

# Breakthrough ACTION Nepal Local Systems Strengthening to Reduce Child, Early and Forced Marriage Project

## Qualitative Learning Documentation Report

Remedial Education Classes and Non-formal Approaches  
Used to Improve Learning Outcomes for Adolescent Girls  
(with the Inclusion of Boys) in Nepal

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Government of Madhesh Province  
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# Acronyms

CEFM	Child, Early, and Forced Marriage
CP	Child Protection
GON	Government of Nepal
R-CEFM	Reducing Child, Early, and Forced Marriage
SBC	Social and behavior change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## Introduction

### 1. Breakthrough ACTION's Nepal- Local Systems Strengthening to Reduce Child, Early and Forced Marriage Project

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Breakthrough ACTION Nepal's Reducing Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (R-CEFM) Project aims to strengthen the institutional and technical capacity of the Government of Nepal (GON) in Madhesh Province to design, implement, monitor, evaluate, and coordinate effective social and behavior change (SBC) activities and child protection (CP) system strengthening for reducing CEFM through a community-based, multi-sectoral, data-driven lens. This report focuses on R-CEFM Project activities designed to increase learning outcomes for adolescent girls (with the inclusion of boys) through non-formal education.

Schools were closed March 19, 2020 for an extended period in response to the outbreak of COVID-19 in Nepal. The school closures and the resulting loss of educational opportunities increased the vulnerability of adolescents, particularly girls, for dropping out of school permanently and potentially leading to CEFM. The educational component of the project was added to improve the learning outcomes of adolescent girls, with the inclusion of boys. The idea of the project was that improved learning outcomes would lead to increased school retention, which would subsequently lead to a reduction in CEFM rates. Given the short period of implementation, the project therefore focused on improving learning outcomes to, over a longer period, influence school retention rates and CEFM.

#### **Remedial Education Activities**

After more than nine months of stay-at-home restrictions by the GoN, schools started reopening in November 2020. Most of the schools were closed again from April 26 to June 15, 2021. Programs that enhance girls' continued education and participation in school were deemed important to delay marriage and transform girls' lives. As such, USAID expanded the Breakthrough ACTION R-CEFM Project's scope of work to include an education component that would allow for a remedial program for girls and boys.

The remedial education program was implemented over a period of approximately four months (December 2021 to April 2022) in 83 schools operating in nine municipalities of two districts in Madhesh Province (48 schools in Mahottari and 35 schools in Rautahat). The program focused on underperforming students from grades six, seven, and eight belonging to marginalized communities who were deemed likely to drop out of school in the near future. The program was developed and implemented in close coordination with municipality partners including Municipality Chairpersons, Education Officers, Ward Chairpersons, staff from Women and Children Section of Municipality and head teachers. A total of 10,621 students took a pretest to determine eligibility for the program. Of them, 7,800 underperforming students in grades 6 to 8 were identified and enrolled in the remedial classes. Classes in Nepali, English, math, and science were conducted at the selected schools before the regular academic hours.

The remedial classes were taught by 365 teachers from all 83 schools trained on instructional session plans, effective individualized instructional practices, use of instructional materials and students' assessment and evaluation strategies.

The remedial activities were implemented along with non-formal interventions such as bursary support (i.e., bag, school dress, self-learning materials and stationery items), psychosocial first aid orientation with need-based counseling support, life skills sessions for the students with parental and community interactions for engagement and support. These non-formal interventions were implemented by 83 facilitators (58 female and 25 male) who were trained by the project.

Prior to starting remedial classes, the project signed agreements with subject teachers to ensure their responsibility and accountability. Similarly, meetings were held with parents for their consent to enroll their children in remedial classes. In the meetings, parents were requested to send their children to classes regularly. Likewise, students were requested to attend classes and participate actively in the learning process. A Code of Conduct was developed for teachers, students, and parents, which included minimum standards for making the remedial classes effective.

This report documents case stories from individuals participating in remedial activities and other non-formal interventions. This report provides further experiential evidence, along with the qualitative Most Significant Change Assessment.

## 1.1 Study Objective

The general objective of the learning documentation was to explore, using qualitative methods, participants' experiences in remedial classes and non-formal intervention activities. Specific objectives were as follows:

- Produce learning documentation of remedial activities conducted in focal schools that aimed to achieve increased learning outcomes for adolescent girls (with the inclusion of boys) through non-formal education.
- Develop 12 case stories documenting the contributions of remedial education activities

## 1.2 Learning Documentation Framework

The learning documentation focused on presenting and describing key qualitative aspects of the remedial educational activities and its contribution to improving the learning outcomes of adolescent girls with the inclusion of boys. Case stories were developed and validated by the information provided by the stakeholders and key actors in the community.

## 1.3 Rationale

Documenting the learning outcomes of remedial classes was imperative to understand how such approaches help retain the most marginalized and underperforming students in grades 6 to 8, including those most likely to drop out of school. The learning documentation also sought to capture learnings by local ward and municipal officials and other local actors and how they can jointly work to improve learning outcomes for students during times of crises.

## 1.4 Methodology

### 1.4.1 Meetings and Discussions

An inception meeting was first held between Mitra Samaj, a local research firm and the R-CEFM Team to understand the assignment (see 1.1 Study Objectives above), including the methodology, study areas, sampling processes, selection of cases or personal stories, ethical considerations, tools, the data analysis plan, etc. After the data collection, several virtual meetings between the Breakthrough ACTION R-CEFM Project and Mitra Samaj, were held to present the findings.

### 1.4.2 Desk Review

In the early phase of the assessment, various documents were reviewed. These included project documents to understand the interventions and approaches of the project, especially those related to non-formal interventions aimed at increasing learning outcomes for adolescent girls (with the inclusion of boys). Likewise,

various guidelines produced by the R-CEFM project were studied prior to conducting the learning documentation.

#### 1.4.3 Guidelines and Tools

This report includes various tools and guidelines, which were developed as per the key objectives of the assessment. The informed consent form (Annex I) was developed to gain respondents' consent per the data protection protocol. Similarly, tools and guidelines for FGDs and KIIs were developed focusing on the effect and impact of COVID-19 on learning outcomes and CEFM, effectiveness of remedial activities and sustainability of those activities. Tools developed included the following:

- 1) Informed Consent Form (Annex-I)
- 2) FGD Guidelines (Annex-II)
- 3) Interview Guideline (Annex-III)
- 4) Interview Guideline for Case Stories (Annex-IV)

#### 1.4.4 Training and Orientation

A two-day training for the study assistants was conducted to enhance their skills in conducting FGDs, KIIs, abiding by the research ethics, etc. A one-day training for other study assistants was conducted to train them on how to transcribe and collate qualitative data. A pretest of the tools was conducted with representatives from the intended audience during a separate orientation for enumerators.

#### 1.4.5 Data Collection

The field manager conducted an initial meeting with the R-CEFM team and identified potential individuals and respondents for case stories, FGDs and KIIs. The work plan for each research assistant was developed and they were mobilized in the project areas to conduct KIIs, FDGs and collect case stories. Table 1 below shows an example of an interview plan.

Table 1: Example of field work plan for research assistants

S.N.	Methods	Target/Group, respondents	Mahottari	Rautahat	Total
1	FGDs	Adolescent Girls	1	1	2
		Adolescent Boys	1	1	2
2	KIIs	Education Section (Palika)	2	1	3
		Teachers (Nepali, English, Math, Science)	5	2	7
		School Principal	1	1	2
		Field Supervisor	1	-	1
		Volunteer	-	2	2
		Rural Municipality President	-	1	1
		Parent	-	1	1
		Chief Executive Officer	-	1	1
2	Case Stories		6	6	12

FGDs were conducted among adolescent girls and boys to understand their experiences in attending remedial classes and participating in other non-formal interventions. KIIs were conducted with key actors such as teachers, head teachers, remedial class supervisors, municipal representatives, parents, and other stakeholders of remedial classes to understand their opinion and perception towards remedial classes. Similarly, students identified by the project team were interviewed to understand how remedial activities helped them to improve their learning outcomes, life skills and understanding about delaying marriage. Success stories were prepared based on those interviews.

#### 1.4.6 Data Analysis for individual interviews

A total of 12 individuals exhibiting improved learning outcomes were interviewed. Five different steps were followed to analyze the data collected from the interviews:

- 1) Debrief of findings from the field.
- 2) Reviewing the transcripts to isolate phrases, sentences and paragraphs that talk about a meaningful topic.
- 3) Identification of initial themes by clustering phrases, sentences, and paragraphs together that have similar meanings or have a relationship to one another to form different themes.
- 4) Reviewing themes to ensure it captured meaningful aspects of the data without missing any important details.
- 5) Naming and defining themes.

#### 1.4.7 Ethical Approval

Approval was received for this learning document from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health Institutional Review Board (IRB) as a Public Health Practice Application (PHP).

This section of the report highlights the learning documentation of remedial activities conducted in focal schools that aimed to achieve increased learning outcomes for adolescent girls (with the inclusion of boys) through non-formal education.

Subjects such as mathematics, English, Nepali and science were taught in the remedial classes. A total of 110 sessions including 10 life skills sessions were conducted, two hours a day and six days a week. In addition, psychosocial first aid orientations and psychosocial counseling services were provided based upon need.

### 2.1. Improved learning outcomes

The remedial classes targeted underperforming students and covered the course contents, which were critical and not taught during the school closures brought into effect during COVID-19 pandemic. This approach proved to be very effective in terms of improving learning outcomes among children (See Case Study 9 below).

Almost all the respondents believed the remedial activities, psychosocial counseling, and sessions on life skills-based education were effective in improving the learning outcomes of students, and that it brought positive changes in their academic and non-academic lives such as completing the lesson of the subjects that were missed earlier, increasing the ability to read and write, and enhancing the confidence level to talk with teachers.

Moreover, the respondents agreed that the remedial classes guided the students to better understand the academic lessons due to the innovative teaching and learning approaches such as games, simulations, group work, question-answers, etc., which they had not experienced before in their regular classes (see Case Study 12 below).

*“Remedial classes were very effective in improving students’ learning outcomes. Classes on Mathematics, English, Nepali and Science were taken which helped us complete the lessons that we had missed out during school closures at the time when COVID-19 cases were at peak.” – KII, Teacher, 15 years of experience, Rautahat*

*“Remedial activities were very effective in improving our learning outcomes. We did not even know how to write our names. We did not even know how to read books before. But now we can. We used to be scared to talk to our teachers, but now, we can ask questions without hesitation.” - FGD Girls, Rautahat*

*“It is difficult for us to get teachers’ time in regular classes but in remedial classes, we have opportunities to talk to them and get support. This has helped in our learning as well”. KII, Student, Shree Ma Vi Bheryahi Rauthaha.*

There were a few respondents who stated that the remedial activities did not achieve as much as it had aimed to, especially because of the language barrier between teachers and students. The instructions and the lessons



were delivered in Nepali language, which was a bit difficult for them to comprehend well because they are more used to Hindi and Maithili language.

## 2.2. Retained students in school

Key informants opined that the remedial classes have helped and encouraged the students to stay in school. As the students started to attend the classes, they said they believed that they gained knowledge and gradually became interested in attending their classes.

Students were taught using various educational methods such as group work, role-play, simulations, and mock exercises, which generated interest in them towards their studies (case story 1). Those students who were not regular in school also started attending the schools regularly. As part of bursary support, various education-related materials were distributed to the students during remedial classes, which motivated them to study and be more engaged in their learning. One of the respondents claimed that various motivational activities and benefits were the reason for the students to start coming to schools regularly.

Motivational activities/benefits included psychosocial social support, manageable class size, different teaching approaches, distribution of books, stationeries, school uniforms, etc.

Focus group discussants stated that the remedial classes helped them stay in school. Some of the respondents mentioned that they were not able to afford tuition fees, required for taking additional private lessons outside of school, previously because of poverty, but the remedial activities provided them with the opportunity to study and catch up since there were no fees.

The respondents shared that the remedial classes have boosted their confidence through psychosocial sessions provided by trained counselors, which resulted in helping them stay in school.

### 2.2.1 Enhanced continuation and participation of girls in schools

Respondents opined that the remedial classes had contributed to retain girls in school, as the remedial classes reduced the distance between teachers and students, adopted a different approach of teaching, provided stationary items as well as provided counseling support when needed (case story 3).

The facilitators and teachers of the remedial program followed interactive instructional approaches following the lesson plans, organized games, asked the students to perform dances or singing, and took other measures like distributing education-related materials. Such engagement not only developed a close relationship between teachers and students, but it also encouraged the students to speak up and share their questions and queries before their teachers without fear and hesitation while also boosting their self-esteem.

*"Remedial activities have helped the students like us to stay in school. Unlike yesteryears, we can freely talk and answer the questions from the teachers properly. The remedial classes have given us uniforms, bags, pens, copies, books, etc., which have made it easier for us to study."- FGD Boys, Mahottari*

*"Earlier, students were irregular in school. When the remedial classes started and stationeries and uniforms were distributed, the students started coming to school regularly, and became interested in their studies." - KII, Field Supervisor, 5 years of experience, Mahottari*

*"Students' fear with teachers is one of the reasons behind their school drop-out." KII, municipality official, 10 years of experience.*

*"Attending the remedial classes has helped us get rid of the fear we earlier had. Unlike yesteryears, we can freely ask questions to our teachers. Our build-up confidence has encouraged us to retain in schools. On the other hand, we can even communicate with our parents easily."—FGD, Girls, Mahottari*

*"Ever since the remedial classes started, students love spending more time with friends and teachers. There has been a better understanding amongst us. Students have become open to share their questions, queries, and curiosities with the teacher."—KII, local government official, Rautahat*

*"Many students belong to poor family are not able to continue pursuing their education. Remedial classes provided them with uniform and stationeries. This helped them to continue coming to the school."—KII, teacher, 5 years of experience, Rautahat.*

On the other hand, the classes kept the students busy, thus they did not have any spare time for developing negative thoughts or activities. In fact, the remedial classes were conducted in off-school hours that provided extra time especially for girls who would otherwise spend a lot of time doing housework. Hence, the students developed an interest and enthusiasm in attending classes and reported that their school attendance increased.

### 2.3. Improved CEFM understanding

Focus group discussants and key informants shared that the life skills sessions, such as those on Child Right, Child Participation and Child Protection Adolescent, Reproductive Health, Menstrual Hygiene and Family Planning, and individual counseling skills during remedial sessions were effective in terms of delivering information regarding CEFM, such as legal provisions of marriage, negative consequences of getting married at an early age, etc. Instructors provided them with several examples and real-life incidents of such marriages happening in the Terai region of Nepal with a few examples. Hence, the remedial classes have helped the students understand more about CEFM and gain more knowledge about CEFM.

*"Our children have better understanding about child marriage that we do. They also remind us that getting married before completing 20 years induce negative consequences." - KII Headteacher, School, 8 years of experience,*

*"We did not have clear understanding about menstrual hygiene, but life skill sessions clarified our understanding about it. Now, we are confident about sharing our issues of menstrual hygiene with our female teachers. We ask with our teachers when we need sanitary pads now; however, in past, we skipped classes sometimes during mensuration period."  
Students, Basic School, Harsaha, Katahariya municipality, Rautahat*

*"The remedial classes were effective for us to learn more about child marriage, early and forced marriage. Before, we did not know much about it."- FGD Girls, Mahottari  
Child marriage is not done by the boy or the girl herself but by the parents. But now even parents have the knowledge about the consequences of child marriage. (KII, Teacher, Gaur)*

### 2.4. Clarified social norms that perpetuate CEFM

All the respondents shared that the facilitators and instructors of remedial activities effectively shed light on various social norms that perpetuate CEFM such as dowry, family prestige in the society, societal pressure, taking daughters as someone else's asset and so on. Furthermore, the students were also educated about child rights and mental and physical problems that CEFM can induce in life.

Some respondents believed the remedial activities positively influenced the students who attended the remedial classes to the extent of them talking about such social norms with their respective parents and guardians because they clearly understood the negative consequences of child marriage.

Hence, all the focus group discussants (adolescent boys and girls) said that their increased knowledge about CEFM have motivated them to avoid getting married at an early age. Not only among the students, but the majority of the respondents opined that the remedial activities have also taught teachers about social norms that perpetuate CEFM.

A few key informants opined that the social norms are deeply rooted in society, and one-off interventions will not ensure complete change or disapproval of the ongoing practices.

*"Before, we did not know about the negative consequences of child marriage, but now, we do. Remedial classes helped us know about mental and physical problems that CEFM causes. We have shared about this with our parents as well."—FGD, Girls, Rautahat.*

*"Remedial activities have clearly explained the social norms which lead to CEFM, such as dowry, family prestige in the society, societal pressure, taking daughters as someone else's asset, among others., After learning about these social norms in the remedial activities, we told our parents about the same." - FGD Girls, Rautahat*

*"Remedial activities have been very effective in educating us about the social norms that lead to CEFM. We shared about these social norms with our family, too." - FGD Girls, Mahottari.*

*'The students were able to explain to their families what they understood in the remedial class regarding child marriage'- KII Mayor, Rautahat*

## 2.5. Helped reduce CEFM

As mentioned in 2.3, some of the respondents believed that the remedial activities helped them understand the negative consequences of CEFM, and this built their capacity to a point where they feel confident enough to advocate against child marriage. Though the program focus was on staying in school, there was some discussion about CEFM.

One young woman shared how the program helped her talk to her family to delay her marriage.

### Saved from Being a Young Bride

Sarita Kumari Thakur (name changed) is a 16-year-old girl living in Gaur municipality, Sisata-7. Had there been no remedial classes conducted in her school, she would have been a newlywed adolescent girl by now and probably a young mom within a year of marriage.

The eighth grader lives with five family members. Her father is a carpenter, and her mother works in the farm fields. Every morning she wakes up, does some household chores, and goes to school.

A few weeks before, she was caught talking with a boy over her phone. As her mother noticed this, she informed Sarita's father, and her parents assumed that she was planning to elope with a guy because recently, Sarita's friend had fallen in love with a guy after talking with him over the phone, and they had eloped.

In a fit of rage, Sarita's father beat her mother, blaming her for not keeping an eye on their daughter. Then, they both beat Sarita. Within a few days, they started preparations for arranging Sarita's marriage though she had not reached legal age. They were preparing for her marriage against her will.

This was a time when remedial classes had already gained momentum and Sarita was enrolled in the classes after she exhibited poor performance on the pretests. Sarita had understood the negative consequences of child marriage as well. She talked about this issue with her teacher. In addition, her teacher went to talk with Sarita's mother. She tried to convince her mother to stop Sarita's marriage, but her mother completely refused.

Then the teacher called the counselor from Aasaman Nepal. They sent two of their team members to talk to Sarita’s mother about the negative impacts and consequences of child marriage. Only then, her mother understood why child marriage was not appropriate and finally cancelled her marriage.

## 2.6. Strengthened the school systems’ institutional and technical capacity

Respondents opined that the remedial classes have helped the teachers and school faculty to strengthen their institutional and technical capacities to monitor, evaluate and coordinate the implementation of remedial activities because the R-CEFM project provided the schools with tools and techniques required to conduct the classes, and taught the ways of monitoring and evaluating the classes.

For instance, Ratauli Youth Club and Aasaman Nepal—implementing partners of RCEFM project—visited the schools and helped teachers, administration, and others to carry out monitoring supervision of the remedial classes. The RCEFM project helped the schools develop a proper schedule of classes and examinations, which were adhered to accordingly, helping the schools identify problems and solve them quickly. Key informants noted that such external support helped the schools to strengthen coordination among teachers, parents, and school administration, and helped them understand opportunities for improvement and motivated them to adopt the modalities.

*“When the remedial classes were going on, our headmaster would also motivate us. Ratauli Youth Club also used to come for monitoring. They designed, implemented, monitored, evaluated, and coordinated the program very well.” KII, teacher, 18 years of experience, Mahottari*

## 2.7. Engaged local stakeholders

The respondents shared that the local stakeholders of Madhesh Province had helped the R-CEFM team and schools in implementing the remedial classes. These included Municipality Chairpersons, Education Officers, Ward Chairpersons, staff from Women and Children Section of Municipality and head teachers who were involved in the program from the outset. They carried out monitoring of the remedial classes and provided suggestions to improve the implementation of the remedial classes. The respondents believed that the technical capacities of the local bodies have improved to support the schools especially through engaging in monitoring of remedial classes. However, some respondents still believe that the local bodies lack competency to design, implement, monitor, evaluate, and coordinate education related programs in their respective schools.

*“Not only had the donor agencies, but the representatives of local levels also conducted monitoring of the remedial classes. The Deputy Joint Secretary of Madhesh Province also monitored the remedial classes time and again and provided us with suggestions over rooms of weaknesses. We then moved forward accordingly.” - KII, teacher, 8 years of experience, Mahottari district*

## 2.8. Sustainability of remedial classes in schools

Almost all the respondents agreed that the remedial classes could not be implemented in the future if funding support from donor agencies or the municipality is not provided because the schools are financially unstable, and they cannot uphold the administrative expenses required to run the remedial classes. Some of the respondents mentioned that the program could also be implemented by the local government, however, they are unable to do so due to lack of priority in education. Schools are committed to ensure continuity of the remedial classes if donors or municipalities support financially.

Respondents from all population groups included in this study agreed that funding and budgeting were the primary challenge to

*“In the future, without external support, conducting remedial classes would not be much effective. We teachers can only offer tuition classes of half or one hour for the students.” – KII Teacher, 5 years of experience, Rautahat*

*“Without the help of Breakthrough Actions, the local government can also do the work. But they do not give attention or show any interest.” KII, Jaleswor, teacher, 8 years of experience, Mahottari*

sustainably conduct remedial activities, along with providing training and salary for the teachers, open space or fields in school and materials such as stationery items and extra pairs of uniforms for the students.

However, it is also believed that not all students can commit their time to attend the remedial classes, conducted during off-school hours.

*"Students are interested to continue attending the remedial classes. However, schools cannot run such classes on its own reserve. Funding support is necessary. KII Headteacher, School", 8 years of experience*

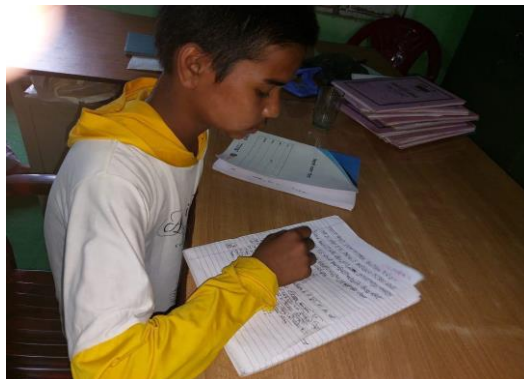
*"Schools are 100% committed but operating remedial classes for the long term is not possible. Many students have a problem choosing remedial education and cannot fully invest their time in a consistent manner." KII, teacher, 8 years of experience*

*"There are many challenges to run remedial activities sustainably. Our school is very small and has no open space or fields. There are a limited number of teachers. We must ask the school for even basic stuff such as brooms or dustbins. We have no extra sources of funds or budgeting which can deliver us basic stuff."- KII, teacher, 8 years of experience*

## Case Stories

### Story 1: Once with no aim, today a dream to become an engineer

Ramesh Kumar Gupta (*name changed*) is a games-loving boy who would love playing with his friends instead of attending his school classes. His inability to understand what was being taught was one of the main reasons he was not motivated to go to school. Gupta says, "I could not easily understand what was being taught at school and asked questions to teachers. Gradually, I did not long to study. Most of the time, I avoided staying in classrooms, but instead, would go to play with friends."



The seventh grader from Siswa-4 of Gaur Municipality was one of the initial students identified for the program and was asked to take a pretest on four subjects – Nepali, English, science, and math – as a pre-assessment for remedial education. In a few days, the test result was issued, and he was one of many students who obtained less marks.

Based on his test results, Ramesh was enrolled in the remedial classes that were designed and conducted to improve learning outcomes of the students like him. He attended the remedial classes and did not miss a session. "It was fun attending the classes, and I started understanding what was being taught," says Ramesh.

Not only did he study academic subjects, but he also learned life skills. It allowed him to realize valuable lessons of life. "The remedial classes not only taught me to realize the importance of time, but also helped me understand the lessons of the major subjects that I used to find difficult. Besides, it built up my confidence. Today, I can also speak in front of people confidently."

Ramesh, who started developing an interest in studies, gradually started following a regular routine of waking up, getting ready for school, and attending his classes. These days, whenever a teacher is not attending the class, he goes to the school office and informs them about it to ensure that the class is attended by the teacher as per the classroom routine. The remedial classes have helped him bring a change in himself, which he appreciates. He says, "I want to be an engineer in future."

### Story 2: Saved from Being a Young Bride

Sarita Kumari Thakur (*name changed*) is a 16-year-old girl living in Gaur municipality, Sisata-7. Had there been no remedial classes conducted in her school, she would have been a newlywed adolescent girl by now and probably a young mom within a year of marriage.



The eighth grader lives with five family members. Her father is a carpenter, and her mother works in the farm fields. Every morning she wakes up, does some household chores, and goes to school.

A few weeks before, she was caught talking with a boy over her phone. As her mother noticed this, she informed Sarita's father, and her parents assumed that she was planning to elope with a guy because recently, Sarita's friend had fallen in love with a guy after talking with him over the phone, and they had eloped.

In a fit of rage, Sarita's father beat her mother, blaming her for not keeping an eye on their daughter. Then, they both beat Sarita. Within a few days, they started preparations for arranging Sarita's marriage though she had not reached legal age. They were preparing for her marriage against her will.

This was a time when remedial classes had already gained momentum and Sarita was enrolled in the classes after she exhibited poor performance on the pretests. Sarita had understood the negative consequences of child marriage as well. She talked about this issue with her teacher. In addition, her teacher went to talk with Sarita's mother. She tried to convince her mother to stop Sarita's marriage, but her mother completely refused.

Then the teacher called the counselor from Aasaman Nepal. They sent two of their team members to talk to Sarita's mother about the negative impacts and consequences of child marriage. Only then, her mother understood why child marriage was not appropriate and finally cancelled her marriage.

### Story 3: Re-Joining Remedial Classes Helped Improve Studies

Sunita Yadav (*name changed*) is a 16-year-old adolescent girl from Gaur municipality, Rajdevi who joined the remedial program after she exhibited low scores on the pretests. However, she discontinued attending the remedial classes shortly after beginning.

Project staff talked with her teachers and found that she was always irregular in school. Teachers informed the project team that she had always been a very nervous child and would not speak with anyone at school. She was shy and could never speak with teachers. They opined that her nervousness was the main reason she no longer attended the remedial classes.

R-CEFM team members went to her house. Sunita lived in a household with 12 members, with three of her brothers and four of her sisters being married already. She lives with her mother who works on a farm when she lost her father many years ago. Since the condition of her family is very fragile, she helps her mother do household chores before going to school and after coming back from school.

The project counselor provided counseling support to Sunita and her mother to motivate her to join the remedial classes. The counselor explained the benefits of attending the remedial classes, and she agreed to be regular in remedial classes and her mother committed to supporting her.

She re-joined the remedial classes and attended classes regularly. Gradually, she started to speak with friends and submit questions to teachers. She also started to show interest in her studies and understanding the content of the subjects.



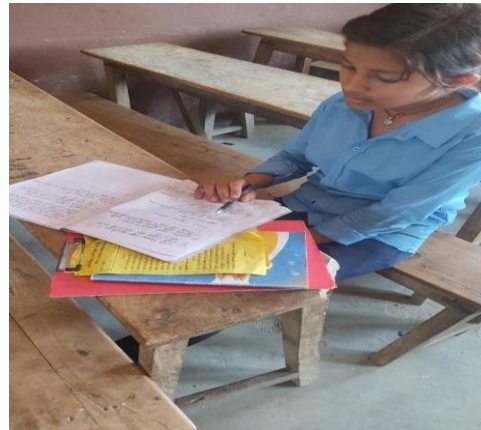
### Story 4: Dreams of Becoming a Nurse

Rabina Kumari Jha (*name changed*) is a 14-year-old from Mahottari-3, Madai. She comes from a family of four members. Her father works in Gujarat, a city in India, and her brother is an engineer.

Rabina has been going to school regularly. She never had any complaints regarding her school and had not encountered any problems. However, she was performing poorly in her studies. Rabina admits, “I didn’t know about many things. My confidence level was very low.”

However, she discovered a change in herself ever since she joined the remedial classes. She explains, “The teaching method in the remedial classes was very exciting. The tutors and instructors helped me understand the four major subjects and life skills. I also understood the consequences of child marriage”. She also received psychosocial counseling support and attended life skills sessions. She expressed, “The psychosocial counseling provided to me boosted my confidence as well.”

With a belief that the classes would continue so that more students will be benefitted, Rabina says, “I now want to become a nurse in the future.”



## Story 5: A Boost in Confidence and New Interest in Studies

Niruta Kumari Mandal (*name changed*), a grade 8 student from Balba Municipality, Banyari-1 belongs to a family who wholeheartedly supports her pursuits in education. She follows a simple routine of waking up in the morning, getting ready for school, eating breakfast, and going to school. She loves reading books and learning. Nevertheless, she was not good in her studies. She expressed that the school environment and teaching methods are two main reasons for her poor performance.

“I could never understand what was being taught in school,” says Niruta. “Besides, I was even more scared to talk and express my emotions or ask the teachers what I had not understood in class.”

Niruta, after joining remedial classes, became more active and more interested in studies. “It was easier for me to understand Nepali, English, math and science,” adds Niruta. “The psychosocial counselor helped me understand other aspects of well-being, including the life skills that I always needed. Today, I am confident to speak in front of people and ask teachers if I do not understand my lessons. This has helped me learn the lessons more effectively.” Today, she is committed to her studies with hopes of becoming a nurse one day.





## Story 6: Understanding Academics and Life Skills, Too

Khusi Kumari Shah (*name changed*), a 15-year-old grade 8 student from Balba Municipality-2 belongs to a family of six members. The financial condition of her family is not very good. Her father works as a laborer in India whereas her mother supports her family by selling vegetables.

Khusi followed a simple routine of waking up in the morning, doing household chores, getting ready and going to school. She was never interested in her studies and would always perform poorly. She was thus selected for remedial classes. Today, she is performing well in her academics and has learned valuable life lessons.

Khusi recalls, “I was uninterested in my studies. I could not properly process what was being taught in my class.” She explains the change she has experienced, saying. “Today, I have understood my academic chapters on Nepali, English, math, and science after attending the remedial classes. In addition, I have learnt about life-skills based lessons, too.”

Khusi, who now takes part in many extracurricular activities, feels it would have been beneficial for students like her if the remedial classes had continued for a longer period. Nevertheless, she plans to continue adopting the methods she learned in the remedial classes and focus on pursuing her career as an army woman in the future.



## Story 7: Becoming Confident and Looking Forward to the Future

Umesh Thakur (*name changed*) is a 13-year-old 7th grade student from Ghobauli, Jaleswor Municipality-6. He is very keen on his studies and loves going to school and attending his classes. His reading skills are also good. He is becoming more confident and less scared and wants to become a businessperson in the future.

Umesh, however, was not like this before. He was not interested in going to school or attending any of his classes. He was not regular in school, and his reading skills were very poor. “I would always get low marks in my tests,” recalls Umesh. He credits the remedial classes for bringing change in him.

Umesh explains, “After I got low marks in tests of four subjects, viz, Nepali, English, math, and science, I was selected for remedial classes. After attending the classes, I started becoming interested in studies, and I started loving going to school every day. I am sure my reading skills have improved. I am happy that I even got a chance to learn about life skills-based education. Today, I feel less scared and more confident.”



## Story 8: Grateful to Attend Remedial Classes

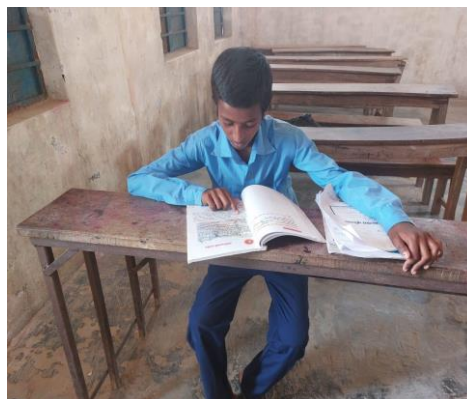
Rafiq (*name changed*) is an 8<sup>th</sup>-grade student studying in a school at Adhayanpur Balba-9. He pursued his education in boarding school up until Grade 4. He has even planned regarding his future: study hard, qualify in business studies by acquiring master's in business studies (MBS) and become an accountant someday. With that plan, the 16-year-old now goes to a government-run school. However, he is worried about his future because the quality of education in the school is not good.

Rafiq shares, "The quality of education at the school is not so satisfactory. I am very scared and worried about my future." To tackle it, Rafiq had thought of taking tuition classes, but his family could not afford it.

Rafiq lives with his mother, brother, and sister-in-law. His mother is a daily wage worker, and the family depends upon the earnings that one of his elder brothers working abroad provides. However, his brother is not able to financially support them to the extent of their needs. In addition, his brother is fully against his education. Hence, he still suffers and faces a lot of stress and pressure about his education.

Rafiq shares, "But my mother is supporting me in my pursuit of education, and she is doing her best to support me, but my brother is not. Thus, I am tense."

However, after attending the remedial classes, Rafiq hopes that he is moving closer towards his pursuit of education and desired profession. He says, "I am so grateful to attend the remedial classes."



## Story 9: Remedial Classes End Struggle to Read and Write

Nasreen Khatun (*name changed*) is a 10-year-old girl who lives with her mother, father, and five siblings in Sukadev village in Jethrahiya, Yamunamai municipality-1. Her family is poor. Her father is a tailor while her mother labors on farms for others.

Nasreen supports her family in different ways possible. Every day, in the morning, she wakes up and helps her mother and then goes to school. After returning from school, she looks after her younger brother and sister as her parents go out to work. Though she likes to study, she is compelled to engage in household chores, which impacts her performance on her studies.

Nasreen was identified as an underperforming student following the pretests for the remedial program and, as a result, was enrolled in the remedial classes. Before attending the remedial classes, she could not read and write anything even though she was attending school. However, after attending the classes, she exhibited great improvements. She could read and improved in all four subjects: mathematics, science, English, and Nepali. She also acquired various life skills.



## Story 10: Students Desire More Remedial Classes

Sadikshya Kumari Chaudhary (*name changed*), 15, belongs to a family of seven members who live in Katahariya municipality, Jamuniya-2. Her family's economic condition is not so good. Her father works

at another family farm. Her mother works at home while her elder brother and sister are currently studying.

Every day she wakes up early to do housework then goes to school. She has interest in studies and aims to become a police officer in the future. However, she was not good at her studies. She had difficulty in reading passages from a book. She would get very nervous when teachers ask her questions. Due to her family problems, she could not go to school regularly.

Sadikshya was enrolled in remedial classes after she exhibited poor performance on the baseline assessment for the remedial program. After attending some classes, she felt the teaching methods were different from regular classes in school. She was more interested and understood the content. Similarly, she noticed some progress in her learning. Now, she is able to read and likes studying more.



From the remedial classes, she learned about life skills and different subjects such as Nepali, mathematics, science, and English. She also came to learn more about child marriage and drug addiction. After attending the remedial classes, she also gained confidence in talking with teachers and answering their queries. Today, she attends school regularly. She is very satisfied with the remedial classes and wishes she could attend more of them. She thinks that it would benefit her a lot.

## Story 11: A Different Approach to Teaching Encourages Learning

The physical environment of the school where Binesh Kumar Baita (*name changed*) studies is not good. There are no restrooms in the school, which requires students to leave the school premises to use the toilet. In addition, there is a lack of teachers, and their teaching methods are not up to the par. As a result, the 7<sup>th</sup> grader from Yamunamai Rural Municipality-1 is weak in his studies though he completes his homework and goes to school regularly.

As he was poor in English, Math, and Nepali, he was enrolled in remedial classes. He found the remedial classes, that started two hours prior to the usual school time, very different from the usual classes in terms of non-formal approaches of teaching and learning. Binesh says, “The remedial classes adopted different approaches. The teachers would teach us in a fun manner and covered all the major subjects. In this short period of time, I learned more than ever before.”

Gradually, the remedial classes helped to improve his learning outcomes. In a post remedial test, he obtained good marks. Today, Binesh wishes to continue attending sessions like the remedial classes and wants to become a teacher so that he can teach future generations about what he learned in the remedial classes.

## Story 12: Unconfident Backbencher Turned Confident Frontbencher

A few months before, Sabin Yadav (*name changed*), a 12-year-old 8th grade boy from Loharpatti municipality, was not regular in school. However, even when he would attend his class, he would take the back seat in his classrooms due to lack of confidence and learning difficulties. Together with the backbenchers, he did not concentrate on his studies. Hence, his performance in academics was always very poor. His test results from the baseline assessment, which covered Nepali, English, math, and

science, showed a need for improvement in these subjects. Consequently, Sabin was enrolled in the remedial education program.

Ever since Sabin attended the remedial classes, he started going to school regularly. Instead of taking the back seat, he started sitting in the front row. He improved in his learning and understood much about the major subjects, including life skills and consequences of child marriage. In fact, he realized a change in himself. "I used to be nervous while speaking in front of people, but today, I am more confident to speak," Sabin adds. "Not only on me, but the remedial class has had a great impact on other students as well."

Sabin comes from a family of seven members. His father works as a security guard in a bank while his mother is a housewife. His brother is undergoing the process to obtain his visa to travel abroad. He plans on being a civil engineer in the future. Pleased with the remedial classes, Rajendra Sahani, Sabin's teacher opines, "Students regularly attend the classes with joy. Weak students have benefitted from this remedial class."

## Conclusion

- The remedial classes encouraged and motivated students to regularly attend schools. Students were motivated to attend the classes regularly because the classes adopted innovative approaches to learning, such as group work, mock exercises, visual shows, etc.
- Bursary support motivated students, especially those belonging to poor families who could not afford to pay for stationery, uniforms etc.
- The remedial classes have been very useful for the students. The lessons that were missed due to school closure during COVID-19 lockdown were covered to a great extent. Even the students who could not write their names are now able to write the letters of the alphabet.
- Life skills sessions, incorporating content on Child Right, Child Participation and Child Protection, Adolescent, Reproductive Health, Menstrual Hygiene and Family Planning during remedial classes, taught students about social norms that perpetuate CEFM and explained negative consequences of CEFM on the lives of adolescent girls and boys. This helped the students learn more about CEFM and made some of them capable enough to talk about it with their parents, thereby enhancing their skills in advocacy against CEFM.
- Remedial activities helped teachers and students build a good relationship with each other because they were engaged in training activities for a longer period than during the usual academic hours, which created an environment to freely interact, raise queries, and clarify doubts. This welcoming and friendly environment really helped students be regular and interactive in the regular classes as well.
- R-CEFM project officials not only helped the school staff run the remedial classes but also helped them monitor and examine the activities and learning outcomes of the students. In addition, the institutional and technical capacity of teachers and school officials to monitor, evaluate and coordinate the implementation of classes similar to remedial activities have been improved.

## Recommendations

### For the local government

- Devise strategies and programs on non-formal approaches to education, and lead to implementing the same with budget provisions and conduct monitoring from time to time. Make plans and programs on non-formal approaches to accelerate learning of underperforming students during annual work planning in both development as well as humanitarian contexts.
- It is recommended to replicate similar remedial activities as part of disaster preparedness and crisis management.
- Design and implement teachers' training programs, especially pertaining to conducting non-formal approaches to learning.

#### For the schools

- Adopt learnings from the remedial activities and implement every possible measure to replicate the activities in regular academic sessions. The schools could also adopt elements of the remedial program if implementing the entire activity is not possible.
- Seek support from the local government to build the capacity of teachers in conducting non-formal approaches to teaching.
- It is important to advocate with the local government to provide relevant support to their schools to uptake remedial activities to improve the quality of regular classes. It is recommended to focus more on advocacy to ensure that local governments make plans to adopt non-formal approaches to accelerate the learning of underperforming students during annual work planning.
- School administration must be more accommodating towards the teachers' needs and requirements for better teaching performance.
- Designing and implementing teachers' capacity building programs should be continued.
- Psychosocial counseling should be considered as part of the offering for students.
- Use skills and knowledge gained from remedial activities to share with other students by incorporating it into the school curriculum.

# Annexes

## Annex I: Informed Consent Form

### John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

#### Informed Consent Form

**Title of Assignment:** Learning Documentation and Education Component (IR3) of R-CEFM

**Team Leader:** Mr. Latshering Glan Tamang, MITRA Samaj

#### a) Introduction

Namaskar. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work with MITRA Samaj, an NGO based in Kathmandu. We are implementing an assignment under Breakthrough ACTION's Nepal Reducing CEFM (Nepal R-CEFM) Project. It is a 2 year-3-month (February 2020 – April 2022) project being implemented in Madhesh Province (Mahottari and Rautahat Districts) and is funded by USAID and led by Johns Hopkins - Centre for Communication Programs (JHU-CCP).

The project has conducted remedial classes/tutorial classes and activities among the targeted students on the specific areas identified from subject-wise competency and needs. The remedial activities were conducted to increase learning outcomes for adolescent girls (with the inclusion of boys) through non-formal education.

#### b) Objective

The objective of this interview with you is to understand the learning outcomes contributed by remedial activities of R-CEFM project among students from grade 6 to 8 who are the most marginalized and underperforming, and those who are most likely to drop out of school in the near future and are studying in schools of the project district i.e., six municipalities of two districts i.e., Mahottari and Rautahat.

#### c) Use of Information

The information obtained from you will be understood, analyzed, and utilized to document various aspects of remedial classes and related factors. Thus, we will ask you about the effect and impact of COVID-19 in learning outcomes and CEFM; schools' action in post-COVID-19 lockdown; effectiveness of remedial activity; contribution of remedial activity among local authorities; remedial activities from stakeholders etc. This will take 30 minutes on average.

#### d) Confidentiality

For KIIs and FGD participants: This is a research activity. Thus, we strictly abide by the research principles in keeping your identification confidential and private. Thus, we will not disclose your names anywhere—neither verbally nor in writing. The records obtained from you will be destroyed once they are transcribed. The information provided by you will be limited to authorised individuals of the research team.

For case studies: Your identification will be kept secret and the information against you will not be recorded and published/broadcasted. You have the right to deny answering any question. Information that might affect your well-being will not be noted and written anywhere.

#### e) Risk

No risk to interviewee and/or focus group discussants is involved in this assignment especially because the interview and the discussion will focus on students' education and not on other privacy-related issues, and the identification of the interviewees and focus group discussants will be kept confidential.

#### f) Reason for selecting you

**Case Story:** You are requested to participate in the interview because you have demonstrated improved learning outcomes, and the project wishes to document your story for its promotion so that similar remedial activities can be replicated and more people like you will demonstrate improved learning outcomes in the nearest future. *[Instruction: Outcomes can be different as listed in the sub-section ‘Selection of Case Stories’].*

**FGDs:** You have been selected or requested to participate in the FGD because you have attended remedial classes and experienced every aspect of the non-formal education approaches. The experiences, opinions, thoughts, etc. which you will share with us will be helpful to understand the effectiveness and areas of improvement of the remedial classes.

**Key-Informants:** You have been selected as an interviewee because you are one of the influential figures in this community, and you have directly or indirectly monitored the activities of remedial activities at schools. Hence, you can provide us with better information that will help us clearly understand the activities of remedial classes and the changes it has brought.

**g) Benefits**

There are no direct benefits to the selected cases, focus group discussants and interviewees, and no financial incentives will be provided. However, the information provided by you will be the basis to gain a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of remedial classes. Information provided by you will be helpful to clearly document the contribution of remedial classes, and the learning documentation can be replicated by other government, non-government, and private sector agencies for improving the learning outcomes of school students and of the children who are out of school—ultimately benefiting your community.

**h) Informed Consent**

We would like to record this interview to ensure that we capture every thought, opinion, and ideas of the interviewee. The records will be destroyed as soon as they are transcribed. The records will not be used for audio broadcasting.

You may refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the session at any time.

a) Agreed to participate       b) Disagreed to participate

[Instruction: Put ✓ mark inside the box relevant to the decision made.]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

## Annex II: Focus Group Discussion Guideline

**Participants:** 8 to 10 students who have attended remedial classes

**Time:** Not more than 40 minutes

### Part I: Effect and impact of COVID-19 in learning outcomes and CEFM

With the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020 in Nepal, schools remained closed from March 19, 2020. The local government-imposed lockdown and closure of schools. How COVID-19 affected your school education?

#### Probe

- a) The lockdown continued for 9 months. During the nine-month stay-at-home restrictions, how difficult was it for you to study? What were the challenges to study at home?
- b) What modalities did you adapt, or school provided to you to continue education during stay-at-home restrictions?
- c) What kinds of opportunities do you think you missed out because of school closure? If the schools were still open, do you think students/you would have been able to grab such opportunities?
- d) Did you or your parents think of dropping you out of school during that period? Please explain why?
- e) What prompts the students like you to drop out of school if school are closed for a certain time?
- f) What prompts the students like you to tie in CEFM if school are closed for a certain time?

### Part II: Schools' action in post-COVID-19 lockdown

The school reopened in November 2020. How effectively did the school take ahead with the missing lessons? How effectively do you think you understood the lessons taught by teachers? If not, please explain why. [Instruction: Ask this without associating it with remedial activities].

### Part III: Effectiveness of Remedial Activity

You have attended and received remedial classes, and have participated in its non-formal activities of education components, such as sessions of four subjects (math, science, English and Nepali), psychosocial counseling, life skill sessions, etc. Do you think are these remedial activities effective in improving your learning outcomes. If yes, how. Please explain.

*[Instructions: Please ask the effectiveness of remedial classes in increasing the learning outcomes of the participants in each of the subjects: Math, Science, English and Nepali. Also ask the effectiveness of remedial activities in improving their understanding of psychosocial well-being and life skills.]*

#### Probe

- a) How have the remedial activity helped in enhancing continuation and participation of girls to education? How the remedial program helped the students/you stay in school?
- b) How effective was the remedial learning activity in helping you understand more about child, early and forced marriage (CEFM)?
- c) Did the remedial activities bring light and total clarity on the social norms that perpetuate CEFM practices? If yes, please why or how in detail?
- d) How effective the remedial activities were to reduce the social norms that perpetuate CEFM practices?
- e) Do you believe the remedial activity has contributed to delay marriage and transform their lives? If yes, please explain how? What were the activities and how did it help?



## Annex III: Interview Guide (KII)

**Participants:** Municipality authorities (Education Unit), Parents, Head teachers (teachers), Ward chairpersons, religious leaders, Local Education Unit, School Management Committee members

**Time:** Not more than 40 minutes

### Part I: Effect and impact of COVID-19 in learning outcomes and CEFM

With the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020 in Nepal, schools remained closed from March 19, 2020. The local government-imposed lockdown and closure of schools. How COVID-19 affected the students' education?

#### Probe

- a) The lockdown continued for 9 months. During the nine-month stay-at-home restrictions, how difficult was it for students to study? What were the challenges? What modalities did the students have to adapt to continue education? What modalities the school adapted to continue the education?
- b) What were the resulting loss to educational opportunities due to school closures? What kinds of opportunities do you think students have missed out because of school closure? If the schools were still opened, do you think students would have been able to grab such opportunities?
- c) How vulnerable were the adolescents' girls and boys in dropping out of school permanently?
- d) Why does the vulnerability of students dropping out of school increase if schools are closed, especially in COVID-19 pandemic?
- e) Why is the vulnerability of students tying in CEFM increases if they discontinue their education, especially in COVID-19 pandemic?
- f) Please explain or provide any examples of CEFM (adolescent girls) due to school closure.

*[Ask only to teachers: How challenging was it for you to teach the students, maybe, through virtual medium?]*

### Part II: Schools' action in post-COVID-19 lockdown

The school reopened in November 2020. How effectively did the school take ahead with the missing lessons?

#### Probe

- a) How effectively do you think the students understood the lessons taught by teachers? If not, please explain why. [Instruction: Ask this without associating it with remedial activities].
- b) [Instructions: To the teachers: What were the challenges in picking up the school curriculum? How was the support from the school administration and the local government?

### Part III: Effectiveness of Remedial Activity

After the school re-opening, some schools in these areas have implemented remedial classes, such as sessions of four subjects (math, science, English and Nepali), psychosocial counseling, life skill sessions, etc. How effective do you think these remedial activities are in improving the learning outcomes of students? If yes, how. Please explain.

#### Probe

- a) How do you think such remedial programs have helped the students stay in school?
- b) How effective was the remedial learning activity in explaining to the students about child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) and reducing social norms that perpetuate such practices?
- c) How have the remedial activity helped in enhancing continuation of girls to education?
- d) How have the remedial activity helped in enhancing girls' participation in school? What were the activities and how did it help?
- e) Do you believe the remedial activity has contributed to delay marriage and transform their lives? If yes, please explain how? What were the activities and how did it help?

#### Ask specifically to Teachers and headmasters

- f) **How have the** remedial activities helped teachers and schools' officials in strengthening their institutional and technical capacity to design, implement, monitor, evaluate and coordinate education programs in their respective schools?
- g) How effective the remedial activities were to educate and sensitize the teachers on the social norms that perpetuate CEFM projects or reduce CEFM prevalence rates?
- h) What lessons did you learn from the remedial activity of the CEFM efforts? What were the good practices that you would want to replicate in the future?

#### Part IV: Contribution of remedial activity among local authorities

How strengthened are the local wards, municipal and provincial officials, and other community actors to jointly develop and implement programs and structures focused on reducing CEFM?

##### **Probe**

- a) How do you think the remedial activity helped in reducing student vulnerability? *Ask separately for the vulnerability of dropping out of school permanently and CEFM.*
- b) How has the GoN in Madhesh Province been supported to strengthen their institutional and technical capacity to design, implement, monitor, evaluate and coordinate education programs in their respective schools?
- c) Has the education remedial activity supported the GoN in reducing CEFM?
- d) Has the educational remedial activity supported the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and coordinating child protection system for reducing CEFM?

#### Part V: Support for sustainability of remedial activity

How sustainable do you think the remedial activities are, especially without the support from Breakthrough ACTION?

##### **Probe**

- a) How committed are the schools to continue with the implementation of remedial activities in the long run? If yes, how are they going to sustain the activities?
- b) If any, what can be the possible challenges to sustainably take ahead with the interventions of the remedial activities?
- c) What can be the effective measures to tackle the challenges to continue with the remedial activities?
- d) How is the GoN Education system supported in the implementation of remedial activities?

##### **[Ask government officials]:**

If yes, how are you going to sustainably implement the remedial activities in the schools within the jurisdiction of this ward and/or municipality?

## Annex IV: Interview Guide for Case Stories

**Participants:** Cases listed in sub-section 2.1. (Selection of Cases for Case Studies)

**Time:** Not more than 40 minutes

1) You had attended the remedial classes in your school. How did you find the remedial classes?

**Probe**

- a) What were the best aspects of the remedial classes?
- b) What interesting things did you find? [*Probe for like-skills based classes, psychosocial counselling, etc.*]
- c) What differences are there between the regular classes and the remedial classes?

2) How did the remedial classes help you improve your learning outcomes in the selected subjects like math, science, English and Nepali?

**Probe**

- a) How different were the methods of teaching these subjects in schools by the teachers and facilitators of the remedial activities? Why are they different?
- b) How easily did you understand these subjects from the remedial classes? Why do you think you understood these subjects more easily?

3) [To those who have re-joined or continued the school after likely being dropped.] How did the remedial classes motivate you or helped you re-join or continue attending the school?

**Probe**

- a) If you wouldn't have had the chance to attend the remedial class, would you have re-joined the school or continued attending the school? If yes, why?
- b) If the remedial classes are closed after some time, will you stop coming to the school? If yes, please explain why?
- c) What should be done to keep on motivating you to continue coming to school?

## Interview Guide

**Participants:** Local GoN who committed to replicate the remedial activities

**Time:** Not more than 40 minutes

### Part I: Effectiveness of Remedial Activity

After the school re-opening, some schools in these areas have implemented remedial classes, such as sessions of four subjects (math, science, English and Nepali), psychosocial counseling, life skill sessions, etc. How effective do you think are these remedial activities effective in improving the learning outcomes of students? If yes, how. Please explain.

#### **Probe**

- a) How do you think such remedial programs have helped the students stay in school?
- b) How effective was the remedial learning activity in explaining to the students about child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) and reducing social norms that perpetuate such practices?
- c) How have the remedial activity helped in enhancing continuation of girls to education?
- d) How has remedial activity helped in enhancing girls' participation in school? What were the activities and how did it help?
- e) Do you believe the remedial activity has contributed to delaying marriage and transform their lives? If yes, please explain how? What were the activities and how did it help?
- f) How have the remedial activities helped teachers and schools' officials in strengthening their institutional and technical capacity to design, implement, monitor, evaluate and coordinate education programs in their respective schools?
- g) How effective the remedial activities were to educate and sensitize the teachers on the social norms that perpetuate CEFM projects or reduce CEFM prevalence rates?
- h) What lessons did you learn from the remedial activity of the CEFM efforts? What were the good practices that you would want to replicate in the future?

### Part II: Contribution of remedial activity among local authorities

How strengthened are the local wards, municipal and provincial officials, and other community actors to jointly develop and implement programs and structures focused on reducing CEFM?

#### **Probe**

- a) How do you think the remedial activity had helped in averting those vulnerabilities? *Ask separately for the vulnerability of dropping out of school permanently and CEFM.*
- b) How has the GoN in Madhesh Province been supported to strengthen their institutional and technical capacity to design, implement, monitor, evaluate and coordinate education programs in their respective schools?
- c) Has the education remedial activity supported the GoN in reducing CEFM?
- d) Has the educational remedial activity supported the design, implement, monitor, evaluate and coordinate child protection system for reducing CEFM?

### Part III: Support for sustainability of remedial activity

How sustainable do you think the remedial activities are, especially without the support from the Save the Children?

#### **Probe**

- a) How committed are the schools to continue with the implementation of remedial activities in the long run? If yes, how are they going to sustain the activities?
- b) If any, what can be the possible challenges to sustainably take ahead with the interventions of the remedial activities?
- c) What can be the effective measures to tackle the challenges to continue with the remedial activities?
- d) How is the GoN Education system supported in the implementation of remedial activities?

#### **[Ask government officials]:**

- e) If yes, how are you going to sustainably implement the remedial activities in the schools within the jurisdiction of this ward and/or municipality?