



ANNUAL REPORT

2072-73

Working to Improve the Quality of School Education



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Preface

At the World Education Forum in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in May 2015, representatives of the global education community signed the Incheon Declaration, embracing the proposed SDG 4 as the single universal education goal, which commits countries to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. SDG 4 and its targets advance a model where learning, in all its shapes and forms, has the power to influence people's choices to create more just, inclusive and sustainable societies. To advance progress towards SDG4 and its targets, the global education community adopted the Education 2030 Framework for Action in Paris in November 2015 (UNESCO, 2015a).

In Nepal, approximately half a million children between the ages of five and 12 remain out of school. Bringing these children in school is likely to require additional resources as they face multiple barriers to access education and to be retained in school. A lot of work needs to be done to upgrade the quality of education. Some factors plaguing the education system are lack of teacher motivation to bring about changes in schools, which results in low academic performance. This again is linked to multiple factors such as a well managed school and the role of the Principal as the leader. Unaware parents too are not able to help and support their children. Furthermore, the progress that has been observed within the education sector in Nepal has been skewed, with certain groups benefitting little or not at all in terms of education outcomes. A joint

analysis undertaken by the Government of Nepal and UNICEF shows that more than a quarter of all out-of-school children live in the same eight districts. Children belonging to the privileged groups in Nepal have 10 year of schooling while children from the most marginalized groups (girls particularly from the Tarai) have less than one year of schooling.

Nepal is addressing these issues by implementing the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) whose objective is to create equitable participation in basic education. It stresses on ensuring equitable access to quality education for all children between 4 and 16 years through a right based approach and promotion of a child-friendly environment in schools. The Consolidated Equity Strategy, developed by the Ministry of Education with support from development partners, is the first of its kind in South Asia and is expected to provide a guiding framework for implementing educational programs with targeted interventions to reduce the number of out-of-school children, bring down the high drop-out rates and improve the learning outcomes among disadvantaged population in Nepal.

Nepal is also participating in the global Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) to reduce the number of out-of-school children by improving research on out-of-school children, reviewing existing interventions to enhance school participation and recommending context-appropriate policies and strategies.

This report highlights the work actively carried out by RBF in 2072-2073, where programs concentrated on training, capacity-building and the provision of essential material for community schools around the country. Nawa Marga project was the biggest one carried out by RBF in the immediate aftermath of the devastating quake of Baisakh 2072. The earthquake crippled all section of a nation's life including education. RBF collaborated with Karkhana for the Nawa Marga Project training more than 6400 teachers from Dhading and Kathmandu and surrounding districts.

The focus was on providing psychosocial training to teachers in the immediate aftermath to ease children back into school. The six month long unprecedented blockade of the Nepal India boarder caused further damage by compelling schools to remain closed. Thus 2072 was a year that severely impacted the education sector. Dailekh School Project and the Gulmi Projects were both phased out in 2072, after successfully completing the project cycle. RBPOP Phase III is currently being designed and the plan is to begin implementation in 2074.

We thank all Rato Bangala School parents, past and present those who have so gener-

ously supported the RBPOP pioneering effort to improve the government school system of Nepal. As Rato Bangala parents value quality education that has benefited their own children, they are keen to help facilitate education for all Nepali children.

However, not much will happen unless the public and private sectors work together. The Rato Bangala Foundation has initiated an inspiring trend in the country. It is the attempt of one small organization to garner support of multiple public sectors and enter into a partnership with the Government's educational bureaucracy. A thank you also goes to the Ministry of Education for giving us permission to work on our multiple projects, the Department of Education for authorizing the DEO to support the project, and the District Education Officer for working together and accepting RBF as a collaborative partner.

Finally and most importantly all individuals working in Rato Bangala School and Rato Bangala Foundation are to be thanked for their sincere dedication in striving to make the Foundation's work meaningful.

Shanta Dixit
Chairperson

List of Abbreviations

RBF	Rato Bangala Foundation
RBPOP	Rato Bangala Partnership in Outreach Program
TGS	Tsoknyi Gechak School
RP	Resource Person
SS	School Supervisor
SMC	School Management Committee
RBS	Rato Bangala School
DEO	District Education Office
DoE	Department of Education
ToT	Training of Trainers
PTTP	Primary Teacher Training Program
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
TLC	Temporary Learning Centers
VDC	Village Development Committees
EGR	Early Grade Reading
WE	World Education
RM	Reading Motivators
LDO	Local Development Officer
SNGVK	Saichik Namuna Gramin Vikas Kendra
VEC	Village Education Committee
VDC	Village Development Committee
BSM	Bal Sahitya Mahotsav
EN	Escuela Nueva
CDC	Curriculum Development Center
CAS	Continuous Assessment System
ISAP	Institute for Suitable Actions for Prosperity
EDSPPS	Earthquake Drills and Safety Preparedness Plans in Schools
ECD	Early Childhood Development
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

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1. About RBF

Rato Bangala Foundation (RBF), established in 2002, seeks to ensure the right of all Nepali children to high quality, child-friendly education. Since its inception, RBF has worked as a training institute which provides various types of trainings to primary and secondary school teachers. It collaborates closely with Bank Street College of Education in New York and Kathmandu University in Nepal to run the Primary Teacher Training Program (PTTP).

RBF focuses on improving classroom practices in schools around the country with a particular emphasis on government schools, many of which lag significantly behind national standards in the areas of pedagogy and classroom management. The goal of RBF is to transform public schools into child-centred, gender-sensitive, community-owned schools which provide quality education to children. Employing a 'whole-school' approach, the Foundation works with parents, teachers, and administrators as well as students so that all feel empowered and develop a sense of ownership of their local schools and the quality of education they offer. RBF believes that simple, low-cost, and locally available teaching aids be used whenever possible and that classrooms should be organized to promote participatory group-learning exercises in which no student is neglected. In such a setup, students interact and learn from each other and teachers serve as facilitators and guides. RBF works with the government both at the central and the local level, thus ensuring the continuity and sustainability of its efforts in changing classroom practice.

In the last 14 years, RBF has successfully introduced its uniquely communal approach in over 1500 schools in 22 districts of Nepal. It has trained more than 12000 teachers and oriented parents, School Management Committee members, and community leaders.

The Foundation's aim to improve the quality of education in Nepal dovetails neatly with the core objectives of the United Nations' Education-for-All initiative and the UN-DP's newly established Sustainable Development Goals. With 15 years of experience, RBF is uniquely placed to ensure that its work is practical and meaningful, and that children acquire the life skills they need to succeed both within and beyond the school environment.

RBF's flagship program –Rato Bangala Partnership in Outreach Program (RBPOP) – is the result of collaboration between itself and the Rato Bangala School (RBS). After a series of extensive consultation and planning sessions with RBS parents in 2003, the Rato Bangala community determined it would dedicate 18 per cent of yearly tuition fees to help improve the quality of education in government schools. Over the years, this partnership has delivered remarkable results.

The first phase of RBPOP concentrated on five districts: Dailekh, Dhading, Makwanpur, Myagdi, and Lalitpur. Over five years, a total of 50 schools from these districts participated in various training programs focused on improving child-friendly teaching

In the last 14 years, RBF has trained more than 12000 teachers and oriented parents, School Management Committee members, and community leaders.

and learning practices; they also received scholarship support and mini-grants for infrastructure projects. Phase I of RBPOP brought about valuable changes in these schools in the areas of pedagogy, community engagement, and overall school management. Many have since become exemplars in their districts, setting the standard for the implementation of child-friendly practices in their classrooms and building strong and productive relationships with their surrounding communities.

Encouraged by the success of RBPOP Phase I, the Foundation then resolved to concentrate the efforts and resources of

Phase II on the district of Dailekh. The Dailekh School Project (DSP) reached an astonishing 513 schools, comprising approximately 2000 teachers and 70000 students at the primary level. Echoing Phase I, the DSP worked to improve teaching and learning practices through a combination of teacher training programs, supportive supervision, and the supply of limited but durable teaching and learning materials. After seven years, the Dailekh School Project was phased out in 2073.

RBPOP Phase III is currently under design; RBF anticipates launch early in the next academic year (2074).

2. Annual Summary

The Baisakh 2072, earthquake caused massive damage to livelihood and property, killing and injuring thousands of people. It devastated 14 of Nepal's densely populated mid-hill and mountain districts causing extensive damage to homes, schools, and infrastructure. The earthquake proved to be a heavy setback to a nation already crippled by corruption and recent war and led to an increase in issues such as human trafficking, urbanization and widespread mental health trauma. A further blow was dealt by the six month-long blockade, exacerbated by bickering political parties and external interference, causing loss of business and promoting a lucrative black market. Essential commodities such as fuel and cooking gas were in short supply and inflation rose at an alarming rate.

Despite the difficulties and setbacks of 2072, RBF continued with its work, conducting a range of significant interventions such as the Nawa Marga Project, which provided the much-needed psychosocial training to more than 6500 teachers in both Dhading and Kathmandu to address earthquake-

related trauma in schools. For the Dailekh School Project, RBF distributed 5000 lime plants to students who then planted these around their communities as part of their social studies curriculum. Vocational Education Training was provided to teachers from three schools in Dailekh district with a view to improving students' employment opportunities and providing skills. Planning commenced for RBPOP Phase III, which is expected to reach ten of Lalitpur's government schools in its first year (2074). Technical support was provided to schools supported by Pitzer College and continued with programs such as Early Grade Reading (EGR) training for teachers, school leadership training for Principals in the district of Kavre, as well as ongoing distribution of teaching and learning materials to government schools. A English language training was initiated in Dhading in a phasewise manner, the Bal Sahitya Mahotsav happened with much fanfare and six workshops with scholars from Bank Street College of Education was initiated to train primary grade teachers from various schools in Kathmandu.

Nawa Marga Project, which provided the much-needed psychosocial training to more than 6500 teachers in both Dhading and Kathmandu to address earthquake-related trauma in schools.



3. Rato Bangala Partnership in Outreach Program

Dailekh School Project

The Dailekh School Project (DSP) sought to overhaul teaching and learning at a scale that would positively affect each and every household and lead to progressive socio economic changes in the district. The DSP was a collaborative effort between Rato Bangala School's social wing – Rato Bangala Partnership in Outreach Program (RBPOP) – as well as the Department of Education, the National Center for Education Development (NCED), District Education Office (DEO), District Development Committee (DDC), one municipality, and 55 Village Development Committees (VDC) in Dailekh.

The DSP trained school leaders and teachers, provided backstopping activities, supported the formation of child clubs, offered supportive supervision, and supplied teaching and learning materials for various subjects. DSP intervened in a total of 513 schools in the district, touching 2,000 teachers and 75,000 students. After five long years of strenuous work, DSP ended its tenure in Dailekh in 2071. However, an agreement was signed with the DoE, extending the project period for a further two years. Initially 14 Field Officers (FOs) were stationed in Dailekh, but after the extension, activities continued under the supervision of a reduced team of FOs.

DSP intervened in a total of 513 schools in the district, touching 2,000 teachers and 75,000 students.





Lime Plantation

In 2072, 5000 lime seeds were purchased and distributed to grade three children who planted the seeds in the school compound and in their backyards. The seeds were distributed to 32 schools of two RCs in Dailekh. The learning objectives of the Lime Plantation project were to cultivate an appreciation for nature in students and teach them how to care for the environment. The plantation project, as part of the social science curriculum, linked well with guidelines outlined in the School Sector Reform Plan, focusing on the fact that children should be encouraged to learn differently by doing and observing in a safe secure environment. The Field Officers observed that students, teachers and parents were seen nurturing

and caring for the plant; when the trees matured, families of students could derive an additional economic benefit by selling the fruits.

Vocational Education Training

The Nepali National Curriculum Framework, 2007, seeks to introduce Vocational, Occupational, and Technological (VOT) skills amongst students of grades 6-8. These skills are expected to pave way for children to realize their interests and excel in the same thereby becoming self-reliant through employment or by acquiring substantial income-generating jobs.

VOT skills are now being taught in schools throughout the country. Students partici-

In 2072, 5000 lime plants were purchased and distributed to grade three children who planted the seeds in the school compound and in their backyards.





Teachers have realized the importance of studying VOT subjects, but schools lack the necessary equipment and tutorial expertise to effectively teach the subjects.

pate in hands-on activities for a full 50 per cent of the teaching hours. Most of the schools in the country including the ones in Dailekh are without basic amenities for running VOT lessons. Computer classes are taught on the board, and students are taught to make raised beds for a kitchen garden without actual practice. Teachers have realized the importance of studying VOT subjects, but schools lack the necessary equipment and tutorial expertise to effectively teach the subjects.

Realizing the pressing need to impart the know-how of multiple approaches to VOT teaching, RBF conducted a three day training session for seven teachers with the objective to connect theory to practice. The names of participating schools were Red Cross S.S., Krishna H.S.S., and Janata H.S.S. The results of RBF's VOT training were as follows: The hands-on activities demonstrated during the three day training enabled participants to make a product each during the session. Teachers recognized the importance of doing curriculum-based teaching as opposed to simply relying on textbooks. The teachers felt the need to include a 90 minute practical lesson. The three participating schools now have separate rooms for running practical lessons on knitting and sewing along with computer labs. The agricultural tools required to teach the subject have already been distributed and are being put to use. DSP staff monitored all ongoing VOT classes during the year and reported in a timely manner.

School Visits

DSP staff stationed in Dailekh conducted regular school visits with RPs. As per the project guidelines they were required to visit 5-7 schools every month. In the school, they observed ongoing classes for the day and made suggestions to improve teaching and learning. Meetings were held with principals and teachers focusing on child clubs, student attendance, regular attendance of teachers, and so on.

Significant changes were brought about due to regular school visits. Teachers acquired new ideas for teaching. Principals discussed problems faced by the school, most often these were addressed during DEO meetings. As a result of ongoing school visits, the attendance of both teachers and students improved, and considerable progress has been made regarding child-friendly teaching and learning practices.

RC/DEO Meetings

DSP staff attended RC meetings held every month at the DEO. Discussions usually centered on ways to improve schools and enhance school visits. Agendas included introducing new and creative approaches to teaching learning in classrooms, school visits, preparing annual action calendars, and so on. The opinions of teachers and principals were taken into consideration while making joint working plans. These meetings paved way for collaborative work in the district.

Planning for RBPOP Phase III

Serving as a role model in the country with the inclusion of an outreach, RBS initiated the concept of a public-private partnership in the education sector in 2003. In Phase III, RBPOP will initiate a project in ten schools of Lalitpur. RBPOP/RBF will implement the project jointly in coordination and in collaboration with the DEO of Lalitpur. A core team will be formed within RBF to work on different aspects of the project.

The RBF team visited two RCs of Lalitpur (total of four schools), to conduct a needs assessment survey. An evaluation questionnaire was prepared beforehand. RBF staff interviewed teachers, principals, and held focus group discussions to determine the teaching and learning priorities of participating schools, and how RBF can best assist them in achieving their targets.

RBPOP Phase III Project Design Workshop RBF staff participated in the Sara Levine facilitated content development workshop for RBPOP Phase III, from 20 Baisakh to 3 Jestha. The entire project cycle was discussed with specific activities outlined for all three years of the project intervention. RBF staff are currently involved in developing training packages for the facilitators and simultaneously holding meetings to work on the project design part with Caitlin Sparks. The RBPOP Phase III is expected to commence by 2074.

A meeting with Principals of neighbouring schools of Lalitpur was held during Jestha as part of the RBPOP project design for Phase III. A total of 28 Principals, along with RPs and Under Secretary of the DoE, participated in the meeting. They were briefed about RBPOP's past work in Dailekh. Six RBPOP partner schools have already been shortlisted to participate; a further four schools will be chosen from amongst the 28 schools for Phase III. Most principals have expressed a keen desire to be a part of RBPOP Phase III project. It is work in progress.

Scholarships provided to neighboring school children

RBPOP has been providing scholarship to children of neighboring school since the last 15 years. A specified amount as part of the scholarship is provided to help the children and their families buy books and uniforms right before the start of the academic year. As of now 28 children receive benefits as part of the RBPOP scholarship program.

In addition RBPOP provides scholarship to 9 students living in the hostel and studying in Rato Bangala School. These students have been chosen from different parts of Nepal.

English audiobook

After securing permission from the Curriculum Development Center (CDC), RBF prepared audiobooks of English textbooks for grades 1-10. The English audio recordings were created to help students understand English language better by assisting them actively in areas of pronunciation and comprehension. The recordings are complete and will be distributed to RBF partner schools.

Relief and Rehabilitation Works in Bhattedanda Schools

As part of its involvement with the NEC, RBF commenced work in Bhattedanda VDC, Lalitpur. Eight schools were se-

RBPOP Phase I phased out in 2065, leaving intact the network of schools.

In Phase III, RBPOP will initiate a project in ten schools of Lalitpur.





lected to have Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs) constructed on their premises: Bhattedanda L.S.S.; Mahakali Devi H.S.S.; Yespa P.S.; Kalidevi P.S.; Baghbhairav P.S.; Bhanu P.S.; Nileswhori P.S.; and Saatkanaya P.S. Engineers were consulted to create maps and design the TLCs, some of which comprised as many as eight rooms. The structures were built with the help of local community workers with recycled materials. In accordance with government stipulations, each room measured 14' x 18'.

The Government had specified that each TLC should cost no more than NPR. 75000: RBF covered this expense for its eight schools. Despite difficult circumstances – including nearby landslides and logistical challenges – the TLCs were completed in a timely manner. The eight schools RBF assisted were able to reopen on 17 Jestha, as per the official government schedule.

Textbooks, school bags, two sets of uniforms and stationeries were provided to 614

students. RBF also facilitated post-disaster counselling training for 38 teachers and donated a range of Rato Bangala Kitab publications.

As part of the follow up activity, RBF staff participated in the Education Cluster Meet held at DoE Sanothimi, Bhaktapur and in the DEO Office, Lalitpur. The meetings focused on reviewing activities completed by participating organizations, facilitating classes during winter months, and initiating WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) projects in schools.

The results of RBF's involvement in the NEC can be cited as follows: eight schools received fully functional Temporary Learning Centers; school bags, books, and other stationery items were provided to 614 students; and 38 teachers received training on post-disaster counselling, which helped build their capacity to identify and support the traumatised children in their care.

RBF helped to build 22 Temporary Learning Centers (TLC)

Comumbia Visit: Escuela Nueva

Observing the Escuela Nueva model in Colombia, in preparation for RBPOP Phase III

A three member team from RBF and the District Education Officer, Dhading, embarked on a journey to Colombia to study





the Escuela Nueva (EN) model during Ashoj 2072. Designed in the late 1970s, the model aims to improve the relevance, quality and effectiveness of education in Colombian schools. Centered on the use of an active learning methodology, EN has been adopted by more than 30 countries around the globe. The RBF team visited three schools in Colombia and spent considerable time interacting with students, teachers, and

Founder of the program. The objective of the visit was to study the program and effectively replicate all or some components of the program, for projects initiated by RBF.

Follow up program

A program to update stakeholders after the visit to Colombia was held on 20 Kartik. Invitees included members from the DoE, DEO, Lalitpur, and RBF Board Members. The visitors to Colombia presented their study on EN, after which the floor was open to meaningful discussion centered on the possibilities for introducing EN in Nepal. Although it was agreed that EN is a good education model for developing countries, it was decided that information needed to be disseminated on a larger scale to ensure participation and eventually acquire support from Government bodies.

Network of RBPOP Schools

The network of RBPOP schools formed at the outset in 2061. It consists of 10 schools in Dailekh, three schools in Mallika RC, and seven schools in Narayan RC. The program phased out in 2065 leaving intact the network of schools. In 2072, mobile meetings were held at one of the member schools on a

The objective of the visit was to study the program and effectively replicate all or some components of the program, for projects initiated by RBF.



The program
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rotation basis, and were attended by school principals, teachers, and SMC Chairpersons. Important issues faced by the schools were discussed at the meeting and ways to improvise education in the district was sought. RBF has noted a range of significant

changes as a result of these meetings, which ensure the continuity of RBPOP project interventions and sustain quality of education in the network schools. The collaboration has created capable students excelling in extracurricular activities and academics.

4. Nawa Marga

Project: Nawa Marga

The impact of the Baisakh 2072, earthquake that affected 14 districts of Nepal, was profound in all sectors, including education. The Post Disaster Needs Assessment carried out by the National Planning Commission, estimated that 8,242 community (public) schools had been affected, with 25,134 classrooms fully destroyed and another 22,097 partially damaged. Institutional (private) schools also experienced significant infrastructural damage with 956 classrooms fully destroyed and 3,983 classrooms partially damaged.¹

The government, Nepali citizens, and the large I/NGO community all responded to the plight of earthquake survivors in different ways, providing a range of emergency resources and services. RBF elected instead to collaborate with local NGO, Karkhana, to deliver psychosocial and subject specific trainings to teachers and Principals in two of the worst hit districts, Kathmandu and Dhading. Knowing that many children had witnessed loss of life and destruction of property, RBF realised that teachers may not have the necessary skills to identify traumatised children, nor know how to address and alleviate their fears. Thus, the emergency package 'Nawa Marga: Post Earthquake Relief through Education' took shape. The intervention culminated in the

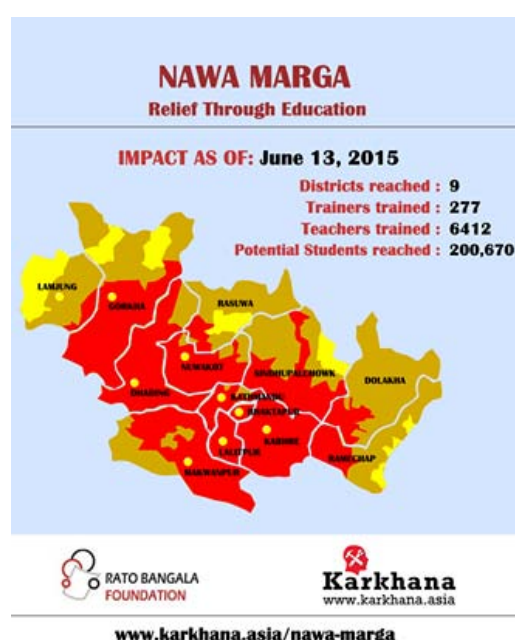
training of over 6500 teachers from various districts in the country.

The details of the program are as follows:

Nawa Marga Phase I: Post-Earthquake Relief through Education

Nawa Marga, the brainchild of RBF and Karkhana² was conceived as a means of easing both teachers and students back into classrooms in the aftermath of the earthquake. RBF and Karkhana recognised that returning to a normal teaching and learning routine would be difficult after such a

The Post Disaster Needs Assessment carried out by the National Planning Commission, estimated that 8,242 community (public) schools had been affected, with 25,134 classrooms fully destroyed and another 22,097 partially damaged.



¹ National Planning Commission, Post Disaster Needs Assessment, Kathmandu 2015, Pg 11.

² Karkhana: An education company and a maker space. Located in Kathmandu Nepal.



traumatic experience: many children were distressed at the thought of going back to school after witnessing death and destruction; and teachers – who were likewise dealing with their own shock – felt ill-equipped to identify traumatised children and alleviate their fears. The Nawa Marga Program comprised intensive psychosocial training to help teachers empathise productively with students, facilitate the healing process, and return to a normal learning routine as quickly as possible. Throughout the program, and in line with its commitment to promoting child-friendly schools, RBF trainers emphasised the school's responsibility for ensuring the emotional well-being of its students.

Training of Trainers (TOT)

Phase I of the Nawa Marga Program began with the training of 90 teachers from RBS, Kasthamandap School and Nisarga Batika School. Subsequently, these 90 teachers delivered Nawa Marga trainings to approximately 3245 teachers in the districts of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, and Kavre.

RBF developed a five day lesson plan to complement the training sessions. These lesson plans consisted of activities, games, role plays, and so on, and were designed to help teachers encourage students to talk about their experiences of the earthquake and come to terms with their grief and fears. For example, the so-called 'Web Activity' required students and teachers to gather around in a circle; one person would

be asked to tell a story about the day the earthquake happened while holding a ball of string. When they finished telling their story, they held on to the end of the string and threw the ball to another person on the other side of the circle who would begin telling their story. In the end, everyone in the class – and therefore all their experiences of the earthquake – would be connected by the string. Having children share their fears and listen to others in this open and interactive environment showed them that they weren't alone in how they felt and facilitated the grieving process. Incorporating activities such as the Web Activity into the learning routine after the earthquake helped relieve the stress children felt at leaving home and returning to school.

As a result, an estimated 150,000 students benefited from Nawa Marga Phase I.

Nawa Marga Phase II

After successfully completing Phase I, Nawa Marga Phase II began in Dhading. A total of 103 sessions were conducted within 12 days, in multiple locations, covering all 20 Resource Centers (RC) of Dhading. The one day session conducted by 90 trainers included RBF staff, RBS teachers, Karkhana staff and PTTP graduates. During the trainings, teachers were familiarized with a range of best practices for interacting in an educational context with distraught and traumatized children.

RBF estimates that its five day lesson plan was used by over 3000 teachers and Principals in the classes of around 80000 students from 641(587 community and 54 private) schools. In addition, 587 schools received teaching learning materials to be used in classrooms. (List of materials attached in Annex 1).

The intensive psychosocial training provided participants with the knowledge and skills to interact productively with traumatised children. Teachers were shown how

RBF estimates that its five day lesson plan was used by over 3000 teachers and Principals in the classes of around 80000 students from 641(587 community and 54 private) schools in Dhading.

to draft a safety plan for their respective schools and encouraged to conduct earthquake drills on campus on a regular basis. Reflecting RBF's 'whole school' approach, Nawa Marga trainers also emphasised how students could effectively disseminate information about disaster preparedness to the wider community if they were encouraged to discuss such topics with their families.

RBF's strong relationships with the District Education Office (DEO) and Resource Persons (RPs) facilitated successful implementation of the program and helped RBF and Karkhana overcome the inevitable logistical hurdles facing a program of this size.

Nawa Marga Phase III

Phase III of the Nawa Marga Program, focused again on the district of Dhading, delivering subject specific training to teachers in Science, Maths, and Nepali. These training sessions responded to a need RBF identified during the previous two phases of the program: teachers lacked knowledge, confidence, and the pedagogical skills to teach these subjects effectively and in a child-centered manner. Learning outcomes for students had suffered as a result.

A ToT program was conducted on 22 Bhadra 2072, preparing trainers for Phase III. Simultaneously the DEO of Dhading prepared a movement plan and delegated peo-

ple at the local level to facilitate the same. Twenty six trainers were instructed on how to conduct subject specific trainings for teachers of 587 schools in Dhading.

Parallel sessions were conducted in multiple RC's to cover the entire district within 10 days starting Ashoj 2, 2072. A total of 1214 teachers from 561 schools participated in the sessions, learning ways to connect theories to textbooks and practicing hands-on techniques. Participating in these sessions gave teachers an opportunity to understand Rato Bangala's child-centered methodology of teaching – a methodology that reflects the national government policy.

RBF also supported sets of materials– including globes, wooden blocks, wires, torch batteries, measuring cylinders, light bulbs, rulers, and compasses – which were distributed to participating community schools. During training sessions, teachers were first instructed on how to use these resources in their classrooms then, under supervision, asked to practice using them during the sessions.

In total, 393 Science teachers, 388 Nepali teachers, and 433 Math teachers received one day subject specific trainings. All 561 schools received sets of teaching and learning materials relevant to each of these subjects, plus a small library of 250 books published by Rato Bangala Kitab.

A total of 1214 teachers from 561 schools participated in the sessions, learning ways to connect theories to textbooks and practicing hands-on techniques.



Nawa Marga Phase IV

For Phase IV of the Nawa Marga Program, RBF worked in partnership with the Institute for Social and Environmental Transition (ISET) Nepal to produce a report addressing school reconstruction efforts and seeking to identify the best means of promoting resilience. Both RBF and ISET acknowledged that the physical learning space of a school is critical in supporting quality teaching and learning outcomes. The report, titled “Mainstreaming Resilience of Schools: Rebuilding in Post Gorkha Earthquake Nepal”, argues that resilient schools can be built by (1) reducing multi-hazard risks; (2) establishing a child-friendly learning environment; (3) integrating landscape, environment, and culture; and (4) encouraging community ownership.

The report emphasised that the rebuilding of schools must take a learning-oriented approach to planning, budgeting, and implementation – informed by public dialogue – so that the end results represent a “shared vision of the community”.

To arrive at these conclusions, 11 school communities – including Principals, teachers, parents, community members, and students – in Jiwanpur were asked to participate in focus group discussions (FGDs) and interviews to determine their aspirations for reconstruction as well as what they thought the relationship between their school and the local community should look like. This was a highly consultative process, with each school treated as a unique case. A total of six enumerators were trained to conduct the FGDs and interviews over a period of two days. The notes and voices from the field were analysed to identify key grievances and concerns.

The study reinforced known facts: earthquakes do not kill people; rather, unsafe faulty structures do. Unsafe buildings are the result of poor regulation, lack of resources, and low institutional capacity, to name just a few. Unsurprisingly, school members and their communities were well aware of the structural deficiencies of school buildings prior to the 2072 earthquakes; they expressed the need and desire to invest in safer and more functional buildings, with adequate facilities, in order to improve the overall educational experience for their children. The report emphasised that the rebuilding of schools must take a learning-oriented approach to planning, budgeting, and implementation – informed by public dialogue – so that the end results represent a “shared vision of the community”.

Separately, RBF undertook an impact study of the Nawa Marga Program to assess the strengths and weaknesses of its intervention. A series of FGDs were conducted with parents and students, while teachers and Principals were asked to complete a questionnaire assessing various aspects of the program. The results of the study showed that teachers and Principals were overwhelmingly positive about the content and facilitation of the training sessions and appreciative of the supported materials, but data collected from students and parents indicated that more time training was necessary to ensure school staff continued to implement changes after the completion of the program.



5. RBF as part of the National Education Cluster

In the aftermath of the 2072 earthquakes, the Government of Nepal, along with the MoE and DoE, reactivated the National Education Cluster (NEC). Multiple I/NGOs joined the cluster and prepared a plan to intervene in the earthquake affected areas.

Helping schools reopen after the disaster

The Government at the outset sought help from development partners, by asking them for help to reopen schools, by either providing relief materials or helping with rehabilitation activities. Regular meetings were held with representatives of the Education Clusters both at the district and at

the national level, with the ultimate aim to bring students back to school by creating a safe learning environment. RBF staff participated actively in all meetings with the intention to reopen schools in a timely manner.

WASH program in schools

In addition, the toilets of all eight schools were repaired and two schools received new water tanks and pipes. In 6 of the schools the money left over after making the TLC that was used to repair toilets. In addition RBF helped schools make a routine to their toilets and asked school authorities to keep soap etc in the same.

The toilets of all eight schools were repaired and two schools received new water tanks and pipes.

6. Early Grade Reading Program

The School Sector Reform Program (SSRP) 2009-2015, sought to tackle the issue by introducing the National Early Grade Reading Program in 2014.

Current development literature indicates that the learning achievement of primary school children of developing countries remains distressingly low in comparison to others. Nepal is no exception to this. Research carried out by Save the Children in schools of Nepal (2010), found that 80 percent of grade two children enrolled in community schools were unable to read a single word. Those who could read did so at a rate of only five words per minute.³ The School Sector Reform Program (SSRP) 2009-2015, sought to tackle the issue by introducing the National Early Grade Read-

ing (EGR) Program in 2014. The major thrust of the program is to encourage reading amongst children of grades one to three and is expected to reach all Nepali schools by 2018, in a phase-wise manner. Guided by this framework, RBF, with support from UNICEF and in collaboration with World Education (WE) has developed content and process to help children improve their reading and comprehension skills. The EGR package has been jointly implemented in Achham, Bajura, Gulmi, Lalitpur, Mugu etc. RBF has facilitated the trainings in the above mentioned districts.

³ Early Grade Learning Community of Practice. 2010. 'Early Grade Reading: Igniting Education for All'. Early Grade Learning Community of Practice.



According to US Aid, research has shown that “children who learn to read in a language they speak well develop stronger reading skills.”⁴ With this in mind, the EGR program aims to assist children to improve their Nepali language skills in the four pivotal areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Emphasis is placed on improving the overall teaching and learning environment in classrooms where the program has been implemented.

EGR in neighboring schools of Lalitpur

RBF and WE were satisfied to see the outcome and receive positive feedback after jointly implementing its EGR package in various districts. RBF was thus encouraged to move ahead and introduce the package in other districts as well. Hence six RBF partner schools, from Lalitpur were chosen to implement the program in. RBF trainers conducted a session on EGR for teachers from the schools. A total of 14 participants took part in the training, which focussed on introducing EGR materials, practice teaching, reading assessment, level identification,

continuous assessment and so on. Participants were then able to go back to their schools and introduce the program in their classes.

A baseline as part of the project was conducted at a later date in the six above mentioned schools, as part of the project. (Results attached in Annex 6).

Participants from six project schools took part in the five day EGR training.



⁴ USAid. 2011. ‘USAid Education Strategy: Opportunity through Learning’. Washington, DC: USAid Available at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pdac946.pdf

7. Earthquake Drill and Safety Preparedness Plans in Schools

Segments of the project consist of developing a total of 20 model schools, conducting advocacy with the government to include earthquake preparedness in the school curriculum, and working on the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

RBF will work with 20 schools of Lalitpur district for the EDSPPS. Segments of the project consist of developing a total of 20 model schools, conducting advocacy with the government to include earthquake preparedness in the school curriculum, and working on the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The project will entail visiting schools,

helping develop safety preparedness in the targeted community, and conducting regular drills in schools. It is believed that disaster risk reduction is best practiced through schools because schools can facilitate a culture of disaster preparedness in the wider community. A baseline survey has been conducted for the project.



8. Enhancing Basic Quality Education in Western Gulmi

Background

RBF initiated and implemented the “Enhancing Basic Quality Education in Western Gulmi” project, aimed at assisting schools in that area meet the minimum enabling conditions outlined in the School Sector Reform Program (SSRP). RBF’s intervention directly benefitted 4000 students, 200 teachers, and 6000 parents in 31 community schools of Gulmi. Emphasis was placed on improving teachers’ pedagogical knowledge and developing their classroom management skills. RBF followed an integrated approach investing in teacher training methodologies, teaching learning materials,

and installing libraries in schools. Its engagement motivated stakeholders who felt that better infrastructure was needed to improve teaching learning on the whole. They thus worked as a team to improve school facilities and the teaching learning process. RBF staff worked closely with the DEO and the parent bodies, trained teachers working at the primary level in partner schools, and conducted supportive monitoring in schools.

Endline Survey

At the conclusion of the Gulmi project, five RBF trainers partnered with five scholars from Kathmandu University to conduct an

Emphasis was placed on improving teachers’ pedagogical knowledge and developing their classroom management skills.





Classrooms and teaching learning practices were observed, and Principals and teachers were interviewed.

endline survey in thirty schools The methodology for the end line survey consisted of using a questionnaire containing 14 questions. Classrooms and teaching learning practices were observed, and Principals and teachers were interviewed.

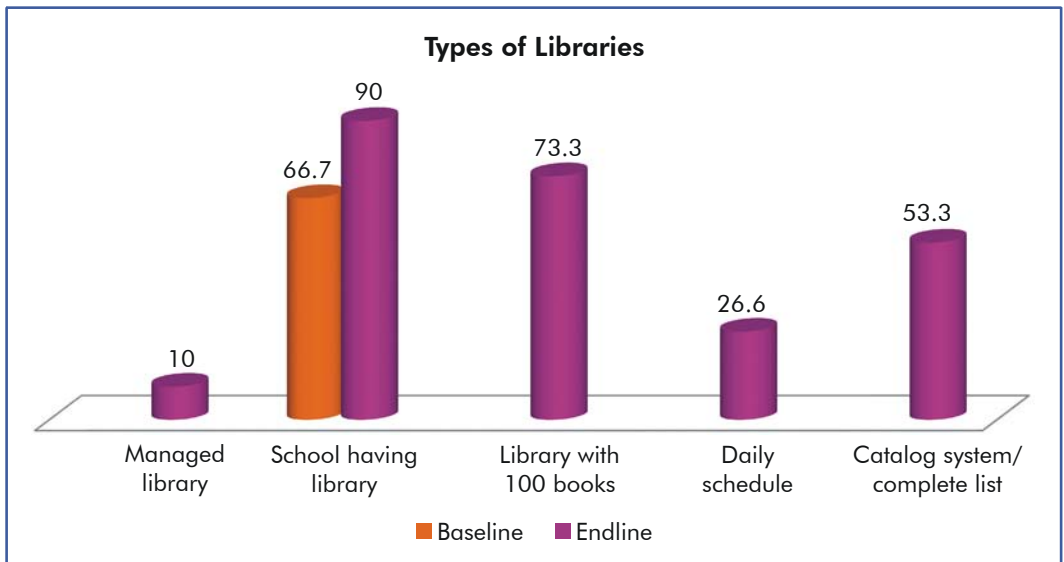
Achievement level of students during baseline and endline

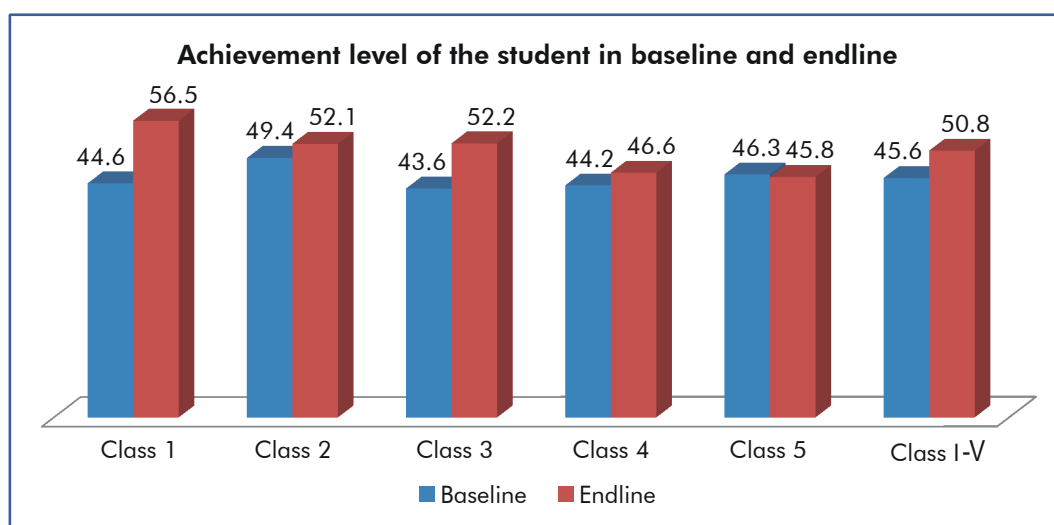
Some of the recommendations from the visiting teams were as follows: (1) frequent monitoring and evaluation by RBF staff in the project area is necessary; (2) a set of guidelines should be provided to teachers and Principals wanting to collaboratively

work with RBF; (3) age appropriate teachers need to be trained; (4) reading clubs should be strengthened; (5) School Management Committees (SMCs) should be strengthened; (6) unannounced visits must be conducted to more accurately gauge how well schools are meeting key SSRP targets; and (7) subject specific trainings should be provided for teachers.

Phase out of the project

In Shrawan 2072, a program phase out session was held. DEO officials, Principals, teachers, and RBF staff attended. This session confirmed that the program had been





well-received by participants and that key stakeholders were positive about the prospects of replicating the project in other parts of the district. A total of five clusters were subsequently formed for this purpose and one school was chosen to coordinate each cluster.

RBF also conducted follow up visits to seven schools in Gulmi from 29 Kartik to 4 Mangshir. The team reported that three of the seven schools were seen using job charts, encouraging group work in class, and holding regular meetings. During the

visit, RBF trainers also conducted a library management training session for 45 teachers and stakeholders.

The Western Gulmi project prompted a number of significant improvements in participating schools, such as print rich classrooms, neat-looking children, an increase in the use of locally made teaching and learning materials, infrastructure development, and so on. Teachers were seen making an effort to come to school on time and appeared motivated to bring about positive changes in their schools.

RBF trainers conducted a library management training session for 45 teachers and stakeholders.



9. Kavre Project

A day-long orientation was organized for local stakeholders, including the DEO, School Supervisor (SS), RPs, School Management Committee (SMC) Chairpersons, Principals, and so on.

RBF has collaborated with 52 schools in Kavre to improve the overall quality of education in these schools. Kavre is a densely populated district and RBF's intervention reached a large number of school children. To start the project, RBF conducted a baseline survey, and held group meetings and discussions with stakeholders in order to set clear goals tailored to local needs. To achieve these goals, RBF partnered with Namuna Shaichshik GraminVikas Kendra (NSGVK), a local non-government organization (NGO) that focuses on providing better health and education. (List of partner schools attached in Annex 2).

Permission was secured from relevant government agencies to start the project. A meeting was held at the district headquarters in Kuntabesi. In attendance were the District Education Officer (DEO), the Lo-



cal Development Officer (LDO), NSGVK members, school community stakeholders, and RBF staff. In addition, a day-long orientation was organized for local stakeholders, including the DEO, School Supervisor (SS), RPs, School Management Committee (SMC) Chairpersons, Principals, and so on. RBF staff gave a presentation outlining different interventions initiated by the Foundation to empower school leaders, parents, and teachers. The orientation encouraged





meaningful discussions between participants resulting in a genuine interest to work collaboratively with each other.

Baseline Survey

On the basis of the meetings held with stakeholders, a baseline survey was conducted. RBF and NSGVK staff visited seven schools to administer the survey. They spent an entire day in one school, collecting information, holding focus group discussions with teachers, and taking photographs. The baseline survey provided a realistic picture of the schools, and helped RBF staff design an effective intervention that would effectively target the needs of participating schools.

Improving SLC results by enhancing teachers' capacity

Eleven of the 52 schools chosen for the Kavre project were secondary schools, comprising grades one to ten. A total of 687 students were expected to take part in the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) exams at these schools. The SLC exams in Nepal are viewed as the benchmark to evaluate student success, yet many students fail to achieve a passing mark.

With an intention to help students perform well in the upcoming SLC exams, RBF conducted a two day training session for 29 grade ten teachers. Eight RBF staff trav-

RBF conducted a two day training session for 29 teachers teaching grade ten.



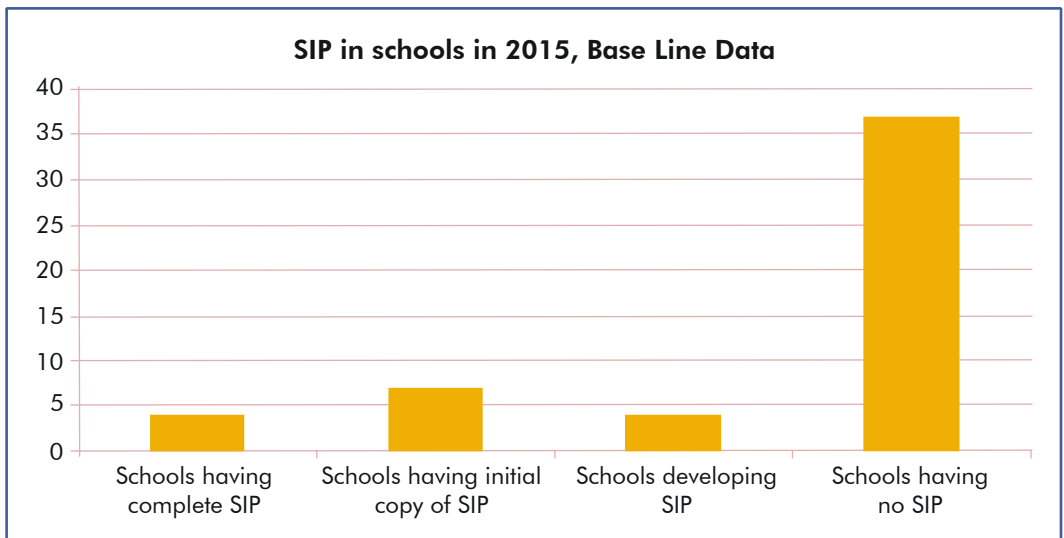


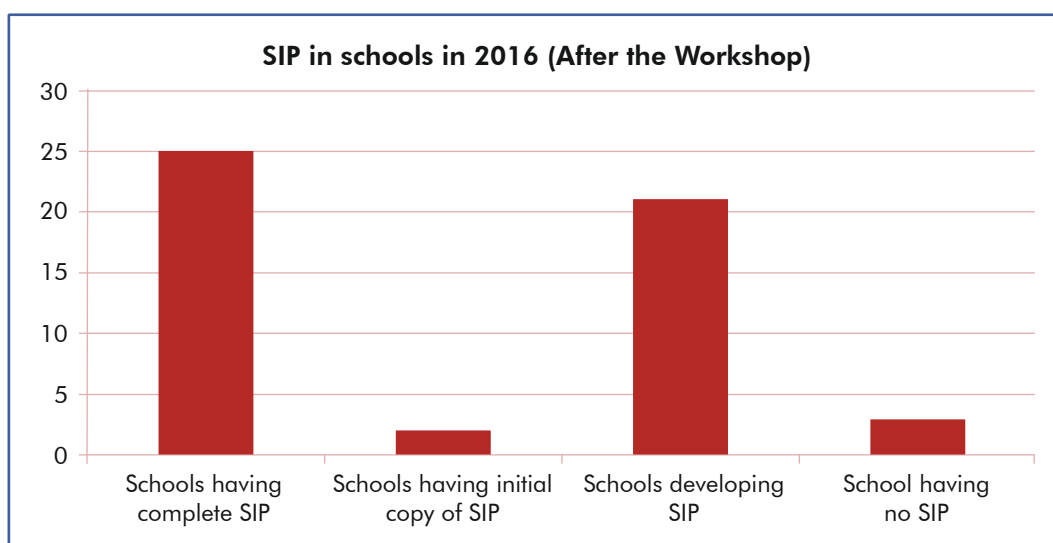
From 31 Jestha – 2 Asar 2073, an intense training session for 90 school leaders of Kavre, was held in RBF

elled to Kavre and conducted trainings in math, science, social studies, and English with special focus on question papers, answering patterns, and time management. To ensure both teachers and students had time to put newly acquired skills and knowledge into practice, training was conducted two months before the exam. Each teacher was assisted to prepare an individual plan for 30 days as well as an action plan for two months for their schools. RBF staff reported that teachers diligently followed the plans, and this resulted in a marked improvement in SLC results for their students.

Training of School Leaders in Kathmandu

Over a period of three days, 31 Jestha-2 Asar 2073, an intense training session for 90 school leaders of Kavre, was held in Kathmandu valley. Participants visited RBS to observe child-friendly practices and classrooms first hand; they also attended sessions on cultivating a ‘Growth Mindset’, and on making a School Improvement Plan (SIP). School leaders were asked to complete their SIPs when they returned to their schools then send a copy to RBF for feedback and



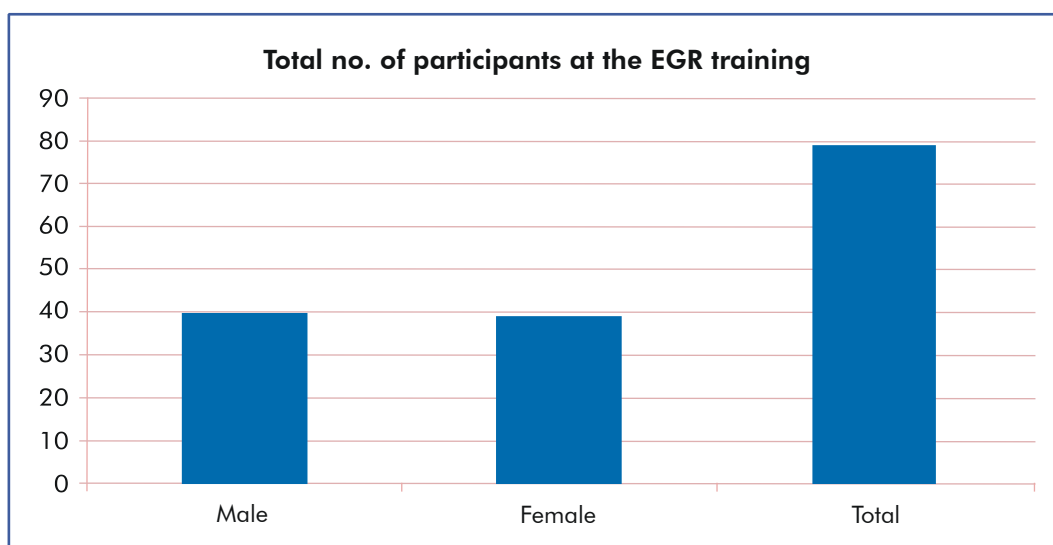


Teacher training for EGR

As part of the Kavre project, RBF also conducted EGR trainings to 80 teachers from 48 schools over the period of 9-21 Jestha 2073. This training aimed to assist community school teachers understand key ideas and techniques for early grade reading, and to actively explore these through participating in hands-on activities. Upon completion of the training sets of EGR books were provided to the schools. The Kavre project is ongoing.

As part of the Kavre project, RBF also conducted EGR trainings to 80 teachers from 48 schools over the period of 9-21 Jestha 2073.

guidance. At the time of writing, 16 Principals have submitted their SIPs to RBF.



10. Helping to enhance the quality of education in Tsoknyi Gechak School

RBF has been contracted to work with TGS to improve the overall quality of education in the school through child-centered teaching and learning methodologies.

Tsoknyi Gechak School (TGS) is a primary school situated in Chobhar, Kirtipur, with an enrolment of 130 students. Primary subjects taught in the school are Nepali, English, Tibetan, science, social studies, and mathematics. TGS is also a Gompa school where Buddhist values are taught in a secure peaceful environment. RBF has been contracted to work with TGS to improve the overall quality of education in the school through child-centered teaching and learning methodologies.

Planning workshop for TGS stakeholders

In RBF's second year of collaboration with TGS, three workshops were held: on 1 Shrawan, RBF staff visited TGS and conducted a one day workshop to review ac-



tivities of the past year and develop new plans for 2072; on 14 Shrawan, a second workshop was conducted during which RBF staff introduced the idea of integrated lesson plans to TGS teachers and addressed the topic of 'multiple intelligence'; finally, a third session was completed on 1 Bhadra, where teachers learnt the importance of





taking their students on field trips to complement the subjects covered in text books. Teachers also learnt how to plan ahead and prepare for these trips.

Educational Exhibition

An educational exhibition was held in TGS on 14 Magh, 2072. Highlights included book stalls, games, and storytelling sessions. RBF trainers attended the exhibition and found considerable progress in comparison to the exhibition held in 2071, thus affirming that child-centered teaching and learning methodologies had improved at the school. An important intervention consisted of RBF trainers giving inputs to TGS teachers to enable them to hold meaningful educational exhibitions in their school.

Training on Integrated Lessons

The training held on 15 Chaitra was designed to familiarise TGS teachers with the theory of integrated lessons and enable them to devise their own integrated lesson plans. Teachers were divided into groups and instructed in how each lesson could be aligned with the curriculum.

EGR training in TGS

A five day EGR training was conducted for 12 teachers of the school, by RBF staff. Pivotal activities of the training included demonstrating the importance of reading, identifying EGR materials, improving classroom dynamics, creating lesson plans etc.

A five day EGR training was conducted for 12 teachers of TGS by RBF staff.



A graduation ceremony was held for 17 participants, on 24 Chaitra, presided by the Rimpoche.



Graduation Ceremony

To mark the completion of the two year primary level teacher training program, a graduation ceremony was held for 17 par-

ticipants, on 24 Chaitra, presided by the Rimpoche. He thanked the trainers for their hard work and dedication, and shared his vision for a modern monastic school. Certificates were distributed during the program.

11. Technical Support to Schools in Simigaun

RBF and Pitzer College collaborated to work in Mahendra Shanti S.S., Balkot, Bhaktapur, and Simigaun P.S., Dolakha. RBF staff visited Mahendra S.S. at the outset of 2071 and a needs assessment survey was conducted. A training focused on “methodology” was conducted for teachers of the schools. The collaboration continued on to 2072.

Visit to Dolakha and Simigaun

RBF staff visited Simigaun P.S., Dolakha, from 15-18 Baisakh 2073, to hold meetings and conduct workshops for teachers

and committee members. Pivotal activities included detailed observation of the school, meeting SMC members and teachers, scaffolding for teachers, introducing the Multi Grade Multi Level (MGML) approach for teachers, introducing reading corners in classrooms, and developing an action plan for six months (Baisakh to Asoj 2073). The school has potential to serve as a model school in the area. However, sincere effort and dedication on part of teachers and principals is required to achieve this status. The next set of activities to be initiated for the project is currently being designed.

The school has potential to serve as a model school in the area.



12. Trainings

Primary Teacher Training Program (PTTP)

The PTTP is a unique teacher-training course that brings together the strengths of three institutions: RBF, Kathmandu University, and Bank Street College of Education (New York, USA). The PTTP course structured to create professional teachers well-versed in the theory of child development and philosophy of education. The strength of the program lies in the integration of theory and practice: lessons learnt in the classrooms are practiced in the field and new knowledge is built from the experience. Students are provided close one on-one supervision and support of advisors throughout the year. This training is rigorous, demanding full-time commitment from students, and aims to empower teachers to be self-confident and motivated professionals.

A total of 22 Graduates received certificates by Chief Guest Khaga Raj Baral, Director of NCED.



PTTP Graduation Ceremony

The PTTP graduation ceremony for 2071-72 was held on Bhadra 31, 2072. A total of 22 Graduates received certificates by Chief Guest Khaga Raj Baral, Director of NCED. Participants included Prof. Mahesh Banskota, Dean, Kathmandu University (KU), Principals of partner schools, Trainers, Advisors, and PTTP graduates. Highlights of





the program consisted of a speech by the Chief Guest, RBF Chair and the Dean of KU, a dance by RBS students and poetry recitation by the graduates.

Observing Demonstration Schools

As part of the training course, PTTP students observed 'demonstration classes' at RBS, the British School, and the Lincoln School. During the visits, students develop their practical skills by participating in classes and learn about the workings of the school from curriculum implementation to classroom management.

PTTP Annual Community Study

The annual community study outside the valley took place from 18-21 Poush. Twenty seven trainee teachers travelled to Pokhara for a total of four days to study a community in depth. This study provides an opportunity for trainees to work together and bond with advisors and friends. They learn and explore a specific topic or a community in depth, appreciate its complexities and take lesson from it. At the end of the study, they presented their findings in a form of a "Big Book".

A total of 22 students graduated from PTTP 2071-72. In 2072-2073, 27 students were accepted to the PTTP.

Level One Training

The Level One Training is a 12 week course which aims to introduce trainees to the philosophy of child-centered education. This training is best suited for in-service teachers, since learnings from the training can be directly applied to classroom settings. The course is held during evenings with RBS teachers as the primary trainers.

Level One Training 32nd Batch Closing Ceremony

The 32nd Batch Level One Training Closing Ceremony was held on 18 Kartik 2072. The Chief Guest consisted of the Assistant DEO of Lalitpur. A total of 28 trainees graduated from the program.



A total of 22 students graduated from PTTP 2071-72. In 2072-2073, 27 students were accepted to the PTTP.



Level One Training 33rd Batch Closing Ceremony

The Level One Training for the 33rd batch commenced on Magh 13. The closing ceremony was held on 17 Chaitra 2072. Mr. Netra Dahal, School Supervisor, DEO Lalitpur, was the Chief Guest. Highlights of the program included a speech by the Chief Guest along with certificate distribution. The “Insight” magazine consisting of a variety of articles written by teacher trainees was handed out during the ceremony. A total of 26 teacher trainees graduated.

A total of 22 Graduates received certificates by Chief Guest Khaga Raj Baral, Director of NCED.

Workshops

Workshop on Early Childhood Development

A workshop on Building Early Childhood Development through Creative Teaching Learning was conducted by Amber Johnston and Kelsey Keithler, teachers from Beijing on 11 Ashoj. Attended by more than 70 participants, it consisted of defining quality early childhood education, supporting young students’ natural curiosity and creativity as learners, while simultaneously encouraging participants to deal with each



child differently and encourage creativity in children. The workshop was followed by a talk on early childhood development for limited participants on 13 Ashoj.

Tools for Assisting Children in Early Literacy

A workshop by Melissa Davis, teacher from Bank Street College of Education,

NYC, was held on 17 Asar 2073. A total of 30 participants took part in the workshop which focussed on using flash cards, medium of songs and creative activities while teaching young children. The training was beneficial for teachers of primary grades. Most participants' opined that they enjoyed the workshop and have come up with new ideas to better teach children in class.

The training was beneficial for teachers of primary grades.



13. Bringing English to Classrooms: an English Language Training in Dhading

The primary objective of the training was to assist teacher participants to witness and realize that language learning is a whole brain activity and that it can happen faster and better if taught using a holistic approach.

The prominence of English language across the world has encouraged community schools to promote English as the medium of teaching.

The training facilitated by RBF trainers to help teachers overcome the problems of English language proficiency coupled with the lack of effective teaching skills and simultaneously equip teachers with Basic English language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), language aspects (grammar and vocabulary) and teaching techniques for teaching English, Math and

Science in primary grades. The 17-day training (6 hours each day) package was developed for English, Math and Science, for teachers of Primary Grades from Achane H.S.S, Jan Jyoti P.S, Chakreswori L.S.S, Daurali P.S, Jaljale P.S and Yuba P.S. The primary objective of the training was to assist teacher participants to witness and realize that language learning is a whole brain activity and that it can happen faster and better if taught using a holistic approach. Therefore the core of the training focused on an integrated approach to learning language hence focus shifted to English language not as an isolat-





ed subject but as a medium of learning. Yet another core objective of the training was to make participant teachers see the aforementioned idea synthesize into practice through activities designed for the training.

The essence of this course was to motivate teacher participants to learn English and simultaneously reflect on the sessions and choose appropriate doable activities that could easily be practiced in their respective classrooms.

RBF trainers conducted an English language training program in Dhading from 6-24 Baisakh, 2073, in Sri Achane Higher Secondary School, Khaharey, Dhading. The training helped teachers overcome the problems of English language proficiency, coupled with the lack of effective teaching skills and simultaneously equipping teachers with basic English language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), language aspects (grammar and vocabulary) and teaching techniques.

The planning generated by teachers during the course of the training showed commitment on their part to implement their learnings in class. They expressed a keen desire to provide continuity to the lessons learnt. Moreover, during the training, teachers developed mini-lessons using English as the language of instruction – this indicated that teachers were now more confident to interact in English.



The planning generated by teachers during the course of the training showed commitment on their part to implement their learnings in class.

14. Bal Sahitya Mahotsav (Children's Literature Festival)

The open sessions included activities such as author read aloud, action poetry, puppet making, drop everything and read, and Newari dance.

Bal Sahitya Mahotsav (BSM) 2072, organized by the Rato Bangala Group of Institutions, was held in the RBS premises. The first day was devoted to children while the second day focused on preparing teachers from various districts to hold a festival of children's literature in their own districts. The festival saw a collaboration of educators and professionals working with children's literature to provide relevant and engaging workshops for children between the ages of 3-16. RBF staff were involved in organizing and planning the two day festival, which involved facilitating smooth flow of guests, training teachers from the districts, and conducting workshops.

Day 1

The first day of the Mahotsav was dedicated to engaging children and teachers in a variety of creative workshops conducted by diverse groups of trainers, including RBF trainers. Both open and closed sessions ran throughout the day. The open sessions included activities such as author read aloud, action poetry, puppet making, drop everything and read, and Newari dance.

The closed sessions included mural making, illustrating a story, slam poetry, philosophy for children, and learning through drama. In addition, there were book stalls and food





stalls. The Guest of Honour was Mr. Peter Lerangis, a renowned children's author from America.

Day 2

Day two of BSM focused on training 40 teachers from community schools located in Kathmandu valley, Dolakha, Sindhupalchowk, and Kaski districts. The objective of the training was to help teachers develop an action plan to conduct BSM in their own schools. The workshop, covering primary aspects of BSM, ran two parallel training sessions with three facilitators leading each group. The first group had 18 participants whereas the second had 22. The workshop aimed to facilitate discussions amongst teachers of community schools to help them understand the essence of a children's literature festival and contextualize it into their own locations to help children develop good reading habits. The activities conducted for the day revolved around understanding the

kind of activities that could be devised to encourage and motivate children to read books. The participants were familiarized with activities by applying the concepts and ideas they had learnt while reading. Such activities are important so as to motivate students to inculcate reading habits.

All teachers participated enthusiastically and came up with creative ideas on ways to foster a culture of reading. The participants realized that holding a festival like BSM was achievable if the school management as well as the community members worked together. Collaboration between school management and local community was emphasised as crucial to the success of any future children's literature festivals.

The results were as follows: approximately 1000 children from Kathmandu valley participated in the Mahotsav. The program encouraged parents to read books and inculcate a habit of reading in their children.

Day two of BSM focused on training 40 teachers from community schools located in Kathmandu valley, Dolakha, Sindhupalchowk, and Kaski districts.

15. Conferences

Engo Challenge in New Delhi

RBF staff participated in the prestigious Engo Challenge held at the All India Habitat Center in New Delhi on 22 and 23 Ashoj. The highlights of the program consisted of workshops and conferences, participated in by more than 1000 delegates from SAARC countries. NGOs, based on their ability to use ICT, were awarded by a panel of jurists, screened from applications received from NGOs from all eight SAARC countries. RBF staff presented on the use and relevance of ICT in the programs implemented by RBF such as the English audio, radio program in Dailekh, newsletters, and proficient use of its website. RBF was recognized for its contribution to improving education in Nepal.

The highlights of the program consisted of workshops and conferences, participated in by more than 1000 delegates from SAARC countries.

GESF Conference (Dubai)

The RBF Chair attended the Global Education and Skills Forum (GESF) held in Dubai on 29-30 Falgun to discuss in detail the expansion of public-private partnership (PPP) in education as a way of achieving education for all. The event brought together participants from over 35 countries, around 100 of whom were speakers. Prominent speakers included Tony Blair, Irina Bokova, Andreas Schleicher, and Fred van Leeuwen. The Program was an eclectic mixture of Plenary, Debate Chamber, Ed Talk, Meet the Mentor, Teacher Masterclasses, and Panel discussions.



16. RBF Scholarship

RBF manages the scholarship funds for students studying in Rato Bangala School and living in the attached hostel. All facilities for the all-round development of a child is given to the scholarship recipients. Currently there are eight children residing in the RBS hostel and benefiting from the scholarship program. RBF manages the funds, meant for the children, and ensures that they receive proper upbringing.



All facilities for the all-round development of a child is given to the scholarship recipients.

17. Administration and Finance

RBF Board Meeting

The first RBF Board for the year was held on 13 Kartik, 2072. The Annual Report and the Audit Report for 2071/2072 was approved by the Board. The Annual Plan for 2072/2073 was approved by the Board. The second RBF Board Meeting was held on 28 Magh, 2072. A mid-term evaluation was done for programs initiated by RBF; its progress was presented to the Board. The other two board meeting for the year were held on 2072/04/32 and 2072/10/28 respectively.

RBF Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The RBF AGM was held on 20 Kartik, 2072. The Annual Report for 2071/2072, RBF Plan for 2072/2073 and the Audit Report 2071/2072 was presented at the AGM. The budget for 2072/2073 was approved by the Board.

Friday Meetings

Mandatory Friday meetings were held in RBF throughout the year. Staff discussed current projects including problems encountered and solutions found. These meetings helps staff stay abreast of their colleagues work, and ensure an accountable and transparent approach to the development and implementation of RBF programs.

RBF Review and Planning Meet

The RBF Review and Planning meet was held in Nagarkot on 28-29 Asar, 2072. All staff participated in the meet which focussed on reviewing activities of the past year and planning ahead for 2073-74. RBF completed nine major projects in 2072, of which Nawa Marga was the biggest, training a total of 6400 teachers in several districts. Dailekh School Project and Gulmi project phased out completely in 2072. Kavre project continued unto 2073. Staff were also assigned specific projects for 2073-74 and are now responsible for planning ahead and executing the projects according to an agreed-upon schedule of deadlines. All staff bonded well with each other during the two day retreat.

Organization Renewal: RBF is registered as an NGO in the DEO, Lalitpur. RBF renewed its membership for the year 2072-73.

RBF was audited by an external accounting firm and was given a clean chit for having all its finances in order.

Staff Retreat

Seven RBF staff participated in a 3 day retreat in Pokhara from 22-24 Falgun. It was a refreshing experience which helped staff bond, and boosted both morale and creativity.

18. Lessons Learnt

- A) Attitude of the teacher: The success of a school hinges not only on the teacher's capabilities, but also on their attitude and behaviour. Teachers holding a Masters Degree are sometimes less involved and productive in classroom than those who have only passed the SLC examination. A motivated teacher is essential for the development of schools and students.
 - B) Trainings should be given to those who will work in the school for a substantial amount of time. Providing training to teachers on the verge of retirement is not the best decision for the school and for its sustainable development.
 - C) RBF in all of its projects works collaboratively with the Government at all levels. Without coordination with the Government, working at the grassroots level becomes impossible. The success of Nawa Marga and Dailekh School Project can be attributed to working closely with the government. This is needed to ensure success of a project as well.
 - D) Working with fewer schools in depth rather than in width. It is best to take an integrated approach while working with schools and all project should delve deep. Coordination with various agencies becomes difficult with vast number of schools and the impact may be much less due to divided attention.
 - E) Practical Training, Support Groups and Supportive Supervision. If teacher trainings focus heavily on theory, they are unable to make a connection in the classroom. Teachers work best in groups and share their learning and problems with each other. RBF aims to train several teachers from the same school simultaneously so that they could have a shared vision and a common plan. Continuous supervision and support by the field officers and fellow teachers was provided so that the teachers could continue to successfully implement the knowledge and skills gained from the training. Vocational Education Curriculum should be introduced in all partner schools to enable students to gain hands-on experience.
 - F) Focus on Primary Education. A strong foundation is necessary to ensure success at the secondary level. When schools have a secondary level, they do not give priority to the primary level, and this leads to major problems in terms of quality of education at the primary grades.
 - G) Teachers are curious and welcome added responsibility. Teachers get a sense of belonging in the school if they are given responsibilities and are also curious to learn. If teachers work in a team and share responsibilities, they assume ownership and take pride in their work.
-

For this, longer durations of training need to be provided. One day trainings will not suffice.

- H) Teachers and students learn best by using teaching learning materials. Although this was an important aspect of the RBF program, it was not possible to ensure that all the teachers used teaching material effectively. While the impact study results of Nawa Marga depicted that the materials had been used, more needs to be done during training sessions to ensure teachers feel confident to use the given materials.
- I) Making lesson plans prior to the trainings. Teachers are not in the habit of making lesson plans. An effective supervision system in addition to the training is essential to ensure that teachers plan their lessons well. For this the teaching load has to be lessened.
- J) Monitoring visits are essential: Surprise and planned monitoring visits need to be conducted every few months to know the actual reality in partner schools. Before embarking on a visit, the external scholars should be given time to conduct research on their own to know the actual ground reality.
- k. A post training implementation plan is one of the most important elements to ensure success of a particular training.

Annex

Annex 1**List of Partner Schools in Kavre**

Gairibisauna, Deupur

Tapesgwar H.S.S.
Bramhayani S.S.
Mahadev P.S.
Jhalkanedevi P.S.
Devbalabhadreshwar P.S.
Nabachetana P.S.
Panchakanya P.S.
Mahankaleshwar P.S.
Bhimsen P.S.
Bhabani P.S.

Baluwapati, Deupur

Baluwa S.S.
Mahakali S.S.
Janakalyan L.S.
Bhadrakali L.S.
Sanjivani P.S.
Janasews P.S.
Nadajyoti P.S.

Mahdevsthan, Mandan

Dedithumka H.S.S.
Dedithumka L.S.S.
Bhabani L.S.S.
Umabidhyamandir L.S.S.
Radhakrishna L.S.
Deurali P.S.
Saraswoti P.S.
Bajrayogini P.S.
Kalidevi P.S.
Setidevi P.S.

Nayagau, Deupur

Mahakali H.S.S.
Dwarpaleshowar L.S.
Bindhbasini P.S.
Golmeshwari P.S.
Deupur P.S.
Janaprabhat P.S.

Chandeni, Mandan

Uma Shaha Shikshyalaya H.S.S.
Bindhabasini S.S.
Kalika L.S.S.
Kulachaur P.S.
Kalikumari P.S.
Himjyoti P.S.

Jyamdi, Mandan

Bagdevi H.S.
Indrawati S.S.
Chamundadevi P.S.
Jayasaraswati P.S.
Ganesh P.S.
Bal Chetana P.S.
Namuna P.S.
Janajagaran P.S.

Jaishithok, Mandan

Chandeni S.S.
Chandrawati P.S.
Panchakanya L.S.
Bhagawati P.S.
Janajagriti P.S.

Annex 2

Findings of the Baseline Survey of EGR

S. N.	Language Component	Rudrayani H.S.S	Yuva Prativa H.S.S	Mahendra Adarsha H.S.S	Adarsh Saul H.S.S	Harisidhi H.S.S	Saraswati H.S.S	Average of the schools
1	Listening Comprehension (1) 3 questions	73	67	80	72	80	72	74
2	Listening Comprehension (2) 4 questions	90	79	95	89	86	81	87
3	Byanjan Barna 36 letters	87	89	90	82	86	93	88
4	Shoor Barna 13 letters	66	62	68	63	70	58	64
5	Word recognition (simple) 5 words	82	79	94	88	68	87	83
6	Word meaning 5 words	78	78	93	87	63	81	80
7	Word recognition (with matras) 11 words	59	57	77	55	48	59	59
8	Word recognition (compound words) 5 words	65	59	72	58	41	48	57
9	Sentences clarity 27 words	67	66	82	65	66	63	68
10	Sentences (fluency words per min)	21	29	37	30	17	17	25
11	Paragraph clarity 35 words	75	61	81	66	58	61	67
12	Paragraph (fluency words per min)	22	28	40	30	15	24	26
13	Paragraph comprehension 3 questions	65	45	68	70	43	42	55
14	Story clarity 72 words	59	60	81	62	54	57	62
15	Story (fluency words per min)	26	33	47	35	26	27	32
16	Story comprehension 3 questions	75	67	85	75	60	62	71

Annex 3**List of Staff Members**

Babita Sharma Chapagain
Trainer

Bhaikaji Rajbahak
Computer Database Officer

Bharat Ghimire
Office Assistant

Caitlin Sparks
Australian Volunteer

Chandani Singh
Junior Program Officer

Hari Pudasaini
Finance and Admin Officer

Midesh Maharjan
Trainer

Min Bahadur Shahi
Program Manager

Nirupan Karki
Intern

Pranay Rana
Intern

Safala Rajbhandari
Trainer

Saraswati Rajbhandari
Training Coordinator

Smriti Pokharel
Communication and Documentation
Officer

Sunil Pokharel
Training Coordinator/Curriculum Expert

Utsav Neupane
Trainer

