

REPORT
on
Science Endline Survey and Support Visit
to Dadeldhura and Doti
March 3-9, 2013

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1. Background

The main activity within the project was the development of interactive digital learning activities for Grade two to six with focus on food, agriculture and nutrition, with special emphasis on the need for balanced gender roles in agriculture and food production. A total of 110 activities were developed in both Nepali and English languages, and are correlated with the ‘Science, Health and Physical Education’ subject prescribed by the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) under the Ministry of Education. The English language version has also been prepared for use in countries outside Nepal.

In order to examine the impact of the new-found educational resources in children, a set of questions on Food, Agriculture and Gender balanced roles was prepared for grades two to five. The pre-program survey was carried out in July 2012 in the eight OLPC program schools of Doti and Dadeldhura districts. The baseline survey took place on a randomized sample of students from each grade, and the sample size for each grade was maintained at ten.

2. Visiting Team Members

- Subir Pradhanang, OLE Nepal
- Ganesh Ghimire, OLE Nepal
- Sumit Acharya, OLE Nepal
- Kayomars Bilimoria Puri, OLE Nepal

3. Visit Objectives

1. Science endline survey for grades 2 to 5 in eight program schools in Dadeldhura and Doti
2. Update the school server with the following changes: Nepali search enabled, English user interface added, Wiktionary enabled and Awstat added (an automatic system to collect pustakalaya usage data from school server).
3. Update XO laptops to the latest operating system (OS) version with the latest E-Paath bundle. This latest bundle has improved stability, whilst the latest E-Paath bundle has corrected as well as improved on a few areas that promise a better learning experience for students.
4. School network support and maintenance

4. Summary

A four-member team from OLE Nepal comprising of Subir Pradhanang, Ganesh Ghimire, Kayomars Bilimoria Puri and Sumit Acharya split into two teams and visited eight schools in the far-western region of Nepal between March 3-9, 2013. They went to five schools in Dadeldhura: Selaling Primary School in Budum, Janjyoti Lower Secondary School in Hamtad, Samaijee Primary School in Haat, Saraswati Primary School in Kapadi Gaon, and Janata Primary School in Koral, and three schools in Doti: Mahadev Primary School in Dukrala, Durga Primary School in Bel, and Saraswati Primary School in Chasi.

The main objective of the visit was to conduct a science endline survey for grades 2 to 5, update the latest digital contents, and provide support required by the schools. The survey was taken by 10 students each from grades 2, 3, 4 and 5 with the help of teachers. The surveys ran fairly smoothly in all the schools. Grade 2 students in most schools did find the surveys challenging as they couldn't read the questions or the options. Hence, grade 2 students were kept in a separate class, and the questions were read aloud to them one by one.



Fig 1: Survey of class 2 students in progress



Fig 2: Students handing over survey papers one by one

The results of the two surveys (baseline and endline) will be compared to measure the impact of the digital content in achieving its stated goals. The final report of the study will be completed and submitted in fall 2013.

5. Schools Visited

5.1 Selaling Primary School, Budum, Dadeldhura

The survey was taken by the students with grade 2 in one classroom and 3, 4 and 5 in another. A total of 40 students, 10 from each grade, participated in the survey. Questions were read out loud to the grade 2 students. Some assistance was provided by the teachers in invigilation. A time period of 1 hour was given for the completion of the survey.

All the laptops, except 3, were in working condition. The damaged laptops were kept separately in the office. The headteacher had maintained a separate record book to keep the details regarding problems in each laptop. The damaged laptops have been brought back for repair. All other laptops were updated with the latest OS and E-Paath content.

There was a problem with the school server's power adapter. Hence, E-Pustakalaya had not been in use for the past two months. School confirmed that they would buy a replacement adapter. The team carried the school server with them for update, and later returned it through the school's teacher- Maan Bahadur. The school server was updated.

The OLPC record book provided by OLE Nepal has been well-maintained by the school.

5.2 Janajyoti Lower Secondary School, Hamtad, Dadeldhura

The survey was taken by 40 students, 10 students each from grade 2 to grade 5. The students from grade 2 were kept in one classroom and 3, 4 and 5 in another and questions were read out loud to grade 2 students. A time period of 1 hour was given for the completion of the survey.

Seven laptops were not in working condition. All the other laptops, were functioning normally and were updated with the latest OS and E-Paath content. The damaged laptops have been brought back for repair. The school server was updated with the latest content.

Additionally, the power stabilizer was not in a working condition. There was a problem with the network cable connecting the old block to the new block. Therefore, the school was requested to replace it with the cable joining class 2 and class 3 routers in the new block.

The visiting team found that the OLPC Record book had not been maintained.

5.3 Samaijee Primary School, Haat, Dadeldhura

The visit to Samaijee Primary School was carried out with multiple purposes- science survey, monitoring and content update.

The science survey was taken by students in grades 2, 3, 4 and 5. Some students in grade 2 had difficulty in understanding the questions. Therefore, they were kept in a separate class so that questions could be read aloud to them. Other grade students were kept in another class. A time period of 1 hour was given for the completion of the survey.

The visiting team found that a total of 8 laptops were damaged. The other laptops were updated with the latest OS and E-Paath content. The school server was updated with the latest released E-Pustakalaya bundle.

The team also observed a class conducted by a teacher named Heera Sethi. She taught science to grade five. The interaction between teacher and students was good. Students were asking the teacher about the problems encountered. The OLPC record book had been well maintained by the school and the teachers' notes were being well used by the teachers to integrate the curriculum with the E-Paath activities. During the team's discussion with the teachers at the school, they asked for more vocabulary activities that would help students improve their English pronunciations.

Furthermore, the team also met the school's chairperson and talked about the laptop program and the changes it has brought about in the quality of education imparted in the school. The chairperson also mentioned that most of the students of the school come from deprived families, and that there is necessity of making their parents aware of the program's importance in their children's education.

5.4 Saraswati Primary School, Kapadi Gaon, Dadeldhura

The team conducted a science survey for 40 students, 10 students each from Grade 2 to Grade 5. Grade 2 students were kept in one room and 3, 4 and 5 in another so that questions could be explained to Grade 2 students. A time period of 1 hour was given for the completion of the survey.

The team updated the school server and XO laptops with the latest OS and E-Paath content.

OLE Nepal had brought 6 laptops for repair in the earlier visit, out of which 1 was repaired and handed over to the school. According to the headteacher, the school had been lacking exactly one laptop, and the newly repaired laptop had filled that void perfectly.

Regarding their 3 stolen laptops, the school had filed a complaint in the police station, but neither their location nor the culprit's identity has been uncovered yet.

In the school, all 3 wireless routers were functional at the time. However, E-Pustakalaya could be accessed on only one of them as the the network cables connecting to the other two routers had been chewed on by rats. The school has been asked to place pipes so that the network cables can be passed through them in the next visit. The school is talking with its SMC members regarding this, and they confirmed that the work will be done in the near future.

The team observed a class conducted by a teacher named Navaraj Kapadi. He taught math in class three. The teacher was confident, and ably managed time, and laptop distribution to students in the classroom. The students appeared to be comfortable with the laptops and were actively following the teacher's instructions. At the end of the class, the students were evaluated and given tasks for the next lesson. The team also gave some feedback to the teacher regarding his ICT integrated class. The school has maintained a chart indicating the book's chapters and its relevant activities in E-Paath.

Students are making good use of E-Pustakalaya in the school. They are aware of the books and materials present within E-Pustakalaya.

There was a short interaction with parents in Kapadigaun village. They were extremely happy to see that their kids were using laptops.

5.5 Janata Primary School, Koral, Dadeldhura

Due to nationwide strike that was planned for the day, the team had to make it to the school even before dawn in order to avoid any risk of untoward incidents. The team then spent the whole day conducting the science survey, updating and maintaining damaged laptops, and interacting with the teachers.

The team conducted a science survey for 40 students, 10 students each from Grade 2 to Grade 5. Grade 2 students were kept in one room and 3, 4 and 5 in another so that questions could be explained to Grade 2 students. A time period of 1 hour was given for the completion of the survey.

The team updated the school server and laptops with the latest OS and E-Paath content. Students were seen to be very active and capable in using laptops. They even knew how to update the laptops and had a real sense of ownership of their laptops.

At the end of the school visit, the team held a meeting with the teachers of the school. As per Tek sir, all

the classes use E-Pustakalaya in the last period everyday. There is even a routine set specifically for class 5. He also said that students, especially of classes 4 and 5, have more interest in E-Pustakalaya than E-Paath due to the availability of numerous stories, poems, etc.

During the meeting, the following points were brought up by the teachers:

- *“Students are acquiring new knowledge by themselves; They are not entirely dependent on teachers now”* - Chandra Prasad Rosyara
- *“Students are busy using laptops even when teachers are absent”*
- *“Students take deep interest due to availability of pictures and sound in the lessons”* - Parvati Oli
- *“Students know and learn about the topics to be taught well before being taught by the teachers”*
- *“Due to laptops, teachers don’t have to keep shouting, instead the students listen to them more attentively”* - Parvati Oli

The school has not maintained the OLPC record book this academic session but has promised to maintain a new one from the new academic year.

A total of 3 laptops were repaired by the team at the school. The remaining 12 laptops and 38 chargers that were damaged have been brought back for repair. The team handed over 2 repaired laptops and 19 local chargers.

5.6 Mahadev Primary School, Dukrala, Doti

The team conducted a science survey for 40 students, 10 students each from Grade 2 to Grade 5. Grade 2 students were kept in one room and 3, 4 and 5 in the school ground so that questions could be explained to Grade 2 students. A time period of 1 hour was given for the completion of the survey.

Due to loadshedding, the team carried the school server with them to update in Dipayal, and later returned it through the head teacher, Miss Chhaya Bohara. The team updated the school server and laptops.

5.7 Durga Primary School, Bel, Doti

The team conducted a science survey for 40 students, 10 students each from Grade 2 to Grade 5. Grade 2 students were kept in one room and 3, 4 and 5 in another so that questions could be explained to Grade 2 students. A time period of 1 hour was given for the completion of the survey.

The team updated the school server and laptops with the latest content. A total of 2 laptops and 8

chargers have been brought back for repair.

The visiting team felt the need for this school to improve a lot. The school has not kept a proper record of where the laptops and chargers are. They have been strictly told by the visiting team to maintain the figures properly.

5.8 Saraswati Primary School, Chasi, Doti

The team conducted a science survey for 40 students, 10 students each from Grade 2 to Grade 5. Grade 2 students were kept in one room and 3, 4 and 5 in another so that questions could be explained to Grade 2 students. A time period of 1 hour was given for the completion of the survey.

The team updated the school server and laptops with the latest OS and E-Paath content.

E-Pustakalaya had not been used for quite a while as their routers' power adapters were damaged. The team managed to get a router's power adapter functioning, and put a network cable through pipes and thus established a working connection to one classroom.

All the broken laptops were kept separately in the headteacher's office and a separate record book was used to keep a record of all the damaged laptops. A total of 4 laptops were repaired by the team at the school. The remaining 4 laptops and 6 chargers have been brought back for repair.

6. Visit to DEO, Dadeldhura and WFP Dadeldhura Sub-Office

The team visited the District Education Office, Dadeldhura and WFP Dadeldhura Sub-Office to apprise them of the support visit to the schools.

The team met with Mr. Basanta Kumar Khatri, Section Officer at the DEO, on 5th March and gave a brief update about the visit. The District Education Officer, Mr. Khubiram Adhikari, was out in the field on that particular day.

The team also met with the Head of WFP Dadeldhura Sub-Office, Mr. Kiran Pal, at the end of the visit and provided him a brief update about the visit. The team informed Mr. Pal about the next scheduled visit to the program schools i.e. monitoring visit in May-June and requested for WFP's participation at that visit.