

ALfA Implementation in Sonbhadra

Research pilot in 4 ALfA schools shows strong Grade 2 and Grade 3 gains

Executive Summary

The Sonbhadra ALfA pilot tested whether a structured, paired and activity-based FLN approach could accelerate learning in government primary schools. The pilot covered eight randomly selected schools in Karma Block: four ALfA intervention schools and four comparison schools.

The implementation sequence was structured and time-bound: permission was secured in April 2025, baseline assessment was completed in early May, teacher training took place in July, classroom implementation began on 13 July, and endline assessment was conducted from 16-18 February 2026.

The strongest pattern appears in the treatment schools. Grade 2 treatment scores rose from 53% to 69%, while Grade 3 treatment scores rose from 55% to 81%. In comparison schools, Grade 2 improved more modestly and Grade 3 declined, strengthening the practical case for ALfA in the district.

Pilot design	Coverage	Decision point
4 ALfA schools + 4 comparison schools	Karma Block; Grades 2 and 3	Scale-up to whole district from March onwards

We acknowledge the support of BSA Sonbhadra Shri Mukul Anand Pandey, CDO Sonbhadra Smt. Jagrati Pandey/Awasthi, DIET and BRC officials, ARPs, head teachers and teachers who enabled the implementation sequence.



District engagement / MoU

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1. Background on ALfA

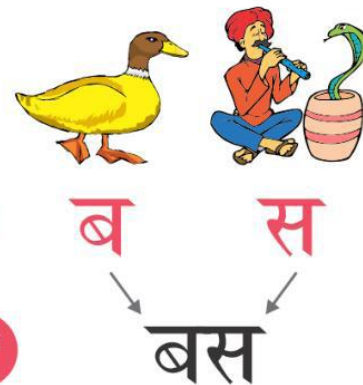
Accelerating Learning for All (ALfA) is a hands-on, activity-based, child-led pedagogy built around daily paired learning. In literacy, children move from familiar pictures to sounds, blending, reading and writing. In numeracy, they move from kinaesthetic experience to concrete materials and then to abstract symbols.

The approach is distinctive because pairs are not passive seating arrangements. Children ask questions, check answers, explain to one another and practise repeatedly. This makes the classroom more participatory and reduces dependence on teacher lecture.

यह क्या है?

इसकी पहली आवाज़ क्या है?

आवाज़ों को जोड़कर क्या बनता है?



2. Pilot Design and Timeframe

Date	Milestone
24 April 2025	Permission letter obtained and BSA meeting held
25 April 2025	CDO meeting and MoU signed with Aspirational District Sonbhadra
2-4 May 2025	Baseline assessment conducted
9-10 July 2025	Teacher training at BRC Karma
13 July 2025	ALfA implementation began
16-18 February 2026	Endline assessment conducted
March onwards	Scale-up to whole district

3. Methods and Implementation Process

Schools were randomly selected for ALfA and comparison groups. The DEVI team oriented DIET/D.El.Ed. support persons for baseline assessment, trained teachers at BRC Karma, and supported school-level implementation through classroom visits. Students worked in pairs using ALfA booklets and concrete materials; teachers demonstrated routines, observed peer practice, and used photos/videos to sustain fidelity.



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4. Results and Interpretation

Key result patterns

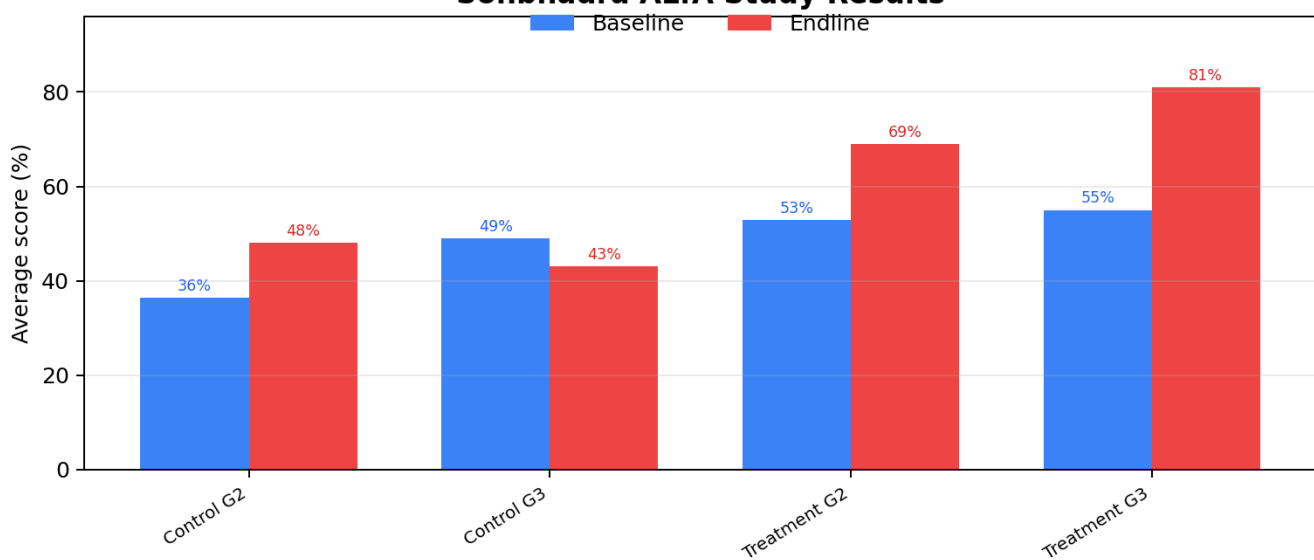
- Treatment Grade 2 improved by 16.1 percentage points, from 52.9% to 69% - larger than the Control Grade 2, which increased by 11.6 pp.
- Treatment Grade 3 improved by 26.0 percentage points, from 55% to 81%.
- Control Grade 3 declined from 49% to 43%, creating a clear contrast with the treatment trend.



The Sonbhadra results show a strong treatment-side acceleration, especially in Grade 3. The pattern is consistent with ALfA's emphasis on peer practice, visible prompts, and repeated child-to-child questioning. The direction and size of the treatment gains provide a strong basis for district expansion.

Group/Grade	Baseline	Endline	Change
Control G2	36.4%	48.0%	+11.6 pp
Control G3	49.0%	43.0%	-6.0 pp
Treatment G2	52.9%	69.0%	+16.1 pp
Treatment G3	55.0%	81.0%	+26.0 pp

Sonbhadra ALfA Study Results



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5. What the Evidence Suggests

Interpretation note

The pilot should be read as directional evidence from a small sample of schools. The core question is not only whether averages improved, but whether the implementation sequence - permission, random selection, training, baseline, classroom support and endline - can be scaled with fidelity.

Conclusion

The Sonbhadra pilot provides a strong case for scale-up. ALfA treatment schools improved substantially, especially in Grade 3, while the comparison pattern was mixed. Continued monitoring should retain treatment-comparison tracking and add domain-wise literacy and numeracy analysis.



Teacher Training



Endline Assessment