DELIVERING LEARNING GAINS AT SCALE: EVIDENCE

from the ILMpact Remedial Learning Programme

Submitted by: Sustainable Development Policy Institute **(SDPI)**.

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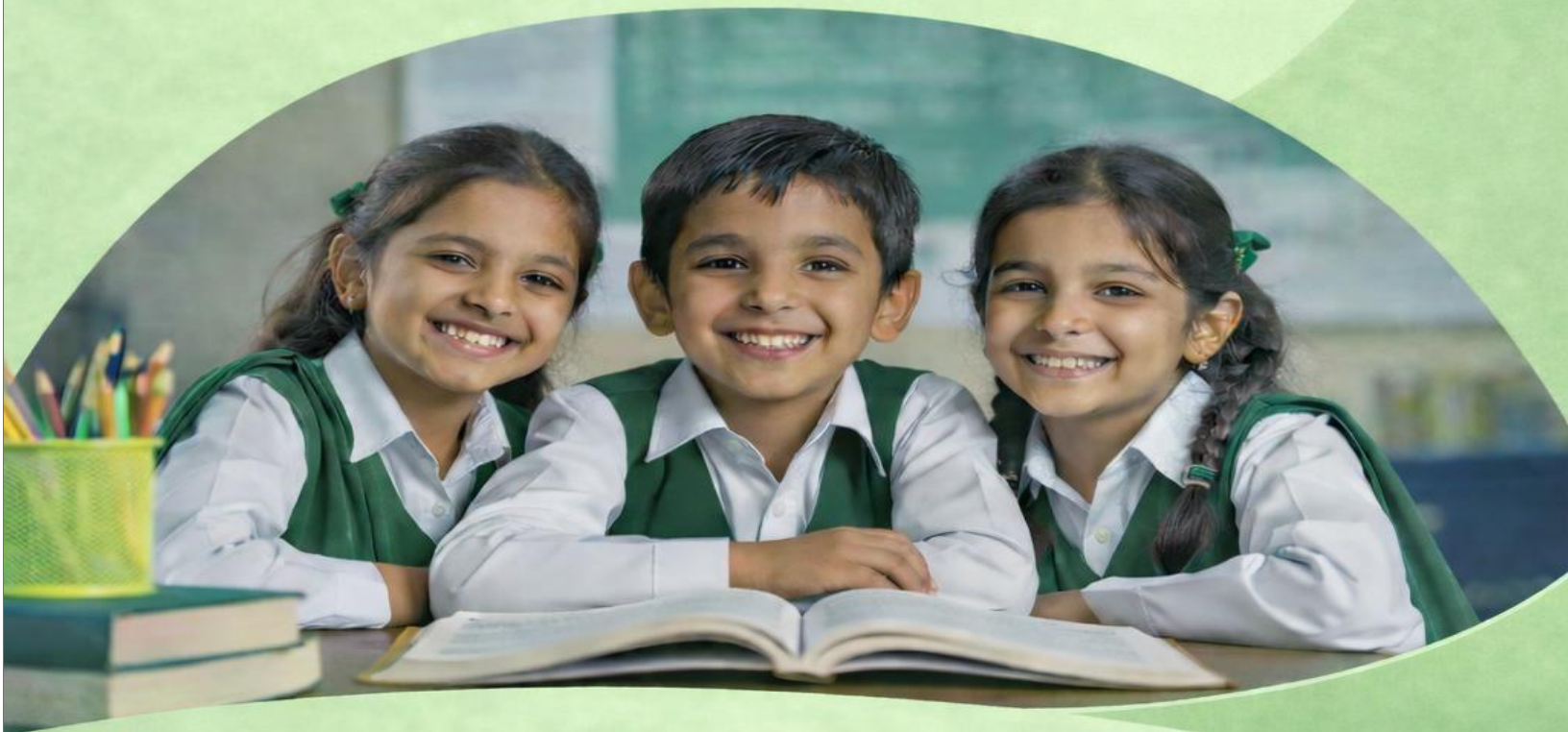

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Acknowledgement

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Executive Summary

The ILMpact Remedial Learning (RL) Programme was implemented across Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to address foundational learning gaps among students in Grades 3 to 6, reaching over **42,516** students across diverse and underserved contexts. The programme achieved an average improvement of approximately 14% across English, Urdu, and Mathematics, with gains of 16% in English, 12.5% in Urdu, and 13.3% in Mathematics, reflecting a clear shift of students from foundational to higher competency levels. Improvements were most pronounced in reading comprehension and core numeracy skills, demonstrating the effectiveness of structured, ability-based remedial instruction in accelerating learning within a short timeframe.

The programme also delivered inclusive and equitable outcomes, successfully reaching a predominantly female cohort as well as students from minority backgrounds and those with functional limitations. Learning gains across these groups were broadly consistent with overall programme results, indicating that the intervention design effectively supported diverse learners without compromising quality.

Despite these achievements, several implementation challenges affected consistency and scale of impact. Delays in approvals and planning, misalignment with the academic calendar, variability in teacher capacity, and data system constraints limited implementation efficiency. The short duration of the intervention further constrained the depth of learning gains, particularly for students at foundational levels. Going forward, strengthening planning processes, extending implementation timelines, improving system alignment, and enhancing partner and teacher capacity will be critical to maximizing impact and supporting sustainable improvements in foundational learning at scale.

1. Introduction

The Remedial Learning (RL) Programme was implemented across Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to address foundational learning gaps and support students of grades 3 to 6 in progressing toward grade-appropriate competencies. A total of **42,516** students were assessed across both provinces, including **18,381** in Punjab and **24,135** in KP, demonstrating the scale of the intervention. The participant profile shows a strong gender skew toward female students, with **90.5%** female and **9.5%** male in Punjab, and **93.98%** female and **6.02%** male in KP, reflecting the programmer's focus on reaching underserved groups. The Programme also ensured inclusion of vulnerable populations, including **282** minority students (**1.93%** in Punjab and **0.12%** in KP) and **2,426** students with disabilities (**1.86%** in Punjab and **11.96%** in KP), highlighting its inclusive outreach.

Baseline-to-midline findings indicate clear improvements in foundational skills across Urdu, English, and Mathematics. Both provinces show a significant reduction in non-readers and early-stage learners, alongside gains in higher competency levels such as comprehension, paragraph reading, and advanced numeracy skills. In Punjab, improvements are evident in reading comprehension and division skills, while KP demonstrates strong gains in transitions from beginner levels and overall skill acquisition. Despite contextual differences, both regions reflect a consistent upward shift in learning outcomes.

Overall, the RL programme demonstrates strong potential as a scalable model for foundational learning recovery. The results highlight not only improvements in literacy and numeracy but also the programmer's ability to reach high-need populations and deliver measurable learning gains, providing valuable evidence for future education interventions in Pakistan.

This report is structured to present overall learning gains first, followed by subject-wise analyses across equity dimensions, including minority status and functional limitations, and concludes with implementation challenges and key lessons learned to inform continued scale-up.

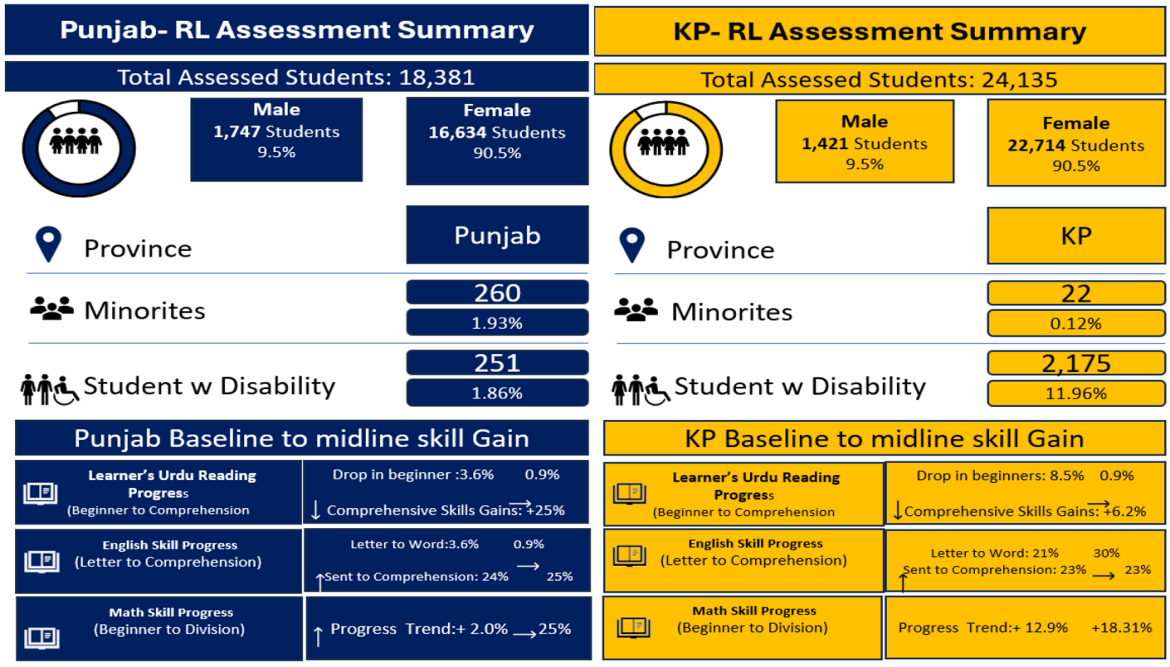

Figure 1: RL Programme, Student Enrolment & Profile Dashboard (Punjab, KP)

2. Overall Learning Outcomes

Across all three subjects, the Remedial Learning phase demonstrates consistent and meaningful improvement in student learning outcomes, as reflected in the overall redistribution of students from lower to higher competency levels. In all subjects, there was a clear decline in the proportion of students at foundational levels, accompanied by gains in higher-order competencies such as sentence and paragraph reading in English, paragraph and comprehension in Urdu, and subtraction and division in Mathematics. While the magnitude of improvement varies slightly across subjects, the overall pattern remains consistent, showing that students are moving beyond basic skills toward more advanced understanding. These trends highlight the effectiveness of the remedial intervention in supporting early learning recovery and building a stronger foundation across core subjects.

Learning Gains in English Reading

English reading outcomes during the Remedial Learning phase show clear and steady improvement from baseline to midline, with approximately **16% of students progressing to higher competency levels** and an average variance of **5.6 percent points** across levels. This progress is reflected in the redistribution of students from lower to higher proficiency bands. The proportion of students at the Beginner level declined by 6.7 percent points, while the Letter level decreased by 7.5 percent points, indicating a reduction in early-stage readers. At the same time, gains were observed at higher levels, particularly at the Sentence level (+6.6 percent points) and Paragraph level (+5.9 percent points), reflecting improved reading fluency and comprehension. **The largest gains were concentrated at the Sentence and Paragraph levels, indicating that most students transitioned into mid-level reading proficiency.** The slight decline at the Word level (−1.4 pp) further suggests progression beyond basic word recognition into more advanced reading stages. Overall, these shifts highlight the effectiveness of the remedial intervention in supporting early learning recovery.

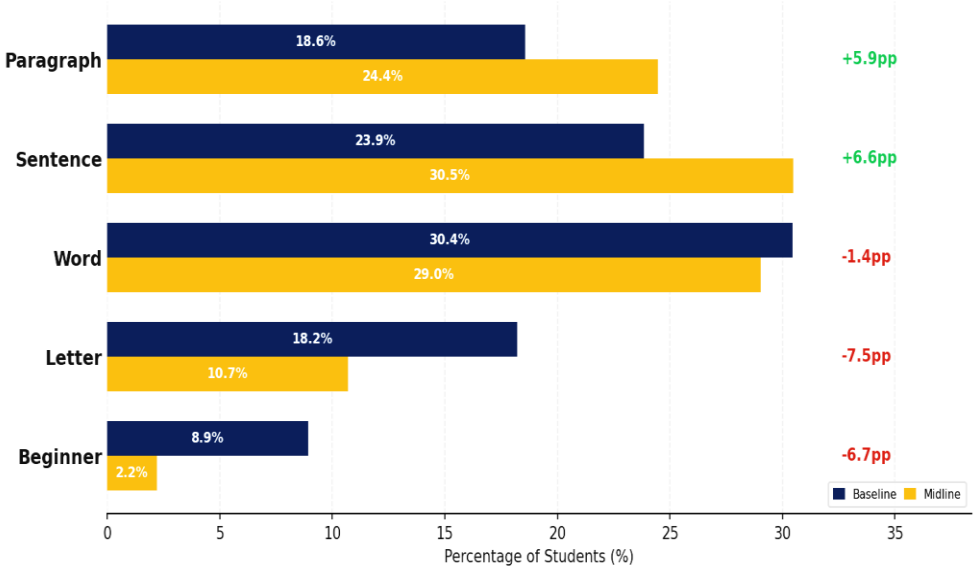

Figure 2: English Reading Overall Learning Gains | Baseline vs Midline

Learning Gains in Urdu Reading

Results from the Urdu reading assessment during the Remedial Learning phase show steady yet meaningful progress from baseline to midline. Approximately **12.5%** of students advanced to higher competency levels, with an **average shift of 4.1 percentage points** across categories. This is evident in the decrease in students at the lower end of the spectrum: the Beginner level fell by 4.8 percentage points, and the Letter category dropped by 5.8 percentage points, indicating movement beyond initial reading stages. Gains are especially noticeable at higher levels, such as the Paragraph (+7.6 percentage points) and Comprehension (+3.2 percentage points), reflecting improved reading fluency and comprehension. **The most significant progress is at the Paragraph level, with many students advancing to mid-level reading skills.** The small declines at the Word (−1.9) and Story (−1.4) levels further emphasize this upward trend. Overall, these patterns suggest that remedial efforts are effectively helping students advance beyond basic skills toward more structured Urdu reading abilities.

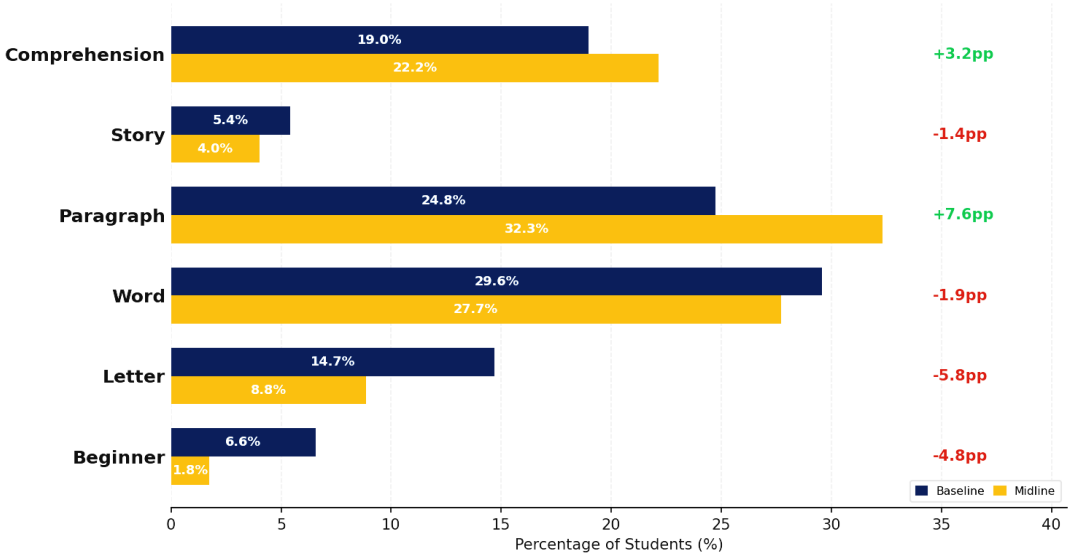

Figure 3: Urdu Reading Overall Learning Gains | Baseline vs Midline

Learning Gains in Mathematics

The mathematics assessment results reveal a remarkable transformation from the baseline to the midline evaluation. Notably, approximately **13.3%** of students have progressed to higher competency levels, with an average variance of **4.7 percentage points** across various skill areas. The data highlights a shift in the student competency distribution: the population in the Beginner group has declined by 3.5 percentage points, while the One Digit category has declined by 2.5 percentage points. This trend signals a departure from merely recognizing numbers toward a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts. Particularly striking improvements occurred in the Division skill area, which rose by an impressive 6.5 percentage points, indicating that many students have cultivated advanced problem-solving abilities. Similarly, the Subtraction category demonstrated growth, increasing by 3.7 percentage points. **These developments suggest that students are not only mastering essential skills but are also moving toward more complex**

mathematical operations. Conversely, the Two-Digit category declined by 7.3 percentage points. Overall, these findings compellingly indicate that the remedial program is effectively facilitating student growth, helping them transition from foundational numeracy toward a more nuanced grasp of mathematical concepts.

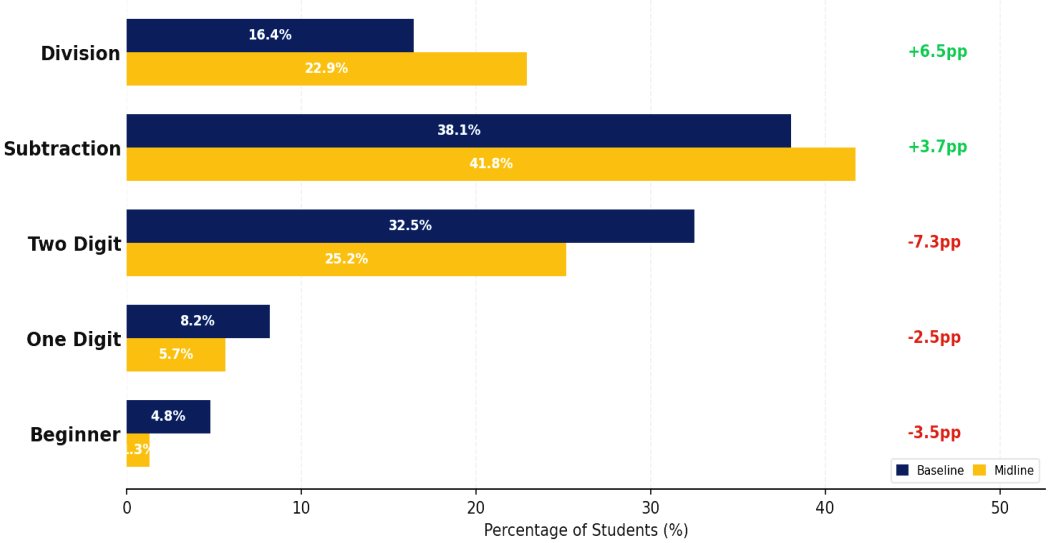

Figure 4: Mathematics Overall Learning Gains | Baseline vs Midline

Summary: Key Trends from RL Assessments *(Baseline to Midline)*

The table below summarizes the main changes observed from baseline to midline across all three learning domains, highlighting their direction and extent, as well as the instructional implications for the next program cycle.

Learning Domain	Baseline Status	Midline Results	Key Trend	Implications for Instruction
English Reading	Majority at Beginner & Letter levels (27.15% combined)	Beginner ↓ 8.93%→2.19%; Letter ↓ 18.22%→10.68%; Paragraph ↑ 18.57%→24.45%	Clear shift from decoding to fluency; consolidate phonics and sentence-level reading	Strengthen structured reading for struggling learners by reinforcing phonics and enhancing sentence- and paragraph-level comprehension. Emphasize guided reading, vocabulary development, and regular comprehension exercises to maintain fluency gains.
Urdu Reading	Many students at the foundational levels, Paragraph at 24.75%	Beginner ↓ 6.57%→1.75%; Paragraph ↑ 24.75%→32.31%; Comprehension ↑ 18.98%→22.16%	Strong progression to paragraph-level reading; support sustained reading practice	Build on gains in paragraph-level reading by promoting continuous reading practice and comprehension-focused instruction. Introduce more story-based comprehension tasks while providing targeted support for students still at foundational levels.

Learning Domain	Baseline Status	Midline Results	Key Trend	Implications for Instruction
Mathematics	Majority at Two-Digit & Subtraction levels; Division at 16.45%	Two-Digit ↓ 32.52%→25.18%; Subtraction ↑ 38.06%→41.75%; Division ↑ 16.45%→22.91%	Solid growth in operational skills; reinforce problem-solving strategies	Enhance operational skills through problem-solving and application-based learning. Emphasize subtraction and division using real-life examples, while supporting students' transition from two-digit concepts.
Overall Learning Gains	Majority of students concentrate on foundational levels across subjects	Clear shift from lower to higher competency levels across all subjects; consistent reductions in beginner levels and gains in higher-order skills	Strong upward progression across literacy and numeracy; movement from basic to intermediate proficiency	Consolidate gains through structured practice, targeted support for remaining low performers, and focus on comprehension and problem-solving skills

2.1. Educational Outcomes by Equity Factors

The RL Programme was designed from the outset to serve all students equitably, regardless of gender, minority background, or functional ability. This section presents subject-wise learning outcomes disaggregated by minority status and functional limitations, providing evidence that the programme's inclusive design delivers consistent learning improvements across diverse student populations.

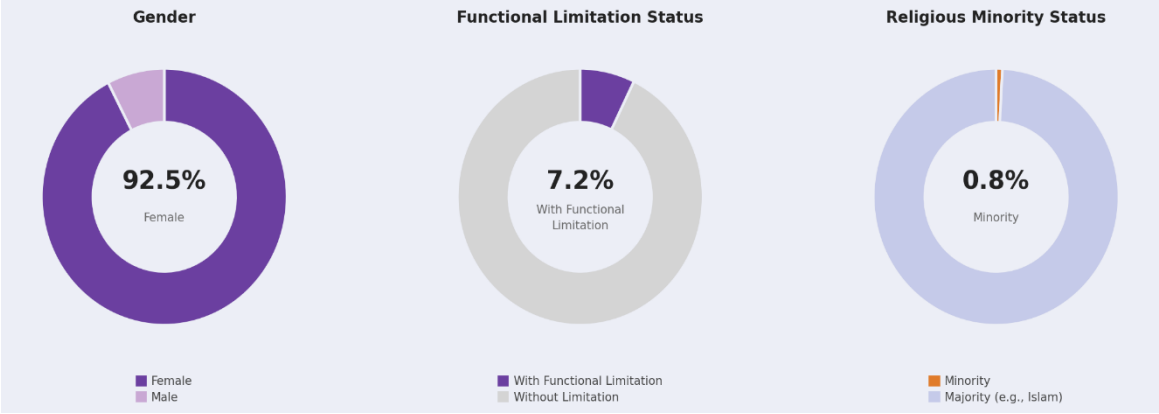

Figure 5: CLP Equity & inclusion (42,516 Students)

2.1.1. Learning Gains by Minority Status

This section presents learning outcomes for minority students enrolled in the Remedial Learning (RL) programme, highlighting their progression from baseline to midline across Urdu, English, and Mathematics. As a traditionally underserved group, minority students often face additional barriers to learning, making their progress an important indicator of programme inclusivity and effectiveness. The analysis focuses on shifts across competency levels to assess how far students have moved beyond foundational skills toward higher-order literacy and numeracy.

Learning Gains in English Reading

English reading outcomes for minority students during the Remedial Learning phase show clear and encouraging progress from baseline to midline, with approximately **18.4% of students advancing to higher competency levels** and an average variance of **6.6 percent points** across levels. This improvement is reflected in declines in lower-level categories: the Beginner level decreased by 6.1 percent points, and the Letter level decreased by 9.8 percent points, indicating strong movement beyond foundational reading stages. At the same time, gains are concentrated at higher levels, particularly at the Sentence level (+6.4 percent points) and Paragraph level (+8.4 percent points), demonstrating improved reading fluency and comprehension. **The most substantial gains are observed at the Paragraph level, suggesting that a large proportion of minority students transitioned into higher reading proficiency.** The decline at the Word level (−2.5 percent points) further supports this upward shift. Overall, these results indicate that the remedial intervention has been effective in accelerating learning outcomes among minority students and supporting their progression toward more advanced reading skills.

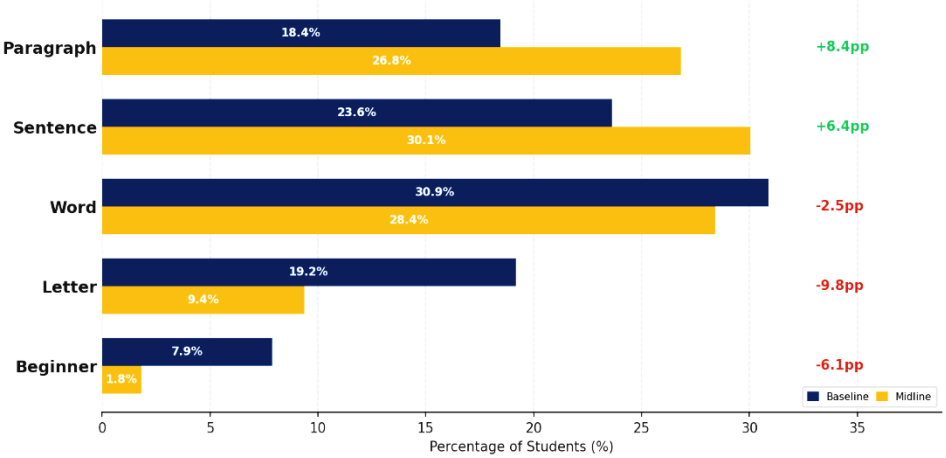

Figure 5: English Reading Minority Students | Baseline vs Midline

Learning Gains in Urdu Reading

Progress in Urdu reading skills among minority students has improved significantly from baseline to midline assessment. Approximately **14.0%** of students have advanced to higher competency levels, with an average variation of **4.7** percentage points across categories. There was a notable decline of 4.1 percentage points at the Beginners level and 7.8 points at the Letter level, indicating many students are moving beyond initial reading stages. Gains are particularly evident at advanced levels, with an 8.0 percentage point increase at the Paragraph level and a 4.4 point rise at the Comprehension level. Despite slight declines at the Word (−2.1 points) and Story (−1.9 points) levels, these trends show that the remedial intervention is effectively supporting minority students in enhancing their Urdu reading skills.

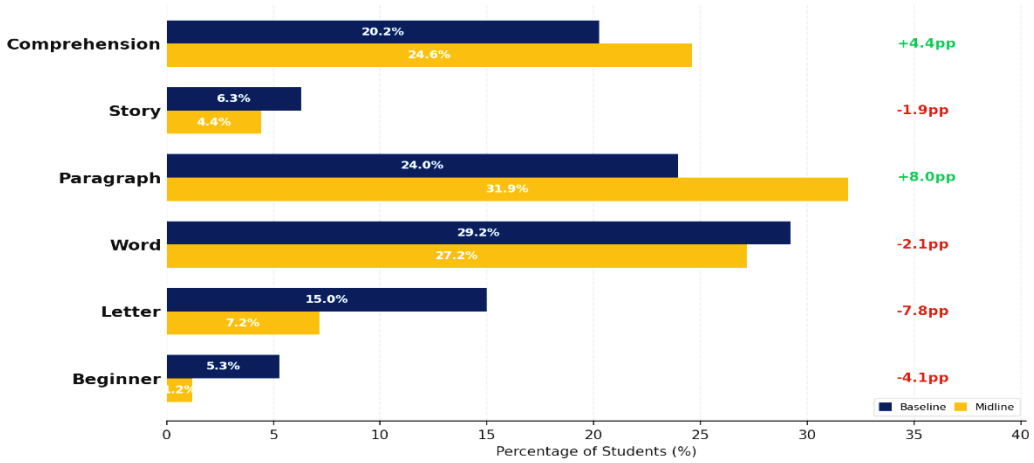

Figure 6: Urdu Reading Minority Students | Baseline vs Midline

Learning Gains in Mathematics

Mathematics outcomes for minority students during the Remedial Learning phase show notable improvement, with about **15.8%** advancing to higher competency levels and an average variance of **5.6 percentage points** across categories. There is a decline in lower-level groups, with Beginner levels dropping by 2.6 points and One Digit levels by 3.7 points, indicating progress beyond basic skills. Gains are most significant in Division (+8.6 points) and Subtraction (+3.7 points), highlighting improved capability in complex operations. The decline at the Two Digit level (−9.5 points) further supports this advancement, demonstrating the effectiveness of the remedial intervention for minority students transitioning to higher-order numeracy skills.

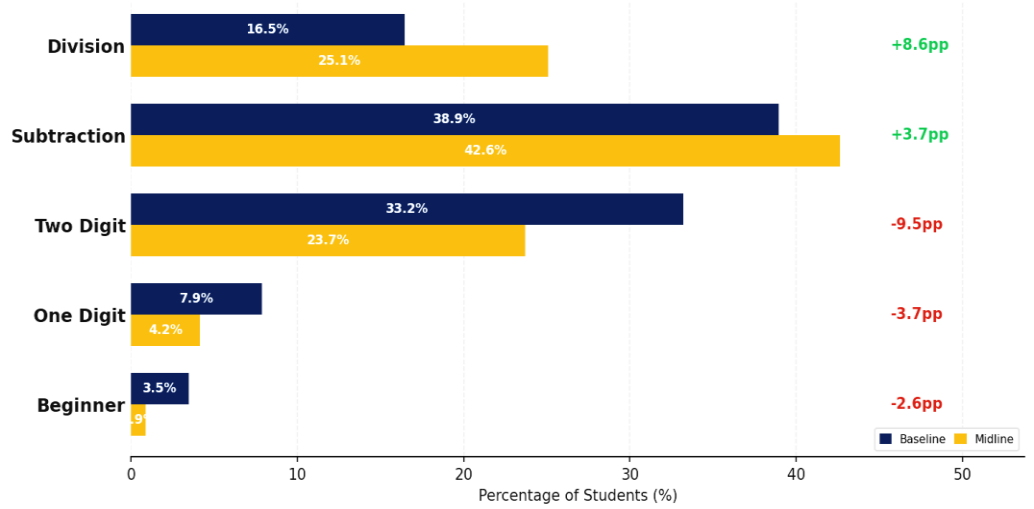

Figure 7: Mathematics Minority Students | Baseline vs Midline

Summary: Key Trends from RL by Minority

Learning outcomes for minority students during the Remedial Learning phase show encouraging progress across Urdu, English, and Mathematics. About **18.4%** of students improved in English, **14.0%** in Urdu, and **15.8%** in Mathematics, with reductions in foundational skills and gains in higher-order skills such as reading comprehension and arithmetic. Most improvements are seen at intermediate and advanced levels,

indicating a shift from basic skills to more structured literacy and numeracy. Overall, these findings highlight the effectiveness of the remedial intervention in enhancing learning outcomes for minority students.

2.1.2. Learning Gains by Functional Limitations

This section presents the learning outcomes of students with functional limitations enrolled in the Remedial Learning (RL) programme, examining their progress from baseline to midline across Urdu, English, and Mathematics. As a group that often faces additional barriers to learning, their progress provides important insights into the intervention's inclusiveness and effectiveness. The analysis focuses on shifts across competency levels to assess how far students have moved from foundational skills toward higher-order literacy and numeracy, highlighting both the gains achieved and areas that may require further support.

Learning Gains in English Reading

Reading outcomes for students with functional limitations show marked improvement, with **17.6%** moving to higher levels and an average variation of **6.4** percentage points. There is a notable decline in lower levels, with the Beginner and Letter levels decreasing by 7.3 and 8.7 percentage points, respectively. Progress is especially evident at higher levels, particularly at the Sentence (+6.2%) and Paragraph (+8.0%) levels, indicating enhanced fluency and comprehension. The significant advancement at the Paragraph level suggests that many students improved their reading skills, while a slight decrease at the Word level (−1.6%) supports this upward trend.

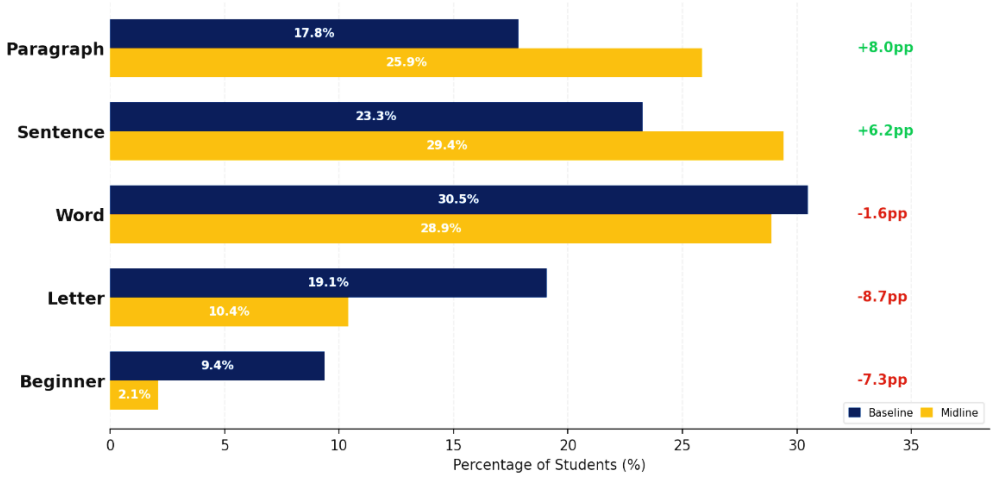

Figure 8: English Reading Students with Functional Limitations | Baseline vs Midline

Learning Gains in Urdu Reading

Urdu reading outcomes for students with functional limitations show significant improvement from baseline to midline. About **13.9%** of students advanced to higher competency levels, with an average variance of **4.7** percentage points across categories. Notably, the Beginner level declined by 5.2 percentage points and the Letter level by 6.9 percentage points, indicating progress beyond early reading stages. Gains were particularly evident at the Paragraph level (+7.6 percentage points) and Comprehension level (+4.5 percentage points), highlighting advancements in reading fluency and understanding.

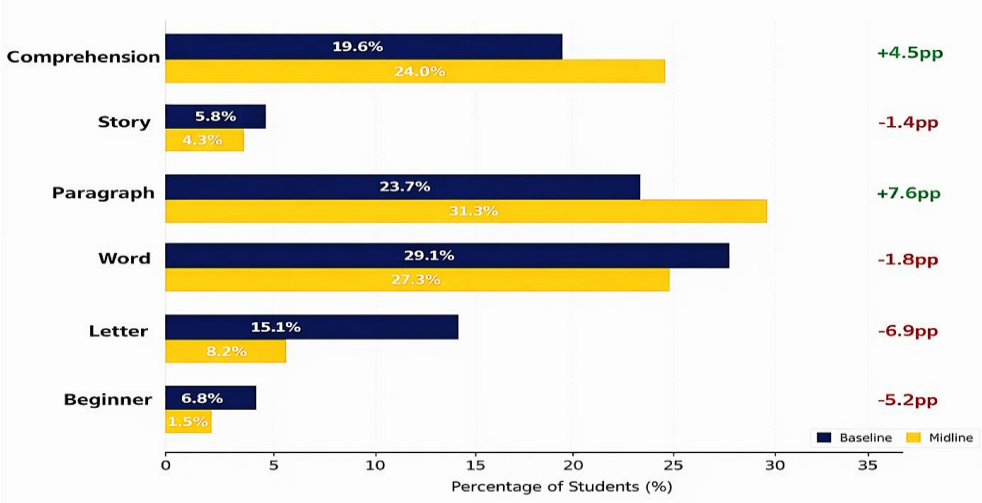

Figure 8: Urdu Reading Students with Functional Limitations | Baseline vs Midline

Learning Gains in Mathematics

Mathematics outcomes for students with functional limitations show clear improvement from baseline to midline, with approximately **15.1% of students progressing to higher competency levels** and an average shift of **5.4 percent points**. There is a decline in lower levels, with Beginner (−3.9 pp) and One Digit (−3.0 pp) decreasing, indicating movement beyond basic skills. Gains are concentrated at higher levels, particularly **Division (+8.1 pp)** and **Subtraction (+3.6 pp)**, showing improved ability in more complex operations. Overall, the results indicate strong upward progression toward higher-order numeracy skills.

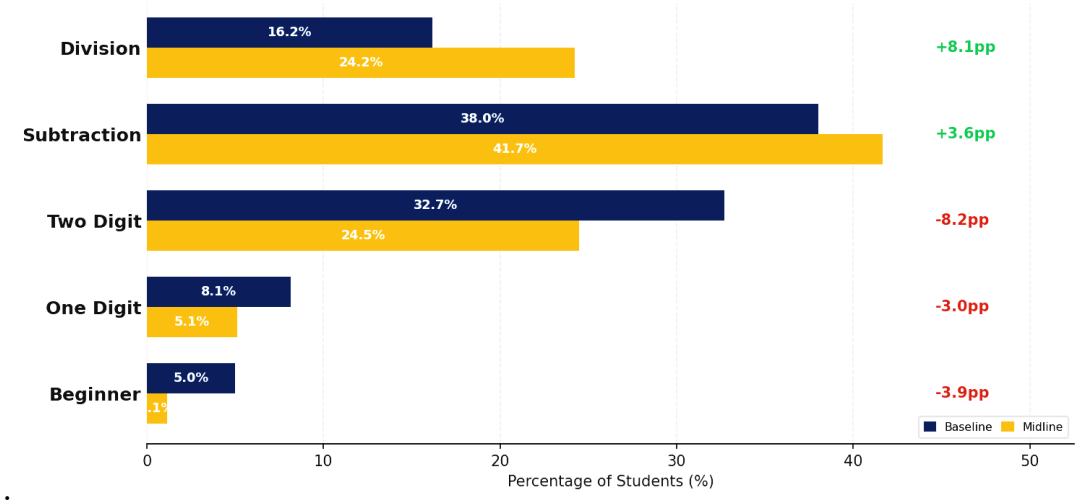

Figure 9: Mathematics Students with Functional Limitations | Baseline vs Midline

Summary: Key Trends from RL by Students with Disability/Functional Limitation

Learning outcomes for students with functional limitations show consistent and meaningful improvement across Urdu, English, and Mathematics. Approximately **17.6% improved in English, 13.9% in Urdu, and 15.1% in Mathematics**, indicating steady progression to higher competency levels. Across all subjects, there is a clear decline in lower-level categories such as Beginner and Letter/One Digit, alongside gains in higher-order skills, including sentence and paragraph reading, comprehension, and advanced operations

like subtraction and division. The improvements are concentrated at intermediate and higher levels, showing that students are moving beyond foundational skills despite learning challenges. Overall, the results demonstrate that the remedial intervention is effectively supporting students with functional limitations in achieving meaningful learning progress across core subjects.

2.1.3. Learning Gains by Gender

This section presents learning outcomes disaggregated by gender, examining the progress of male and female students from baseline to midline across English, Urdu, and Mathematics. Gender-based analysis provides important insight into the equity and effectiveness of the Remedial Learning programme, particularly in understanding whether both groups benefit equally from the intervention. The analysis focuses on shifts across competency levels to assess progression from foundational skills toward higher-order literacy and numeracy, highlighting patterns of improvement and any differences in learning gains between male and female students.

Learning Gains in English Reading

Overall, English reading outcomes indicate stronger gains among female students, with an estimated **18.7% improvement compared to 14.4% for male students**, alongside an average variance of approximately **5.8 percent points across both groups**, reflecting a consistent upward redistribution toward higher-order reading skills. Both male and female students show clear progress from lower to higher competency levels; however, female students demonstrate slightly stronger gains. Declines in early-stage categories are more pronounced among females, with reductions in Beginner (−7.4 percent points vs. −5.1 percent points for males) and Letter levels (−9.5 percent points vs. −8.0 percent points), indicating a faster transition out of foundational reading stages. Gains at higher levels are also greater among females, particularly at Sentence (+7.0 percent points vs. +6.3 percent points) and Paragraph (+6.8 percent points vs. +4.3 percent points), highlighting stronger improvements in reading fluency and comprehension.

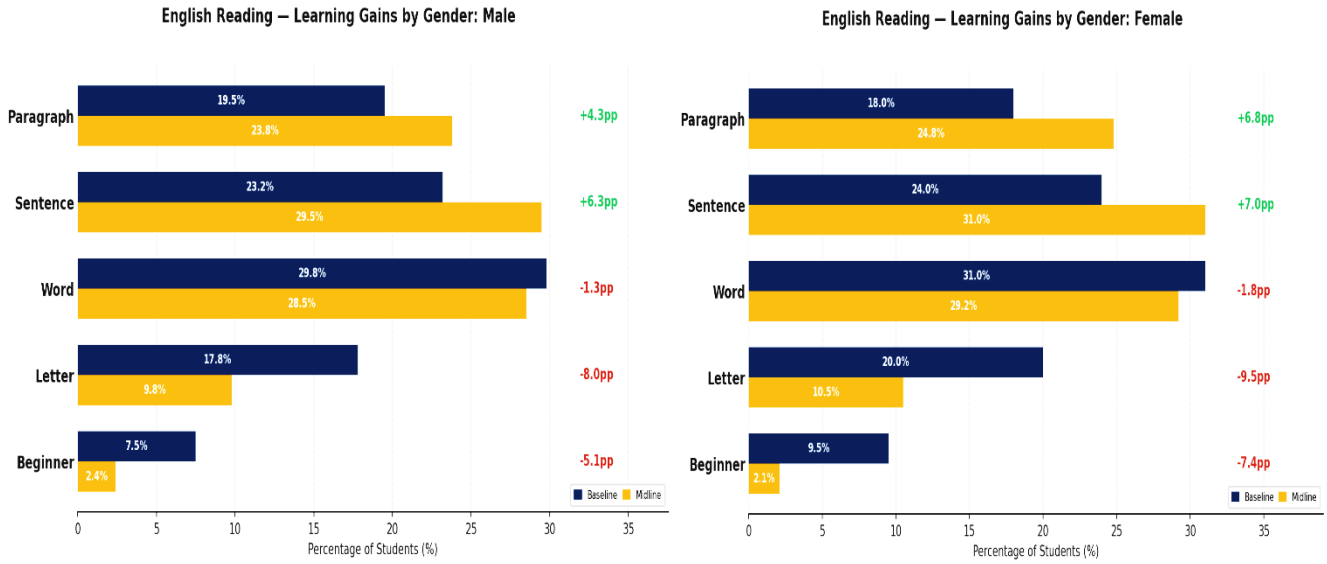

Figure 7: Learning Gains in English, Baseline vs Midline (3,168 male, 39,348 female Students)

Learning Gains in Urdu

Overall, Urdu reading outcomes show slightly stronger gains among female students, with an estimated **15.0%** improvement compared to **14.9%** for male students, and an average variance of approximately **4.2** percent points across both groups, indicating a steady upward shift toward higher-order reading skills. Both male and female students demonstrate clear progress from lower to higher competency levels. Declines in early-stage categories are evident for both groups, with females showing slightly greater reductions in Beginner (−4.7 percent points vs. −5.1 percent points for males) and Letter levels (−5.8 percent points vs. −6.2 percent points for males), reflecting movement beyond foundational reading. Gains at higher levels are comparable across genders, particularly at the Paragraph level (+7.8 percent points for females vs. +7.4 percent points for males) and Comprehension (+3.1 percent points for both), indicating improvements in fluency and understanding.

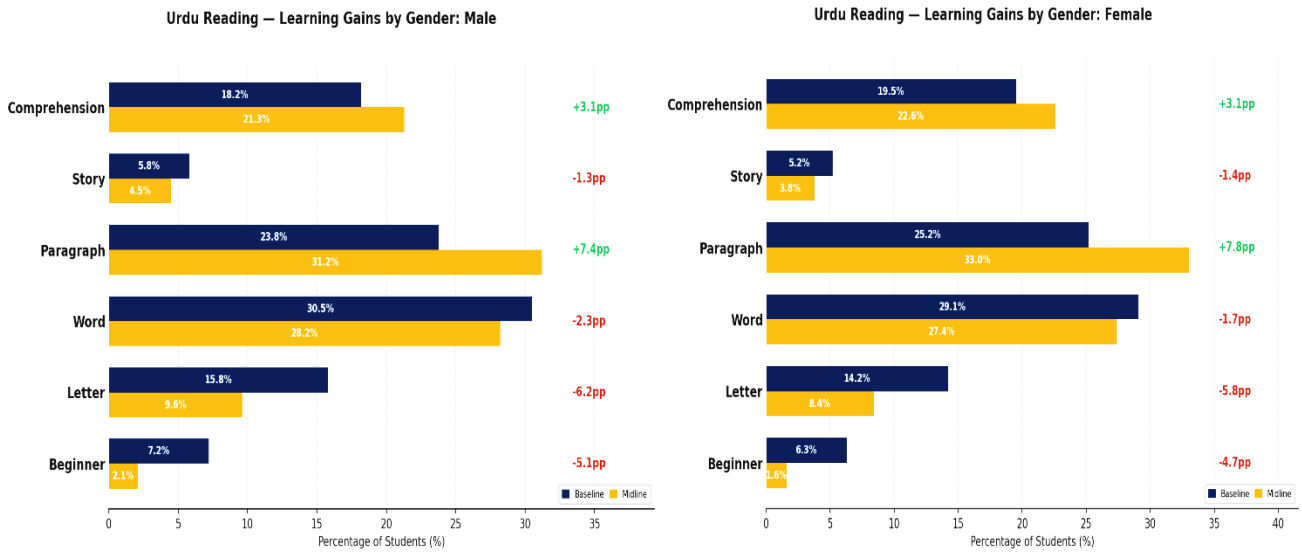

Figure 7: Learning Gains in English, Baseline vs Midline (3,168 male, 39,348 female Students)

Learning Gains in Mathematics

Overall, mathematics outcomes show slightly stronger gains among female students, with an estimated **13.0% improvement compared to 14.0% for male students**, and an average variance of approximately **4.9 percent points across both groups**, indicating a clear upward shift toward higher-order numeracy skills. Both male and female students demonstrate consistent progress from lower to higher competency levels. Declines in foundational categories are observed for both groups, with reductions in Beginner (−3.8 percent points for males vs. −3.3 percent points for females) and One-Digit levels (−2.7 percent points vs. −2.5 percent points), indicating movement beyond basic number skills. Gains are concentrated at higher levels, particularly in Division (+6.0 percent points for males vs. +6.7 percent points for females) and Subtraction (+3.6 percent points for both), reflecting improved ability in more complex operations. The decline at the two-digit level (−7.5 percentage points for males and −7.2 percentage points for females) further supports

this upward trend. Overall, both groups show strong improvement, with females having a slight edge in higher-order numeracy gains.

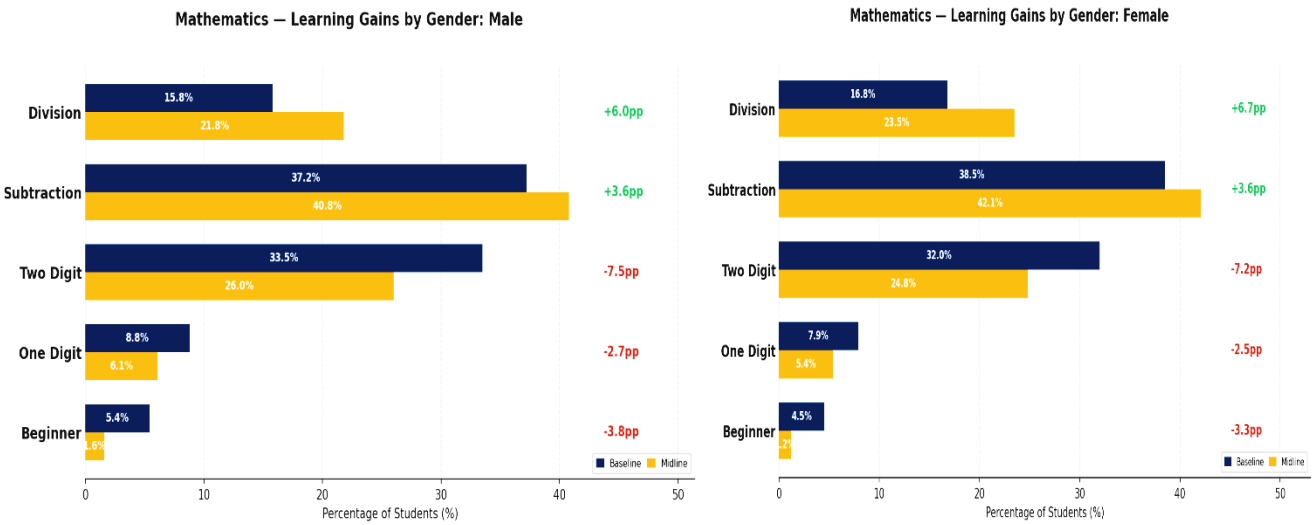

Figure 8: Learning Gains in Mathematics, Baseline vs Midline (3,168 male, 39,348 female Students)

Summary: Key Trends from RL by Gender

Learning outcomes by gender show consistent improvement across English, Urdu, and Mathematics, with a clear shift from lower to higher competency levels for both male and female students. Female students demonstrate slightly stronger gains overall, particularly in English reading, where improvement is estimated at **18.7% compared to 14.4% for males**, along with a higher average variance. In Urdu, progress is nearly equal across genders, with both groups showing steady movement toward paragraph and comprehension levels. In Mathematics, both male and female students show strong improvement, with gains concentrated in higher-order skills such as subtraction and division, and only minor differences between groups. Overall, the results indicate that the programme effectively supports learning for both genders, with a marginal advantage for female students in progressing toward higher-level competencies.

3. Learning Lags and Key Challenges

Although RL has demonstrated very positive learning outcomes, After-Action Review (AAR) meetings with all DSPs from both provinces have identified ongoing challenges that have hindered their ability to deliver and implement the programs more effectively.

3.1. Implementation Challenges faced by DSPs (from AAR)

The AAR responses show that implementation challenges varied by context but were consistently rooted in RL, i.e.,

- Unclear project scope, covering what, where, when, and how, disrupted early planning and execution, causing inconsistent delivery, resulting in inconsistent implementation quality, likely

impacting the uniformity and overall magnitude of learning improvements observed in RL outcomes in both provinces.

- Delays in obtaining NOCs across several districts emerged as a major challenge, as approvals took longer than expected, delaying timely programme initiation, highlighting the need for realistic timelines during the planning phase. School selection criteria were not fully aligned with programme targets, particularly for RL and CLP, as selecting high-enrolment schools limited the identification of out-of-school children and minority students. The CLP design also lacked alignment with the context, particularly in area selection and enrolment and retention strategies, reducing its effectiveness. Budget cuts further constrained implementation, while an overload of activities created operational pressure on field teams and schools. In addition, misalignment with the academic calendar disrupted programme flow, collectively affecting implementation quality and overall learning outcomes.
- Planning and implementation faced multiple challenges, including incomplete RL data profiling and inconsistencies in MIS systems, which affected accuracy and coordination. Delays in the provision of learning materials, infrastructure constraints, and resistance from some school heads further disrupted programme delivery. In addition, trainings conducted during the academic term and mid-implementation revisions to monitoring formats slowed reporting processes and reduced overall operational efficiency, contributing to variations in implementation quality and learning outcomes.
- Late project initiation, training sessions conducted in November, and interruptions due to winter vacations significantly reduced the effective implementation period. This was further compounded by the academic calendar, as teachers were occupied with their regular school schedules and preparing students for final exams. At the same time, unrealistic targets placed additional pressure on field teams, particularly the expectation of achieving substantial learning improvements within a short 45-day cycle. This timeframe was technically insufficient to drive meaningful learning gains for all RL students, limiting the overall effectiveness of the intervention.
- Some delays in achieving targets were driven by limited time availability, coordination challenges among multiple stakeholders, and competing schedules among teachers and community members. School-related factors such as examinations, routine activities, and unplanned vacations, along with security concerns in certain areas, affected the timely delivery of sessions. Logistical and transportation constraints also contributed to delays in implementing planned activities.
- Staff shortages posed a significant challenge to implementation, particularly in data management. In several cases, teachers were reluctant to enter assessment data, which created delays in reporting and monitoring. To address this, DSPs had to hire additional enumerators to complete data entry tasks, increasing operational burden and diverting resources from core programme activities.
- Limited teacher understanding and challenges in practical application led to variations in instructional delivery across sites. As a result, some students did not receive instruction aligned

with their actual learning levels, reducing teaching effectiveness and contributing to uneven learning gains in RL outcomes.

- Inconsistent participation across all sessions remains critical to sustaining and maximizing learning gains. Irregular attendance was identified as a key factor limiting progress for a proportion of enrolled students, particularly in geographically dispersed districts.
- In some areas, limited field supervision reduced the consistency of implementation and adherence to programme guidelines, leading to variations in instructional quality across sites.
- Frequent assessments and data-collection requirements caused fatigue among both teachers and students, affecting the quality of responses and the reliability of the data.
- Teachers faced constraints in providing one-on-one or differentiated support to struggling learners due to large group sizes and time limitations.
- A lack of structured home-based learning supports limited skill reinforcement, slowing the progress of students who needed additional practice outside classroom sessions.
- The limited duration of the RL intervention was not sufficient for all students, particularly those at foundational levels, to achieve meaningful and sustained learning gains.

4. Key Lessons Learned (from AAR)

The following section presents key lessons drawn from the After-Action Review (AAR) meetings, offering deeper insights into programme implementation. The observations highlight critical operational, contextual, and design-related factors that influenced delivery and learning outcomes. These lessons provide a comprehensive understanding of what worked well and where improvements are needed to strengthen future programme planning and implementation.

- Needs assessments should be conducted prior to implementation and geographic selection to ensure the programme is aligned with local realities. This will support more accurate targeting, better resource allocation, and improved effectiveness in reaching the intended beneficiaries.
- Identification and approval of districts, tehsils, and schools, including NOCs, should be completed before the end of the academic year to enable timely programme initiation. Achieving meaningful improvements in learning levels requires sustained intervention of at least one year rather than short-term cycles. In addition, HR recruitment should be aligned with the project scope and field requirements to ensure adequate support for effective implementation.
- Early planning aligned with the academic calendar is critical for effective implementation. Delays caused by exams, holidays, and seasonal breaks highlight the need for proactive coordination with education departments, school leadership, and partners from the outset to ensure timely approvals and smooth execution of programme activities.
- Teacher motivation at all levels is critical for ensuring consistent implementation and ownership of programme activities. There is also a need to strengthen the technical capacity of engaged teachers. Finally, stronger advocacy of programme objectives at all levels is essential to build stakeholder buy-in, improve coordination, and support effective implementation.

- CLP and RL targets should be clearly segregated and geographically rationalized to improve effectiveness. RL should be implemented in high-density areas where in-school children can be easily reached, while CLP should focus on rural and underserved areas with higher concentrations of out-of-school children. This targeted approach will enhance outreach, improve enrolment efficiency, and ensure better alignment with programme objectives.
- Assessments should be conducted by independent teams rather than teachers to ensure objectivity and reduce bias in data collection. In addition, introducing control and treatment groups would strengthen the ability to measure programme impact more rigorously, allowing for clearer attribution of learning gains to the intervention.
- Clear SOPs and implementation guidelines must be developed prior to programme rollout to ensure consistency and clarity in execution. Learning materials should be delivered in advance of training and activity implementation to avoid delays and maintain instructional continuity. In addition, stronger institutional coordination with the Education Department, through a designated focal point, is essential to streamline communication, expedite approvals, and ensure smooth implementation.
- Students taught at their actual competency level, rather than their enrolled grade level, progress significantly faster. This finding is consistent across all three subjects and across all equity sub-groups analyzed in this report.
- The integration of students with functional limitations and minority students into the standard RL classroom, with differentiated support where needed, results in learning gains that are directionally consistent with and in some metrics exceed programme-wide averages.

6. Conclusion

The ILMpact Remedial Learning (RL) Programme shows strong evidence that targeted, structured interventions can lead to measurable gains in basic literacy and numeracy in a short timeframe across Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. On average, the programme saw about a 14% increase in core subjects, with 16% in English, 12.5% in Urdu, and 13.3% in Mathematics. These improvements indicate a steady progression of learners from foundational skills to higher levels of competency. The results highlight the programme's success in speeding up learning recovery, especially in reading fluency, comprehension, and fundamental arithmetic skills.

The programme has successfully achieved equitable learning gains among various student groups, including a mostly female cohort, minority students, and learners with functional limitations. The results for these groups generally match overall trends, showing that the programme's inclusive approach works well and can effectively support high-need populations without affecting learning outcomes.

Implementation constraints restricted the programme's overall impact. Delays in planning and approvals, misalignment with the academic calendar, variability in teacher capacity, and data system issues led to inconsistent delivery and learning improvements across both provinces. Furthermore, the short intervention period limited the depth of learning, especially for students beginning at the lowest competency levels.

Overall, the RL Programme offers a practical and scalable approach to tackling learning poverty. Moving forward, expanding the program should focus on extending intervention durations, strengthening initial planning, better aligning systems, and boosting the capacity of delivery partners and teachers. Focusing on these aspects is essential to solidify progress and ensure lasting improvements in foundational learning outcomes at a larger scale.