

Towards Reading for All

Early Grade Reading Assessment in
Cambodia

Presentation by

H.E Nath Bunreoun

Secretary of State, MoEYS

Early Grade Reading a Key Priority

- Cambodia Education Strategic Plan 2009 – 13 is committed to:

Education for All, All for Education, Education and Learning for All.

- To support this, Cambodia offers free Basic Education for Grades 1 – 9
- Ability to read is fundamental to completing Basic Education successfully.

Introducing the EGRA program

- February 2010: Cambodia initiated an early grade reading program implemented through the Cambodia Education Sector Support Scale-Up Action Program(ESSSUAP) funded through the Education for All Fast Track Initiative Catalytic Fund. TF 092097
- The fund is managed by the World Bank.

February 2010

- MoEYS invited Dr. Helen Abadzi, FTI Language Specialist to advise on introduction of an EGRA program in Cambodia.
- Field visits found poor reading skills at Grades 1 – 6.
- Advised a return to traditional ways of teaching letter combinations.

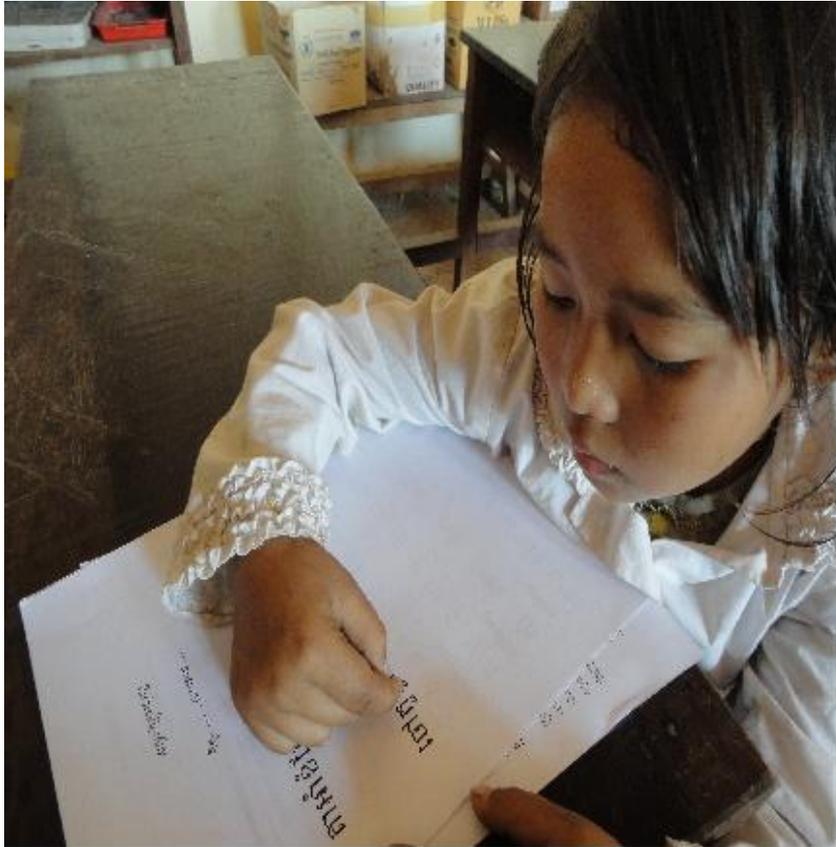
February 2010



National EGRA Test

- March 2010:
24,000 students in Grades 1 – 6 in 40 schools in 18 / 24 Provinces given a basic grade 1 reading test.
- 46.6% could read but did not understand what they had read.
- 33% could not read at all
- 28% could not recognize basic vowels and consonants
- Students from poor social backgrounds had lower reading skills than those with more support.

March 2010



Key Difficulty

- Khmer written language one of the most complex in the world.

Addressing the issue

- March 2010 Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport announced that the teaching of reading should be a national priority.
- Work began to create a new draft Grade 1 text book based on a importance methods of teaching reading.

June 2010

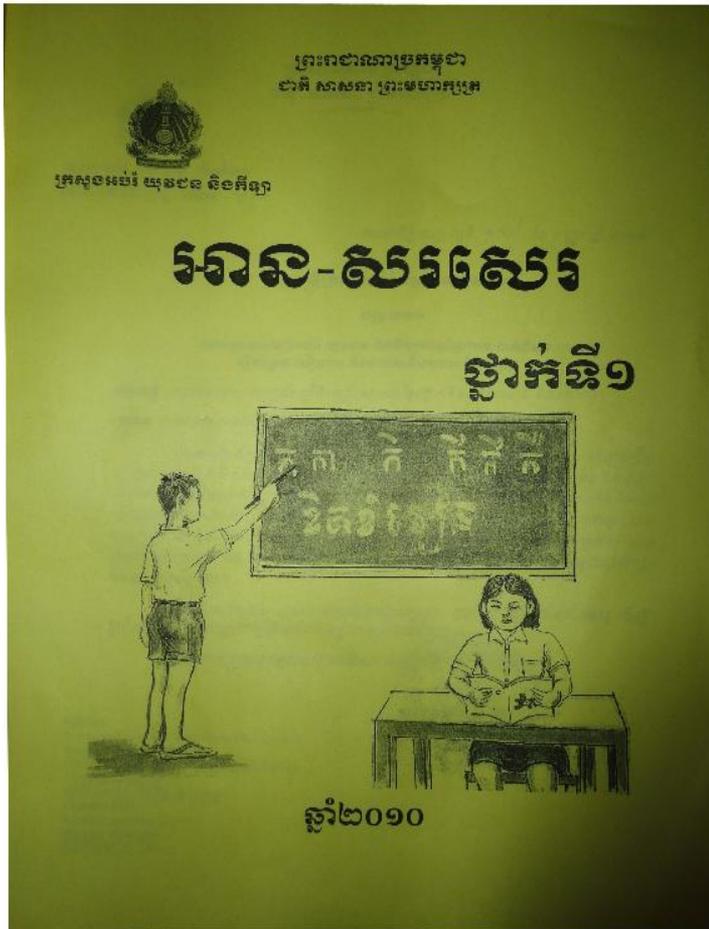


Achievements to date

- June 2010: new text book created, based on use of a phonetic letter combinations
- August 2010: agreed pilot implementation in 20 target schools and 20 control schools in 5 Provinces across the country.

Trained 101 school directors and 340 Grade 1 teachers in the target schools on use of the pilot text book

June 2010



Key Factors in the New Approach

- Each of the 11,000 Grade 1 students in the target schools has received their own copy of the pilot text book. 1 book per student.
- Realistic implementation plan agreed in advance with the teachers. This means the majority of target schools will complete the reading program within the allocated time.
- This raises motivation

A new focus on learning to read



Results

- March 2011 teachers in provincial schools self reported results for the first ¼ show 74% of Grade 1 students in target schools can read and understand, more than 50% of the text taught to date
- This result compares with 46.80% Grade 1 students in control schools

Differences in the Capital

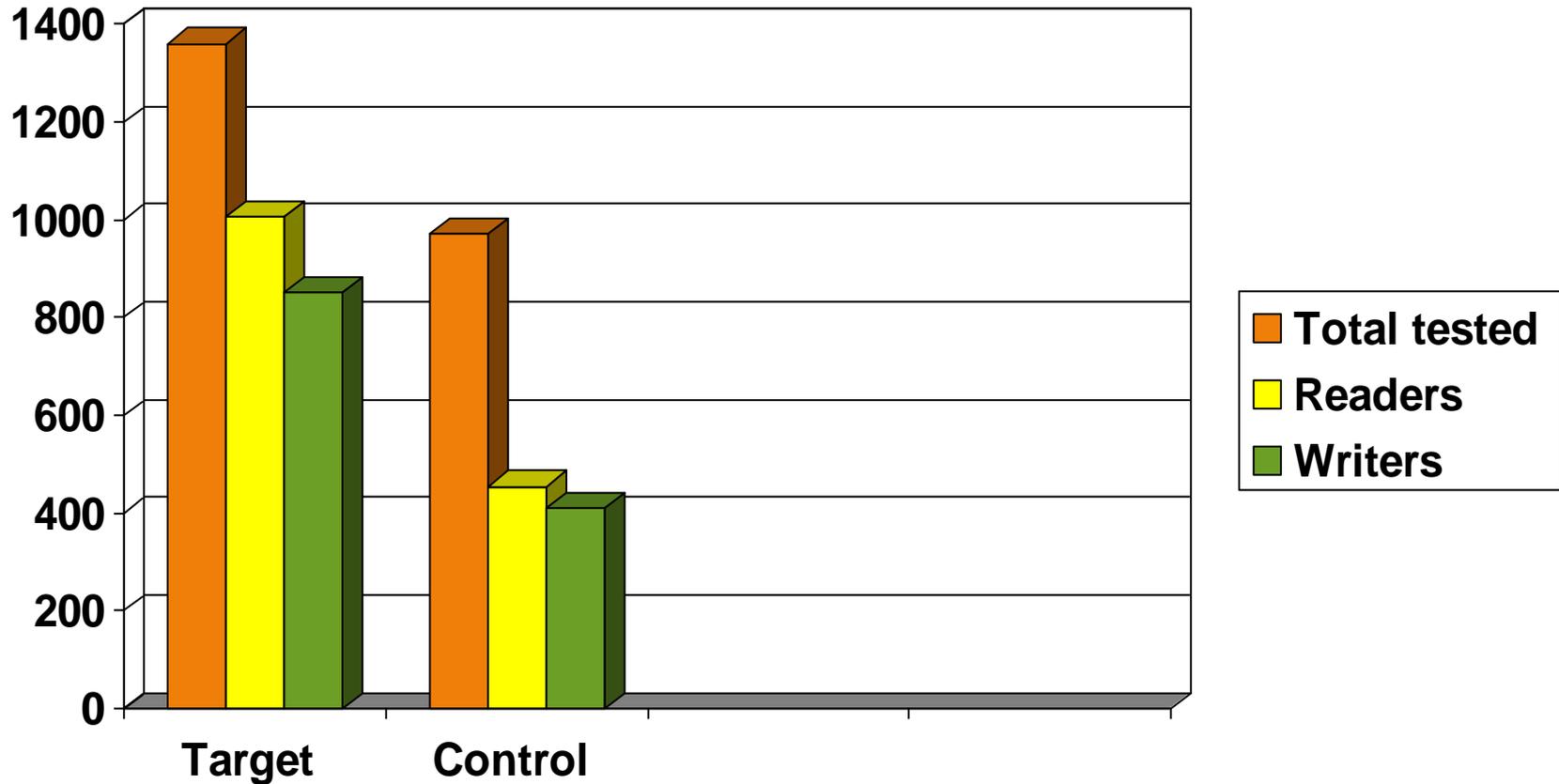
- Teachers in target schools in Phnom Penh reported 84% can read and understand, more than 50% of the text taught to date
- This compares with 43.85% in Control schools in Phnom Penh



First $\frac{1}{4}$ test results

- March 2011 National Test applied randomly to every fifth students on the register in every Grade 1 target and control school in all 5 Provinces. Test was the same for all students. Students had to read and write text using words and letters taught at the end of the first $\frac{1}{4}$.
- Results of the test shown below.

Results of random test for the first ¼ showing numbers of students successfully completing more than 50% of the test



Move from
Early Grade Reading Assessment to
Early Grade Reading Assistance

- May 2011: Revise the Grade 1 pilot text book based on feedback from Dr. Abadzi and teachers in the pilot
- June – July 2011: Prepare a Grade 2 pilot text book for use in the original pilot schools
- August – September 2011: Train Grade 2 teachers in the original pilot schools.
- Train Grade 1 teachers across the country as part of a nation wide expansion.

Working together to improve the teaching of reading



Plans for 2011 / 12

- Provide a new reading text book to every teacher and student in Grade 1 for all schools nation wide.
- Provide additional reading assistance based on the new method, to students currently in grade 3 who cannot read.

Longer Term Plans

- Provide in-service teacher training and new reading text books to all teachers and students in Grades 1 – 3 nation wide
- Integrate the early grade reading program into the pre service teacher training curriculum.
- Carry out annual Early Grade Reading Assessments in Grades 1 – 3 to chart literacy levels and monitor progress

Long Term Aim

- Every students who successfully completes Grade 3 will be able to read with understanding at a level of 45 – 60 words per minute.

This will give them the ability to read for life

- Every students who successfully completes Grade 3 will be able to write commensurate with their ability to read.

Literacy for ALL!



Thank You For Your Attention