with the K–12 Basic Education Curriculum and Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) policy resulting in a high degree of involvement, technical direction and ownership within DepEd from the division, region to the national level.

Basa maintained DepEd's strong engagement throughout the life of project by involving DepEd officials in the design of Basa workplan activities through the Program Management Committee (PMC) meetings, co-chaired by the DepEd Undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction and USAID Office of Education and through Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings with DepEd regional and division level partners. The strong partnership between DepEd and Basa at the national, regional and division levels has led to the adoption and issuance of policies and guidelines that recognize the technical assistance and contributions of Basa and endorsed the use of Basa-provided tools and materials.

SCALING UP BASA

Working with DepEd across all levels facilitated Basa's ability to implement efficiently, to contribute to DepEd's priorities, foster a sense of ownership and establish DepEd's stake in Basa's success. It also served to strengthen DepEd's local capacity, ensuring interventions and gains could be sustained well beyond Basa's timeline. For example, in developing a pool of 500 DepEd trainers able to deliver professional development activities, Basa was able to harness local talent who are able to continue supporting teacher training efforts. By deliberately including all schools in its partner divisions in the provision of assistance, Basa was able to test and demonstrate the scalability of its interventions, as summarized below:

- DepEd adopted Basa's Grade 1 English Revised Teacher's Guides (RTGs) as the official DepEd Teacher's Guide for English beginning SY 2016/2017. This allowed USAID-developed materials to reach an additional **1.9 million** Grade 1 learners in non-Basa assisted divisions during that school year (SY). This was followed by DepEd's adoption of Basa's Grade 1 Filipino RTGs beginning SY 2017/2018, reaching over **1.7 million** Grade 1 learners in non-Basa schools across the country. The mainstreaming of these key TLMs serves as validation of Basa's impact on Philippine early grade literacy and instruction.

- DepEd uploaded all Basa RTGs, Leveled Readers, Kindergarten Storybooks and Multigrade (MG) Supplementary Outlines onto the DepEd Learning Resource (LR) Portal (https://lrmds.deped.gov.ph). This made Basa materials downloadable by any teacher in any school across the country.
- As requested by DepEd, Basa oriented all 220 divisions and 17 regions on how to use Basa materials available on the DepEd's LR portal. Since 2017, at least 20 divisions replicated orientation workshops on the use of Basa materials for their schools, while 6 divisions submitted requests to Basa (and were granted approval) to reproduce Basa-developed materials for their respective teachers and students.
- With the issuance of *DepEd Order 64, s2016*, Basa's Leveled Readers became an authorized nationwide resource for MG classrooms across the Philippines. In 2018, DepEd also authorized the procurement of all Basa Leveled Readers for Grades 1–3, for distribution and use in all schools across the country.
- DepEd has used the Basa RTGs in developing the new set of Learner's Materials for Grade 2 Filipino and Grade 3 Filipino and English, which are currently under review and evaluation. With broader use of these USAID-developed materials, hopes are high that literacy classrooms and learning outcomes throughout the Philippines will be similarly transformed.

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Over its five and a half years of implementation, Basa has directly benefited 1.8 million K–3 students and improved students' reading performance, particularly in the critical skills of fluency and comprehension. Many Basa-developed TLMs developed have been adopted by DepEd and scaled up to nationwide use, as well as being shared widely through the DepEd's online Learning Resource Portal. In reflecting on its experience in supporting early grades reading, Basa identified the following key lessons:

- **Building ownership and sustainability** through DepEd's active engagement and involvement in Basa planning design and activities is key in fostering a sense of ownership and the project's buy-in. Strengthening capacity of local DepEd officials is critical to sustaining project's interventions and gains well beyond Basa's timeline.
- **System-wide engagement** with DepEd from national to regional to division to school levels facilitated Basa's ability to be highly flexible, implement efficiently and to ensure integration and alignment with DepEd and USAID's priorities.
- **Power of partnership** is critical for achieving results and accomplishments. Strong partnership with DepEd relies on building trust and credibility, underscoring the shared goals and vision of Basa with the host government's priority reforms to improve early grade reading literacy.
- **Importance of evidence.** Basa's substantial research, monitoring and evaluation activities to assess whether or not interventions were working for learners aligned well with the current DepEd focus on evidence-based programming.
- **No school left behind.** By extending assistance to all schools in its partner divisions, Basa tested and demonstrated the relevance, applicability and scalability of its interventions, as well as provided an equitable approach to supporting schools and learners regardless of their location and accessibility.

TRANSFORMING EARLY GRADE CLASSROOMS

PUNTA CRUZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The USAID/Philippines Basa Pilipinas (Read Philippines) Program is the Mission's first nationwide education project and it is also the first time that a host government education program has been directly supported by USAID, without the creation of a parallel project.

Originally designed as a four-year project (January 2013–December 2016) to support the DepEd in its efforts to improve reading skills for **one million children in the early grades in two Mother Tongues (MT), Filipino and English**, Basa was extended by 17 months from January 2017 to May 2018 to sustain and scale up accomplishments and transformative early grade literacy practices in close collaboration with DepEd. In addition, the USD$15 million cost-extension expanded Basa's implementation to the Kindergarten level and approved professional development support for Grades 1–3 teachers and school administrators. In February 2018, USAID approved the project's no-cost extension through end of July 2018.

Based on consultation with DepEd and USAID, Basa was assigned two MTs: 1) **Ilokano** in Region 1 covering DepEd province divisions of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur and La Union as well as San Fernando City (La Union) in northern Luzon and 2) **Sinugbuanong Binisaya** in Region 7 covering DepEd province divisions of Bohol and Cebu as well as city divisions of Tagbilaran City (Bohol) and Mandaue City (Cebu) in Central Visayas. The project targeted eight divisions covering over 3,000 public elementary schools. One of Basa's principal approaches was to leave no schools behind—be it big central schools in densely populated districts or 1-teacher schools in remote rural areas. Therefore, all schools in assigned divisions received the same level of support from Basa.

In response to USAID and DepEd's request for a *Transformed Classrooms Framework*, Basa introduced and delivered **transformational change elements** in reading instruction and learning at the classroom level. Given the MTB-MLE policy adopted by DepEd, practices were situated in a framework for

> "USAID believes that education is crucial for development. With education, people can make well-informed choices and receive better opportunities."
>
> **– Lawrence Hardy II,**
> *Mission Director,*
> USAID Philippines

> Learning to read is the single most important skill that a child should have. Good readers succeed in school. The use of storybooks and literature-based instruction to develop literacy has been a fundamental keystone in the interaction between DepEd and Basa Pilipinas.
>
> **– Dr. Dina Ocampo,**
> *Former DepEd Undersecretary*

bridging languages embedded with balanced literacy. The assistance package included face-to-face training of K–3 teachers on effective literacy practice accompanied with demonstration videos in a real classroom setting along with the provision of requisite TLMs, which went through DepEd's extensive review and clearance process. The post-training support for teachers was provided through school-based Learning Action Cells (LAC), online coaching (Facebook Groups), as well as engagement of school administrators as instructional supervisors to sustain transformational practices.

From the beginning, Basa engaged in a lengthy process of vetting and validating its program design and workplan with DepEd. This involved a series of consultation meetings with DepEd officials to align Basa Pilipinas with K–12 Basic Education Curriculum and the MTB-MLE policy and program, resulting in a high degree of involvement, technical direction and ownership within DepEd from the division, region to the national level. Such close coordination and validation of transformational activities with DepEd at all levels, has contributed to further sustainability, institutionalization and scale up of project's accomplishments after the end of project.

BASA THEORY OF CHANGE

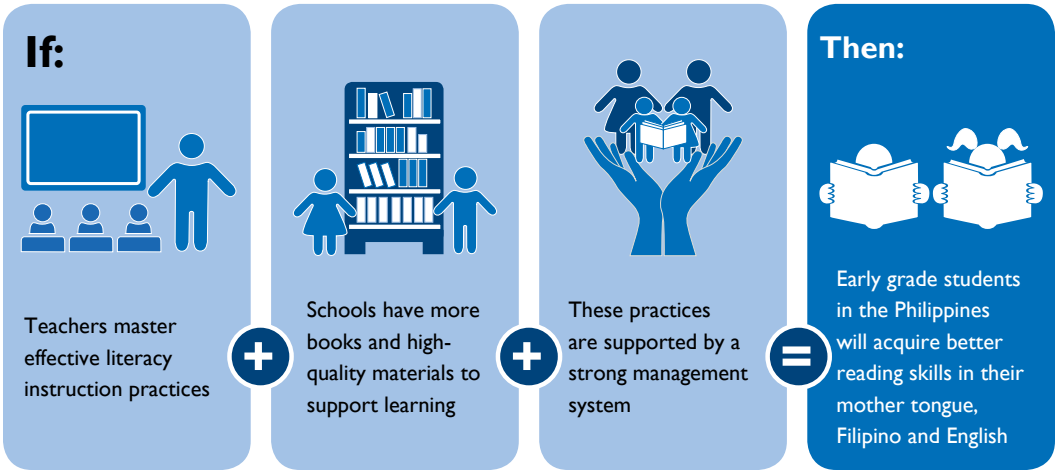


Figure 1. *Basa Theory of Change*

The project's theory of change states that if: 1) teachers master effective reading instruction practices; 2) schools have more books and other materials for students to read and 3) these practices are effectively supported by a strong management system then students in the early grades in schools in the Philippines will acquire better reading skills in their mother tongue, Filipino and English (see Figure 1. Basa Theory of Change above).

The theory of change correlates directly with the results framework as stated in the project's scope of work. As envisioned by USAID and DepEd, improving early grade reading skills of one million Filipino children was to be achieved through delivery of targeted interventions resulting in 1) improved reading instruction; 2) improved access to quality reading materials and 3) technical assistance to DepEd to improve reading delivery systems in line with K–12 Language Arts Curriculum and MTB-MLE

framework. Each of the three key areas in the results framework included specific subcomponents critical towards achieving the main objectives:

IR 1. IMPROVED READING INSTRUCTION

- **Sub IR 1.1** Improved ability of public school teachers to teach early grade reading, to conduct diagnostics and to implement reading recovery programs.
- **Sub IR 1.2** Improved capacity of administrators and school heads to supervise early grade reading instruction, early grade reading diagnostics and initiate reading recovery programs.
- **Sub IR 1.3** Strengthened capacity of the DepEd and/or teacher education institutions to design, implement and monitor early grade reading interventions at various levels.

IR 2. IMPROVED READING DELIVERY SYSTEMS

- **Sub IR 2.1** Effective implementation of valid and reliable early grade reading standards in English, Filipino and at least two mother tongues for the first three grades.
- **Sub IR 2.2** Strengthened capacity of host government to implement sound early grade reading diagnostic tools in English, Filipino and at least two mother tongues.
- **Sub IR 2.3** Increase advocacy for early grade reading at local and national levels.

IR 3. IMPROVED ACCESS TO QUALITY READING MATERIALS

- **Sub IR 3.1** Increased availability and access to age and gender appropriate, culture-specific early grade reading materials in English, Filipino and at least two mother tongues.
- **Sub IR 3.2** The successful piloting and evaluation of an appropriate, cost-effective information and

communications technology for education (ICT4E) approach.

- **Sub IR 3.3** Successful establishment of at least two public-private partnerships to leverage counterpart resources, especially reading materials, equivalent to at least 10% of total project cost.

The detailed analysis of Basa accomplishments and impact by IR and subcomponents is included in the relevant section of this final report.

MAIN OBJECTIVES

Basa's main objectives throughout the life of project were to **1) improve reading skills for one million Filipino children in the early grades in two MTs, Filipino and English** in line with DepEd's K–12 language arts curriculum reform and MTB-MLE policy, and within the framework of USAID's Global Education Strategy and USAID/Philippines Country Development and Cooperation Strategy and **2) provide technical assistance to DepEd** in support of its national Every-Child-A-Reader Program (ECARP) without the creation of a parallel project.

Through direct support to DepEd's implementation of the K–3 language and literacy curriculum and the MTB-MLE policy, Basa has made a difference at the region/division level by **transforming early grade literacy instruction** in over **3,000** schools of Basa-assisted divisions in Regions 1 and 7. These schools have benefited from Basa's support to teachers and school administrators through intensive training on effective literacy instruction jointly designed by Basa and DepEd, post-training coaching and the provision of a full suite of TLMs developed by Basa and formally vetted by DepEd.

DepEd demonstrated its confidence in the soundness of Basa's approach and materials by **spreading the transformed literacy instruction practices nationwide.** This included uploading Basa-developed materials to the DepEd's online Learning Resource Portal; using Basa materials and support at DepEd's nationwide K–3 ELLN training; officially adopting the Basa RTGs for Grade 1 English and Filipino for nationwide use and allocating DepEd funding to reproduce Basa's Leveled Readers nationwide.

Our technical assistance included support to DepEd's nationwide trainings, such as K–3 ELLN and National Training of Trainers (TOT) for Kindergarten, as well as building DepEd capacity to sustain Basa interventions by training a cadre of 500 DepEd K–3 language and literacy trainers capable of training teachers beyond Basa's project life cycle. At DepEd's request, Basa also implemented several research studies and pilot initiatives to support DepEd priorities, such as research on MTB-MLE trajectories, ICT for Reading, and Reading Remediation.

PROJECT MILESTONES

2013

- **Jan 2013:** Start of USAID/Philippines Basa Pilipinas program
- **Jul–Sep 2014:** Basa trained over **5,500** Grades 1–3 teachers, school administrators and district supervisors from La Union and Cebu province divisions
- **Sep 2013:** 1st Basa PMC co-chaired by DepEd and USAID approves Basa-developed *Transformed Classrooms Framework*
- **Nov 2013:** Basa hosted a text leveling workshop with DepEd to define and identify appropriate grade level text in MT, Filipino and English

2014

- **May and Oct 2014:** Over **7,500** Grades 1, 2 and MG teachers trained on effective literacy instruction
- **Jul and Aug 2014:** **2,137** DepEd officials and school administrators oriented on Basa's approach to literacy within K-12 curriculum
- **Sep 2014:** Basa program expanded to San Fernando City, La Union (Region 1) and Tagbilaran City, Bohol (Region 7)
- **Apr–Sep 2014:** Over **2 million** units of Basa TLMs and supplementary books distributed to Basa schools
- **Nov 2014:** Over **2,200** school administrators trained on literacy LAC
- **Dec 2014:** More than **1,700** Grade 3 teachers training in Reading-Writing Connection

2015

- **Jan-Mar 2015:** **1.4 million** units of Grades 1 and 2 TLMs for Q4 distributed to Basa schools
- **Apr-Jun 2015:** Over **520,000** units of Grade 3 Q1 TLMs distributed to Basa schools
- **May 2015:** Close to **4,100** Grade 3 teachers trained on effective literacy instruction
- **May 2015:** Reading benchmarks set for Grades 2 and 3 during workshop with DepEd participants from Regions 1 and 7
- **Jul-Sep 2015:** At least **800,000** units of Grade 3 Q2 TLMs distributed to Basa schools
- **Oct–Dec 2015:** Close to **486,000** books in English donated by Brother's Brother Foundation (BBF) distributed through book-shopping activities to 758 schools in Region 1
- An estimated **500,000** students whose teachers received K–3 ELLN training are direct project beneficiaries of assistance partly funded by USAID
- **Sep 2015:** Over **USD$5 million** leveraged from private sector partners, exceeding its 10% target of the total project value

Figure 2. *Project Timeline and Milestones*

2016

- **Jun 2016:** DepEd Order No. 35 s.2016, declared the LAC as a school-based professional development mechanism to improve teaching and learning within the K-12 curriculum framework
- **Sep 2016:** 17-month cost extension workplan with **US$15 million** in additional funding approved to cover activities during January 2017-May 2018
- **Oct 2016:** DepEd Order No. 64, s2016, endorsed Basa-developed Leveled Readers in all MG schools nationwide

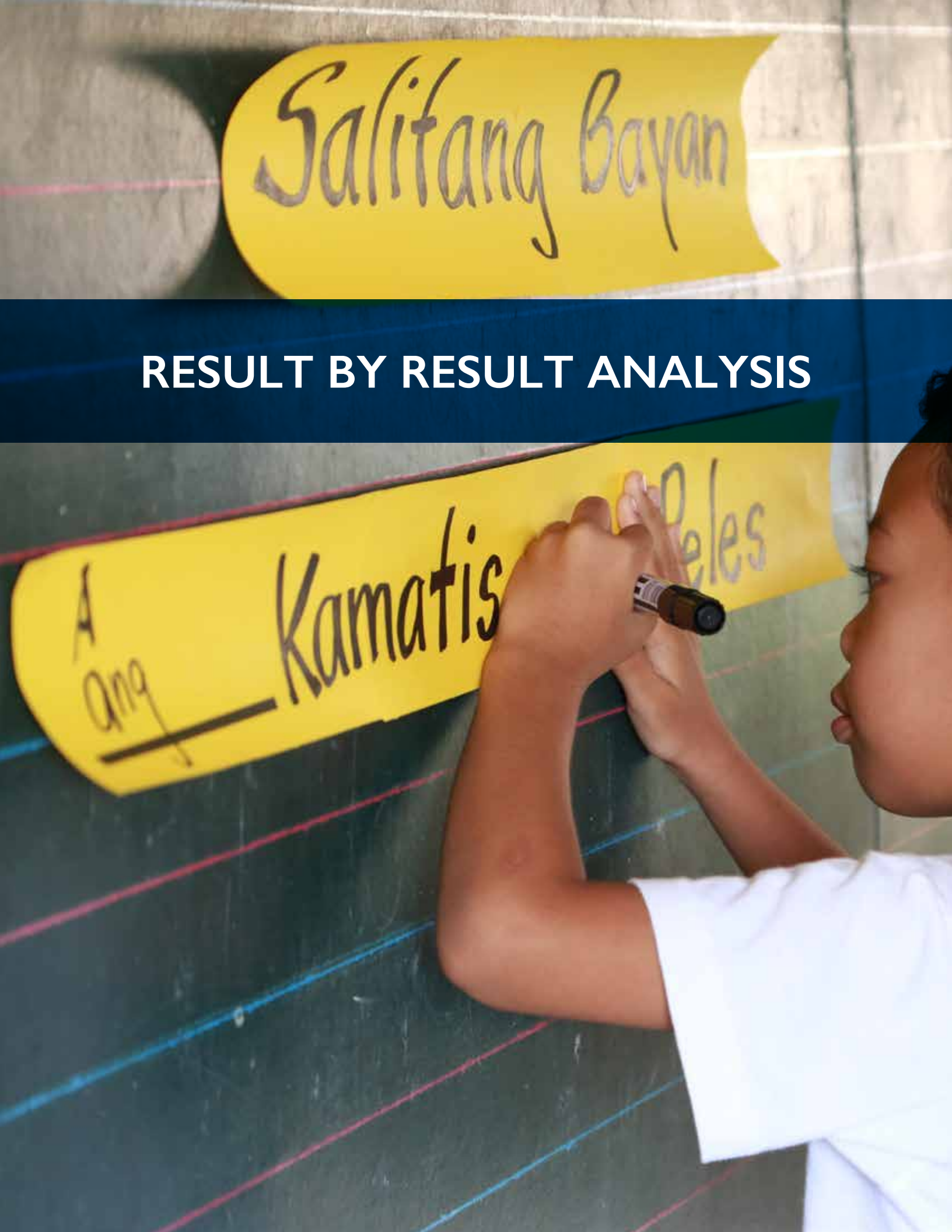
2017

- **Aug–Sep 2017:** Basa hosted KLM finalization and contextualization writeshops for more than 50 DepEd representatives; turned over KLM master document to DepEd
- **Sep–Oct 2017:** Nationwide workshops on use of Basa TLMs for 453 DepEd participants representing 17 regions and 220 divisions
- Two cycles of training delivered for **3,126** Kindergarten teachers from all eight Basa-assisted divisions
- A total of **4,396** Grades 1 and 2 teachers provided with refresher training on effective literacy instruction
- **2,500** school administrators trained on LAC and literacy focused instruction supervision
- A total of **3,244** tablets distributed to school, district and division officials conducting instructional supervision. A tablet-based SCOPE-L application developed and loaded onto tablets, along with a complete set of Basa TLMs
- **Dec 2017:** Close to **4,000** Grades 1 to 3 teachers subscribed to *Nagbabasa Kami!* Facebook Group for post-training online support as of Dec 2017
- **Dec 2017:** Over **1.1 million** supplementary books for K–3 classroom libraries procured and distributed

2018

- **Feb 2018:** Contextualized Ilokano and Sinugbuanong Binisaya digital versions of KLM turned over to DepEd for SY 2019/2020
- **Mar 2018:** Final meetings with held with DepEd partners to update division sustainability plans and discuss how to sustain gains achieved during Basa
- **Apr 2018:** Final research dissemination event highlighting Basa accomplishments and lessons learned
- **May 2018:** Over **287,000** supplementary books distributed to Grade 1 classroom libraries
- **May 2018:** DepEd developed Grade 3 English and Filipino Learner's Materials for nationwide use based on Basa's Grade 3 English and Filipino RTGs
- **Jun 2018:** Ceremonial handover of Basa Pilipinas from USAID to DepEd in Region 1 on June 14 and in Region 7 on June 19
- **Jul 2018:** **296,000** supplementary books delivered to DepEd divisions for distribution to Grade 1 classroom libraries
- **Jul 2018:** Basa Pilipinas ends on July 31, 2018

RESULT BY RESULT ANALYSIS



BASA PILIPINAS
RESULTS AT A GLANCE

IMPROVED READING SKILLS

Four years after Basa, Grade 2 learners have shown significant improvements in their oral reading fluency and reading comprehension skills in Filipino.

53% of Grade 2 learners met the DepEd **fluency benchmark (40 wcpm)**, up from 45% before Basa intervention

The percentage of Grade 2 learners who met the **comprehension benchmark** or can answer 3 out of 5 questions correctly almost doubled to **40%**

Grade 2 learners were able to read an additional **4.7 words correct per minute**, correctly identify **5.9 more letter sounds** and answer **14% more comprehension questions** compared to other Grade 2 learners tested before Basa

IMPROVED READING INSTRUCTION

16,000 K–3 teachers trained on effective literacy practices

6,300 K–3 teachers and school heads received online post-training support on early grade reading

IMPROVED READING DELIVERY SYSTEMS

More than **3,400** school administrators equipped with tools and training to provide better instructional supervision to teachers

1,200 parents reached through community engagement seminars to support children's literacy

Strengthened local capacity of more than **500** DepEd personnel trained as K–3 language and literacy trainers

IMPROVED ACCESS TO QUALITY READING MATERIALS

10.4 million units of teacher's guides, leveled readers, storybooks and other education aids developed, procured and distributed to nearly **16,000** K–3 classrooms

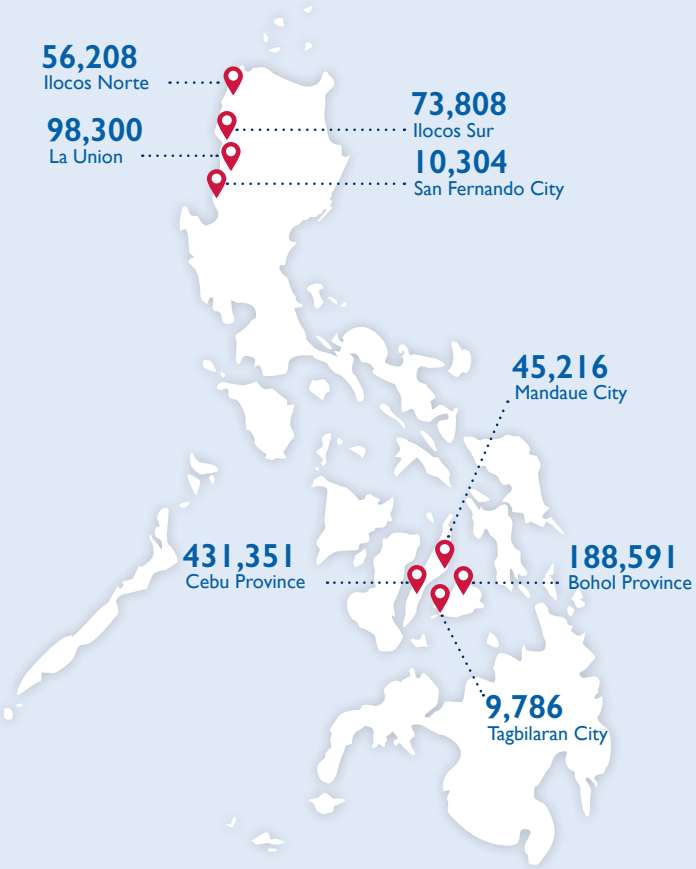
More than **2 million** teaching and learning materials produced in two Mother Tongue languages–Ilokano and Sinugbuanong Binisaya

USD$5 million leveraged from private sector partners to support provision of supplementary reading materials and school kits for K–3 students

Figure 3. *Results at a Glance*

LEARNERS REACHED

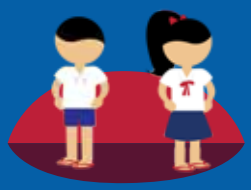
1.8 million learners in Kindergarten through Grade 3 provided early grade reading interventions



889,865
Priority schools of DepEd's Early Language, Literacy and Numeracy (ELLN) Program

1,803,429
Total Number of Students

53%
956,322
Male



47%
847,097
Female

Sources:
Basa Pilipinas Final Evaluation Report, 2018
Basa Pilipinas M&E Reports, 2013–2018
DepEd Basic Education Information System

IR 1. IMPROVED READING INSTRUCTION

Guided by the DepEd's MTB-MLE reform and its integrated K–12 language arts curriculum, Basa worked with DepEd's national bureaus and teachers, school heads and supervisors to make language and literacy come alive in K–3 classrooms—as DepEd policy envisioned. Training on effective literacy instruction came hand in hand with the requisite teaching and learning materials. This enabled teachers to immediately implement what they learned from training. Moreover, Basa developed training videos that demonstrated how the approaches and materials could be used in a real classroom setting. These training videos were not only used in division training events, but also in school-based continuing professional development (CPD) activities via the Learning Action Cells (LACs).

School heads and district or division supervisors tasked to lead or supervise LACs were the main targets of LAC-focused training activities. Moreover, recognizing the important role these officials play as instructional supervisors of K–3 classroom teachers, Basa provided additional training for school administrators focused on Enabling Effective Literacy Instruction. As instructional supervisors, school heads are mandated to provide guidance, support and mentoring to their classroom teachers, to help ensure that children receive quality instruction that can lead to improved learning. Ensuring that school heads understand and support the approaches being promoted in Basa training has been essential to ensuring that teachers indeed use Basa materials and instructional practices in their classrooms.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over five years of implementation, Basa has trained over 16,000 K–3 teachers in effective language and literacy instruction. This number exceeded the LOP target of 12,894

educators able to complete professional development activities on implementing evidence-based literacy instruction. In terms of cumulative yearly training service counts (as opposed to tracking unique individual teachers trained), the numbers are even higher: 30,729 trained over project life.

In addition, Basa also conducted capacity building for school heads and other officials who are in charge of providing instructional supervision and support to classroom teachers. This is to ensure that the practices being promoted in Basa teacher training will be followed up and reinforced by school heads as they do their mentoring and supervisory roles. Because school heads are also the designated LAC leaders, Basa focused much of its training for school heads on conducting literacy-focused LAC sessions in their respective schools.

Training rollouts for teachers across divisions typically occurred during the prescribed DepEd in-service training (INSET) periods—the summer break months of April/May and the semestral break week, typically in late October or early November. This was in keeping with DepEd policy to ensure that teachers spent class days teaching in classrooms, as opposed to being pulled out for training.

The table below summarizes the total number of training days received by teachers or school officials over the life of the project.

In between the large, division-level Basa training events, teachers received follow-on training and support via school-based literacy LACs. School heads were trained to use USAID-provided literacy LAC resources such as LAC session guides and trigger videos during 2014 and 2015. Basa staff conducted monitoring and mentoring visits to schools to check in on the implementation of these school-based LACs, and to identify any issues that could be addressed via discussions with DepEd officials or through additional school head training.

In school year (SY) 2017/18, Basa initiated a Reading Remediation Support Pilot (RRSP) to test an approach to reading remediation for the early grades. This was in response to DepEd's request to pilot processes and tools that could support teachers in implementing lessons for struggling readers during the regular daily remediation period required of all public schools. Thus, Basa worked with 25 schools and intensively trained 50 Grades 1 and 2 teachers and their school heads and supervisors on a reading remediation approach that adapted Response-to-Intervention principles. The RRSP provided teachers with a toolkit of informal assessment, instructional planning and progress monitoring tools, and two

Basa has brought me to a higher level of teaching. It helped me to better understand, love and care for my learners.

–Raymart Ballesteros
Kindergarten Teacher,
Paddagan Primary School,
Ilocos Norte

TABLE 1. DIVISION-LEVEL TRAINING DURATION (IN DAYS, BY YEAR)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	TOTAL
KG Teachers					7	**7**
Grade 1 Teachers	3	6	6		3	**18**
Grade 2 Teachers	3	6	6	3		**18**
Grade 3 Teachers		3	3	3		**9**
School Heads		5	1	1	6	**7**

cycles of training on how to use the toolkit and other resources with struggling learners in their classrooms. A total of **442 Grades 1 and 2 learners** benefited from RRSP implementation.

On DepEd's request, Basa also provided technical assistance to various DepEd national teacher training initiatives related to K–3 literacy. This included providing training modules and resource persons for DepEd's nationwide K–3 ELLN training rollout in 2015 and NTOT on Kindergarten implementation in 2017.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The various inputs and resources provided to DepEd K–3 teachers and their instructional supervisors redounded to observable changes in the way literacy instruction was conducted in USAID-assisted classrooms. These results from Basa's efforts are discussed by sub-IR (intermediate result) below:

SUB IR 1.1. IMPROVED ABILITY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS TO TEACH EARLY GRADE READING, TO CONDUCT DIAGNOSTICS AND TO IMPLEMENT READING RECOVERY PROGRAMS

Effective early grades literacy instruction, including diagnostics/ formative assessments. Basa's series of teacher training events focused on promoting key evidence-based literacy instruction practices using USAID-provided classroom resources. For Grades 1–3, this included the Revised Teacher's Guides (RTGs), Read Aloud Big Books and Leveled Readers; and for Kindergarten, the mother tongue Big Books as well as hard copies of the latest DepEd Kindergarten TG. For Grades 1–3, this also included practices such as the use of gradual release of responsibility in Basa's 10-day instructional sequence, bridging between languages, formative assessments to identify learner strengths

and needs, differentiated instruction, guided and independent reading and reading-writing connections. For Kindergarten, the focus was on promoting developmentally appropriate practice, effective implementation of the Blocks of Time approach, supporting smooth transitions within class time, and making Story Time activities more engaging and effective using the Basa-developed Kindergarten Big Books.

In school visits conducted in 2013 as part of Basa's formative research for its materials development and teacher training activities, Grades 1–3 classrooms were observed and teacher inputs gathered via focus group discussions. These processes indicated that teachers needed more support in putting the principles and standards of MTB-MLE into practice at the classroom level. Although most teachers followed their DepEd-issued teacher guides, they tended to treat the three languages (MT, Filipino and English) as separate subjects. There were no attempts to bridge the skills students already learned in their MT to what they were learning in Filipino or English. Language instruction tended to emphasize formal rules rather than communicative language learning; as such, children were often restrained in expressing themselves given the tendency to privilege correctness over communication and self-expression. Children were observed to have

> I found that with every training, every delivery of books, my knowledge and skills as a reading teacher grew more and more.

–Mary Jean Cuello, *Grade 2 Teacher,* Taboc Elementary School, La Union

limited time and opportunity to practice reading on their own or in pairs/small groups, or to engage in thinking, discussions and writing about stories they read or listened to in class. Materials available for children to read were limited—with little to no variation in genre, topic and level of text difficulty.

With Basa implementation, changes in teachers' literacy instruction practice slowly began to transform. With training on the use of the RTGs, Big Books and Leveled Readers—as well as the evidence-based approaches that informed the instructional sequence that underpinned the daily lessons—classrooms were now seen to be implementing activities associated with gradual release of responsibility and the balanced literacy approach. The ready availability of Big Books for Read Alouds (RAs) and Leveled Readers for guided and independent reading meant teachers had ample resources to use children's literature as a springboard for oral expression, listening comprehension, vocabulary development and authentic reading and writing activities. With the Leveled Readers in particular, teachers now had the opportunity to provide materials to students who needed different levels of text difficulty, thus making differentiated instruction possible. Teachers were able to identify which learners needed which leveled text version by practicing formative assessment strategies imparted to them during training (and reiterated as guidance in their RTGs). (For more detail on the Leveled Readers provided, please refer to the discussion under IR3.)

To assess whether these changes were indeed happening across USAID-assisted schools, Basa conducted longitudinal classroom observation research using the Standardized Classroom Observation Protocol for Education in Literacy (SCOPE-L)[2] tool beginning in its first year of implementation. Thirty-three grade 2 teachers from a sample of Basa schools in Cebu and La Union were observed and scored in November–December 2013 and again in December 2014. SCOPE-L findings showed that teachers started out with very low scores at baseline in 2013, ranging between "deficient" and "inadequate". By the end of 2014, teacher practices reflected a broader range of scores with more teachers performing at "basic" level. This suggests some improvement from 2013 to 2014, which indicated that teachers were starting to apply new teaching practices. Improvements were seen in all teaching practices observed; however, the largest gains were seen in the Language and Literacy Instruction domain. In particular, notable improvements in the areas of oral language development, developing reading fluency and developing comprehension were seen under Language and Literacy Instruction. The improvement in "opportunities for developing reading fluency" was particularly striking, as there was almost no evidence of this practice at baseline. In the Classroom Structure domain, teachers saw the largest improvements in "ensuring participation of all learners," "ensuring accessible classroom materials" and "effective management of

[2] The SCOPE-L tool is an EDC-developed classroom observation protocol that focuses on two areas of instruction: classroom structure, and language and literacy instruction. There were a total of 13 domains assessed under these two main areas. Domains under classroom structure included positive learning environment; effective grouping strategies; participation of all learners; opportunities for reflection; classroom materials; and management of reading/writing instruction. Domains under language and literacy instruction included opportunities for oral language development, opportunities for meaningful reading, opportunities for learning to decode and spell words, opportunities for developing reading fluency, opportunities for developing vocabulary, opportunities for developing reading comprehension, and writing instruction. For the Basa M&E research activities in which this tool was used, SCOPE-L observers were asked to rate the classes they observed according to a five-point scale: 1 was deficient, 2 was inadequate, 3 was basic, 4 was strong, and 5 was exemplary.

reading and writing instruction" items of SCOPE-L. In fact, in 2014, nearly half of observed teachers scored "strong" in "classroom materials" and "management of reading and writing instruction." This is important given that Basa had introduced a large number of new reading materials for teachers to manage in the classroom.

In 2015, Basa again conducted classroom observations using SCOPE-L, with the same teachers observed at baseline in 2013 who could still be located in the Basa schools. Due to attrition factors such as teacher transfer and absence at time of data collection, only 28 teachers could be tracked longitudinally in 2015. Overall, improvements were seen in classroom structure and language literacy instruction from SY 2013/2014, to SY 2015/2016, after two years of Basa intervention. This time, however, the largest gains were seen in Classroom Structure teaching practices. Teachers saw the largest improvements in "ensuring accessible classroom materials," "providing opportunities for learners to reflect on their reading and writing" and "effective management of reading and writing instruction" items.

Changes in Kindergarten instruction. On DepEd's recommendation, USAID authorized the extension of Basa's literacy improvement interventions to the Kindergarten level in 2016. To inform the design of its Kindergarten intervention, Basa conducted formative research in July to September 2016, including field visits, teacher and school head interviews and Kindergarten classroom observations in 32 schools across eight Basa-assisted divisions. The field research was designed to gather information on the support that Basa schools required to be able to meet or fulfill DepEd expectations for Kindergarten instruction, as laid out by the newly instituted *Omnibus Kindergarten Policy (DepEd Order 47, s2016)*. Please see Annex B for a copy of Basa's Kindergarten Formative Research Report.

Findings from the 2016 field research showed that schools and Kindergarten implementers still did not have a full grasp of DepEd policies, standards and expectations for this level. There were still a number of misconceptions on what kind of learning environment is appropriate for 5-year old children and what literacy looks like in Kindergarten. For example, some teachers treated the Blocks of Time as subjects (e.g., language arts and math), and focused more on skill development rather than thematic and integrated learning. Very little processing of tasks and activities with the children was observed. Some Blocks of Time tended to be skipped (often Story Time and Indoor/Outdoor Games), and play and exploration was not maximized as a teaching tool.

Moreover, Basa found that Story Time was conducted intermittently, inconsistently or skipped altogether, largely due to either the absence of storybooks aligned with the prescribed themes or the availability of storybooks written in the Mother Tongue, the language of instruction mandated for Kindergarten.

Based on these findings, Basa designed a Kindergarten intervention that would 1) increase the availability of appropriate teaching-learning materials and 2) improve teacher practices so that these practices adequately reflect DepEd's vision for Kindergarten instruction. More details on how Basa addressed the first objective can be found under IR3.

To address the second objective, Basa developed two cycles of training for Kindergarten teachers. Looking at the findings from its formative research, Basa saw the need to help teachers and school heads (who served as their instructional supervisors) better understand Kindergarten teaching and learning that fulfilled DepEd standards and sound early childhood education practices, to get a better sense of how these were to be implemented. Thus, Basa designed training content that would flesh out the principles underlying Kindergarten implementation and demonstrate how the Blocks of Time approach is conducted. Training modules and videos were produced as part of two cycles of intensive teacher training on Kindergarten pedagogy. Cycle 1 (Understanding Kindergarten Teaching and Learning) was conducted in April–May 2017, participated in by 2,911 teachers and their schools heads. Cycle 2 (Strengthening Kindergarten Teaching and Learning) was conducted in October 2017, participated in by 3,126 teachers. School heads were also separately trained in conducting Kindergarten-appropriate instructional supervision and support in November 2017, where a recommended Classroom Observation Tool developed by Basa specific to Kindergarten was provided.

To learn more about what differences could be noted in Kindergarten classroom environments after less than a year of exposure to Basa interventions, Basa conducted a Kindergarten teacher survey alongside its endline data collection among a sample of Kindergarten learners. This survey was conducted among teachers in both Basa and non-Basa schools, allowing comparison in what USAID-assisted schools were doing differently when compared to other schools. There were 148 Kindergarten teachers (77 intervention and 71 comparison) surveyed in sample schools to provide an overall picture of the Kindergarten learning environment. Specifically, data was collected on: 1) learning environment; 2) classroom resources and materials; 3) teaching practices in the classroom; 4) training support to teachers and 5) community involvement.

Analysis of survey data indicated areas where Basa schools were more advantaged than non-Basa schools. In terms of access to reading materials in the classroom, for example, results showed that intervention classrooms had significantly ($p<.001$) more variety in types of books than comparison classrooms. Intervention classrooms had between two and three different book types, on average, while comparison classrooms had between one and two. The most common types of books found in intervention classrooms were Big Books (87.0%), Story Books (64.9%) and Teacher-made Books (26.0%). In comparison classrooms, the most common books

reported by teachers were Activity Books (56.3%), Story Books (47.9%) and Big Books (40.8%). Regarding the print, audio and writing environment in the classroom, intervention classrooms tended to have more resources than comparison classrooms. Nearly half of intervention classrooms had flash cards and alphabet cards compared to only a quarter of comparison classrooms. Additionally, in terms of writing materials, 42% of intervention classrooms had crayons/markers and 38% had pencils, pens and/or chalk for learners. Conversely, in comparison classrooms, only 18% of comparison teachers reported having crayons/markers and only 15% had pencils/pens/chalks.

Teachers were asked, unprompted, about the types of charts that were on display in their classroom. The large majority of classes, in both groups, had alphabet charts on display. Overall, teachers in the intervention group reported a richer print environment. Nearly two-thirds of intervention classrooms had calendars, weather charts and attendance charts in the classroom, while less than 15% of comparison classrooms displayed these materials. Roughly, a third of intervention classrooms had job charts and word walls compared to only 4% and a quarter of comparison classroom, respectively.

When asked how often they implement the Blocks of Time in the classroom, the large majority of teachers, in both groups, reported implementing Arrival Time, Meeting Time and Work Periods 1 & 2 daily or four times a week. Teachers in the intervention group reported implementing Stories, Rhymes, Songs and Poems more frequently than teachers in the comparison group. Overall, 83.1% of teacher in the intervention group implemented stories, rhymes, songs and poems blocks daily or four times a week, compared to 69.0% of teachers in the comparison group.

Sampled teachers were asked about the Kindergarten trainings that they attended since 2017. Significantly more ($p<.001$) teachers in the intervention group reported attending Kindergarten training than the comparison group. All teachers in the intervention group reported attending training, while 78.9% of teachers in the comparison group reported attending Kindergarten training since 2017. Overall, teachers in the intervention group reported attending more days of Kindergarten training than teachers in the comparison group. As seen in the figure below, 88% of teachers attended Kindergarten training that lasted six or more days, while only 61% of teachers in the comparison group attended training of that duration.

In addition to these survey results, the Basa team also conducted frequent school visits to Basa-assisted schools to check

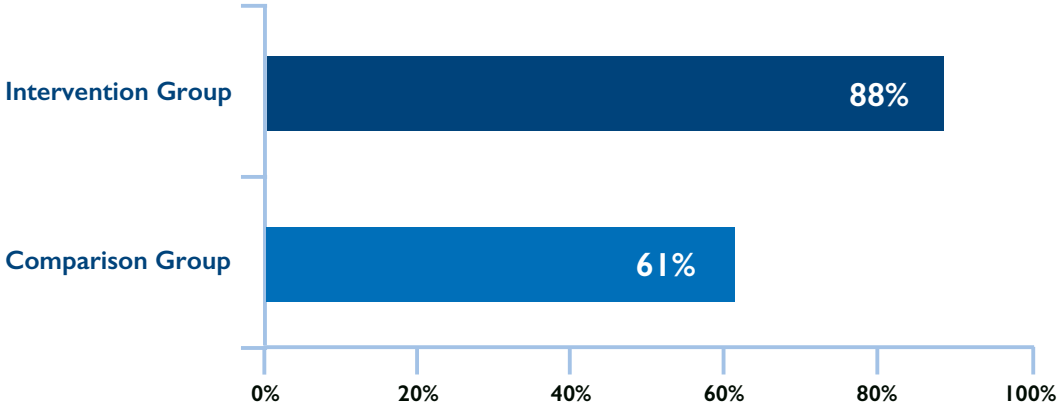


Figure 4. *Teachers Attending Kindergarten Training, Intervention vs. Comparison Groups*

on teachers' progress after receiving Basa training and materials. Visits were conducted to various schools in August 2017, January 2018 and March 2018. Based on class observations in 24 schools in January 2018, staff found that Kindergarten teachers now had a better understanding of the Blocks of Time approach when compared to schools observed earlier in the school year. Story Time was more regular, and repeated readings of a story were observed. There were more attempts to increase learner talk, and teachers had noticeably better rapport with children in their classroom interactions. However, areas for further improvement could still be noted. In implementing the Blocks of Time, for example, teachers tended to focus more on finishing activities for the day rather than on the underlying skills/competencies that each activity develops.

Similarly, selected schools visited in March 2018 (which were also among the schools visited during Basa's 2016 formative research) showed improvements in instructional delivery. There was better understanding of developmentally appropriate pedagogy and of the DepEd vision of Kindergarten implementation. Teachers were exhibiting more strategies to develop comprehension and other literacy skills. Teachers were able to focus instruction on a particular theme, and to use these themes for content integration. In most classrooms, established routines were now evident. Implementing the different Blocks of Time was more clearly understood and applied. For example, story time was now regularly practiced, with more attempts at eliciting responses from students. However, there were still some teachers who could improve the way they engaged with learners in pre, during and post-reading conversations.

During interviews in March 2018, teachers said they gained a lot from the Basa training.

Almost all teachers mentioned the Blocks of Time approach as a major change in their teaching practice, as a result of what they learned from Basa. Teachers also mentioned a better appreciation of the play-based approach and its importance to children at this stage of learning and development. However, they acknowledged that there were still some concepts that were challenging to them, including ensuring more differentiated activities during Work Period.

It was evident from the classroom visits that after less than a year of Basa interventions, there was still room for improvement. However, when compared with where schools were before the start of Basa's Kindergarten intervention, progress towards the DepEd vision and standards for Kindergarten can already be noted. Sustained practice of strategies and approaches, and more effective use of teaching and learning materials, would go a long way towards better Kindergarten instructional environments in these USAID-assisted schools.

Reading remediation, including more detailed skill diagnostics. It was during the cost-extension period of October 2016–July 2018 that DepEd gave Basa the go-signal to pilot test a reading remediation approach for struggling readers in the early grades. The Reading Remediation Support Pilot (RRSP) was implemented in 25 schools by training and equipping 50 Grades 1 and 2 teachers across seven school divisions.

The RRSP adapted the Response-to-Intervention process where students go through levels of instructional support as an approach to identifying and supporting learning of students who struggle with reading. RRSP's approach focused on supporting MT (L1) reading in Grade 1 and Filipino (L2) reading in Grade 2. The intervention was designed for learners to go through three stages: differentiated instruction within a whole class setting (Stage 1); small group instruction among learners identified as needing remedial support (Stage 2) and individualized and small group instruction for learners who need intensive and continuous support

(Stage 3). Learners were grouped into different learning profiles based on their individual literacy assessment results, and provided with RRSP activities depending on their identified strengths and needs.

Teachers received the RRSP Toolkit—a collection of informal assessment, instructional planning and progress monitoring tools—and were trained on its use over two cycles of teacher training. Basa also provided mentoring visits and follow-up support in between training cycles.

The RRSP framework proved to be a useful innovation. Qualitative data from stakeholders point to the feasibility of using this approach in public school classrooms. In addition, *Early Grade Reading Assessment* (EGRA) results showed significant improvements in the literacy skills of participants, although variations were noted across regions and across grade levels. After RRSP implementation, Grade 1 learners were already showing mastery of foundational skills (i.e. initial sound identification, letter sound identification, and decoding), while also beginning to improve their skills in both reading and listening comprehension. This suggests that given the time and continued use of RRSP as an approach to reading remediation, Grade 1 learners will become proficient readers in MT. Meanwhile, Grade 2 learners were already showing improvements in some literacy skills (i.e. passage reading and familiar word identification). Although there were significant gains in these skills, continued support to mastering the other skills is needed for learners to be considered proficient readers in Filipino.

Moreover, EGRA results show that RRSP generally benefited learners regardless of their sex, socio-economics status (SES) or self-reported attendance. No significant differences were noted in comparisons of gains across these sub-groups, except for one subtask (familiar word identification) among Grade 2 learners in Region 7, where girls scored significantly higher than boys. This indicates that RRSP has the potential to bridge learning gaps for struggling learners, regardless of their characteristics (see the Monitoring and Evaluation section for further details on RRSP EGRA results, and Annex C for the full RRSP Research Report).

Teachers and school heads expressed their intent to continue utilizing the RRSP framework in providing support to the non-readers and struggling readers in their schools, as well as sharing this approach to other schools in their district/divisions.

Feedback provided to Basa Pilipinas was used in revising and simplifying the RRSP toolkit. This revised toolkit, as well as the associated training resources used during implementation, was shared with DepEd through its Learning Resource Portal, for possible wider uptake beyond the pilot schools and partner divisions.

SUB-RESULT 1.2. IMPROVED CAPACITY OF ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL HEADS TO SUPERVISE EARLY GRADE READING INSTRUCTION, EARLY GRADE READING DIAGNOSTICS AND INITIATE READING RECOVERY PROGRAMS

School administrators as Literacy LAC leaders. From 2014 onwards, Basa implemented capacity building activities with school heads[3] across all its partner divisions focused on their role as LAC leaders. This was in keeping with the LAC strengthening approach identified via partner, Philippine Business for Social Progress' (PBSP) review of school improvement plans

[3] In the Philippines, schools heads—those who fulfill the roles of school administrators and instructional leaders—can include full-fledged school principals as well as teachers-in-charge. The generic term "school head" is thus used to refer to this position.

and partner SEAMEO INNOTECH's desk review on how to create and sustain school-based professional development for teachers within the DepEd structures and systems. In consultation with DepEd, Basa identified LACs as the ideal mechanism for continuously enhancing the quality of reading instruction, allowing school heads to support teachers as they applied evidence-based instruction practices from the Basa training in their respective classrooms.

To ensure that school heads had sufficient grounding in the early grade reading approaches embedded in Basa's RTGs and other TLMs, the first training for school heads in 2014 was a two-day orientation to formally introduce them to the Basa approach, materials and bridging strategies between languages. A follow-on three-day training was held in November–December 2014. School heads were provided with a LAC Facilitator's Guide and a set of trigger videos that they could use in conducting literacy focused LACs with their respective teachers. The Facilitator's Guide was developed as a stand-alone flipchart outlining the content of 12 LAC sessions. The videos were used to trigger discussions among teachers on the topics focused on for each session. School heads had the opportunity to simulate a LAC session, complete LAC action plans and receive feedback from trainers as part of their three-day training. Refresher training on LACs was held in 2015, 2016 and 2017. The training during 2016 and 2017 focused on assisting school heads in understanding and implementing the newly issued DepEd Order 35, series of 2016, officially establishing the LAC as the school-based continuing professional development strategy for the improvement of teaching and learning. The training designs for these various LAC workshops were guided by findings from field-level LAC implementation monitoring, which allowed Basa to address any gaps or misconceptions that were evident in school LAC practices.

To examine progress made by school heads as LAC leaders in supporting their teachers via this school-based CPD mechanism, Basa conducted a survey among 2,039 school heads who attended the second three-day training on Enabling Effective Literacy Instruction in November 2017. School heads were asked how many literacy LAC sessions they had conducted since the earlier August 2017 training on LAC planning and implementation. Results show that between August and November, almost all participants conducted at least one Literacy LAC session—60% said they conducted two or more LAC sessions during this period, while 37% of them reported to have conducted only one since August. School heads were also asked to rate their level of confidence in leading school-based LAC sessions before and after Basa training. About 44% of respondents felt that they were not confident in their capacity to lead LAC sessions before Basa's training, while 53% rated themselves somewhat confident and very confident before they received Basa training. After the Basa training, those who rated themselves somewhat or very confident increased to 96%.

In focus group discussions (FGD) that were conducted to get further input on the preliminary survey results, school heads expressed that availability of tools, understanding Basa's TLMs and the suggested LAC facilitation procedures introduced by Basa helped them in performing their role as LAC leaders. For example, in Ilocos Sur, school heads noted that their familiarity with Basa's TLMs, which were consistently revisited and discussed during Basa's training for school heads, helped ensure a productive sharing

> Working with Basa's literacy experts/ consultants in crafting activities and training designs allowed us to share our real life experiences, which helped align the training design with what we really need in the field.

– Dr. Pamela Rodemio, *Education Program Supervisor for Mother Tongue and Multigrade,* DepEd Cebu Province Division

and discussion with their teachers during LACs. In La Union, school heads said Basa trainings clarified their misconceptions on LACs, which they previously saw as a venue for 'relaxation' or for informal meetings with teachers. In Bohol, school heads sought to perform LAC-related tasks better by creating an atmosphere of open discussion, letting teachers speak up and share their experiences. Learning that they could designate teachers as LAC facilitators was also helpful for most school heads, given their workload as administrators. Ilocos Norte school heads agreed that this was a way for them to provide teachers an opportunity to enhance their facilitation skills.

Instructional supervision using USAID-provided tools. The November 2017 training for school heads touched on their roles as instructional supervisors. During this training, Basa provided school heads with practical tools on how they could provide the DepEd-envisioned type of formative and supportive supervision to their K–3 teachers. For Kindergarten, school heads were trained on how to use the paper-based Kindergarten classroom observation tool, structured to help school heads assist teachers in fulfilling aspects of the Omnibus Kindergarten Policy, including their implementation of the Blocks of Time approach. For Grades 1–3 supervision, school heads received a tablet-based application, which used a simplified version of the SCOPE-L tool to facilitate pre- and post-observation conversations and mentoring support focused on teachers' literacy instruction practices. School heads also received additional resources, such as Basa-developed tip sheets and demonstration videos to enhance the mentoring and support that school heads could provide to teachers after classroom observations were completed.

Shortly after the November training, Basa conducted school visits and interviews with both school heads and teachers to check in on their progress in using the instructional supervision processes and tools that Basa provided. From January–February 2018, Basa conducted 22 school visits and interviews, touching on both Kindergarten and Grades 1–3 supervision processes.

Out of the 22 school heads interviewed across eight divisions, six were able to conduct one complete cycle for all K–3 teachers. (A complete cycle for Grades 1–3 teachers involves accomplishing the self-assessment tool up to conducting the post observation conversation. A cycle for Kindergarten teachers begins with a pre-observation conversation and ends with the post observation conversation.) The other 16 school heads were able to conduct one complete cycle for at least one K–3 teacher. It was repeatedly mentioned that lack of time prevented them from being able to do more observations. There were a lot of activities, meetings and trainings conducted during the months of December and January thus leaving little time to schedule conversations and observations. They are hopeful though and very much interested in doing the full implementation next school year.

During interviews, school heads who have experienced using the tools said they found the specificity of the tools to be helpful in guiding them in determining what technical assistance should be given to the teacher. They said they were able to give better feedback, as each observation is focused on selected aspects of teaching only. They find the process beneficial for the teachers as well, since they can prepare for the observation and are aware of areas of focus from the beginning.

Teachers, on the other hand, felt that the process, though daunting at first, would be a big help in improving their teaching practices. They were particularly appreciative of the self-assessment tool. It not only gave them the opportunity to assess their practice but also inform them of how an early grade literacy classroom should look like. They are encouraged to do better as they are provided with the technical assistance that is specific to their needs but also reinforced to continue doing what is already good practice.

In terms of the user-friendliness of the SCOPE-L tablet-based application, some school heads suggested additional tweaks to make the app more useful. Many of their suggestions e.g., allowing them to go back to a form to make edits, having an option to print the summary sheet per observation, increasing the maximum number of teacher profiles they can add onto the app, were addressed and incorporated in an updated version of the app. This updated version was installed in all distributed tablets by Basa staff during the May 2018 supplementary

NATIONWIDE DEPED TRAINING ON USE OF BASA MATERIALS FOR EFFECTIVE LITERACY INSTRUCTION

In 2017, DepEd national leadership requested Basa to train key regional and division level officials across the 17 regions and 220 divisions on the use of Basa materials that were now available to them via the DepEd Learning Resource Portal. Participants included regional Curriculum and Learning Materials Development (CLMD) chiefs, division Curriculum and Instruction Division (CID) chiefs, and division Learning Resources Management and Development System (LRMDS) managers. The workshops introduced non-Basa regions and divisions to Basa-developed learning materials and discussed their practical use in early grade reading instruction. To cover all 17 regions and 220 divisions, the workshops were implemented in four clusters. Cluster 1 covered Regions CAR (Cordillera Autonomous Region), 1, 2 and 3, with a total of 51 divisions; Cluster 2 covered Regions NCR (National Capital Region), 4-A, 4-B and 5, with a total of 56 divisions; Cluster 3 covered Regions 6, 7 and 8, with a total of 50 divisions, all in the Visayas and Cluster 4 covered the Mindanao Regions 9, 10, 11, 12, Caraga and ARMM (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao). In follow-on communications with Basa, at least six divisions have submitted requests to Basa and were granted permission to reproduce the Basa materials. Many other divisions were also monitored to have echoed the training they received to their respective schools.

> What I really appreciate and am grateful for from Basa is the SCOPE L assessment tool that was given to the school heads which is a huge help to them. It is something that is not found in other programs that I've been involved with in the past.

–Dr. Rhea Mar Angtud,
Schools Division Superintendent,
DepEd Cebu Province Division

book distribution, or via other ongoing Basa activities where school heads were present.

School head and supervisor participation in RRSP. School administrators' capacity to initiate or supervise reading remediation programs was addressed by ensuring their active participation in both cycles of RRSP training. During these training activities, in addition to learning about all of the tools and processes expected of the implementing teachers, school heads also had time to meet and discuss as administrators in planning how they could best support the Grades 1 and 2 teachers to implement RRSP. In addition, DepEd division and district supervisors were also involved in the initial technical working group discussions and consultations during the design phase of RRSP.

Because of their active involvement throughout the RRSP process, both school heads and DepEd supervisors at the district and division level fully appreciated the RRSP approach and content, and committed to continue its use in the following school year. Some divisions like Bohol already scaled up and rolled out the RRSP model to all its schools, using its own training budget to provide RRSP training during the 2018 summer INSET period.

SUB-RESULT 1.3. STRENGTHENED CAPACITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND/OR TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO DESIGN, IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR EARLY GRADE READING INTERVENTIONS AT VARIOUS LEVELS

Involvement of DepEd division and district supervisors in Basa training design. An integral part of Basa's capacity building process with DepEd was ensuring their input and involvement in the design of teacher and school head training. DepEd regional and division officials participated in several technical working group and/or consultation meetings to review and suggest refinements to the design of Basa training events.

DepEd cadre of early grade reading trainers at division level. To ensure that USAID-assisted divisions could sustain the implementation of teacher capacity building around early grade reading, Basa developed a two-stage training approach. In the first stage, DepEd supervisors, master teachers and school heads underwent a Training of Trainers (TOT), which was a simulation of the actual content and processes to be implemented in the training rollout. In the second stage, the DepEd TOT participants were paired with a Basa training consultant—typically early grade reading experts recruited by Basa as external consultants as well as project technical staff—in delivering the content they learned during the TOT to the division-wide participants, be they teachers or school heads. Through this process, USAID enabled DepEd to develop a growing corps of in-house K–3 language and literacy trainers able to keep building teacher and school head capacity over time, beyond Basa's project life.

DepEd officials from Tagbilaran and Bohol reflected on their experiences being engaged as trainers in Basa workshops during their division closeout meeting last March 2018. They agreed that it was a learning experience, which they took as an opportunity to absorb and adapt the "Basa style" of conducting training, from TOT to rollout. They added that many of the training dynamics Basa introduced have been adopted by DepEd in their own training activities, including having participants reflect on what they learned via the "ticket-to-leave" format. In the end, their participation as trainers boosted their morale and confidence.

THE 14 DOMAINS OF LITERACY

Content Standards/Domains
1. Oral Language
2. Phonological Awareness
3. Book and Print Orientation (Knowledge)
4. Alphabet Knowledge
5. Phonics and Word Recognition
6. Fluency
7. Spelling
8. Writing and Composition (Handwriting)
9. Grammar Awareness
10. Vocabulary Development
11. Reading Comprehension
12. Listening Comprehension
13. Attitude Towards Language (Reading), Literature, and Literacy
14. Study Strategies

Figure 5. *14 Domains of Literacy, DepEd Integrated Language Arts Curriculum*

Support to DepEd national in the design and delivery of its Early Language, Literacy and Numeracy (ELLN) training for teachers. Beyond the support delivered to its eight partner divisions, Basa also provided technical assistance to DepEd national in its ELLN implementation. Over the course of 2014–2015, Basa supported DepEd's efforts to target 100 priority schools across 17 regions as part of the DepEd-initiated K–3 ELLN training. Basa's assistance included technical support to the TOT, provision of Basa TLMs and other direct technical assistance. In addition, DepEd requested Basa program staff to participate in the observation and validation of the training in seven out of 17 regions. Basa's assistance to ELLN training contributed to an additional estimated 500,000 Kindergarten to Grade 3 pupils counted as direct project beneficiaries, due to ELLN activities being partially supported by USAID resources through Basa assistance.

Support to DepEd national in the design and delivery of its National Training on Kindergarten Implementation. Basa Pilipinas staff and consultants supported the DepEd's NTOT on Kindergarten implementation. The DepEd-organized training included DepEd regional and division Kindergarten focal persons, division CID chiefs and select Kindergarten teachers. Basa Pilipinas staff and consultants served as resource persons in different clusters of the NTOT. They covered a day and a half of content in the 4.5-day training, handling topics focused on "Understanding the Kindergarten Child" and "Learning through the Blocks of Time." Basa's Kindergarten training videos were also shared during the NTOTs. These NTOTs were conducted in four clusters—two clusters for Luzon, one cluster for the Visayas and one cluster for Mindanao.

BASA IMPACT

As it supported DepEd's implementation of the K–3 language and literacy curriculum and the MTB-MLE policy, Basa was able to make a difference on two fronts: its partner Basa regions and divisions and at the national, system-wide level.

TRANSFORMED EARLY GRADE LITERACY INSTRUCTION

Among its partner divisions, Basa's work in enhancing teacher capacity for early grade reading instruction, along with improving the supervision and support teachers received from their school heads and other DepEd officials, led to changed instructional routines and practices. These practices helped to demonstrate the soundness of DepEd's MTB-MLE policy, marking a shift towards more learner-centered language and literacy instruction. By beginning instruction in the language that children know best, Basa support for MTB-MLE allowed

> Our lives have changed because of this program. Now that we have read aloud books and teacher's guides, it's easier for us to teach because we have all the materials. All we need to think about is the strategy and how to teach effectively.
>
> **–Milagros Marilao,** *Education Program Grade 1 Teacher,* Francia Sur Elementary School, La Union

teachers to draw on the skills and knowledge that children bring to the classroom, thus promoting the effective learning and practice of literacy skills in all three languages.

By helping teachers and school officials see the interconnectedness of the three language subjects—as indicated by its common set of 14 language and literacy domains—Basa enabled learners to build on their knowledge in their mother tongue and transfer those competencies as they learned Filipino and English.

Basa trainings put a high focus on effective bridging strategies for teaching reading across multiple languages. It also underscored the interrelatedness of oral language skills, reading and writing; weekly instructional routines were guided by a balanced approach to these language and literacy components. Equally emphasized was the importance of scaffolding children's literacy learning—with the teacher's guidance gradually diminishing to facilitate learners' independent reading and writing practice. Basa-developed training demonstration videos were utilized to introduce key concepts and stimulate discussion on successful teaching practices.

In agreement with DepEd, Basa made efforts to bring professional development and technical expertise directly to the teachers, rather than relying exclusively on the cascade teacher training model traditionally used for DepEd mass training delivery. Basa employed a hybrid teacher training model in which a core group of reading experts was coupled with local DepEd leaders to provide important context in local language and experience. This approach facilitated mutual learning on the part of both DepEd trainers and reading consultants. More importantly, it developed a cadre of early grade reading training expertise within the DepEd regions and divisions.

The ultimate test of Basa's efforts to enhance classroom instruction is whether this redounded to improvements in

children's early grade reading skills. As the M&E section will show in greater detail, Basa's interventions have indeed increased not just average fluency and comprehension scores from pre-Basa levels, but also the proportion of learners meeting DepEd benchmarks for proficiency. These results, as well as deliberate efforts to build DepEd partners' ownership of and capacity for USAID-enabled innovations, facilitated DepEd's commitment to sustain what they gained from Basa implementation. (See Conclusions and Lessons Learned section for further discussion on this topic.)

SPREADING THE TRANSFORMATION OF LITERACY INSTRUCTION SYSTEM-WIDE

Beyond the eight divisions that Basa directly supported, the reach of USAID early grade reading resources extended to regions and divisions across the country. DepEd recognized and tapped Basa expertise and resources in designing and delivering nationwide capacity building on K–3 ELLN and Kindergarten implementation. Its support for K–3 ELLN implementation beyond Basa sites in particular enabled Basa's student reach to go up by an additional 500,000 learners assisted with USAID support.

Moreover, by orienting CLMD and CID chiefs and LRMDS managers in all 17 regions and 220 divisions on the use of Basa materials—not only for classroom instruction but also for teacher training and school-based LAC implementation—Basa also paved the way for expanding the use of its resources in classrooms well beyond its direct 3,025 school reach.

GETTING BASA TO SCALE: EVIDENCE FROM THE FIELD

Not long after the successful staging of the Basa national-orientation workshops in September and October 2017, Basa's materials started to gain traction in other DepEd (non-Basa) divisions, providing the impetus for DepEd's increasing adoption of Basa's early grade reading approaches.

As of July 2018, at least 20 DepEd divisions had reported conducting rollout orientations and training activities on the use of Basa materials for literacy instruction. These scale-up initiatives had been documented in various DepEd memos and in photos posted by participants on social media. Of note are the measures being undertaken by eight DepEd divisions that signified plans to reprint and distribute the Basa materials for use for the next two school years.

Luzon

Division of Benguet (Cordillera Autonomous Region). On February 2, 2018, the Division requested Basa's permission to reprint 13 titles of Grade 1 Mother Tongue-Ilokano Leveled Readers for distribution in SY 2018/2019 and SY 2019/2020. Total number of copies to be printed is 367 per title or nearly 4,800 Leveled Readers for Grade 1 classrooms in Benguet.

Division of Sorsogon (Region 5 – Bicol Region). The Division printed Basa's Leveled Readers in English and Filipino in 2017, which will be distributed to schools in SY 2018/2019.

Visayas

Division of Sagay City (Region 6 – Western Visayas). In a memo dated November 22, 2017, it was confirmed that by third quarter of SY 2017/2018, the Division has begun using the Basa Filipino and English Revised Teacher's Guides and supplementary reading materials for Grades 1–3. The Division also organized a conference to enable district supervisors and school heads to monitor the utilization of Basa materials in public schools.

Division of Iloilo (Region 6 – Western Visayas). Throughout December 2017, the Division conducted training for district English coordinators and Grades 1–3 teachers on the "Development of Beginning Reading Materials and Contextualization of MTB Learning Resources from Basa Pilipinas." They also trained multigrade teachers on the utilization of Leveled Readers, which suggests that the materials may have already been distributed to schools in Iloilo.

Division of Cadiz City (Region 6 – Western Visayas). On February 8, 2018, the Division requested to reprint all Grades 1 and 2 Revised Teacher's Guides and Leveled Readers in Filipino and English for distribution in SY 2018/2019. The materials will be provided to 50 schools and will benefit more than 200 teachers and 6,750 learners. They also requested for the materials

to be posted on their local LRMDS Portal and Facebook Group.

Division of Biliran (Region 8 – Eastern Visayas). The Division informed Basa that they have reprinted and distributed the Basa Leveled Readers for Grades 1–3 to all schools in 2017.

Division of Ormoc City (Region 8 – Eastern Visayas). On September 30, 2017, the Division sought Basa's permission to reprint and distribute select titles of Basa's Revised Teacher's Guides, Leveled Readers and Multigrade Outlines for SY 2017/2018.

Mindanao

Division of Bislig City (CARAGA Region). In a letter sent by Schools Division Superintendent Josita Carmen to Basa on March 22, 2018, the Division expressed their intent to reprint the Grades 1–3 Mother Tongue-Sinugbuanong Binisaya, Filipino and English Leveled Readers and Revised Teacher's Guides for distribution in SY 2018/2019. Nearly 6,000 copies of Basa materials will be printed for 267 Grades 1–3 teachers and 5,600 learners in 50 schools in Bislig City. The Division also conducted a two-day training for Grade 1 teachers and shared updates on the Grade 1 Filipino RTG developed by Basa Pilipinas and adopted by DepEd national.

YOUNG FILIPINO LEARNER OVERCOMES READING DIFFICULTIES

New reading strategies and materials boost students' reading skills

"Learning to read has given my son more confidence to make friends in school."

July 2018 – Seven year-old John* runs his finger through the pages of a book. Slowly but precisely, he sounds out the words in the book about a small hut and vegetable garden.

Mary Jane* is impressed with her son's progress. A little over a year ago, John could barely recognize the letters of the alphabet. Lacking in social skills and facing reading difficulties, Mary Jane thought of pulling him out of first grade and enrolling him back to kindergarten. She worried that John might have a learning disability since his seven older siblings learned to read fairly young.

"Even when he was unable to read, I would see him pick a book from our reading corner and look at the pictures," says his teacher, Ruffa Maboloc. Seeing his interest, she persuaded Mary Jane to let John stay on and instructed her to read to him at home.

Aside from John, there were five other first grade students at his elementary school in the coastal town of Ubay, Bohol in central Philippines, who struggled in their reading skills.

During remedial reading period, while her more advanced students read on their own, Maboloc would sit with each one of them and guide them as they sound out the correct letter sounds, then carefully blending them to form words.

Grouping her students based on their learning needs allows Maboloc to maximize her contact time with students and provide the appropriate support they need. It is a technique she learned from the literacy training she attended as part of USAID's flagship early grade reading project, Basa Pilipinas, implemented by Education Development Center (EDC), in partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd).

Mary Jane quietly listens as her son, John practices his oral reading skills in Sinugbuanong Binisaya, their local dialect. PHOTO BY KAREN RIVERA FOR USAID

The project, which started in 2013, supports the Philippines' goal of improving the reading skills of early grade students by training teachers and school heads on effective reading instruction, producing curriculum-based teaching and learning materials for use in early grade classrooms and strengthening the capacity of DepEd to effectively implement the language and literacy component of its K–12 curriculum reforms, which introduced the shift to using mother tongue as the medium of instruction.

"From the training, I learned that to develop good readers, it is important for every child to master the letter sounds in the alphabet when learning to read," she says. "For years, I've relied on memorization and drills. The strategy worked for some of my students but most did not progress in their reading and would end up struggling in the higher grades," she adds, describing the traditional practice that has been widely used in Philippine classrooms.

**Full name withheld to protect identity*

The training also taught Maboloc new reading strategies like read-aloud and guided reading, that facilitate the use of children's literature as springboard for developing students' oral reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension skills.

In her classroom, Maboloc set aside a space where students can pick up a book and read anything they like. On display are colorful storybooks, big books and leveled readers i.e., books written in different levels of difficulty. The books, written in Filipino and Sinugbuanong Binisaya—two of the 19 regional languages in the Philippines were provided by USAID.

"The reading corner is a big hit among the students. It's a tight space but they like to hang out there during our reading period at noontime. I change the books on display every couple of weeks so that they have something new to read each time," says Maboloc.

The availability of these big books for read-alouds and leveled readers for guided and independent reading meant teachers had ample resources to use not only for teaching reading but in developing students' love of reading.

"I like the books because they have nice colors and drawings. I like to stay there with my classmates after lunchtime," says John, who is now in second grade and can read, write, speak and comprehend in Filipino and Sinugbuanong Binisaya.

Mary Jane couldn't be happier with her son's development. "Learning to read has given him more confidence to make friends at school. We're lucky that his teacher is very supportive and caring," she says.

USAID's Basa Pilipinas project, which ran from 2013 to 2018, has strengthened the reading skills of more than 1.8 million students from Kindergarten to Grade 3, trained more than 19,000 teachers and school heads and provided more than 10.4 million copies of teacher guides, storybooks and other education aids to 3,000 public elementary schools in the Philippines.

Evaluation results in 2018 showed that Grade 2 learners have shown significant improvements in their oral reading fluency and reading comprehension skills in Filipino, with 53 percent of Grade 2 learners meeting DepEd's fluency benchmarks of 40 words correct per minute (wcpm), and 40 percent attaining the comprehension benchmark.

Grade 2 learners were also able to read an additional 4.7 wcpm, correctly identify 5.9 more letter sounds and answer 14 percent more comprehension questions compared to other Grade 2 learners tested before Basa.

"In all my years of teaching, it is seeing my students develop into readers that brings me so much joy," says Maboloc.

IR 2. IMPROVED READING DELIVERY SYSTEMS

For improvements in early grade reading instruction to be sustained over time, Basa also implemented activities focused on the systems of support that can influence how children learn as well as how teachers teach literacy. The intermediate result of improving reading delivery systems, thus focused on standards and policies related to early grade reading, tracking trends and trajectories in literacy learning and generating broader support for literacy improvement through advocacy and awareness raising.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Among the key activities implemented under IR2 are benchmarking workshops using EGRA data in various mother tongues, English and Filipino; the establishment of text leveling gradients for Filipino and English grade level materials from Grades 1–3; conduct of an EGRA survey in four MTs; capacity building activities for DepEd partners around EGRA implementation and data use and advocacy campaigns with parents, community members and other stakeholders around the importance of early grade reading.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Details of these various IR2 accomplishments are detailed below by sub-IR.

SUB IR 2.1. EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF VALID AND RELIABLE EARLY GRADE READING STANDARDS IN ENGLISH, FILIPINO AND AT LEAST TWO MOTHER TONGUES FOR THE FIRST THREE GRADES

Early grade reading performance standards developed in partnership with DepEd. In August 2014, USAID's PhilED Data project and Basa Pilipinas jointly supported a workshop with DepEd to develop initial benchmarks for reading performance in the early grades. Data used were from the 2013 National EGRA Survey in Filipino and English and from the 2014 EGRA managed by RTI. Participants were charged with obtaining feedback from their constituencies in their regions to validate or revise the proposed benchmarks for fluency and comprehension.

In May 2015, Basa conducted its benchmarking workshop with its partner regions and divisions. During that workshop, DepEd participants analyzed EGRA data from Basa sites looking at the proportion of children reaching certain fluency thresholds (20 wcpm, 40 wcpm, 60 wcpm) and comprehension thresholds (40% comprehension, 60% comprehension, 80%

comprehension). This was done for two MTs (Ilokano and Sinugbuanong Binisaya), Filipino and English. Based on this data, DepEd participants set targets in terms of the proportion of children attaining these benchmarks that would be tracked for SY 2015/2016. For a full report on the benchmarking workshop, please see Annex D.

In its subsequent EGRA M&E reports, Basa reported on the percentage of children meeting the Filipino and English benchmarks of 40 wcpm and 60% comprehension, for both Grades 2 and 3. This was based on discussions with USAID as part of its Contract Monitoring Performance (CMP) plan. The M&E section of this report provides a fuller discussion on how Basa students have fared against these benchmarks.

Descriptions of characteristics of text levels in Filipino and English appropriate for Grades 1, 2 and 3 developed in close partnership with DepEd. As part of its materials development process for creating Leveled Readers for Grades 1–3, Basa developed a text gradient defining text characteristics for appropriately leveled early grade reading materials that children could read independently in Filipino and English. The Grades 1–2 gradients were developed in 2014, while the Grade 3 gradient was developed in 2015.

SUB IR 2.2. STRENGTHENED CAPACITY OF DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND/OR TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO IMPLEMENT SOUND EARLY GRADE READING DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS IN ENGLISH, FILIPINO, AND AT LEAST TWO MOTHER TONGUES

EGRA survey in four MTs. Per USAID guidance in early 2015, Basa and RTI directly supported an EGRA and classroom observation in four MTs (Ilokano, Sinugbuanong Binisaya, Hiligaynon and Maguindanaon) following a similar assessment conducted by RTI International in 2014. The main goal of the 2015 replication activity was to gauge progress compared to 2014 in early grade reading performance in four MTs. The 2015 EGRA in four MTs was designed and implemented in close collaboration with RTI and DepEd, and was increasingly viewed by USAID and DepEd as a capacity building exercise to implement early grade reading diagnostic tools and improve DepEd's capacity to track nationwide trends in early grade reading performance.

Basa commissioned a third-party contractor to lead data collection activities in the field while making every effort to capacitate and transfer knowledge to designated DepEd personnel for future implementation without outside assistance. Based on assessment, DepEd now has the capacity to plan and conduct the EGRA assessment from training to data collection. Of important note, however, is DepEd personnel were not involved in data analysis and interpretation, nor did they program the tablets or analyzed data during training sessions to ensure inter-rater reliability. These tasks were undertaken by RTI, and subsequent results were shared during the Early Grade Reading Summit in August 2015. The external service provider has recommended that DepEd should further train its staff on the EGRA software, adherence to standard protocols and procedures and pilot testing of the instruments to troubleshoot issues or problems prior to field testing.

SUB IR 2.3: IMPROVED CAPACITY OF DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO TRACK NATIONWIDE TRENDS IN EARLY GRADE READING PERFORMANCE

DepEd capacity building on EGRA. In the first half of 2016, Basa conducted several capacity building workshops for DepEd

to reinforce evidence-based decision-making at the national level as well as data collection at the division level. On January 8, 2016, Dr. Elena Vinogradova, then EDC's Director for Monitoring and Evaluation visited Manila to provide an in-depth presentation on main approaches to analyze EGRA results for evidence-based decision-making based on the most recent guidance from USAID. The Basa M&E team also conducted EGRA Assessors' Training for 31 DepEd assessors followed by the practice test and actual fieldwork for the 2016 EGRA assessment during January–February 2016.

Results of Basa's annual EGRA M&E data collection were also consistently shared with DepEd partners—from national and regional officials, to division supervisors, school heads, teachers and even parents. This enabled DepEd partners to reflect on progress made as well as the remaining gaps that need to be addressed in improving children's literacy outcomes.

> "Basa helped me grow professionally and personally. It created an avenue for me to appreciate the value of reading and its impact to the improvement of literacy rate in basic education."
>
> **– Jenifer Corpuz,** *Principal,* DepEd Cebu Province

Research on children's multilingual literacy learning trajectories under MTB-MLE. As part of its policy support to DepEd national, Basa conducted a special research from 2015–2017 to examine whether the literacy learning trajectories of students in schools implementing the MTB-MLE policy were consistent with expected policy outcomes. Although conducted by Basa staff, the study was not an examination of the impact of interventions in schools served by Basa. Rather, it explored whether or not initial MTB-MLE implementation was having the desired effect across a broad sample of schools using three different mother tongues. It also examined the extent to which the similarity of MT to Filipino affected Filipino literacy acquisition, and the extent to which policy expectations about language transition were appropriate. A sample of 245 students was tracked from Grades 1 through 3 in 15 schools in Cebu, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur and Laguna (Tagalog MT, which is linguistically very similar to Filipino). Students' oral reading fluency in their MT, Filipino and English was assessed annually using the relevant EGRA tools. The study found that Mother Tongue, Filipino and English literacy trajectories were consistent with expectations, but most students were not yet reading proficiently in these languages by Grade 3. It also found that a strong literacy foundation in a student's MT was associated with higher Filipino and English fluency. For further discussion on the findings of the MTB-MLE study, please refer to the M&E section of this report, and to Annex E to access the full research report.

SUB IR 2.4. INCREASE ADVOCACY FOR EARLY GRADE READING AT LOCAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

***Brigada Eskwela* and early grade reading.** Basa maximized DepEd's annual week-long campaign to prepare public schools for the start of the school year to integrate early grade reading promotion among school officials, parents and other stakeholders. In 2014, Basa distributed an initial set of 270,000 supplementary English books donated by Brother's Brother Foundation (BBF) during the *Brigada Eskwela* period, including book shopping activities. Over the course of 2013–2015, BBF donated over 800,000 supplementary English books imported from US publishers. On May 2015, Basa turned over supplementary books to Grade 3 teachers in La Union and Cebu. On May 22, 2015, as part of the *Brigada Eskwela* culmination activity, Basa handed over TLMs, school furniture and supplies to Yolanda-hit schools in Sogod district. Basa continued to support *Brigada Eskwela* in 2017 by conducting half-day parent workshops on home-based support to children's language and literacy skills. This was in keeping with the new DepEd leadership's thrust of

elevating the original goal of *Brigada* from improving maintenance of school facilities through community volunteerism to using this activity as a catalyst for achieving higher learning outcomes at the school level. This new *Brigada Eskwela* activity was so appreciated by DepEd partner divisions that they extended its implementation across several schools and districts throughout the SY 2017/2018. (See section on parenting seminars.)

Support for National Reading Month (NRM) celebrations. Beginning in November 2013, Basa actively promoted NRM to create buzz and excitement about early grade reading at the local level through read-along activities, materials development contests and the provision of reading corners. During the same year, private sector partner, National Bookstore Foundation, Inc. (NBSFI) also supported publicity efforts with Basa during NRM by hosting two read-along events in La Union and Cebu. The 2013 NRM celebrations were capped by a national level culminating event held on November 27 at the DepEd's *Bulwagan ng Karunungan*. Basa presented a six-minute presentation on the accomplishments produced with Basa partner SEAMEO INNOTECH. A mini-exhibit showcasing Basa's work and accomplishments to date was also installed at the Bulwagan.

The following year, Basa supported NRM via a partnership with Resource Room in Cebu for a joint storytelling session with Kindergarten to Grade 4 pupils from Calape Primary School in Aloguinsan District. Local DepEd officials, teachers and parents also participated in the event with pupils receiving books to bring home and practice their reading skills. In Bohol, Basa implementing partner, Save the Children conducted a storytelling caravan with Grade 3 students, logo design contests and poetry reading sessions as part of the 2014 NRM festivities.

In 2015, Basa-supported school divisions in Ilocos Sur, Bohol, Tagbilaran City, Cebu and Mandaue City kicked off the NRM celebration through storytelling workshops and reading caravans, read-a-thon contests, book distribution, read and play activities and kids' reading camp. These events enabled Basa to mobilize literacy support at the community-level; more specifically teach parents about their role in nurturing their children's love for books and reading. The NRM celebration also highlighted Basa's partnership with local education partners, namely U.S. Peace Corps, Resource Room and PBSP's Jose Aboitiz Foundation, Metro San Fernando Rotary Club, Synergeia Foundation and World Vision in promoting the early grade reading agenda with DepEd partners and local communities. In addition, Basa donated 100 supplementary English storybooks from BBF to support DepEd national's culminating activity for NRM. DepEd distributed the books during the sustained silent reading activity of more than 100 teachers and students held on November 27, 2015 at Quirino Memorial Medical Center, Quezon City.

The 2016 NRM celebrations reached an estimated 11,000 pupils who participated in activities aimed at promoting DepEd's Every Child a Reader Program, and inspiring Filipino learners to become a generation of readers. Activities included storytelling caravans and culmination events in Bohol and Tagbilaran City for approximately 9,600 learners; reading caravan in Cebu and Mandaue City for approximately 900 learners in partnership with local education group, The Resource Room; *Agbasa Tayo!* (Let Us Read!), school-based reading activities in Ilocos Norte for 254 learners; division-wide storytelling contest for teachers and reading activities for 199 learners in Ilocos Sur and

> "It is important that my children learn to read so that they will grow up to be smart and independent. I will read them stories before we go to bed, and will use storytelling to teach them good values."
>
> **– Eva Balucan**, *Parent,* Loac, Bohol

play-based reading and educational activities in La Union and San Fernando City for 288 learners.

In 2017, Basa partnered with YesPinoy Foundation chairman and actor, Dingdong Dantes for a special read-along activity with students from Highway Hills Integrated School in Mandaluyong City on October 27, 2017. During the event, USAID's Deputy Chief for Program Resources Management Chris Foley led the turnover of donated storybooks to DepEd. Mr. Dantes also shot a video with Basa to increase public awareness on the importance of reading, specifically to underscore the role of parents in supporting the development of children's reading skills at home. Throughout November, Basa conducted parent workshops and reading caravans in 41 schools in all Basa partner divisions. On November 28, 2017, USAID/Philippines Office of Education Deputy Director Jona Lai and Basa's Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) Monica Ang-Tan joined the reading month celebration in Mabilbila Integrated School in Ilocos Sur. Ms. Lai read a story to 100 K–3 pupils and unveiled the Grade 3 classroom library filled with supplementary books donated by USAID.

Parent seminars on reading awareness. Basa started implementing awareness raising activities with parents in 2015 (reaching 150 parents) and 2016 (reaching 300 parents). In 2017, half-day Basa parent workshops were facilitated together with DepEd and parent-teacher associations (PTAs) from May to November 2017. Nearly 600 parents from both urban and rural communities in all Basa divisions participated in this activity. This activity allowed Basa to share information with parents on how children in Basa schools were performing in terms of reading (using EGRA data) and simple things they could do at home to help them improve their language and literacy skills. Workshops included sessions on effective strategies for reading stories with their children, making picture books and spelling charts using recycled household items. Because of the positive feedback from parents on the community literacy seminars, DepEd plans to adopt the workshop design and materials developed by Basa and to conduct more seminars with parents for next school year.

National Teacher's Month/International Literacy Day events. USAID, in a meeting with DepEd Secretary Armin Luistro on August 2013, committed to support the National Teachers' Month (NTM) campaign through the activities of Basa Pilipinas. Basa led 2013 NTM festivities in Cebu, where two mass training events for Grades 1 and 2 teachers were held on September 5–7 and September 12–14, respectively. During the training's opening program, Basa talked about the importance of honoring teachers, specifically their role in nation-building. For the 2014 NTM, Basa took part in DepEd's celebration of National Teachers' Month by distributing local teaching and learning materials to Grades 1 and 2 teachers in all Basa sites throughout the month of September. To kick off Basa's NTM activities in 2015, USAID, with support from Basa implementing partners, BBF and NBSFI turned over about 300,000 brand new supplementary English books and 50,000 school kits to DepEd Ilocos Norte Division. The assistance benefited 318 public elementary schools and 58,800 students in Ilocos Norte. Basa also treated 346 Grade 3 teachers in Ilocos Norte to a one-day book distribution event where they shopped for new supplementary English textbooks, storybooks, decodable readers, etc. to use for classroom instruction on September 12. In 2017, Basa supported DepEd NTM activities by participating as an exhibitor in

DepEd's national celebration held in Legazpi City and producing a teacher profile video featured by USAID on its Facebook page.

Early Grade Reading Summit. Together with DepEd and RTI, a USAID contractor, Basa organized the first ever Early Grade Reading Summit on August 14, 2015, where Basa presented emerging results from its mid-project early grade reading assessment (EGRA) and research on student developmental trajectories in reading. The summit brought to the fore critical issues on early grade education, and enabled policy- and decision-makers to begin looking at how data can inform solutions to early grade literacy challenges. Aside from helping structure the design of the summit, Basa provided secretariat and production support for the event.

DepEd-USAID Research Dissemination Event. Basa shared the results of its various research activities via a forum called Examining K–3 Literacy and Learning last April 26 at the Mercure Hotel in Pasig. Presentations focused on Basa's Kindergarten implementation, EGRA monitoring, the ICT for Reading and Reading Remediation pilots, the MTB-MLE trajectory study and the gender gap in children's literacy performance. A total of 45 representatives from DepEd's national office, Basa-assisted regions and divisions, teacher education institutions and basic education NGOs participated in the day-long forum. Opening remarks prepared by DepEd Undersecretary for Administration Alain Del Pascua was presented for him by DepEd External Partnerships Director Margarita Ballesteros. DepEd Undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction Lorna Dig-Dino was also on hand to present her reactions on Basa's EGRA M&E results, comparing progress from baseline to endline. During the closing activities, Teach for the Philippines' Monette Santos-Fider and University of the Philippines College of Education Professor Hazel Preclaro shared their reflections from the day's discussions. USAID's Office of Education Director Brian Levey and Deputy Director Jona Lai also gave remarks, emphasizing their appreciation for the strong partnership and support that DepEd had extended to USAID through Basa Pilipinas. A full report documenting highlights from the April 26 forum may be found in Annex F.

BASA IMPACT

Basa's various activities under IR2 helped to focus stakeholder attention on the standards that should guide children's reading performance, the progress they were making against these standards and the issues that still needed to be addressed. Advocacy and awareness campaigns similarly put a spotlight on the importance of helping children become successful readers and galvanized multisectoral action to support their improved literacy.

BENCHMARKS FOR READING PROFICIENCY ESTABLISHED AND TRACKED

In partnership with DepEd, clearer standards for measuring children's progress were established, enabling all stakeholders, including Basa to be able to track performance against expectations and to adjust interventions when the data so indicated. Through discussions on its revised contract monitoring plan (CMP), Basa and USAID agreed to track progress against Grade 2 Filipino fluency and comprehension benchmarks of 40 wcpm and 60% comprehension. Annual targets were set against these benchmarks, and interventions were tweaked or strengthened based on whether targets were met. Basa also shared its EGRA M&E results with DepEd partners to broaden awareness about these benchmarks and how well children were faring in terms of these standards.

MULTISECTORAL AWARENESS AND SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN'S READING PROMOTED

The different awareness campaigns and dissemination events, conducted as part of annual DepEd activities such as Brigada Eskwela, NTM and NRM, helped Basa to mobilize broader stakeholder support for early grade reading. Private sector partners, NGOs, parents and community members were informed and engaged through Basa's advocacy efforts. This helped DepEd to more systematically engage parents and other partners in such reading campaigns and activities moving forward. Indeed, in closeout discussions with DepEd divisions, among the interventions that they vowed to sustain were the NRM celebrations as well as the parent seminars for reading awareness. This bodes well for continued broad-based support for children's early grade reading success even after Basa implementation has ended.

WITH TABLETS, SCHOOL LEADERS PROVIDE BETTER LITERACY SUPPORT TO FILIPINO TEACHERS

Innovative tool makes teacher supervision more efficient

"I understand that the tool was intended to help me and my principal identify the support I need to become a better teacher."

February 2018 – Booc Elementary School Principal Janess Marie Encarnado was excited after completing a USAID-supported training on teacher supervision in November 2017. She was also curious to know how her teachers will find the new approach given that in their past supervision sessions, her teachers were usually so anxious that she had little opportunity to coach and mentor them.

With USAID support, Janess was trained to use SCOPE-L, a classroom observation tool for assessing literacy instruction. The tool and other resources like tip sheets and teaching and learning materials developed by USAID's Basa Pilipinas project and implemented by Education Development Center (EDC), were all loaded in a tablet computer to make it more efficient for school heads to do teacher assessment and supervision.

Janess started using the tool right after the training, and was pleased that the process went smoothly. Grade 2 teacher, Yvette Mellalos shared that it was a refreshing change from previous classroom observations. "I wasn't scared like before because I understand that the tool was intended to help me and my principal identify the support I need to become a better teacher," said Yvette.

Principal Janess Marie Encarnado gives feedback to Grade 2 teacher, Yvette Mellalos during the post-observation conference. PHOTO BY KAREN RIVERA FOR USAID

Janess recognizes the tool's potential to improve reading instruction and intends to use it regularly. "Some school heads are still learning to use the tool but I am confident that once they are more familiar with it, they will also learn to appreciate this tool," said Janess.

By helping school heads and teachers improve literacy teaching in early grade classrooms, USAID is strengthening students' reading skills, which is key to lifelong learning.

IR 3. IMPROVED ACCESS TO QUALITY READING MATERIALS

Learning to read, and learning to love reading, requires access to quality reading materials. An important element of Basa's gains over the past five and a half years is undoubtedly the impressive number and range of appropriate, relevant and interesting reading materials USAID provided to its partner schools. Materials ranged from those important for classroom instruction to those indispensable for motivating and maintaining children's interest in reading. Materials were also diverse in terms of their origin—many were Basa-developed, some were donations from private sector partners and some were procured from local children's book publishers. During its cost-extension period, as Basa adapted to respond to DepEd priorities, USAID-provided materials expanded to include Kindergarten manipulative toys as well as tablet computers, to test new ways of enhancing children's language and literacy practice.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

USAID provided a total of 10.4 million units of books and TLMs over Basa's project life. Of this number, 73% were Basa-developed materials, 18% were purchased from local publishers, and 9% were donated by private sector partners such as Brother's Brother Foundation. This figure far exceeds Basa's original target of providing 5.8 million TLMs. It should also be noted that some private sector partners, such as Petron Foundation Inc. (PFI), provided cash to procure locally published books.

The impetus for the types and range of TLMs provided under Basa is inextricably linked to DepEd's vision for literacy instruction. Each type of material served a purpose connected to the domains or competencies children needed to learn under the DepEd curriculum. Basa started its materials development process with an analysis of the

> One of the biggest challenges in DepEd Region 7 was the shortage of quality and age appropriate learning materials especially in kindergarten. Basa Pilipinas came and took the lead in developing quality, relevant and developmentally appropriate learning resources, in training the teachers and in putting the systems in place.
>
> **–Dr. Emiliano Elnar, Jr**
> *Curriculum Implementation Division Chief,*
> DepEd Region 7

K–3 language arts curriculum. From this analysis, it was clear that children needed a variety of materials to develop the various language and literacy domains. They needed books to be read aloud by their teacher to develop vocabulary, listening comprehension and even grammar skills. They needed books they could decode and read independently, with text difficulty levels appropriate to their needs. Their teachers also required guidance on how to orchestrate the teaching of DepEd's literacy curriculum through the use of USAID-provided children's literature. Thus, the RTGs, Leveled Readers and Big Books were born.

Some materials—such as the MG Supplementary Outlines or the ICT for Reading app—were developed in response to DepEd-articulated priorities and needs assessment. Although not originally part of Basa's materials package, the MG Outlines were developed as part of the legacy of materials USAID could leave behind for the DepEd system.

Moreover, in addition to the 3,025 schools directly assisted by Basa, USAID materials are now accessible to all public schools in the country via DepEd's Learning Resource Portal. Teachers can access the Basa-developed RTGs, Leveled Readers and MG Outlines for all grade levels and languages via the portal.

DepEd itself has already adopted four of Basa's RTGs for nationwide use. The Grade 1 English Teacher's Guide that DepEd provided all schools in SY 2016/2017 and the Grade 1 Filipino Teacher's Guide it provided schools in SY 2017/2018, were both adaptations of Basa's RTGs. In early 2018, DepEd informed Basa that it was developing Learner's Materials (LMs) for Grade 2 Filipino and Grade 3 Filipino and English based on the Basa RTGs. DepEd plans to update/revise the Basa RTGs to realign with the LMs for printing and nationwide distribution and use.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

SUB IR 3.1. INCREASED AVAILABILITY AND ACCESS TO AGE AND GENDER APPROPRIATE, CULTURE SPECIFIC EARLY GRADE READING MATERIALS IN ENGLISH, FILIPINO AND AT LEAST TWO MOTHER TONGUES

Revised Teacher's Guides. Basa developed a set of RTGs for Grades 1–3 for the various language subjects. Each RTG was based on the scope and sequence of competencies set by the DepEd Curriculum Guide. The RTGs followed a carefully planned 10-day instructional routine, allowing teachers to provide instruction to cover the targeted domains and competencies for that week, using the sets of children's books provided by USAID. The RTGs also included special features such

TABLE 2. BASA-DEVELOPED RTGS PROVIDED TO GRADES 1–3 TEACHERS					
	Sinugbuanong Binisaya	**Ilokano**	**Filipino**	**English**	**Total**
Grade 1	Q1-Q4: 10,832	Q1-Q4: 5,600	Q2-Q4: 12,324	Q3-Q4: 8,216	**36,972**
Grade 2	Q1: 2,642	Q1: 1,392	Q1-Q4: 12,102	Q1-Q4: 12,102	**28,238**
Grade 3	N/A	N/A	Q1-Q4: 16,144	Q1-Q4: 16,144	**32,288**
Total	**13,474**	**6,992**	**40,570**	**36,462**	**97,498**

as Bridging text boxes, ongoing assessment guidance, and notes to the teacher.

The Grade s1 and 2 RTGs were developed first in 2014. The Grade 3 RTGs followed in 2015. For the two MTs, Basa only developed RTGs (and associated Big Books and Leveled Readers) for all four quarters of Grade 1 and the first quarter of Grade 2. This allowed Basa to focus its resources on supporting children's literacy in the less familiar second and third languages. All RTGs went through the process of DepEd content and language review before they could be authorized for use in classrooms and distributed to schools. The table above sums up the types and numbers of RTGs provided to teachers in Basa schools.

All of the Grades 1–3 RTGs used RAs as springboards for literacy instruction. For Grade 3, Basa decided to use specially developed Listening Stories that were linked to the Leveled Readers used for that week. The texts for the Listening Stories were included in the RTG lesson plans. For Grades 1–2, Basa used commercially available children's book titles developed into Big Book format, selected according to their fit to the weekly themes set by the curriculum and used in the RTGs.

Big Books for Grade 1 and 2 Read Alouds (RA). To enable teachers to develop children's vocabulary, listening comprehension and other literacy domains across the three languages (MT, Filipino and English), Basa provided sets of Big Books as per the established 10-day instructional routine.

Basa selected existing children's book titles that were aligned with the themes specified in the curriculum and in the RTGs and that met standards for grade-appropriate RA stories. Publishers contracted to provide these titles included Vibal, Tahanan, OMF, Lampara and Adarna. Titles were selected by a committee composed of Basa technical staff and reading expert-consultants.
A total of 96 Big Book titles were selected for Grades 1 and 2 use. A list of the RA titles provided by grade level can be found in Annex G.

TABLE 3. BIG BOOKS PROVIDED TO GRADES 1–2 TEACHERS					
	MT Sinugbuanong Binisaya	**MT Ilokano**	**Filipino**	**English**	**Total**
Grade 1	54,160	28,000	61,620	143,780	**287,560**
Grade 2	N/A	N/A	82,160	82,160	**164,320**
TOTAL	**54,160**	**28,000**	**143,780**	**225,940**	**451,880**

The summary table above is the number of Grades 1–2 Big Books provided throughout project life.

During Basa training, teachers were guided on how to effectively use these RA books within their weekly instruction, following the detailed guidance provided in the RTGs. Training videos were also developed demonstrating the pre-reading, during reading and post-reading conversations that teachers needed to do with their learners as part of the RA. Copies of the videos were also provided to schools so that teachers could refer back to these demonstrations during their school-based Literacy LAC sessions.

Leveled Readers. Children need appropriate texts with which to practice guided and independent reading. Text difficulty can determine the success of reading instruction. If a text is too hard, the learner will not be able to apply the skills or strategies being taught. On the other hand, if the text is too easy, the learner will not be able to apply strategies to meet the demands of increasingly difficult texts.

Thus, Basa developed a set of Leveled Readers for all three languages and grade levels. These books followed text gradients appropriate for each grade level and language. The text complexity gradually increased as learners went further into the school year. For certain titles, particularly those used after the first half of the school year, two versions of the same story were produced: 1) the one-dot version was relatively easy, while the two-dot version was relatively challenging. Again, the procedures for using these readers in differentiated classroom instruction, including how to group children based on the type of text difficulty appropriate to their reading level, was explained in teacher training sessions, as well as in LAC trigger videos that teachers could use as reference in between INSET periods.

Basa provided schools with a total of 6.8 million units of Leveled Readers over project life. Of these, 19% were in the two MTs, 43% were in Filipino and 38% were in English. The table above summarizes the number of Leveled Readers provided to schools.

TABLE 4. BASA-DEVELOPED LEVELED READERS IN MT, FILIPINO AND ENGLISH PROVIDED TO GRADES 1–3 TEACHERS

	MT Sinugbuanong Binisaya	MT Ilokano	Filipino	English	Total
Grade 1	809,615	343,869	N/A	N/A	**1,153,484**
Grade 2	112,799	59,431	1,137,399	786,622	**2,096,251**
Grade 3	N/A	N/A	1,809,302	1,809,302	**3,618,604**
TOTAL	**922,414**	**403,300**	**2,946,701**	**2,595,924**	**6,868,339**

A list of the Leveled Reader titles provided by grade level can be found in Annex H.

Multigrade (MG) Supplementary Outlines. In response to the sizeable number of schools in Basa areas where early grade teachers handled more than one grade level, Basa developed the MG Outlines. These were developed for the use of Grades 1 and 2 and Grades 2 and 3 MG teachers, and designed to be used alongside the Basa RTGs, Leveled Readers and Big Books. The outlines aimed to help teachers better facilitate differentiated instruction and effectively teach reading and writing in a multi-grouped/combination class. It indicated which parts of a lesson could be delivered with both grade levels together, which activities were intended only for one grade level and what activities teachers could provide the other grade level while working with the other group. Basa distributed a total 6,705 MG Outlines to its partner schools during project life.

Kindergarten Big Books. For Kindergarten, Basa focused in developing a set of 40 Big Book titles aligned with the weekly themes identified in the DepEd Kindergarten Teacher's Guide. These books were designed to be used by teachers during the Story Time period under the Blocks of Time approach.

Basa decided to develop a set of Big Books because its formative research in the field indicated that many teachers did not have access to MT Read Aloud materials, leading them to sometimes skip this block of time. Because Story Time is fundamental to children's emergent literacy

development, Basa went ahead and developed a set of titles that were developmentally appropriate, relevant and aligned with the Kindergarten curriculum.

In developing these Big Books, Basa worked with DepEd in identifying existing Big Books made by teachers that could be adapted for use—most of which were designated for the first two quarters of the year. In 2017, Basa conducted a writeshop with Kindergarten teachers, selected jointly with DepEd, to develop an additional set of titles for use during the last half of the school year. All titles went through a formal content and language review by DepEd and approved for classroom use. All books were laid out and illustrated by well-regarded children's book designers and illustrators. Scheduling of production and distribution ensured that the books would be in the hands of the Kindergarten teachers before the start of the quarter when they needed it. The two cycles of training provided to teachers incorporated content and activities demonstration on how these books would be used during instruction. Please refer to Annex I for a list of the Kindergarten Big Books.

Kindergarten manipulative toys. Basa ensured that all USAID-assisted classrooms had access to materials needed for the different work periods under the Blocks of Time approach. For this reason, each Kindergarten classroom was provided with a set of manipulative toys that children could use to develop different skills and competencies, including gross and fine motor skills, concept development, numeracy and literacy. Basa worked with a local non-profit benefiting people with disabilities (PWD), *Tahanang Walang Hagdanan*, to produce the sets of table blocks, shape sorters, lacing beads and other manipulative toys provided to each Kindergarten classroom. Basa also provided sets of puzzles using illustrations from its Kindergarten Big Books. The manipulatives kits were accompanied by a detailed guidance note on how to integrate the use of these toys in the various Blocks of Time. During the distribution process, Basa staff also provided an orientation on the manipulatives and how they could be used so that teachers would be well prepared to have children use the various materials in learning activities. A total of 3,658 Kindergarten classrooms were provided with these manipulatives. Annex J provides a detailed list of the different manipulatives included in each kit.

Supplementary books for K–3 classroom libraries. Practice and motivation are key for children to continually progress in their literacy development. Children need a wide variety of reading materials with which to practice their reading skills. Thus,

Basa also provided sets of supplemental books for each grade level from K–3, to augment the titles they could choose from in their classroom library. The books were accompanied by a guidance note for teachers on how they could maximize the use of their classroom libraries. The supplementary books were selected by teams of Basa staff and consultants, based on selection criteria that considered factors such as themes, topics, text difficulty, genre, language and illustrations used. Basa provided 43 titles for each KG classroom, 83 titles for Grade 1, 63 titles for Grade 2 and 68 titles for Grade 3. In total, 1.5 million supplementary books were distributed to 15,842 Basa-assisted K–3 classrooms.

SUB IR 3.2 THE SUCCESSFUL PILOTING AND EVALUATION OF AN APPROPRIATE, COST-EFFECTIVE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY FOR EDUCATION (ICT4E) APPROACH TO IMPROVING ACCESS TO READING MATERIALS IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE FREE VOLUNTARY READING IN AT LEAST 20 SCHOOLS

The ICT for Reading Pilot was launched in 2017 in response to DepEd's request to USAID for an initiative that would test the use of tablet computers in improving children's learning. Implemented in all 26 schools in the City Division of San Fernando, La Union, the pilot was implemented to test the use of tablets in enhancing Grade 3 student reading skills.

The pilot was implemented from August 2017 to February 2018. A total of 369 tablets were distributed to all 26 elementary public schools in San Fernando, and were loaded with digital copies of Grade 3 Basa Pilipinas Leveled Readers and a localized version of the EDC-developed Vernacular reading app, which combines audio files and visuals in interactive literacy learning activities. Activities in the app focused on both Filipino and English Leveled Readers.

Participating schools were assigned to five groups: 1) 8-week exposure; 2) 16-week exposure; 3) 20-week basic exposure with no additional inputs; (4) 20-week exposure with additional home reinforcement (tablets could be taken home during the semester and Christmas breaks) and 5) 20-week exposure with additional in-class use facilitated by the teacher. All groups had participants read the digital Leveled Readers and use the Vernacular app on a set schedule during every school day. What varied was either the number of weeks of exposure or whether they had additional home or teacher reinforcement.

A research study was designed to explore how much and what kinds of tablet-based literacy support make a difference in the

> "The materials helped us a lot. Before these materials were given to our school, we experienced problems in the ratio of the textbooks. We also have problem on reading comprehension of pupils both in English and Filipino. Now that the Basa materials were given to our school, we have a remarkable improvement in the reading comprehension of pupils."
>
> **–Ofelia Arcinas,**
> *Head Teacher,* Urzadan Elementary School-Bago Tribe School, Ilocos Sur

reading fluency and comprehension of Grade 3 learners. Research questions included:

1. *Does longer exposure to tablet-based reading content lead to improved reading scores (fluency and comprehension)?*
2. *Does home reinforcement of classroom tablet use lead to improved reading scores?*
3. Does teacher discussion of the tablet-*based reading app lessons lead to improved reading scores?*

The full research report detailing the results of this study is included in Annex K. Findings from student reading assessments showed that all research groups showed statistically significant gains in both English and Filipino fluency, while most groups showed statistically significant gains in comprehension except for the 8-weeks Group (in Filipino) and the 20-week In-Class Use Group (in English). The 20-weeks Basic Group had significantly higher fluency scores than the 8-weeks Group, indicating an increased effect of increased exposure. Home reinforcement and in-class use with teacher facilitation did not produce additional significant gains, when compared to 20 weeks of student use only.

In a debrief meeting with officials and school heads of San Fernando City last April 2018, DepEd confirmed that they would continue using the app with their Grade 3 students in SY 2018/2019. An updated version of the Vernacular app was provided to the Division of San Fernando via an installer kit, so that tablets could be loaded with the final version.

SUB-RESULT 3.3 SUCCESSFUL ESTABLISHMENT OF AT LEAST TWO PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO LEVERAGE COUNTERPART RESOURCES, ESPECIALLY READING MATERIALS, EQUIVALENT TO AT LEAST 10% OF TOTAL PROJECT COST

Basa's efforts to partner with the private sector to generate additional resources for early grade reading began in 2013. During Year 1, Basa mobilized support from partners PBSP, NBSFI and PFI to distribute close to 25,000 early grade reading books. PBSP member companies donated 12 reading corners to Basa-supported schools in La Union (6 schools) and in Cebu (6 schools). This was done through the *Balik Baterya* program of PBSP and Oriental Motolite Corporation. Proceeds were used to fund the reading corners. NBSFI donated four reading corners with more than 300 books each to deserving schools in La Union and Cebu. PFI also contributed big books and storybooks for distribution in select schools.

In 2014, Basa's partnership with BBF resulted in the delivery of 270,000 high quality supplementary English reading materials for Grade 3 teachers and pupils in La Union, Cebu and Bohol. Book distribution was organized during DepEd's *Brigada Eskwela* in May and through "book shopping" events during Basa's May and October mass teacher trainings. These events were conducted with full support from DepEd. Also in 2014, PFI released PhP 5.88 million (USD$265,000) funding support for Basa to purchase locally

published Filipino and English books and materials. Of the total fund, the amount of PhP 3.56 million (USD$79,000) was approved by PFI on February 17, 2014 to procure 21,000 big books for Grade 1 teachers during April and May of 2014. Further, 3,100 Filipino and English reading books costing PhP 596,000 (USD$13,244) donated by PFI from their contribution was distributed to Grade 3 teachers during Basa trainings in Cebu in mid to late February 2014. Meanwhile, NBSFI continually provided support to the Basa program by offering discounted materials and free packaging and shipment, as well as supplementary materials to support the program's objectives of improving reading outcomes across the Philippines. NBSFI also donated books to typhoon-affected areas assisted by Basa in the second quarter of 2014.

As of end-2015, Basa had leveraged resources, considerably exceeding the stated goal of 10% of the total project cost. The majority of leveraged resources was donated by BBF, which provided over 800,000 high-quality supplementary English reading materials. Of these, Basa distributed over 560,000 BBF books in Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur divisions in 2015. NBSFI donated over 37,000 back-to-school kits for K–Grade 3 pupils of Ilocos Norte division. PFI, for its part, allocated an additional PhP 2,000,000 (USD$43,000) for 2015 program activities.

In 2016, Basa continued its efforts to engage corporate partners to leverage resources for supplementary reading materials. To this end, the PFI—EDC's long-term local partner in the Philippines, allocated PhP 2,000,000 (approximately USD$43,000) for the procurement and distribution of 30,810 locally published English and Filipino storybooks for 960 Grades 1, 2 and MG teachers from 258 schools in three city divisions and 11 provincial districts. The selection of priority schools was closely coordinated with DepEd divisions with inputs from Basa field offices. Distribution of these supplementary reading materials was completed by end of July 2016.

All told, Basa was able to establish four public-private partnerships and generate leveraged resources equivalent to more than USD$5 million from its private sector partners throughout project life. These resources not only enabled Basa to exceed its reading materials provision targets, but also extended the range and reach of USAID resources in improving early grade reading, as well as in providing much-needed assistance to communities affected by natural disasters. A detailed presentation of Basa's public-private partnership (PPP)-generated leveraged resources can be found in Annex L.

BASA IMPACT

Teachers and students in every single USAID-assisted school benefited from the full suite of teaching and learning materials integral to Basa's approach to improving early grade reading. In addition, schools across the country saw improved DepEd Grade 1 Teacher's Guides in English and Filipino after DepEd officially adopted the Basa RTGs for these subjects in SY 2015/2016 and SY 2016/2017. DepEd also demonstrated its confidence in the soundness of USAID-provided materials by uploading these to the DepEd Learning Resource Portal; using Basa-selected Big Books and the training that accompanied these as part of the nationwide ELLN training and endorsing the use of its own DepEd MG funds to reproduce Basa's Leveled Readers for use in MG classrooms.

> "With the MG outlines, lesson planning becomes lighter because the activities and sequence of lessons are all there. There are clear activities and directions for making instructional materials."

> It is a great honor for Ilocos Norte to have writers of Big Books. This helped localize and indigenize the materials. Materials now reflect the realities of learners and the values of their communities.
>
> **– Ritchelle Dejolde,** *Education Program Supervisor,* DepEd Ilocos Norte.

LITERACY COMES ALIVE IN BASA CLASSROOMS

Through USAID's provision of a whole range of books and TLMs for every K–3 classroom, children are now able to experience and benefit from authentic language and literacy practice. Oral language skills, vocabulary and comprehension are strengthened via the use of Big Books for Kindergarten Story Time or Grades 1–2 RAs. Independent reading skills are built through interesting stories written at appropriate language and vocabulary levels through Basa's Leveled Readers—the first time ever that leveled texts became available to public schools. With guidance from the RTGs, teachers are able to orchestrate the use of these children's books through scaffolded instruction that touch all 14 domains and help children bridge their knowledge across languages. Children are able to access interesting and varied supplementary books in their classroom libraries during their free time. All four languages are represented in these materials, enabling children to build their multilingual and multiliteracy skills.

Marjorie Semana, a MG teacher from Madalayap Elementary School in Ilocos Norte, expounded on what had changed in her classroom with the new Basa materials. "Initially, I had to adjust and understand how to use the new materials from Basa. But the children are really excited when we read the books. Because the stories are more contextualized, it's easier for the children to connect to the text. I can also draw more examples based on the experiences of my pupils and relate it to our lesson. They are more active and participate in group activities too."

In the case of the Kindergarten books, the fact that they were written by DepEd teachers themselves bolster their relevance even more.

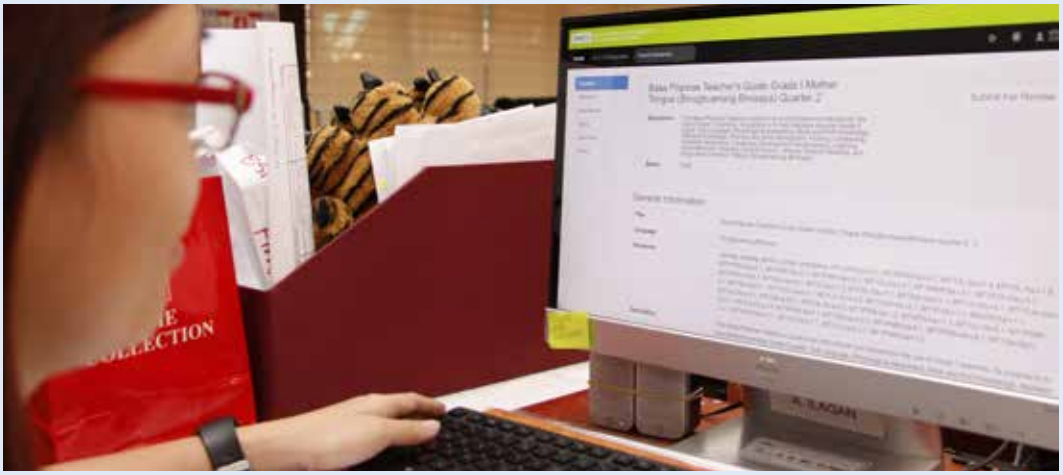
NATIONWIDE SCALE AND REACH THROUGH DEPED UPTAKE

The potential for USAID materials to benefit many more millions of children was realized with DepEd's decision to use Basa's RTGs for Grade 1 Filipino and English as its own official teacher's guide. This enabled USAID to indirectly reach 3.6 million children nationwide.

DepEd has also continually demonstrated its confidence in the approaches and materials that Basa has developed. It uploaded all Basa RTGs, Leveled Readers and MG Outlines onto the DepEd Learning Resource Portal. This made Basa materials downloadable by any teacher in any school across the country. DepEd also requested Basa to orient all 220 divisions and 17 regions on how to use these materials available on the portal.

With the issuance of *DepEd Order 64, s2016*, Basa's Leveled Readers became an authorized nationwide resource for MG classrooms across the Philippines. In 2018, DepEd also authorized the procurement of all Basa Leveled Readers for Grades 1–3 for distribution and use in all schools across the country. DepEd has also used the Basa RTGs in developing new sets of Learner's Materials for Grade 2 Filipino and Grade 3 Filipino and English, which are currently under review and evaluation. With broader use of these USAID-developed materials, hopes are high that literacy classrooms and learning outcomes all over the Philippines will be similarly transformed.

EXPANDING USE OF BASA PILIPINAS MATERIALS THROUGH THE DEPED LEARNING RESOURCE PORTAL



Teachers, when asked what kind of support they need for classroom instruction, often cite materials as their top answer.

When Basa began developing teaching and learning materials for K–3 classrooms, DepEd quickly recommended that the materials be uploaded to their official, web-based platform called the Learning Resource Portal (https://lrmds.deped.gov.ph), which stores all DepEd-developed and DepEd-approved learning resources for educational purposes. This will ensure that Basa materials are made available long after the project has ended, and are widely shared to all teachers for continued use. With more than 630,000 active users throughout the country and 6,400 published resources, the LR Portal has become the leading source of educational materials for DepEd teachers and school administrators in the Philippines.

In 2016, Basa turned over digital copies of teaching and learning materials in Mother Tongue (Ilokano and Sinugbuanong Binisaya), Filipino and English developed for Grades 1–3, including the Revised Teacher's Guides, Leveled Readers and Multigrade Supplementary Outlines. Basa also shared training manuals and videos on effective literacy instruction and other teaching aids. By first quarter of 2018, Basa submitted the final set of materials, including the Kindergarten Storybooks, training course packages, toolkits and other media resources for uploading to the portal.

Most Downloaded Materials

As of July 2018, there are **260** Basa-developed resources published in the portal. According to analytics generated from the LR Portal, total number of downloads of Basa materials is **154,099**. Leveled Readers are the most downloaded Basa materials (43% of total number of downloads) in the portal, followed by the Revised Teacher's Guides (27.9%) and the Multigrade Outlines (25.6%). The new set of Basa materials, which have only been uploaded in June 2018, had already been downloaded 5,500 times. Comparatively, Grade 3 materials have been downloaded the most, followed by Grade 2 and Grade 1. The top 10 materials with the most number of downloads are shown in the next table.

	Title	Resource Type	Grade Level	Date Published	Downloads
1	Basa Pilipinas Gabay sa Pagtuturo ng Filipino Unang Baitang: Yunit 2	Teacher's Guide	Grade 1	25-May-16	**4,582**
2	Kuwento ng Magkapatid na Daga: Si Kiko at si Tomas | Kuwento ng Magkapatid na Daga: Pakikipagsapalaran sa Siyudad	Learning Material	Grade 3	13-Jun-16	**3,751**
3	Basa Pilipinas Gabay sa Pagtuturo ng Filipino Unang Baitang: Yunit 4	Teacher's Guide	Grade 1	25-May-16	**2,836**
4	Basa Pilipinas Gabay sa Pagtuturo ng Filipino Ikalawang Baitang: Yunit 1	Teacher's Guide	Grade 2	25-May-16	**2,783**
5	Basa Pilipinas Lingguhang Gabay ng Guro sa Filipino para sa Multigrade na Klase (Baitang 1 at 2) Yunit 2 (Even Cycle)	Teacher's Guide	Multigrade	19-Jul-16	**2,524**
6	Basa Pilipinas Teacher's Guide Grade 1 English Quarter 4	Teacher's Guide	Grade 1	25-May-16	**2,477**
7	Basa Pilipinas Teacher's Guide Grade 1 English Quarter 3	Teacher's Guide	Grade 1	25-May-16	**2,413**
8	Ang mga Pambansang Produkto -- Relatively Challenging (2-dots)	Learning Material	Grade 3	17-Jul-16	**2,337**
9	Basa Pilipinas Supplementary Outlines for Multigrade Classes (Grades 2&3) English Quarter 1 (Even Cycle)	Teacher's Guide	Multigrade	19-Jul-16	**2,320**
10	Basa Pilipinas Lingguhang Gabay ng Guro sa Filipino para sa Multigrade na Klase (Baitang 1 at 2) Yunit 2 (Odd Cycle)	Teacher's Guide	Multigrade	19-Jul-16	**2,266**

Source: *DepEd Learning Resource Portal Dashboard, July 11, 2018*

Most Active Users

A closer look at the geographic location of users of the most downloaded materials for each resource type shows that the most active users or downloaders of Basa materials are from schools in Region 6 (Western Visayas). Across Luzon, users from Region 5 (Bicol Region) accessed the Basa materials the most, while in Mindanao, Region 10 (Northern Mindanao) registered the highest number of downloads of Basa resources. The next table presents the ranking based on the number of downloads across all 17 regions and schools divisions.

Basa's legacy materials have become firmly entrenched within the DepEd system through the Learning Resource Portal. Evidence-based data shows that teachers from non-Basa supported divisions have been accessing the full suite of Basa materials from the portal, and the rate has been consistently high in Region 6 and Region 5. This proves that even without direct intervention, Basa's transformative approaches and materials in early grade reading will continue to benefit teachers and learners for generations to come.

	Most Active Region	Most Active School Division
1	Region 6 – Western Visayas	Capiz
2	Region 5 – Bicol Region	Camarines Sur
3	Region 7 – Central Visayas	Bohol
4	Region 4A – CALABARZON	Cavite
5	Region 3 – Central Luzon	Bataan
6	Region 10 – Northern Mindanao	Bukidnon
7	Region 11 – Davao Region	Tagum City
8	Region 12 – SOCCSKSARGEN	South Cotabato
9	Region 8 – Eastern Visayas	Leyte and Southern Leyte
10	Region 1 – Ilocos Region	Pangasinan I
11	Region 2 – Cagayan Valley	Isabela
12	Region 13 – CARAGA	Agusan del Norte
13	National Capital Region	Taguig City
14	Region 4B – MIMAROPA Region	Oriental Mindoro
15	Region 9 – Zamboanga Peninsula	Zamboanga del Norte
16	Cordillera Autonomous Region	Benguet
17	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	

Source: *DepEd Learning Resource Portal Dashboard, July 11, 2018*

YOUNG GIRL IN RURAL PHILIPPINES BRAVES THE SEA TO READ AND LEARN

Engaging lessons and storybooks spark children's love of reading

"She enjoys school more than ever. When she comes home in the afternoon, she tells us everything that she did in class. After dinner, she would read to us from her books."

July 2018 – Silagon, a small and remote islet located southwest of Bantayan Island in Cebu, central Philippines is home to seven-year old Crisha*.

There are only 83 families living on the islet with an estimated population of 300. Its rocky terrain makes it difficult to plant even the most versatile of crops so most people rely on fishing as their main source of income.

Access to basic needs and services such as electricity, fresh water and produce is severely limited and costly, and requires frequent trips to the main island of Bantayan. The location of the community also makes it difficult for children to study.

Like other school children on the islet, Crisha and her sister attend classes across the main island in the coastal village of Sulangan.

Without life vests, they board a small boat to school with a friend. They take turns steering it with a long bamboo pole. The trip takes 40 minutes each way, but a bit longer during low tide when they have to wade on ankle-deep water, halfway through.

The trip is risky. Twice, the girls fell overboard when they lost their balance while prying the pole free when it got stuck on the rocks. But despite these challenging circumstances, nothing could keep the girls from going to school everyday.

**Full name withheld to protect identity*

Seven year-old Crisha spends her vacant period in class sharpening her reading skills. She decodes printed text from a leveled reader taking cues from the picture on each page to help her understand the story.

PHOTO BY KAREN RIVERA FOR USAID

"I don't want to be absent from school because I don't want to miss our lessons," says Crisha, who is currently in third grade.

Every day that Crisha bravely crosses the sea to get to school, she is taking a step toward her dream of becoming a teacher.

Crisha's parents understand the value of education and admire their daughter's drive and ambition. Her mother, Amy, was not able to finish high school and her husband only had four years of primary education.

"My husband's income from fishing can barely support us. We want a better future for our daughters. They have better opportunities if they are educated," says Amy.

Hermida Alota was Crisha's teacher in second grade. She shared a fond memory of her young student, "From the start, Crisha has always been eager to learn but she became even more interested when I started to make my lessons more fun through storytelling and interactive activities."

Alota credits the change in her teaching practices to USAID's Basa Pilipinas (Basa) project, which is working with the Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) to improve students' reading skills in the early grades, which is key to lifelong learning.

With USAID support, Alota and 16,000 teachers in Kindergarten to Grade 3 were provided new sets of teacher guides, leveled readers and supplementary books in English, Filipino and select mother tongue languages in Ilokano and Sinugbuanong Binisaya. Teachers were also trained on how to use the materials to teach reading more effectively.

"Because I have all the tools I need as a teacher—from the teacher guides to the various reading materials that support my lessons—I can focus on engaging my students more meaningfully in class," she says.

To take their interest in reading beyond the classroom, Alota sends her students storybooks to read at home. These reading materials keep Crisha occupied on rainy days, when it is too dangerous to take the boat to school.

For Crisha, these interventions have sparked an even greater interest to come to school and learn. Not only is she learning to read but she is also developing a deep love of reading.

"She enjoys school more than ever. When she comes home in the afternoon, she tells us everything that she did in class. After dinner, she would read to us from her books," says her mother.

By training all teachers and providing teaching and learning materials to all schools in Basa-supported regions, USAID is helping unlock young people's potential to achieve their dreams and have a better future.

USAID's Basa Pilipinas project, which has run from 2013 to 2018, has strengthened the reading skills of more than 1.8 million students from Kindergarten to Grade 3, trained more than 19,000 teachers and school heads and provided more than 10.4 million copies of teacher guides, storybooks and other education aids to 3,000 public elementary schools. Some of these materials have been widely adopted by DepEd and will soon be distributed to all schools throughout the 7,641 island archipelago of the Philippines.

CROSS-CUTTING COMPONENTS

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

In support of DepEd's mother tongue-based early grade instructional reform, Basa led several research studies that looked at changes in children's reading performance associated with Basa's core approach and pilot innovations. Beginning in 2013 through 2018, Basa conducted annual evaluations using EGRA to examine the project's contribution to literacy achievement in its target regions. Basa also produced a policy report on DepEd's MTB-MLE implementation, as well as a study on gender differences in early grade reading. In its final implementation year, Basa expanded its research portfolio to include a Kindergarten literacy assessment and the pilot-testing of innovations in DepEd priority areas of reading remediation and ICT for reading. Highlights of key findings on the various research activities spearheaded by the project are outlined below.

FINAL EVALUATION (GRADES 2–3)

As part of its scheduled M&E activities, Basa conducted its fifth and final annual outcome evaluation to measure changes on reading performance of learners in Basa's focal areas—Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Bohol and Cebu. Basa implemented EGRA with a random sample of learners prior to the rollout of the Basa intervention in SY 2013/2014, and subsequently each year thereafter. The study followed a cross-sectional design to examine changes in student achievement of Grades 2 and 3 learners in reading in Filipino and English.

When compared to average 2013 baseline Filipino scores, Grade 2 pupils assessed in 2018 had significantly higher scores in EGRA subtests focused on the DepEd language and literacy domains of alphabet knowledge, reading fluency (oral passage reading and prosody), reading comprehension and writing (dictation). After four years of Basa, Grade 2 learners were able to read an additional 4.7 words correct per minute, correctly identify 5.9 more letter sounds, answer 14% more comprehension questions and score 18.6% higher on a writing/dictation task than their counterparts at the same grade level who were tested before Basa began.

Filipino reading fluency (40 wcpm) and comprehension (60% correct answers) benchmarks were established by DepEd in 2015 to determine what percentage of learners were attaining reading proficiency in the national language. In 2014, only 45%

TABLE 5. AVERAGE GRADE 2 EGRA RESULTS – COHORT 1 (SY2013/2014) AND COHORT 5 (SY2017/2018)

Filipino EGRA Subtests	Cohort 1 (SY2013/2014)	Cohort 5 (SY2017/2018)	Change (Cohort 1 to 5)	Effect Size (Cohort 1 to 5)
Initial Sound Identification (pct correct)	57.6%	62.8%	5.2% (±3.7%)	0.16
Letter Sounds (pct correct)	19.1%	25.0%	5.9% (±1.6%)	0.33
Letter Correct (per min)	19.2%	25.0%	5.8% (±1.6)	0.32
Oral Passage Reading (pct correct)	56.1%	60.3%	4.2% (±3.2%)	0.15
Words Correct in a Text (per min)	37.0%	41.8%	4.7% (±2.2)	0.21
Prosody score	2.1%	2.5%	0.4% (±0.1)	0.62
Reading Comprehension: timed (pct correct)	28.1%	42.0%	13.9% (±2.9%)	0.47
Dictation Composite (pct correct)	45.6%	64.2%	18.6% (±2.7%)	0.83

of learners met the Filipino reading fluency benchmark, while only 21% attained the Filipino reading comprehension benchmark (based on timed passage reading). **In 2018, after Basa, 53% of Grade 2 learners met the fluency benchmark and the percentage of learners who met the comprehension benchmark almost doubled to 40%. With untimed passage reading (allowing children to read the entire passage beyond the 60-second mark), that proportion increased even further to 48%. Almost one third of Grade 2 learners (31.6%) now meet both the fluency and comprehension benchmarks, compared to only 19.9% before Basa. Using untimed passage reading, an even higher 36.6% of children met both DepEd benchmarks in 2018.**

An even higher proportion of Grade 3 learners are meeting proficiency benchmarks than learners in Grade 2, and the effect is particularly strong in

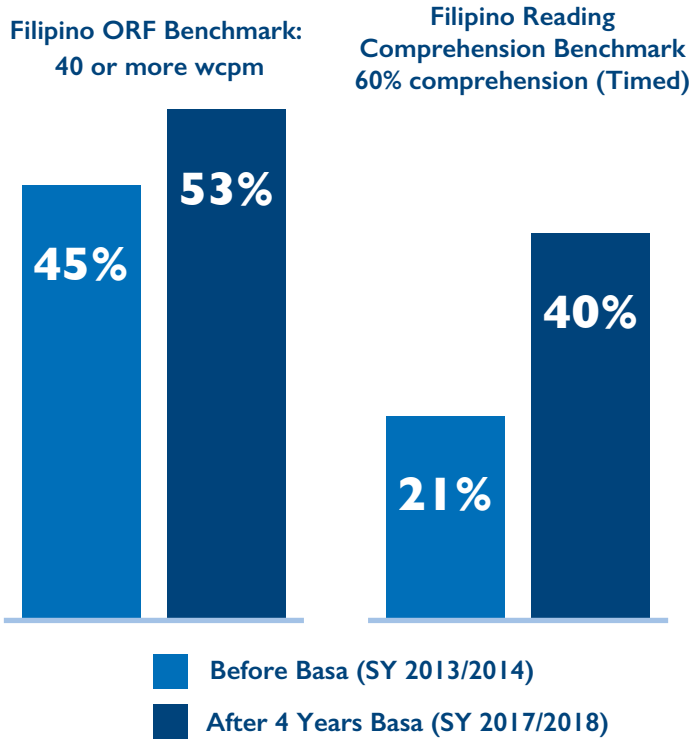


Figure 6. *Percent of Grade 2 Learners Meeting Proficiency Filipino Fluency and Comprehension Benchmarks (Timed)*

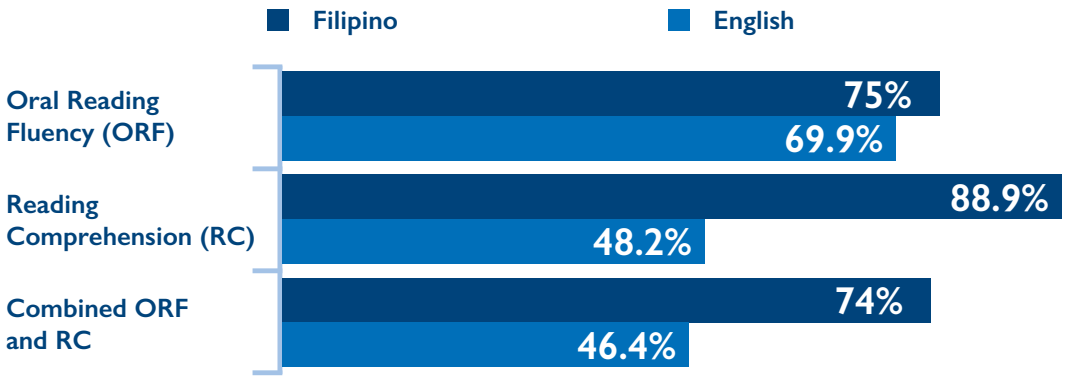


Figure 7. *Percent of Grade 3 Learners Meeting Proficiency Benchmarks in Filipino and English, SY 2017/2018*

> Now, we have seen the results—the performance of our children has improved because we have taught them how to read better through the Basa Pilipinas program.
>
> **–Dr. Arden Monisit,** *Schools Division Superintendent,* DepEd Mandaue City Division

Filipino. Seventy-five percent (75%) of Grade 3 learners met the Filipino fluency benchmark in 2018 and 89% met the comprehension benchmark (untimed passage reading). Seventy-four percent (74%) of Grade 3 learners met both the fluency and comprehension benchmarks. **In English, 70% of Grade 3 learners read at or above 40 wcpm, 48% answered 3 or more questions correctly and 46% met both benchmarks. These percentages were more than double those of Grade 2 learners (20.3%) who met both English benchmarks, indicating strong growth from second to third grade in classes using the Basa approach.**

The results of the 2018 outcome evaluation show that the Basa approach to literacy instruction is effective in improving children's reading skills. In its final year of implementation, Grade 2 learners performed better on key measures of literacy such as Filipino oral reading fluency and comprehension compared to students in 2013. Grade 3 learners likewise demonstrated proficiency in Filipino though the same is not yet true for English reading. **Given these findings, DepEd and future similar projects may benefit from providing more support to Grade 4 learners transitioning to learning Math and Science content in English, exploring additional ways of improving English language acquisition in the earlier grades and providing teachers and school heads with tools to engage parents to support children's learning at home.**

KINDERGARTEN RESEARCH STUDY

In October 2017, Basa Pilipinas expanded its support of the MTB-MLE instruction to the Kindergarten level. Basa worked with national, regional and division level DepEd partners to provide instructional materials, learner materials and assessment tools in the relevant MTs (Sinugbuanong Binisaya and Ilokano) and conducted intensive teacher trainings in Basa-supported divisions in Regions 1 and 7.

To assess changes in emergent literacy skills as a result of the Basa intervention, the project conducted a quasi-experimental, longitudinal study to compare learners' emergent literacy skills in Basa and non-Basa sites at baseline (September 2017) and endline (January/February 2018). Using the Basa-designed, Mother Tongue-specific Literacy Assessment Tool for Kindergarten (LAT-K), the study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. *Do students, both male and female, demonstrate improved emergent literacy skills in their Mother Tongue at the end of Kindergarten?*

2. *Do Kindergarten learners demonstrate improved emergent literacy skills at the end of Kindergarten as a result of participating in the Basa intervention?*

The research samples included 160 randomly selected schools in both Basa and non-Basa divisions in Regions 1 and 7. In total, 1,065 intervention and 1,010 comparison students were longitudinally tracked and tested from baseline to endline.

Key Findings

Results of the assessment showed that Basa and non-Basa learners in both regions made similar gains in their emergent literacy skill scores from baseline to endline. Kindergarten learners demonstrated significant improvement in emergent literacy skills in their Mother Tongues from beginning of Quarter 2 to the end of Q3 with substantial gains in Letter Sounds and Syllable Awareness. Despite this, Kindergarten learners in both groups did not have high proficiency in critical pre-reading skills such as letter naming, letter sound knowledge and listening comprehension after a brief period of instruction. Learners were only able to name less than 60% of letters, identify less than half of letter sounds and answer less than half of listening comprehension questions correctly at endline.

Additional analysis revealed that at the end of Q3, little to no intervention effect was noted, with the exception of a significant Basa intervention effect, which was found on the Sinugbuanong Binisaya Rhyme Awareness subtest. LAT-K results also suggested a slight gender achievement gap in emergent literacy skills in Kindergarten in both regions and across both intervention and comparison groups. At endline, results showed that girls slightly outperform boys, on average, on several LAT-K subtests.

The LAT-K tool was able to detect changes in children's emergent literacy skills, making it a useful research tool for studies that seek to assess Kindergarten learners' progress over time. However, a five-month interval between baseline and endline may be too short a time within which to assess a newly-introduced intervention's effect. Future follow-on studies that continue to track these children's progress through Grade 1, or even up to the end of Grade 3, may prove instructive in understanding how emergent literacy skills can serve as a foundation for future early grades literacy performance.

MTB-MLE POLICY RESEARCH STUDY

In 2015, as part of its policy support to DepEd, Basa Pilipinas examined the implementation of the MTB-MLE policy. The language policy was designed based on growing research that children learn best when the language they are taught in is in MT and that literacy skills in MT can help with learning other languages. Basa's study explored whether initial MTB-MLE

implementation was achieving the desired effect—in this case, across a broad sample of schools using three different MTs. The study also examined the extent to which the similarity of MT to Filipino affected Filipino literacy acquisition, and the extent to which policy expectations about language transition were appropriate. Although conducted by Basa, the study was not an examination of the project's impact in schools.

The Philippine government's theory of change underpinning the MTB-MLE policy is that MT instruction will improve literacy outcomes in Grade 1, and strong MT skills will support similar improvement in Filipino and English literacy in Grades 2 and 3, preparing students to transition to these languages of instruction. This study therefore asked:

1. *What were the actual patterns of student literacy acquisition across MT, Filipino and English from Grades 1 to 3?*
2. *Was there a difference in Filipino fluency by Grade 3 among students with different Mother Tongues?*
3. *Was MT performance in Grade 1 predictive of Filipino and English performance in higher grades?*
4. *Is the MTB-MLE policy's mandated transition from MT to Filipino and English as languages of instruction in higher grades appropriately timed, given students' relative skills in each language?*

A sample of 245 students was tracked from Grades 1 through 3 in 15 schools in Cebu (Sinugbuanong Binisaya MT), Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur (Ilokano MT) and Laguna (Tagalog MT, which is linguistically very similar to Filipino). Students' oral reading fluency in their MT, Filipino and English was assessed annually using EGRA.

Key Findings

On the whole, results showed that MT, Filipino and English literacy trajectories were consistent with expectations, but most students were not proficient by Grade 3. Reading proficiency was defined as being able to read a text at a language-specific rate (50 words correct per minute [wcpm] for the MTs, 40 wcpm for Filipino, 60 wcpm for English and with 80% comprehension). Results revealed that the rate at which students acquired reading proficiency in Filipino was much slower than in MT, and most were not reading proficiently in Filipino by Grade 3. English reading proficiency increased considerably from Grades 2 to 3 for students in all study regions, but remained below proficiency for most students.

Tagalog MT students increasingly outperformed non-Tagalog MT students in Filipino. While a percentage of non-Tagalog MT students who were proficient readers in Filipino improved between Grades 1 and 3, the Filipino proficiency gap between Tagalog MT students and students speaking other MTs also increased between Grades 1 and 3. Linguistic similarity between Tagalog and Filipino seems to give Tagalog MT speakers a sustained advantage over speakers of other MTs. Further analysis showed a strong literacy foundation in a student's MT was associated with higher Filipino and English fluency.

The results of this study show that overall, students may not yet be ready for the language instruction shift by Grade 4. Findings suggest that expectations for learners to develop trilingual fluency by Grade 3 are too high and students would likely benefit from continuing instruction in their MT. Strategies are needed to help prepare non-Tagalog MT learners improve their Filipino reading proficiency so they can transition to Filipino-based instruction at a pace comparable to their Tagalog MT peers.

READING REMEDIATION PILOT STUDY

As part of its technical support to DepEd, Basa Pilipinas tested an approach to reading remediation in SY 2017/2018. Dubbed the Reading Remediation Support Pilot (RRSP), the intervention was implemented in Grades 1 and 2 classrooms in 25 schools in Basa-assisted divisions. The RRSP adapted the Response-to-Intervention process where students go through levels of instructional support as an approach to identifying and supporting learning of students who struggle with reading. RRSP's approach focused on supporting Mother Tongue reading in Grade 1 and Filipino reading in Grade 2.

The pilot study was designed for learners to go through three stages: differentiated instruction within a whole class setting (Stage 1); small group instruction among learners identified as needing remedial support (Stage 2) and individualized and small group instruction for learners who need intensive and continuous support, respectively (Stage 3). Learners were grouped into different learning profiles based on their individual literacy assessment results, and provided with RRSP activities depending on their identified strengths and needs. Grades 1 and 2 teachers were given the RRSP Toolkit—a collection of informal assessment, instructional planning and progress monitoring tools—and were trained on its use over two cycles of teacher training. Mentoring visits and follow-up support were provided in between training cycles.

To measure changes in reading skills associated with the remediation pilot and to determine its practicability, Basa implemented a mixed methods research with the following research questions:

1. *Will a multi-component remedial reading pilot improve the reading performance of Grades 1 and 2 struggling readers? In what literacy domains will these Grades 1 and 2 learners exhibit the most and least improvement?*
2. *Are there significant differences in gains among learners based on their sex, socio-economic status or frequency of attendance in RRSP?*
3. *Will teachers and schools be able to easily implement this approach as designed? What feedback or suggestions do implementers and participants have to improve RRSP before this pilot is expanded to other schools?*

EGRA-type assessments were implemented at baseline and endline among 197 Grades 1 and 2 RRSP participants. Grade 1 learners were assessed in their MT, while Grade 2 learners were assessed in Filipino. Results were analyzed by grade level and region given the different languages used in the assessment. Focus group discussions with learners and interviews with teachers were also conducted.

Key Findings

Overall, results showed positive gains in almost all of the subtests in both regions and grade levels. In Region 1, Grade 1 learners saw statistically significant improvements in all Ilokano EGRA subtasks with high effect sizes noted in familiar word reading, non-word decoding, passage reading and reading comprehension. Grade 2 learners made significant improvements in all but two Filipino EGRA subtasks—reading and listening comprehension, with the highest effect size noted in passage reading fluency.

In Region 7 schools, Grade 1 learners assessed in Sinugbuanong Binisaya saw significant gains in familiar word reading, non-word decoding and passage reading, with effect sizes in the moderate range. Grade 2 learners from this region made significant gains in Filipino word reading and dictation.

Comparison of gains based on RRSP participants' sex, socio-economic status and their self-reported attendance in RRSP sessions revealed no significant differences in almost all subtasks. This indicates that

TABLE 6. GAINS IN READING SCORES BY GRADE (REGION 1), RRSP

	Region 1 Grade 1		Region 1 Grade 2	
Subtask	**Gain**	**Effect Size**	**Gain**	**Effect Size**
Initial Sound Score	26.47*	0.82	25.97*	0.76
Letter Sound Knowledge (lcpm)	7.16*	0.58	5.67*	0.43
Familiar Word Identification (wcpm)	15.94*	1.32	9.54*	0.75
Simple Non-Word Decoding (wcpm)	13.87*	1.33	5.09*	0.46
Passage Reading (wcpm)	13.97*	1.07	11.15*	0.81
Passage Reading Prosody Score	0.86*	0.99	0.56*	0.60
Reading Comprehension Score	26.85*	1.04	7.76	0.28
Listening Comprehension Score	16.80*	0.46	12.30	0.32
Dictation Composite (% Correct out of total items)	NA	NA	-5.22*	0.35

**Significant at 0.05*

TABLE 7. GAINS IN READING SCORES BY GRADE (REGION 7), RRSP

	Region 7 Grade 1		Region 7 Grade 2	
Subtask	**Gain**	**Effect Size**	**Gain**	**Effect Size**
Initial Sound Score	-0.86	-0.03	-2.30	-0.05
Letter Sound Knowledge (lcpm)	2.73	0.22	1.64	0.10
Familiar Word Identification (wcpm)	6.94*	0.56	7.50*	0.46
Simple Non-Word Decoding (wcpm)	5.32*	0.50	4.05	0.29
Passage Reading (wcpm)	8.77*	0.66	6.85	0.39
Passage Reading Prosody Score	0.44*	0.49	0.10	0.09
Reading Comprehension Score	7.40	0.28	8.61	0.25
Listening Comprehension Score	-1.12	-0.03	8.40	0.17
Dictation Composite (% Correct out of total items)	NA	NA	-12.58*	-0.62

**Significant at 0.05*

RRSP can produce reading gains among learners across characteristics.

In interviews and focus groups, teachers said they found RRSP effective and useful in supporting struggling readers. While difficult at first, they found RRSP implementation less challenging over time. School officials appreciated RRSP's clear and structured guidance to remediation implementation. They also recommended better involvement of parents to ensure their children's good attendance in RRSP and better support from parents at home.

ICT FOR READING PILOT STUDY

The Basa Pilipinas ICT for Reading pilot was a division-wide research initiative to test the use of tablets in enhancing reading skill development in early grade classrooms. The study ran from August 2017 to February 2018 and involved the distribution of 369 tablets to all 26 elementary public schools

in the City Division of San Fernando, La Union. The tablets, used by Grade 3 pupils and teachers, were loaded with digital copies of Grade 3 Basa Pilipinas Leveled Readers and a localized version of the EDC-developed Vernacular reading app, which combines audio files and visuals in interactive literacy learning activities in Filipino and English.

The study was designed to explore how much and what kinds of tablet-based literacy support would make a difference in the reading fluency and comprehension of Grade 3 learners. Research questions included:

1. *Does longer exposure to tablet-based reading content lead to improved reading scores (fluency and comprehension)?*
2. *Does home reinforcement of classroom tablet use lead to improved reading scores?*
3. *Does teacher discussion of the tablet-based reading app lessons lead to improved reading scores?*

EGRA-type assessments were conducted on 232 Grade 3 pupils before and after the intervention, along with focus group discussions and key informant interviews with teachers and school heads towards the end of the pilot. Participating schools were assigned to five groups: 1) 8-week exposure; 2) 16-week exposure; 3) 20-week basic exposure with no additional inputs; 4) 20-week exposure with additional home reinforcement (tablets could be taken home during the semester and Christmas breaks) and 5) 20-week exposure with additional in-class use facilitated by the teacher. The difference in group assignments lies in the number of weeks of exposure or whether they had additional home or teacher reinforcement. All groups had participants read the digital Leveled Readers and used the Vernacular app on a set schedule every school day.

Key Findings

Overall, analysis of the data showed positive results, with particular effects resulting from longer exposure. In terms of fluency, all groups showed statistically significant gains in both Filipino and English. As for prosody, all groups except for the 8-weeks intervention showed statistically significant gains in both languages. In terms of comprehension, all groups

TABLE 8. GAINS IN FLUENCY, PROSODY AND COMPREHENSION (FILIPINO AND ENGLISH)

	Gains in Fluency		Gains in Prosody		Gains in Comprehension	
Group	**Filipino**	**English**	**Filipino**	**English**	**Filipino**	**English**
8 Weeks Basic	7.65 *	8.69 *	0.23	0.27	7.53	9.77 *
16 Weeks Basic	13.09 *	15.50 *	0.34 *	0.34 *	13.74 *	12.21 *
20 Weeks Basic	16.58 *	21.47 *	0.42 *	0.50 *	14.03 *	11.43 *
Home Reinforcement	10.69 *	17.27 *	0.35 *	0.50 *	15.88 *	23.79 *
In-Class Use	16.91 *	19.46 *	0.49 *	0.53 *	16.88 *	8.48

**Significant at 0.05*

showed statistically significant gains in comprehension except the 8-weeks Group (in Filipino) and the In-Class Use Group (in English). The 20-weeks Basic Group had significantly higher fluency scores than the 8-weeks Group, indicating and increased effect of increased exposure. Home reinforcement and In-Class Use with teacher facilitation did not produce additional significant gains, when compared to 20-weeks basic exposure.

Using DepEd reading score benchmarks of 40 and above correct words per minute (CWPM) and 60% correct comprehension answers, results showed that the percentage of students who reached these benchmarks increased across all five research groups.

Results of the study show positive gains in the integration of ICT in reading, particularly with longer exposure to tablet learning. In taking the intervention to scale, it is recommended that engagement with key stakeholders must be strengthened—including technical support (device troubleshooting) and regular school visits to help teachers manage the intervention. Future ICT projects may also explore extending the integration of ICT to other grade levels to foster independent learning, especially those who are still struggling readers. Extension of the tablet intervention to upper primary could also provide strong remedial support for literacy in those grades.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

To comply with *Section H.17 Environmental Compliance* of Contract AID-492-C-13-00004, Basa made its best effort to ensure that environmental considerations were factored into program implementation both for project operations and technical activities. The procurement of electronic equipment was done through certified vendors or authorized dealers. During its training activities, e.g., ICT pilot for Grade 3 teachers and SCOPE-L for school administrators, Basa oriented DepEd participants and division representatives on proper use and maintenance of tablets. In preparation to disposition of project's equipment, Basa has provided written guidance and instructions to DepEd and other project beneficiaries on proper use, maintenance and disposal of electronic equipment taking into account the environmental impact. Lastly, a contact list of local Philippine firms authorized to recycle electronic waste was provided and acknowledged by DepEd and other beneficiaries of disposed Basa equipment.

GENDER AWARENESS AND DISABILITY INCLUSION

Promoting gender equality and inclusion has been central to the design and implementation of Basa's early grade reading approaches. Basa worked with DepEd to identify and address gender gaps in learning, and introduced teaching strategies that ensured the involvement and participation of all learners in early grade classrooms.

GENDER GAP IN LITERACY OUTCOMES

A learning outcomes gap showing that girls outperform boys on key competencies is a long-standing trend in Philippine education. Basa Pilipinas found a similar gender gap in literacy outcomes at baseline. When calculating the average percent correct on all Filipino EGRA subtests in SY 2013/2014, Basa found that while the overall average for the total Grade 2 sample was 46% correct, boys on average were scoring at a lower 42% compared to girls' average score of 50%. This trend has largely remained unchanged over the years. In fact, in the most recent EGRA data for SY 2017/2018, boys were scoring an average of 45% correct on all EGRA subtests, while girls were scoring an average of 56% correct.

Looking at performance on individual subtests at endline, Grade 2 girls, on average, demonstrate far better EGRA results than boys. The difference in reading performance between boys and girls is statistically significant at the $p<.001$ level for nearly all Grade 2 Filipino subtests. Overall, the largest differences between boys and girls were seen in Filipino Oral Passage Reading, Familiar Word Reading and Nonsense Word Reading in which small to medium effect size differences ($0.2<d<0.48$) between boys and girls were seen. Moreover, analysis of Filipino EGRA subtest results show that the gender gap in Filipino has increased from SY 2013/2014 to SY 2017/2018 in all subtests, with the exception of Oral Passage Reading, timed Reading Comprehension and Dictation, where the gender gap remained unchanged.

Basa data indicates that the gender gap may already be emerging at the Kindergarten level. In its 2018 LAT-K data for both intervention and comparison groups, results suggest a slight gender achievement gap in emergent literacy skills in Kindergarten in both Region I and Region 7. Overall average scores on combined LAT-K subtests indicate that boys in Region 1 were at 41% while girls averaged at 45%. In Region 7, boys scored an overall average of 45%, compared to girls' 49%. While the gap in

Kindergarten is still relatively modest, it would be important to look into ways to already begin to address these differences at this foundational stage.

STUDY ON THE ROLE OF GENDER IN LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT

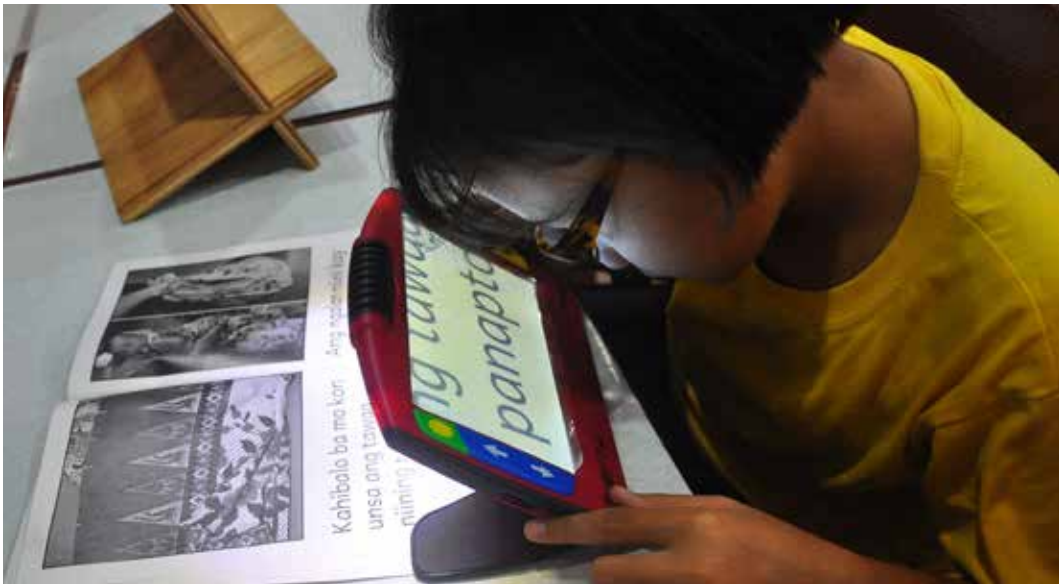
At the end of 2016 and early 2017, Basa undertook additional research to investigate the growing gender gap in literacy achievement as evidenced by the EGRA results gathered from 2013 through 2016. While Basa's interventions have successfully improved literacy performance for Filipino children in both second and third grades, these gains have not been consistent across genders. Evidence show that girls have consistently outperformed boys, and the gender gap only widens over time.

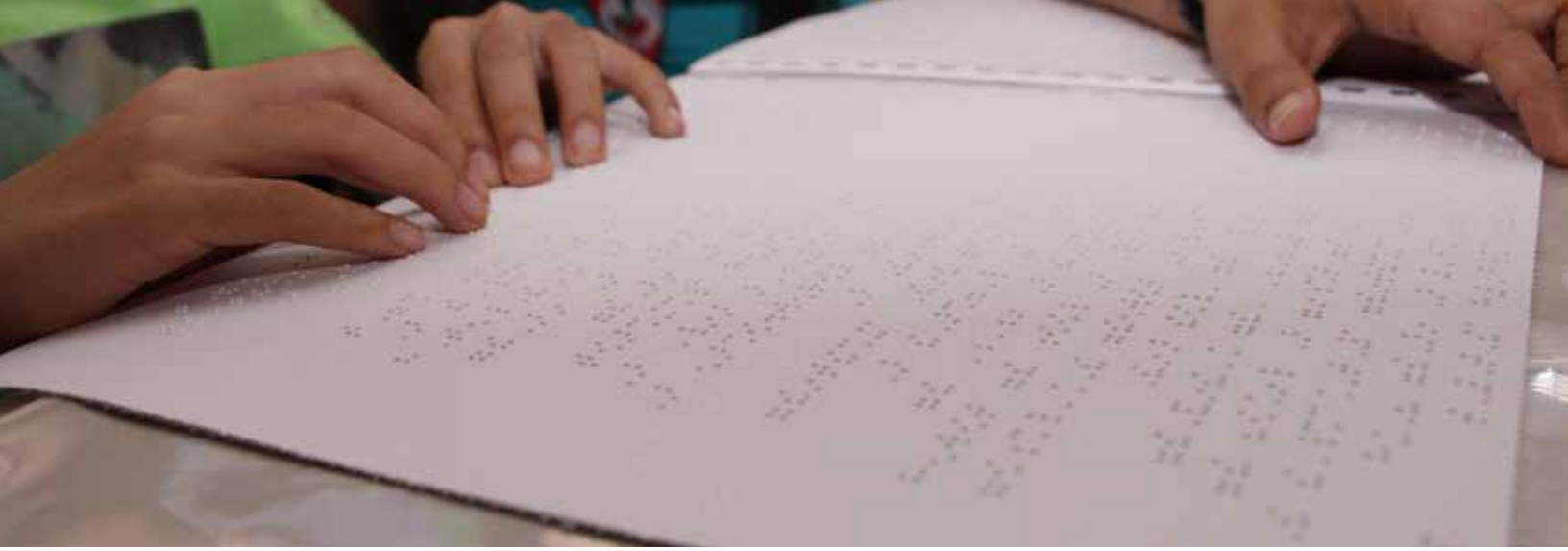
In line with this, Basa conducted a qualitative study of parent, teacher and student beliefs and practices related to gender and literacy, as well as to explore how the project's efforts could be strengthened in addressing gender gap in literacy. The mixed methods study included a desk review of current literature on gender differences in educational attainment globally and in the Philippines; focus groups with teachers, parents and students from Basa-assisted divisions; development and administration of the Gender Dynamics Tool as a supplement to classroom observations and collection and analysis of attendance and repetition data by gender through teacher surveys.

Key Findings

Results from the focus groups revealed widespread gendered beliefs about schooling and achievement. The belief that boys are naturally more active and less obedient than girls was common among both adults and children. Schooling in general, and reading in particular, was considered be a "girl's activity," and boys who excelled at it were "girlish." While assessment data demonstrate that the gender gap in educational achievement emerges early and widens over time, parents and teachers mistakenly believed that boys gradually catch up to girls.

Parents did not recognize how gendered expectations affect boys' achievement. They believed that education was equally important for girls and boys, but acknowledged that they had different expectations for them in terms of focus and results. Parents tended to ascribe differences in educational achievement to personality rather than gender.





Students, on the other hand, did not report differences in achievement between genders, but recognized that boys needed help in reading. When asked about what schools could do differently to improve reading skills, many girls focused on ways to help boys learn better and boys said they wanted to do better and needed more attention and practice to improve their reading and writing.

Results from the teachers' survey also suggested that lower attendance rates and higher repetition rates among boys may have contributed to their lower achievement. Teachers reported fairly high average daily attendance rates and very low repetition rates for students. However, within this pattern, boys had significantly higher repetition rates and lower daily attendance rates than girls.

Further, teacher training in gender awareness had not yet led to changes in attitudes and practices. Although teachers reported attending DepEd's gender awareness training, content and design varied widely. Overall, teachers reported that teachers did not explicitly address actions that can ameliorate gender gaps in achievement for boys. Teachers continued to attribute learning styles and behavior to gender. Classroom observations showed continued differential treatment of students by gender. Few observed teachers called on boys and girls equally, and most disciplined boys more often and more harshly than girls.

The findings from this study informed the design of 2017 Basa activities—including increased parent awareness raising efforts, pilot-testing of reading remediation interventions and attempts to use ICT to spark heightened interest in reading. Books developed for Kindergarten sought to deliberately break gender stereotypes and make plots and characters interesting to both boys and girls.

GENDER AND DISABILITY INCLUSION

Sharing USAID's thrust that gender equality is the core of development, Basa

strived to promote gender principles in the design and implementation of its activities. Beyond collecting sex-disaggregated data and information on gender and disability trainings attended by participants, Basa took a step forward to investigate on the underachievement of boys in reading as evidenced in Basa's outcome evaluations. In its teacher trainings, Basa emphasized the implementation of differentiated instruction and variety in learners' activities to encourage participation from both male and female learners. Development of Leveled Readers and Kindergarten Storybooks and selection of children's books took into account topics and stories that would appeal to all learners. As much as possible, gender lens was applied in reviewing Basa-developed materials to avoid gender stereotypes. In its advocacy activities, Basa shared key findings on the gender gap in reading with parents during seminars in supporting children's literacy.

Basa likewise routinely collected information on teachers dealing with children with special needs. Based on the latest information collected in 2017, 22 % of Kindergarten teachers, 17% of Grade 1 teachers and 25% of Basa school heads reported to have attended trainings on teaching or managing children with special needs. Approximately 13% of Kindergarten teachers and 16% of Grade 1 teachers reported to have students with special needs last SY 2017/2018.

OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

As USAID's flagship basic education project in the Philippines, outreach and communications (O&C) was a high priority for Basa. The project was deliberate in aligning its efforts to the Mission's overall communications strategy—incorporating key messaging that highlights USAID's shared values of democracy, freedom, equality and transparency in every public event, campaign and narrative—to promote a better understanding and awareness of USAID basic education programs for Filipino and American audiences.

The work was extensive in scope, and involved close coordination with USAID staff and DepEd partners to ensure that outreach activities were implemented smoothly, and in accordance to diplomatic mission and branding protocols. This required timely preparation, submission and clearance of documents such as scene setters, talking points, press releases, project briefs, success stories and other communication materials.

Throughout the project's five and a half-year run, Basa hosted high-level visits of three mission directors and five USAID Washington officials, and organized events for three US ambassadors. With every event, Basa helped increased USAID's visibility, amplifying the Mission's key messages through numerous news releases published both in print and online. Solid collaboration with DepEd's Public Affairs Office and the Philippine Information Agency's regional and provincial offices proved vital in extending the project messages' reach and impact through official media channels.

Annual literacy and education-themed events such as International Literacy Day, World Teachers' Day and National Reading Month provided excellent venues for spreading positive messages on reading. Basa has been a member of the DepEd-led National Teachers' Month Coordinating Council, which galvanizes support from various education stakeholders to conduct outreach events honoring teachers. As a council member, Basa sat on meetings with DepEd and other education groups to organize the campaign's culminating event, forging partnerships with key education leaders.

Basa also contributed significantly to USAID's Literacy Month campaign on social media in September 2017, producing short vignettes of local literacy champions. This included a video profile of a Basa-trained Grade 1 teacher, Milagros Marilao, which to this day remains one of the most watched videos on USAID Philippines Facebook page. Other social media posts from Basa have consistently generated high engagement from USAID's fans and followers, which

speaks to the high level of public interest and support on Basa activities.

Documenting and sharing Basa's work, as it made headway on the ground was a good practice in project storytelling; keeping beneficiary stories alive. Aside from the required reporting requirements such as the quarterly and annual progress reports, Basa regularly contributed project updates/ highlights to USAID Office of Education's Monthly Newsletter, which is disseminated to USAID staff and implementing partners.

Basa also submitted seven success stories that illustrate beneficiaries' development journey with Basa and how the project made a difference in their lives. The story of Marjorie Semana, a multigrade teacher in Madalayap Elementary School in Ilocos Norte was published on USAID's website in November 2016, https://www.usaid.gov/results-data/success-stories/rural-public-school-teachers-accelerate-learning-philippines. Two more success stories were featured in this report. To achieve these, Basa made sure to build local staff's capacity for identifying good story leads, preparing story pitches, interviewing subjects and writing story drafts. Stories were vetted and underwent editorial review by project communications staff and senior management.

Equally important to Basa's outreach and communications work was the creation of an elaborate, yet nimble materials development process that would facilitate the production of high-volume early grade reading materials within the span of a school year. It was a huge undertaking that warranted close coordination with the DepEd Bureau of Learning Resources, Bureau of Curriculum Development and Bureau of Learning Delivery. It also meant fostering creative collaborations with a dynamic pool of local artists who specializes in graphic and book design, illustration and layout. Key to the success of this massive book production effort is Basa's strong partnership with DepEd, which paved the way for DepEd's eventual adoption of select Basa materials for nationwide distribution.

During the cost-extension period, Basa also began producing other multimedia materials such as graphics for the Vernacular app, as part of the reading pilot, and varied digital content, including graphics and videos, even social media analytics, for the online post-training support for teachers and school administrators.

Despite the many challenges that come with outreach and communications work, Basa made sure to deliver only high-quality outputs, with strong compliance to USAID branding guidelines and DepEd publishing standards. Throughout the implementation, Basa stayed true to its role as USAID's implementing partner, communicating accurate and timely messages about USAID and its work on early grade reading, and fostering robust and productive partnerships between USAID and DepEd to achieve literacy development goals.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Programmatic achievements were predicated on a critically important partnership building process with DepEd and an inclusive approach to planning, implementation and review from project start-up in 2013 through project handover in 2018. Basa engaged in a multi-level vetting and validation process with DepEd to align its program design and workplan to ongoing reforms, particularly the K–12 curriculum in the context of MTB-MLE. This resulted in a high degree of involvement and ownership within DepEd, from the school and district to division and region to national level, as demonstrated by adoption of policies and practices and wide-ranging measures to sustain and institutionalize Basa processes, tools and materials.

Partnership at the national level. A landmark project validation meeting with DepEd was conducted in April 2013 where Basa presented its program design to the DepEd Executive Committee headed by then-Secretary Armin Luistro. Following this, the Basa Project Management Committee (PMC) was established which facilitated high-level linkages between DepEd and USAID, ensured clear alignment between Basa's workplan and DepEd rollout plan for K to 12 and other major policy and program reforms and informed and validated key technical areas in the Basa workplan.

The PMC was co-chaired by the DepEd undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction and USAID Office of Education director, with membership of relevant DepEd bureaus and technical offices, DepEd regions and divisions, USAID Office of Education and Basa management team. The first PMC convened in September 2013, a pivotal meeting which set the direction and priorities of the project. Succeeding PMC meetings were conducted in February, June and October 2014; March, August and December 2015 and April 2016. Below were key discussions and decisions made by the PMC:

- Identification of key Basa program tasks that respond to DepEd and USAID program targets and deliverables and also have the potential to go to scale and be adopted nationwide

- Organization and mobilization of technical working groups composed of DepEd representatives and Basa staff and consultants
- Training teachers on how to conduct bridging for the early grade languages of MT, Filipino and English
- Development and provision of quality teaching and learning materials, with content and language review by DepEd through the Bureau of Learning Resources
- Development of appropriate and responsive assessment tools to monitor reading progress at both classroom and national levels
- Strengthening the Learning Action Cell (LAC) as a platform for post-training support and as a venue for communities of practice and continuing professional development of teachers and administrators
- Conduct of research study on the literacy trajectories of early grades learners in the context of MTB-MLE
- Development of sustainability plans by Basa-supported Regions and Divisions to build on the successes and lessons learned during Basa implementation

These key discussions and decisions were fleshed out during follow-on meetings with relevant DepEd bureaus and technical offices. To assist in day-to-day coordination, Basa also engaged a consultant who was based in the Office of the Undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction from July 2015 to December 2016. The consultant helped strengthen linkage and coherence of Basa technical intervention with DepEd priorities and initiatives and supported efforts toward project sustainability and institutionalization.

Basa integrated an Early Grade Reading Forum (EGRF) at the PMC meeting in April 2016 where stakeholders discussed and reflected on how to better prepare learners for Grade 4 with Filipino and English as languages of instruction, how to narrow the gap between boys' and girls' achievement in reading and ways forward for effective teacher professional development.

Starting third quarter of 2016, senior leadership transitions within DepEd national had affected Basa's ability to conduct PMC meetings on a quarterly basis. To continue the review of the project's progress and address issues and DepEd requests that may arise, Basa held individual or team consultation meetings with the new undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction and with relevant DepEd bureaus and technical offices. Consultations primarily focused on:

- Expanding access to Basa materials nationwide by providing technical assistance to DepEd in redevelopment, digitization and uploading of materials to DepEd's online learning portal
- Kindergarten materials development (considering DepEd plans for future reproduction), training design and assessment of emergent literacy skills
- Validation of program activities planned during the cost-extension including pilot initiatives on using ICT in Grade 3 classrooms and testing an approach to reading remediation for Grades 1 and Grade 2 learners

Consultation and coordination meetings in 2017 and 2018 focused on the completion of project deliverables and technical assistance to DepEd and sharing of accomplishments, best practices and lessons learned in more than five years of Basa implementation.

> "We are grateful to USAID for the continuous effort to help our learners gain the very critical skill of reading. Moving forward, we must continue to support our dedicated teachers so that these successful approaches are used and sustained in our classrooms."
>
> **–Dr. Lorna Dig-Dino**
> *Undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction,* DepEd

As part of project closeout and handover, Basa organized the *Examining K–3 Literacy and Learning: A DepEd-USAID Basa Pilipinas Research Dissemination Forum* in April 2018 to share highlights, insights, and lessons learned from Basa Pilipinas EGRA results and research on key innovations in Kindergarten, ICT and Reading, and Reading Remediation Support, and spur reflection and initial thinking on how these insights could be applied to other Philippine learning contexts.

Key officials from DepEd national and Basa-supported regions and divisions attended the forum, along with stakeholders from NGOs, foundations, multilateral agencies and teacher education institutions. Basa presented and facilitated discussions on the following topics/studies:

1. Tapping Tablets to Support Grade 3 Literacy: Results from the Basa Pilipinas ICT for Reading Pilot Research
2. Using the EGRA to Monitor Children's Reading Progress: Basa Pilipinas Results, 2013-2018
3. Tracking Literacy Trajectories under DepEd's MTB-MLE Policy
4. Supporting Kindergarten Literacy and Learning: Insights and Results from the Basa Pilipinas Experience
5. Testing an Approach to Reading Remediation for Grades 1 and 2 Learners: The Basa Pilipinas Pilot
6. Investigating the Gender Gap in Literacy Learning Outcomes: Data from Basa Pilipinas Sites.

Partnership at the regional and division levels. Concurrent with project validation at the national level, Basa established strong presence on the ground by engaging DepEd regions and divisions in a series of planning and consultation meetings to assess priority needs of schools, refine and contextualize Basa's technical intervention and develop an implementation plan with due consideration for people, process and context. With support and endorsement from DepEd leadership, Basa field offices were set-up within the premises of DepEd division offices, and Basa coordinators from DepEd were identified to serve as division and regional focal persons. These arrangements allowed frequent professional and social interactions that facilitated building of rapport, trust and confidence between DepEd personnel and Basa field teams.

Basa started its partnership with the Divisions of Cebu and La Union in 2013, and expanded to the Divisions of Bohol, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur and Mandaue City in 2014. During the latter part of 2014, Basa included into its coverage the Divisions of San Fernando City and Tagbilaran City, as part of USAID's Cities Development Initiative aimed at advancing the development of second-tier cities as engines of growth.

DepEd leadership at the regional and division levels was part of the PMC, and were invited to attend the meetings to provide concrete inputs and recommendations based on realities on the

ground. Equally important, Basa conducted regular consultation meetings at the field level to provide progress updates, seek advice on technical and field programming, discuss details of upcoming activities, agree on standards and protocols and facilitate issuance of relevant advisory and memoranda. Basa field teams were invited to Executive Committee and Management Committee meetings in DepEd regions and divisions. These provided strategic platforms for briefing, consulting and interacting with wider DepEd, including division supervisors, district supervisors and school heads.

Basa's inclusive approach and DepEd's strong commitment and high level of engagement resulted in successful project implementation and, in the process, built the capacity of DepEd personnel as technical reviewers, trainers, assessors and storybook writers.

- As part of technical working groups, DepEd representatives, including the CLMD chiefs, CID chiefs, School Governance and Operations Division (SGOD) chiefs, education program supervisors for Mother Tongue, Filipino and English, LRMDS managers and division Kindergarten focal persons, were involved in the team review, feedback and finalization of technical materials. This collaborative process facilitated sharing of new approaches and innovative practices in literacy instruction and classroom management in the early grades.
- From 2013 to 2017, a total of 815 supervisors, school heads and teachers participated in a series of TOTs to update their technical knowledge, upgrade their presentation and facilitation skills and increase their confidence in processing questions and discussions. Together with Basa staff and consultants, they rolled out trainings on effective literacy instruction, understanding and strengthening Kindergarten teaching and learning and enabling effective literacy instruction through school-based LACs and classroom observations.
- In January 2016, 30 supervisors and school heads from Basa and non-Basa divisions in Region 1 and Region 7 were trained in using the EGRA tool to monitor the reading progress of early grade learners. Through the training sessions, assessors appreciated the purpose and principles of assessment, and learned how to create optimal conditions for testing, administer e-EGRA in accordance with agreed standards and protocols and record and score learner responses accurately. Assessors practiced their skills in EGRA administration through paper drills, video scoring and school practice, and were provided with post-training feedback and coaching, as needed.
- Basa organized a writeshop in May 2017 to produce developmentally appropriate storybooks that aligned with the themes in

> "Bohol has been part of education and development programs of foreign partners. But in all of those partnerships, Basa Pilipinas is the best."
>
> **–Dr. Wilfreda Bongalos,** *Former Schools Division Superintendent,* DepEd Bohol Province

the Kindergarten Teacher's Guide. With support from Basa staff and consultants, 21 DepEd teacher-writers developed 20 storybook manuscripts for use in Kindergarten classrooms.

DepEd policies and guidelines at the national, regional and division levels. The strong partnership between DepEd and Basa at the national, regional and division levels led to the adoption and issuance of policies and guidelines that recognize the technical assistance and contributions of Basa and endorse the use of Basa-provided tools and materials. Listed below are the DepEd Orders and Regional and Division Memoranda supported by Basa. Please also see Annex M for a copy of the memoranda.

> "Having seen firsthand the impact of this program, rest assured that we, at the Department of Education will take the necessary steps to make sure that this program will continue on and remain a priority for the Department."
>
> **–Dr. Alma Ruby Torio,** *OIC-Assistant Secretary for Curriculum and Instruction,* DepEd

DepEd orders issued by DepEd National:

- *DepEd Order number 35 series 2016: The Learning Action Cell as a K to 12 Basic Education Program School-based Continuing Professional Development Strategy for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning.* Per DepEd request, Basa organized a desk study, convened a national LAC workshop and submitted a draft LAC policy, which led to the issuance of this LAC policy.
- *DepEd Order number 64 series 2016: Guidelines on the Utilization of the 2015 and 2016 Financial Support for MG Schools.* Financial support was provided for the nationwide printing and distribution of Basa-produced Leveled Readers for Grades 1–3 and orientation-training workshop of MG teachers on the use of the materials.

Regional memoranda issued by DepEd Region 7:

- *Unnumbered regional memorandum issued on November 26, 2015: One-day Conference with Basa Pilipinas.* This one-day conference was organized by DepEd Region 7 to discuss Basa overview, present project accomplishments and milestones and draft sustainability plans for Basa-supported divisions.
- *Unnumbered regional memorandum issued on January 18, 2016: Submission of Accomplishment Reports for Basa Recipient Schools.* DepEd Region 7 required Basa-supported divisions to submit accomplishments reports from 2013 to 2015 reflecting the number of trained teachers by grade level, number of trained school heads, number of trained district supervisors, graphical representation of the reading profile for Mother Tongue, Filipino and English; academic performance of learners and list of schools monitored and supervised by district and division supervisors.
- *Regional Memorandum number 900 series 2017: Workshop on the Crafting of Contextualized Classroom-based Assessment Tools in Literacy and Numeracy for Key Stage 1.* DepEd Region 7 tapped Basa-trained EGRA assessors as resource persons to explain the conceptual framework of EGRA, synthesize the learning domains for literacy and numeracy and create a contextualized classroom-based assessment tools for literacy and numeracy.

Division memoranda issued by DepEd Bohol:

- *Division Memorandum number 056 series 2018 and Division Memorandum number 158 series 2018: Capability Building of Selected Grade 1 and Grade 2 Teachers on* Reading *Remediation Support Program.* The division-organized training was based on the approach and framework of Basa's Reading Remediation Support Pilot.
- *Division Memorandum number 101 series 2018: Workshop on the Preparation of Quarter 1 MG Daily Lesson Plans in English, Filipino, Mother Tongue and Other Learning Areas.* This memo specified the use of Basa-

produced Revised Teacher's Guides and MG Supplementary Outlines as learning resources in the preparation of MG daily lesson plans.

- *Division Memorandum number 175 series 2018: Utilization of Instructional Supervision Tools for Kindergarten Classroom Observations and Standardized Classroom Observation Protocol for Educators in Literacy.* This memo instructed school heads and district supervisors to maximize the use of Basa-developed classroom observation tools for Kindergarten and Grades 1–3.

Division memoranda issued by DepEd Cebu:

- *Division Memorandum number 778 series 2015: Clarification on the Preparation of Instructional Plans/Lesson Plans in Elementary Schools.* This memo instructed Grades 1–3 teachers to use Basa-provided materials, and requested supervisors and school heads to maximize the use of said materials.
- *Division Memorandum number 495 series 2017: Understanding Kindergarten Teaching and Learning (UKTL) – Training of Untrained Kindergarten Teachers.* This memo announced the division-organized training for newly hired or on-leave Kindergarten teachers who were unable to attend the UKTL training conducted by Basa. The Division tapped Basa-trained trainers and used Basa-developed training materials.
- *Division Memorandum number 503 series 2017: Seminar-workshop on LAC Facilitation* Ski*lls' Enhancement for Secondary School Heads.* The LAC seminar-workshop for secondary school heads used aspects of Basa-developed Literacy LAC processes and materials. This memo specified that school heads of integrated schools who already attended Basa LAC trainings were not required to attend.
- *Division Memorandum number 720 series 2017: Submission of School LAC Reports.* This memo instructed supervisors and school heads to submit monthly LAC reports in accordance with DepEd Order number 35 series 2016 (also mentioned above).

In addition to these policies, DepEd divisions also provided Basa-related guidelines to supervisors and school heads during trainings and committee meetings. The CID chiefs of Bohol and Tagbilaran City advised schools to keep Basa-trained teachers in the same grade level for at least five years to maximize application of strategies and lessons learned during Basa trainings. In Cebu, the CID chief announced that school-based LAC shall be conducted every 3rd Friday of the month. While in Ilocos Norte, the schools division superintendent instructed supervisors and school heads to conduct school-based LAC every Thursday at 3 p.m. The use of Basa-provided RTGs, RAs, Leveled Readers and MG Outlines was reinforced by the CID chiefs of Ilocos Sur, La Union and San Fernando City. In Mandaue City, the CID chief also reinforced the monthly conduct of LAC, and instructed supervisors and school heads to include in their monthly instructional plan the use of the paper-based Kindergarten classroom observation tool and tablet-aided SCOPE-L for Grades 1–3 classrooms.

Basa handover and DepEd sustainability plans. As part of project closeout and handover, Basa conducted the *Division Closeout Meeting: Lessons Learned and the Way Forward* with DepEd leadership to discuss results, experiences and lessons learned from the partnership; review and update their sustainability plans and discuss strategies for continuing use of Basa-provided materials and tools and identify how schools can build on the gains and accomplishments achieved

during Basa implementation. A total of 84 DepEd officials participated in the closeout meetings held in La Union, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Bohol and Cebu in March–April 2018.

DepEd acknowledged the joint efforts in accomplishing key milestones in improving reading instruction, reading delivery systems and access to quality reading materials, and was pleased with the highlights of EGRA results showing improvements in reading performance of Grade 2 learners in Filipino fluency and reading comprehension from SY 2013/2014 to SY 2016/2017 and preparedness of Grade 3 learners to transition to Filipino as medium of instruction in Grade 4. They also reflected on key experiences and processes during Basa implementation, and shared positive feedback on their involvement in the design and delivery of activities and in the development of teaching and learning materials.

Basa valued the active participation of DepEd representatives in technical working groups and their contributions to the refinement of the overall training design. Supervisors, school heads and teachers appreciated their participation in several TOTs which helped build their capacity as trainers and allowed them to share their knowledge, skills and experience with their peers and colleagues during training rollout. DepEd officials were also very proud of their teachers who authored Kindergarten Storybooks and of their supervisors who assisted in the contextualization and review of Basa materials in the Mother Tongue.

DepEd leadership affirmed the power of partnership and expressed appreciation for the inclusive, collaborative and diplomatic approach of Basa in working with DepEd across levels—from the school and district to division and region to national level. DepEd leadership committed to build on the joint gains and accomplishments during Basa implementation, continue to nurture children's love for reading and enjoin the wider school community to invest further in their children's education.

Please see Annex N for a copy of DepEd sustainability plans at the regional and division levels.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS (SAVE THE CHILDREN, SEAMEO INNOTECH, PBSP)

Basa was implemented by Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC), prime contractor, in partnership with three subcontractors: Save the Children (SC), SEAMEO INNOTECH and Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) that supported the technical implementation of the project during the original four-year period from 2013 to 2016. Save the Children has contributed significantly to program implementation through technical assistance in developing select TLMs, selection and procurement of developmentally appropriate MTB-MLE reading materials and management of Basa's Bohol field office. SC has also contributed to the disaster and emergency preparedness assistance efforts, including Basa's response to Bohol earthquake, Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) and Post-Typhoon Haiyan education recovery assistance.

SEAMEO INNOTECH has made significant contribution in the training design of LAC refresher trainings, production of demonstration videos/editing current video clips for K–3 teacher trainings, as well as the rollout of the pilot online training module for new K–3 teachers. SEAMEO INNOTECH provided additional technical support to Basa during the cost-extension in 2017. The PBSP's main contribution was the implementation of initial LAC trainings and monitoring across all Basa divisions as well as leveraging support from PBSP's corporate partners.

The detailed description of each partner's contribution is described below.

SAVE THE CHILDREN

Save the Children played an important technical and operations role as one of Basa's implementing partners from March 2013 through April 2016. Staff from its home office and national office were part of the technical team that worked on the scope and sequence of DepEd competencies, as well as the bridging framework that would guide training and materials development under Basa's approach. It was also charged with Basa field-level implementation and DepEd coordination in Bohol and Tagbilaran City divisions, with a fully-staffed field office based in Tagbilaran City.

Save the Children also led the development, procurement and distribution of selected Read Alouds (RA) as part of the TLM package that Basa produced. A total of 76 RA titles were selected by the technical team alongside the teacher's guides for instructional use. The RAs, utilized by Basa-trained teachers, were provided in MT, Filipino and English to facilitate the swift bridging of language and literacy skills. This pedagogical practice has been gradually adapted by DepEd that led to the procurement and delivery of 10 RAs titles that Basa previously developed. About 57,410 copies of these RAs were procured and utilized in the DepEd's National TOT. In addition, Save the Children education specialists provided technical assistance by participating in the development of Grades 1 and Grade 3 TLMs, such as RTGs and Leveled Readers in Filipino.

The subcontractor was also responsible for leadership and oversight of Basa's design and refinement of the MTB-MLE component. In close collaboration with the EDC, SC ensured that the MTB-MLE principles were mainstreamed within the project activities through planning, implementation, monitoring, follow-up and reporting of the project's MTB-MLE component. SC provided technical assistance by participating in workshops and consultation meetings related to the development, review and

approval of Basa TLMs with relevant DepEd's bureaus.

It was an essential partner during the implementation of the Post-Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) Disaster Education Recovery Assistance. Basa, through SC, procured and delivered school equipment critical for prepositioning to respond to needs from DepEd Cebu Province. In addition, the subcontractor delivered three training modules to DepEd administrators, officials, DRR focal points, teachers and school guidance counselors as part of the Disaster Risk and Reduction component.

Lastly, with Save's assistance, specifically its Bohol field office team, Basa was able to successfully host several USAID and foreign government dignitaries and delegations to demonstrate Basa's ongoing program implementation in Bohol and hand over teaching and learning materials to public schools.

SEAMEO INNOTECH

SEAMEO INNOTECH's programmatic activities under Basa mainly focused on video content to support training and the strengthening of LACs, including desk review and FGDs with Basa divisions to guide training design on LAC strengthening. In 2014, they developed a training design for TOT and training rollout for school officials, as well as a package of training delivery materials, including a LAC Facilitator's Guide with 12 structured LAC sessions on various topics to walk school administrators through a LAC session with teachers. Throughout 2015, SEAMEO INNOTECH significantly contributed to Basa's workplan implementation through participating in the training design of LAC refresher trainings, production of new video and editing existing video clips for Basa's division teacher trainings. SEAMEO INNOTECH also hosted the Early Grade Reading Summit co-chaired by DepEd national and USAID and facilitated by Basa Pilipinas. The culminating activity for SEAMEO INNOTECH was the design, implementation and post-training support for the pilot online training course for 90 new K–3 teachers on effective literacy instruction in Basa divisions in 2015. This important activity was implemented at DepEd's request building on SEAMEO INNOTECH's subject matter expertise and experience in the Philippine context.

In 2017, SEAMEO INNOTECH made significant contributions in production of new demonstration videos and editing of existing video clips for Basa training activities. The subcontractor produced 10 demonstration videos for the first round of Kindergarten teacher training in May 2017. In addition to videos for Kindergarten teacher training and RRSP pilot, they also produced a set of 33 videos on key classroom behaviors that represent good literacy instruction. The Basa subcontract with SEAMEO INNOTECH ended in December 2017.

PHILIPPINE BUSINESS FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS (PBSP)

As part of Basa's focus on LAC strengthening, PBSP was tasked with providing operations support for the training of school administrators to support teachers through literacy-focused LAC. The LAC facilitation trainings were completed towards the end of 2015. PBSP provided logistical assistance with implementation and conduct of LAC trainings in La Union and Cebu. In addition, PBSP also deployed four program officers to Basa field sites in La Union, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur and Cebu. The main accomplishment of PBSP has been the successful delivery of the regional LAC TOTs followed up by LAC cluster-level training rollout in Basa divisions during the third quarter of 2015. Basa technical team regularly met with PBSP staff to refine the training design and schedule, while PBSP and EDC field teams took charge of the operational and logistical preparations and conducted LAC monitoring and data collection during the fourth quarter of 2015.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Due to its geographic location, the Philippines is vulnerable to natural disasters, particularly to floods, earthquakes, landslides and volcanic eruptions. Following USAID's guidance, Basa has set aside a portion of project funds in Special Activities Fund (SAF) to assist DepEd in Basa-supported divisions.

BOHOL EARTHQUAKE

A 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck the province on October 15, 2013 at 8:12 AM. This prompted an on-site assessment to collect education-related data to identify any gaps in the Bohol schools' ability to undertake the typical Basa Pilipinas model and to assess capacities and resources that will be relevant to Basa priorities that may have been damaged or destroyed by the earthquake. A team composed of Save the Children staff conducted several assessment activities in the wake of the earthquake meeting with DepEd representatives and visiting affected schools.

As part of Basa emergency response efforts, resources were mobilized during the last quarter of 2013 for response in Bohol coming from different donor and funding agencies. Interventions included distribution of non-food items, back-to-school kits and teacher learning kits, setting up of child-friendly spaces and temporary learning spaces. USAID provided support for purchase and distribution of student's and teacher's kits and conduct of psychosocial support sessions for teachers.

TYPHOON HAIYAN (YOLANDA) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Three weeks after the earthquake hit, on November 8, 2013, as the Basa team prepared for NRM activities, notice of an impending typhoon circulated in the news. After the storm hit, reports of the horrific devastation came in over that weekend, and Basa staff stayed in close contact with DepEd to determine the extent of the damage within our areas of operation.

Two Basa assistance priorities identified in the aftermath of Typhoon Yolanda were basic materials for teachers and students and psychosocial support for those affected by the storm. Basa, through use of USAID's Special Activities Fund, moved quickly to support the response effort by contracting Psychosocial Support and Children Rights Resources Center (PST CRRC) with the objective to provide psychological first aid (PFA) to DepEd

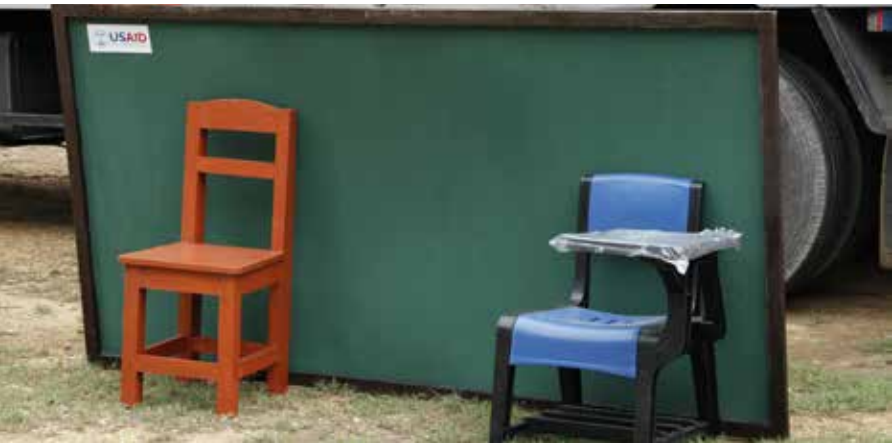
field officers (superintendents, supervisors) and teachers as well as train teachers on how to provide PFA. Individuals with considerable experience conducting such activities traveled to Ormoc in December 2013 and January 2014 to conduct these activities. PFA involves humane, supportive and practical assistance for people who have experienced distress and trauma. PFA training involved a series of activities to give participants the capacity to support others in distress and need of psychological support.

To support schools impacted by the typhoon, Basa identified a number of items required by teachers and students in the aftermath of the storm for procurement and distribution to affected areas. Within the months of January and February 2014, almost 18,000 student backpack/kits and the 800 teacher kits were distributed to impacted areas within Region 8 and northern Cebu. All emergency response kits were branded appropriately, with credit given to USAID whenever possible through public distribution events. The selection of areas most in need of these items was done in conjunction with DepEd and other stakeholders through education response cluster meetings.

POST-TYPHOON HAIYAN DISASTER EDUCATION RECOVERY ASSISTANCE

During the last quarter of 2014, USAID awarded USD$1.75 million to Basa for the implementation of the 12-month Post-Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) special assistance for Basa-assisted school districts in northern Cebu. Basa conducted several coordination meetings with DepEd Cebu Province to identify existing needs and finalize the allocation of furniture by the manufacturer to school districts. Throughout 2015, EDC provided essential school furniture, such as 19,500 tablet chairs for Grade 1-6 students; 1,414 teacher's tables and chairs and 1,178 blackboards for K–6 classrooms. The project also procured 10,400 back-to-school kits for K-Grade 6 pupils and 900 teacher kits with school supplies.

Basa's implementing partner Save the Children strengthened DepEd's Education in Emergency (EiE) response capacity



by building the capacity of learners, teachers, as well as DepEd's systems, to include front line responder's training and PFA training. Save the Children, has also procured and delivered emergency prepositioning equipment consisting of 12 temporary learning spaces (TLS) and 75 school-in-a-box (SIAB) kits to the DepEd of Cebu Province. Save the Children has also delivered three training modules as part of the Disaster Risk Reduction Management component, specifically: 1) Frontline Responders Training (FLRT) for 48 DepEd Cebu Province division and district administrators and officials; 2) Comprehensive School Safety Training (CSST) for 260 DepEd officials, administrators, school heads and DRR focal points and 3) PFA for approximately 265 school guidance counselors, teachers and coordinators.

Basa also co-developed and procured 1,600 *Be Ready!* emergency preparedness materials in English for Grades 3–6 classrooms from existing material of Anvil Publishing. This classroom material has been revised following DepEd's rigorous review and approval process. The front pages include disaster preparedness illustrations, while the reverse pages include lesson plans for teachers. By the end of the fourth quarter of 2015, all components of the Post-Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) special assistance were completed. After EDC identified some modest savings in the Post-Typhoon Haiyan budget in 2016, Basa received USAID's approval to procure and deliver an additional 1,275 school chairs for Grades 1-6 pupils and distributed these in Basa-supported schools in northern Cebu. Some 240 copies of Be Ready! emergency preparedness instructional materials in English for Grades 3–6 pupils were also turned over to USAID's Be Secure project.

MARAWI ASSISTANCE

In July 2017, USAID/Philippines requested Basa to submit a proposal for emergency assistance to displaced students affected by the Marawi crisis. Based on the data provided by DepEd's Disaster Risk and Reduction Management Office (DRRM) through USAID, 6,650 student desks were urgently needed to facilitate classroom operations.

On August 15, 2017, EDC submitted the special activity proposal for USAID's COR approval to use Basa's Special Activities budget for the procurement and delivery of 6,650 school chairs to 78 elementary and secondary schools with displaced Marawi pupils in Lanao del Sur I and II divisions as well as 12 elementary schools in Marawi City. The ceremonial handover of school chairs donated by USAID Philippines to DepEd took place at the DepEd Central Office in Pasig City on August 2, 2017.

Basa closely coordinated this special assistance effort with DepEd's DRRM Office. Thanks to DepEd and USAID's assistance, the seamless distribution of the first batch of close to 3,000 school desks concluded by mid-September. The final batch of more than 3,600 school desks was delivered and distributed during the first week of October 2017.

In April 2018, USAID approved Basa's request to spend down the remaining balance of the SAF budget category through procurement and delivery of 3,555 kits with instructional supplies to Mindanao for teachers affected by Marawi crisis. The NBSFI sorted and packed much needed teachers' supplies in kits and delivered them free of charge to Mindanao via air shipment where they were turned over to DepEd ARMM on May 23, 2018 through USAID's Mindanao Youth for Development (MYDev) and Education Governance Effectiveness (EdGE) projects during DepEd's *Oplan Balik Eskwela* in Amai Pakpak Central Elementary School in Marawi City. DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones and DepEd-ARMM Regional Secretary Rasol Mitmug, Jr. accepted the donation from USAID.

CORRELATION TO CONTRACT MONITORING PLAN (CMP)

PROGRESS REPORTING VIS-A-VIS CMP METHODS (2013–2018)

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT MEETINGS

Basa conducted regular project management meetings throughout the LOP, as part of an iterative planning process and to inform the implementation of project activities. The Basa Senior Management Team (SMT) comprised the project director, the chief of party (COP), the deputy chief of party (DCOP) for programs and the deputy chief of party for operations. Weekly calls were held throughout with the project director and COP, with more frequent planning sessions held between the Manila-based SMT. During 2013–2018, regular planning meetings were also held with subcontractors to ensure smooth implementation of workplans. Quarterly in-person meetings and weekly calls were held between field-based Basa team leaders and the program and partnerships manager for updates on DepEd relations and to follow up on task management at the division level.

DEPED ENGAGEMENT

Basa established and maintained strong working relationships and rapport with DepEd at the national and local levels (regional and division levels), enabling the program to achieve LOP commitments to USAID. This was accomplished through alignment of Basa with DepEd's priorities within the K–12 reform and MTB-MLE policy and establishment of Basa PMC—a vital mechanism for joint program development, planning, monitoring and implementation co-chaired by DepEd and USAID leadership; with membership of the Basa management team and representatives of relevant DepEd central bureaus, regional and division offices. A total of eight PMC meetings were held over the life of project, to identify together with DepEd leadership key Basa program tasks that responded both to USAID targets and deliverables, and also met DepEd priorities with the potential to go to scale or be adopted nationwide. (See Strategic Partnership section of this report for a detailed description of Basa's engagement with DepEd at all levels.)

MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS WITH USAID

The USAID/Philippines Office of Education (OEd) was a supportive stakeholder throughout Basa's relationship building process with DepEd. The close coordination and regular open

communication with USAID was critical for smooth program implementation and continued navigation of a complex work environment. The USAID's OEd team was instrumental in establishing the Basa PMC and they regularly accompanied Basa to meetings at DepEd for high-level validation discussions and programmatic troubleshooting and agreements. Regular coordination meetings were conducted in addition to regular communication via email and phone calls that facilitated strategy discussions, joint problem solving and activity planning. EDC greatly appreciated USAID's support to Basa throughout the LOP during visits to field-based events, training activities and providing key messages to DepEd participants.

REGULAR MONITORING OF PMP DATA

Basa's Contract Monitoring Plan (CMP) and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Guide are the main documents detailing the methods for collection, storage and verification of data, as well as rationale for the project M&E process. The M&E team managed all data collection activities, with analysis done in partnership with EDC's home office M&E advisor and full-time Basa technical team.

Important to note that effective FY2017, Basa's numbers were based on the new USAID indicator definitions that allowed Basa to count beneficiaries even if they were already counted in previous fiscal year M&E reports. Therefore, the overall LOP totals reflect double counts of teachers, school administrators and learners reached in previous years.

TABLE 9. LIFE OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN TABLE (2013–2018)

Indicator type	Indicator Description	Target LOP	Jan 2013 – Jul 2018						Over all (Total)
			2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	FY 2018	
							Follows new USAID indicator guidance which no longer requires unique beneficiary counts		
Custom: Proportion of students who, by the end of three grades of primary schooling, demonstrate they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text (Type: Outcome)	Proportion of students who, by the end of three grades, demonstrate they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text	Targets are set by fiscal year. This indicator only began to be collected in 2016.	n/a	n/a	n/a	76%	75%	74%	
Numerator							1258	1,222	
Denominator							1677	1,651	
Number of males							65% (541)	549 (65.1%)	
Number of females							85% (717)	674 (83.5%)	
ES.1-1: Proportion of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text (Type: Outcome)	Proportion of students who, by the end of two grades, demonstrate they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text	Targets are set by fiscal year	n/a	n/a	45%	34%	29%	36.6%	

TABLE 9. LIFE OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN TABLE (2013–2018)

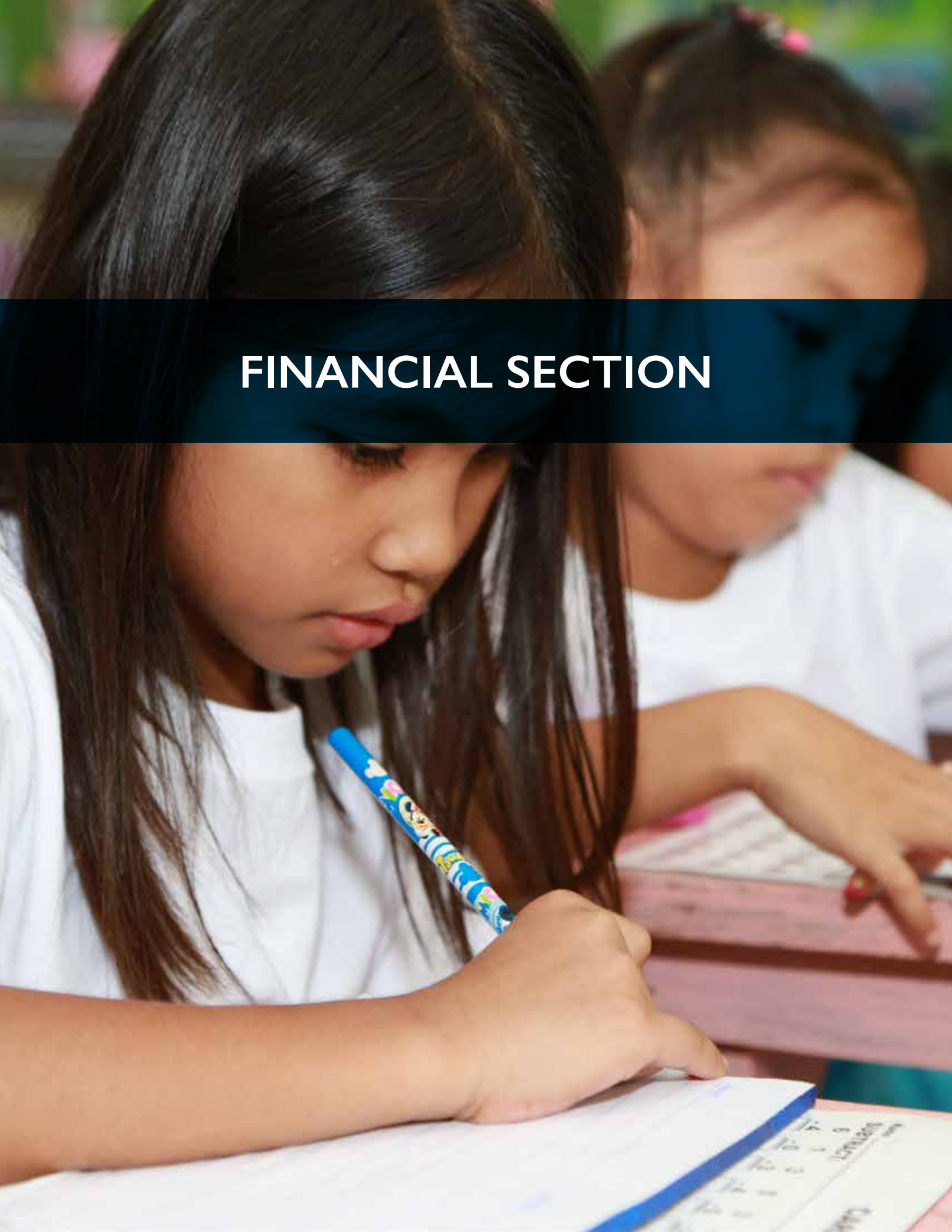
Indicator type	Indicator Description	Target LOP	Jan 2013 – Jul 2018						Over all (Total)
			2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	FY 2018	
							Follows new USAID indicator guidance which no longer requires unique beneficiary counts		
Numerator							488	602	
Denominator							1680	1,645	
Number of males							23% (189)	248 (29.8%)	
Number of females							36% (298)	354 (43.4%)	
ES.1-3 Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG education assistance	Number of students enrolled in schools that receive USAID/ Basa assistance	1,308,434	159,846	303,373	629,128	509,146	968,645	426,601	**2,996,739**
ES.1-5: Number of learners reached in reading programs at primary level with USG assistance.	Number of students enrolled in primary schools reached by the Basa program (direct: fully and partially funded)	1,308,434	159,846	303,373	629,128	509,146	968,645	419,551	**2,989,689**

TABLE 9. LIFE OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN TABLE (2013–2018)

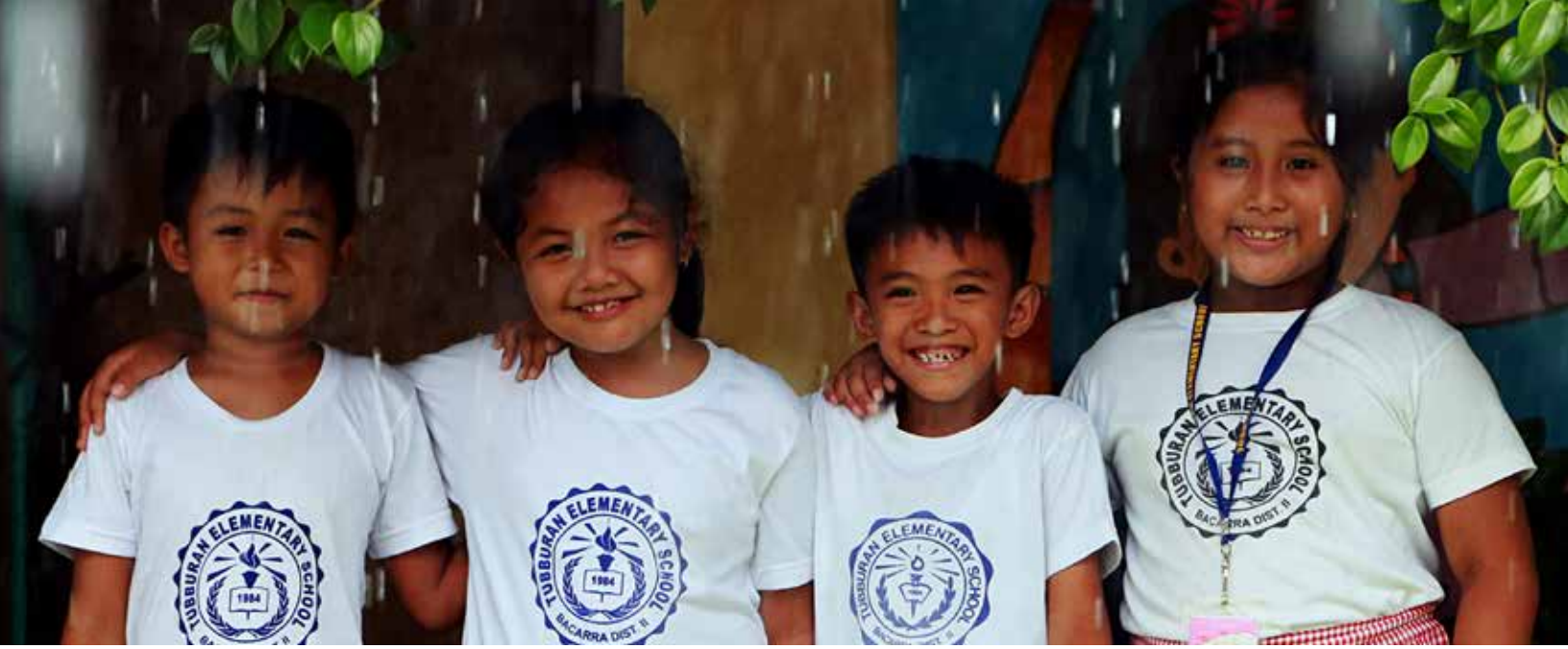
Indicator type	Indicator Description	Target LOP	Jan 2013 – Jul 2018						Over all (Total)
			2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	FY 2018	
							Follows new USAID indicator guidance which no longer requires unique beneficiary counts		
ES.1-6 Number of primary or secondary educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	Number of teachers who successfully completed Basa training	12,894	4,493	7,682	746		14,602	3,206	**30,729**
ES.1-7: Number of primary school educators who complete professional development activities on implementing evidence-based reading instruction with USG assistance.									

TABLE 9. LIFE OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN TABLE (2013–2018)

Indicator type	Indicator Description	Target LOP	Jan 2013 – Jul 2018						Over all (Total)
			2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	FY 2018	
							Follows new USAID indicator guidance which no longer requires unique beneficiary counts		
ES.1-10: Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other teaching learning materials (TLM) provided with USG assistance .	Number of early grade reading (EGR) materials for learners and teachers provided	5,700,000	28,498	,057,150	4,118,263	1,802,893	533,525	1,882,648	**10,422,977**
ES.1-11: Number of primary school classrooms that received a complete set of essential reading instructional materials (TLM) provided with USG assistance .	Number of classrooms provided with complete set of EGR materials	14,600	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3,202	15,571	**18,773**
ES.1-12: Number of administrators and officials who complete professional development activities with USG assistance.	Number of school heads and administrators who successfully completed Basa training	3,414	1,146	2,205	63		2,568	2,635	**8,617**



FINANCIAL SECTION



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The table below provides an illustrative summary of Basa spending throughout life of project (2013-2018) allocated by Intermediate Result (IR). Please note that Special Activities category also includes Post-Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) funds previously reported as a separate category until 2017. Please be advised that reported amounts include project administration costs allocated by IR and Special Activities. The projected local expenses for July 2018 were converted to USD$ based on USD$1=PhP 51.11 exchange rate in the no-cost extension budget approved by USAID. The final July 2018 expenses will be included in Basa's monthly invoice that will be submitted to USAID/Philippines no later than July 31, 2018.

TABLE 10. FINANCIAL SUMMARY - LIFE OF PROJECT

Category	Total Approved Budget for LOP	Total Actual Expenses thru 12/31/2017	Estimated Actual Expenses 01/1/18-07/31/18	Total Estimated Actual Expenses thru 07/31/18	Balance of Awarded Amount
Result 1	$24,192,553	$16,828,939	$129,221	$16,958,160	$7,234,393
Result 2	$3,130,676	$4,286,254	$412,981	$4,699,235	($1,568,559)
Result 3	$9,900,734	$12,015,421	$3,573,000	$15,588,421	($5,687,687)
Special Activities	$2,456,037	$2,349,065	$32,455	$2,381,521	$74,516
Total	**$39,680,000**	**$35,479,679**	**$4,147,657**	**$39,627,337**	**$52,663**

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Princess Carla

WAY FORWARD

Over its five and a half years of implementation, Basa Pilipinas has directly benefited 1.8 million learners, and improved learners' reading performance particularly in the critical skills of fluency and comprehension. Teaching and learning materials developed for Basa-assisted divisions have now been adopted by DepEd and scaled up to nationwide use, as well as being shared widely with the rest of the DepEd system through the DepEd Learning Resource Portal. This has expanded Basa's reach, indirectly benefiting an additional 3.6 million Grade 1 learners nationwide over the past two school years.

Basa's accomplishments would not have been possible without the strong engagement and involvement of DepEd personnel throughout the system—from national leadership on to the school and classroom levels. DepEd officials were involved in the design of Basa activities—be it through the PMC meetings, headed by the DepEd undersecretary of Curriculum and Instruction, or through TWG meetings participated in by regional and division level DepEd partners. DepEd also facilitated the delivery of Basa activities, particularly its support for teacher professional development. DepEd divisions identified supervisors, school heads or teachers who could serve as trainers for the delivery of Basa teacher training activities, thereby building a local corps of literacy champions who can keep building teacher and school head capacity over time. Finally, DepEd staff were instrumental in the writing, review and approval of Basa teaching and learning materials. For example, DepEd teachers were tapped to serve as writers of Kindergarten Big Books, with Basa providing the framework, training and production process as support. DepEd officials further assisted in the contextualization and review of Basa materials in the mother tongue, ensuring that these were relevant and appropriate for learners. Basa's strong engagement with the DepEd's BLR also ensured that materials would be approved for classroom use, and later shared with non-Basa divisions via the DepEd Learning Resource Portal.

Basa Pilipinas was also successful in leveraging additional private sector support for early grade reading. With partners such as Brother's Brother Foundation, National

> USAID and Basa Pilipinas helped to pilot processes that would inform processes for the rest of the country... that kind of relationship is very powerful because there is purpose to the partnership... we could build the multilingual literacy program better with that kind of collaboration.
>
> **– Dr. Dina Ocampo,**
> *Former DepEd Undersecretary*

Bookstore Foundation, Petron Foundation and Philippine Business for Social Progress, Basa raised equivalent to USD$5 million in leveraged resources. This allowed Basa to increase both its beneficiary reach as well as the number of materials provided to learners, making books and the pleasures of reading accessible to more children.

LESSONS LEARNED

In reflecting on its experience in supporting early grade reading, Basa identified the following key lessons.

POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Results and accomplishments of the past years—including the legacy of materials that Basa is now able to share with the rest of the DepEd system—were made possible by the strength of the partnership with DepEd. This partnership relied on building trust and credibility with DepEd, and underscoring the shared goals and vision of the program with DepEd's priority reforms. In addition, private sector partner contributions were invaluable not only in attaining and exceeding project targets, but also in communicating that improving children's learning is everyone's concern.

IMPORTANCE OF EVIDENCE

Basa's substantial research, monitoring and evaluation activities enabled the partnership to assess whether or not interventions were working for learners. This approach aligned well with the current DepEd focus on evidence-based programming. In fact, many of the research-based initiatives—including the MTB-MLE trajectory study and the ICT for Reading pilot—were implemented on the request of DepEd's top leadership. Basa relied heavily on support and cooperation from its partner schools in realizing its substantial research and M&E activities. In turn, Basa ensured that data and results were shared with and reflected on by DepEd stakeholders. Teachers, school heads and parents, as well as DepEd officials from the division to the national level, had an opportunity to learn about Basa's reading results, and reflect upon actions they could take to improve children's reading even further.

> I appreciate Basa's data-driven interventions and its commitment to assessment.
>
> **– Dr. Rhea Angtud,**
> *Schools Division Superintendent,*
> DepEd Cebu Province.

SYSTEM-WIDE ENGAGEMENT

Working with DepEd across levels—from national to regional to division to school—facilitated Basa's ability to implement efficiently and to contribute to DepEd priorities. The Program Management Committee (PMC) structure is a good example. Co-chaired by the USAID Office of Education director and the DepEd undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction, and with the regional directors and superintendents of Basa's partner regions and divisions as members, the PMC allowed discussion of both policy level standards and field level implementation. Basa's ability to do monitoring and school visits after each training activity and intervention, and to obtain timely feedback from teachers and school heads, also facilitated an adaptive and responsive approach when it came to intervention design or redesign. Having Basa's field team offices embedded within the DepEd division further strengthened Basa's ability to more swiftly adjust or negotiate activity schedules so that these did not clash with other DepEd activities on their school calendar. This also allowed Basa to ensure integration and alignment with the division's priorities, including enabling USAID to provide assistance during times of emergency or natural disasters, as in the case of Bohol after the 2014 earthquake, or Cebu in the wake of Typhoon Yolanda.

> DepEd's support to Basa has been consistent because Basa has been very sensitive to our needs. It is Basa Pilipinas that provided us with the materials that we needed for our teachers and learners—from Leveled Readers and other materials to replacement fixtures and instructional materials after what we had was destroyed by Typhoon Yolanda.
>
> **– Dr. Mary Ann Flores,** *CID Chief,* DepEd Cebu Province.

NO SCHOOL LEFT BEHIND

By deliberately including all schools in its partner divisions in the provision of assistance, Basa was able to test and/or demonstrate the relevance, applicability and scalability of its interventions. From large enrollment central schools to remote MG and even single-teacher schools, Basa was able to roll out materials and training that could serve the needs of the wide variety of schools within a division. It was this approach that enabled Basa to adapt and adjust its interventions when needed. For example, the creation of MG outlines was not originally part of the Basa workplan; but upon seeing that there were a sizeable number of MG schools in its partner divisions, the Basa team developed these outlines to assist MG teachers in using Basa RTGs, RAs and Leveled Readers appropriately for their mixed grade classrooms. Including all schools in USAID assistance coverage also meant an equitable approach to supporting schools and learners—most especially those schools and communities in remote areas who tend to be left out due to their distance or inaccessibility.

> Reading materials are now available in all classrooms, even in the farthest schools in the division.
>
> **– Dr. Elsie Rigunay,** *Education Program Supervisor,* DepEd Ilocos Sur

This support is much appreciated by DepEd divisions, as USAID support ensures fair and far-reaching assistance for all learners.

BUILDING OWNERSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

DepEd's active engagement and involvement in Basa fostered a sense of ownership and established DepEd's stake in Basa's success. It also built local capacity that can ensure that interventions and gains will be sustained well beyond Basa's timeline. For example, in developing a pool of local DepEd trainers able to deliver professional development activities, Basa was able to harness local talents who can continue supporting teacher training efforts even after Basa implementation ends.

> Establishing a pool of DepEd trainers strengthened the partnership, and it makes it easier for us to sustain the program. Now we are confident that we can initiate and conduct our own trainings, and we are also being recognized and approached by other non-Basa divisions to serve as resource persons.
>
> **– Marlon Taloza,** *Education Program Supervisor,* DepEd Ilocos Sur.

DepEd ownership was also underscored from the outset by DepEd leadership, with former Undersecretary Dina Ocampo regarding Basa Pilipinas as "simply not a USAID project, but rather a DepEd program being implemented with USAID support."

THANK
YOU

ANNEXES

The full details are contained in the second part of this report, *USAID/Philippines Basa Pilipinas Program Final Project Report: Annexes*.

Thank you so much for being a program of the heart of the children, for making them functional readers, for helping teachers have a big heart for teachers.

BASA / USAID / EDC

A million thanks to You! Your Help and assistance to the Filipino learners are indeed priceless. - In gratitude we commit to sustain the gains - God Bless - CAS BOHOL

Thankful to have helped the future of young children to be functionally literate.

Mark Lani

Thank you BASA for Empowering our school Heads

SDO - San Fernando City

Honored & Privileged to participate in the BASA PILIPINAS Project. How it had assisted our learners had been amazingly

Thank you BASA for providing tablets to our learners in the City of San Fernando. Our children were able to read + manipulate it through with your guidance

Thank You Basa Pilipinas for a very good job in improving early grade reading Thank you DepEd for the partnership!

Monica USAID

BASA –
Our deepest gratitude for making us a part of this project.
SDS Nimfa Bongf

Thank you for taking care of our SPED children
SDO-San Fernando City

Thank you very much USAID and EDC in helping our learners become Readers.
Cebu Province

Wonderful. We commit to continue the gains to reach more learners and to work for its sustainability
Madam Juls

We appreciated much your generosity & love to SDO ILOCOS NORTE. We promise you to sustain BASA Program. Thank You so much!!!

6/19/18
HURRY TO USAID BASA PILIPINAS.
WE'RE SO BLESSED TO BE PART OF THIS WONDERFUL PROJECT FOR OUR EARLY GRADE LEARNERS & TEACHERS. THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
MANDAUE CITY DIVISION

Thank you for providing tablets to our learners. You made them so happy and updated.
SDO-San Fdo. City

It was such a great opportunity/experience to be part of this BASA Project. Thank you ♡♡♡
GUS

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July 2018