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REPORT

Final Results Sharing Workshop of the ASEAN-UK SAGE Projects Pillar 2: Strengthening Retention through Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) in Cambodia

Siem Reap, 24-25 February 2026

Delivered by
 **BRITISH
COUNCIL**



In partnership with
EdTech Hub



In collaboration with
 **Pratham
International**

1. Introduction

The ASEAN-UK SAGE Programmes, Pillar 2: Strengthening Retention through Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) in Cambodia focuses on developing a 'proof of concept' for intensive TaRL-style foundational learning packages, as an effective and cost-effective approach to accelerate foundational learning for marginalised primary-enrolled children at risk of non-learning and dropout. It aims to demonstrate how the approach can be used to help children catch up with their grade level as well as raise awareness of pedagogic and inclusion strategies to reduce these risks. The pilot will run 32 'catch up' classes in primary schools for approximately 800 children enrolled in the upper grades of 32 selected primary schools, who have not yet attained solid foundational skills. The classes have provided a minimum of 70 hours of learning input to groups of approximately 25-30 learners per class. They have been taught after-school hour, by regular teachers from the participating schools.

Since its official design and launch in March 2025, the project has undertaken a comprehensive series of technical consultations, design workshops, training sessions, and monitoring activities. These key activities include Scoping visits and consultations with MoEYS departments and development partners, Program Design Workshop, TaRL Material Development and Review Workshops, Master Training for Master Trainers and Cluster Mentors from the two provinces, Teacher Planning and TaRL Training for Teachers in Target Schools, TaRL Teaching in the classroom, mentoring visits, Parent engagement activities, Project Review Meetings (Baseline, Midline and Endline) between Cluster Metors, PoE of the two provinces, technical and management team from PED with Pratham International Team, Study visits and investigation of MoEYS management and British council team to observe, learn and reflect how TaRL has been implemented in Cambodia, Study visit of a delegation from Lao PDR in some TaRL Schools to learn and benchmark the TaRL Implementation in Cambodia

On the 24-25 February 2026 in Siem Reap, the Final Workshop Result Sharing engaged key advisory and technical team members from the MoEYS, master trainers, mentors, ASEAN-UK SAGE project technical team and development partners including Pratham International, World Bank Cambodia and Room-to-Read.



The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Technical Education Development (SEAMEO TED), as the coordinator of the project on behalf of the SEAMEO Secretariat, and ASEAN-SAGE Projects, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), the British Council, and Pratham International, successfully supported the implementation of the *Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) Final Results Sharing Workshop*, held from 24–25 February 2025 at the Royal Angkor Resort, Siem Reap Province.

The workshop was chaired by **H.E. Prof. Dr. Bo Chankoulika**, Under Secretary of State, MoEYS, and attended by the 72 participants who are MoEYS Advisory and Technical Group members, experts and team leader of the British Council, Pratham International, Representatives of Room to Read, the World Bank Cambodia, PoE management team, Cluster Mentors, Master Trainers, and Master Trainers from Kampong Cham and Battambang. The event brought together national and international partners committed to advancing foundational learning for marginalized children in Cambodia.



2. Opening Session

- H.E. **Dr. Bo Chankoulika's** opening remarks at the TaRL Final Results Sharing Workshop highlighted Cambodia's strong commitment to improving foundational literacy and numeracy as a national priority and moral imperative. Aligned with the Education Strategic Plan 2024–2028 and the Teacher Education Reform Strategy 2024–2030, the TaRL pilot was implemented in 32 schools across Kampong Cham and Battambang, reaching over 800 Grade 4 and 5 students through targeted after-school instruction. The results demonstrated remarkable learning gains, with literacy proficiency increasing from 39% to 85% and numeracy performance rising from 42% to 99% within a short instructional period. The speech emphasized that these achievements reflect effective partnership among MoEYS, development partners, teachers, and mentors, and called for scaling up the approach to ensure that every child in Cambodia can learn successfully and reach their full potential.



- **Ms Isla Gilmore**, Education Officer, FCDO delivered impressive remarks at the results-sharing workshop, expressing appreciation for the opportunity to join the event and highlighting the importance of the education program implemented in Cambodia. Ms Gilmore recognized the strong leadership of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in improving learning outcomes and appreciated the government’s commitment to piloting and using evidence to strengthen education policies. She also thanked the team from Pratham International for their hard work and collaboration. During a recent field visit, Ms Gilmore observed the dedication of teachers and the positive impact of the program on children’s learning. Finally, she emphasized that the findings shared today are an important part of the learning process to understand what works best in supporting children’s education, and outlined how the future independent TaRL impact evaluation results will help inform education decisions in Cambodia.



- **Mr. Craig Farmer**, Team Leader, congratulated Cambodia for being the **first country in Southeast Asia to implement a full TaRL programme**. He highlighted the efficient 11-month implementation process, which included co-designing learning materials, developing assessments, preparing mentors and teachers, and establishing governance and support structures across provincial and district levels. Mr. Farmer also noted the encouraging learning gains and confirmed that an independent TaRL impact evaluation will be conducted in June to further validate the findings



- In her impressive remarks, **Ms. Usha Rane** highlighted the TaRL pilot in Battambang and Kampong Cham as a landmark initiative marking TaRL’s first implementation in Southeast Asia and focusing on strengthening reading and mathematics skills among struggling Grade 4 and 5 students.. She emphasized the successful adaptation of the phonics-based TaRL methodology to the Khmer script, noting that structured syllable charts, pattern recognition, and continuous practice effectively support children in decoding, recalling, and mastering foundational skills. She underscored that TaRL’s balanced, non-linear approach accommodates diverse learning styles and enhances students’ ability to engage with the formal curriculum. Expressing gratitude for the strong collaboration with Cambodian education teams, she reaffirmed Pratham International’s commitment to continued partnership in advancing literacy and numeracy development.



- In his welcome remarks at the TaRL Final Results Sharing Workshop, **H.E. Dr. Chhinh Sitha**, an adviser for the MoEYS highlighted the TaRL pilot as a significant milestone in Cambodia’s efforts to accelerate foundational literacy and numeracy for marginalized primary school students . TaRL is structured and systematic approach ensured quality preparation, contextual adaptation of materials, capacity building at all levels, and continuous monitoring throughout the implementation process. Beyond the results, we should also recognize the strong systems established such as clear student selection criteria, structured assessment tools for Khmer and Mathematics, Data entry and monitoring through the PLP system and Endline review conducted collaboratively at provincial and central levels. Today’s workshop is not only about reviewing results. It is about reflecting on lessons learned, identifying challenges in classroom processes and time management and discussing sustainability and next steps. Since its launch in March 2025, the initiative has followed a systematic approach including technical consultations, material development, teacher training, mentoring, and continuous assessment.



3. Overview of the pilot and Endline Results by Experts of Pratham International - Plenary

Pratham Team presented the result of the Endline Review of the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) pilot under the ASEAN-UK SAGE initiative demonstrates strong evidence of accelerated foundational learning gains among Grade 4 and 5 students in Cambodia. Below are the key points captured during the session:



- Implemented between November 2025 and February 2026 across 32 public schools (including two attached schools) in Kampong Cham and Battambang provinces, the program targeted students who were performing at the lowest levels in literacy and numeracy.
- Through a structured after-school pull-out model delivering 70 hours of focused instruction, public teachers, supported by cluster mentors, provided level-based teaching tailored to students’ actual learning needs.
- At baseline, a majority of selected students were classified as non-readers in Khmer and unable to perform basic subtraction in mathematics.
- By the endline assessment, substantial improvements were observed. Eighty-five percent of participating students progressed to reader levels—able to read paragraphs, stories, and demonstrate comprehension—compared to only 39% at baseline.
- In numeracy, 99% of students reached subtraction level or higher, including division and word problem solving, marking a significant increase from 42% at baseline.
- Both provinces recorded consistent upward movement from lower-level competencies to higher-level skills, confirming the effectiveness of targeted, level-based instruction. Importantly, student attrition remained below 2%, reflecting strong engagement and commitment from schools, teachers, students, and parents.

- The structured assessment cycle—Baseline, Midline, and Endline—combined with digital data entry through the PLP system, ensured rigorous monitoring and evidence-based analysis.



Overall, the Endline findings provide compelling evidence that the TaRL model can accelerate learning recovery for upper primary students who are lagging behind. The results highlight the potential for scaling and institutionalizing TaRL within Cambodia’s broader foundational learning reform agenda to strengthen retention, improve literacy and numeracy outcomes, and ensure that marginalized learners are not left behind.

4. Reflection by MoEYS, Master Trainers and Cluster mentors

- The reflections shared by the PoE Director, Master Trainer and Cluster Mentor highlighted that Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) is not merely an instructional technique but a transformative approach that reshapes classroom culture and student learning experiences.



- Both presenters emphasized that TaRL’s greatest strength lies in focusing on students’ actual learning levels rather than grade or age, allowing struggling learners to rebuild foundational literacy and numeracy skills through targeted, activity-based instruction.
- The simplicity of materials—using locally available resources and easy-to-administer assessments—makes the approach practical and adaptable in various school contexts. Importantly, the implementation of TaRL has resulted in visible positive changes: students who previously could not read or calculate began making rapid progress, gained confidence, and participated more actively in class.
- Teachers shifted from traditional lecture-based teaching to a facilitative role, using continuous assessment to group students and adjust instruction accordingly. While challenges such as classroom management, absenteeism, limited mentoring skills, and parental engagement remain, ongoing collaboration, mentoring support, and data-driven monitoring have helped address these issues.



Overall, the reflections demonstrate that TaRL fosters not only academic improvement but also a more supportive, student-centered learning environment, laying a strong foundation for sustainable educational improvement.



4.1 Discussion Session with Master Trainers, Cluster Mentors and TaRL Teachers- Kampong Cham



On 24 February 2026

A group discussion was conducted in Kampong Cham to reflect on the implementation of the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) program as follows:

1. Ensuring the Accuracy of Endline Results

Students at the Paragraph level remained similar between baseline and endline. However, students at Comprehension Level 2 increased significantly (33%) compared to baseline (1%). The question was raised whether the endline assessment results were reliable.

To ensure validity:

- During testing, worksheets were folded by level so students could not see other sections.
- Different test sheets were used for each student at baseline, midline, and endline.
- Teachers monitored daily progress and used the PLP system to track student development.
- By midline, teachers observed that non-readers had already progressed to Paragraph, Story, and Comprehension Level 1.
- Cluster mentors conducted random assessment for verification test for every baseline, midline and endline to ensure reliability of the assessment conducted by teachers.

2. Plans to Achieve Targets

Mentors used baseline results to organize support in three phases:

1. **Direct Support:** Meeting TaRL teachers during school visits; if teaching challenges were observed, mentors provided advice or demonstration.
2. **Indirect Support via Telegram:** Regular Q&A and consultation through phone and Telegram.
3. **Short Meetings:** Scheduled discussions with teachers at each school to solve challenges.

Teachers clearly understood students' levels based on baseline tests. In mathematics, teachers reviewed one-digit and two-digit numbers daily for 15 minutes at the beginning of class for lower-level students. Higher-level students practiced subtraction and division daily in groups.

3. Newly Learned Practices

- Ball-throwing game into baskets.
- Teaching difficult vocabulary by having students read passages, identify difficult words themselves, and create new sentences.
- Sentence correction activities where students read and correct errors independently.

These activities increased student engagement and responsibility. Mind Map 1 and 2 enhanced students' deeper thinking skills.

4. Additional Support Strategies

- Refresher meetings via Google Meet or Zoom.
- Organizing demonstration classes.
- Producing instructional videos on how to use teaching and learning materials.

5. Teaching and Learning Materials

Requests included:

- More math materials (play money, exercise books, place value cards).
- Colored dice and rotating wheels.
- Larger syllable charts for Khmer reading.
- Short storybooks with illustrations to improve comprehension.
- Ideally, each student should have their own set of materials according to their learning level.

On 25 February 2026

A group discussion was conducted with master trainers, cluster mentors and TaRL teachers from Kampong Cham to reflect on the implementation of the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) program

- The discussion brought together teachers and mentors to share experiences, challenges, and lessons learned from the field. Teachers acknowledged that adapting to the TaRL approach required a significant shift in mindset, particularly in preparing lesson plans that included differentiated activities for students grouped by learning level. While this transition was initially challenging, most teachers reported that after two to three days of practice, they became more confident and skilled in organizing level-based instruction.



- Teachers highlighted that grouping students by actual learning levels made instruction more focused and manageable. Activities such as mind mapping were particularly effective and well received by students. However, some practical challenges remained, including limited ability to conduct outdoor activities and the need to adjust lesson plans in real time when students struggled to grasp content. Importantly, teachers emphasized their role in modeling tasks, encouraging students, and providing additional time for learners who required extra support.
- Mentors played a crucial role in sustaining implementation quality. Through structured planning, full-lesson observation, constructive feedback, and follow-up visits, mentors provided continuous professional support to teachers. The use of PLP data further strengthened implementation by allowing mentors and teachers to track student progress and adapt teaching strategies accordingly. Participants recommended enhancing the PLP system to include document uploads and daily attendance tracking to further support monitoring and sustainability.
- Overall, the reflection demonstrated meaningful progress in shifting classroom practices toward student-centered, level-based instruction. Despite initial challenges, teachers and mentors showed strong commitment to improving foundational learning outcomes, and the collaborative approach between schools and technical support teams contributed significantly to the program's positive implementation in Kampong Cham.
- The discussion focused on teachers' reflections on TaRL implementation. The Brief of the discussion is as follows:



1. Initial Challenges

- Teachers initially found it difficult to change their teaching habits.
- The first challenge was preparing lesson plans that included lesson content and differentiated activities for different learning-level groups.
- However, after teaching for 2–3 days, teachers gained a better understanding of how to prepare more effective lesson plans.
- The second challenge was that students could not immediately adapt to being grouped with peers from different grade levels.



2. Activities that Worked Well

- Grouping students by learning level made teaching easier because teachers could use appropriate materials and clearly explain the objectives for each group.
- Students enjoyed and easily understood activities using Mind Map 1 and Mind Map 2.

3. Activities that Could Not Be Fully Implemented

- Some activities required outdoor implementation, but teachers could not always conduct them outside due to reliance on classroom materials.
- Teachers sometimes had to adjust their lesson plans during implementation because students did not fully understand or grasp the content.

4. Student Support

- Teachers modeled activities before students practiced in groups or individually.
- Teachers continuously encouraged students.
- Additional time was provided for students who needed more time to complete tasks.

4.2 Discussion Session with Master Trainers, Cluster Mentors and TaRL Teachers- Battambang



24 February 2026

A group discussion on TaRL Implementation was conducted in with PED team, cluster mentors, master trainers and TaRL Teachers from Battambang to reflect on the implementation of the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) program as follows:

Satisfaction

- Strong satisfaction with the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach
- Positive experience with level-based group implementation
- Targeted student selection based on criteria (focusing on low-performing students)



Challenges:

- High student absenteeism
- Students gathering during migration/displacement periods
- Students with low cognitive ability (slow learners)
- Grouping students according to learning levels (TaRL groups)
- Mentors providing both in-person and online/phone support



Requests

- Develop instructional videos demonstrating each teaching activity to support teachers
- Produce teaching materials with larger fonts for clearer student visibility
- Use a digital system for assessments to simplify data collection for baseline, midline, and endline

Applying TaRL Methods in Regular Classrooms

- Grouping students by learning level
- Introducing new learning games
- Individual and group reading practice
- Use of mind maps
- Timely teacher facilitation and response to student activities



The presentation of Khmer Language and Mathematics results in Battambang Province demonstrated outcomes that exceeded expectations, reflecting the effectiveness of the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach. Despite these positive achievements, several implementation challenges were identified, including high student absenteeism, seasonal student migration, and the presence of slow learners who required additional support. These contextual realities highlight the importance of flexibility and continuous adaptation in program implementation.

From the perspective of master trainers, cluster mentors, and classroom teachers, one of the most impactful strategies was grouping students according to their actual learning levels. This level-based grouping enabled teachers to provide targeted instruction and focus directly on foundational gaps. Mentors played a critical role

by offering both direct classroom support and remote guidance through phone and online communication, ensuring teachers received timely feedback and encouragement.

Participants expressed strong satisfaction with the TaRL methodology, particularly its focus on low-performing students and its structured, activity-based learning approach. The selection of students based on clear criteria allowed the program to prioritize those most in need, resulting in noticeable progress in both literacy and numeracy.

Several recommendations were proposed to further strengthen implementation and sustainability. These include developing instructional videos to model teaching activities, producing larger and clearer teaching materials to improve student visibility, and introducing a digital assessment system to streamline baseline, midline, and endline data collection. Additionally, participants emphasized the importance of integrating TaRL strategies into regular classroom practice, such as level-based grouping, learning games, individual and group reading, mind mapping, and timely teacher facilitation.

Overall, the experience in Battambang Province illustrates that while challenges remain, the TaRL approach has significantly improved classroom engagement, student confidence, and foundational learning outcomes. Continued refinement, digital support, and teacher capacity development will further enhance sustainability and long-term impact.

5. PTOM Presentation

During the workshop, PTOM/PLP expert presented a comprehensive framework covering Grades 1 to 3 that began with a structured introduction to the national course syllabi and official textbooks for Khmer and Mathematics to ensure full alignment with curriculum standards and learning progressions. Below are key points covered by the presenter

- To strengthen the linguistic foundation of PTOM, the expert team developed a 30,000,000-word Khmer corpus to extract the 1,500 most high-frequency words, which informed the design of instructional materials and assessment content.
- A large-scale diagnostic assessment was then constructed, consisting of 420 reading items and 200 Mathematics items, organized into tests of 50 items each, to accurately identify students' proficiency levels.
- Based on assessment results, students scoring below 50% were placed in Level 1, those scoring 50–65% in Level 2, 65–79% in Level 3, and those scoring 80% and above required no additional support.

Students were assigned progressively by level, with Level 1 comprising 9 units (each unit containing 12 components and 20–30 activities per component) for both Reading and Mathematics, while Levels 2 and 3 each included 8 units.



- Level 1 focused on foundational skills such as identifying consonants, vowels, and words in reading, and recognizing numbers, size, shape, and measurement concepts in Mathematics; Level 2 emphasized understanding meaning and application through tasks such as matching words with pictures, synonyms, antonyms, gap-filling, and performing mathematical operations; and Level 3 targeted higher-order competencies including retrieving, interpreting, and reflecting on various text types in reading, alongside problem-solving and analytical tasks in Mathematics.

6. Summary of Key Discussion Points (Next Steps for TaRL Scale-Up in Cambodia)

Below are main points shared and discussed during the session:

- **Strong Endline Results and Need for Scale-Up Roadmap**

The meeting acknowledged the impressive endline results of the TaRL pilot and emphasized the need for a clear, structured roadmap to scale up the intervention nationwide, with PED taking leadership responsibility.

- **Learning from International Experiences**

Experiences from countries such as Zambia and Morocco were shared, highlighting the importance of adapting TaRL to local contexts while maintaining core principles. Zambia's scale-up model emphasized strong central planning and nationwide rollout supported by data use.

- **Contextual Adaptation of TaRL in Cambodia**

It was agreed that Cambodia must translate TaRL into its own implementation model, aligned with national curriculum and classroom realities, rather than copying another country's model directly.

- **Teacher Capacity Building and CPD Integration**

A proposal was made to integrate TaRL training into the existing 100-hour Continuous Professional Development (CPD) framework, possibly as credit-based courses. Strengthening both in-service and pre-service teacher training systems is critical for sustainability.



- **Support for Contract and New Agreement Teachers**

Special attention is needed to build the capacity of contract and newly recruited teachers so they understand foundational learning principles and can effectively deliver remedial instruction.



- **Cascade and Cluster-Based Implementation Model**

The scale-up strategy should use a cascade approach, empowering Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs), Provincial Offices of Education (PoE), district offices, and cluster mentors to provide systematic training and support at school level.

- **Data-Driven Monitoring and Accountability**

The importance of student learning data was strongly emphasized. All actors—teachers, school directors, district officials—must understand and use data to monitor student progress and implementation fidelity.

- **Program Structure and Modality Decisions**

Clear decisions are required regarding program delivery: whether TaRL should be implemented during school hours, after school, or through flexible models depending on school context and student needs.

- **Maintaining Implementation Fidelity at Scale**

While pilot results were strong, scaling up risks reducing quality. Continuous monitoring, learning-by-doing, and phased implementation (short-, medium-, and long-term stages) are recommended to preserve effectiveness.

- **Financing and Development Partner Alignment**

Funding sources—including World Bank support and other development partners—must be mapped and aligned with local school needs. PED must take ownership while partners provide technical and financial support to ensure sustainability.

6.1 Key points taken during the Meeting on Next Steps (Scale-Up) concluded by Dr. Bo Chankoulika and agreed by the team

1. Roadmap on scale up plan of intervention to support the slow learners (TaRL) to be in charged by PED Team in consultation with development partners
2. Coordination team on the scale up of TaRL shall be included Primary Education Department, Teacher Education Institutions, TTD, PoE, cluster mentors
3. Identification of students who needed support the intervention of TaRL program and mechanics of supporting

4. Model of program structure shall be developed: It should be wither within the school hour or after school hour based on school context
5. Edu-Tech roles should be clarified and mainstreamed
6. Mapping the sources of funding to be aligned with local need of schools
7. PED need to take ownership on the scale up of the TaRL Intervention with the support from development partners including World Bank and Pratham International

6.2 List of Attendees of the session

No.	Full Name	Position and Organization
1	H.E. Dr. Bo Chankoulika	Under Secretary of State, MoEYS
2	H.E. Dr. Khuon Vichheka	Director General of Teacher Development, MoEYS
3	H.E. Dr. Chhinh Sitha	Advisor of MoEYS
14	Dr. Ai Songheang	Centre Director, SEAMEO TED
5	Dr. Puth Nessay	Director of EQID, MoEYS
6	Mr. Khou Hav	Office Chief of EQID
7	Mr. Hun Sovannara	Vice Chief Office of PED, MoEYS
8	Mr. Chea Vannak	Vice Chief Office of PED, MoEYS
9	Mr Craig Farmer	Team Leader, ASEAN-UK SAGE Programme
10	Ms. Marla Spiveck	Economist, World Bank Cambodia
11	Ms. Somphospeak Heng	Technical Team, Working Bank Cambodia Office
12	Ms. Usha Vithal Rane	Senior Director of Content and Training, Pratham International
13	Ms. Divya Arora A	Associate Director-Programs and Partnerships, Pratham International
14	Mrs. Meera Tendolkar	Director of contents and training, Pratham International
15	Mr. Suong Saruon	Head of Public Relations & Partnership, SEAMEO TED (minute taker)

7. Closing Session

- In her remarks, **Ms. Divya Arora, Associate Director-Programs and Partnerships, Pratham International** expressed heartfelt appreciation to the Primary Education Department, the British Council, and all partners for their leadership and trust in implementing the TaRL pilot. She highlighted that within just 70 hours of instruction, classrooms were transformed, demonstrating that meaningful change is possible within the existing system when strong partnerships and shared commitment are in place. Describing TaRL as “magic” that spreads through collaboration and belief, she emphasized that this moment represents not an ending but a transition toward systematic and contextually adapted scale-up in Cambodia. She reaffirmed Pratham International’s commitment to refining the model based on feedback and continuing close collaboration with the Ministry to sustainably advance foundational learning outcomes.



- In his impressive closing remarks, **Dr. Songheang Ai , SEAMEO TED Centre Director** highlighted the significant achievements of the ASEAN-UK SAGE Program in strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems and accelerating foundational learning outcomes in Cambodia. He emphasized that under Pillar 1, expanded classroom observations, teacher surveys, and instructional support across 120 schools revealed important improvements in teaching practices, though challenges remain in student-centered methods and oral language development. Under Pillar 2, the TaRL intervention delivered remarkable gains within just 70 hours, increasing Khmer reading proficiency from 39% to 85% and substantially improving mathematics performance among 815 students, with a dropout rate below 3%. Dr. Ai underscored the importance of sustainability and scale-up through integration into teacher education systems and the BEEP project, while outlining next steps including regional knowledge sharing, teacher training, and an impact study to guide Phase II expansion.



- In his impressive remarks at the TaRL Results Sharing Workshop, **Dr. Chhinh Sitha, the adviser for the MoEYS** emphasized that Cambodia’s foundational learning reform is built on the integration of three key elements: TaRL as a refined instructional approach, PTOM as a contextualized national system-strengthening model, and the PLP ecosystem as the digital engine enabling scale and sustainability. He highlighted significant improvements in literacy and numeracy among marginalized students, while encouraging deeper classroom-based analysis to refine instructional strategies and address remaining learning gaps. Dr. Sitha stressed that effective classroom teaching remains the core driver of change, supported by structured materials, level-based instruction, active engagement, mentoring, and continuous formative monitoring through PLP. He further underscored the institutionalization of reform through accredited



PRESET and INSET programs and the integration of PTOM into national teacher development systems, positioning the initiative not as a short-term project but as a sustainable system transformation for improving foundational learning outcomes nationwide. Finally, Dr. Sitha has recognized that TaRL results will inform the continued adaptation, strengthening, and systematization of PTOM to ensure scalable and sustainable implementation within existing resource frameworks.

8. Conclusion and recommendation

The Final Results Sharing Workshop of the ASEAN-UK SAGE Project (Pillar 2) highlighted significant progress in strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy through the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach in Cambodia. Implemented in 32 public schools across Kampong Cham and Battambang, the pilot targeted low-performing Grade 4 and 5 students through a structured 70-hour after-school intervention. Within a short period, literacy proficiency increased from 39% to 85%, while numeracy performance improved from 42% to 99%, with minimal student attrition. These results provide strong evidence that targeted, level-based instruction can accelerate learning recovery among marginalized learners.

A central strength of the pilot was its focus on grouping students by actual learning levels rather than age or grade. Teachers reported that this approach transformed classroom culture, enabling them to shift from traditional lecture-based instruction to a more facilitative and student-centered method. Continuous formative assessment allowed teachers to adapt instruction based on student progress. Students who were previously non-readers gained confidence, participated actively, and demonstrated measurable improvement in reading comprehension and mathematical problem-solving.



The structured assessment cycle—Baseline, Midline, and Endline—supported by the PLP digital system, ensured rigorous monitoring and data-driven decision-making. Random verification tests conducted by cluster mentors strengthened reliability and credibility of the results. The mentoring system, involving master trainers and cluster mentors, was instrumental in maintaining quality through classroom observation, feedback, demonstration lessons, and online support.

Importantly, the TaRL methodology was successfully adapted to the Khmer language context using phonics-based syllable charts, pattern recognition techniques, and activity-based learning materials. This contextualization ensured relevance to Cambodia's curriculum while maintaining the core principles of TaRL.

Despite strong outcomes, implementation challenges were identified, including teacher mindset shifts, absenteeism, seasonal migration, limited teaching materials, and the need for stronger parental engagement. Participants emphasized that scaling up must preserve implementation fidelity while adapting to local realities.

The workshop concluded with strong agreement that TaRL should move from a pilot initiative to a system-level reform aligned with the Education Strategic Plan 2024–2028 and Teacher Education Reform Strategy 2024–2030. Government ownership—particularly by the Primary Education Department (PED)—is critical to ensure sustainability beyond external funding.

Main Suggestions and Recommendations for Sustainability and Scale-Up

1. Develop a Clear, Phased National Scale-Up Roadmap

MoEYS, led by PED, should develop a structured roadmap outlining short-, medium-, and long-term expansion strategies. A phased approach will allow gradual provincial expansion while maintaining quality control and implementation fidelity.

2. Institutionalize TaRL within Teacher Education Systems

Integrate TaRL into both pre-service (PRESET) and in-service (INSET/CPD) teacher training frameworks. Embedding TaRL into accredited teacher development programs will ensure long-term sustainability and reduce dependency on project-based training.

3. Strengthen Data-Driven Monitoring and Use of PLP

Enhance the PLP system to include attendance tracking, automated reports, and document uploads. Build the capacity of school leaders and district officials to analyze and use student learning data to guide instructional decisions and accountability.

4. Expand and Formalize the Cluster Mentoring Model

Strengthen the cluster-based mentoring structure by providing standardized observation tools, refresher training, and digital mentoring platforms. Continuous professional support is essential to maintain quality during scale-up.

5. Clarify and Pilot Flexible Delivery Models

Before nationwide implementation, pilot different modalities (during school hours, after-school sessions, or hybrid models) to determine the most feasible and cost-effective structure based on school contexts and teacher workload.

6. Secure Sustainable and Aligned Financing

Map funding sources within the national education budget and align with development partner support (e.g., World Bank and others). Gradually transition financial responsibility to government systems to ensure long-term continuity.

7. Standardize and Distribute Teaching and Learning Materials

Develop nationally approved TaRL material packages including larger syllable charts, math manipulatives, illustrated readers, and instructional videos. Ensure each school has sufficient resources for level-based instruction.

8. Address Equity and Vulnerable Learner Challenges

Develop targeted strategies for high-absenteeism areas, migrant children, and slow learners. Flexible scheduling, catch-up modules, and stronger parental engagement mechanisms should be incorporated into scale-up plans.



