



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



2008/ED/UNLD/PI/EP/18

United Nations Literacy Decade

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Presented at the UNESCO sub-regional Conference *Addressing Literacy Challenges in South, South West and Central Asia: Building Partnerships and Promoting Innovative Approaches*. (29 - 30 November 2007, New Delhi, India)

Programme name: National Literacy Programme

Implemented by: National Commission for Human Development (NCHD)

Basic facts

Country: Pakistan

Starting year: 2002

Outreach: 2.5 million participants

Target Population: mothers of children up to primary school age

Language of instruction: Urdu and Sindhi

Operating in: 122 districts of Pakistan covering the whole area of Pakistan, approximately 50,000 settlements, and the number of beneficiaries are 2.5 Million per annum.

Facilitator/Beneficiary ratio: 1/25

Main Funding: Government of Pakistan

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Brief Description

The comprehensive National Literacy Programme implemented by the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) follows a two pronged approach. On the one hand, it aims at increasing enrolment and reducing school dropouts through its Universal Primary Education (UPE), while on the other hand targeting the illiterate adult population through its Adult Literacy Program (ALP). The Programme includes a specific focus on family literacy and intergenerational learning based on the understanding that retention in school and quality basic education is also fostered by a strong support coming from parents and the family background. Concentrating on developing literacy skills of mothers of school-age children became therefore a crucial component of the National Literacy Programme.

Rationale

Pakistan is rated among the countries with a very low literacy rate, nearly two thirds of illiterates being girls and women. The illiterate population expands each year due to significant number of children either failing to enroll in the regular education system or dropping out before acquiring literacy skills. As, in addition, most parents are not aware of how they can actively support the

education of their children, the specific programme part on family literacy and intergenerational learning focuses children – calling for knowledge on early child care and development. The programme component focusing on family literacy and intergenerational learning intends therefore to address the issue of non-enrollment and dropouts of children, between five to nine years of age through developing literacy skills of both children and their mothers and empowering the parents to take an active role in the education of their children.

Objective

The overall objective of the programme is to reduce the number of school drop-out, to allow effective learning in early school years and to improve literacy skills of mothers of young children. It provides basic literacy skills in particular to mothers whose children are studying in primary classes to enable them to actively support and accompany the learning of their children.

Conceptual Model and Methodology

The highlights of the conceptual model are:

- a. Focus on mothers, who's children are studying in grade one, two and three, so that the mother's may support their kids in their home work. In this way they are not only supporting their kids but also sustaining their literacy skills.
- b. Early child care and preparation of Oral Dehydration Solution (ORS) are the integral part of the Literacy Program.
- c. Schools health initiatives to improve the health status of their family.
- d. Social Mobilization at the village level.
- e. Data collection (by name, age and address) of illiterates.
- f. Making groups of illiterates (25 in each group) and enrolment after carrying out Base Line Assessment test.
- g. Duration of the course- 210 credit hours, 105 working days (approx. 5 months).
- h. Teaching through phonics.
- i. Intensive monitoring (weekly, monthly, once in a cycle of literacy centres).
- j. Distant Reinforcement: Through monthly newsletter.

Innovative features

- Targets groups.
- Conducting Base Line Assessments (BLA) and other book assessment to assess the learning achievements and deficiencies.
- Learning materials in accordance with the needs of the learners.
- 70% of the learning materials being developed locally.
- Community involvement through Social Mobilization Process.
- Extensive Monitoring System.
- Literacy Management Information System (LIMIS), through this we could approach all Neo-literates (more than 1.4 million).
- Amendments in materials and program design on the basis of feedback from the field.
- Using ICT for the promotion of literacy.