

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

Literacy is complex to define and international definitions have changed. There has been a lack of systematic financial investment in literacy interventions in low income countries by donors and governments over previous decades. UNESCO argue that governments must have a greater financial commitment to investing in new literacy interventions that are not separate from the political and cultural needs of the country. This introduction provides an outline of how the report is structured.

### 1. Project Design

At the outset of the project 66 teachers were interviewed across all three provinces. The interview data enabled the project team to analyse the existing pedagogy through the perceptions of the teachers. Teachers were asked about their approaches to literacy. Most teachers prioritised neatness and the importance of learning letter sounds. A large proportion of teachers also agreed that 'children learn to recognise words in Grade 1'. This response was common regardless of gender, experience and locality. It became clear from follow-up interviews with teachers that they generally held a mechanistic view of teaching, and by implication of learning. For example teachers said that copying and repetition were the main strategies used for teaching literacy. This approach was mirrored in the teachers' forms of assessment which involved reading aloud and writing from dictation or copying from the board.

Views of literacy are evident when teachers talk about assessment and how to recognise a good reader. In some cases reading well is equated with speed and perhaps fluency. However, the interviews led to an emerging picture of pupils who often struggled with the mechanics of reading and writing. It was evident that many of the teachers were aware of the limitations of current practice but did not have the experience to suggest improvements. Many of them wanted more resources, but found it difficult to be specific about what kinds of materials would help and several felt that a content-heavy curriculum left them insufficient time to alter their practice.

The majority of classroom observations show that pupils are taught Khmer through repetition: either orally by copying the sounds from the teacher or by copying letters onto their chalkboards. Teachers had a limited range of resources: some had mobile letters, some had an alphabet chart on the wall, neither resource was seen in frequent use. During observations it was noted that many pupils were not engaged with the session and the teachers had few opportunities to assess learning.

For at least 50 years there have been two very different views taken by researchers and educationalists on how pupils learn to read. These two different approaches are often referred to as a 'whole word' approach and a 'word building' approach. A 'whole word' approach emphasizes that literacy is a meaning making process. Readers need to learn how to make use of a number of cues in order to access and understand text. The 'word building' approach emphasizes the sound-symbol relationship, arguing that reading is essentially an ability to match combinations of symbols with the sounds that can then be used to form words. The principle behind the ELP is that both these approaches help pupils become literate and it is not a choice of one or the other but a combination of both that needs to be developed. Research suggests learning to read Khmer is not dissimilar from learning English. Both the languages have phonetic regularities, but they also have many inconsistencies that pupils have to learn.

This is why using different approaches is important. Some languages are easier to learn to read because the relationship between the sound and symbol is always the same, such as in Italian.

There are different ways a government can support literacy development. This may be through prioritising adult literacy programmes, non-formal education or early childhood programmes. There is considerable research on these types of interventions across the globe. There is far less research on how governments and donors have supported the development of literacy in the primary school. Where research exists it shows that books are an important part of becoming literate, but as this is an expensive investment many Ministries and organisations do not follow this course of action and therefore literacy rates remain low.

## 2. Development of Materials

**Classroom materials:** The starting point of the BETT project's approach to material development was children's books. Having sourced all available books for pupils in Cambodia the project team discovered that there were few books for early grade pupils i.e. books of interest and books that could start pupils reading. The project set out to develop a set of books for grade one and two pupils by selecting a team of national and international materials developers and a national artist. 36 books were developed, 18 for grade 1 and 18 for grade 2. The grade one books were based on a family created by the team. The vocabulary was kept to a minimum with a limit of ten new words being introduced in each new book. This meant the books had a basic progression and made constant use of familiar vocabulary. A number of other materials that were particularly relevant to developing pupils' literacy skills, were produced to accompany the books. These included big books, posters, sequence and picture and word cards for the in-service programme. The pre-service programme was provided with photocopyable templates so these resources could be developed by trainees for work in schools as appropriate.

**Training materials:** These were developed for speaking and listening, reading and writing so there were three inputs. Each module had a trainer manual which was scripted and a participant manual – for in-service in workbook form and for pre-service in textbook form.

**Assessment and Evaluation tools:** The impact of the in-service project has been assessed in a number of ways. Teachers were required to keep a record of the sessions they had taught. Trainers visited the schools once a month and completed a checklist outlining the implementation. Classroom observations were carried out by trainers, School Directors and members of the project team. These observations were recorded on summary forms to assess what was working well and what required further action

Part way through the implementation 500 teachers completed a questionnaire on their attitudes towards the materials and the responses of the pupils. This provided an opportunity for teachers to articulate their views on literacy.

Over 1,200 pupils were assessed each year using a specially designed test. Approximately a third of all participating schools were sampled in the first year of implementation and in the following two years. A control group was tested, chosen to represent the variety of target schools. The assessment tool was implemented by national Khmer literacy trainers after they had attended a training programme and participated in moderated assessment sessions. To ensure the continued rigour in the moderation process assessors were videoed at intervals during the assessment. Each assessor visited two schools. In each school the assessor took eight pupils from each class, four grade one and four grade two classes,

thereby assessing 128 pupils. Pupils were identified by pre-allocated register numbers to ensure pupils were randomly selected and not chosen.

Exit interviews and questionnaires were conducted with trainers at the end of the implementation phase.

### **3. Implementation of Early Literacy Project (in-service)**

The Early Literacy programme addresses pupils' literacy development in grades 1 and 2. The programme is based on the existing Khmer school curriculum as well as international research and experience of literacy development in Cambodia. The principles which underpin the development of training and pupil materials, such as the need to develop speaking and listening skills, vocabulary and familiarity with story, are clearly set out in the training materials. The MoEYS curriculum includes a speaking and listening component because experience in Cambodia, and many other parts of the world, supports the understanding that learning to read is part of language development. When young children hear their own language spoken around them they are learning the sounds and patterns of that language. They are also learning the meaning of words and how words are combined to make sentences to communicate.

Reading and writing need to be taught formally. Just as children generally need to hear spoken language before they begin to use it themselves, so they need to see and hear written language before they can begin to write. Reading skills are taught before pupils begin to write their own words and sentences. The ELP is based on an understanding of the complexity of literacy.

At each stage of the ELP programme officials from DOE and POE, and MoEYS representatives were invited to attend training and material development sessions. This was to ensure all stakeholders could be part of the planning and development process and contribute their specialist knowledge and expertise. But it was also important that officials were consulted and informed at every stage of the training so they could understand how to support schools.

The reading books were created in collaboration with MoEYS, Cambodian trainers and international consultants. The stories were written with Cambodian settings and characters and reflect the Khmer culture and way of life. The pictures were drawn by a Cambodian artist. There are Activity Manuals for Grade 1 and Grade 2, each containing 100 activities. These activities are designed to be used in the classroom for 10 to 15 minutes three or four times a week. The activities complement the Khmer curriculum, but do not replace it. The activities are organised session by session and provide for progression in pupils' literacy development. They demonstrate different approaches to teaching reading. The Early Literacy materials include a set of manuals for trainers. These have been piloted on the training programmes and have been revised and improved in the light of MoEYS advice and participant feedback. The manuals give guidance to trainers in delivering training to teachers. The pedagogy manuals enable trainers to understand and practise how to use the activities so that they can demonstrate and guide the teachers. Notes are provided for trainers so that they can respond to discussion and feedback on the implementation of the activities.

BETT selected potential trainers through the advice of district and provincial officers of education. The group eventually selected benefited from coming from different positions in the school system. In this project the training was provided by international specialists. The training was staged so it focused on a limited number of skills and activities. The trainers then had the opportunity to implement and

consolidate what they had learnt before beginning the next part of the training. The trainers were also trained in how to store and organise the materials so that they were accessible to teachers and remained in good condition. Teachers were taught these procedures. Trainers were also trained in how to observe lessons, monitor the implementation of the training in schools and conduct pupil assessments. As part of the training trainers were guided through each of these functions.

ELP trainers worked in pairs, each pair trained grade one and two teachers in approximately 14 schools. Each trainer was then allocated seven schools to support on an individual basis. Teachers were trained in groups of between 20 and 25. The schedule (p.37) shows the length of training and the number of inputs to complete the programme.

The ELP was strengthened through an in-school support programme. Each trainer was allocated approximately seven schools. Each school was visited on a monthly basis. During the visit trainers would observe lessons with the school director and check that the programme was fully implemented. Issues were raised at the beginning of the implementation about sharing materials and storage. These problems were later resolved. The first monitoring visits of ELP training showed that trainers were able to engage the participants and deliver the ELP training in a practical way. By November 2008 teachers were successfully following the activity manuals although on occasion the activity was taking too long or organisation was poor. Some pupils became over excited. Implementation was slow due to the UNICEF readiness programme in some schools, but this was perceived as a strength rather than an issue.

In January 2009 four schools in Siem Reap were visited and a total of 8 classes were observed. The minimum standard was good. The implementation although initially slow had increased in frequency. Nine schools were visited in Kampong Cham in May 2009. The teachers observed largely followed the activities well and the trainers were generally able to provide feedback that could develop the teachers' potential.

Issues raised by trainers in October 2009 included: implementation was problematic in practicum schools; some of the teachers who got ELP training from BETT did not teach grade 1 or 2; schools in which directors are grade 1 or grade 2 teachers cannot do many activities because they are busy.

The teacher survey completed in November 2009 by 490 teachers was used to gain teachers' impressions of the ELP. Teachers were asked if they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements. In terms of the implementation the teachers' responses suggest that nearly 100% of them found the ELP easy to implement.

Regular monitoring using the school checklist revealed that although all grade 1 and 2 teachers had been trained at the beginning of the project the staff turnover in grade 1 and 2 is particularly high. The checklists also showed that whilst contract teachers were invited to the training, school directors had sometimes not included them. BETT calculated that within four years there would be no trained teachers in grade 1 or 2. More training was given to accommodate new teachers and at this point integrating the ELP into the PTTCs was considered.

In a last monitoring visit in April 2011 the project team was impressed by the quality of the lesson observed and the commitment and interest of the teachers. The school director summarised the programme by explaining that pupils have increased confidence and reading fluency, the ELP fitted with the MoEYS curriculum and the ELP trainers had been very supportive.

#### **4. Implementation of Early Grade Reading Activities (in-service)**

The GSRA programme was put in place to extend the grade 1 and 2 ELP programme and was initially developed with other NGOs and Donors. It was not possible to grade books in terms of reading, so books were selected by curriculum and pupil interest. Before planning the GSRA programme the team wanted to be clear on the differences between a literacy and a library programme. A library programme would give pupils access to a range of books and texts written for different purposes and used for different activities as well as developing research skills. After viewing books the project team made a selection of 15 core books for each of grades 3 and 4. The GSRA had to be designed to take into account that some of the target schools had library rooms and some did not. Those schools with a library room may also have a librarian. Librarians were included in ELP training so they had a basic understanding of literacy skills. A pilot programme was implemented in grade 3. All stakeholders viewed this as successful and therefore the programme was extended to all BETT schools in grades 3 to 5. The grade 6 programme was pupil led rather than teacher led. It was focused on the enjoyment and understanding of books. Pupils worked both individually and co-operatively in pairs or small groups. There were a number of issues that had to be considered before pupils started to choose their own books. The project team needed to find out if the pupils would be able to read the books and to follow a pupil activity independently. The trainers researched this and suggested that 50% of pupils would be able to 'have a go' at reading the book and following the activity. A carefully planned set of instructions were drawn up so that the programme could be managed. These were piloted in several ways and trainers were successfully trained to demonstrate the programme to teachers. Two grade 6 classes were observed. The quality of the organisation and the approach to the session by the pupils was quite unexpected. The teachers were able to set up the programme and all pupils had chosen a book and were working within a few minutes of the lesson beginning. Pupils were engaged and concentrating on the task with the teacher supporting where needed. It was very exciting to see pupils use a whole 40 minute lesson period for working independently and collaboratively. Most pupils could follow the activities, were engaged in the work and thoroughly enjoying themselves while learning.

In early monitoring visits some difficulties were identified with teachers finding it difficult to implement the second activity. They tended to re-read the story with no time left for pupil interaction. Story reading was good and trainers were giving some supportive feedback. At a later period the project team visited about 30 schools to observe teaching of the activities from Grade 3 to Grade 5. One team member also observed grade 6 lessons. Library trainers monitor the schools and send in their reports each month. They were very positive about the programme. The lead GSRA Project Manager was very positive and felt that ELP and GSRA complemented each other, especially in the BETT schools which did not have a library and therefore have no books. He felt that libraries were not always useful, as often librarians are only in post for a few months, and without a librarian pupils lack access to the library. The GSRA allows teachers in grades 3 to 6 to take charge of library sessions, thus providing added value for the pupils. In the provinces that BETT supports there are more than 138 schools and at least 800 teachers in Grade 3 to Grade 6.

#### **5. Implementation of Basic Literacy Strategy (pre-service)**

The steering committee recognising that the ELP programme had brought some successes to pupils' literacy development recommended that the ELP should be used in the 18 PTTCs. The project team had initial concerns about widening the programme to include the PTTCs as the ELP was reliant on training and materials which could not be easily expanded to the schools that the PTTCs work with. However, advantages outweighed the disadvantages. Training the PTTC trainers would ensure a steady supply of

teachers to the classrooms who could use the ELP. Trainers would be able to offer training when necessary within their provinces. Trainees would benefit from training in the development of early literacy skills.

As the literacy programme was in three basic areas already it was possible in the timeframe to make three inputs into the PTTCs, allowing some time between each so trainers could practice and review the implementation.

The project team and representatives from MoEYS and PTTCs agreed on the basic principles behind the training programme. All library and literacy trainers in PTTCs would be trained. The programme was structured so it could be delivered in its entirety. 30 hours were needed to deliver the programme to the trainees over a two year period. PTTCs would be given books and materials needed for the training by BTC.

The first training in Speaking and Listening was delivered by international consultants in August 2010. When PTTC trainers reviewed the implementation in their PTTCs they concluded that the BLS linked well with the MoEYS teacher training curriculum. The trainers had felt confident in programme delivery and activities were enjoyed by trainees. Most issues raised were related to resources and time to teach the trainees. One major concern raised for the project was the reluctance of trainers to deliver the training in the order it was written, preferring instead to select activities. No PTTC delivered all chosen activities in order or the complete the programme. This pick and mix approach to implementation was likely to undermine the progressive nature of the programme. To provide the PTTC directors a little more insight a visit was arranged so they could see the in-service trainers deliver the reading training with a group of grade 1 and a group of grade 2 teachers. The directors observed teachers using activities and the trainers working through the activities with confidence, encouraging teachers to participate and giving positive feedback. Directors then interviewed trainers and school staff who commented that they were positive about the training and implementation of the programme, also commenting that pupil literacy had improved. During the discussion the PTTC directors expressed concerns about the amount of training for the PTTCs being inadequate so they would be unable to deliver the same standard of training as they had seen with the in-service trainers. PTTC directors also asked for endorsement of the BLS from MoEYS.

In the final evaluation by the PTTCs trainers it was reported that the most successful part of the programme was how trainees were able to follow activity instructions and were interested in gaining knowledge about literacy that they could transfer to pupils. The methodology was considered consistent with that advocated by MoEYS and trainees were able to make their own materials. Time to implement the programme was still raised and also that in provinces where there was no support for schools it was more difficult to implement.

The PTTC directors and representatives from MoEYS also made a final evaluation and considered issues of sustainability. They identified the same successes as the trainers. They commented that the PTTC management encouraged and supported trainers in implementing the BLS. They requested that follow-up support for the BLS should be on the agenda of the technical meeting at PTTC. There was still a recognised need that the BLS needed to be integrated into the PTTC curriculum, but the recently approved TTD curriculum would allow them to implement the BLS in a progressive way following the manuals page by page. There were some suggestions as to how the PTTC could work more closely with practicum schools and the POE.

## 6. Results

What has been learned about pupils' achievement using the ELP has largely been derived from the pupil assessment. There are four sections in the pupil's assessment: attitudes towards books, features of text, reading in context and comprehension. The results are presented in three parts. Part 1 is an analysis of the results from grade 1 and 2 pupils in June 2010. The second part compares the results between June 2009 and June 2010 and the third part looks in more detail at what words pupils are reading.

In June 2010 assessment shows pupils in grade 1 in the control group, which had not received the intervention, had the highest percentage of non-recognition of features of text and the lowest percentage of pupils achieving the highest marks. The results from Siem Reap are not dissimilar to the control group, but Kampong Cham and Otdar Meanchey show a far higher percentage of pupils gaining more marks. In reading for context it can be seen that a very high percentage of pupils in all provinces, as well as the control group are unable to read any words. Kampong Cham is the notable exception where the difference between the scores achieved in KPC and the control group is over 40%. Nearly half of the Kampong Cham control group have been relatively successfully reading between 50 and 100% of the assessment book. Looking at the results for comprehension all three provinces have obtained different results to the control group with the majority of pupils scoring between 3 and 7 out of 7, whereas in the control group the majority of pupils are scoring between 0 and 2 out of 7.

In the grade 2 test it can be seen that features of the book part of the test was too easy for these pupils with the majority of all groups of pupils scoring 6 out of 6. However, the score of the control group remains lower than the three target provinces. As in grade 1 the results for the control group in grade 2 have a higher percentage of pupils who can read no words compared with the three target groups. In Kampong Cham at the end of grade 2 nearly 70% of pupils are able to read 76 – 100% of the grade 2 assessment book whereas in the control group it is less than 20%. Comprehension in grade 2 has the same pattern of results as in grade 1 with the vast majority of the target schools scoring between 4 and 7 out of 7, whilst the majority of the control group pupils score between 2 and 5 out of 7.

The same test in grade 1 was conducted in June 2009 and June 2010 with the assessment book in the target schools. It would not be expected to see a difference in the results unless the conditions had changed, but many factors could affect the results. With the exception of Otdar Meanchey where attitudes towards books in grade 1 has decreased there appears to be a steady increase in positive attitudes towards books over the two year period. The graph on features shows no real patterns in the data. The graph on comprehension shows no pattern either. The results from reading in context show that results between June 2009 and June 2010 have gone up. In all three years the implementation was moderated by the project team and there did not appear to be any substantial discrepancies in the way it was administered. In 2010 the results were higher, but this could be related to teachers having greater familiarity with materials and activities or that more activities were implemented. Comprehension had gone down. There may be a relationship with the reduction in comprehension and the rise in reading in context due to the nature of the test process.

The raw data for 2009 were presented to ELP trainers at the beginning of 2010 and the data for 2010 were presented to trainers before the exit interviews were conducted. This was to ensure trainers were able to discuss and reflect upon the results. Trainers were positive about results, had questions that required further explanation and wanted to disseminate the data to schools as it was felt that it would encourage teachers and directors with the implementation.

Which words pupils were able to read and not read was analysed in detail to learn more about how pupils applied strategies to unknown text. The Standard Deviation that was derived from looking at the percentage of words read by each target group was considered as a possible reflection of how much a decoding strategy was applied to the text. If pupils were more reliant on decoding as a strategy to read then it would be expected that the Standard Deviation would show a more limited range whereas if pupils were using a variety of strategies the range may have been wider. This proved the case with the control group having a limited range of Standard Deviation compared to the province target groups.

Individual word data was also insightful. The word ball is used in three different places in the assessment book. In OMC the success rates for reading this word remain stable on each reading suggesting the word is read only if it is known, whereas the results in KPC and SR show greater fluctuation suggesting other strategies may have been used. The word I (personal pronoun) also appears on three separate occasions. Although different groups are more or less successful, the results for each separate time it is encountered are almost identical suggesting that the word is either known or not known. Another interesting set of words to consider is (in or at) and (go) as they sound similar suggesting that if one of these words can be read phonetically the other should have the same success rate. This hypothesis works in OMC but not KPC and SR suggesting once again suggesting that OMC pupils are reading more phonetically than KPC and SR pupils. These three words had a low reading success rate. This could be because they are less familiar or the words are more difficult to read. The picture clues were also less obvious. If a good reader was successfully exclusively using phonics to read it could be expected that the success rate would be higher.

In 2010 a survey was carried out of all the Grade 1 and 2 teachers trained through the ELP (approximately 500). Results showed that the teachers felt that the training and materials had met some of their needs. Teachers all agreed that the pupils enjoyed the materials and the associated activities. 98% of Grade 1 and 97% of Grade 2 teachers also said that implementation of the activities in their Khmer lessons was easy. 97.7% of teachers in Grade 1 and 96.7% of teachers in Grade 2 agreed that 'ELP helps pupils develop literacy skills quickly'. These impressions were confirmed when consultants visited schools where they saw pupils participating in the activities and enjoying the books. It was also evident that pupils were familiar with the family depicted in the stories, suggesting that the books had not simply been brought out for a monitoring visit. On one visit a School Director was asked about the ELP. He said that the ability of the pupils in literacy had improved and that the community were happy about the improvement in pupil achievement. He noticed that attendance had improved and that there was a decrease in pupil drop-out from school.

As part of the exit interviews all groups of in-service trainers were asked to discuss what they felt was an effective school and then to agree together on six criteria that they would use to rate their own schools against their criteria. Each literacy trainer then rated (1 to 4 with 4 as the highest) the individual schools they worked with (approximately 7) using their final agreed criteria.

The data below provides a snapshot indication of how schools are perceived by trainers in terms of their effectiveness. This is presented with the data from each school for reading in context in grades 1 and 2 in the 2010 pupil assessment. Some schools are often seen as better resourced and therefore achieving more. What differences are revealed when the following is compared in each province?

- Grade 1 and grade 2
- Urban rural or remote
- Satellite or Core



- Additional support
- Effectiveness and achievement outcomes

Examining the results of individual schools provided some insight and challenge to perceptions. There are no patterns in data for location, school type or schools with additional support. There is a clear pattern in the number of words read between grade 1 and grade 2. There is some match between effectiveness criteria and pupil outcome. It would not be possible to tease out all the variables but putting the qualitative with the quantitative may make a clear picture. One trainer describes as effective school: *'Meas Chrey in Kampong Cham has a high implementation of the ELP, but is a long way from a district town (20km). The school director, he always joins with lesson observations. He feeds back good points to other teachers. In Grade 1 pupils tell the teacher 'We know this book already, we have done it many times'. The pupils are doing well at this school because the school director is a good communicator and teachers are experienced in Grades 1 and 2'.*

## 7. Lessons learned

The design of this project definitely benefited from thorough initial research. The training and classroom materials were developed from an understanding of teachers' beliefs on how pupils become literate and an understanding of their classroom practices and the possible difficulties they may encounter. Writing books for children with a team of people all working from different perspectives was a challenge, but the outcome was enriched because of the process. Having an experienced story writer to support the material developers was essential as this ensured that the text generated had enough characterisation, interest and twists in the plot to ensure that the final books were ones that pupils wanted to turn the page to know what happened next. Sometimes the team found it difficult to link all the different processes together. The need to develop books so that they were not only of interest to pupils, but were also useful in the classrooms and simple enough for pupils to be able to 'give reading a go' was difficult. The most difficult part of this process was finding ways to repeat the same vocabulary and provide a limit on the vocabulary, especially in the earlier books and do this without compromising enjoyment. Issues arose over how books can be correctly written but in a way where the language used will be recognised by pupils and also the issues of the cultural and moral content of the stories. All these issues lent themselves to robust discussion and at some point everyone had to compromise. However, the approach taken to developing the books has been a valid one and everyone involved, especially teachers and pupils using the books have been very happy with the final product.

There were principles underpinning the design of the training materials. There were two sets of all training materials. One for the trainer which was scripted, and one for the teachers or in the case of pre-service for the trainees. The ELP trainers always worked through the teacher version during their training. This ensured that they did the activities themselves and could see the types of questions raised and difficulties encountered.

Evaluation tools designed for use by the project were generally successful. The in-schools support programme worked well and the information from one form to another did leave a way to summarise key issues and successes identified by the schools. As a monitoring process at the beginning of the project the forms provided less useful qualitative data as there was time lag between the use of the forms being introduced and the trainers getting to a point where they were recording valid information. What has been learnt is that forms need to be developed early on in the project and more training needs to be undertaken at the outset.

Designing a literacy test for young readers is very difficult and even more difficult if the test design is made to diagnose what pupils are learning and how. A detailed assessment that can build up a picture of how pupils read was essential and this was achieved in part by the tools developed. The baseline assessment undertaken by the project has provided a starting point – even if it only raises some questions and draws out some contentious issues. The cost of pupil assessment also has to be carefully considered. Saving on the cost has inevitably led to compromises, which may have affected the quality of the results.

The in-school support programme was a key part of the ELP. Having a regular and extensive programme did affect the implementation in a positive way. Directors and trainers always identified its usefulness and how much support for schools and teachers was generated by regular structured visits. The programme could have been improved further by a greater involvement from DOE and POE to ensure that trainers had more access to school directors and the in-school support programme was seen as something that would benefit the schools.

The model for training content using the two sets of manuals and regular inputs was successful. Training for the in-school support programme and providing opportunities for trainers' own professional development that went beyond what they were delivering to teachers, supported in-service trainers. Some activities could have been introduced earlier. It was an unexpected outcome that the trainers viewed the classroom observation training as so significant in their development. Choosing to train the trainers with international experts was an expensive option, but one that paid off. Many organisations have commented on the high quality of the majority of in-service trainers. Choosing not to develop training through a many layered cascade approach was again costly. However, the quality of training delivered by the in-service trainers was generally high and this lent itself to better quality training for teachers. Some feedback from teachers positively cited how good it had been to be trained directly and not through another level of a cascade such as the TGLs.

The ELP, BLS and GSRA programme have all been implemented as complete packages. This has been a successful strategy and particularly welcome to other organisations in terms of sustainability. Some organisations have paid for materials and hired ELP trainers to deliver the package (VSO volunteers, Caring for Cambodia, Pepy Ride). All have been positive about this experience.

## **8. Recommendations**

Many of the recommendations in the implementation of these literacy programmes from different stakeholders have been discussed in detail in the main body of this report (see end of sections 3, 4 and 5). The following provides a short summary.

The strength of the ELP programme is that it is an entire package, easy to implement and leads to good results. Recommendations focus around users having an understanding of how it works and the essential components. The package will need to be adapted by some organisations working in more intensive ways with schools. They may be able to add to the package. For a large scale implementation effect support structures must be in place. This programme is not recommended for large cascade training.

Any organisation would find it possible to source materials and follow the training for the GSRA. As such it can be implemented easily and at low cost in any school. At the time of writing MoEYS has only given permission for a library session to run in a grade group every second week. Therefore in order to make

this programme work it is suggested some of the year is used rather than all of it, and during the selected months it is implemented weekly. The grade 6 library programme management may seem initially daunting, but the results from this were particularly pleasing. Giving pupils opportunities to work in a sustained, creative and independent way is very important...and achievable in Khmer grade 6 classrooms.

This pre-service literacy BLS programme is based on a slimmed down version of the ELP and the additional use of the GSRA. At the time of writing TTD has given permission for this programme to be allocated 15 hours teaching time in each of year 1 and year 2. Whilst the implementation has progressed there are some recommendations that would ensure sustainability of this programme in the PTTCs. These recommendations are taken from the project and the stakeholders (more detail is provided at the end of section 5).

- The programme should be implemented as written on a page by page approach to ensure progression.
  - Trainees will need to prepare some materials.
  - Practice schools need to be aware of the programme and support trainees in practicing their new skills.
  - PTTC directors need to continue to encourage, monitor and support the programme
1. Grade 1 and 2 teachers are often new teachers and there is often a high turnover in grade 1 and 2. Teachers' pedagogic skills need to be highly developed in grade 1 and 2 as they are working with large classes and pupils with low attention spans. How grade 1 and 2 teachers can be raised in status and stability in these grade groups assured needs to be considered
  2. Little is known about the teaching and learning of Khmer for young pupils. Before further major investment is made in this area more research should be undertaken.
  3. DOEs and POEs in the target provinces need to think about how they can continue the ELP and GSRA in their schools when funding finishes. There have been suggestions (see the end sections 3 and 4 of this report).
  4. There are not enough books for young children. The ELP only goes some way to addressing this gap. More books need to be developed that are appropriate for young readers.
  5. Over a period of time attitudes towards reading need to change so that young children are perceived as readers. Having access to more materials and books being introduced into the home should assist this process.