**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Basa Pilipinas is USAID/Philippines’ flagship basic education project in support of the Philippine Government’s early grade reading program. Implemented in close collaboration with the Department of Education (DepEd), Basa Pilipinas aims to improve the reading skills for at least one million early grade students in Filipino, English and selected mother tongues. This will be achieved by improving reading instruction, reading delivery systems, and access to quality reading materials. The project commenced in January 2013 and will be implemented for four years (2013-2016).

Basa Pilipinas is working with DepEd in targeted language regions to develop and implement effective literacy instruction practices to transform reading and learning outcomes in Philippine classrooms.

**MIDTERM PROJECT EVALUATION**

*Student Reading Performance*

To track and measure changes in student reading performance over a period of time, data was collected from randomly selected second grade students in a comparison cohort in school year 2013/14 and in an intervention cohort in school year 2014/15. The project evaluation follows a cross-sectional design and examined student reading data on Filipino and English EGRA and data on school environment obtained through student interviews.
**MIDTERM PROJECT EVALUATION FINDINGS**

Filipino EGRA

Overall, the intervention cohort students performed better than the comparison students in all Filipino subtests, which demonstrates the positive effect of Basa on student reading performance. To measure the magnitude of the effect or how much the Basa intervention affected the group of students tested, a statistical analysis was conducted to estimate the true intervention effect size. The analysis took into account the differences between the two groups, specifically the sample size.

### Basa Intervention Effect on Filipino EGRA Results, by Subtest, Controlling for the Baseline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>Endline Difference of Means*</th>
<th>Effect Size of Cohort Difference at Endline</th>
<th>Intervention Effect**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Sound Identification (pct correct)</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Correct (per min)</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>5.5 wcpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar Words Correct (per min)</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>2.6 wcpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonsense Words Correct (per min)</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>1.5 wcpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words Correct in a Text (per min)</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>9.1 wcpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension (pct correct)</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Comprehension (pct correct)</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation Composite (pct correct)</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All differences between the means are statistically significant at the p<.001 level.

** Intervention effect is computed using a linear regression model controlling for the baseline differences between the cohorts.

### BASA’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO READING ACHIEVEMENT

- Classrooms receiving the full Basa intervention showed significant improvements in student reading skills in Filipino, particularly on fluency and reading comprehension.

- Basa intervention helped increased the fluency of second grade students by additional nine words correct per minute (9 wcpm), above and beyond the natural increases expected to occur over the course of the school year.

- With Basa assistance, Grade 2 students have achieved substantial gains in reading comprehension in Filipino by as much as 24 percent at endline.
The English EGRA, which was administered to the intervention cohort students, indicate that Grade 2 students are also learning to read English better but still need help on their comprehension skills. This highlights the need for the project to continue its focus on providing teachers with strategies for increasing comprehension.

Overall, the majority (92%) of students performed better on the Filipino EGRA than on the English EGRA. This is not surprising given that English is introduced later in the curriculum than Filipino.

Fluency and Comprehension Results as per Benchmarks

On May 20-21, 2015, Basa facilitated a discussion with DepEd on setting benchmarks for what students in Regions 1 and 7 should be able to achieve in their reading skills, particularly in the areas of fluency and reading comprehension.

Results point to improvements in students’ reading achievements within the last two years, with more students in the intervention cohort meeting DepEd’s target Filipino oral reading proficiency (fluency) of 40 wcpm. About 62% of second grade students achieved the standards for fluency in Filipino, reading at and above 40-60 wcpm.

A similar trend is noted for reading comprehension where students in the intervention group outperformed those in the comparison group, with 17% more students reaching the benchmark of at least 60% comprehension.

Girls on average demonstrate better EGRA results than boys, and the difference is significant. This pattern was consistent at the baseline and endline testing, in both intervention and comparison cohorts. To address the gender gap, it will be important for teachers to use differentiated learning to ensure the slower students are not left behind.
Teacher’s Literacy Practices (SCOPE findings)

Basa used the Standards-based Classroom Observation Protocol for Educators (SCOPE) to measure changes in teaching practices as a result of Basa intervention. Data from 33 grade 2 teachers in La Union and Cebu was collected for two time periods, November-December 2013 to establish the baseline and again on December 2014. Results gleaned from the assessment show marked improvements in most teaching practices observed, particularly in the domains of Classroom Structure and Language and Literacy.

• Basa’s intervention has significantly helped teachers improve their classroom management by ensuring more equitable participation of learners, more accessibility of classroom materials, and more effective management of reading and writing instruction.
• The most improvement was seen in the domain of Language and Literacy instruction, particularly in providing opportunities for students to develop oral language, reading fluency, and comprehension.


For more information on this report, you may contact Dr. Lisa Hartenberger-Toby at +63 (02) 631.1970 or 631-1871.