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**Mother Tongue Based ECD:**  
**A Case of Nepal**

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# A Map of Nepal

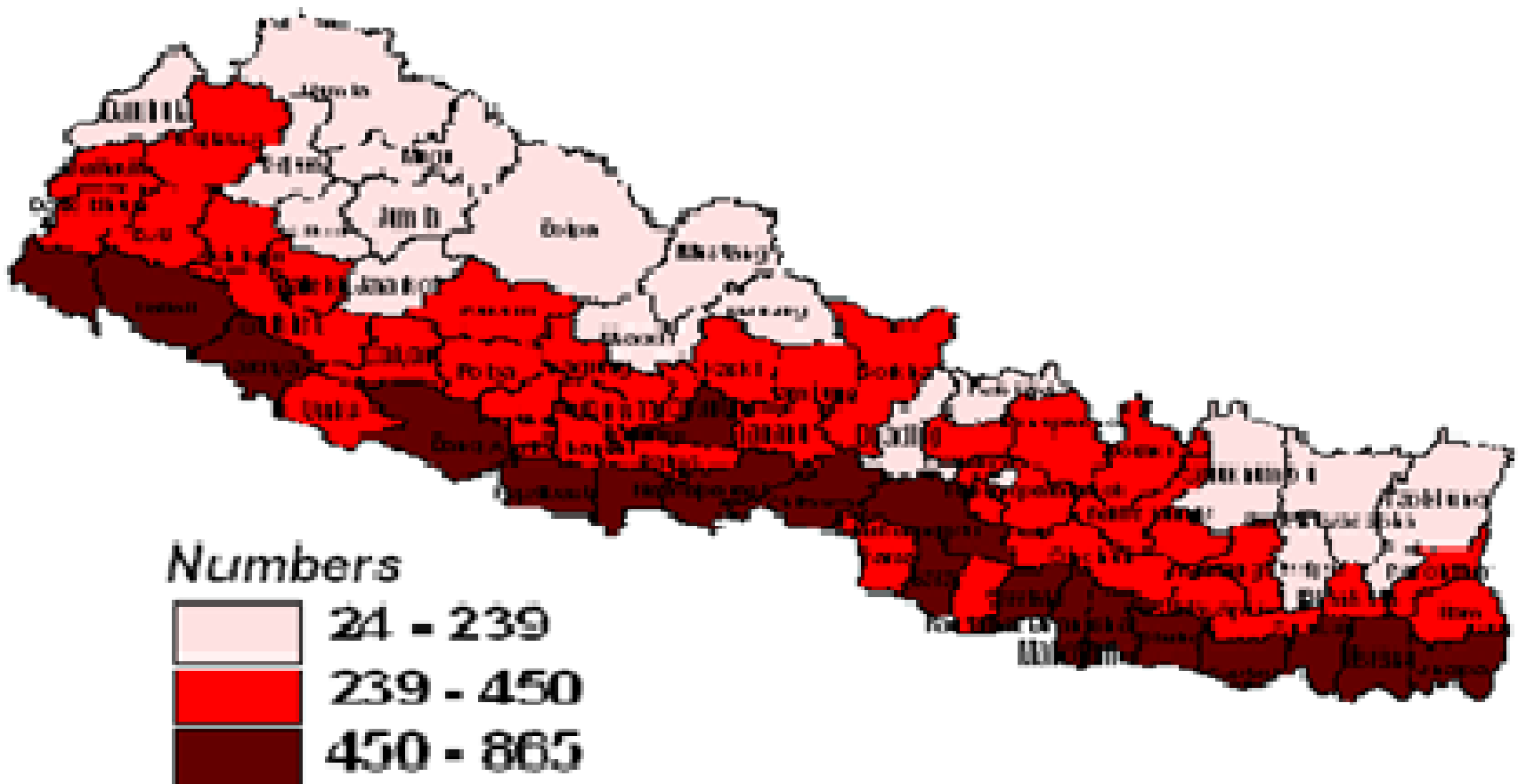


# Languages in Nepal



# ECD/PPCs in Nepal

*Map: 1 Number of school and community based ECD/PPCs*



# Language Use in ECD/PPCs in Nepal

- 123 Language in use in Nepal
- Nepali as official language, all languages are national languages (stated in Constitution)
- 55% of children speak other than Nepali
- 48 Indo-European & 68 Tibeto-Berman langs
- More than 70 languages have oral traditions
- About 30 languages are at risk of extinction
- Spread of English is showing alarming signs
- Language Planning is extremely crucial

# MTB MLE in ECD/PPCs

- Nepal's Constitution enshrines children's right to ECD/ECCE
- Children's Right to Education through MTs
- Local Self Governance Act and Regulations
- Education Act and Regulations
- DoE's dedicated unit for ECD & MLE
- School Sector Development Plan 2016 -22
- ECD Guidelines
- MTB MLE Guidelines
- Strategy Paper on ECD in Nepal
- One year ECD (at age four) as part of Ed Str

# Mother Tongues in ECD/PPCs

- ECD/PPCs operate mostly in MTs in Nepal
- Almost all ECD facilitators/ teachers are local females, with competent knowledge of MTs
- Oral approaches are prevailing in ECD centres
- ECD curricula define MTB MLE competencies
- Pre-service ECD courses are offered in Higher Secondary Schools and Bachelor Level courses at the university
- On-the-job 30-Day Modular courses are provided by DoE/ NCED
- Refresher courses are offered by Gov & NGOs



## **Mother Tongues in ECD/PPCs 2**

- On-going SSDP (School Sector Development Programme) 2016-2022 emphasizes MTB ECD
- Language related disabilities are being diagnosed in partnership with NGOs & CSOs
- Schools/ ECD centres collaborate with Parents, NGOs for MTB ECD activities
- DEO and Supervisors encourage facilitators to use MTs and local contents

# MTB MLE Impacts

- 83% children in ECD, and 65% children in G1 with ECD
- Language minorities are getting closer to ECD centres
- MTB interventions in partnership have shown impressive results (NGOs have been more innovative)
- Oral approaches, Family Literacy interventions have encouraged elders, parents to participate in ECD activities
- Drop outs, repetition and failures rates in grade one onwards have come down, readiness improved
- Children, girls in particular, from marginalized language communities have been now attending ECD and school programmes (more than ever before)

# Research on ECD/ PPC

- Several studies have been carried out with focus on ECD impacts
- Such studies focused on children's retention, success rates, readiness, upward mobility, inclusion, equity, ECD facilitators' engagements
- However, MTB ECD focused studies have NOT yet been conducted
- DoE monitoring reports reveal that Home-School transition has been much smoother in MTB ECDs
- Studies show that MTs contribute to enhancing cognition and all-round development
- MTs are prerequisites to realize transformative power
- Children's competencies are lower than 50%, primarily due to the growing use of non-native languages such as Nepali and English (low on academic achievements)

# MTB MLE Issues and Challenges

- Language policy on ECD not explicit
- Transition from ECD to Grade one remains critical
- MTs in ECD, BUT Nepali/ English in Grade 1
- Linguistically and culturally - children not ready to enter into grade 1
- Languages remain a low priority in pre-schools and primary classes (34% of children in grade 1 can't read even a single word of Nepali)
- Growing use of English and Nepali, detrimental to cognitive capital and learning
- Diversity language groups in ECD
- Facilitators competencies are low; mobility is very high

# MTB MLE Issues and Challenges 2

- Language shifts have pronounced effects on MTB MLE (40% children have lost MTs)
- Memorization, reproduction and rote learning in ECD/PPCs
- ECD/PPCs as downward extension of grade 1
- Children affected by Earthquakes, compelled them to move to non-native communities
- Parenting processes have not been systematic
- Overlapped ownerships & unclear oversight roles
- Impressive spread but unmet SDG 4.2 quality indicators

# MTB MLE Issues and Challenges 3

- Materials and resources are low on MTB MLE
- Making MTs as part of Continuous Assessment
- ECD classroom settings are not development focused, and lack conducive environment
- ECD programmes have been seen as downward extension of grade one lessons
- A lot of cramming, memorization and reproduction take place in ECD/PPCs
- Private schools tend to set a wrong model for ECD/PPC practices, causing huge waste owing to Eng

# MTB ECD Holds Transformative Power

- MTs pronounce the transformative power of ECD
- Concentrated interventions in linguistic minorities
- Parental linguistic orientations to ECD
- Mother tongue approach for quality ECD, with focus on (1) local cultures (2) children's identities (3) oral traditions, and (4) indigenized contents
- Research/ innovation on MTB MLE in ECDs for multi-grading pedagogies and multi-lingual use
- Evidence based informed policy making for ECD
- Gov's commitment, accountability & enabling environment

# **MTB ECD Holds Transformative Power 2**

- Making ECD holistic and inclusive
- MTs provide firm foundation for ECD, and ECD offers solid foundation for education
- Indigenizing ECDs and building parental trust
- Realizing the transformative power of MTB ECD for attaining SDGs
- Proving the worth of ECD, focusing on local cosmologies
- MTs make ECD's transformative power possible



Thank You