

English Language Teacher Education Project, Nepal (ELTEP): Endline Report



June 2022

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Cover photograph: A collaborative student-centred task in the classroom of an ELTEP teacher

1. Executive Summary

Over a three-year period (2018-2021) the English Language Teacher Education Project (ELTEP) has succeeded in developing the subject and pedagogical knowledge of at least 50 Class 6 to 8 English language teachers from government schools in Chitwan, Ramechhap, and Dhading districts of Nepal. ELTEP has had the following aims:

1. Build teacher competence and confidence in their own knowledge and use of English in the classroom
2. Consolidate knowledge and use of the skills and aspects of English Language
3. Enhance the pedagogical content knowledge and skills of English Language teaching
4. Enhance the training, classroom observation, supporting and mentoring skills of English language teacher educators
5. Develop the knowledge and skills of English teachers and teacher educators to take more responsibility for their own CPD.

The main activities included extensive training of teachers and establishing Teacher Activity Groups that meet regularly at local level. Teachers were also observed by skilled trainers providing one-to-one feedback on their classroom practice as part of the project monitoring, evaluation and learning process. To understand project impact, extensive baseline and endline studies with student and teacher treatment and control groups were conducted in mid-2018 and late 2021.

Despite the massive changes to the structure of education in Nepal brought about by the move to federalism and decentralisation midway through ELTEP, and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the project has succeeded in completing all planned activities, and in achieving measurable and sustainable impact on its stakeholders.

Changes in teachers' professional practices

Teachers were observed for specific demonstration of professional practices according to the British Council CPD Framework. The results demonstrate a positive trajectory for all professional practices between baseline and endline, and also identify specific teaching skills that require additional focus.

There has been a marked and sizeable increase in the level of technology uptake by teachers from near zero at project start to 56 per cent at endline. This was probably accelerated by the constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic, which struck midway through the project and disrupted face-to-face teaching and training activities.

Changes in teachers' English language levels

At the start of the project in 2018, only 34 per cent of the treatment group of teachers were at B1 level, with none at B2. By the end of the project, 93 per cent of the treatment group had proficiency levels at B1 or above, with 23 per cent achieving B2. There was little difference in the language levels of the control group (teachers who did not attend ELTEP training), making it likely that the positive changes in the treatment group can be attributed to participation in ELTEP. This happened across all three districts with little variation.

Changes to students' English language levels

Students made measurable increases in their English language proficiency during the project, according to the baseline and endline assessments carried out. However, as the

pandemic disrupted our plans for assessing students' English levels, we cannot conclusively attribute these increases to their teachers' involvement in ELTEP.

Sustainability

Most teachers in the project have developed their English proficiency, and their professional skills and knowledge, which they can continue to use and implement in their classrooms, beyond the project. They have also developed their awareness and skills related to using technology for professional development, and they continue to participate in Teacher Activity Groups and/or online communities of practice established through ELTEP. The training curriculum continues to be used for training class 6 to 8 teachers, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation will now inform the design of the training curriculum for other grades too. The project has also resulted in various recommendations and lessons learnt, which will be shared with the government to help future initiatives run more successfully.

2. Recommendations

The main body of the report makes the following recommendations, which have been reproduced here for convenience.

Recommendation 1: We recommend ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and reviews, of the Class 6 to 8 teacher training resources and syllabus to:

1. evaluate their relevance
2. gather and incorporate participant and trainer feedback to inform the development of training curricula for other classes
3. consider whether the language and pedagogy components should have greater integration.

Recommendation 2: Consider using the Teacher Knowledge Test (TKT) training and test as a trainer selection tool if feasible, and/or integrate relevant aspects of the TKT syllabus in future pre-service and in-service teacher training

Recommendation 3: One third of the participating teachers (25 of the original 75) left the project. This was largely due to their passing of the Teacher Service Commission Exam while the project was ongoing, shifting to a permanent teacher status, and then choosing their first posting to be in a more urban district. These circumstances may now be different due to the federalisation of education which occurred during ELTEP, with local governments having greater control over teachers. Nevertheless, in the future, we should seek to anticipate the potential for teacher transfers or status changes, to ensure as many teachers as possible remain with a project.

Recommendation 4: Use of technology for teacher development

1. During the pandemic, online teacher CPD on ELTEP has been successful in supporting many teachers. However, many others were unable to participate due

to their connectivity and/or digital literacy limitations. Developing all teachers' digital access and skills would enable more teachers to participate in blended professional development in the future.

2. Include blended inputs in future teacher development initiatives
3. All teachers would also benefit from developing their skills at facilitating online teaching and learning using the technologies typically available to students, so that they can effectively support as many of their students as possible whenever face-to-face classes are not possible due to the ongoing pandemic or other *force majeure* events.

Recommendation 5: Future teacher development initiatives should continue to focus on:

1. the importance and practice of teachers praising students, and eliciting their prior knowledge
2. ensuring teachers take individual student needs and levels into account while planning and teaching lessons
3. developing teachers' understanding and use of learning-centred classroom management practices, particularly the value and use of collaborative learning approaches.
4. how to give students greater opportunities to practise and develop their spoken English, in conjunction with the textbook.

Recommendation 6: To encourage teachers to take greater agency in their own professional development, awareness-raising of a range of CPD opportunities, should ideally be accompanied by greater incentives, to motivate teachers to develop their professional skills and practice.

Recommendation 7: For future projects, try to ensure gender representation is at least in proportion to the teaching population. This could be done by consulting females as to whether there are any adjustments that can be made to schedules, venues, locations, the project model, childcare facilities etc. so as to facilitate higher female participation.

Recommendation 8: There are opportunities to use English language assessments alongside a language proficiency programme, to measure teachers' language levels, as long as this is done sensitively and constructively to motivate teachers, rather than being presented as a hurdle or high-stakes test. Tests aligned to the CEFR, such as the British Council Aptis, or the British Council English Score App, could be considered for this purpose.

Recommendation 9: While designing assessments to measure students' language improvement during a project:

1. Ensure both control and treatment groups share as many characteristics as possible, so that they can be accurately compared to isolate any impact that occurs from the treatment.
2. Tracking a treatment group of students across three years is problematic unless it can be confirmed that they have been continuously taught for the whole three years, by teachers involved in the project. If not, it would be more valid to measure their progress between the start and end of a single academic year.

3. Project overview

3.1 Scope

The then National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) and the British Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly develop a 'training curriculum' and deliver ELTEP in May 2018. The purpose of this project was to bring in a new approach to teacher continuing professional development (CPD) in three districts of Nepal: Chitwan, Ramechhap, and Dhading. ELTEP was intended to be a two-year pilot project focussing on developing both content and pedagogical knowledge of English language teachers from government schools teaching grades six to eight. However, there was an initial delay due to the reorganisation of the local and national government structures, leading to an extension in the project time lines. This project involved multiple inputs and had to navigate not only the move to autonomous districts and all the reorganisation that entailed, but also the Covid pandemic with its school closures and moving to remote teaching and learning. A full description of project activities is outlined below.

3.2 Aims and Outcomes

Drawing on both international evidence and recommendations from Nepal-specific studies, in particular, *Medium of Instruction and Languages for Education (MILE): Ways Forward for Education Policy, Planning and Practice in Nepal*, (Seel, Yadava, & Kadel, 2017) this project had the following broad aims:

1. build teacher competence and confidence in their own knowledge and use of English in the classroom
2. consolidate knowledge and use of the skills and aspects of English Language
3. enhance the pedagogical content knowledge and skills of English Language teaching
4. enhance the training, classroom observation, supporting and mentoring skills of English language teacher educators
5. develop the knowledge and skills of English teachers and teacher educators to take more responsibility for their own CPD.

Table 1 below summarises the main project outcomes for each stakeholder group involved in the project.

Table 1: Project outcomes for each ELTEP stakeholder group

	Project outcomes
Government Trainers	Greater awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses in English language and pedagogy
	Enhanced knowledge of pedagogical principles underpinning interactive training and teaching methods
	Enhanced knowledge of classroom observation and feedback techniques
Teachers	Greater awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses in English language and pedagogy
	Enhanced knowledge of, and confidence in, using English
	Increased knowledge and skills in effective pedagogy
	Enhanced awareness of how to learn from CPD resources
School leaders	Greater awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses as school leaders
	Increased understanding of the project and the benefits for the school
	Increased understanding of their role in supporting the CPD of staff/teachers
Provincial and local education Leads	Increased understanding of the project and the benefits for teachers and students
	Increased understanding of their role in supporting teachers' CPD at local level

4. Activities

4.1 Timeline

The following section explains the different project activities, their role in the project and impact on teaching and learning.

Table 2: ELEP activity timeline

	2018								2019								2020								2021																					
Main stages	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D		
MoU	█																																													
Baseline		█																																												
TPD curriculum development (G6-8)					█																																									
Training resources development					█																																									
Study tour						█																																								
Local government orientation							█																																							
Training of Trainers							█															█																								
TAG coordinator training							█																																							
Government Trainers TKT training							█																																							
Head Teacher orientation								█																																						
TAG meetings								█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Phase 1 TPD Training														█	█																															
Midline observation																	█																													
Remote support																																	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
Phase 2 TPD Training																																														
School closures																																														
TCE trainer course																																	█	█	█											
Online Teaching																																														
Endline evaluation																																												█	█	

4.2 Baseline and endline

An extensive baseline study was conducted before this project began in June 2018. This involved two main components:

1. Measuring the English language proficiency of the 68 teachers who would be involved in the project (the treatment group), as well as a further 79 teachers not involved in the project (the control group). This was done using the British Council's Aptis English language test for teachers.¹
2. Classroom observations of the treatment group using a standard rating scale adapted from the British Council Teacher CPD Framework.

Photo 1: ELTEP teachers taking the British Council Aptis for Teachers test



Both Aptis tests and observations were repeated at project completion in December 2021. Table 3 shows the sample distribution by region and gives numbers of each group at the beginning and end of the project.

Table 3: Treatment and Control group population size by district

	Chitwan		Dhading		Ramechhap		Total Baseline	Total Endline
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline		
Control group	26	13	30	9	23	16	79	35
Treatment group	24	18	19	16	25	22	68	60

¹ For more details on Aptis for Teachers: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/exam/aptis/aptis-test/for-educational>

It should be noted that there were a number of dropouts. In the treatment group eight teachers (7.5 per cent) did not take the final Aptis test. There was a much larger dropout of 44 per cent of the total sample size in the control group.

To ensure validity of the sample, only control or treatment group members who took part in both endline and baseline were included in the analysis below.

4.3 Curriculum Construction

As a part of the MoU, a taskforce was created comprising four members from NCED and two from British Council who worked together and developed a training curriculum for basic level (grade 6 - 8). The project followed the format of the government's Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programme – ten days of face-to-face training followed by five days of classroom projects. This was planned in two phases over the project period. The curriculum for both courses differed in that Phase 1 was based on content knowledge and language development, while Phase 2: was based on pedagogy development.

The curriculum was approved by the Curriculum Council in September 2018. All the seven Provincial Education Heads were oriented on the new curriculum. This task also supported CEHRD in meeting one of the SSDP's Disbursement Linked Indicators.

A further MoU was signed between British Council Nepal and Cambridge University Press for resource partnership on 11 September 2018. To support the ELTEP pilot project Cambridge agreed to provide 100 copies of the Empower coursebook at A2 level with 20 copies of the accompanying teacher's book and online access to the Empower tests.

Cambridge further provided self-access resource packs for the three training centres in the pilot districts. These resources were to be used by the teachers for developing their own English capacity.

Beyond the pilot, CUP committed to providing free of charge 25 resource packs (student book / teachers' book/ self-access resources) each to the seven lead Education Training Centres (ETCs). A total of 175 student books and 7 teacher's books. For the 750 remaining local government training centres around the country - Total 22,500 student books, 3,750 teachers' book - a privileged price was agreed.

Recommendation 1: We recommend ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and reviews, of the Class 6 to 8 teacher training resources and syllabus to:

4. evaluate their relevance to:
 - a. the current educational contexts in Nepal
 - b. to participants' and trainers' ongoing needs
5. gather and incorporate participant and trainer feedback to inform the development of training curricula for other classes
6. consider whether the language and pedagogy components should have greater integration.

4.4 Study Tour

In September 2018 three English language teachers and four Nepal government officials from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) from Nepal observed the 'Technology enabled education through joint action and strategic initiatives' project (TEJAS) project in India, which is a joint initiative between the British Council, Government of Maharashtra and Tata Trusts of India. Apart from other interactions the delegates participated in a live training session for Teacher Activity Group coordinators.

4.5 Head Teacher orientation

This two-day workshop on 27 and 28 December 2018 introduced the project to 68 Head Teachers from the treatment schools from all three districts. The orientation developed Head Teachers' understanding of ELTEP, the sorts of changes that were expected to take place in their classrooms, and how they could support teachers in participating in the project and in implementing its objectives.

Photograph 2: Head Teachers participating in the workshop



4.6 Initial Training of Trainers

As part of the trainer preparation for this project, Cambridge University Press provided 25 Cambridge Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) resource books to be used for training the trainers. This two-day training was carried out in November 2018.

Photograph 3: Training of Trainers



At the end of the face-to-face training, CUP provided the TKT test and certification for all participants for TKT module 1.² A total of 23 government trainers received training in TKT Module 1. Results for the 19 that took the test were: Band 3: 74 per cent, Band 2: 26 per cent. The top band is Band 4. Band 3 means that the candidate generally demonstrates comprehensive and accurate knowledge of areas on the TKT Module 1 syllabus. They show familiarity with most of the concepts, terminology, practices and processes tested in TKT Module 1, which relate to describing language and language skills, factors in the language learning process and the range of methods, tasks and activities available to the language teacher.

Band 2 means that the candidate demonstrates basic knowledge of areas on the TKT Module 1 syllabus, and the candidate is able to relate existing knowledge to familiar classroom situations, and occasionally to unfamiliar ones.

Recommendation 2: Consider using the Teacher Knowledge Test (TKT) training and test as a trainer selection tool if feasible, and/or integrate relevant aspects of the TKT syllabus in future pre-service and in-service teacher training

² For more information on TKT see <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/teaching-qualifications/tkt/>

4.7 Teacher Activity Group (TAG) Coordinator training

TAG Coordinator training took place in Hotel Gangjong, Kathmandu, on 20-24 Nov 2018. It was facilitated by three CEHRD officers and two British Council staff. The attendees were the three TAG Coordinators: one per district, seven government trainers, and seven British Council trainers. The TAG coordinators were chosen by the education authorities. Their role was largely administrative: to coordinate and manage logistics for TAGs. They did not deliver any trainings or TAG meetings, but recorded presence or absence at TAG meetings, dealt with scheduling and resource management and assisted the trainers.

4.8 ELTEP Phase 1 Teacher Training

This first ten-day training course run in June to July 2019 with 75 participants, aimed to:

1. develop participants' own English language knowledge and use
2. encourage participants to use a more learner centred, communicative approach in their own lessons.

This was accomplished using *Empower*, published and supplied freely by Cambridge University Press. Participants were given ample opportunities to apply new language to the Nepali context and personalise their language use, usually towards the end of training sessions.

CEFR level A2 was chosen because according to the British Council Aptis tests given to the participants during the baseline, this was the average level across all four skills of the group. The taskforce suggested that as the classes would be multi-level, differentiation activities to support the trainer should be provided each day.

When asked whether the training and trainers had met their expectations, the 75 participants all rated it from 8 to 10 on a 10-point scale. The feedback also suggested that while the course dealt with basic issues in classroom practise, there should be additional inputs that go into different areas in greater detail, such as teaching specific skills (listening, reading, speaking, writing) or classroom management and encouraging active student participation.

4.9 Teacher Activity Groups

ELTEP also established a monthly Teacher Activity Group (TAG) in each district to continue discussion of how to implement learner-centred approaches in classrooms, how to overcome specific challenges, and to provide teachers with wider CPD discussions over an extended period of time. Table 4 shows the distribution of these TAG meetings across the project, with the pink-coloured cells showing the dates the TAG meetings took place (a question mark indicates that the meeting took place in that month, but the exact date has not been reported). In Chitwan, there were 35 TAG meetings, with Dhading and Ramechhap holding 24 and 23 meetings respectively.

The blue boxes indicate when Covid response activities took place, during which an additional 18 remote learning activities were conducted to help teachers stay engaged and to continue their professional development.

After the enforced school closures, towards the end of 2020, the frequency of TAG meetings increased, responding to teachers' requests for support in moving to online teaching.

4.10 Covid Response

In response to the Covid pandemic all face-to-face activities in 2020 were put on hold until that September. This disruption to the training programme required a response. A telephone survey was carried out to understand the digital access of project teachers, interviewing all the 65 teachers involved in ELTEP at this point.³ Through this, we found that:

- 48 per cent had a WIFI connection at home
- 70 per cent used mobile data regularly
- 41 per cent had laptops at home
- 88 per cent regularly used Internet on their smart phones
- 94 per cent were interested in receiving online English support.

Based on this information the decision was made to move the project online. We created a plan to support teachers remotely for at least two and a half months with resources based on the project objectives, which they could use for classroom teaching immediately after the schools re-opened.

Individual school responses to the Covid 19 crisis differed considerably. One school had 47 laptops among 60 teachers. Most English teachers were using the laptops to teach two to three classes online per week. While a second school was less fortunate with only five laptops between 27 teachers. Online classes happened but only 50 per cent of students could access them due to lack of devices or access to internet.

Teachers from each district were already part of social media groups (Ramechhap and Dhading on Viber, and Chitwan on Facebook). These groups were used for initial communication and announcements of events and TAGs moved online. Project staff provided follow-up support to the teachers, monitored their learning, and kept online assessment records on the following activities:

- Short questions on English language teaching and learning were sent to project teachers via bulk SMS (three times a week). Responses were collated via an online system and a record of learning was maintained for each participant.
- Existing print resources from British Council and Cambridge University Press with wraparound tasks, focusing on their reading skills, were sent through email twice a week. Teachers were able to either respond via email or take a snapshot of their answers and respond through the WhatsApp or Viber groups. Records of these activities were kept.
- A taskforce was formed to compile and develop relevant content to upload on the British Council Teach App.⁴ Once ready, the teachers were divided into groups and were oriented on the content and ways to access them efficiently.
- Weekly webinars on different topics were organised for teachers on various topics.
- Subsequently, Phase 2 training was then moved online.

³ Of the original 75 teachers involved in ELTEP, ten had dropped out by the time of the pandemic.

⁴ This mobile app has been specially designed for British Council projects in Nepal. For more information:

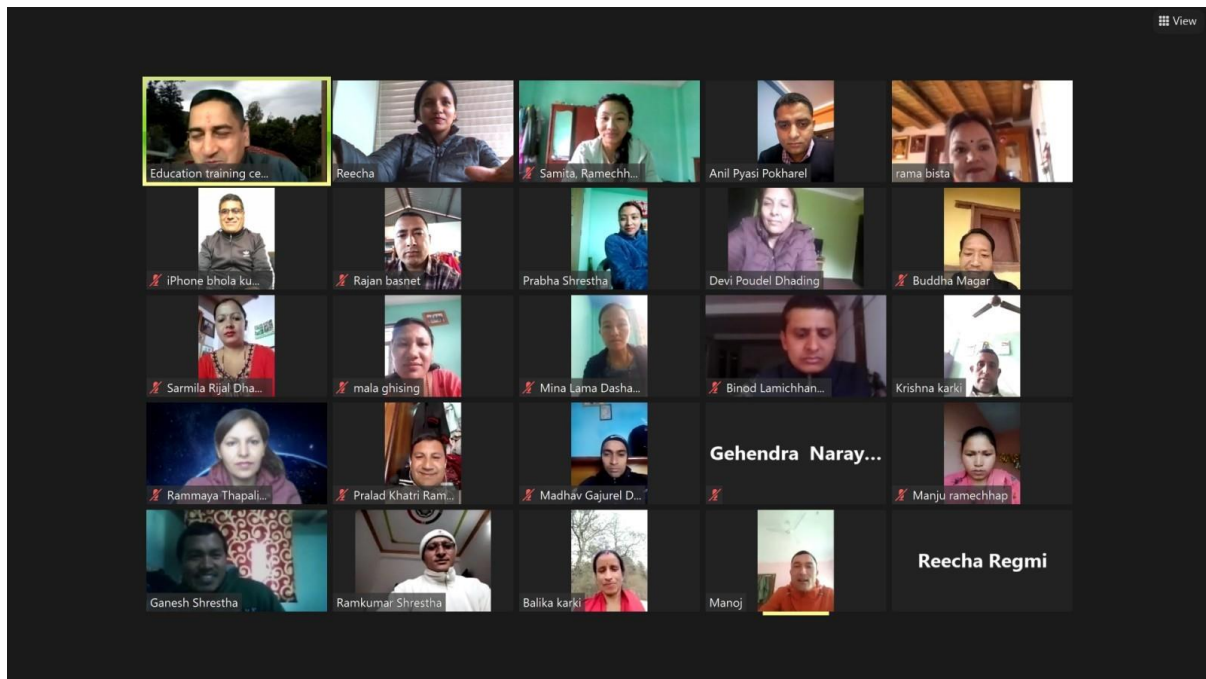
<https://www.britishcouncil.org.np/teachapp#:~:text=TeachApp%20offers%20FREE%20resources%20on,through%20these%20easily%20available%20resources.>

As much as possible of the original project plan was kept in place, but the timeline shifted significantly.

4.11 ELTEP Phase 2 Teacher Training

The ELTEP Phase 2 training was carried out from 1-10 March 2021 in partnership with the Provincial Education Training Centre (PETC), Dhulikhel. The training was conducted online due to Covid-19 restrictions, using Zoom.

Photograph 4: ELTEP teachers participating in an online training session on Zoom



The online course focused on pedagogical skills for English teachers across the three districts. The 50 participants who were still involved in the project were divided into two groups, each with 25 participants. Three British Council trainers and one government trainer facilitated the training. The two training portals were managed by two hosts from the PETC who looked after all logistics such as admitting participants, mute functions as well as sharing slides. This 15-day training course had ten face-to-face online training days conducted by the PETC followed by a five-day equivalent school-based practical component with CPD project work.

The participants carried out four pieces of project work in their schools and submitted reports to the training centre within 52 days of completing the face-to-face training. The project work was determined based on the training content so as to enable the trainees to implement the theoretical and practical skills learnt in the training in an innovative and creative way.

Since this was the first time any of the trainers had conducted online training, they had a number of transition issues. The trainers found that they had:

1. Challenges managing time:
 - a. Administrative tasks consumed most of the time, so doing them beforehand was more productive.
 - b. Participants were not able to complete their assignments in time, and it was not possible for trainers to follow up with the participants individually.

- c. Most of the time during the session was consumed by managing breakout rooms and at the end there was usually no time for feedback and reflection.
 - d. Conducting the same activities as face-to-face training online took more time.
2. Challenges managing participants:
- a. Participants often spoke over each other
 - b. They kept their microphones on, rather than muting, which meant there was a lot of background noise.
 - c. Scheduling sessions on Saturdays generated complaints.

Despite these challenges, participants were actively engaged and trainers and participants became more comfortable with the virtual training as it progressed. Investigating this training, the British Council conducted two focus groups with participants, revealing that this online training was considered to be useful, but not as effective as face-to-face training. It also appears that many of the teachers need basic training in how to use technology: laptops, mobile devices and video-conferencing apps such as Zoom.

Recommendation 3: One third of the participating teachers (25 of the original 75) left the project. This was largely due to their passing of the Teacher Service Commission Exam while the project was ongoing, shifting to a permanent teacher status, and then choosing their first posting to be in a more urban district. These circumstances may now be different due to the federalisation of education which occurred during ELTEP, with local governments having greater control over teachers. Nevertheless, in the future, we should seek to anticipate the potential for teacher transfers or status changes, to ensure as many teachers as possible remain with a project.

Recommendation 4: Use of technology for teacher development

- 4. During the pandemic, online teacher CPD on ELTEP has been successful in supporting many teachers. However, many others were unable to participate due to their connectivity and/or digital literacy limitations. Developing all teachers' digital access and skills would enable more teachers to participate in blended professional development in the future.
- 5. Include blended inputs in future teacher development initiatives
- 6. All teachers would also benefit from developing their skills at facilitating online teaching and learning using the technologies typically available to students, so that they can effectively support as many of their students as possible whenever face-to-face classes are not possible due to the ongoing pandemic or other *force majeure* events.

5. Impact

The purpose of this report is to draw together all the evidence generated throughout the project lifetime, evaluate to what extent the project achieved its outcomes, highlight areas of learning and suggest future ways forward. To this end, all project documentation has been reviewed systematically and evidence from the baseline and endline data collection is presented below.

- The English language proficiency of teachers and students was measured both before (in June 2018) and at the end of the project (December 2021).
 - Students at grade 8 took a standardised speaking test. This was graded across 5 levels which were linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (see Appendix 1)
 - Teachers took the British Council Aptis for Teachers test to determine their CEFR level
- Classroom observations were also conducted at the start and end of ELTEP.
- Focus groups with teachers, head teachers, government officials and trainers were conducted in early January 2022 to corroborate findings.

5.1 Changes in Teachers' Professional Practices

Professional practices were measured through classroom observations of the treatment group. At the baseline, 69 teachers were observed and 62 at the endline. The graphs below indicate what percentage (Y axis) of teachers achieved which levels at each of these points.

The eight most relevant of the twelve professional practices were observed for. Each of these had sub-categories which were each assigned a level rating. Red is level 1 which indicates awareness: the teacher may have heard of this professional practice, but there is no real demonstration of competence for this category. Amber is level 2, which indicates evidence of showing signs of understanding the sub-category, and why it is important. Higher levels are in greens with light green at level 3 indicating developing competence, or 'engagement': the teacher demonstrate basic competency in this professional practice. Dark green for level 4 denotes 'integration': the teacher demonstrates a high level of competency in this professional practice.

The results show that for all categories observed, the participant teachers moved, to varying degrees, from levels 1 and 2 at the baseline towards levels 3 and 4 by the endline.

5.1.1 Planning Lessons and Courses

Figure 1 shows that at baseline over 50 per cent of teachers did not keep (level 1), or kept only a basic (level 2) class profile. Similarly, the majority had no (level 1) or only a rudimentary statement of (level 2) lesson aims. Even fewer anticipated how to handle challenges (level 3) and only 12 per cent had a written lesson plan (level 3).

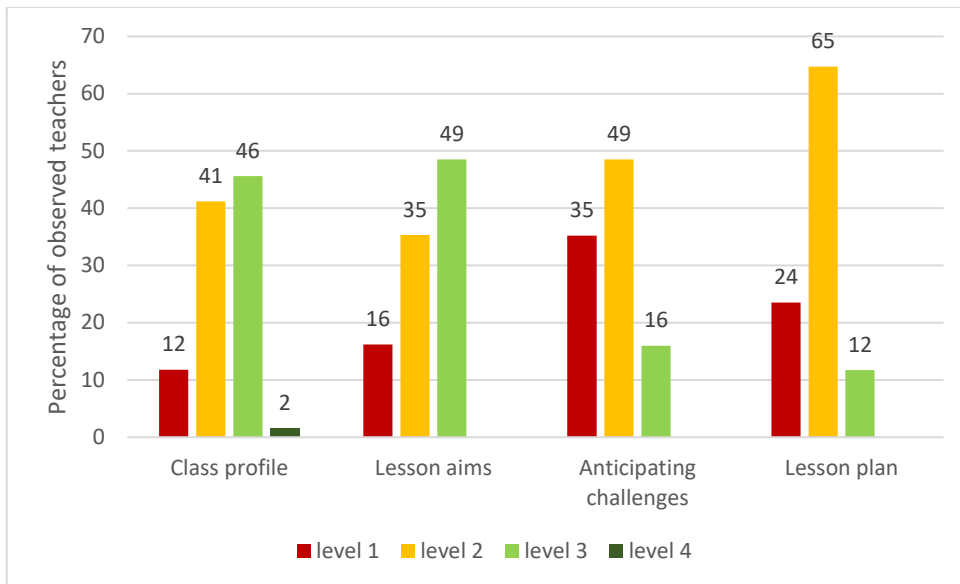


Figure 1: Baseline observation scores for Planning Lessons and Courses

By the endline (See Figure 2), the situation had changed a great deal. 64 per cent were keeping basic (level 3) or comprehensive (level 4: 22 per cent) class profiles. A similar 60 per cent had clear aims for their lessons, though only 2 per cent were doing this to level 4 standard. There were 26 per cent more teachers anticipating issues in their planned lessons than at baseline, while only a few more teachers were producing lessons plans to higher levels of quality.

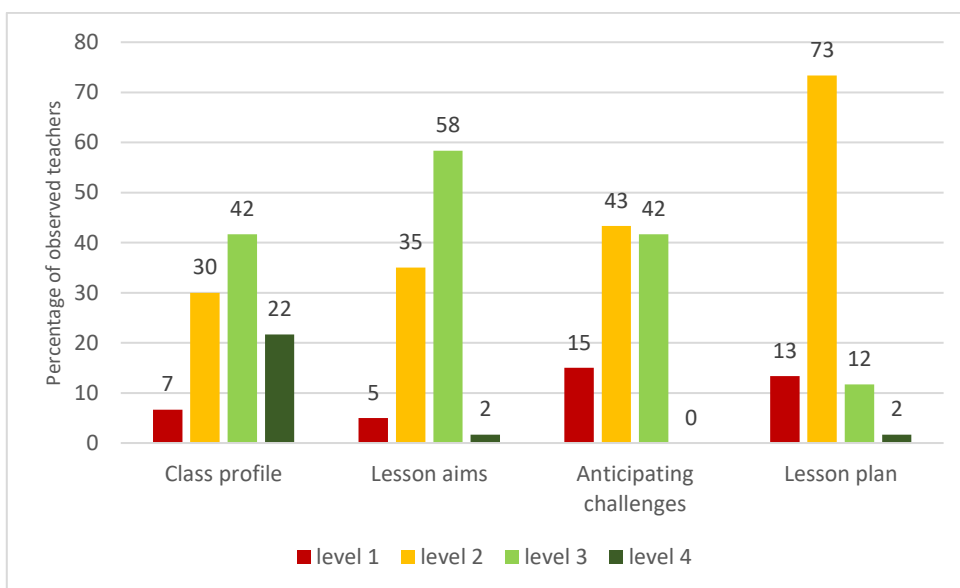


Figure 2: Endline observation scores for Planning Lessons and Courses

Lesson aims are one area where there is a lot more progress, with most teachers operating at level 3 on endline. This suggests that while teachers do not have a written version of their plan, they have considered the aims of the lesson and how they are going to achieve them, as well as what the potential challenges of the upcoming lesson might be.

5.1.2 Understanding Learners

Fair treatment and use of names are two of the most highly-affected categories in terms of improvement (See Figures 3 and 4 below). Perhaps teachers realised through training how important it is for children to know that teachers know their names and treat them like individuals. The idea that teachers do not favour other children, or inadvertently pick on certain children also appeals to the child's sense of justice and has clearly resonated with these teachers.

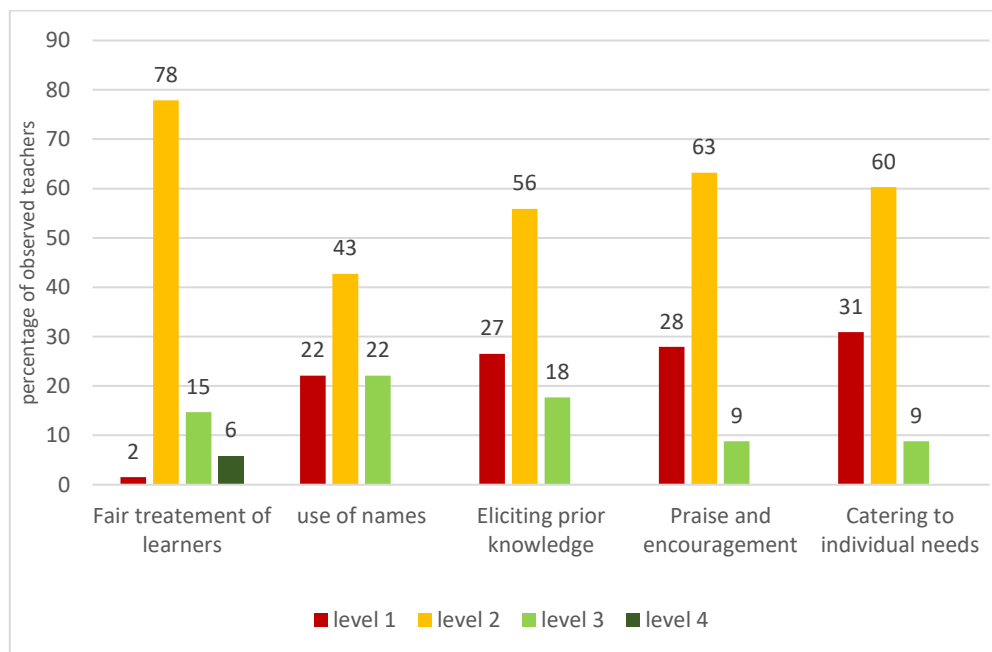


Figure 3: Baseline observation scores for Understanding Learners

As we saw above, teachers now seem to be paying more attention to their learners by creating class profiles. Figures 3 and 4 show that they are also thinking more about the individual needs of the learners, where 18 per cent more teachers are demonstrating level 3 competency in that regard. Having said this, there are still 74 per cent of teachers not doing so, so there is still a lot of improvement to be made.

In class, teachers are eliciting more and praising learners more (both register an increase of 19 per cent of teachers performing at level 3 at endline). However, as these did start at a very low levels (91 per cent and 83 per cent respectively at level 2 or below on baseline), there are plenty of opportunities still being missed to do these more often, and this should be a focus for future development.

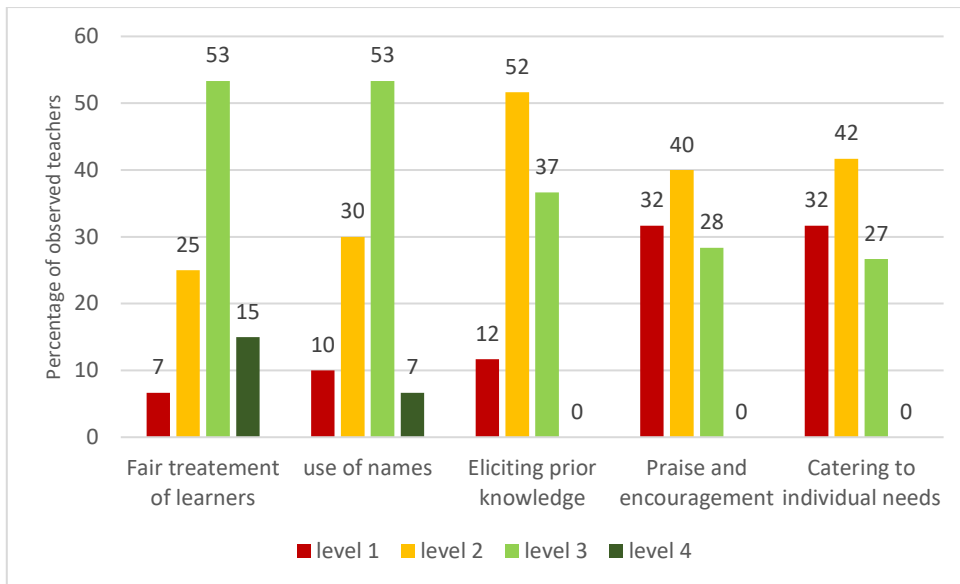


Figure 4: Endline observation scores for Understanding Learners

5.1.3 Managing the Lesson

Figures 5 and 6 show that more classroom management features are being used more frequently as a result of project activities. While, as the trainers noted, teachers do appear to be paying more attention to instructions, still only 40 per cent of them are giving instructions that are mostly effective. However, this is 33 per cent more than at baseline which is one of the largest improvements noted.

The complexity of developing the skill of giving instruction effectively, and the time required for teachers to fully develop competency in that seemingly simple skill should not be underestimated. Teachers need time to be able to change their teaching behaviours and only limited change can be expected without more intensive CPD practices.

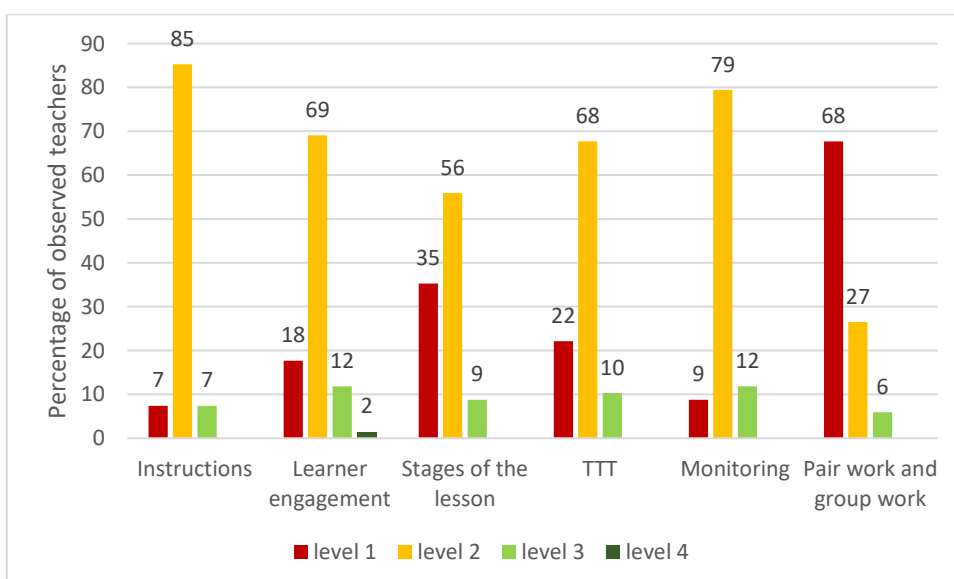


Figure 5: Baseline observation scores for Managing the Lesson

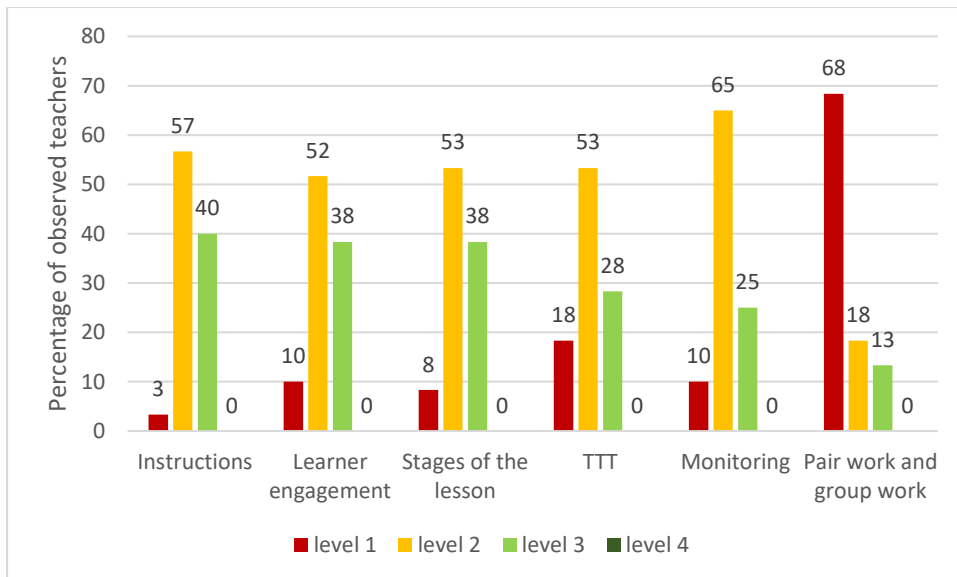


Figure 6: Endline observation scores for Managing the Lesson

Teachers are engaging more with learners with 26 per cent more demonstrating level 3 competence and 10 per cent fewer at level 1. Similarly, 29 per cent more are demonstrating level 3 competence in planning stages within their lessons with 17 per cent moving from level 1 to level 2. Teacher talk time (TTT), monitoring and pair and group work show much smaller signs of improvement, and these would benefit from ongoing attention in TAGs as well as more focus in future trainings.

5.1.4 Use of English and Other languages, and Inclusive Practices

As Figure 6 showed, teachers appear to be trying to reduce their TTT, and even though they are still talking a lot in class, at least now they appear to be doing it more in English according to Figure 8. This shows a 22 per cent increase in level 3 competence in using English in class. Teachers are also giving their learners some more opportunities to learn English, and learners are taking slightly more opportunities to use English in class.

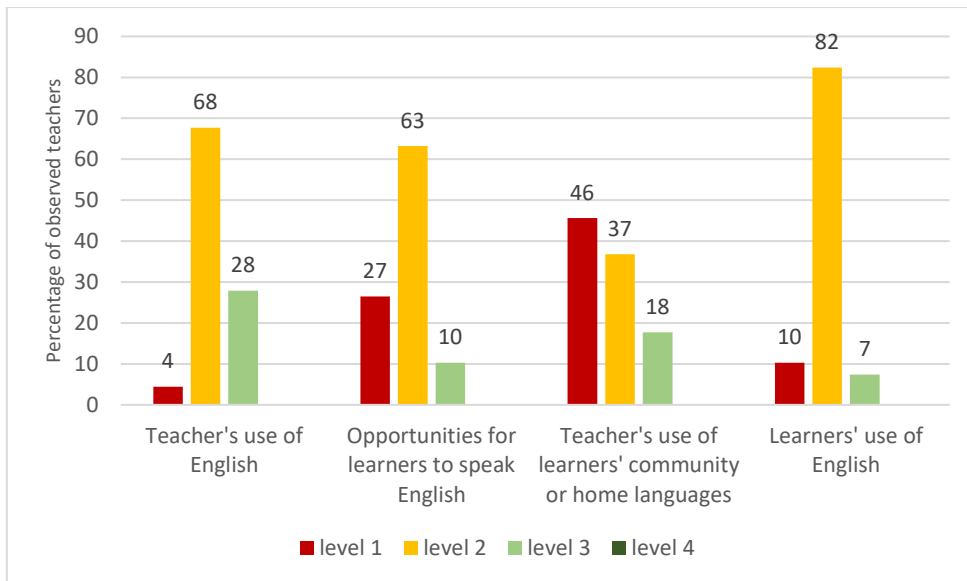


Figure 7: Baseline observation scores for Use of English and other languages

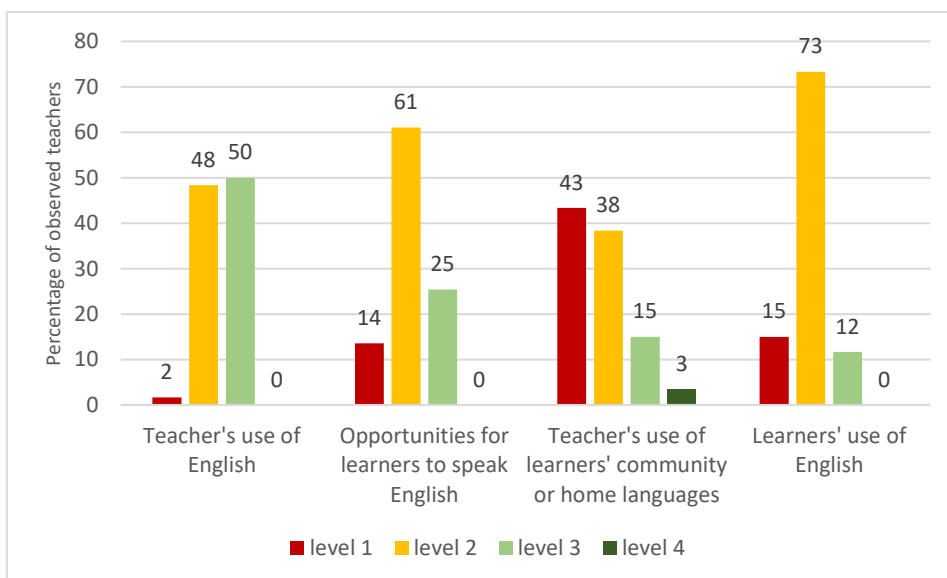


Figure 8: Endline observation scores for Use of English and other languages

The learners use of English in class and the teachers' use of the community language are still very low on the scale of change according to Figure 8. It is likely that learners still need time to see opportunities to use language, teachers still need practise in giving more opportunities, and while there seem to be a small number of expert integrators of local languages into the classroom, most teachers still seem uncomfortable with the idea.

5.1.5 Managing resources and assessing learners

Comparing Figures 9 and 10, we can see that the use of textbooks and additional resources are two of the most improved categories, and formal and informal assessment has also increased significantly. However, error correction and feedback have been impacted least.

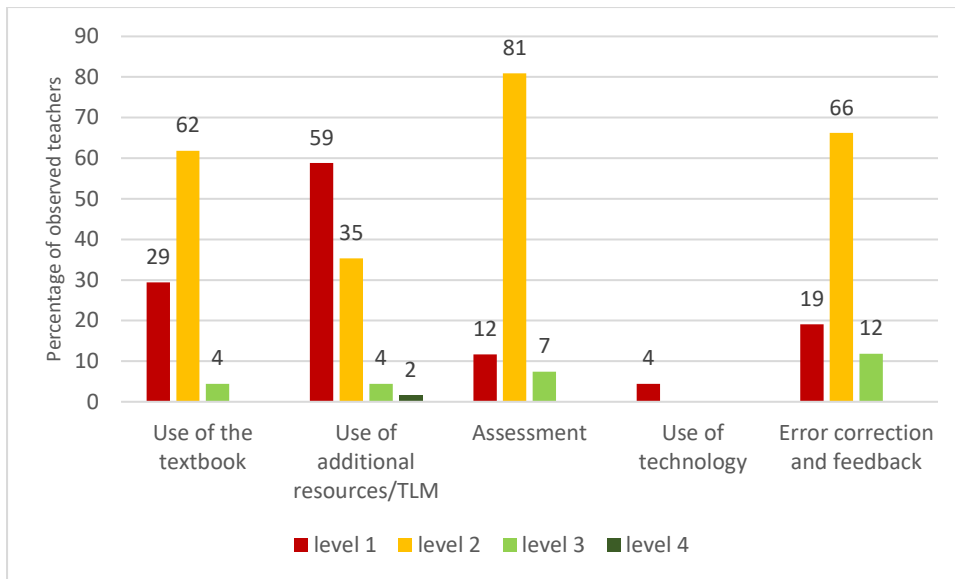


Figure 9: Baseline observation scores for Managing resources and Assessing learners

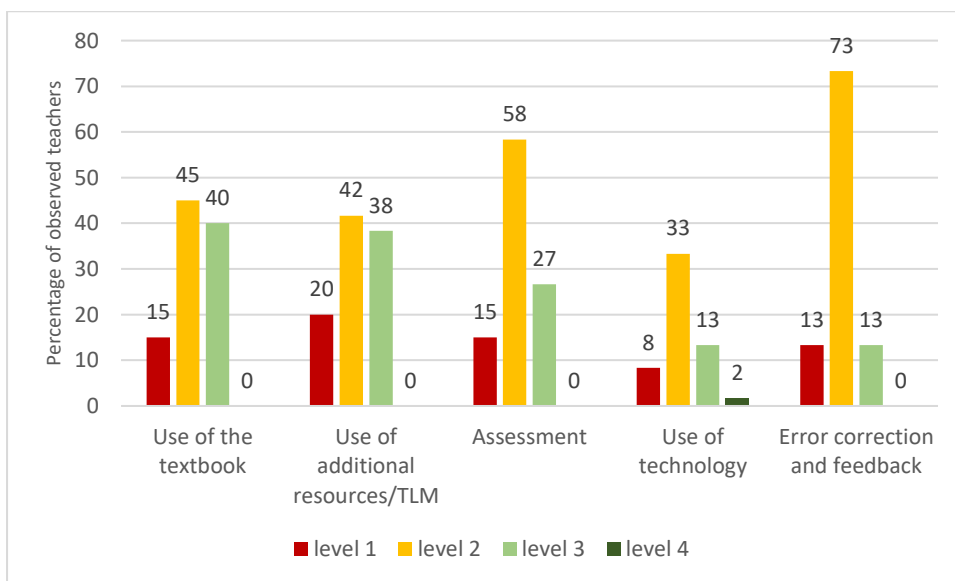


Figure 10: Endline observation scores for Managing resources and Assessing learners

The technology category is worth mentioning here. In 2018, nobody was using technology in the classroom at all. Fast forward to 2021 and by the endline, we can see that over half, or 54 per cent of teachers are regularly integrating some form of technology into their classrooms with 14 per cent of them are doing so very well at level three and four, most likely influenced by the circumstances of Covid response.

Recommendation 5: Future teacher development initiatives should continue to focus on:

1. the importance and practice of teachers praising students, and eliciting their prior knowledge

2. ensuring teachers take individual student needs and levels into account while planning and teaching lessons
3. developing teachers' understanding and use of learning-centred classroom management practices, particularly the value and use of collaborative learning approaches.
4. how to give students greater opportunities to practise and develop their spoken English, in conjunction with the textbook.

5.1.6 Teacher Reflection

Figures 9 and 10 give evidence of a positive shift in terms of teachers' reflective practice. However, there is less change in terms of their awareness of CPD opportunities.

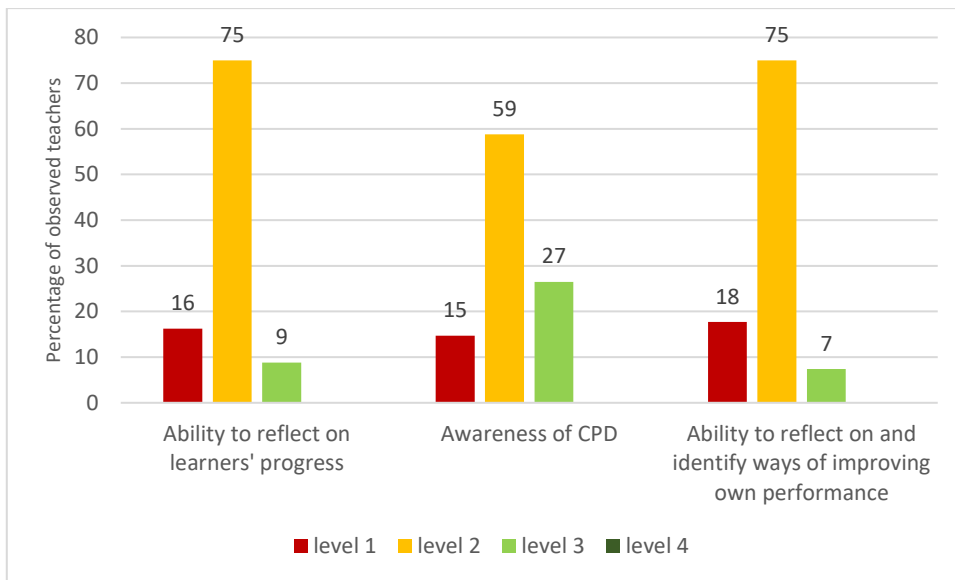


Figure 9: Baseline observation scores for Teacher Reflection

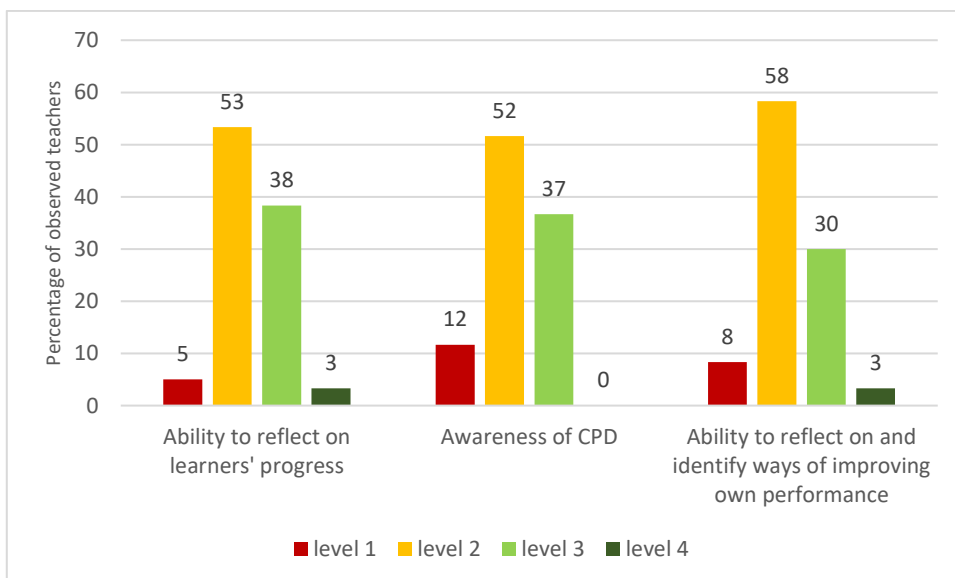


Figure 10: Endline observation scores for Teacher Reflection

Recommendation 6: To encourage teachers to take greater agency in their own professional development, awareness-raising of a range of CPD opportunities, should ideally be accompanied by greater incentives, to motivate teachers to develop their professional skills and practice.

5.1.7 Qualitative feedback

In addition to the quantitative findings, focus groups further investigated project impact. When asked what changes they had noticed about their own teaching, the teachers in the focus group responded that they prepared more, present less, use more materials, make more lesson plans, find materials on the Internet. They also mentioned changing their teaching style, and that it is motivating to think more about their teaching approaches.

They use English more with students in class because they have more confidence and their fluency has increased, so they feel they can speak more smoothly. One teacher noted:

I didn't know how to use different techniques and motivate learners. Reflecting on my own teaching, making effective lesson plans, classroom management, all these topics helped me. Then being supported by the TAG meetings was useful. Using games while teaching helped my students learn better because it was interesting for them.

Several teachers found the CPD framework, planning lesson and learning processes, managing learners and improving their skills useful. They also mentioned the increased creativity especially through the TAG groups. One teacher noted the improved learning environment she created by asking learners to read English news articles and stories. She had learned the importance of engaging them more in activities rather than talking to them. However the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic was repeatedly mentioned.

TAG groups were highly valued.

Every 15 days, especially we got a chance to meet and share our problems according to a fixed schedule. We had a chance to discuss these and solve them. F2F and online have been important, but different things I learned in each training. The online meetings had many difficulties, but the TAG meetings twice a month were most helpful. F2F was a good introduction but TAG meetings were more democratic: we were not trainer and participant, but all colleagues. They helped us deal with specific problems that we had at that particular time. It also helped us use same techniques as others and use similar solutions so it increased the consistency of our approaches.

Online training was considered less effective than face-to-face, though largely for technical reasons:

TAG and F2F was most useful. The online training was less useful: We cannot teach online to all students.

Some of the teachers were paying attention, some were not, so I feel the online training was less effective.

Local internet connection and electricity are unreliable. This is very frustrating. Although when they work, both F2F and remote are effective.

Another point that teachers wanted to have recognised was how supportive Head Teachers had been in helping teacher CPD over the past few years:

I asked him for some special materials like this laptop. He provided for me. He was very supportive of my attending training.

He was supportive of me attending TAG meetings. He created an internet connection and sourced me a laptop. He has asked the whole, staff to share ideas. He has provided me with photocopy paper and books for students.

She provided instructional materials like English language newspaper subscription.

The main suggestions from teachers were that:

This programme needs to be national.

Just participating in the programme helps our English language development. Repeated engagement and exposure is most useful so the TAG groups must continue. TAGs have developed our communicative skills.

Any opportunities to share ideas, particularly with other countries would be good. Perhaps observing teachers in other countries would be useful. If we observe teachers, we can copy what they do and use their ideas in our classes.

We need to focus more on our own language development.

Future programmes should be context-sensitive and react to our specific needs.

5.2.1 Changes in teacher English language levels

In the following graphs, the CEFR levels of teachers from the control and treatment groups are represented. The control group (n=38) are in red, the treatment group (n=53) in green. As mentioned earlier, while both populations started in the high 60's and 70's, 15 individuals in the treatment group did not take the endline Aptis test, and there was a significant dropout rate in the control group. Only members of each group who took both baseline and endline tests are compared here.

Ideally, the control and treatment groups should share similar characteristics. However, looking at Figure 11, we can see that at baseline, the control group had a significantly lower level of English, compared to the treatment group. The Government provided both lists of teachers, and one possible explanation for the difference of levels, is that perhaps the teachers in the treatment group were selected based on their English levels and/or motivation, or perhaps there are other factors that explain the difference.

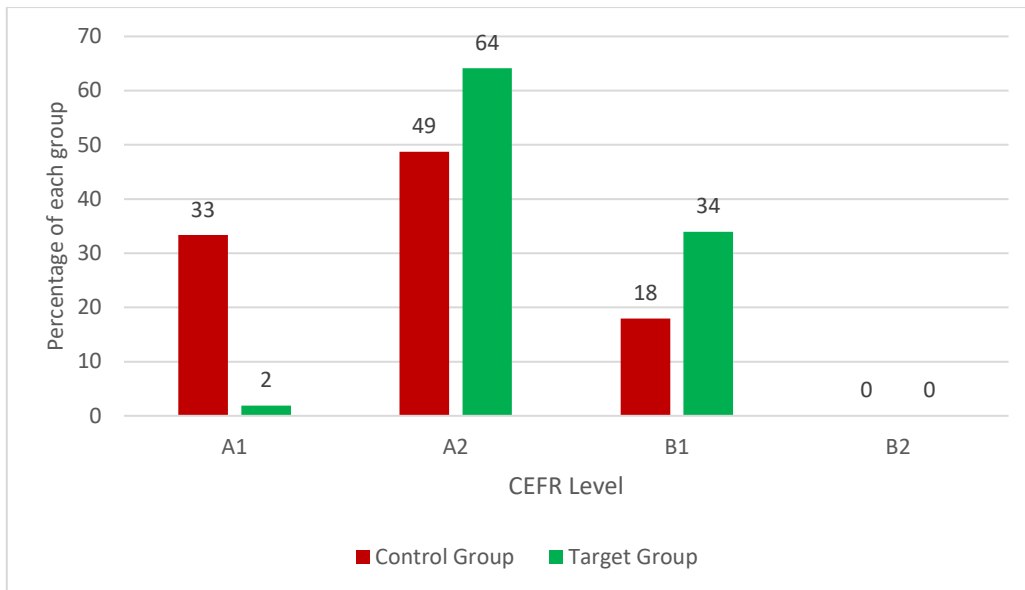


Figure 11: ELTEP baseline CEFR scores

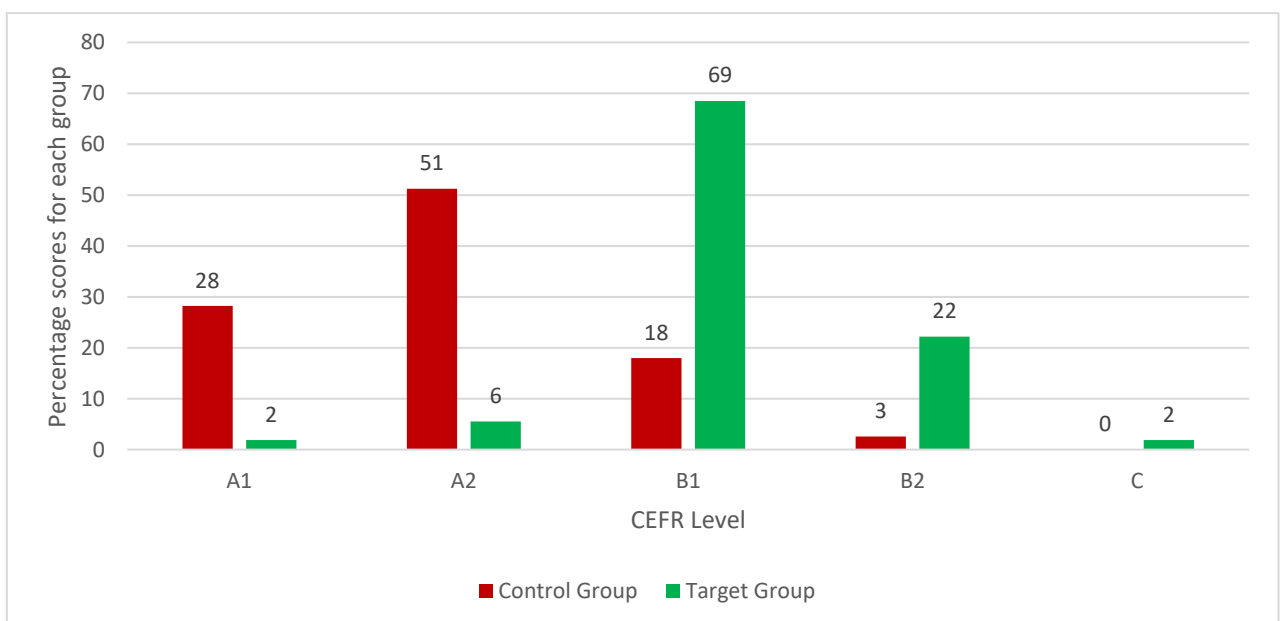


Figure 12: ELTEP endline CEFR scores

Despite this limitation in the study design, the endline results still reveal interesting results. Comparing the baseline and endline results for the control group, there is very little difference in results; these teachers did not participate in ELTEP and their English proficiency did not change during the three years of the project. However, among the treatment group, there is a marked difference: by the endline, 93 per cent of the group have proficiency levels at B1 or above, with 24 per cent achieving B2 or higher. It is therefore likely that the impact of ELTEP was majorly responsible for this improvement. The improvements were consistent across the three districts.

Figure 13 illustrates the number of teachers from control and treatment groups, whose CEFR level did not change between baseline and endline (0), decreased one level (-1), increased one level (+1) or increased by two levels (+2). In the control group, most teachers'

language levels stayed the same, with a few increasing and a few decreasing. In contrast, 74 per cent of the teachers who took part in ELTEP and were tested both at the beginning and end of the project increased their CEFR score by at least 1 level.

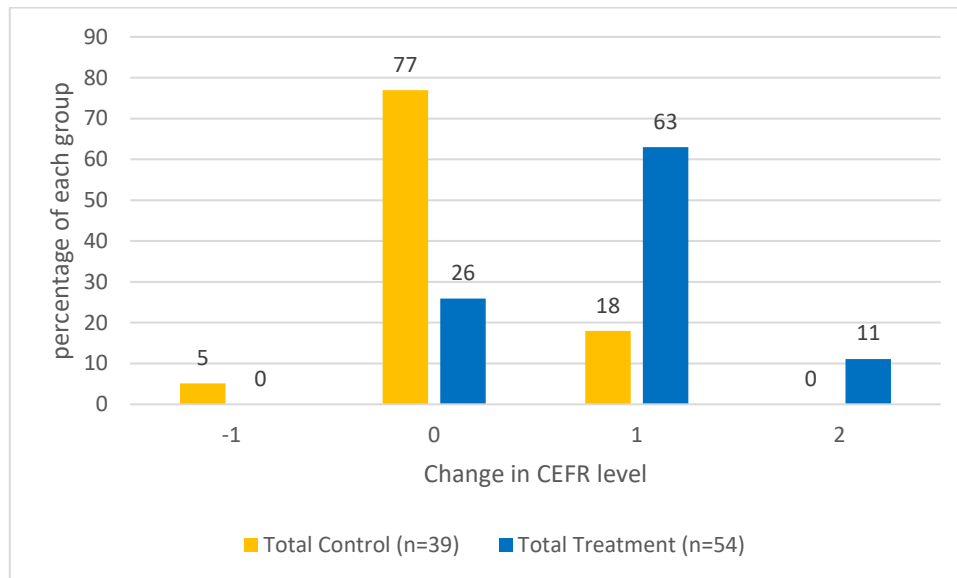


Figure 13: How CEFR scores have shifted across the project: Control (n=39) versus Treatment (n=53) endline score

5.2.2 Gender differences

Despite the total number of individuals participating in the project declining over the three years, the gender balance remained the same at 60 per cent male and 40 per cent female. This is a slight under-representation of women in the teaching population, which is 47 per cent in the primary teaching population in Nepal according to World Bank figures for 2020.

Recommendation 7: For future projects, try to ensure gender representation is at least in proportion to the teaching population. This could be done by consulting females as to whether there are any adjustments that can be made to schedules, venues, locations, the project model, childcare facilities etc. so as to facilitate higher female participation.

Figure 14 depicts the differences in score gains of the treatment group population disaggregated by gender. Please note that percentages are shown as a percentage of the total number of male and female teachers rather than a percentage of the total population. Slightly more men (79 per cent) have increased their levels than women (68 per cent), though more women made larger increases, with 18 per cent increasing by two CEFR levels. However, given that the sample size is relatively small (53 males and females in total), these differences may be statistically insignificant, aside demonstrating that most participants made significant progress.

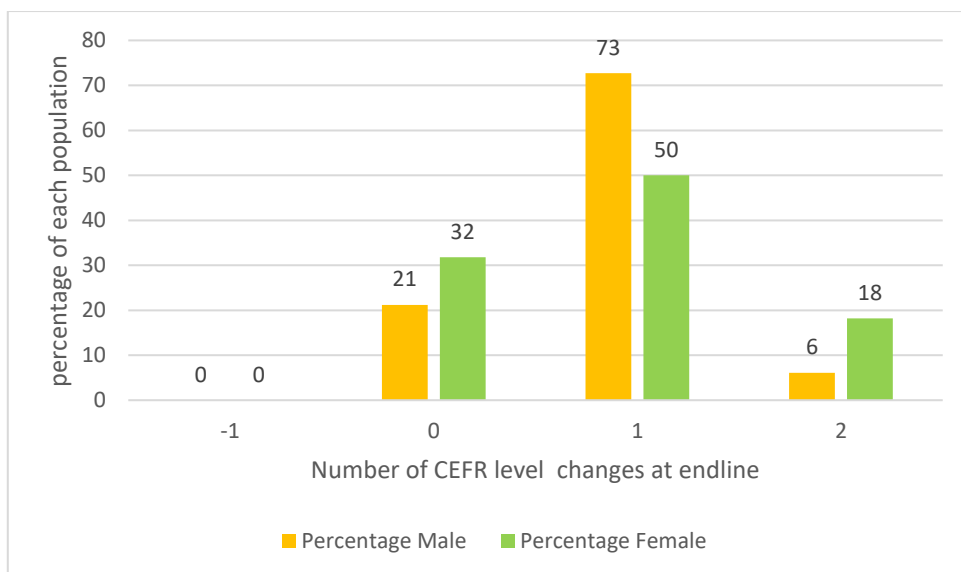


Figure 14: CEFR score changes for the treatment group by gender

5.2.3 Reactions to proficiency testing

Reactions to the use of Aptis were very positive. Mr. Chiranjibi Poudel, Deputy Director of NCED, noted that:

...this was the first time we used Aptis as a tool to test language abilities of the teachers. We have seen the results and it is quite promising. It has given us an indication of the type and level of training we should provide them. We have so far used this only with existing teachers at a curriculum level. If Aptis could be used during the recruitment of new teachers, it would be really effective.

Teacher also reacted positively to having their proficiency tested. As on teacher, Ms. Goma Tamang, English language teacher of Bandevi Basic School in Dhading district said:

Using Aptis as a tool to check the skills of English language teachers was an eye-opening experience. We realised that we need to improve our own English first in order to be better at teaching students. Many teachers like myself who teach English language in community and government schools never had the opportunity to learn English well. In those days, we were taught English from only grade four and we hardly got to practice the different skills like listening and speaking.

Recommendation 8: There are opportunities to use English language assessments alongside a language proficiency programme, to measure teachers' language levels, as long as this is done sensitively and constructively to motivate teachers, rather than being presented as a hurdle or high-stakes test. Tests aligned to the CEFR, such as the British Council Aptis, or the British Council English Score App, could be considered for this purpose.

5.3 Changes to student English language levels

To identify impact on students, they were given a test. The test required students to ask and answer basic questions, and to describe pictures. It was graded via a six-point scale (0-5 points), administered by trained British Council Master Trainers. Students who studied within classes with teachers who had taken part in the ELTEP programme were intended to be the treatment group. Students in regular classes, whose teachers received no inputs from ELTEP, were the control group. The total numbers of control and treatment at baseline were 89. By endline there were 23 students in the control group and 55 in the treatment group. The dataset was cleansed of students who did not take the endline test and only students who had completed both baseline and endline are used in this comparison.

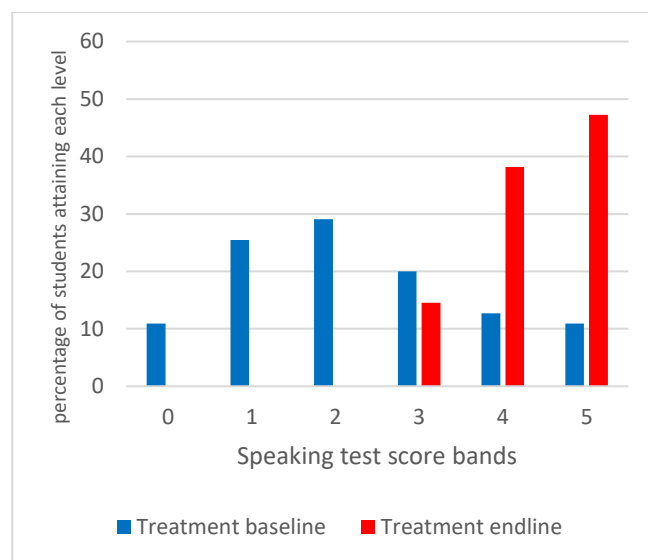
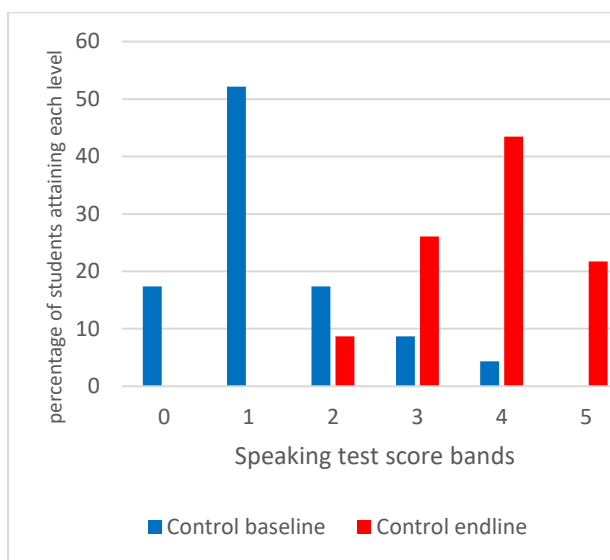


Figure 15: Baseline and endline speaking test score distributions for the control (n=23) and treatment (n=55) groups

Looking at the endline, as we would expect, English speaking scores increased significantly for both the treatment and the control groups (see Figure 15) between September 2018 and October 2021. This can most likely be attributed to students' learning from their regular English lessons, whether or not their teachers attended ELTEP. Due to the pandemic, we were unable to visit the students in early 2020 to measure their progress and could only conduct the endline in October 2021.

Comparing the two groups, the students in the treatment group appear to have made more progress than those in the control group (see Figure 16). However, we cannot confirm whether ELTEP contributed to these learning gains, as it is not clear whether the treatment group continued to study with teachers involved in ELTEP during 2020 and 2021.

There are no significant differences in the learning gains, between the female and male students involved in either the control or treatment groups.

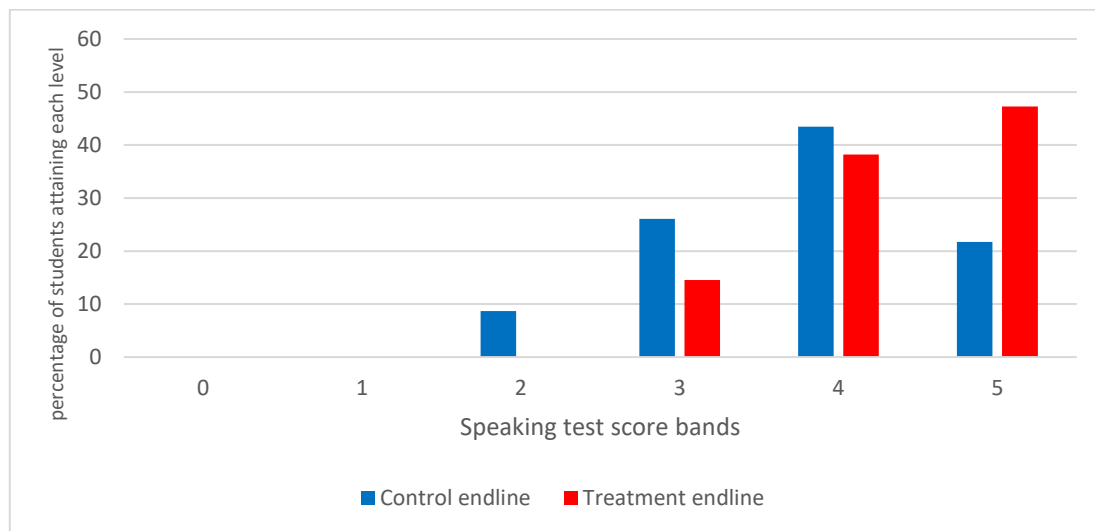


Figure 16: Comparison of endline speaking test scores for the treatment versus the control groups of students

Recommendation 9: While designing assessments to measure students' language improvement during a project:

1. Ensure both control and treatment groups share as many characteristics as possible, so that they can be accurately compared to isolate any impact that occurs from the treatment.
2. Tracking a treatment group of students across three years is problematic unless it can be confirmed that they have been continuously taught for the whole three years, by teachers involved in the project. If not, it would be more valid to measure their progress between the start and end of a single academic year.

6. Conclusions

Despite the changes to the structure of education in Nepal brought about by the move to federalism and decentralisation midway through ELTEP, and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the project has succeeded in completing all planned activities, and in achieving measurable and sustainable impact on its stakeholders.

Most teachers have developed their English proficiency as a result of participation in ELTEP. They have a greater awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses in pedagogy; enhanced knowledge of, and confidence in, using English; Increased knowledge and skills in effective pedagogy; and enhanced awareness of how to learn from CPD resources. Students have also improved their English proficiency, though we cannot attribute this progress only to ELTEP. Teachers continue to participate in online communities of practice established through ELTEP, and the class 6 to 8 training curriculum is now being used across the country, ensuring that project impact is sustained. The report makes a number of recommendations related to specific areas of teachers' professional skills, which would benefit from additional focus. The recommendations in this report will be of interest to both the federal government, and the local governments who now have increasing responsibility for running education.

7. Appendix: CEFR descriptors

(also available at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale>)

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.