Peru

Rapid Results Initiative

From 32% proficiency to 80%
in just 45 days

ONG ARCA BETA

DIGNITY EDUCATION VISION INTERNATIONAL

ALfA ACCELERATING LEARNING FOR ALL

Executive Summary

This study presents the results of the Accelerating Learning for All (ALfA) pedagogy implementation in Sachachorro, Peru, under the Rapid Results Initiative (RRI) Stage 1: Explore through Research Implementation. The initiative was a collaborative effort between Arca-Beta NGO (Peru) and Dignity Education Vision International (DEVI Sansthan) in India, which funded the printing of the Spanish ALfA toolkits used in the intervention.

The intervention aimed to accelerate Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) among 164 students in grades 1 to 6 over a 45-day period, utilizing a structured learning approach.

The program proved highly successful, with around 80% of students achieving an 'A' in the post-test. The ALfA pedagogy is now ripe to scale across different geographies in Peru.

Background & Context

Geographical & Socioeconomic Overview

Sachachorro, in Peru's Loreto region, is part of the vast Amazon rainforest. Its capital, Iquitos, is accessible only by river or air, emphasizing the area's isolation. This remoteness limits economic opportunities and access to quality education. Loreto's population includes diverse Indigenous communities with unique languages and traditions. While the region boasts rich biodiversity, its complex river systems add to its inaccessibility.

Educational Challenges

Loreto faces major educational barriers, especially in rural and Indigenous areas. Geographic isolation, poor infrastructure, and a lack of trained teachers contribute to these difficulties. Limited internet and electricity access further widen educational gaps. The COVID-19 pandemic worsened these issues, leaving many students unable to engage in remote learning. Low literacy and numeracy rates persist, and the region's linguistic diversity complicates curriculum standardization.

ALfA Pedagogy

Accelerating Learning for All (ALfA) is a groundbreaking structured pedagogy, designed to enable children to gain foundational literacy and numeracy skills in as little as 45 days. What makes ALfA so effective? It is the combination of learning materials, pedagogy, curriculum and teacher training.
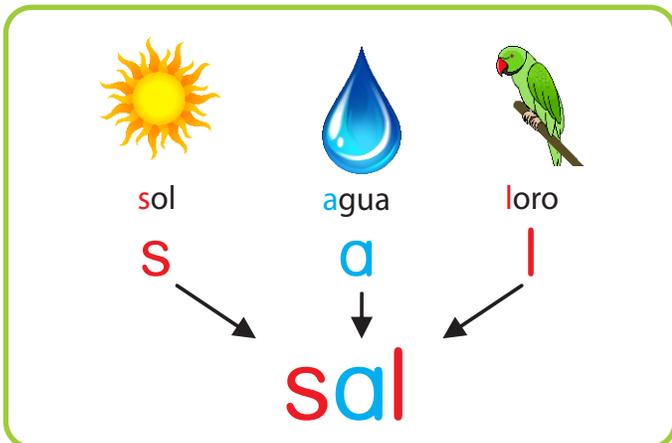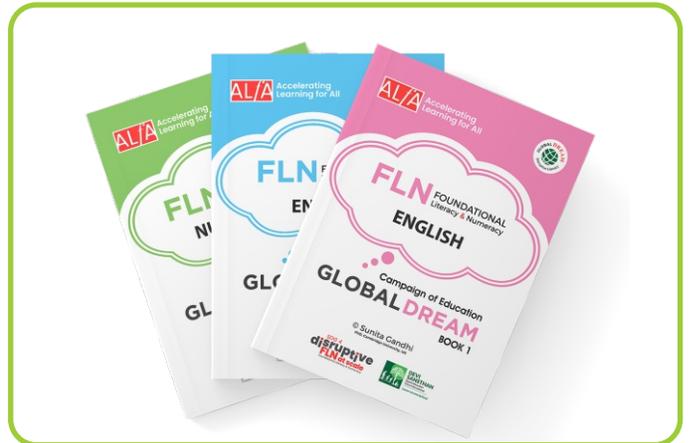
PAIRED LEARNING

The transaction of learning is not from teacher to student, but rather between two children.

KNOWN TO UNKNOWN

Children work from known to unknown: rather than 'a for apple', they derive the first sound from a picture. In numeracy, they use concrete objects.

CURRICULUM

Books are simple, modular, and highly visual, enabling children to learn independently.

HOLISTIC EDUCATION

ALfA doesn't just develop children's academic abilities; it fosters 21st century skills including creativity, critical thinking and collaboration.

Implementation Process

- **Teacher Training:** Educators underwent online and in-person training on ALfA techniques, ensuring a deep understanding of the pedagogy.

- **Classroom Implementation:** ALfA sessions were conducted in short bursts, making learning more engaging and accessible.

- **Continuous Monitoring:** Learning outcomes were tracked through regular assessments to measure student progress.

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Meetings with parents, teachers, and local education officials ensured sustained support and involvement.

Evaluation Methodology

To assess the impact of ALfA, students were evaluated at Baseline (Pre-Test) and Endline (Post-Test) across three competencies: Reading, Writing & Arithmetic. Student performance was categorized into three levels:
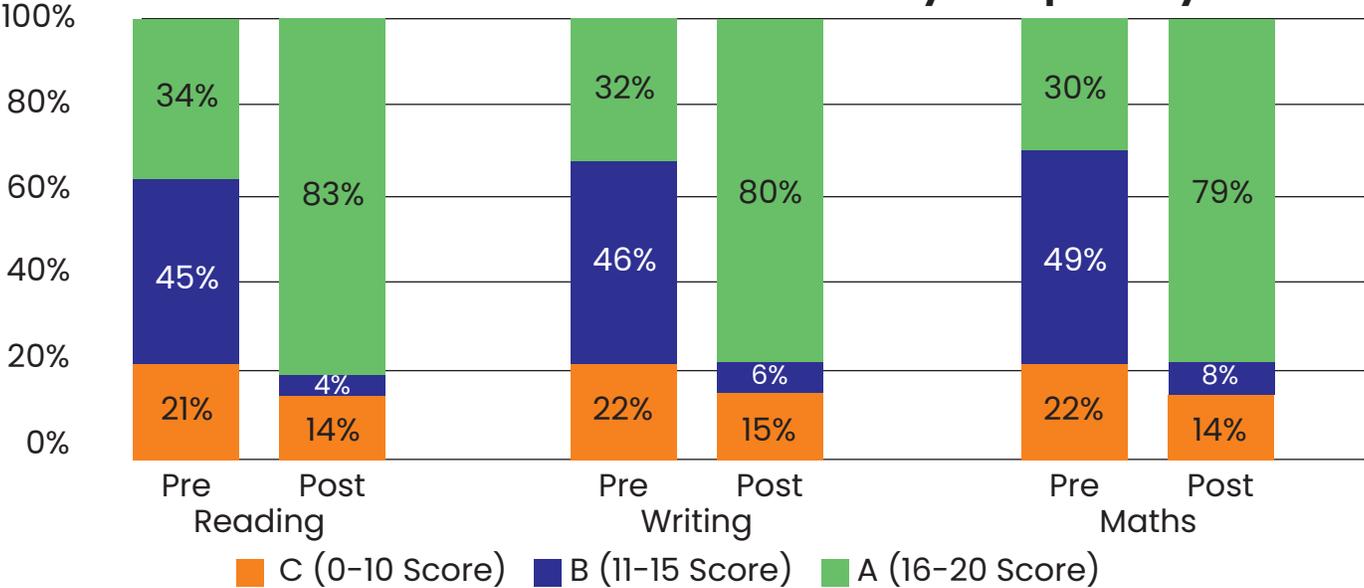
- **Proficient (A):** Scores between 15-20 (out of 20)

- **Above Basic (B):** Scores between 11-14

- **Below Basic (C):** Scores between 0-10
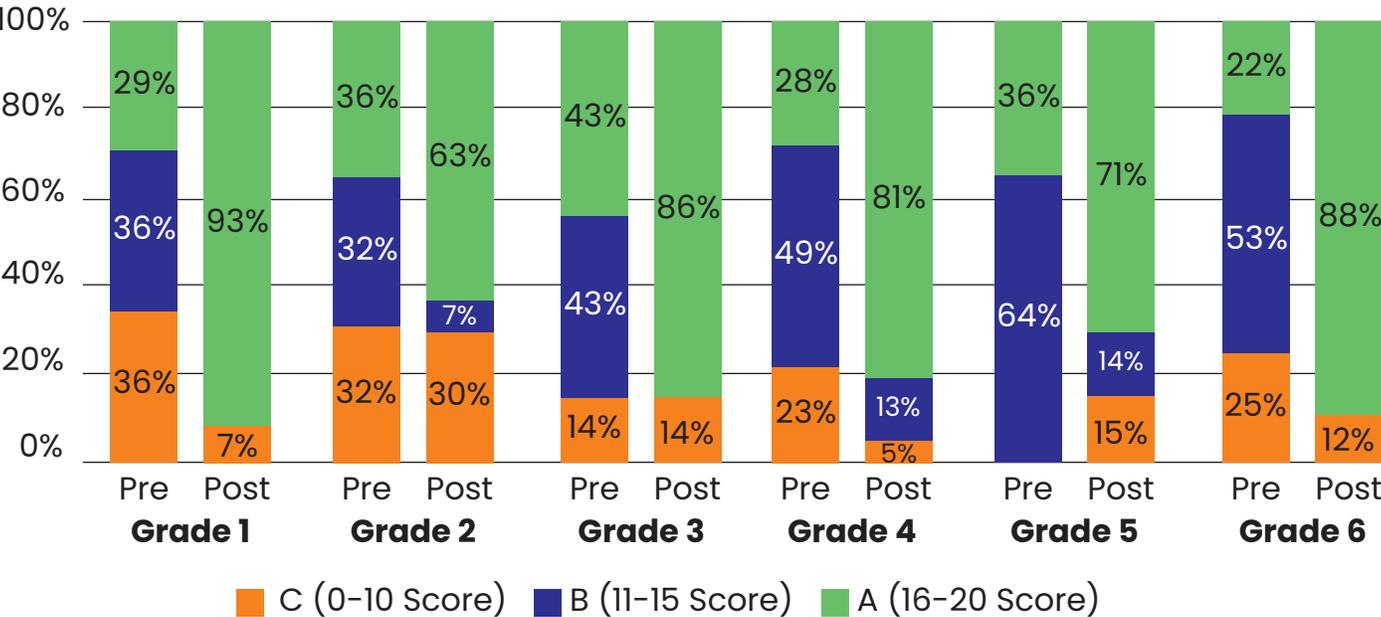
Quantitative Results

The Baseline Evaluation showed that only about one-third of students were Proficient (Reading: 34%, Writing: 32%, Arithmetic: 30%). By endline, this proportion had increased drastically (Reading: 83%, Writing: 80%, Arithmetic: 79%). These results indicate that ALfA was highly effective across all three competencies.

Pre & Post-Test Score Distributions by Competency

All the grades showed significant improvements in test scores, though there was some variability between different grades. This indicates that ALfA is effective across a wide range of ages.

Pre & Post-Test Score Distributions by Grade

Teacher Testimonies

" When the students came first, they wrote scribbles; they didn't know how to read. They worked in pairs. They began to form simple words, then more complex words and small sentences. Now, 80% of the students are reading. It is engaging and exciting for the students. Thank you so much. "

Sheila, Grade 1 Teacher

" Parents are happy because their children were at a disadvantage compared to those who already knew how to read, but now are making good progress. "

Zenaida, Grade 3 Teacher

Click/Scan for classroom footage from Sachachorro and school director's testimony.

Click/Scan for a message from Dr Sunita Gandhi, ALfA pedagogy founder, on its use in Peru.

Government Engagement

The ALfA program has proven to be highly effective in closing fundamental learning gaps within a short period. Its structured and participatory methodology has led to significant improvements in students' literacy and numeracy. The involvement of teachers, parents, and the interest shown by local authorities ensured strong support for the program's sustainability and expansion.

The following government bodies have expressed interest in the ALfA program:

· District Municipality of Belén (Loreto)

· Provincial Municipality of Maynas (Loreto)

· Local Educational Management Unit (UGEL MAYNAS – Loreto)

· Regional Education Management – Loreto

· Provincial Municipality of Coronel Portillo (Department of Ucayali)

· Provincial Municipality of Lamas (Department of San Martín)

This case study highlights the importance of innovative learning methodologies in improving literacy and numeracy, paving the way for broader educational reform to enhance learning achievements in Peru.

Next Steps

Given the success in Stage 1 of the Research Implementation in Sachachorro, the next steps include:

· **Stage 2 (Expand)**: Scaling ALfA pedagogy to additional schools and provinces, with a focus on improving implementation models based on feedback from this pilot.

· **Stage 3 (Embed)**: Collaborating with national education policymakers to integrate ALfA into the national curriculum, ensuring its long-term sustainability.
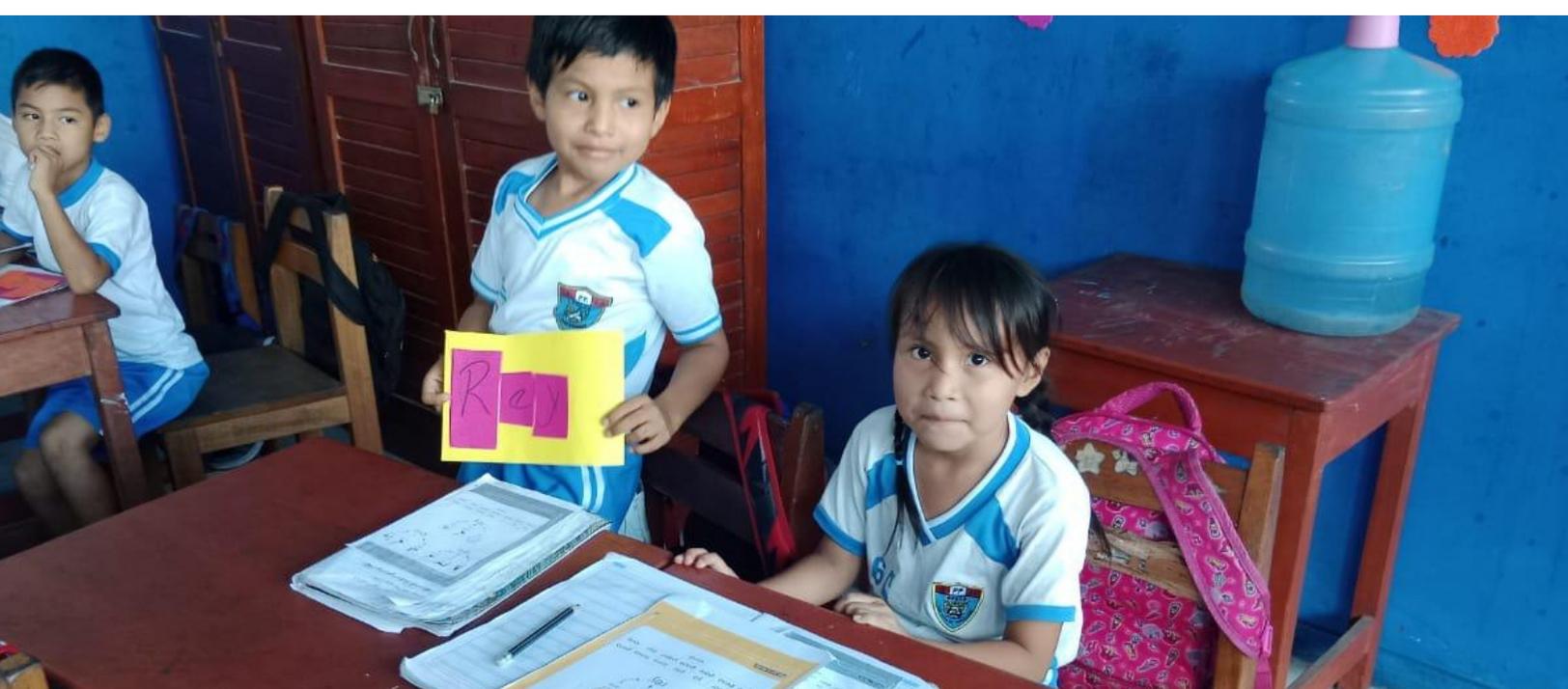
The long-term vision includes expanding ALfA to other Spanish-speaking regions, contributing to a broader impact beyond Peru.

Conclusion

The ALfA program has proven effective in bridging foundational learning gaps within a short intervention period. The structured, methodology provided accelerated learning gains, particularly for struggling students. The engagement of policymakers has indicated ALfA's potential scalability.

This case study highlights the importance of innovative learning methodologies in improving Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) and setting the stage for broader educational reforms in Peru.

To Learn More & Implement ALfA in Your Context

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