

Literacy in multilingual and multicultural contexts

Effective Approaches to Adult Learning and Education



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Foreword

Ensuring lifelong learning opportunities for all involves ensuring that diversity – including ethnic and linguistic diversity – is no cause for exclusion. Respecting cultural and linguistic rights will be essential for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals' literacy target (i.e. target 4.6) will therefore involve paying special attention to the role played by learners' first language in becoming literate and as a medium of instruction. Meeting the target will also entail paying close attention to cultural diversity and learners' culture. The Education 2030 Framework for Action calls for the provision of context-related bilingual and intercultural literacy programmes as an effective way of achieving target 4.6.

UNESCO has a strong commitment to protecting cultural and linguistic rights, and it recognizes the inherent value of cultural and linguistic diversity. It has developed a normative framework for education in a multilingual world that supports the principles of mother-tongue instruction, bi-/multilingual education and intercultural education as a means of improving educational quality. These principles are particularly relevant to teaching and learning literacy, since language, culture and literacy are closely related.

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) uses research-based advocacy to make a case for mother-tongue-based literacy instruction. A number of related publications testify to many years of experience in this field. This new compilation of literacy programmes adds valuable insights into good practice in multilingual and multicultural contexts. It also provides essential lessons on how existing challenges can best be addressed. All the case studies included in this compilation have been selected from the Effective Literacy and Numeracy Practices database (LitBase), which UIL develops on a continuous basis in fulfilment of UNESCO's mandate to make information on effective literacy policies and programmes available worldwide.

The examples of literacy programmes showcased in this publication range from governmental adult literacy programmes offered in all national languages or in main minority languages to programmes run by civil society organizations that help preserve the language and culture of only one or a few ethnic minorities. This compilation also includes programmes for migrants and refugees with a strong focus on equipping them for integration into mainstream society while strengthening their literacy skills in their home language. A number of programmes featured in this compilation use family learning and intergenerational approaches to literacy, language and numeracy learning. While some programmes emphasize the development of language competences, others focus on culture. One of the important lessons that emerges from all of these experiences is that the success of multilingual and multicultural approaches to literacy depends on participatory decision-making and the involvement of local communities in all stages of programme design and implementation. Optimal use of all existing knowledge, skills and resources also reflects good practice.

It is my hope that this publication will help meet the ongoing demand for best-practice examples of literacy programmes that successfully use multilingual and multicultural approaches to teaching and learning. I am confident that the challenges and lessons shared by the providers of the programmes presented in this volume will help build a more solid knowledge base of what works. This knowledge base will in turn contribute to the development of innovative strategies for improving the quality and relevance of literacy programmes in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

**Arne Carlsen, Director,
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Empowering through culture and language: Literacy in multilingual and multicultural contexts

The use of a learner's mother tongue, their first or home language,¹ as the language of instruction has been found to have a positive impact on learning across the board. Evidence of this impact informs the key messages of a Global Education Monitoring Report policy paper released to mark International Mother Language Day in February 2016 (GEMR, 2016). Adult literacy teaching and learning in a language of which neither the learners nor the facilitator has a good command clearly does not work. Yet while this statement may meet with general agreement, it remains the case that many learners around the world – some 40 % of the global population – still have no access to education in a language they speak or understand (ibid.). This particularly affects learners in multicultural and multilingual contexts, while poverty and gender further amplify educational disadvantage linked to ethnicity and language. The 2015 World Education Forum in Incheon highlighted insufficient attention to mother tongue-based literacy in programme design as one of the factors behind literacy's neglect within the broader international education and development agenda, helping explain why, up to now, it has been 'a weak link in the EFA movement' (UNESCO, 2015a: 20).

¹ Mother tongue, first, native or home language are used interchangeably in this text to refer to the language(s) a person has learned from birth and / or knows best. While these are complex concepts, each individual has a unique language history (see UNESCO, 2003: 14-16).

HOW DO INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION?

The Education 2030 Framework for Action, unanimously adopted by member states at the November 2015 UNESCO General Conference, provides guidance for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 over the next fifteen years. It builds on the following vision:

All people, irrespective of sex, age, race, colour, ethnicity, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property or birth, as well as persons with disabilities, migrants, indigenous peoples, and children and youth, especially those in vulnerable situations or other status, should have access to inclusive, equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities (UNESCO, 2015b: 6).

This new vision highlights inclusion and equity in and through education as essential to the achievement of human development. People should not be excluded on the basis of factors such as their ethnicity or language. No education target can be considered to be met unless it is met for all. Language, ethnicity, gender and poverty can interact to produce complex patterns of compounded disadvantage and increased risk of being left behind. Combating the cumulative effects of multiple disadvantage involves supporting the development of learning opportunities in local or indigenous languages. Culturally and linguistically sensitive programmes, methods and materials 'recognize and value the indigenous cultures, knowledge and methodologies, while adequately developing the teaching of the second language of wider communication' (UIL, 2010: 8).

The Education 2030 Framework for Action not only emphasizes everybody's right to inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities, it also provides strategic orientation as to how this can be achieved. For the achievement of Target 4.6 – By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy – ‘particular attention should be paid to the role of learners’ first language in becoming literate and in learning’ (UNESCO, 2015b: 20). Furthermore, the Framework for Action stresses that literacy programmes and methodologies must respond to the needs and contexts of learners, ‘including through the provision of context-related bilingual and intercultural literacy programmes within the framework of lifelong learning’ (ibid.). In addition to supporting multicultural and multilingual approaches to teaching and learning, the Education 2030 agenda pays particular attention to literacy for girls and women and vulnerable groups. Therefore, in future, one of the criteria for assessing the quality of literacy and numeracy programmes will be the degree to which they respect and address the cultural and linguistic rights, needs and desires of young and adult learners, and, in particular, of disadvantaged groups.

More than a decade ago, UNESCO developed a normative framework, guidelines and principles for languages and education (UNESCO, 2003). This framework built on a monograph published in the 1950s, which concluded that ‘education can best be carried out in the mother tongue’ of the learner, though it also acknowledged that the application of this principle would involve overcoming some complex challenges (UNESCO, 1953: 15). Language is not only a tool for communication and knowledge but also a fundamental attribute of cultural identity and empowerment, both for the individual and the group. Cultural and linguistic rights have been framed in international agreements – declarations and conventions – to protect particularly minority groups (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009). By highlighting the value of cultural and linguistic diversity, which is reflected in the everyday reality of life in most member states, UNESCO makes a strong case for mother tongue instruction as a means of improving educational quality by building on the knowledge and experience of learners and teachers. With regard to adult literacy learners, UNESCO recommends they ‘should make their first steps to literacy

through their mother tongue, passing on to a second language if they desire and are able” (UNESCO, 1953: 69, quoted in UNESCO, 2003: 31).

UNESCO advocates a bilingual or multilingual approach to literacy as a key element of linguistically and culturally diverse societies. Bilingual and multilingual approaches to education refer to the use of two or more languages as mediums of instruction. The term ‘multilingual education’ refers to the use of at least three languages – the mother tongue, a regional or national language and an international language – in education. Furthermore, UNESCO urges an adequate supply of reading material in mother tongues to learners, ‘for entertainment as well as for study’. The organization also highlights the need to provide for teacher training in order to ensure ‘sufficient numbers of fully competent and qualified teachers [...] who are familiar with the life of their people and able to teach in the mother tongue’ (ibid.). For mother tongue-based bilingual or multilingual education approaches to be effective, teachers or facilitators need to be recruited from minority language groups.

In recognition of the fact that respect for the languages of people belonging to different linguistic and cultural communities is essential to peaceful coexistence, UNESCO supports language as an essential component of inter-cultural education with the aim of encouraging understanding among different population groups and ensuring respect for fundamental rights. Inter-cultural approaches to teaching and learning address the needs of both majority and minority groups, including indigenous peoples, migrants and refugees. Successful inter-cultural strategies in education promote positive attitudes and the valuing of cultural and linguistic diversity, the use of culturally appropriate teaching methods, and a deeper understanding of other cultures (ibid., p. 33).

WHAT IS THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE?

There is general agreement that language and culture are closely related. Language can be considered the verbal or written expression of culture. It is used to maintain and convey culture, cultural identity and cultural ties. However, language is more than culture and culture is more than language (Brock-Utne, 2005).

For example, the use of local languages as the medium of instruction is not only in order to preserve culture but it is also recommended for educational reasons: a new language must first be taught and learned before it can be used as a language of instruction. In addition, there are socio-political reasons why states, above all in Africa, decide to use national languages other than those introduced in the past by the colonial rulers in their education systems. It is perceived as an indication of political sovereignty with regard to the old colonial power, an assertion of national cultural identity, and a mechanism for reducing ethno-linguistic conflict (Cobarrubias, 1983, cf. Lo Bianco, 2016).

That said, no culture can be reduced to its linguistic expression. The way that teaching and learning is institutionalized and organized, the methods and content, as well as approaches to assessing learning outcomes, are all deeply interwoven with culture. For example, it can make a huge difference to learners whether learning materials are produced abroad in a foreign language are adopted for use without modification or content is taken from the local culture and written in the local language. This latter model, however, is seldom found (Brock-Utne, 2005; Mallam Garba, 2015).

In Latin America, in particular, the importance of the development of inter-cultural or multicultural competences has been emphasized, in addition to bilingual or multilingual competences in the context of youth and adult literacy programmes (see López and Hanemann, 2009). The promotion of inter-cultural or multicultural approaches to literacy acknowledges that programmes need to cater for learners from a diversity of cultural and linguistic backgrounds as well as the need to go beyond the mere co-existence of people of different cultures in a community or society. It calls for teaching and learning strategies that include opportunities for cultural exchange, cross-fertilization and enhancing awareness of mutual dependence and inter-relationship (Pérez, 2009).

WHY IS THE HOME LANGUAGE OR MOTHER TONGUE RECOMMENDED AS LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION?

There is ample evidence that the use of the first or home language of learners as the language of instruc-

tion has a positive impact on learning (see UNESCO, 2016). Research has consistently demonstrated that learning to read and write in one's home or first language or mother tongue facilitates access to literacy as well as the ability to read and write in other languages (e.g. Brock-Utne, 2000; Goody and Bennett, 2001; Heugh, 2003; Hornberger, 2003; Ouane, 2003; Grin, 2005; Ouane and Glanz, 2011). Literacy provision that initially uses the learners' first language and progresses to a second language has cognitive, psychological and pedagogical advantages (UNESCO, 2005).

Mother tongue-based adult literacy programmes were piloted by the Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) at UNESCO Bangkok in Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal and Thailand, with promising results. The case studies from the different countries show that learners can acquire the desired skills faster in their mother tongue. The pilots demonstrate how much ethnic communities value their linguistic and cultural heritage and the practicability of teaching and learning through mother tongue. They also illustrate the direct impact bilingual mother tongue literacy programmes can have on the lives of adult learners. They have tremendous potential as poverty reduction strategies (SDG 1), not only reducing income poverty but also addressing the lack of capabilities essential for human development ('capability poverty') through learning opportunities that effectively empower people, in particular women, to access developmental resources previously denied them. One of the conclusions drawn from these experiences is that mother tongue-based programmes that strengthen linguistic and cultural diversity should be viewed as an integral component of sustainable development (UNESCO-APPEAL, 2007).

At an international workshop on mother tongue-based literacy programmes in 2007, participants from three world regions analysed the changes resulting from the use of learners' language as the medium of instruction. They found that it makes the home culture of learners visible, allows them to talk about their prior knowledge and experience and link them to new information, brings the home and the school closer together, opens up communication between families and teachers, facilitates communication and participation in the classroom, and helps learners increase self-esteem and a stronger sense of identity (UNESCO-APPEAL, 2008).

While there is convincing evidence that the school participation of, in particular, girls from language minorities is significantly enhanced through use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, little systematic data have been collected to date on mother tongue-based adult literacy programmes (see Kwan-Terry and Luke, 1997; Walter, 1997). In future, it will be important to better understand the interactions between gender and language by evaluating data that is disaggregated by gender, and analysing the reasons women give for attending such programmes (ibid.).

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES IN THE USE OF MULTILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL APPROACHES TO TEACHING AND LEARNING LITERACY?

While there are some promising examples of good practice, many programmes taking multilingual and multicultural approaches to teaching and learning literacy face complex issues, such as trying to influence national educational language policy where governmental support is limited, or trying to upscale successful pilot projects and make them sustainable. One of the common challenges is how multilingualism can be operationalised and integrated into adult learning programmes so as to enhance the literacy development of all learners and ensure good-quality provision. Policy decisions need to be well informed, keeping in mind and responding to the following questions:

- Is there demand for mother tongue-based literacy? While learners may feel more comfortable when they are taught in their first language, it is also the case that potential adult literacy learners may prefer to learn initially (in) regional or national languages, perceiving this as helpful in terms of their upward socio-economic mobility. In discussing these preferences, learners should be informed that the available evidence suggests that people learn best in the language they understand and speak, and that it is worth the investment of time and effort to have a good foundation in literacy in their first language before they learn to read and to write in other languages.
- Is language learning framed as an additive approach? Developing literacy in one's mother tongue need not come at the expense of developing literacy in a regional or national language. Likewise, programmes

focused on developing literacy in a regional or national language need not ignore the mother tongue. People benefit socially, economically and culturally from expanding their linguistic repertoires and developing multilingual literacy.

- Does the local language have a standard written form and how much material is available in that language? Often, spoken languages are codified in different ways, and complex processes need to be put in place in order to build consensus among different communities on one standard version. There is also a question concerning the presence of a literate environment in a local language. The scarce availability of teaching and reading materials can be an impediment to developing literacy in local languages.² Pilot programmes may be used to work out context-specific issues, such as which languages are ready for use and which will need further development, what types of written materials are needed and who will create them, among others.
- Are there adequately trained and competent educators to teach in local languages? Often, literacy teachers speak the local language, but they do not feel confident in writing it. They are not equipped with pedagogical strategies to support bilingual or multilingual practices in the classroom. Therefore, the issue is how to identify and recruit the 'right' teachers and how to train them. If there are few certified teachers who speak the local language, the linguistic community can help identify the most appropriate candidates to be trained. Experience shows that the best mother-tongue teachers are those who share the learners' culture and experiences.
- Which language communities should be considered and have access to literacy provision in their home language? Generally speaking, the fewer members a language community has, the fewer the opportunities to learn in their mother tongue. In other words, the size of a language group often determines its members' inclusion or exclusion from the right to mother tongue-based education. Experiences from multilingual countries such as India, Nigeria and Papua New Guinea show that

² As Krashen (2011) has noted, providing access to materials can reduce the negative effects of poverty on literacy development and educational achievement.

even where there are many languages spoken by large or small groups, and even where there are mixed communities, there are solutions involving the first language people speak and/or another familiar local language (the language of wider communication or local *lingua franca*).

- How can literacy programmes become more culturally and linguistically relevant and better cater for the existing diversity of learners? The colonial legacy inherited by many countries of the African, Arab, Asian and Pacific regions, as well as those in Latin America and the Caribbean, has further complicated the situation. For the sake of ‘national unity’ following independence, or because of dependency on external donor resources, related programmes often seem to move towards greater standardization rather than diversifying culturally and linguistically.
- How can the content of literacy programmes be aligned with the social, cultural and economic needs of programme participants? Adults, in particular, benefit when the content through which literacy is developed is aligned with the practical needs of language use in their daily lives. It is useful, then, to assess local knowledge and to conduct needs analyses of the societal domains in which people need and want to engage and the (oral and written) multilingual resources needed for this. This will ensure that programmes foster the communication skills needed for activities such as trade and commerce, health and safety, education and cultural reproduction (see, for example, Gebre, 2015).

These examples show how complex educational realities in multicultural and multilingual contexts are and indicate that there are no easy solutions. The challenges, however, while significant, must be weighed against the inefficiency of teaching and learning in languages that learners do not understand.

WHAT CAN BE CONSIDERED ‘GOOD PRACTICE’ IN MULTILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL CONTEXTS?

An inclusive approach to multilingual and multicultural contexts will address language needs and make use of available linguistic and cultural resources. It will address the following guiding principles (Alidou and Glanz, 2015):

- In order to achieve inclusion, it is crucial to create an enabling learning environment that motivates, engages and allows for persistence. Special attention should be paid to gender equality.
- Literacy and language competences are acquired through a lifelong learning process in different domains of life where literacy and languages matter. Therefore, good-quality literacy and language teaching is related to the ways in which reading, writing and language are used in learners’ everyday lives and are meaningful to them.
- Literacy from a multilingual and multicultural perspective should be seen and dealt with as an essential aspect of the human right to education. This implies acknowledging that spoken and written language is not a neutral tool of communication but a carrier of symbolic meaning and a mirror of power relationships. It also involves a contextualized and critical view of literacy with a deep understanding of the underlying cultural dimensions.
- Accepting and recognizing linguistic and cultural diversity as normal supports the multilingual and multicultural ethos. Adopting this ethos means rejecting both ‘linguistic assimilation’ and ‘cultural traditionalism’.
- The creation of a multilingual and multicultural literate environment contributes to the sustainability of literacy and language competences and of a community’s culture and ways of life.

Furthermore, an inclusive approach to multicultural and multilingual contexts will include the following key features, applied in ways suited to the local context (Robinson, 2005):

- Analysis of the linguistic and socio-linguistic situation of the learners. This should be the basis for determining which languages should be used for learning, and in what sequence. The analysis should include information on the attitude of communities towards the languages they use or desire to learn.
- Consultations with local communities. They should be held to establish links between literacy providers and local institutions. This will generate input into learning and result in local governance and management of programmes, especially with regard to choice of language of literacy.

- Local writing and production of material. This must be the basis for the development of a sustainable and dynamic literate environment and for the incorporation of local knowledge as learning content.
- Learning of additional (second, third, etc.) languages must take into account learners' existing language patterns, skill and knowledge. This involves, for example, ensuring that specific issues of linguistic structure and language use are considered in designing the learning of other languages, so that the addition of languages in oral and written form is readily available to large numbers of people.

In general terms, the success of multilingual and multicultural approaches to literacy depends on consultative, participatory and democratic decision-making, as well as optimal use of existing skills and resources (Ouane and Glanz, 2011). In short, good practice reflects the respect accorded to the cultural and linguistic rights of all groups, uses a participatory approach to mediate among different needs and aspirations, and draws on culture and language as resources that enrich the teaching and learning process.

HOW ARE MULTILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL APPROACHES TO LITERACY IMPLEMENTED AND WHAT KEY LESSONS CAN BE DRAWN?

There are various ways in which literacy programmes make use of bilingual or multilingual approaches. The programmes presented in this compilation often begin literacy teaching in the learners' first language while teaching a second language orally. Once learners feel confident in reading and writing in their home language, and have begun communicating in the second language, they transfer their emerging reading and writing skills to the second language. If they face the additional challenge of learning a different script, this may take much more time. A regular feature of the literacy programmes described here is that they all seek to motivate and engage learners not only through approaches that are linguistically and culturally sensitive but also through other services that often go beyond education. Most of them seek not only to equip learners with literacy, language and numeracy skills but also to empower them with knowledge and

skills that are relevant to the improvement of their life quality and to community development.

The close inter-relationship of language and women's empowerment is suggested in the title of the programme *Literacy in Local Language*, a Springboard for Gender Equality. This programme, run by the Associação Progresso in rural communities in Mozambique, has a focus on women and aims to provide literacy classes in local languages with particular attention to awareness-raising and advocacy on domestic violence and human rights. Tradition and patriarchal culture are dominant in rural communities, determining every aspect of life. One lesson from the programme is that social mobilization and the involvement of community leadership are important in changing this and other aspects of tradition that result in prejudice against women. Gender issues, women's empowerment and working with community leadership are also priorities of the Senegalese non-governmental organization (NGO), Tostan. Since 1991, Tostan has implemented programmes in twenty-two national languages in ten African countries. Tostan's Community Empowerment Programme in Senegal works in communities for a set period in order to foster social and economic empowerment. This includes the development of problem-solving skills, health and civic education, as well as literacy, numeracy and project management-related skills. All facilitators undergo training to master participatory and community-led approaches before joining a community of their own language and ethnic group.

Civil society organizations can play a strong role in developing and promoting the use of local languages in education, in particular in youth and adult literacy programmes. Such is the case with the Federation of Associations for the Promotion of the Guera Languages (FAPLG), which was established in 2001 with the aim of developing the twenty-six languages of the Guera region in Chad, promoting language teaching and education, and creating income-generating activities. Currently, FAPLG is working with eighteen member associations, of which fifteen already run literacy programmes, in fifteen African languages. One reason for the success of the programme is its firm foundation in the community. Another example of a civil society organization with a vision to save the rich variety of languages and promote traditional knowledge

is Knowledge is for a Better Life (*Savoir Pour Mieux Vivre*) in Côte d'Ivoire. It implements a programme called *I am learning your tongue, you are learning my tongue, we are understanding each other, tomorrow belongs to us*, which aims to create a literate environment encompassing not only French, but also national and local languages. Traditional values are highlighted and each Ivoirian is encouraged to learn at least five native languages, thus promoting acceptance of difference, reducing barriers and prejudices, and contributing to social cohesion. People are made aware that learning one's native language, including reading and writing it, should be recognized as a right. However, growing urbanization in Côte d'Ivoire poses challenges to this approach as people in urban areas are increasingly disinclined to value their native languages.

The Bilingual Education Programme (BEP), run by the Swiss Organization for Workers' Solidarity (OSEO) and the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy (MEBA) in Burkina Faso, has a strong focus on language and culture. Its main aims are: 1) to improve the quality, relevance and effectiveness of basic education in Burkina Faso through the use of national languages and French; 2) to promote development based on the country's socio-cultural values and realities; and 3) to strengthen the status of national languages. BEP's provision of bilingual education in eight major languages is organized according to age group, reflecting a progression of literacy learning and learning needs from early childhood to adulthood. The bilingual model has not only improved the effectiveness and efficiency of both the teaching and learning process but has also increased parents' motivation to participate in the education of their children and reinforced social cohesion, since language is an important unifying factor.

The Kha Ri Gude (Let us Learn) adult literacy programme is an integrated, multilingual mass adult literacy campaign implemented in South Africa by the government Department of Basic Education. In order to address the constitutional right of all citizens to access to basic education in their own language, the programme is offered in all 11 official languages. The learning materials have been professionally adapted for use by deaf and blind learners. In addition, the programme provides instruction in English as a second language. By promoting mother tongue-based adult literacy, the programme

has created opportunities for the research into all of South Africa's main languages, as well as contributing to their advancement and preservation. Respecting all languages and treating them equally can play a critical role in fostering national cohesion.

Providing rural families in Ethiopia with digital access to good-quality mother-tongue pre-school materials is one of the objectives of the recently established eBooks and Family Literacy Programme (eBFLP), implemented by CODE Ethiopia, the Ethiopian branch of the Canadian Organization for Development (CODE). The six eBooks used during the pilot phase were produced by local authors and illustrators and made available in two local languages, Amharic and Oromo. Participating families were also encouraged to write their own stories. For many parents, participation was also an opportunity to enhance their own language and literacy skills. Parents were, however, required to have reached a minimum threshold level in literacy before they could enrol in the programme. Without this, they would not have been able to participate fully in the activities. However, this baseline literacy level was not always enough to enable parents to participate actively with their children in some of the more challenging reading activities. This is a crucial point to take into account in implementing family literacy programmes in rural areas, where many adults are struggling with reading and writing skills.

A family learning approach is also used by Mother Tongue-based Education in Northern Uganda (MTE), a programme implemented by Ugandan NGO, Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE). The programme brings parents and children together in school-based learning, with reading materials developed in each local language, using authentic knowledge and cultural experiences familiar to the learners. The programme operates in six post-conflict districts of northern Uganda in five local languages. The main goal of MTE is to strengthen the status and use of local languages in marginalized Ugandan communities. Ultimately, MTE is expected to contribute to rebuilding these post-conflict communities. This programme demonstrates the political nature of mother tongue-based education, particularly in post-conflict contexts. LABE offers some important lessons with regard to the challenges that such a programme faces. While, in the first

phase of the programme, LABE sought simultaneously to address the ideological, ethno-linguistic and pedagogical barriers to successful programme implementation, during the second phase, its main focus has been on core pedagogical issues, such as lack of language standardization and teachers' capacity development. LABE concluded that ideological factors, such as public awareness, are best addressed through working with related government partners at national and regional levels. Another lesson learned concerns the use of oral literature and traditional folklore as important literacy resources. At the outset of the programme, LABE thought that it would be a challenge to obtain resources for learning materials from communities that lack a written literature. However, it turned out that almost all adult participants in the literacy programme not only possessed a rich knowledge of oral literature and folklore, but also were ready and motivated to share their knowledge. LABE, therefore, asked community members to provide more information to participants at local materials-writing workshops.

Women working in Morocco's Argan cooperatives are able to access literacy classes, which they also help coordinate. The Functional Literacy Programme of Women of the Argan Cooperative through Amazigh (Berber) Language DVDs, implemented through the national Association Ibn Albaytar in Morocco, is an example of a programme through which literacy classes are combined with income-generating activities targeting women. It is also an instance of a programme that has had to introduce adjustments because the issue of language had been overlooked in its original design. The revised literacy programme addressed the fact that many of the participating women spoke only Amazigh, a Berber language, by introducing an audio-visual pedagogical tool in the Amazigh language that helped the women to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to run their cooperative effectively.

In the Asia and Pacific region, a number of literacy programmes support the empowerment of minority communities by building on their linguistic and cultural resources and thereby strengthening their identity and position in mainstream society. The empowerment of an ethnic and linguistic minority – the Parkari community in Pakistan – is the focus of the Parkari Literacy Project, which is implemented by the

Parkari Community Development Programme (PCDP). Through linking literacy with community development, it is promoting the use of the Parkari language as the most effective means of involving members of the community. One essential lesson learned in this programme is that the use of the native language in the early stages of education is not only a means of facilitating the learning process, but is also an important symbol of unity and self-determination. Being able to read and write in one's mother tongue means being able to record, transmit and have access to the cultural heritage of the community.

The Isirawa Language Revitalization Programme (ILRP), implemented by SIL International-Indonesia, has a similar focus to that of the Parkari Literacy Project. One of the objectives of the programme is to empower the Isirawa people (particularly women and young people) to spearhead development and problem-solving in their communities, in part through the provision of basic social services, without imperiling their cultural identity. ILRP's experience demonstrates that literacy programmes are more effective when they are based on communal perceptions of culture and cultural preservation. Communal dialogues are central to both literacy learning and cultural propagation. Revitalising the linguistic and cultural identity of the Isirawa people (indigenous Papuans living in the Indonesian province of Papua), while fostering their community engagement, has also encouraged the Isirawa to engage constructively with the outside world.

Patani Malay-Thai Bilingual/Multilingual Education in Thailand's Deep South (PM-MLE) is one of 23 minority-language revitalization programmes conducted by the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia of Mahidol University in Thailand. The programme aims to provide children, families and communities of the Patani-Malay minority with a quality bilingual education in both Thai and Patani Malay. By taking the unique cultural and linguistic identity of the Patani Malay into consideration, the programme providers aim to support peace and reconciliation efforts in the south (a conflict zone) by reducing Patani-Malay people's fears of being assimilated by the Thai majority through a Thai-only educational system. Another Thai programme serving an ethnic minority – the Pwo Karen communities – is the Bilingual Education Programme

(BEP), implemented by the governmental Office of Non-formal and Informal Education (ONIE) with the aim of preserving the cultural identity and integrity of the Pwo Karen through the provision of mother-tongue literacy skills training and the mobilization of local resources such as local knowledge. A key lesson learned is that communities should be consulted for their input at every stage of a programme's development. Because language is emotive, particularly among marginalized ethnic-minority groups, the success of bilingual educational programmes strongly depends on the active participation of the entire community.

Strengthening cultural identity is the chief goal of the Wānanga Embedded Literacy programme implemented by the national Association of Wānanga. In New Zealand, the Wānanga is a very well-established institution in Māori tradition, with a strong learning culture. All learning is centred on Māori tradition and culture. Its three basic objectives are: 1) to pursue knowledge in the greatest possible depth and to broaden horizons; 2) to empower all Māori to claim and develop their cultural heritage; and 3) to acquire knowledge that supports an understanding of the past and present, and the ability to claim a place in the future. However, government funding is targeted at the general policy aim of improving learners' literacy, language and numeracy skills. Therefore, Wānanga tutors must try to ensure that they flexibly address the particular needs of their learner groups – which is often not literacy but to learn a specific vocational skill, or to learn more about their heritage – while embedding literacy, language and numeracy skills into the programme, in a seemingly natural way.

Europe and North America are home to migrants and refugees from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds whose educational rights are often not fully met. According to official policy, they are predominantly expected to assimilate into mainstream language and culture as quickly as possible to support their smooth integration into increasingly multicultural societies. A number of programme providers acknowledge the right of these groups to also strengthen their own cultural identities and improve their literacy skills in their native language. An array of initiatives and programmes cater for the educational needs of people with a migrant or refugee background, many of whom

must improve their literacy, language and numeracy skills. This compilation features three examples, from the USA, Sweden and Switzerland.

Plazas Comunitarias is a programme run by the Mexican government, through its National Institute for Adult Education (INEA), and implemented through the network of Mexican consular representatives and civil society organizations active in the USA on behalf of Mexicans and other Latin-american citizens. Each Plaza Comunitaria is established at the request of an immigrant community. They offer non-formal basic education (literacy, primary and secondary education certificate courses) as well as other services for young and adult Mexicans in the Spanish language. The programme uses the methodology of INEA's Mexican Education Model for Life and Work (MEVyT), with a strong focus on citizenship rights and responsibilities, health, environment, finances, migration, and work-related information.

Linköping is one of the fastest growing cities in Sweden, due in large part to the arrival of increasing numbers of immigrants and refugees. The Learning Together programme aims to increase the general literacy and numeracy skills, and Swedish language skills, in particular, of parents and their children. Building on previous experience of courses for families from different cultural backgrounds, the Municipality of Linköping began to train tutors from different cultural backgrounds, with language skills in Somali and Arabic, to act as 'bridge builders' for the Learning Together programme. The involvement of tutors who share common language skills and cultural backgrounds with the respective group of learners became one of the key success factors of the programme. The 'link people' have proven indispensable in supporting foreign-born parents and their children, and are an integral part of Learning Together. They function both as role models and language tutors, help avoid misunderstandings through their common language skills, and can inform as well as motivate participants.

The family literacy programme, Give me a story, implemented by the Swiss Institute for Children's and Youth Media, addresses the language barrier to successful integration into the Swiss education system. It also aims to increase parental involvement by reaching out

to families with migrant backgrounds in an effort to improve their language and literacy development. As of 2014, the programme was offered in seventeen languages (including the official languages of Switzerland) and is open to the addition of new languages, should demand arise. It works through local partners, such as libraries, community centres and city/district governments, and around stories. Volunteers who know the language and are familiar with the cultural background of the families attending the courses deliver the programme. Parents are encouraged to support the literacy attainment and language development of their pre-school children. Being able to read and to write in their native language is a pivotal foundation for children to learn the official language(s). To support this, parents learn how to incorporate literacy activities at home, and to make use of available resources in the community. A lesson learned is that successfully enrolling families from specific migrant backgrounds depends on key facilitators who are well-integrated into the community.

In Latin America, where a number of countries are home to groups of African descent and other ethnic minorities, in addition to the indigenous population, there is an emphasis on the need for intercultural or multicultural approaches to teaching and learning. For example, Ecuador's Basic Education for Young People and Adults programme has developed a particular model for bilingual indigenous people, the *Dolores Cacuango* method, which builds on the indigenous Weltanschauung or philosophy of life ('cosmovisión'). Teaching indigenous peoples in their own languages – in this case, Quechua and Shuar – supports the programme's aim of strengthening learners' (inter-) cultural identity by using a reflective-critical methodology that reflects their experience, knowledge and worldview. The programme also focuses on teaching and learning the mainstream language (Spanish). A lesson drawn from this experience was that paying special attention to native languages requires additional resources, for example to offer training in bilingual methodologies.

The literacy challenge in Latin America is particularly evident among indigenous women in rural communities. Due to gender discrimination, a majority of indigenous women have traditionally not benefitted from formal education as much as men. Therefore, the

Mexican Bilingual Literacy for Life programme (MEVyT Indígena Bilingüe or MIB), an integrated, bilingual non-formal basic literacy and life skills training programme implemented by the National Adult Education Institute (INEA), principally targets indigenous women and out-of-school girls. The unique aspect of the programme is that, to date, it has been implemented in 42 main indigenous languages across 15 federal states. Furthermore, its curriculum takes into account the particular linguistic and cultural situation of each ethnic and linguistic regional group, as well as their interests. For this reason, the learning modules are developed differently by teams located within decentralized state institutes linked to INEA. They reflect each group's specific world-views, culture, existential realities and linguistic characteristics, as well as addressing its needs and aspirations. In addition, the programme endeavours to empower and promote sustainable development within indigenous communities. Since indigenous languages remain marginalized at national level, it can, at times, be challenging to motivate people to participate in the bilingual programme. One of the important lessons of this programme is that, to be viable and sustainable, bilingual educational programmes must be adapted to the needs of the communities concerned, as well as aligning with the goals and vision of the state in which they are implemented.

The promotion of sustainable community development and poverty alleviation through bilingual (Spanish and Quechua) literacy skills training is also the aim of the Peruvian Reading Comprehension programme, implemented by the ATEK Association. The implementing organization reported that many learners can be motivated to participate in the literacy programme by their desire to read the Quechua bible. The main achievement of the programme has been to empower women to play an active role in civic life. The programme also boosted participants' sense of self-esteem, confidence, civic responsibility, solidarity and optimism for themselves and their communities. One major lesson that has emerged from six years of programme implementation is that literacy projects are cheaper to implement, function better and are more sustainable when they are actively supported by their beneficiaries.

The Paraguayan post-literacy programme Ñane Ñe' is a bilingual (Spanish-Guarani) non-formal programme

for young people and adults who did not complete their basic education, and, in particular, vulnerable groups such as rural farmers, the indigenous population, offenders and people living in extreme poverty. The framework of the national bilingual policy encourages not only indigenous peoples but all citizens to become bilingual in Spanish and Guarani. To this end, learners receive key materials, including a dictionary and the national constitution, in the two languages. Linking the programme with work-related and practical skills training has helped maintain the motivation of learners to attend the classes.

CONCLUSION

All of the literacy programmes featured in this publication offer valuable experiences and lessons on how the challenges posed by linguistic and cultural diversity can be productively addressed by harnessing the potential of language and culture as enriching resources in the process of literacy teaching and learning. A major lesson that has emerged over the years is that the use of local languages as the medium of instruction enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning process in developing literacy, numeracy and (second or more) language skills. However, mother tongue-based literacy not only facilitates the learning process, but is also an important symbol of identity, unity and self-determination. It is closely intertwined with culture and local values, wisdom, worldviews and tradition. A number of the featured programmes demonstrate that language and culture in education are highly political. Respect for all languages and cultures, and their equal treatment, can play a critical role in fostering national cohesion. In some cases, this is contributing to rebuilding peace in post-conflict communities. Literacy programmes that contribute to the preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity should, also, be viewed as integral to sustainable development.

The analysis further indicates that the success of bilingual or multilingual education programmes strongly depends on the active participation of the entire community. To be successful, programmes must be able to connect to learners' and communities' needs, aspirations and purposes. Success also depends on a programme's ability to empower learners and promote

sustainable development within communities. There remain major challenges that must be addressed, including the improvement of the quality of bilingual/multilingual teaching and learning and the establishment of constructive bridges between different ways of living and worldviews, whether at local, national or global level. The realization of linguistic and cultural rights certainly merits special attention as part of the new Education 2030 agenda and its promotion equity and lifelong learning for all.³

More examples of promising programmes can be found on UNESCO's Effective Literacy and Numeracy Practices Database (LitBase), a continuously developing resource featuring case studies of inspiring adult literacy and learning programmes (<http://www.unesco.org/ui/litbase/?language=en>). UNESCO cordially invites providers of innovative programmes not yet featured in LitBase to contribute material about their literacy initiatives. Please refer to the LitBase website for further details.

Ulrike Hanemann

³ The central role of language was affirmed at an April 2016 symposium held by the Study Group on Language and the United Nations, which brought together academic researchers, NGO representatives.

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Bilingual Education Programme

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

16,935,000 (2013)

Poverty

(Population living on less than USD 2 per day, 2009)

73 %

Adult literacy rate (15+ years, 2015, UIS estimation)

Female: 29.32%; Male: 43.03%; Both sexes: 36.02%

Youth literacy rate

(15–24 years, 2015, UIS estimation)

Female: 43.24%; Male: 47.56%; Both sexes: 45.43%

Official languages

French (recognised regional languages: Mòoré, Dioula, Fula, Bambara, Dogon, Dagaare, Nanerige, Sucite, Karaboro)

Statistical sources

- UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)
- UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report
- UNICEF: Information by country
- World Bank: World Development Indicators database

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

The Bilingual Education Programme

Implementing Organization

Swiss Organisation for Workers' Solidarity (OSEO); Government of Burkina Faso

Language of Instruction

French and national languages

Funding

Government of Burkina Faso and the Netherlands; Coopération Suisse; Diakonia NGO; Catholic Church; Fund for Literacy and Non-Formal Education (FONAENF)

Date of Inception 1994

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a GDP per capita income of USD 1,200. Agriculture contributes to 32 % of its GDP and employs about 80 % of the working population while access to quality education remains low. According to UNDP, despite con-

	BILINGUAL SCHOOLS				NATIONAL AVERAGE
	No. of schools	No. of national languages	No. of exam candidates	Pass rate (after 5 yrs in education, adolescents 4 yrs)	6 yrs spend in education (excluding retakes)
1998	2	1	53	52.83 %	48.60 %
2002	4	2	92	85.02 %	62.90 %
2003	3	1	88	68.21 %	70.01 %
2004	10	4	259	94.59 %	73.73 %
2005	21	6	508	91.14 %	69.01 %
2006	40	7	960	77.19 %	69.91 %
2007	47	7	1182	73.69 %	66.83 %
AVERAGE				78.16 %	65.69 %

certed efforts to double its literacy rate from 12.8 % in 1990 to 25.3 % in 2008, Burkina Faso has the lowest literacy levels in the world. A government-sponsored national evaluation study of the education system (1994) revealed that it was not attuned to the social and economic realities of the country, was costly and inefficient. These problems undermined access to quality education as well as national development efforts. As a result, in recent years, the government and its development partners have made concerted efforts to reform the education system. Part of the solution involved instituting strategies which encouraged the use of both French and national languages as the medium of instruction in schools. The bilingual approach to educational instruction arose out of an awareness of the importance of national languages in the provision of quality education. The Bilingual Education Programme (BEP) was initiated to compliment these policies and efforts.

THE BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME (BEP)

Since 1994, the Swiss Organisation for Workers' Solidarity (OSEO) and the Government of Burkina Faso through the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy (MEBA) have been implementing the BEP. The project was initially conceived and implemented as a non-formal adult literacy and rural development programme

in aid of small-scale farmers. The success of the adult literacy programme convinced state officials and policymakers to adapt and expand the programme into a broad-based intergenerational education programme targeting all age groups above three years. The BEP is currently linking non-formal and formal education and is being implemented in all 13 regions of the country. It employs French and national languages as the medium of instruction. Principally, the BEP aims to resolve the problems associated with access to quality and relevant education in the country.

Currently, the BEP is technically and financially supported by the Government of Burkina Faso and the Netherlands, the Coopération Suisse, the Diakonia NGO, the Catholic Church, and the Fund for Literacy and Non-Formal Education (FONAENF) for the ALFAA and AFI-D method. The ADEA (Association for the Development of Education in Africa) provides technical and financial backing for the assessment and evaluation of the BEP.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The BEP aims to:

- increase access to education for all people
- improve the quality, relevance and effectiveness of basic education in Burkina Faso through the use of national languages and French
- combat illiteracy and to use literacy skills to combat poverty
- promote development based on the country's socio-cultural values and realities
- strengthen the status of national languages
- promote the creation of bridges between formal and non-formal basic education.

IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

The development and implementation of the BEP is based on solid strategies which endeavour to satisfy the literacy and skills development needs of learners. These include the training of teachers and the production of appropriate didactic/instructional materials in the eight major languages. To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the bilingual approach, teachers in bilingual schools receive additional and specialised language training over and above the standard teacher training curricula.

The development and planning of the programme is based on professional research and needs assessment studies which involve the active participation of all national and local stakeholders including, most importantly, community members who are often sidelined from such processes. Active community involvement in programme development creates a strong sense of ownership and responsibility among the people which makes the mobilisation of learners an easier task. In addition, community members will also monitor the actual implementation of the programme in their localities.

The provision of bilingual education under the BEP is organised according to age groups, reflecting a progression of literacy learning and learning needs from early childhood to adulthood. In line with this structure, BEP is implemented using both the formal and non-formal approaches. The BEP is sub-divided into two broad components: the formal and non-formal basic education. The formal basic education component of the BEP has three age-based levels of learning and instruction for children and young people aged between three and 16 years old and these constitute the age-based bilingual educational continuum:

The Educational Discovery Areas

The educational discovery areas (espaces d'evenil educatif/3 E) is a community-managed early childhood learning project which caters for children aged between three and six years and was conceived to provide a solid educational foundation to children. The project provides stimulating learning environments and formal cognitive, psychomotor, and socio-effective training. At the 3 E level, instructors are voluntary parent-teachers who receive training in early childhood education with emphasis on child psychology, hygiene and nutrition, play activities and early childhood teaching methods.

Curricular development as well as the production of didactic materials for the programme is managed by professionals in infant care and early childhood learning. The curricula integrate national cultural practices in childcare and socialisation with modern practices in the field of early childhood education. In the 2005/06 academic year, the programme had 36 functional 3E centres which catered for 2,832 children, of whom 58.28 % were girls.

The specific objectives of this component of the BEP are:

- to promote early childhood or infant education in rural, urban and outer-city areas
- to overcome inadequacies regarding childcare, hygiene, nutrition and psychomotor development provided by the family
- to prepare the young child psychologically, physically and mentally for the first cycle of primary school
- to free mothers and girls from caring for smaller children for a period of time, in order to give them the possibility to participate in educational programmes.

Bilingual Primary Schools

The Bilingual Primary Schools (EPB), which have been operational since the 1994/95 school year, target children aged between seven and 12 years. The major innovative aspect of the EPB project is the use of both national languages and French as the medium of instruction in the learning process as well as the promotion of productive and cultural activities. Pupils attend the EPB schools for four to five years instead of the usual six years in non-EPB schools. In addition, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the EPB system, teachers receive additional professional training in bilingual education and instruction materials are produced in French and the eight major national languages.

The EPB aims to:

- foster the integration of learning and production activities in order to prepare children for active roles in national development
- reconcile the education process and societal expectations by infusing positive local cultural values, norms and practices into the learning system; this entails the active involvement of local communities in the education system and the activities of the schools
- give learners the opportunity to use their knowledge of a national language(s) in the learning process as well as to improve their literacy skills in both local languages and French as the national official and major international language spoken in the country
- contribute towards finding ways and means of establishing links that bridge the gap between formal and non-formal education.

The EPB programme is evaluated continuously by teachers and external professional evaluators. But in the 4th and 5th grade, pupils' learning achievements are assessed using the same rigid methods that are used in non-EPB schools in order to prepare them for the official primary school termination examinations. The monitoring and evaluation process of the bilingual primary schools involves several actors and institutions:

- close monitoring by the responsible agency for basic education (Circonscription d'Éducation de Base) once per term
- evaluation by the Regional Teacher Training Team once per term
- regional evaluation by the MEBA/OSEO team once per term
- regular area meetings between teachers and teacher trainers from the same region.

Special Multilingual Secondary Education (CMS)

Special multilingual secondary schools accept learners aged between 12 and 16 years old who have successfully completed their EPB courses. At CMS, learners extend their knowledge of the national languages and French. In addition, they also learn a second national language chosen from the dominant languages in Burkina Faso. The CMS schools are innovative in that – in addition to the standard secondary school curriculum – they also provide specific courses in national languages, as well as in cultural and production-oriented activities (livelihood skills training). To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, teachers in multilingual schools receive special training in the national languages and functional English, as well as in culture and production issues.

The CMS project endeavours to:

- teach the full and standard secondary school curriculum
- promote functional multilingualism (i.e. in French, a second widely-used national language and functional English)
- promote education with production
- promote positive cultural values and citizenship education.

Intensive Functional Literacy for Development (AFI-D)
AFI-D, a non-formal and intensive literacy training for

development programme, was integrated into the BEP in 1994. The programme targets out-of-school children and young people aged between nine and 14 years who have either not attended school or have dropped out of the education system. Training under the AFI-D programme lasts four years and is offered in both the national languages and French.

The AFI-D programme has many benefits for trainees/learners. It gives them an opportunity:

- to proceed and pursue secondary education
- to pursue professional/vocational skills training at institutions specialising in their region's socioeconomic activities, but leading to an officially recognised qualification. The integration of literacy and skills training has enabled many learners to successfully integrate into society through self-employment in agriculture or carpentry or metal-working, while others have secured employment in the public sector (as teachers or health workers) as well as in the private sector (electricians, engineers, plumbers, etc.).

Adult Non-Formal Literacy Programme (ANFLP)

Under the ANFLP, lessons are conducted in both French and national languages. The ANFLP is an integrated project which links literacy learning to rural development and is therefore organised and structured to meet the specific socioeconomic and livelihood needs of adult learners, most of whom live in rural areas. To this end, the programme focuses on technical skills training in: agriculture (livestock rearing, crop farming, and market gardening); basic financial management and book-keeping; health education and the organisation and management of individual and/or group socioeconomic activities. Such an approach to literacy empowerment has enabled parents to improve their living conditions as well as to assist their children in undertaking their school work.

With regards to literacy training, young adult and adult learners attend French classes which use the ALFAA method of teaching French based on functional literacy. The ALFAA method enables learners to reach a standard equivalent to the 6th year of standard primary education. The principal goal of such a strategy is to enable adult learners to use their acquired literacy and livelihood skills to improve their living conditions as well as

to empower them to effectively monitor their children's schoolwork through enhanced bilingual skills.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The BEP has achieved major accomplishments which have had strong and positive impacts on the entire education system as well as on the quality of life of the beneficiaries. The following are key indicators of the impact of the BEP.

- Many children and young people have benefited from the BEP and many beneficiaries have acquired professional qualifications. For example, during the 2005/06 school year, the BEP was operating:
 - 36 E centres catering for 2,832 children aged between three and six years, of which 50.28 % were girls
 - 112 bilingual primary schools with a total of 14,301 pupils, 46.82 % of whom were girls
 - two CMS with 337 pupils, 48.37 % being girls.

The bilingual approach to education has proved to be more cost effective and efficient than the normal system. For example, a comparative study by Korgho (2001), revealed that bilingual schools are less expensive than normal schools: the average unit cost of educating a holder of the Primary School Certificate (CEP) at a bilingual school in Nomgana is 455,388 CFA francs (USD 922,373) compared to 3,879,396 CFA francs (USD 7,857,723) – a difference of 3,424,008 CFA francs (USD 6,935,357).

- Bilingual schools have also proved to be more efficient and effective with regards to skills acquisition than normal schools. As the table below indicates, the pass rate in the Primary School Certificate (CEP) for pupils in bilingual schools – where they only spend four to five years – has generally been higher than the national average, despite the fact that the CEP tests are entirely in French and intended for pupils who have spent at least six years in school.
- At the family level, the existence of 3 E programmes has led to an improvement in the quality of education and childcare services that are provided to children by the parents. This has, in turn, led to a drop in child mortality. The early childhood centres have also liberated parents, particularly women, to engage in other livelihood activities.



- The pupils' knowledge of traditional stories, songs, and dances and mastery of local music instruments (tom-tom, African xylophone, castanets, flutes etc.) has considerably improved. Pupils from bilingual schools achieve outstanding results during cultural competitions organised by the primary education area authorities.
- Pupils enjoy taking part in practical and manual activities, e.g. in agriculture and gardening. Their small-holdings produce harvests that improve their home-produced school meals. Breeding poultry, sheep or goats is of great interest to the pupils, who derive a small profit from it that earns them small incomes.
- Beneficiaries of the BEP, especially small-scale farmers, have managed to use their acquired knowledge and skills for productive engagement in various socioeconomic fields such as health (hygiene and nutrition) and agricultural production (livestock and crop farming). Programme skills have therefore enabled beneficiaries to expand their livelihood activities and thus to increase family incomes. This has resulted in improved living conditions and ability to finance the education of children.
- Parents are more supportive of education and are encouraging children to attend school due to the benefits they have enjoyed from improved literacy skills. This has resulted in higher school attendances especially among girls.

- The programme has also improved social networking within the communities as well as the organisation and management of community developmental activities. For example, community groups are now able to keep group-activity records in their mother-tongue. Yet the need for official communication has seen several community groups requesting training in French.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

The effective implementation of the programme has been hampered by the following challenges:

- widespread resentment and ignorance of national languages in the formal education system
- the resistance by some schools and/or teachers to cooperate with local communities and development facilitators in promoting the growth of the education system
- the huge disparity between available resources and high levels of grassroots demand
- limited trained manpower to effectively implement the bilingual approach to education across the entire sector
- limited expertise to make national languages an effective instrument of bilingual education
- the big challenge of adapting and integrating national languages into the education system

- the fact that official examinations take no account of national languages or the disciplines of culture and production
- high levels of poverty which limit parents' abilities to support the education of their children. To minimise the impact of these challenges on the BEP, the following strategies have been adopted:
 - responding to community demands (demand-driven approach): this strategy entailed providing bilingual education to communities that requested the programme
 - encouraging the involvement of other actors in the education system
 - empowering local communities to enable them to support the use of local languages in schools
 - providing on-the-job refresher training for teachers and teacher trainers with special focus on bilingual education modules
 - improving the image of national languages by enacting laws that aim to strengthen the integration of national languages as well as cultural and productive studies in national and competitive exams.
- The integration of literacy learning with skills training motivates many children and young people to attend school and at the end, enables learners to easily integrate into the local economy.
- Parents are more motivated to participate in the education of their children and the development of their schools if the learning process is relevant to local needs and realities. Most importantly, the bilingual model also reinforces social cohesion because language is an important unifying factor.
- The bilingual approach also enables those who have been excluded from the education system for reasons other than non-attendance, such as the blind, to be integrated via the bilingual Braille programme.

CONCLUSION

A major lesson that emerged over the years is that, the use of local languages as the medium of instruction in schools and training enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning process. In addition, the bilingual approach to education enhances the language acquisition abilities of learners. Most importantly, for a poor country like Burkina Faso, the approach reduces education costs and thus enables parents to support the education of their children.

SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability of the BEP is based on strong partnership that has been developed with governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as with local communities and professional researchers. Such partnerships have enabled the programme to benefit from local moral support as well as a wide range of technical expertise and financial support systems.

LESSONS LEARNED

The following main lessons have emerged from the programme:

- Bilingual instruction improves the effectiveness and efficiency of both the teaching and learning process. It also allows the length of the learning process to be significantly reduced without, at the same time, compromising the quality of education received by learners. The reduction of study time also reduces the cost of education.
- People with poor skills in French as the official language can benefit from the education system like everyone else.

SOURCES

- Korgo, Albert, (2001): Comparative study of costs between normal and bilingual schools in Nomgana, in the district of Loubila, Ouagadougou: OSEO
- UNDP Human Development Report, 2007/2008: Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a divided World

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Mother-tongue Literacy in the Guera Region

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

12,825,000 (2013)

Official languages

French, Arabic

Other spoken languages

130 indigenous languages including Arabic Chadian, Bagirmi, Dazaga, Kanembu, Maba, Ngambay, Sango, Sar

Access to primary education, net intake rate (NIR)

79.27%

Youth literacy rate

(15–24 years, 2015, UIS estimation)

Female: 50.17%; Male: 55.30%; Both sexes: 52.75%

Adult literacy rate

(15+ years, 2015, UIS estimation)

Female: 31.92%; Male: 48.49%; Both sexes: 40.17%

Statistical sources

- UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Mother-tongue Literacy in the Guera Region (Alphabétisation en langue maternelle dans la Région du Guéra)

Implementing Organization

Federation of Associations for the Promotion of the Guera Languages (Fédération des Associations de Promotion des Langues de Guéra - FAPLG)

Language of Instruction

Official and 15 local languages

Funding

International NGOs and foreign donors including the Chadian State, World Food Programme (WFP), SIL International, Wycliffe USA, Wycliffe Sweden, Wycliffe Germany, Wycliffe Great Britain. Also self-funding with contributions from the communities.

Programme Partners

Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy, Linguistic Society, the Chad Government, PAM, SIL International, Wycliffe USA, Wycliffe Sweden, Wycliffe Germany, Wycliffe Great Britain

Annual Programme Costs

CFA 102 474 780 (USD 211,436);

Annual programme cost per learner:

CFA 13 970 (USD 29)

Date of Inception

2001

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Chad is a developing country ranking 184 out of 187 in the Human Development Index for 2013 (UNDP, 2013). The total adult literacy rate stands at 40.4% (UIS, 2015). In order to deal with the need for adult literacy education, Chad has set up three technical departments: the *Direction de l'Alphabétisation* (DIAL – Literacy Directorate), *Direction de la Promotion des Langues Nationales* (DPLN – Directorate for the Promotion of National Languages) and the *Direction de l'Éducation Non-Formelle* (DENF – Directorate for Non-Formal

Education). Each of these are represented at local levels by literacy inspectors and supervisors.

The Guera region is a transitional region between the North and South of Chad, situated in the central Sahel zone. The region has an area of 53,000 km² and a population of 553,795 (UN STATS, 2009). It has a large potential for agriculture and livestock farming, which could cover both its own food needs and those of the neighbouring regions. In 2009, the region's illiteracy rates stood at 89% (UNESCO, 2012) with poverty also at high levels.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The *Federation of Associations for the Promotion of the Guera Languages* (FAPLG) is a civil society organization formed in 2001 with the aim of developing the 26 languages of the Guera region, promoting language teaching and education, and creating income-generating activities to halve the very high level of illiteracy and its corollaries in the region by 2025. They hope to contribute to solving the problem of illiteracy which, in their view, is closely linked to the causes of under-development, as well as promoting and making possible the continuing education of farmers, especially women, key factors in improving Chad's economic situation.

The FAPLG was formed at the initiative of native speakers in the region, on observation of linguistic communities in the region where the illiteracy rate was over 90% and poverty and disease were strangling their socio-economic development. The institution was officially formed in Bitkine at a General Assembly organized by members of the executive boards of the three founding associations: *APLK Association pour la Promotion de la Langue Kenga* (Association for the Promotion of the Kenga Language), *APLD Association pour la Promotion de la Langue Dangaleat* (Association for the Promotion of the Dangaleat Language) and *ADPLG Association pour le Développement et la Promotion de la Langue Guerguiko* (Association for the Development and Promotion of the Guerguiko Language). In 2004, soon after the FAPLG was created and had obtained authorization to operate, it was joined by other associations. It now has 18 member associations, of whom 15 already run the literacy programme and 3 are preparing to put it in place. Today the circle now extends to the 26 languages of the region. Of these languages, 15 have already been taken on by the FAPLG and are being used for literacy courses for their native speakers, with a further three at the final stages of preparation for starting literacy courses. These 15 languages include: Dangaleat, Guerguiko, Kenga, Migaam, Sokoro, Dadjo, APLB, Bidiya, Mawa, Saba Sorki, Mogoum, Oubi, Zerenkel, Baraïne, More and Eeni.

Multi-lingual instruction including teaching in the mother-tongue is something relatively new in Chadian education system, as although the current debate in Chad is focused on bilingualism (French-Arabic), it

does not include trilingualism or plurilingualism, which would take into account the local languages. The Guera is an exception because, despite this debate, mother tongues have their place in literacy and pre-school centres.

In addition to the adult literacy programme, the FAPLG is also developing a pre-school programme which consists of providing basic education to children aged 5 to 6 years in the mother tongue with time for oral French to prepare them for successful admission into school.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Develop and standardize the languages of the Guera to allow literacy of their native speakers
- Build the capacity of member associations in planning and managing local language literacy programmes, through the training of members in certain language associations
- Develop teaching materials and written manuals on subjects relating to community development and the daily life of people in the Guera, agriculture and livestock farming
- Create a literate environment through the publication of a range of literature in the languages of the Guera
- Serve as a focal point between farmers organizations and other institutions to help them in implementing their programme in the context of literacy
- Harmonize, coordinate, supervise, monitor and evaluate the activities of the language associations
- Strengthen solidarity between member associations

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Since its inception in 2001, 18 communities have been organized into associations. 15 associations have a literacy programme which includes the adult programme, the pre-school programme and the functional literacy programme. Twenty seven supervisors and coordinators have been trained with two staff members at an advanced Masters level. There are 31 functional literacy centres and 5 premises built for member associations. One building has been built for FAPLG headquarters and hundreds of titles have been published for native language speakers.

On the FAPLG executive board is a technical body consisting of a director, four other coordinators and

a finance manager. This technical board oversees linguistic research, the elaboration of teaching materials, monitoring and evaluation, raising awareness and funds mobilization and seeking partnerships with other institutions.

TEACHING-LEARNING APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

The programme offers a series of four six-month mother tongue literacy courses. This time is divided into two stages. In the first two years, the learners concentrate on mastering reading and writing in their mother-tongue. Following this stage, the youngest learners are steered towards the transition classes from mother-tongue to French in two courses and sit an exam to obtain a primary school certificate in state schools. After this stage, learners wishing to continue their studies do so in a state school. Meanwhile, adults are steered towards functional literacy centres where classes are given using books produced in their mother tongue. Themes covered include market gardening, agriculture, livestock farming, poultry and small livestock farming, health, proverbs, history of the people, management, income-generating activities and commerce. As part of the curriculum, participants carry out practical activities under the supervision of experts in the subject. These income-generating activities provide them with the financial means to pay for mats and chalk for the centre along with an incentive for the instructor. After being monitored for two years by the FAPLG, these centres are organized into community interest groups and evolve in the context of socio-economic development helping to improve their lives.

The FAPLG is aiming to halve the illiteracy rate by 2025. The strategy is to teach literacy in the mother tongue as this option is considered to be the most rapid and effective. In consequence, books concerning scientific methods on agriculture and livestock farming, produced under the direction of experts, provide farmers with practical knowledge enabling them to increase their annual productivity, and also grow various products during the dry season. Among other subjects covered by the production of manuals is the cultural question, which reunites learners with their identity heritage through stories, proverbs, oral histories, myths, and legends, or simply subjects relating to the life of the population. The activities started

are systematically directed towards socio-economic development. The learners' income-generating activities in the market gardens earn them money and allow them to vary the quality of their diet with fresh vegetables, not otherwise available during the dry season. Through these activities, people are teaching themselves as well as learning from ideas gained in the centres and from books translated into their language.

PROGRAMME CONTENT (CURRICULUM)

In 2012, the National Literacy Plan for Chad was prepared as a guide and reference document for all those involved in literacy. This manual is based on the reality of the country and especially of each community. Key actors, including the FAPLG, participated in decisions on its content. In addition to the reference document, subject content is developed by the local association according to the community's needs. The technical aspects are the responsibility of technical advisers, the technical staff of the FAPLG with the approval of the literacy department in the Ministry of National Education (DAPLAN – Department of Literacy and Promotion of National Languages).

The Governing Council of the FAPLG is composed of representatives of member associations. During a planning meeting all needs for the next campaign are determined and discussed by the Governing Council. These needs are summarized in reports of programme managers which the associations pass on to FAPLG staff. Feedback from staff monitoring visits helps to determine the needs of learners and reports of statutory meetings in each community are also sent to the technical staff. The associations send in the reports at the beginning of each month during campaign periods. The FAPLG, in turn, sends a report to the sponsor every quarter and another report to Chad's administrative authorities at the beginning and at the end of each campaign.

The producers of materials vary according to the nature of the publication. Basic syllabuses are prepared by technical advisers with the help of programme workers or informants on a given language. Materials for newly literate and more advanced readers are prepared during workshops organized for the purpose. Alternatively, experts in different fields are invited to speak on the subject concerned. The material is adapted to the methodology by technical advisers.

ers and native speakers with technical support from FAPLG staff.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

Each language association affiliated to the FAPLG has a programme manager, supervisors, instructors and an elected executive board which supervises activities at a local level. Its staff are chosen by the community and are responsible to that community.

Facilitators are volunteers and oversee up to 30 learners. They are given an incentive of around 33,000 CFA per campaign (USD 68) of which 20% is paid by the community and the rest coming from funds mobilized externally.

Candidates for the post of facilitator must have at least the intermediate secondary certificate BEPC (equivalent to a secondary school certificate gained at the age of 15 or 16) and be a native speaker of the community language. After their recruitment, facilitators are given an initial training of three weeks which covers the following main subjects: spelling in the community language, teaching methods for the syllabus, teaching practice, general concepts related to literacy, adult teaching methods and management of the literacy centre. At the end of the training, there is a final test which identifies the best candidates. After the final test, the candidate is passed for appointment as a facilitator by the FAPLG. After this training, refresher courses are held in mid-campaign. Facilitators are also re-trained each year at the beginning of the campaign on subjects considered necessary by the programme managers in the course of their monitoring visits.

At different levels, the programme provides for further training of trainers: the FAPLG technical staff, as master trainers, receive training in the framework of capacity building by SIL International experts and other external training bodies (Africa Training Programme, seminars and symposiums). The FAPLG technical staff build the capacities of member associations by training their coordinators and supervisors who in turn train their facilitators.

The training of facilitators and members of certain associations is carried out on a local level by the asso-

ciation itself. As an example, associations currently in a position to train their facilitators include APLK, APLD, ADPLG and ASDEPROLAM.

ENROLLMENT OF LEARNERS

The main target groups of the programme are adults, out-of-school youth, women and girls.

After an awareness-raising visit by the executive board of each association to each of the villages in its community, applicants are registered by facilitators recruited by the association for the purpose. Each facilitator then consults the learners with a view to drawing up a timetable, fixing class days and the place of classes. Bearing in mind the burden borne by women in Chad, especially in the Guera, classes are held in the afternoon from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. to allow them to attend courses. In all, the courses consist of three hours per day and four classes a week. The literacy campaign lasts six months, from January to June, just after the harvest and before the advent of the next rainy season. This period was chosen in consultation with the learners. Each adult centre has at least 30 learners at each level and a trained instructor. Each learner buys, at a subsidized price of 200 CFA (USD 0.40), teaching and general culture books. Classes are held in a barn or in a school at the end of the school day in public schools.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

During classes the facilitator is monitored by a supervisor, who in turn is monitored by a coordinator. Two (evaluation) tests are held during the campaign. The last assessment is done by the supervisor rather than the facilitator so as to determine the learner's precise ability to move up to the next level. At the end of two years of learning, learners can read and write well in their language.

Learners who complete each level of the programme, including the transition period supplemented by classes in French, depending on their jurisdiction, may also have the option to sit for exams to pass the primary school certificate from the National Education System. To better measure the impact of the programme, a monitoring and evaluation questionnaire is submitted to the beneficiaries through the programme supervisors at the end of each literacy campaign.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Day-to-day monitoring of associations' literacy activities is carried out by supervisors, coordinators and technical advisers of each association and the technical staff of FAPLG. The latter organizes unannounced monitoring and evaluation visits two or three times in each campaign and for each association. For this purpose, it collects statistical data for evaluation reports to be sent to the various partners, such as DAPLAN, SIL, WFP, the Guera National Education Department (DDEN-G) and foreign donors. The FAPLG also carries out internal audits each year to control the use of funds allocated for each member association and to strengthen financial management capacities.

Monitoring is also carried out by the NGO Directorate (DONG), DAPLAN and the University of N'djamena at specific intervals. Every four years, the DONG sends a monitoring mission to evaluate the activities of the FAPLG and the accounts are audited every two years. Annual reports are sent to the Regional Delegation of Education and then to DGAPLAN Direction Générale d'Alphabétisation et de la Promotion des Langues Nationales (General Direction for Literacy and the Promotion of National Languages) working under the Minister for Basic Education and Literacy.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Expected impacts are an improvement of communities' living standards, in particular poverty reduction, thanks to the use of knowledge acquired in the literacy centres.

In 2003 (following the formation of the federation) the literacy campaign of 2003–2004 reached a total of 1,113 learners. As the number of associations increased, the number of learners also increased. In the 2012–2013 campaign, 13 languages were in operation with 6,577 learners enrolled. Of these 5,356 were women enrolled in 143 adult centres with 166 classes including 31 functional literacy centres. There were also 69 pre-school centres for 1,859 children, including 852 girls. This campaign covered three departments of the Guera region, with 100 villages being reached by the programme.

At the last evaluation by the DONG team in April 2011, considerable improvement in the communities' living standards was noted. The beneficiary populations are applying their new knowledge in their daily lives: market gardening activities, livestock farming, and the organization of community interest groups. Women are showing that they benefit greatly from the manuals they read in the literacy centres on children's lives, managing household income and managing their group.

Today in the Guera region, women who attended literacy classes mostly give birth in a health centre. More of them also attend health centres for pre-natal and post-natal consultations and their children complete their schedule of vaccinations. Women now create groups or associations without having to resort to a male secretary. Based on the arithmetic learned in literacy centres, women manage their household budgets better. Instead of wasting the millet, they measure the daily or monthly ration with precise calculations. This even prevents arguments at home with the husband who often used to scold the wife for bad food management. Through the programme and regular attendance, some learners have managed to make up for the schooling lost because of past wars in the country. Success stories are shared among the communities, with some learners even progressing to become community teachers and pass on everything they have learnt. It is estimated that more than 210 former literacy learners have moved on to become either teachers in the literacy centres and public schools, secretaries of local groups and associations, or certified enabling them to follow their cursus elsewhere in public establishments.

The impact of multi-lingual teaching has been demonstrated through the programme. Knowledge which hitherto had been reserved for French or Arabic speaking readers is now within the reach of farmers, having been translated into their mother tongues. By way of example, in 2011, the Guera region was shaken by a cholera epidemic. There were several deaths. During that period, the FAPLG translated the booklet on how to avoid catching cholera into 13 languages. This brochure was printed in several copies, made available to readers and displayed on posters fixed to trees and walls in public places in the villages. The message was



understood by everyone, as it was read and understood directly in their language without the intervention of a third person. These anti-cholera measures were followed and many people did not catch the disease because they respected the prophylactic measures and applied them in their daily lives. There were villages which were not touched by the epidemic, yet all around, people were dying in their dozens.

In 2012, after a successful transition stage supplemented by evening classes in French, the ASDEPROLAM association entered 56 candidates for the primary school certificate, and of 50 candidates who passed, 30 passed with excellence.

In 2013, FAPLG's contribution to literacy training in Chad was recognised with the award of the UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The objective set by FAPLG on its formation “to develop the 26 languages of the Guera and use them to educate and train their speakers in order to halve

illiteracy by 2025” remains a challenge. Although 15 of these languages are now operative in terms of literacy, much remains to be done, because the more one embraces a community, the greater the scope of intervention, the more the need for qualified personnel is felt and the more the financial envelope rises. Among other constraints on the ground is the lack of material, human and financial resources to meet all the population's needs. This is the greatest challenge faced by the FAPLG. Another constraint, and no less serious, was the withdrawal of one of the Federation's chief donors in 2012. This has led to great financial constraints for FAPLG. To deal with this difficulty, Faplg has had to take some strong measures, including, reducing the number literacy centres, compressing the central and decentralised personnel, suspending the financing of certain communities, such as, Oubi, Eeni, Baraine, Zerenkel, Saba and Mawa. Other communities have had their activities reduced to the preschool programme and adult literacy programme.

Given the high cost of living in recent times in Chad, facilitators, although they are volunteers, have begun to ask for some form of subsistence, because they think

they could earn more in other jobs. The resources for travel for programme managers (especially for monitoring and evaluation) are also sometimes lacking.

Another lesson learnt is in relation to the context of Chad. The reason behind the success of the programme lies in its foundation which is the community. If the programme was solely run by state agents, the risk of funds being diverted would be high and the programme could not be fully implemented.

Learning literacy in a practical setting helps the learner to flourish as alongside literacy classes, they are also able to participate in income-generating activities. This brings benefits to their family, creates unity and contributes to socio-economic development.

SUSTAINABILITY

Since the creation of the FAPLG, the communities of member associations have contributed 20% of the costs of programmes for each campaign in kind or in cash. The remaining 80% is still provided by the foreign donors mentioned above, but the community is gradually taking up the baton and the donor contribution is falling. At the beginning of the partnership, the donor bore 100% of the cost and now the community bears 20% of the total cost. This is the system of progressive weaning which has been adopted. For levels three to four, the centres already provide functional literacy where they carry out income-generating activities. Based on this income, the centre itself pays for its operation, including the incentive to the facilitator, the purchase of chalks, mats, and other equipment. The FAPLG is also in the process of re-directing its foreign funding to micro credit to provide associations with the means to strengthen their income-generating activities, to cover the costs of programmes.

At a technical level, the on-the-job training of all the actors in the programme continues: literacy facilitators, supervisors, coordinators, FAPLG technical staff and members of the executive boards of the associations. At the facilitator level, the first learners are already taking over the helm, for they have better local knowledge and are competent for the position. They meet the selection criteria and are not demanding in terms of incentives.

SOURCES

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- UNESCO (2012) Plan d'action national d'alphabétisation du Tchad (2012–2015)
- UNESCO (2008) Tendances récentes et situation actuelle de l'éducation et de la formation des adultes (EdFOA) - Rapport national du Tchad
- UN STATS (2010) 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme – Chad

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I am learning your tongue, you are learning my tongue, we are understanding each other, tomorrow belongs to us

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

20,595,000 (2012)

Official language

French

Other spoken languages

Over 70 national languages

Poverty

(population living on less than USD 1.25 per day)

24% (2000–2009)

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GDP

(2010) 4.8

Access to Primary Education –

Total Net Intake Rate (NIR)

28% (2003)

Youth literacy rate (15–24 years)

Total: 67% ; Male: 72%; Female: 62% (2005–2010)

Adult literacy rate (15 years and over)

Total: 56% ; Male: 65% ; Female: 47% (2005–2010)

Statistical sources

- UNESCO Education For All Global Monitoring Report
- WorldBank (2013) Data WorldBank

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

I am learning your tongue, you are learning my tongue, we are understanding each other, tomorrow belongs to us.

(J'apprends ta langue, tu apprends ma langue, nous nous comprenons, demain nous appartient)

Implementing Organization

NGO Savoir Pour Mieux Vivre (SA.PO.MI.VIE)

Language of Instruction

Official languages and up to 70 local languages

Funding

Private sector and self-financing; The group Librairie de France provides financial support for the *Quinzaine des langues maternelles*, editors Livre Sud publish literacy and post-literacy books in French and local languages; Association Régionale d'Expansion Économique de Bonoua (AREBO) supplies resource people for conferences; Memel Foté Foundation makes their conference room available to the NGO's activities.

Programme Partners

Ministry of Culture and Francophonie; National Ministry of Education; Group Librairie de France; Livre Sud Publishing (Edilis); Institute of Applied Linguistics; International Society of Linguistics; Memel Foté Foundation; NGO Heart of Women; Association of Regional Economic Expansion; Bonoua (Arebo); Cooperative Rehoboth; Self-service Literacy and Non-formal Education (SAA / ENF); Bible Society of Côte d'Ivoire

Annual Programme Costs

CFA 3,500,000 (USD 7,200).

Programme Cost per Learner: CFA 20,000 (USD 40)

Date of Inception

2000



COUNTRY CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Côte d'Ivoire is a developing country in Western Africa. In 2013 the Human Development Index for Côte d'Ivoire stood at 168 out of 187 positioning it in the low human development category (UNDP, 2013). Female participation in the labour market is 51.8 percent in comparison to 81.2% for men (UNDP, 2013).

While French is the only official language, the country has a rich linguistic diversity with over 70 different languages. While there may be indications of change, French is the sole language of instruction in the country's education system. Part of the diversity in languages is due to a long history of immigration with figures from 1999 indicating 30-35% of the population being foreign-born, mainly from Burkina Faso, Mali, France, Guinea, Lebanon, Syria and other neighbouring West African countries (Djité, 2000). However with 52% of the population living in urban areas (UN Data, 2012), less people are communicating in their mother tongues, considering their future chances to be greater if they master the official language (Djité, 2000). Out of the over 70 languages currently in use, only 17 have more than 100,000 speakers (INS, 2013).

Adult literacy levels in Côte d'Ivoire stand at 56% globally and 47% for women. This represents 5.4 million adults, including over 3.2 million women, lacking basic literacy skills.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Savoir Pour Mieux Vivre (SA.PO.MI.VIE) is a non-profit, non-political and non-union organisation created in 2006 and registered as an NGO in Côte d'Ivoire. Taking as a motto *Knowledge is for a better life*, the organization brings together people from all walks of society, aiming to promote traditional knowledge. With a vision to save the rich variety of languages in Côte d'Ivoire, as through these understanding and insight into cultures can be gained, SA.PO.MI.VIE has taken on the task of tackling literacy needs on both an urban and a rural level. Their main objective is to help reduce the illiteracy rate to 35% by 2020 by creating a literate environment and developing a culture of writing in native languages and French.

By creating a literate environment encompassing not only French, but also national and local languages, the linguistic wealth of Côte d'Ivoire is brought to light. Traditional values are highlighted and each Ivoirian encouraged to learn at least five native languages, thus promoting acceptance of each other's differences, leveling barriers and apriorisms and creating a total social cohesion. People are made aware that learning one's native language, including reading and writing it, should be recognised as a right.

The association organises literacy classes in the native languages not only for adults, but also for school children as part of their school programme. They publish a wide range of books in the native languages including

easy readers, syllabuses, learning manuals, essays, stories, essays, among other things, all catering to the different levels readers may have and also to ease people into reading in their native languages. A main activity of the association is the organisation and participation in different literacy and reading and language events. Each year they are behind the organization of a large event called *Quinzaine des Langues or Fortnight of Languages*. It is a national two-week event, recently expanded to cover the whole year, bringing together and promoting the reading and writing of the native languages in Côte d'Ivoire.

In recognition of their achievements, in 2013, SA.PO.MI.VIE was awarded the *UNESCO Confucius Literacy Prize*.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Specific objectives relating to the programme include:

- Create a written environment for French and native languages through poster boards and other environmental indicators
- Create a variety of literature in national languages
- Promote traditional cultures through bilingual literature: tales, legends, proverbs, riddles in native languages and French
- Remove any complexes Ivorians may have with their traditional languages and cultures through lectures, roundtables, language games (scrabble, puzzles)
- Organize events (two-week events of promoting native languages, competitions for the best speaker, best polyglot, best reader) for social mobilization around national languages and traditional cultures

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

TEACHING – LEARNING APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

The main pedagogy used is active and participatory. This is based on the REFLECT method which focuses on the life experience and the environment of the learner. Learners needs are determined during a preliminary meeting or interview to assess their expectations.

All the national languages are potentially taught, to the limit of finding available specialists to teach them along with suitable locations. In large towns bilin-

gualism is promoted and specialists are bilingual in a native language and French.

Each year an event called the is held. This is a 15-day language event promoting reading, writing and speaking of the native languages. During this event, initiation sessions are organised for reading and writing in local languages. Competitions are also held for the best polyglot, the best reader, the best writer, among other things.

Since 2010, this event has been extended to cover the whole year with special activities for pupils organized during their classes and the same for adults and students during the holidays.

PROGRAMME CONTENT (CURRICULUM)

The content of the programme is jointly determined with learners according to the needs they expressed during the preliminary investigation. Classes for adults and the general public are held at the NGO, and for school-age learners, these are held in a classroom set aside in their establishment. On average there are 25 learners per group with the school programme according 64 hours per year to work directly with the students during class time. There is also a library period which is also used by the programme as well as free periods. Classes from grades 5 and 6 (ages 10-12) have been followed by the programme. They are taught the alphabet, reading and writing, various themes taken from the syllabuses, fables, proverbs and subjects relating to development.

Main topics covered relate to civil, moral and family life, health, environment, democracy, living together, rights and duties of citizens.

Materials are developed according to learners' needs by specialists of the Institute of Applied Linguistics of Abidjan, the International Linguistics Society and the Bible Society of Côte d'Ivoire in collaboration with the publishers Livre Sud (EDILIS).

Material used includes primers in local languages, bilingual texts (French/mother-tongue), whiteboards, marker pens, the board game Côte d'Ivoire: 60 languages=1 nation. Individual equipment is also supplied including notebooks, pens and pencils.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

Facilitators are usually paid on a part-time basis, on average CFA 50 000 per month (USD 103). Facilitators take care of classes of 25 participants. They each receive training by a team of trainers from the NGO. They also follow a seminar on capacity building provided by a training firm before each literacy campaign.

Facilitators are selected from a list of contacts depending on which language of instruction is needed. Each facilitator is a native speaker of the teaching language.

ENROLLMENT OF LEARNERS

The main target groups are adults and out-of-school youth, particularly women and girls. The programme is mainly run among the general public, but also at the school level from primary to secondary. Participants are tested to see if they have already learnt to read and write in the language being taught or in another national language. Groups are formed based on this information.

The programme regularly participates at national and local reading and language events promoting adult literacy and the acquisition of the national languages. Participation rates at these events are shown in the following chart.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

Evaluations of participants take place during the event *Quinzaine des langues maternelles* in the form of various competitions. Those wishing to partake compete against each other, and through the results, prizes are awarded during an official ceremony. Each participant receives an attestation of participation.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring is an ongoing process. Follow-up cards are filled out and analysed. Learners also give feedback orally, through interviews. Following feedback and analysis, reports are written. This helps to obtain results and evaluate how the programme and project is progressing.

The NGO SA.PO.MI.VIE works along with the Ministry of Culture and Francophonie for all of its activities as well as the Ministry of Education. They bring institu-

tional and technical support to the different events organized by the association.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Since 2006 the NGO SA.PO.MI.VIE has organised an event called the *Quinzaines des langues maternelles*. This event, lasting two weeks and aiming to promote mother-tongue languages, organizes a wide variety of activities surrounding the theme of mother-tongues and books including round table discussions, conference debates, a reading space open to the public. 2013 saw the 8th edition of the annual event. Through games, competitions and conferences, the importance of the mother-tongue is highlighted and brought to the fore. This event is the result of individual short events organised during 2000-2005 including *Lire en Fête* (Reading Festival), *Fête du Livre* (Book Festival), and *Journées des Langues* (Language Days).

The association also actively publishes bilingual manuscripts, and now has over 100 in their collection. These texts currently cover around 10 languages and there are plans to publish in a further 20 languages .

The project is in place for it to be rolled out across the country, but is lacking funding to do so. In the interim, in line with the financial support available, focus is

Focal points have been put in place in the following areas:

TOWNS	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION IN THE COUNTRY	LINGUISTIC FAMILY
Yamoussoukro (Kouaméfla)	Centre	Kwa
Daloa, Gibéroua, Saïoua and Ouragarhio	Centre-west	Kru
Bouna	North	Gur

given to establishments and centres who follow the same vision as the association.

Feedback from participants also show the motivation they have for the programme:

“I want to learn local languages to feel always at home, wherever I may go on the national territory”

(Je veux apprendre les langues maternelles pour me sentir toujours chez moi partout où je vais sur le territoire national.)

“I come to this class because I want to master the local languages and especially be able to read and write any Ivorian language fluently”

(Je viens à ce cours parce que je veux pouvoir maîtriser mes langues maternelles et surtout parvenir à lire et à écrire couramment n’importe quelle langue ivoirienne.)

“I come to this class because I saw what I was capable of, thanks to the initiation to reading and writing which I received in 2006, to read and write my

mother languages which I already speak. I want to deepen my knowledge”

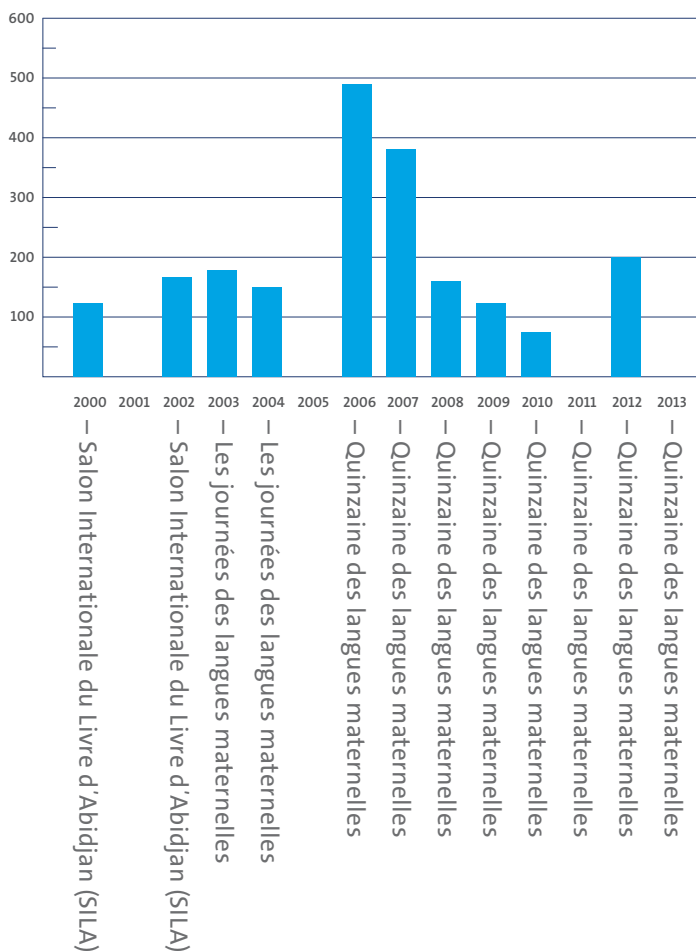
(Je viens à ce cours parce que j’ai vu que je suis capable, grâce à l’initiation à l’écriture et à la lecture que j’ai reçue en 2006, de lire et d’écrire les langues maternelles que je parle déjà. Je veux approfondir mes connaissances.)

“I want to be able to read and write the mother languages I speak”

(Je veux pouvoir lire et écrire les langues maternelles que parle.)

“I want to improve on the alphabet I learnt last year to be able to write the mother languages fluently”

(Je souhaite approfondir l’alphabet que j’ai appris l’année dernière pour pouvoir écrire couramment les langues maternelles.)



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

As with many programmes, financing is a key issue. While the programme is able to keep running through self-funding and private donations, this has hindered any projects to expand and extend the programme.

Some of these projects include the training of facilitators in the efficient use of literacy documents as well as written numeracy in the local languages.

The previously mentioned board game *Côte d'Ivoire: 60 languages=1 nation* has yet to be published. It has been tested in various establishments as well as during the annual language events. Adequate funding needed to publish it is still being obtained.

Another big challenge and also the original challenge to which the programme tries to respond comes with the modernisation of Côte d'Ivoire. Mastering the native languages is not seen as a priority among the general population, even looking down on them. Urbanisation is at the forefront and so convincing people to hold on to and master a language they don't consider of value is an ongoing and constant challenge. The fact that Côte d'Ivoire has over 70 national languages only increases this challenge, many of them risk dying out if action is not taken. The association considers each language to be of equal value. A lan-



guage is seen as a brick which is both a single entity and also necessary to building a nation, reinforcing peace and reconciliation. Taking the interest and needs of each one into account is a strategy that has shown itself to work so far.

SUSTAINABILITY

The programme runs on self-financing and private donations. This has proved sustainable so far, and no plans are underway to change this form of funding.

The programme has yet to be reproduced throughout Côte d'Ivoire and abroad, but this is a possible project under discussion. Following an enquiry made during the 32nd Book Salon in Paris (Salon du Livre du Paris), the interest of Ivoirians living in Paris to learn their native languages was aroused. During the 33rd Salon, the following year, a conference was held which many Ivoirians from the diaspora participated in.

The growing interest of the population and public administrations to save and promote the national languages is a key indicator of the sustainability of the

programme. The Ministers of Education and of culture are looking at ways for teaching the national languages in schools. The programme is also looking to participate in the emergence of the country in 2020.

INTERNET SOURCE

- INS (2013) République de Côte d'Ivoire Institut National de Statistique
- UN Data (2013) Côte d'Ivoire

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eBooks and Family Literacy Programme

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

94,101,000 (2013)

Official languages

Amharic; English (there are more than 75 officially recognised regional languages, e.g.: Tigrinya; Oromifa; Tigre; Harari; Agaw; Afar)

Poverty

(Population living on less than USD 1.25 per day)
31% (2011)

Total expenditure on education as % of GNP

4.74 (2010)

Youth literacy rate (15–24 years, 2015)

Female: 67.8%; Male: 71.13%; Both sexes: 69.5%

Adult literacy rate (15+ years, 2015)

Female: 41.1%; Male: 57.2%; Both sexes: 49.1%

Statistical sources

- UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

eBooks and Family Literacy Programme

Implementing Organization

Canadian Organization for Development (CODE-Ethiopia)

Language of Instruction

Amharic and Oromo

Funding

CODE-Ethiopia, Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL)

Programme Partners

Electronic Information For Libraries (EIFL) and Canadian Organization for Development (CODE)

Annual Programme Costs: USD 20,000

Annual programme cost per learner: USD 219.80

Date of Inception

2014

COUNTRY CONTEXT

The linguistic and cultural heritage of Ethiopia is rich and complex. More than 80 ethnic groups, each with its own distinct local languages, live in the country. Some of the languages spoken have a written script, with Amharic the most common (Alidou and Glanz, 2015). Other languages have, more recently, adopted Latin script or used a mixture of Amharic and Latin characters to produce a hybrid script. The multilingual environment has been actively supported by the government since the 90s, when the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) took power and led the transition to a federative form of government, which it still leads. Each of the states in the new federation has been encouraged to use local languages for administrative, judiciary and educational purposes. Primary schools classes are conducted in 21 different languages, while some local languages are also used in higher education. Amharic, the official language of the federal government, is taught as a second language in

states where it is not the mother language (*ibid.*). This variety of different linguistic uses and scripts should be taken into account in the design of educational and literacy policies.

Although the federal government has sought to promote primary, secondary and adult education, a large part of the population still struggles with literacy, especially in rural areas and among women (Shenkut, 2005). This has been compounded by the low levels of financial and material resources available for delivering recent education reforms. Many schools are poorly equipped, often lacking reading rooms and libraries, and with access to few books that are outdated or inappropriate for the age or skills level of the students (CODE-Ethiopia, 2015).

However, recent investment in primary and secondary education has overall had a positive impact on young people, though adults have not benefited to the same extent. According to a recent survey, almost half of

Ethiopian fathers and a third of mothers have completed primary school, while a significant proportion (45 per cent of fathers and 73 per cent of mothers) have no education (LSMS and World Bank, 2015). Several studies highlight the significant correlation between the culture of literacy within a family and children's acquisition of literacy skills (Hanemann, 2013). In addition, the risk of school failure and drop-out is lower when parents participate actively in learning activities with their children. Therefore, adult education and literacy skills should be enhanced, not only to respond to adults' needs, but also to enable parents to be more involved in the educational experiences of their children.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

CODE-Ethiopia is a non-profit, non-governmental local organization established in 1994 as a partner of CODE, the [Canadian Organization for Development through Education](#). Since 1959, CODE has supported the publication of books that engage and enhance literacy skills for children and young people, the establishment and the maintenance of libraries, and teacher training around the world. Up to now, Code-Ethiopia has established 97 community libraries (CLs) in rural Ethiopia, serving local communities in ways that reflect their cultural, social and economic lives.

The eBooks and Family Literacy Programme (eBFLP) was piloted between May 2014 and June 2015. eBooks are digital versions of books, which can be accessed online, by computer or other information and communication technology (ICT) tools, or can be downloaded, printed and used offline by anyone who can access an internet connection or has access to the PDF copy of the eBook. The accessibility characteristic is particularly relevant in a multilingual context where books in local languages are scarce. Providing access to the same book in different languages is an immediate response to this need. The accessibility issue is also relevant given the prohibitive cost of having books printed in all the different languages.

The pilot programme was funded by a grant from the Electronic Information for Libraries Public Library Innovation Programme (EIFL-PLIP). The grant covered the costs of providing the three pilot libraries with computers, LCD projectors, projection screens and six

eBooks commissioned from local writers and illustrators. The salaries of the full-time librarians were covered by local governments.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Overall, eBFLP aims to promote reading, as well as critical and creative thinking, among families in rural Ethiopia, through activities that can support whole-family literacy as well as literacy development at pre-school age.

Specific objectives are:

- Providing access to digital, mother-tongue, quality, pre-school materials to children and their families in rural Ethiopia.
- Developing, publishing and distributing culturally and linguistically relevant early literacy materials.
- Engaging parents in their children's educational activities and providing knowledge and skills on how children grow, develop and learn.
- Connecting parents with community learning centres and resources, and providing opportunities for them to network and develop mutual-support mechanisms within their community.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The six librarians from the three community libraries participating in the pilot (two librarians from each CL) were provided with a set of eBooks in different local languages and the necessary ICT tools to use them in family literacy workshops. CLs were selected based on the interest and commitment shown by librarians.

The pilot worked with three rural community libraries: Fitcha, in the state of Oromia; Dubertie, in the state of Amara; and Dire Dawa, one of two city administrations in Ethiopia. Library staff organized and managed at least three family literacy workshops in the period between May 2014 and June 2015, aimed at pre-school children and their parents. Every workshop ran for eleven weeks and sessions were given on weekly basis.

APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

At the heart of eBFLP is the family literacy approach: children and their parents are engaged in learning activities that encourage them to interact and to learn from each other. The approach fosters intergenerational engagement within the family and the com-

munity, and bridges formal and non-formal learning, supporting parents and children to become partners in education. Drawing on this approach, the programme aims to increase parents' awareness of the importance of early literacy for the cognitive development of their children. Moreover, it helps parents to enrich their relationships with their children through active participation in educational activities and to develop competences in order to nurture their children's language and literacy skills, as well as their interest in reading.

The programme comprises eleven workshop sessions in which both parents and children participate. During these sessions, the librarian guides families through activities intended to improve the language and literacy skills of children and their parents, as well as the parents' ability to help their children. Workshop sessions are structured as follows:

- Activities to do before reading – including a revision of what was covered in the previous section.
- Activities to do while reading – including reading a story out loud, and asking participants what they learned from it.
- Activities to do after reading – including discussion of assignments and homework and the distribution of a printed copy of a new eBook to each child.

In a typical session, the librarian might read an eBook aloud to participants and set modeling activities that parents can use when reading with their children at home. The reading is preceded by a warm-up activity aimed at improving oral language and phonemic awareness and other activities to foster the ability to make inferences drawing on the title and illustrations of the books. One of the core pre-reading activities is 'book walking'. The librarian goes through the pages of the book and participants share their expectations about the story, using the illustrations. While reading, participants are encouraged to discuss the events of the story, to express their opinion on the main characters and to imagine how the story will evolve. After the reading, children and parents read the story again, by themselves, and are then engaged in more proactive follow-up activities, such as drawing, acting or physical games. At the end of every session, the librarian gives the printed copy of the book to the families, and asks them to complete a task at home before the following session.

The eBFLP curriculum has been developed to address both early reading and pre-literacy skills. The first eight sessions are focused on reading the six eBooks proposed by the librarians, while, in the last three sessions, participants create two eBooks of their own.

The use of eBooks as learning materials is a positive way of addressing literacy acquisition. Children can either listen to the book being read or read it by themselves. They can also click on the more challenging words or expression to hear the right pronunciation or definition. This same option can be used by adults who need support in strengthening their reading skills. Moreover, eBooks represent a particularly useful resource in multilingual and rural contexts. The same eBook can be translated into several different languages, which can be selected from the main menu. At the same time, eBooks offer a useful alternative in rural and remote areas, where access to commercial print books may be limited due to their cost.

TEACHING MATERIAL

The six eBooks used during the pilot phase were produced by local authors and illustrators and made available in two local languages, Amharic and Oromo. They cover themes related to animals, school life and friendship. Every book includes a list of suggested activities for the librarians, to help them to conduct sessions effectively. Suggested activities include: rhyming, drawing a picture based on the story, and asking questions about the cover of a book.

During the last three sessions, participants write and design their own eBook. Children and families write their own stories. Two stories are then selected, through a process facilitated by librarians, and further developed. The other stories are kept for reference and may be published in the organization's biannual magazine. Illustrations by participants are added at the end. The final selected stories are given to CODE-Ethiopia and retouched by professional book developers and illustrators. Each new eBook created enriches the library collection and the experience of its users with a meaningful story grounded in the community's values, traditions and memories.

Examples of the eBooks created by participants can be found on the organization's website: <https://codeethiopiadigitalbooks.wordpress.com/workshops/>

RECRUITING AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

The CLs were established not only to collect books and provide access to resources. For CODE, a successful CL should be more than a reading room. It should meet the learning needs of all the members of the local community and promote a wide range of learning activities. For this reason, CL staff should manage the library in a way that reflects the needs and wishes of the local community.

To improve the capacity of librarians to create programmes for the promotion of reading, CODE-Ethiopia organized a one-week workshop in December 2014, at the Cooperative Training Centre of the Ministry of Education, in Addis Ababa. The librarians who participated had attended other reading promotion training and library management courses. During the training provided for eBFLP, they were trained in family literacy approaches and how to design a literacy programme, and taught the ICT skills required for the programme, such as the capacity to work with specific software for eBooks production or to use data projectors and computers more proficiently. The librarians were also provided with assessment tools to track the impact of the programme. New training courses are planned.

ENROLMENT OF LEARNERS

Every library implementing eBFLP promoted the programme by posting advertisements in places where families spend time, such as early childhood education and development centres and primary schools. The advertisements were printed in languages spoken within the community, mainly Amharic, Oromo, Somali and English.

Only applicants meeting specific requirements were eligible for the programme: parents with basic literacy skills in one local language and at least one child aged between three and six years old. Parents had to commit to attending each of the eleven sessions. Participants were selected from eligible families by lottery. In some cases, parents with low literacy skills were accepted as well, but additional support was provided by referring them to adult literacy centres, as in the case of the CL in Dire Dawa. Adults who did not have solid literacy skills were also supported by librarians during the workshops.

ASSESSMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The effective implementation of the programme and its evaluation were assured by assessment tools, which were used before, during and at the end of the pilot, and by monitoring visits conducted by CODE-Ethiopia.

Questionnaires and tests were provided to librarians during training to track and document the work undertaken. A test was administered to children before and at the end of the programme, in order to assess their literacy skills and understanding of the use of printed words. A librarian might, for example, show an illustrated book to a child and ask her questions regarding books and their use. Questions could include identifying the front and the back of a book, where a story starts, and where he or she should continue to read when at the end of the page. Another questionnaire was used to gather background information about families, such as the schooling level of parents and their reading habits. A third and final questionnaire was used to collect families' feedbacks on the eBooks developed by CODE-Ethiopia and on the related activities. This was done to adjust the programme to local need. For parents, a separate assessment tool was created to record baseline data and evaluate the programme. Some librarians (for example, in Fiche) have also developed their own questionnaire for parents and tried to collect information from participant parents. CODE-Ethiopia provided a service for librarians who needed additional support in the administration of the assessment tools. The data collected through the assessment tools were analysed by CODE-Ethiopia in order to better understand the impact and effectiveness of the programme, as well as to find ways to improve it, taking into account feedback from parents and children.

IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

ACHIEVEMENTS

Between May 2014 and June 2015, eleven workshops ran in three pilot CLs. Each workshop reached, on average, twenty children and their families. A total of ninety-one participants attended in one year (some of them going to multiple workshops).

The impact of the project on children has been considerable. Analysis of the data collected through the

assessment tools highlights the significant increase in the print awareness of the children. In addition, according to the libraries' records, the number of visitors has grown in the three pilot CLs, showing an increasing interest from adults in the resources and activities offered by the libraries.

Most of the librarians who participated in the pilot reported gains in confidence in implementing and promoting reading activities as part of their job. With regard to the impact on participants, CODE-Ethiopia focused primarily on children's outcomes, but the whole community benefits from the new ICT tools available in their CLs.

Among the many innovative features of the programme, one of the most interesting was the production of new eBooks, created collaboratively with families, for the library's collection.

CHALLENGES

The family literacy approach embraced by eBFLP aimed to enhance early literacy skills by involving parents in the educational process. For many parents, participation was also an opportunity to enhance their own language and literacy skills. Parents were, however, required to have reached a minimum threshold level in literacy in order to enrol in the programme, as otherwise they would not have been able to fully participate in the activities. This baseline literacy level was not always enough to enable parents to participate actively with their children in some of the more challenging reading activities. This is a crucial point to take into account in the implementation of family literacy programmes in some rural areas of Ethiopia, where many adults are struggling with reading and writing skills. Some of the parents who faced these difficulties were encouraged to join an adult literacy programme.

Other difficulties were related to the training offered to the librarians. One week was, in many cases, not enough for many of them to acquire essential ICT skills. Moreover, the use of assessment tools was challenging and staff also required more training to become fully confident in their use.

Lastly, it is evident that CLs do not have enough ICTs. Some do not have internet access either and have to make do with digital copies of the eBooks saved on

their computers. Power outages make the use of computers challenging as well.

LESSONS LEARNED

The family literacy approach embraced by eBFLP succeeded in involving adults and children together in the activities of the community library. Reading and writing together is not only a means to enhance language and literacy skills, it builds community among those who share a common story and space. More specifically, reading aloud is a pleasant experience shared between parents and children as members of a community. In this common space, parents can discuss worries and difficulties regarding their role as educators and supporters of their children's education.

Reading aloud is often considered an activity reserved only for young children. However, the pilot programme gave adults and older children the opportunity to enjoy listening to someone reading to a group. Reading aloud also provided access to language usage and a vocabulary beyond their current reading and language level.

More significantly, the family literacy approach helped to fulfill the main aim of the community libraries: to be more than a simple reading room, and become a shared place where the local community can gather, and develop networks and mutual support mechanisms.

SUSTAINABILITY

Despite the fact that expenditure on the pilot programme was covered by the grant, the expansion of the programme to other CLs, projected to take place between 2016 and 2020, still faces sustainability issues. In order to address this challenge, an agreement has been reached between local authorities, community members and CODE-Ethiopia in order to transfer ownership of the programme and responsibility for it to local communities. The agreement is not a written one but rather an oral understanding between CODE and communities which were informed, before the beginning of the programme, of the budgetary limitations. This understanding includes the responsibility of each community for the costs associated with all programme's components. This responsibility corresponds to the ownership that each community has

of their CL. Almost all the ninety-five CLs established by CODE-Ethiopia and local communities over the last fifteen to twenty years are still active, owned and run by their communities using funding from the government's budget and other NGOs.

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More information and reading material is available on CODE-Ethiopia's website: www.code-ethiopia.org.

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Literacy in Local Language, a Springboard for Gender Equality

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

25,824,000 (2013)

Official Language

Portuguese

Other recognised languages

Emakhuwa (25.3%), Xichangana (10.3%), other Mozambican languages (30.1%)

Poverty

(Population living on less than 1.25 USD per day)
59.6% (2011)

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GNP (2006)

6.6% (2013)

Access to Primary Education –

Total Net Intake Rate (NIR)

87.4% (2013)

Youth Literacy Rate (15–24 years, 2009)

Total: 67.15%; Female: 56.54%; Male: 79.84%

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 2009)

Total: 50.58%; Female: 36.45%; Male: 67.35%

Statistical Sources

- UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report
- UNICEF: Information by country
- World Bank: World Development Indicators database

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Literacy in Local Language, a Springboard for Gender Equality

Implementing Organization

Associação Progresso

Language of Instruction

Portuguese and local languages (Yao, Nyanja, Makua, Makonde and Kimwani)

Funding

The European Union, the Irish Embassy in Maputo

Programme Partners

Local community leaders, Direcção Nacional de Alfabetização e Educação de Adultos (Ministry of Education and Human Development); Serviços Distritais de Educação of Sanga, Muembe, Chimbunila and Lago districts, Niassa province; Direcção Provincial de Educação e Cultura (Provincial Direction of Education and Culture) of Niassa province; Serviços Distritais de Saúde, Mulher e Acção Social (Districtal Services for Health, Women, and Social Action) of Sanga, Muembe, Chimbunila and Lago districts, Niassa

province; Direcção Provincial de Mulher e Acção Social (Provincial Direction of the Woman and Social Action) of Niassa province, FórumMulher (Mozambican network of organizations working on gender issues); ORERA – Raparigas em Acção (Girls organization), Niassa province; Community Radios in Lichinga, Lago and Sanga; MEPT – Education for all Movement; GMD - Mozambican Debt Group

Annual Programme Costs

2,444,008.00 Meticaís (approximately USD 63,360.27) over 18 months for Alfabetização, Esteira para Igualdade de Género. 6,429,679.00 Meticaís annually (approximately USD 166,687.74) over 12 months for “Teaching to Read to Learn”, for 2014.

Annual Programme Cost per Learner: 788.39

Meticaís (approximately USD 20.40) over 18 months for Alfabetização, Esteira para Igualdade de Género. 2,449 Meticaís (approximately USD 63.49) for “Teaching to Read to Learn”.

Date of Inception 2012

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Mozambique has experienced sustained growth in its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the past few decades. In spite of this development, the country continues to struggle as the upward trend in GDP has not been translated into significant reductions in poverty, or improvements in life quality for most of the population. Mozambique was ranked 178th out of 187 countries in the 2014 Human Development Index, and 21st out of 28 participating sub-Saharan African countries in the 2010 Education For All development index.

In education, the country has worked towards expanding school access and guaranteeing equal gender participation. The net enrolment rate for children in primary school has increased from approximately 70% in 2004 to 87.4% in 2013, and for girls from 66.08% to 85%. But despite the government's efforts, Mozambique continues to face low school retention and transition rates, as well as poor learning outcomes. Gender disparities still favour men over women in education, as reflected in the disparities in literacy rates found in data disaggregated according to sex (67.35% for men and 36.45% for women in 2009). Such disparities are also found in health, access to public services, and employment.

Although Mozambique is a multilingual country and the majority of the population does not speak Portuguese, bilingual education remains, for the most part, in the planning and piloting stage. During the first trimester of 2015, the Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH) announced that, from 2017, all primary school children will be able to study in one of sixteen Mozambique languages in addition to receiving education in Portuguese later on. In spite of this encouraging development, for most adult learners bilingual education is not yet a reality. Although the ministry is preparing a plan to introduce adult literacy in local languages across the whole country, the current curriculum for adult literacy continues to be available only in the official language.

The educational challenges facing the country are exacerbated in the central and northern parts of the country where most people in moderate to extreme poverty live. Niassa, the country's largest province,

is located at the northern end of Mozambique. The sparsely populated nature of the province makes the provision of public services difficult. In addition to difficulties with the provision of education, large parts of the population also lack access to health services and clean water. The province of Niassa also ranks among the Mozambican provinces with the highest adult illiteracy rates. According to the national population survey, 60% of people have low or non-existent literacy skills, including 75% of women. However, reading and writing tests conducted in 2012 by Associação Progresso found that literacy rates among adult men and women were no higher than 6% and 10% respectively. The difference in rates can, in part, be attributed to the difference in transition rates from primary to secondary school between girls and boys. While, in recent years, girls' access to the first cycle of primary school has increased compared to boys, there is still a noticeable drop in the participation of girls from the fourth class of primary school (first cycle) onwards.

Niassa also has the highest rate of child marriage in the country. Twenty-four % of women aged between twenty and twenty-four married before the age of fifteen. Tradition and local culture contribute to the continuation of some practices that prejudice women's development, including the negative treatment of widows, domestic violence, early marriage and early pregnancy, and forced school drop-out for girls.

Although Mozambican laws recognize the right of women to protection against any form of discrimination, gender differences in terms of access to opportunities continue to be an issue, even more so in rural areas such as Niassa. Associação Progresso has identified two main reasons: people's lack of awareness of the regulations, and the lack of development and financial opportunities that results from poor literacy among women.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Established in 1991, Associação Progresso is a Mozambican non-governmental organization with a mission to support rural communities in improving their living conditions and management capacity, with special attention paid to the most vulnerable: women and children. With gender equality a central theme in

the organization's programmes, Progresso has implemented several literacy and reading initiatives since its inception. Since the national primary school curriculum reform of 2003, Progresso's initiatives have included the provision of bilingual education (in Portuguese and local languages). In 2009 the organization signed a partnership agreement with the German Adult Education Association (DVV-International) for the implementation of FELITAMO, an adult literacy programme in the Makonde language. In following up this programme, Progresso has expanded its work on adult literacy, with a special focus on women.

TEACHING TO READ TO LEARN AND LITERACY, A SPRINGBOARD FOR GENDER EQUALITY

In 2011, with financial support from the European Union, the Teaching to Read to Learn (TRL) project was created and has now been implemented in nine districts (four in Cabo Delgado, five in Niassa). This project has focused on literacy teaching and learning in local languages for adults, with women and young people the priority target groups. It is projected to end in November 2016. In 2012 the organization began a new programme, Alfabetização, Esteira para Igualdade de Género (or Literacy, a Springboard for Gender Equality), with financial support from the Provincial Fund for Civil Society of the Irish Embassy in Maputo. The two programmes have since then been implemented simultaneously, creating the 18-month project, Literacy in Local Language – A Springboard for Gender Equality (hereafter referred to as 'the integrated literacy-gender programme'), which aims to provide literacy classes in local languages with attention to awareness-raising and advocacy on domestic violence and human rights.

TARGET GROUPS

The integrated literacy-gender programme has so far been implemented in 64 classes in rural communities. Communities were selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- Existence of good community-school relations.
- Presence of functioning literacy classes in local language for at least a year.
- Interest and willingness from local leadership in discussing gender issues.
- Proximity of the communities to one another.

The programme works simultaneously with two main target groups:

- Women and men already enrolled in literacy classes in twenty-five rural communities in the districts of Muembe, Sanga, Chimbunila and Lago, in Niassa province.
- Local leaders, including village chiefs, leaders of male and female initiation rites, matrons and religious leaders. Working with community leadership is considered essential to achieve the desired changes in the recognition of women's rights.

The first target group included approximately 3,200 women and 64 literacy classes in local languages. Under the leadership of trained literacy teachers, participants learned the basics of legislation on women's rights and discussed how some cultural practices can prevent or hinder the achievement of these rights. Students could read about women's rights using materials specially prepared for early readers. They were also shown how to apply community monitoring instruments focused on gender-based discrimination, and encouraged to participate in advocacy campaigns against violence and in support of gender equality.

The second target group was the local leadership of the 25 target communities – a total of 250 community leaders (10 per community), including village chiefs, leaders of male and female initiation rites (to adulthood), matrons and religious leaders. These leaders were trained in gender issues and legislation, and encouraged to reflect upon, debate and revise cultural practices that hinder women's and girls' school participation (i.e. enrolment, attendance and completion) and development.

To promote the enrolment of people with disabilities in their literacy classes, Progresso translated some of the local-language literacy texts into Braille and provided training to literacy teachers in how to teach blind people.

Progresso sees working with teachers and students to promote literacy as the engine of change. It works with local leadership in order to ensure the sustainability of results.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

The literacy in local language component, Teaching to Read to Learn, reaches between 5,000 and 5,500

(young) adults annually. Over 70% of them are women. Since its inception, it has engaged approximately 21,000 young adults (70% women) and collaborated with around 300 literacy teachers, supervisors and technical education staff. Since 2012, 4,629 students have graduated from literacy classes in four districts in Niassa. The discrepancy between the numbers of people participating in the programme and the number graduating is due to the fact that not all learners completed the school year, while others might have attended but did not participate in the final exam.

Literacy, a Springboard for Gender Equality has so far reached a total of 3,100 students, 70 literacy teachers, supervisors and technical education staff at district and provincial level, and 250 community leaders.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Progresso's strategy is to promote gender equality through the opportunities provided by literacy classes. The literacy classes in local languages provide the perfect space for dialogue and the introduction of the basic concepts of gender theory. Progresso sees this as an opportunity to disseminate the laws concerning women's rights, and organize community monitoring of gender-based violence practices, particularly traditional cultural practices that hinder the achievement of women's and children's human rights.

The overall objective of TRL was to 'contribute to the eradication of illiteracy among young people and adults in eight districts, giving priority to women and people with disabilities in order to increase opportunities for their social development'. The Literacy, a Springboard for Gender Equality project aims to promote gender equality and women's participation in twenty-five communities in four districts in Niassa province. The provision of literacy classes in local languages is a starting point to involve community leaders in raising awareness and action.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

The literacy courses are organized according to Ministry of Education guidelines. Lessons follow the national programme and curriculum within which literacy and numeracy are the main subjects, with life

skills integrated into both. Classes are offered in the afternoon and last between two and three hours. Students and teacher are allowed to negotiate which days and hours would work best for the class, with the proviso that the total number of teaching hours is at least 300 per academic year (10 months).

Progresso's evaluations have found that one academic year is often not enough time to complete the prescribed content. This is due to the poor conditions in which adult literacy classes take place. Classes frequently take place outside, under a tree, or in improvised spaces, for example a participant's yard or the local church. In addition, adult learners – and women, in particular – do not have much time for classes during the day and attending for two or three hours each day can be difficult. However, the biggest factor driving participants' failure to complete the course is poor teaching quality. There is also high turn-over among teachers, which contributes to quality issues in teaching. Given the above mentioned limitations, Progresso's courses generally take between eighteen and twenty months for the completion of teaching and testing/evaluation, including literacy, numeracy, life skills and transition to a course taught in Portuguese. Adult learners who pass the initial reading and writing exam can continue their studies on courses where they can learn Portuguese, allowing them to go further through the mainstream adult education system. This is important since Portuguese is the official language used in district and state offices and newspapers.

TEACHING AND LEARNING: APPROACHES, METHODOLOGIES AND COURSE STRUCTURE

In line with guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Human Development, Progresso is using the analytic/synthetic method for literacy teaching: beginning with a word, or a sentence, focusing on everyday life contexts. Words are introduced using pictures in the literacy textbook. The word helps to introduce a new syllable, then a new family of syllables, until students complete a syllable table. With the support of these tables of syllables, learners build their own words that are discussed by the whole class. Each lesson also includes sentence exercises and the reading of a short text. The text is read by learners, so they can practise reading from the very beginning, and discover

the meaning of the text as they discuss its content in relation with their own lives. Each revision lesson combines a different global method with the oral development of a story (a text) by the group. The story is written down by the literacy teacher. Throughout the literacy course, the students do most of the reading, and are not asked simply to imitate their teachers.

For local language adult literacy teaching, the method was further developed in collaboration with provincial education staff and experts, all of them native speakers of a specific local language. The methodology applied is the analytic/synthetic method, which was adjusted for its practical application in local languages. These experts were also very much involved in the development of textbook content and teaching manuals.

Classes generally comprise twenty-five students per teacher, in line with the minimum requirement, established by MINEDH, for payment of a subsidy (around USD 20 per month). Drop-out, however, is high and many classes finish the year with only half the required number of students. That said, evaluation of Literacy, a Springboard for Gender Equality found increased retention rates in the classes that participated in the project.

PROGRAMME CONTENT AND TEACHING MATERIAL

Although MINEDH has developed a general curriculum for adult literacy teaching, there has not been a specific curriculum for literacy teaching in local languages. To address this gap, Progresso has prepared textbooks for literacy and numeracy in five local languages. These languages are predominantly spoken in the northern provinces of the country: Yao, Nyanja, Makua, Makonde and Kimwani. Following the national curriculum, efforts were made to ensure the necessary adjustments were in line with the linguistic logic of the local language of instruction and were culturally appropriate. Since a written form of these languages had not been developed before, intensive work was needed to test textbooks with native speakers within the communities, including teachers and trainers. This was done to ensure that the language used was linguistically correct and comprehensible to speakers with diverse dialects of the same language. Once the orthography of the languages was agreed, reading and

life skills materials could be developed and/or translated into different languages.

The production of material follows the process described below:

1. Material is developed by community workers.
2. Material is tested in community groups and associations.
3. Material is translated into the local language by expert linguists in collaboration with literacy teachers.
4. Illustration and editing is done by Progresso's publishing section (which specializes in local language publishing).
5. Published material is shared with MINEDH and the provincial and district education authorities.
6. Material arrives in classrooms.

As non-state adult literacy providers are free to introduce life skills contents and develop specific materials according to their own priorities, Progresso has developed a wide range of reading and other material on life skills, covering issues such as:

- Nutrition
- Mother and child health
- HIV/AIDS
- Preventable diseases including malaria
- Clean water and sanitation
- Themes relevant to income generation, such as livestock, planting and caring of indigenous trees, and financial education
- Civic education and human rights, including land law, family law, and the law against domestic violence
- Natural resources management

With regard to the gender component of the integrated literacy-gender programme, Progresso has produced and delivered two booklets on gender-based violence and a set of posters that explain the law against domestic violence.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

Monitoring conducted by Progresso in 2014 characterized the facilitators and teachers of its adult literacy classes as follows:



A moment from the campaign against domestic violence lead by Progresso learners

- Seventy % of the teaching body is male.
- More than 50% are younger than 25.
- Facilitators live in the community in which they teach.
- Facilitators have completed at least full primary education (Grade 7), with some educated to Grade 8 or Grade 9.
- Facilitators do not have formal professional teacher training.

These characteristics are shared by the majority of literacy teachers and facilitators in the country. People volunteer to become literacy teachers. The government pays them a small amount of money (equivalent to USD 20 per month) as an incentive. MINEDH offers them a contract for the 10-month duration of the school year. The contract can be renewed in subsequent years and does not depend on student retention. Teachers retain their jobs even if large numbers of students leave their class before completing the course.

The make-up of the country's education system helps explain why facilitators for adult learners do not typically have formal preparation. Mozambique has five institutes for the training of adult educators, at which people with a 10th grade general education receive one year's professional training. Graduates find employment in provincial or district education direc-

torates as technical staff providing support to literacy teachers. The institutes do not prepare educators to work directly with adult learners, but to oversee and support those who do. Some of the institutes' graduates are part of the training team set up by Progresso to provide initial training to literacy teachers.

Although literacy teachers are hired and paid by the state, their training is generally delivered by implementing agencies, such as churches and civil society. Progresso offers two seven-day workshops during the first year of a facilitator's recruitment, as part of the initial teacher training for its literacy programmes.

The main components of the first workshop are:

- basic concepts of andragogy;
- reading and writing in the local language; and
- methodologies for initial reading and writing in the local language.

The second workshop focuses on numeracy and life skills teaching. In both workshops extensive time is dedicated to practising teaching in simulated and real classroom situations. This is followed by discussion of performance with a view to overcoming challenges and improving various aspects of teaching.

In the context of Literacy, a Springboard for Gender Equality, a seven-day seminar was offered to literacy teachers involved in the project. The seminar provided basic information about gender theory and Mozambican legislation on women's rights, and shared methodologies on how to teach life skills subjects in literacy classes. Seminars also discuss objectives, action plans, indicators and instruments proposed for the community monitoring system.

Provincial and district training teams are selected for the training of literacy teachers. For the literacy training seminar, trainers were selected from the provincial teacher training institute and from provincial and district technical education staff. The criteria for selection concerned the technical skills involved in teaching initial reading and writing, experience of teaching adults, skills and experience in teaching in a local language, attitudes and commitment. For the numeracy classes, trainers from the provincial teacher training institute were included in the team. For the gender project, trainers were selected from technical staff at the District Directorate of Education and staff from the District Directorate for Health, Women and Social Action.

For this project, Progresso has trained twelve trainers, three per district. Trainers have provided capacity development training to 64 literacy teachers and 250 community leaders, 113 of them women, in 25 rural communities.

ENROLMENT, ESTABLISHING LEARNING NEEDS AND ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Local campaigns are organized at the start of each school year to encourage young adults who do not know how to read and write to enrol in literacy classes. The campaigns use radio messages and involve local leaders, public education and Progresso staff. Once candidates are registered and classes are formed, literacy facilitators administer an oral test to assess the reading and writing skills of learners. This helps them adjust lessons to the existing knowledge of the class. The literacy facilitator also discusses with learners what subjects they would be interested in exploring in the context of life skills learning. She or he informs students about the education material already available and takes notes on what new material might need to

be produced in response to students' expressed needs. At the end of a course, students take a final written test set by district education staff and approved by provincial education authorities. Final tests entail: reading simple words, image reading (students should be able to write the appropriate word next to an image), linking images and written words, grammar exercise, constructing words with a syllabic frame, writing a composition of between three and five lines, and a simple numeracy test. Students receive a certificate of participation, signed by the Provincial Directorate of Education and Progresso after successfully completing the 300-hour literacy and numeracy programme. Although recognized nationwide, certificates may hold little practical use if learners do not follow the transition to a Portuguese taught course and acquire reading and writing skills in the official language.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The quality of teaching is assured by means of a short initial training course followed by regular supervision and one-day upgrading sessions organized by supervisors (some of whom are graduates of the training institute for adult educators) delivered monthly. Monitoring of the programme is conducted at different levels and in different places:

- At community level, the impact of the gender programme is assessed through community monitoring. Literacy teachers and students collect data on a form with indicators relevant to: women's and girls' participation in education, gender-based violence, traditional practices that prejudice women and girls, and women's participation in community-based organizations and local government. The indicators were first conceived by provincial education and Progresso staff, and later discussed with community leaders and adjusted according to their contributions. Collected data is disaggregated at class and village level and later collated for presentation to community leaders and district authorities.
- The performance of literacy classes is monitored by supervisors. Each supervisor works with ten literacy teachers, assisting classes at least twice a month and organizing one-day training sessions once a month. Supervisors report to technical district staff, who write quarterly reports to the provincial education directorate and to Progresso's provincial office.

- Progresso provincial staff visit at least one district each month. Provincial education staff and Progresso staff arrange quarterly joint supervision visits to literacy centres, where they assist classes, discuss performance with literacy teachers and provide in-service training.
- Progresso staff from headquarters visit provincial sites twice a year for monitoring.
- Donor representatives visit project implementation sites once a year.

Progresso provides annual narrative and financial reports to donors, the European Union and the Irish Embassy in Maputo. Financial reporting includes yearly external audits carried out by an international audit organization. Programme outcomes are evaluated against previously defined indicators (described in the following section). The Teaching to Read to Learn project is internally evaluated each year with provincial and district education staff and Progresso project managers. The European Union produced a results-oriented monitoring report in 2013 in Niassa province to assess performance and outputs.

COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

An important part of the gender component of the integrated literacy-gender programme is raising awareness among community members. Progresso promotes it through an activity called community monitoring, carried out by literacy students and their teachers. In addition to its awareness-raising function, community monitoring also has a clear instructional effect: as students work with survey forms and systematized data, they apply and improve their reading, writing and numeracy skills through hands-on activity. The application of recently acquired reading and writing skills is encouraged through the collection of data and the production of reports with aggregated data. Narrative reports have so far been written primarily by the literacy teacher under the supervision of the district technical staff, while students are encouraged to write sentences to add to the final reports. These reports have been presented to local leadership as well as public institutions and civil society organizations at district and provincial level. Indicators included in the community monitoring survey forms concern school/literacy class attendance and drop-out, participation

in initiation rites, early and forced marriage, teenage pregnancy, domestic violence, treatment of widows, and women's participation in local governing bodies. A practical exercise on community monitoring is conducted in a neighbouring community followed by an evaluation by seminar participants.

In 2013 Progresso devised a strategy with the organization of community libraries. Instead of having libraries in a fixed location, such as classrooms, the organization built wooden boxes to be used as mobile libraries in all literacy centres of the project. Some 171 wooden boxes were produced in order to provide a space in which to maintain the reading material. This material can be used in the classrooms for collective reading and discussions. Some communities have allowed students to borrow books to read at home. The portable libraries are managed by the literacy facilitator with the support of his/her supervisor.

IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2012 Progresso set two main targets for the Teaching to Read to Learn project, to be met by the end 2015:

1. Provide 48,750 young people and adults (70% of them women, including 5,850 with disabilities) with literacy, numeracy and life skills sufficient to improve the quality of their life. In 2014, after a mid-term evaluation, project targets were revised, leading to an increase in districts to be covered (from eight to nine) and a decrease in the number of students to be enrolled in the two provinces (from 48,750 to 22,500).
2. Contribute to the creation of human and institutional capacity to achieve the structural changes necessary for the effective eradication of youth and adult illiteracy, especially among women and people with disabilities, based on the use of native languages in literacy and life skills teaching.

For the Literacy, a Springboard for Gender Equality project, as a key aspect of the integrated literacy-gender programme, Progresso set the following specific targets:

- Raise the awareness of adult students in sixty-four literacy classes in twenty-five communities and

train them so that they can promote change in traditional practices that are harmful to women and girls (such as initiation rites for children under 16, early marriage, early pregnancy, violence against women and children, and inhumane treatment of widows).

- Increase the knowledge of 3,200 (1,625 in year one) women and men of the laws that govern gender equality and women's rights and increase their ability to relate the content of such laws to traditional and cultural practices that limit development opportunities for women.
- Support the empowerment of 250 local, traditional and administrative leaders at community level so that they have the knowledge and skills to act according to the law in addressing issues concerning women's human rights.
- Increase participation of women in local governing bodies, consultative councils and community-based formal and informal institutions in the four districts covered by the project (Lago, Sanga, Muembe and Chimbunila).

The Teaching to Read to Learn project has created real momentum for literacy in local languages in Niassa province. While local language teaching for adults was limited to two districts and five classes up until 2012, between 2012 and 2015 Progresso supported the delivery of more than 800 literacy classes in local languages, in collaboration with community leaders as well as education authorities at provincial and district level. The project gave an important boost to local language teaching, not only in Niassa (and Cabo Delgado) province, but across the whole country.

While Progresso provided textbooks and additional reading and education materials in five local languages and delivered training in literacy in local language to trainers and teachers, the government assumed responsibility for the payment of incentives to more than 200 teachers and supervisors each year. By doing so, the government raised the social status of local languages in general and of those who teach or learn to read and write in their mother tongue, in particular. In this context, an important result of the project is the prominent place MINEDH gives to adult literacy teaching in local languages in its new strategic plan for adult education (under preparation).

The Teaching to Read to Learn component of the integrated literacy-gender programme will end in November 2016. Although an impact evaluation is expected to take place in October and November of the same year, a preliminary evaluation of the gender component found increased retention rates in the literacy classes that participated in the integrated project. The external evaluation of the project (provided by a monitoring and evaluation specialist contracted by Progresso), conducted in June 2014, concluded that it was an innovative project with the active involvement of communities and a strong connection to community-based organizations. It stressed that the link between literacy and community discussions on gender contributed to changes in behaviour and attitudes within the target group. The interaction and participation of strategic partners, both public and private, was also considered an important positive point.

Advocacy and lobbying activities, carried out as part of the project, were important from an awareness-raising perspective. Changes in awareness have led to visible changes in attitudes and actions towards women and girls. For example, men and women increasingly share daily chores, and parents avoid practices that lead to school drop-out, particularly among girls. An important decision was also taken by community leaders with regard to the timing of initiation rites. Instead of being in the middle of the school year, leaders decided to conduct these traditional practices during the school holidays. They further agreed to regulate the age of children participating in initiation rites, avoiding the participation of very young children. The evaluation concluded that the project achieved most of the expected results. The evaluator recommended that Progresso should double its efforts to replicate and continue the programme. An external evaluation indicated that, as more women in literacy courses continued studying until the end of the course, the project has also helped to reduce the drop-out of girls from primary school.

At the general end-of-project meeting, held June 2014, all project participants (community leaders, literacy teachers, supervisors and technical district and provincial staff from the district directorates of Education and Women and Social Action, donor representatives and civil society) expressed their positive apprecia-

tion of the programme, because of the changes it had brought about in the perception of gender relations and their connection with day-to-day gender practice. The open and frank discussions during the sessions on women's rights, gender and culture greatly helped leaders, teachers and students to gain a different perspective on gender relations. According to a community leader in Messumba village (Lago district), 'The debates were like a flashlight!'

Lastly, by selecting communities located in close proximity to one another, the organization increased the possibility of achieving a change in traditional practices throughout the community network. As a result of Progresso's work, one leader decided to move the initiation rite from the middle of the school year, which used to cause a significant drop-out among girls, to the summer holiday at the end of the school year. His decision was followed by neighbouring communities.

TESTIMONIES

I gave up studying ... in 2001, when I lost my parents. At that time I had not yet learned to read and write. I decided to continue in 2012 in a literacy class. To facilitate my learning I chose to attend the literacy course in my mother tongue ... The same year I married Alabia Aly, and we now have two children. We're both attending literacy classes. To give time to my wife and respect her rights, we divide household activities. This week it's my turn to fetch water and bathe our children. I don't mind if my neighbors talk, my wife is not my machine, but she is a human and deserves rest, just like me.

Imede Abasse, a student from the integrated literacy-gender project

[The] advisory board in [my community] consisted of three women against seventeen men. During the sessions women never contributed on a particular subject. When they were asked to speak, they would answer: 'We agree. It's just like the men said'. In 2014 the advisory board was revitalized. Currently, nine of the twenty members of the new advisory board are women and they are very active in the board and in the community. I think it's because of their active participation that women in my neighbourhood have changed a lot lately. When we have meetings to discuss development issues, they give

their opinions. Thanks to the women we now have a water tap with clean water in (the community).

Traditional leader of a Progresso community

LESSONS LEARNED

- Making use of literacy groups to reflect on common problems and discuss possible solutions is a widely accepted concept in literacy teaching. But combining this approach with the teaching of reading and writing has often been problematic as it requires a high level of pedagogic and didactic skills on the side of the teacher. The gender project enriched the reflective approach with active teaching of reading, writing and numeracy. Specific lessons were prepared and activities undertaken to effectively link life skills teaching with the teaching of reading and writing.
- The community monitoring component of the gender component of the integrated programme turned out to be a powerful instrument for the involvement and sense of ownership of literacy teachers and students, as well as of a wider group of community members, particularly local leaders. For Progresso, systematic community monitoring represented a new way of working with communities. For education staff, community monitoring provided insight into how to make literacy teaching interesting and useful for learners.
- Establishing a direct link between teaching in the classroom and social mobilization work with community leaders turned out to be a highly effective approach to bringing about inclusive and sustained change in gender relations, particularly in creating opportunities for women's and girls' participation in community development activities.
- A particular aspect of local culture is its oral nature. Rural communities are generally small, communication is easily maintained in person, and, for the most part, there are no written words in the village: no street names, no signs, and few advertisements. Hence, the need to read is limited. Therefore, any literacy programme has to include provision of educational and reading materials so that adults can experience the benefits of being able to read.
- Installing portable libraries in literacy centres helped to keep books in good condition.

CHALLENGES

- Tradition and patriarchal culture are dominant in rural communities, determining every aspect of life. Following tradition, women do not decide autonomously on issues that concern their health, their money or their marriage. Likewise, women often need their husband's permission to participate in literacy classes. Social mobilization is important in changing this and other aspects of tradition that prejudice women.
- Most literacy teachers have very few academic qualifications and little professional training. Additionally, their volunteer status and low pay can lead to low motivation and high staff turn-over. Professionalizing literacy teaching for adult learners is a huge challenge for the Mozambican government.
- Poor infrastructure. Classes are often held outdoors or on someone's property.
- Students have difficulty reconciling learning with their work and family responsibilities. This is particularly true for women.

SUSTAINABILITY

An important facet of the integrated literacy-gender programme lies in the organisers' aim of guaranteeing its sustainability beyond the 18-month implementation. This has been pursued through different strategies: a strong partnership with the Ministry of Education and Human Development and its local branches, capacity building among local providers, the creation of relevant learning material, and the establishment of complementary projects for the maintenance of said material, even after the end of the project.

The cost of facilitators is covered by MINEDH. Additionally, some of Progresso's own facilitator trainers graduated from one or other of the institutes for the training of adult educators.

The Teaching to Learn to Read project invested in human resources, particularly trainers of literacy teachers for local language teaching, literacy teachers and supervisors. The gender project followed the same strategy to sustain its activities: training of a team of gender trainers in each district, and training of literacy teachers and supervisors on the technical aspects of gender questions, and also on how to integrate gender concepts into their everyday teaching. District

gender trainers were trained to lead discussions with community leaders on sensitive issues. Leaders experienced the positive effects of organized dialogue and felt inspired to continue dialogue sessions on social problems in the community. Progresso expects that knowledge transfer and awareness-raising will continue in the years to come thanks to literacy teachers and their acquired gender knowledge, and the presence of educational and reading materials on gender subjects which will remain in the literacy centre libraries.

Since education authorities assumed payment of the subsidy for literacy teachers, no interruption is expected to occur when the project terminates. Progresso will advocate for regular recycling of trained teachers in order to maintain quality standards.

The project provided study and reading materials in local languages that can be used beyond the project life cycle. Additionally, both facilitators and learners will be able to continue to use the material, accessing it through portable libraries in literacy centres. The portable libraries were conceived in order to keep books in good condition.

Proposals are being prepared to raise funds to replicate the project in Cabo Delgado province. Possible donors are being contacted for another project which seeks to broaden and deepen the Literacy, a Springboard for Gender Equality project in Niassa province. The lessons learned with the implementation of the integrated projects will be essential for the development of integrated approaches, as foreseen in the new strategic plan for adult education for the period from 2015 to 2019 presently being elaborated by MINEDH.

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The Tostan Community Empowerment Program

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

11,658,000 (2005 estimate)

Poverty

(Population living on less than USD 1 per day):

22.3% (1990–2004)

Official Languages

French (Wolof, Peul, Sérère, Mandingue, Soninké, Diola and Manjaque are recognised regional languages)

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GNP

3.5

Access to Primary Education –

Total Net Intake Rate (NIR)

58% (2005)

Total Youth Literacy Rate (15–24 years)

49% (1995–2004)

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 1995–2004)

Total: 39%; Male: 51%; Female: 29%

Statistical Sources

- UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report
- UNICEF: Information by country
- World Bank: World Development Indicators database

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

The Community Empowerment Program

Implementing Organization

Tostan

Language of Instruction

22 African languages

Funding

UNICEF, UNFPA, Sida, USAID, NORAD, the Spanish Government and a number of foundations such as Nike Foundation, Greenbaum Foundation, and Skoll Foundation

OVERVIEW

Tostan, an NGO established in 1991 and headquartered in Dakar, Senegal, works to empower rural and remote African communities to bring about positive social transformation and sustainable development through a holistic nonformal education programme based on human rights. The origins of Tostan date back to 1982 when its founder and executive director, Molly Melching, initiated nonformal education programmes in Senegal which built on participants' existing cultural practices and local knowledge. The three-year participatory education programme, facilitated by local staff and offered to adults and adolescents in their own language, includes modules on human rights and democracy, problem solving, hygiene, health, literacy and project management. Since 1991, Tostan programmes have been implemented in 22 national languages in 10 countries and have had a positive impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. The Tostan approach inspires positive social change in five impact areas: governance, education, health, environment and economic growth; as well as addresses the cross-cutting issues of child protection, early childhood development, female genital cutting, child/forced marriage and the empowerment of women and girls.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

When Tostan's founder, Molly Melching, arrived in Senegal in 1974, she noticed that the lack of education in African languages acted as a barrier to basic education and thereby inhibited development. As a result, and in collaboration with Senegalese villagers, she designed educational materials using African traditions and learning methods. Based on participation and feedback from participants in a small village near the city of Thiès, a six-module basic education programme was conceived in 1982. Beginning in 1988, with support from UNICEF Senegal, Molly and her team trained local facilitators to implement a three-year nonformal education programme, called the Community Empowerment Program (CEP), in the regions of Thiès and Kolda.

In Wolof, the most widely spoken language in Senegal, Tostan means “breakthrough”, as well as “spreading and sharing”. This word was suggested to Molly Melching, Tostan’s founder and executive director, by renowned African scholar Cheikh Anta Diop. He believed that to foster democracy, development must be educational for all involved, always rooted in and growing out of existing cultural practices and local knowledge. Influenced by his philosophy, Tostan honors the local context of participants. Classes are offered in African languages, and led by culturally competent and knowledgeable local staff. Sessions are led in a participatory manner and include dialogue and consensus building, highly valued skills in African societies. Participants create songs, dances, plays and poetry inspired from traditional culture to reinforce new knowledge. Tostan believes that when participants start with what they already know, they can expand and “break through” to new understandings and practices and easily share with others what they have learned.

Tostan uncovers local knowledge, values and beliefs and uses a holistic educational approach that encourages program participants to reflect on their own experiences across a wide range of subjects. Working from what they already know and what they hope for their future, they can better define and solve community problems. In Tostan classes, community members design, undertake, evaluate and sustain new actions that they believe will help them reach personal and community goals.

In addition to the nonformal education classes, Tostan establishes a Community Management Committee (CMC) and provides training for this committee throughout the program. The role of the CMC is to ensure coordination, management and sustainability for all development activities.

Tostan is mindful to include those who already hold influence and power in the community and those who have traditionally been marginalized. In this way, women and men, adolescents and adults, religious and traditional leaders, people of different social and economic backgrounds and locally elected officials come together to find solutions that benefit everyone.



THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (CEP)

The CEP originally focussed on women and girls but has since evolved to include both men and women, boys and girls. The original literacy and problem-based nonformal education curriculum was revised in 1995 to include modules on democracy and human rights, with particular focus on women’s health, as women showed keen interest in learning about their specific health issues.

Participants of the CEP belong to different ethnic groups and socio-economic levels within their villages, and have either never attended formal school or have dropped out at an early age.

The CEP begins by initiating dialogue with community members who are asked to envision their individual and collective futures. Their hopes and aspirations serve as the reference point for the educational programme and the curriculum is designed/adapted accordingly. Evidence of building on participants’ existing strengths and cultural knowledge is visible through the use of traditional learning methods such as song, dance, poetry, theatre and storytelling.

The CEP has two phases, and each phase contains modules, units of sequenced information organized around a theme. The first phase is called the Kobi, a Mandinka word meaning “to prepare the field for planting.” The information contained in over 100, two-hour long Kobi sessions is shared orally since most participants beginning the program cannot read or write. The Kobi sessions take place over a one-year period, with facilitators draw-

ing on oral traditions to spark debate and dialogue on issues related to the community's wellbeing. The revised CEP is currently being implemented in eight sub-Saharan African countries (Djibouti, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Somalia and The Gambia).

The second phase is called the Aawde, a Fulani word meaning "to plant the seed." Devoted to economic empowerment, this phase is composed of literacy lessons and project management training. In the Aawde, participants learn to read and write in their own language and study basic math. They write letters and compose simple project proposals, reports, autobiographies, stories, poems and songs. They also learn to read and write SMS text messages on mobile phones to practice their literacy skills. Participants study management skills and learn how to assess the feasibility of income-generating projects and then select, implement and manage good projects. Interactive workbooks help them review the initial modules of the Kobi and practice their reading and writing skills.

Some of the key features that have enabled the CEP to succeed include:

1. Community members' visions – participants identify goals for the future that are then reviewed, discussed, debated, revised and incorporated into the programme.
2. Learner-centred participatory pedagogy – teaches participants the knowledge and practical skills necessary to become self-sufficient and productive.
3. Responsiveness – use of feedback from participants to update and revise the programme.
4. Sustainability – creation of Community Management Committees (CMCs), which are 17-member democratically selected committees (with at least 9 members being women) which are set up at the start of the program and continue development efforts long after the CEP comes to an end.
5. Community-led outreach through organised diffusion – participants adopt learning partners and share programme topics, later full communities adopt neighbouring communities.
6. Inclusiveness – involving key stakeholders such as traditional/religious leaders, government officials, other NGOs (Freedom From Hunger, the Barefoot College, Rural Energy Foundation, Yarum Jen), outside evaluators, UN agencies (UNICEF, UNFPA) and other donors.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The CEP aims to:

1. Enable participants to understand democracy, human rights and responsibilities and apply them in daily life
2. Enable participants to identify problems relevant to their communities and engage in analytical problem-solving
3. Enhance understanding of personal and community health and hygiene
4. Empower women and adolescent girls to actively participate in and lead community activities
5. Facilitate the collective abandonment of harmful social norms such as FGC and child/forced marriage
6. Provide literacy and maths skills, including mobile-phone literacy
7. Engage participants in project management for income generation
8. Foster social mobilisation movements for positive change.

IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

START-UP

Villages learn about Tostan's program in a variety of ways, most often by word of mouth. When a community has requested Tostan's Community Empowerment Program and funding is available, the community is informed about what Tostan provides and what it must contribute. Community members understand that they will receive a systematic curriculum for the classes, a chance to interact and discuss what they are learning and a trained facilitator whose stipend is paid by Tostan. The community must provide a meeting place for the classes and feed and house the facilitator, who lives in the community and teaches two classes of 25 to 30 participants three times a week. Each village has a class for adolescents and one for adults, so a minimum of 50 to 60 community members participate.

Tostan regional coordinators select CEP facilitators taking into consideration past experience, educational level, availability during the programme, and willingness to work in isolated rural areas. All facilitators (approximately 80 percent are women and often previous participants) undergo training courses at the Tostan training centre (CCDD) in Thiès, Senegal, before joining a community of their own language and ethnic



group. Tostan's facilitators have social security benefits and their stipends are higher than those of most other literacy teachers in the country since they teach longer hours and are considered full-time community development agents.

SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT ELEMENT – THE KOBİ

This phase of the CEP includes 97 sessions of approximately two to three hours each and promotes dialogue and exchange as participants at this stage do not learn to read and write. The Kobi includes sessions on:

- Democracy and Human Rights and Responsibilities (for example the fundamental elements of democracy, basic human rights and responsibilities summarised from seven major human rights instruments)
- Problem-solving (for example, how to achieve goals for the community through collective analysis of the situation, choosing appropriate solutions to problems, planning and evaluation skills)
- Hygiene (precautions and prevention of germ transmission)

- Health (understanding the body and systems of the body, common illnesses, nutritional information and reproductive health)

LITERACY AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ELEMENT – THE AAWDE

The Aawde comprises the latter half of the CEP and introduces literacy and project management-related elements of the programme. It is composed of modules related to:

- Pre-literacy and Literacy skills (use of the mobile phone and SMS texting to reinforce literacy skills);
- Math (basic mathematical operations, use of the calculator);
- Project Management (how to do a feasibility study and budget, implementing and monitoring small projects and business ventures); and
- Workbook Review (three interactive Knowledge to Action workbooks to reinforce learning related to democracy and human rights, health and hygiene, small-scale project implementation and management).

THE COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES (CMC) AND THE EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES NETWORK (ECN)

Community Management Committees (CMCs) are established in each participating community at the start of the CEP. Composed of 17 members, these committees are a mechanism for community action and institutionalizing democratic community leadership. The training curriculum for the CMCs provides the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to identify, prioritize and address human rights issues, using the same participatory and reflective methods that are modeled throughout the CEP. CMCs propose and manage development projects identified during class sessions and CMC meetings.

They also organize social mobilization activities and spur meaningful action in areas including health care, the environment and child protection, among others. CMCs provide sustainability for the Tostan program as responsibility for development is placed in the hands of the community itself. Many CMCs register as official Community-Based Organisations and often form federations allowing them to work together. In 2006, Tostan created the Empowered Communities Network (ECN) to help communities partner with other organizations on development initiatives to help realize their community vision.

OTHER TOSTAN PROJECTS

The Child Protection Module

In the countries where Tostan works, there are numerous threats to a child's healthy development, the greatest of which arise from lack of access to education, child trafficking, child labour, child/forced marriage, and female genital cutting (FGC). The child protection module helps communities address the deeply entrenched social norms and practices that are at the source of these issues. In 2010, Tostan developed the Child Protection Module as an addition to the CEP. The module helps build consensus around human rights and children's rights while building awareness of the various moral, social, and legal norms that affect children. It emphasises the importance of education and introduces ideas for how communities can work together to protect their children. This work begins within the Community Management Committees (CMCs). They create commissions for child protection in their communities.

The CMCs of all participating communities now receive the Child Protection Module.

Community Development Grants

Community Development Grants are small grants provided to CMCs to help fund community development projects as well as to establish CMC-run microcredit funds. Tostan provides the CMC with a small grant—usually between USD 300 and USD 1,000. The CMCs often use this grant to establish a rotating microcredit fund, which enables community members, especially women, to start small projects to improve their quality of life by putting into practice the literacy, math and management skills learnt during the CEP. The grants are managed by the CMCs and the profits from microcredit activities are invested in projects to reinforce community health, education and well-being, for example adding primary school classrooms, installing water pumps or launching agricultural cooperatives.

The Mobile Phones for Literacy and Development Module

The Mobile Phones for Literacy and Development Module was added to the CEP's Aawde phase in 2009. Though mobile phones are commonplace in some of the most remote rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa, they are used primarily by locals to make and receive calls, which is much more expensive than text messaging. The Mobile Phones for Literacy and Development Module harnesses the value of mobile phones to reinforce literacy, organisation and management skills, as well as serve as social mobilisation tools, to help build consensus around local development initiatives. Participants learn how to use the mobile phone and how to navigate its menu, focusing on practical applications such as sending and receiving messages in local languages, using the calculator, and storing and retrieving contacts.

The Peace and Security Project

The Peace and Security Project works to strengthen and support Tostan's proven grassroots strategy of community-led development to improve peace and security in the West African region. It focuses first on strengthening peace-building at the community level by reinforcing the prevention of violence skills learned in the CEP. These skills include improved communication and problem-solving skills as well as the peaceful resolution of

community and familial conflicts. The project is developing strategies for fostering peace and security across social networks through research and collaboration. It also works to connect grassroots communities and their social networks with regional and international institutions. With this increased collaboration, regions and nations as a whole can work together to identify barriers to the peace and security of their area and create solutions that will overcome those barriers.

The Prison Project

The Prison Project aims to help detainees reintegrate into society upon their release by providing them with a modified version of the Tostan CEP while they are in prison, in addition to mediation sessions between inmates and their families. Participants are also given access to microcredit loans for the establishment of small businesses upon their release. The programme is operational in men's and women's correctional facilities in Dakar, Thiès and Rufisque, Senegal.

The Reinforcement of Parental Practices Module

The Reinforcement of Parental Practices (RPP) Module was launched in March 2013. The module aims to reinforce parental and community practices which create a healthy environment for children's early development. Research has shown that certain social norms and traditional practices in Senegal can hinder the brain development of infants. For example, the belief that to protect infants from dangerous spirits, parents must avoid eye contact, interaction and verbal communication. During the RPP Module, facilitators share with community members simple techniques that enrich parent-child interactions and are all linked to respecting the human rights of children to education and health. These techniques include directly speaking to young children, using a rich and complex vocabulary, asking them questions and helping them to respond, playfully copying their children, describing objects in detail, and storytelling. As a result, the module will help improve children's early development and learning, allowing them to perform better and stay in school.

Solar Power! Project

Many rural communities with which Tostan partners are not connected to their country's electrical infrastructure. Without access to electricity, community members' productivity is limited to the hours of day-

light. Through the Solar Power! Project, Tostan sponsors women from rural Africa to attend the Barefoot College in India, where they complete a six-month training program in solar engineering. The comprehensive training provides participants with the knowledge and skills to install, maintain, and repair solar panels. Back in their home villages, each solar engineer installs one solar unit in at least 50 homes, providing each family with a fixed lamp, a bright solar lantern, an LED flashlight, and a plug for charging mobile phones. Each participant also trains women and men from neighbouring rural communities in solar engineering, spreading the impact of the program and providing each engineer with an income.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In keeping with Tostan's participatory philosophy, the CEP is evaluated, revised and improved continuously based on participant feedback. In addition, Tostan supervisors visit seven to ten community centres at least twice a month, providing support, in addition to collecting programme data, working with CMCs, and reporting to regional coordinators. They also share best practices among communities and help organise inter-village meetings and regional events. Tostan has also been extensively evaluated by external agencies whose recommendations are considered and acted upon. Examples include the Knowledge to Action workbooks which were introduced based on the Population Council's recommendations for activities designed to reinforce learning; CMC training modules were improved as it was found that the skill sets of CMCs needed to be strengthened in order to ensure sustainability. Furthermore, Tostan has identified specific indicators, measured during the three-year programme, with a view to standardising data collection and analyses. In 2007, Tostan formalised the Department of Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) to coordinate evaluation of projects across sub-Saharan Africa.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Some of Tostan's major impacts and achievements are as follows:

1. A 2006 publication of the Population Reference Bureau compared five community-based pro-

grammes deemed effective for improving health care. Tostan was one of the five programmes given the highest overall score for community participation because of its efforts to work on health goals identified by the community.

2. A 2008 study by UNICEF showed that among Tostan communities that had publicly declared their abandonment of FGC eight to ten years earlier, 77 per cent had indeed stopped the practice.
3. The 2008 report 'Girls Count: A Global Investment & Action Agenda', issued by the Center for Global Development cited Tostan as a best practice for its work on community development and FGC abandonment.
4. Tostan's three programme components – an empowering education programme, organised diffusion and public declaration for collective abandonment of FGC – have been endorsed by 10 UN agencies and a variety of other donors through an inter-agency statement published in 2008.
5. In 2010, the Government of Senegal and their partners decided to adopt Tostan's human rights model as the centrepiece of their National Action Plan to end FGC, based on the results of a study conducted by the Senegalese Government's Ministry of Family Affairs, National Solidarity and Women's Enterprise and Microcredit, which believed that FGC could be totally abandoned by 2015 in light of such a concentrated effort.
6. 2010 Evaluation of the Jokko Initiative by UNICEF and the Center of Evaluation for Global Action (CEGA) at the University of California, Berkeley, found a statistically significant increase in the percentage of people scoring a medium to high literacy rate in the villages receiving mobile phone-based literacy training as opposed to control villages that did not participate in the Jokko Initiative.
7. The authors of a 2009 article from the UNICEF Innocenti Research Center looked the factors that perpetuate harmful social practices, such as female genital cutting, and how these factors interact with processes of social change are critical to understanding why and how communities abandon such practices, citing Tostan as a best practice.
8. In 2013, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Working Group for Adolescent Girls and Young Women in Development issued a report entitled "Adolescentes, jeunes femmes et développement"

in which Tostan's Community Empowerment Program was cited as best practice for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of girls.

9. Other achievements include: opening new lines of communication between men and women, youth and adults, husbands and wives, parents and children and different socio-economic groups; increased mediation and conflict resolution; increased involvement of women in economic activities and community leadership; establishment of small community-operated health centres; increased community-managed micro-credit operations; increased birth registrations, marriage certificates, national identity cards and school registrations; increased school retention rates, especially among girls; improved literacy and maths skills, including phone literacy; improved child and maternal health, fewer incidences of infant malnutrition and a higher number of attended births; improved behaviours for the reduction of malaria and HIV/AIDS; organisation of peaceful marches against forced/child marriage and violence against women.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Tostan participants have sometimes faced challenges when working to achieve their visions for the future as social action is often constrained within broader systems of political and social power relations. For example, when 30 women in 1997 decided to abandon FGC it was realised that unless people in neighbouring intra-marrying communities also abandoned FGC, sustainability would not be possible. Enhanced efforts by a local visionary and Tostan's ensuing organised diffusion strategy have thereafter resulted in the abandonment of FGC by thousands of communities – as of 2013, more than 6,700 communities across the countries where Tostan is active have participated in public declarations to this effect. Tostan also faced considerable resistance in the conservative northern region of Senegal, which was to some extent relieved when strong partnerships were formed with local religious leaders in terms of implementation. Some other challenges that proved to be important milestones in the history of Tostan include the following:

1. Tostan tried to implement a shorter version of the CEP without the literacy component. The shorter ver-

sion, however, was not well received by participants, who found it frustrating to engage in just the Kobi phase without the literacy elements of the Aawde. As a result, Tostan and its most long-term partner, UNICEF, made a firm commitment to delivering the full three-year programme in every community.

2. Some men became resentful of Tostan's initial focus on women, especially the CEP module on women's rights and health. After several classes were shut down because of distrust on the part of men, the module on women's and children's rights were rewritten to include men's rights as well. This new inclusive approach, introducing an emphasis on human rights, led the men to become fully engaged in the programme.

SUSTAINABILITY

Tostan has highly successful inbuilt strategies to facilitate knowledge and skill sharing, such as through organised diffusion. Additionally, awareness-raising activities in the form of inter-village meetings are organised, which in turn provide a platform for representatives of different communities, linked by common underlying social structures, to share experiences and discuss potential collective solutions to problems. Tostan also airs radio programmes which discuss topics related to health, human rights and democracy, which subsequently generates further discussion among participants and leads to social mobilisation initiatives. Tostan has also helped and supported villages in making public declarations if they decide to abandon harmful social norms (such as FGC) and in organising marches around topics like child protection, human rights and environmental issues. Most of all, Tostan's CMCs serve as a focal point of community-led activities. Establishing well-functioning CMCs is an essential part of Tostan's responsible exit strategy to sustain programme outcomes after the CEP has been completed and Tostan's immediate presence in the community has ceased. The Empowered Community Network aids CMCs to form partnerships with external actors including other NGOs.

CONCLUSION

Trying to force change through coercive action and condemnation alienates people and can be counterproductive, as it causes individuals to become defensive and cling to their traditional beliefs. Tostan has shown that a programme that works from the bottom up can suc-

ceed when its design takes into consideration the needs of communities, as identified by their people. Tostan's participatory philosophy has resulted in remarkable social changes, including the large-scale abandonment of FGC. Continuous evaluation and revision in light of feedback, as practiced by Tostan, are crucial to the programme's enhancement and future success. Tostan is preparing to launch a training centre with the aim of sharing its philosophy and model with others.

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Kha Ri Gude (Let Us Learn) Adult Literacy Programme (KGALP)

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

47,432,000 (2007 estimate)

Poverty

(Population living on less than USD 1 per day)

10.7% (1990–2004)

Official Languages

Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GNP

5.5

Access to Primary Education –

Total Net Intake Rate (NIR)

51% (2005)

Total Youth Literacy Rate (15–24 years)

94% (1995–2004)

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 1995–2004)

Total: 82%; Male: 84%; Female: 81%

Sources

- UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report
- UNICEF: Info by Country
- World Bank: World Development Indicators database

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Kha Ri Gude (Let Us Learn) Adult Literacy Programme (KGALP)

Implementing Organization

Government of South Africa (Department of Basic Education)

Language of Instruction

Mother-tongue and English as a second language

Funding

Government of South Africa

Annual Programme Costs

Overall budget: 6 billion Rands / about USD 780 million

Date of Inception

2008

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Since its democratization in 1994, South Africa has instituted several educational programmes such as the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programme and the South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI, 2000) in an effort to promote universal access to education and most importantly, to eradicate illiteracy among adults, many of whom were deprived of educational opportunities during the apartheid era. The programmes were also intended to empower previously socially disadvantaged groups in order to enable them to be self-reliant and to participate more effectively in national development processes.

However, despite concerted efforts by successive post-apartheid governments to expand learning opportunities for adults, the rate of adult illiteracy in the country remains significantly high. A recent study by the Ministerial Committee on Literacy (June 2006) established that about 9.6 million adults or 24% of the entire adult population aged over 15 years were functionally illiterate. Of these, 4.7 million could not read or write (i.e. had never attended school) while 4.9 million were barely literate having dropped out of formal school before completing primary education. The study also revealed that the rate of adult illiteracy was significantly higher in non-white communities and among women, a pattern which partly reflected the negative

effect of apartheid-era segregationist policies with regards to the provision of social services including education as well as socio-cultural practices which tend to promote the education of male over female children. The continued prevalence of adult illiteracy and its negative effect on development and social transformation prompted the government of South Africa to institute the Kha Ri Gude (Let Us Learn) Adult Literacy Programme (KGALP) in February 2008.

KHA RI GUDE (LET US LEARN) ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMME (KGALP)

The KGALP is an integrated and multilingual mass adult literacy campaign which is being implemented across the entire country by the State through the Department of Basic Education (DoBE). The government of South Africa has committed six billion rands (about US\$780 million) to fund the programme over the next five years (2008–2012). Although the KGALP is an inclusive educational campaign which targets every adult person with little or no formal education, specific efforts are made to target vulnerable and often marginalised social groups such as women, young people and people living with disabilities (see pictures below). For instance, of the 620,000 learners that were enrolled into the programme in 2009, about 80% were women, 8% had disabilities and 25% were youth. Overall, 50% of programme participants were aged between 25 and 55 years and 20% were above the age of 60. In addition, a disproportionate majority of learners were from impoverished urban informal settlements and rural areas and almost all of them are unemployed or self-employed.

In order to effectively address the particular and diverse learning needs of different groups of learners, the KGALP employs an integrated and multilingual approach to literacy skills training. Accordingly, the programme curriculum integrates basic literacy skills training of learners in their mother tongue with life skills training. The life skills component of the programme places greater emphasis on subjects or themes that are central to the learners' socioeconomic context or everyday existential experiences such as:

- health (e.g. HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention; nutrition and sanitation)

- civic education (e.g. human rights, conflict resolution and management; peacebuilding and gender and racial relations)
- environmental management and conservation
- income generation or livelihood development.

In addition, the programme also provides instruction in English as a second language in order to enable them to conduct ordinary tasks such as filling in official forms.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The KGALP endeavours to:

- enable 4.7 million functionally illiterate and semi-literate adults (aged above 15 years), including people living with disabilities, to become literate and numerate in one of the 11 official languages by 2012. This is intended to reduce the national rate of illiteracy by 50% by 2015 in line with the government's Education for All (EFA) commitment made in Dakar in 2000 as well as to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on poverty reduction, women's empowerment, HIV and AIDS eradication, environmental protection and sustainable democratisation and peacebuilding.
- fulfil the constitutional right of all citizens to gain access to basic education in their own language (i.e. promote universal access to education)
- empower socially disadvantaged people to become self-reliant and to uplift their living standards (poverty reduction/alleviation)
- enable socially disadvantaged people to participate more effectively in national socioeconomic development processes
- foster social transformation through enhanced civic or public awareness.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

In order to facilitate the effective implementation of the programme, the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) has recruited and trained about 75,000 community-based volunteer coordinators, supervisors and educators or literacy training facilitators, including 100 blind and 150 deaf educators who provide specialised instruction to their illiterate compatriots with disabilities. The DoBE has also developed and produced various teaching-learning materials in all 11 official

languages. The learning materials have been professionally adapted for use by deaf and blind learners. In addition, the DoBE has also established about 35,000 community-based learning centres or sites across the country. Learning centres range from basic structures or venues such as a participant's homestead/back-yard or bus shelters, to more established institutions such as a local church, community centre or prison. Some classes are even conducted under trees, indicating the State's commitment to reach out to all potential learners including those living in adverse situations lacking basic infrastructure.

Over the years, the campaign has involved a diverse and inclusive group of learners. About 20% of the learners enrolled are aged 60 and above. The programme has helped this group of learners in countless ways, such as helping them to participate actively in their grandchildren's education and in their communities, to overcome depression and gain confidence, and to increase their financial security. In addition, special attention has been paid to learners with special needs and disabilities, for instance by developing literacy material in Braille. During the campaign, approximately 15% of learners had disabilities.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

The implementation of the programme, including the recruitment of new learners, is heavily dependent on a cadre of community-based volunteer educators or facilitators, supervisors and coordinators. In order to reach approximately 600,000 learners, the campaign recruited and trained some 40,000 volunteers to work as programme educators and facilitators. Over the years, the volunteers were predominantly women (85%), two thirds (66 %) were under the age of 35; 85% of them were unemployed and all were recruited from the same communities as the learners they serve. As a rule, only matriculants with a minimum of Grade 12 qualification and qualified professionals are recruited and trained to serve as programme facilitators. Currently, there are about 75,000 volunteers working as programme educators or facilitators. Of these, about 66% are under 35; 80% are women; 85% of them were unemployed and all were recruited from the same communities as the learners they serve. As a rule, only matriculants with a minimum of Grade 12 quali-

fication and qualified professionals are recruited and trained to serve as programme facilitators. Currently, 51% of the volunteers (coordinators, supervisors and educators) have one or more tertiary qualification. Programme facilitators are provided with basic training in various aspects of adult education including:

- adult-appropriate teaching-learning methods
- class room management
- how to use teaching modules to conduct lessons, as well as to moderate the learning process
- how to conduct the assessment activities in the Learner Assessment Portfolios (LAPS).

In addition, programme facilitators also receive ongoing training, mentoring and support from skilled supervisors and coordinators, all of whom have post-graduate qualifications and substantial experience in community development work. They are also provided with a desk calendar which includes lesson plans and teaching modules for the 35 mother tongue literacy lessons, 35 numeracy lessons, and 10 English for Everyone lessons.

Each trained educator/facilitator is responsible for between 15 and 18 learners. Volunteers are paid a monthly stipend (about R 1,200) that is contingent on them meeting a number of pre-defined criteria such as submitting LAPs. This 'outcomes-based payment' is necessary for reasons of accountability, motivation and to ensure that the learners are not compromised. It is also essential in ensuring the integrity of the campaign's payment system. Apart from providing teaching services, programme educators also play a critical role in the recruitment or enrolment of new learners and various advocacy campaigns which are intended to make the programme a vibrant part of community life.

RECRUITMENT OF LEARNERS

Various strategies are used to encourage potential learners to enrol into the programme. These include:

- public announcements and advertisements in community newspapers and over the radio, production and distribution of posters and pamphlets
- word of mouth through meetings with women and youth groups, taxi organisations, trades unions, traditional leaders, and door-to-door visits

- public announcements in church, at funerals, and in schools
- community advocacy by programme graduates.

TEACHING-LEARNING APPROACHES AND METHODS

Teaching reading and writing is a complex undertaking, especially when the learner is an adult, and the educator is an untrained volunteer. The situation is particularly complex when the teaching-learning process involves learners with special needs such as blind and deaf learners. Hence, in order to ensure effective literacy skills acquisition by learners, the KGALP provides participants with free and adequate learning materials, basic stationery and obligates them to attend classes three times a week (on average, each class is three hours long) over a period of six months.

In addition, the programme has adapted the learning materials to cater for the particular needs of blind and deaf learners. Accordingly, blind learners are provided with various learning devices and aids including Braillette boards and Perkins Brailers for use in class, talking calculators, pins for learning the Braille alphabet, egg boxes and ping pong balls for initial Braille lessons. They are also taught how to read and write in Braille by specialist and volunteer educators with disabilities. Similarly, deaf learners also receive specialised instruction through sign language from trained deaf facilitators. The strategy of engaging educators with disabilities is not only beneficial to the educators but it also ensures that learners with special needs receive effective instruction and assistance from people who understand their existential needs and challenges.

Teaching-learning materials are designed to help facilitators to develop the reading and writing skills of their learners through a highly instructive teaching-learning process as well as guided practice by the learners (see pictures below). The materials are also intended to enable facilitators to pay special attention to the particular needs of individual learners.

In addition, the learning materials also follow an integrated approach to literacy acquisition drawing on the benefits of the language experience and whole word approaches while taking seriously the recent findings of neuro-cognitive research. In line with this research, the KGALP materials teach the mechanics of reading,

paying explicit attention to enhancing learners' perceptual and visual literacy skills, and systematically introducing phoneme/graphemes (from high frequency to low frequency) according to linguistic typologies developed for each language. In this way, the KGALP materials are able to direct and map learners' progression in phonic knowledge and skills.

Because the campaign relies on untrained volunteers who work in less than conducive circumstances, it is essential to ensure that materials are highly structured with in-built sequenced activities to teach:

- phoneme/grapheme isolation necessary for learners to recognise individual sounds in words, and to learn letter/sound correspondence
- phoneme identification where learners are required to identify common sounds in different words
- phoneme categorisation so that learners can identify the odd sounding word in a sequence of three or four words
- phoneme blending which enables learners to read or listen to a sequence of separate sounds and then to combine them to form a word or to blend phonemes from left to right to decode a word
- phoneme segmentation where learners break words into their constituent phonemes – a skill especially important in agglutinative languages.

It is recognised that the ability to decode individual words is not sufficient, hence the materials simultaneously attend to fluency which promotes comprehension by freeing cognitive resources for interpretation. The materials include a range of word cards and a phonic 'domino' game to assist automaticity. The intention is that learners develop a reading speed of at least 45 words per minute so that they do not forget the start of the sentence by the time they reach the end. In line with the rudiments of language experience, and whole word approaches, the learning outcomes are immersed in eight organising themes so that the content is relevant to learners' motivation, in contexts where skills at this level will support independent living and broaden the choices and opportunities available to adults. Each lesson starts with a picture to stimulate discussion, to encourage learners to think about related social issues and to make applications to their lives and contexts. Key sentences and key words



are derived from these contexts. The themes include, for example:

- my family, my home
- living together in communities
- health, HIV, hygiene and nutrition
- the world of work
- caring for our environment, and
- our country and the world around us.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

The KGALP has instituted an extensive monitoring and evaluation system which is carried out by supervisors who each monitor 10 educators/facilitators, and coordinators who each monitor 20 supervisors. This ongoing internal monitoring and evaluation process includes:

- monthly class visits by supervisors to monitor and evaluate/assess the teaching-learning process and the learners' progress
- spot checks carried out by a team of external monitors and 'line' coordinators.

This ongoing action-oriented monitoring and evaluation system enables supervisors to advise facilitators on how to improve their teaching strategies in order to enable learners to effectively acquire literacy skills. Furthermore, the system also enables programme supervisors and coordinators to solve many of problems onsite and therefore to maintain programme standards.

In addition, all Kha Ri Gude learners are tested continuously through a portfolio containing 10 literacy assessment activities in their mother tongue, and 10

numeracy activities. The activities are competency based and are time-linked to the various stages of their learning. The learners are also required to complete their (LAPS) which are then marked by the volunteer and then moderated by supervisors and controlled by coordinators. The LAPS are then collected and returned to the campaign head office where the site-based marking is verified by SAQA (presently more than 80% of the LAPS are returned, indicating that the programme has a high learner-retention rate). On the basis of this inter-connected assessment process, successful learners are issued with certificates (at ABET level 1) by DoBE's examination directorate and, for the less competent ones, an award of one of the five UNESCO LAMP levels will be applied in recognition of their varying degrees of alphabetisation. At the end of the assessment process, the learners' biographical details and marks per activity are captured onto an assessment database to allow for statistical analysis which in turn informs on the measures and strategies needed to improve programme delivery.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT

Despite being in its infancy, the KGALP has quickly evolved into South Africa's biggest adult literacy campaign to date as partly manifested by the number of graduates which rose from 380,000 in 2008 to 620,000 in 2009. In light of this, the rate of learner enrolment into programme is therefore expected to increase in the coming years, allowing the campaign to achieve its principal goal of reducing the national rate of adult illiteracy by 50% by 2012.

Apart from this, the programme has also had some concrete benefits for both the learners, their families and communities and by extension, the entire nation. These include:

- By the end of 2009, the programme had assisted about one million learners (380,000 in 2008 and 620,000 in 2009) to acquire basic literacy skills including basic spoken English. This has enabled hitherto illiterate youth and adults to be more independent in conducting daily business including undertaking shopping errands and travelling. In addition, the programme also creates critical avenues for lifelong learning not least because successful KGALP graduates are eligible to enrol into other governmental educational programmes.
- Employment creation and poverty alleviation: although the KGALP is essentially an educational intervention aimed at eliminating adult illiteracy, it has nonetheless contributed towards poverty alleviation by creating employment opportunities for 75,000 matriculants who are engaged as facilitators and 700 people who are employed in the production and distribution of programme learning materials and other ancillary programme activities. Furthermore, programme graduates have also been empowered to engage in more profitable income generating activities or to improve the profitability of their existing projects. Essentially therefore, the programme enables both employees – most of whom had been unemployed – and learners to be self-reliant and to contribute towards their families' well-being and living standards.
- Empowerment of people living with disabilities: the programme has created learning and employment opportunities for people with disabilities who are often marginalised and ostracised by their families and communities. Therefore, the programme has enabled people with disabilities to lead an independent lifestyle.
- Sense of social responsibility: the provision of employment to youth especially those from disadvantaged communities has not only fostered a sense of self-worth among the youth but has also instilled them with a sense of social or civic responsibility (the value of serving) that potentially prevents some youth from engaging in antisocial behaviour including violent crime.
- Social/community cohesion and organisation: the programme is currently playing a critical role in fostering community cohesion and peaceful co-existence not only through the creation of employment opportunities for local people but also through the creation of learners' groups which brings together people with a common goal and vision for themselves and their communities. Hence, as the Chief Executive of the programme, Veronica McKay, rightly observed, 'besides the actual learning experience, a lot of programme participants come for the social aspect. They meet new friends, and learning groups help to overcome loneliness'.
- Preservation and advancement of languages: by promoting mother-tongue adult literacy, the programme has created opportunities for the research into, advancement and preservation of all South Africa's main languages. The respect and equality accorded to all languages could also play a critical role in fostering national cohesion.
- Promoted progressive democratisation through the dissemination of civic education materials which improve civic awareness.

PROGRESS

Since its inception in 2008, the programme has achieved considerable success. For example, 90% of the 4,207,946 adult learners who enrolled on the programme between 2008 and 2015 completed their course.

CHALLENGES

Despite the successes recorded to date, the implementation of the programme has also been encumbered by various financial and technical challenges including:

- Although the principal aim of the programme is to target all illiterate adults, the programme is yet to reach out to working adults. To date, the campaign has been aimed at the employers and big business to enforce the fact that a literate and educated workforce will add value to any business. It is of the greatest importance that corporate companies and big business become involved in the education of all South Africans.
- There have been complaints from volunteer facilitators over delayed or non-payment of their stipends. Senior programme officials have attributed this phenomenon to either the failure of facilita-

tors to provide correct personal and bank details or their delays in submitting the LAPS which are used to trigger payment of stipends. Furthermore, banks also close accounts with a zero balance which they consider to be 'dormant' and as a result, many of the volunteers are unable to receive payments which banks leave pending in suspense accounts for long periods before notifying the head office.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Provision of adequate training opportunities and payment of stipends to facilitators is central to the potential success of adult literacy campaigns.
- Provision of specialised instruction to people living with disabilities is critical for their inclusion into literacy projects as well as the success of their learning experiences.
- Community mobilisation is central to successful adult literacy programming.

SUSTAINABILITY

The long-term sustainability of the programme is not in doubt, not least because demand from potential learners to enrol into the programme continues to be high as evidenced by a waiting list of about 1.2 million adults. Additionally, the programme has also secured State funding for the next five years and most teaching-learning materials, which consume a substantial amount of the available funds, have been developed.

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Mother Tongue-based Education in Northern Uganda



Mr Dramani, a P3 teacher in one of his literacy lessons in local language



A storybag

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

36,573,000 (2013)

Official Language

English and Swahili

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GDP

2.2% (2013)

Access to Primary Education –

Total Net Intake Rate (NIR)

93.65% (2013)

Youth Literacy Rate (15–24 years)

Total: 87% (2015); Female: 86.57; Male: 87.4%

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 1995–2004)

Total: 73.86% (2015); Female: 66.89%; Male: 80.85%

Statistical Sources

- UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Mother Tongue-based Education in Northern Uganda

Implementing Organization

Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE)

Language of Instruction

Acholi, Kakwa, Aringa, Madi and Lugbara

Funding

Oxfam Novib, Comic Relief (UK) and Africa Educational Trust (AET).

Programme Partners

The National Curriculum Development Centre, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sport, six district education departments, five area language boards, primary teachers' colleges, parents and 120 schools from six districts of northern Uganda.

Annual Programme Costs

USD 362,452 (2014).

Annual programme cost per learner:

USD 9.91 (2014)

Date of Inception

2009

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Although English and Swahili are its official languages, Uganda is a multi-lingual country, with around forty local languages spoken. The Government of Uganda has sought, through a series of policies, to promote local languages in education. Article 6 of Uganda's Constitution (2005), for example, says that 'any language may be used as a medium of instruction in schools or other educational institutions'. The government White Paper on Education for National Integration and Development (1992) states that local languages should be used as the medium of instruction in all education programmes up to Grade 4 of primary school. However, inadequate resources and ineffective implementation strategies have hampered efforts to put these policies into practice. This is especially true of northern Uganda where decades of civil war (since early 1980s), and their aftermath, have limited the impact education work has had on children, young people and adults. Moreover, existing education policies on the teaching and learning of local languages tends only to focus on formal education up to Grade 4. Thus, there are few opportunities for young people and adults, who have not received formal education and are unable to read or write in their native language, to build up literacy skills in their mother tongue through non-formal or informal education.

Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE) is a Ugandan non-governmental organization (NGO) established in 1989 at Makerere University. It has contributed to government efforts in northern Uganda by implementing an education programme that focuses on local languages. LABE's mission is to promote literacy practices among local community members (particularly women and children) and increase their access to information by enhancing their literacy skills in their mother tongue. In this way, participants become able to more effectively advocate and realize their rights and those of their communities. LABE has expanded its focus to include basic education for children, as well as for adults.

LABE is governed by a board of directors, with members drawn from the Uganda National Commission for UNESCO, institutions of higher education, international organizations, the private sector and a grass-

roots women's organization. The members bring with them professional experience in academia, finance, monitoring and evaluation, project planning and NGO management. The secretariat, which is responsible for overall coordination, resource mobilization, monitoring and national-level advocacy, is led by the executive director supported by the senior management team.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

LABE's Mother Tongue-based Education (MTE) programme operates in six post-conflict districts of northern Uganda: Adjumani, Arua, Gulu, Koboko, Nwoya and Yumbe. Five local languages (Achoi, Kakwa, Aringa, Madi, Lugbara) are spoken across the six districts.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main goal of MTE is to strengthen the status and use of local languages in marginalized Ugandan communities. Ultimately, MTE is expected to contribute to rebuilding these post-conflict communities. Its three main aims are to:

- Enhance local language-based early-years instruction and bilingual education (mother tongue and English), thereby contributing to improved enrolment, retention and learning outcomes. This objective is achieved mainly through supporting teachers who provide effective instruction in children's local languages.
- Bridge the gap between home and school by providing parents and community members with adult literacy programmes in their mother tongues, and by engaging children and their parents together in interactive after-school learning activities.
- Integrate LABE's in-service teacher development and parenting education approaches into the national system for teacher training. This involves LABE's continuous engagement with the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC).

TARGET GROUPS

Due to its broad formal and non-formal two-track approach to mother tongue-based teaching and learning, the programme targets a wide range of stakeholders. Direct target groups include primary school children between Grade 1 to Grade 3 (P1–P3), parents and relatives of these children, and teachers of P1–P3.

Head teachers from all project schools are also targeted for training and awareness meetings, so that they can better support P1–P3 teachers on MTE.

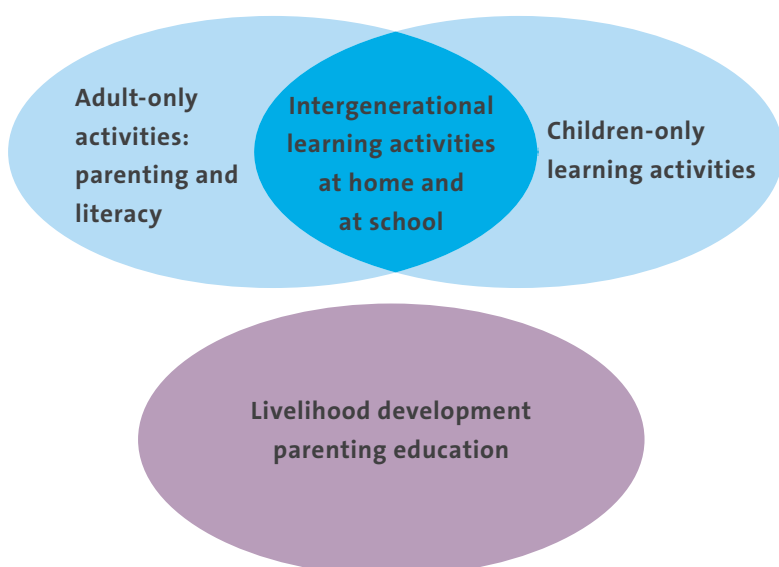
PROGRAMME FACILITATORS

The major facilitators for this programme are community volunteers known as ‘parent educators’ (PEs). They are selected by community members guided by LABE’s selection criteria. Typically, these facilitators are adult relatives of P1–P3 school children, drawn from within the extended family. They are expected to have completed primary-level education and must be able to read and write in their local language.

P1–P3 teachers also play important roles as facilitators, in teaching children in their mother tongues, training PEs and implementing school-based learning activities for children and parents.

HOME LEARNING CENTRES

Most of the programme’s activities take place in home learning centres (HLCs) in different communities. These learning centres might be a simple grass-thatched shelter or the shade under a tree established as a schools-at-home space within a selected homestead. Affiliated to a nearby primary school, HLCs serve as multi-purpose learning spaces where educational programmes for preschoolers, afterschool learning for in-school children and parenting or family literacy for adults are usually carried out. These centres are equipped with solar lamps to allow extra time at night for parents to learn with their children.



PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

APPROACHES AND METHODS

The first phase of MTE commenced in 2009 and ended in 2013. The second phase began in 2014 and will end in 2018. During the first phase, LABE engaged in advocacy to promote mother tongue education, capacity building, in-service teacher training, adult literacy programmes for parents, and the development of curricula and teaching resources for local language instruction. This phase included a series of micro-level initiatives:

- Informing communities and parents of the value of educating their children in local languages, through events such as International Mother Language Day.
- Supporting area language boards, government institutions that develop areas’ local languages, to produce orthographies.
- Working with teachers and children to produce story-books, children’s magazines and teaching resources.
- Dissemination of experiences from the districts to education policymakers countrywide.

This micro-level work facilitated the implementation of macro-level policy, especially in the context of using local languages in education.

To increase the programme’s impact, the second (ongoing) phase addresses a number of new objectives, focusing more on consolidating the following areas:

- Building teachers’ capacity in delivering courses in local languages, including the use of ICTs to supplement the national training offered by teacher educators (known as coordinating centre tutors).
- Increasing parental support for MTE and integrating parental involvement in national systems for teacher training.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Prior to the execution of project work, a thorough needs assessment is conducted to gauge problems and needs. Parents’ needs are assessed informally through community sensitization meetings, held at the beginning of the project. At these meetings, LABE shares the project goal and gives an overview of the government’s policies

on local language-based education. A list of issues that need to be clarified further to parents and community members is developed at these meetings.

Teachers' needs are determined through ongoing meetings and interviews at school. Teachers attending these meetings often report that they have received little professional training in mother tongue-based instruction. For that reason, LABE, in partnerships with teacher educators from primary teachers' colleges, has developed a training programme focused on mother-tongue based instruction.

ACTIVITIES

1. Training for Facilitators – P1–P3 Teachers

Induction training for in-service P1–P3 teachers was provided in conjunction with centre coordinating tutors, whose main responsibility is to provide primary school teachers with additional in-service professional development. This training lasts for seven days and aims to increase teachers' competence in using the local language as a medium of instruction.

Apart from the formally structured training, P1–P3 teachers are invited to attend teachers' forums, usually held during school holidays or over weekends. At these forums, which are organized by LABE, participants share their experiences of instruction, materials development, advocacy and managing joint parent-child literacy sessions.

Parent Educators

Once recruited, PEs receive initial training of between ten and twelve days to induct them into the programme. This introductory training is followed by continuous training in short sessions conducted by LABE. PEs are trained not only to deliver the parenting course and lead children's afterschool activities, but also to manage the home learning centre. The training is, for the most part, delivered by P1–P3 teachers.

2. Parenting and adult literacy courses and other activities for parents

There are two literacy courses: one integrated with the parenting education course, and one integrated with courses that focus on providing skills to improve learners' livelihoods. Learners can choose to participate in both courses.

The parenting education with adult literacy course targets parents who are unable to support their children's home-based learning, largely because of their poor literacy skills. Motivated to better support their children's learning, these parents seek to strengthen their literacy skills. Classes usually take place once or twice a week and last for no more than two hours. There are usually fifteen parents on each literacy training course.

The parenting education with livelihood development course involves adults with and without adequate literacy skills in one-to-two hour sessions, twice a week. LABE does not provide the training directly; rather, it partners with other organizations that provide livelihood-related training to parents in LABE's project areas. For instance, in Koboko district, LABE invited Italian NGO ACAV to deliver agriculture support training in HLCs. In districts such as Gulu and Nwoya, LABE has encouraged some of the parents involved in HLCs to become members of village savings and loans associations, supported by the organizations that offer these loans. Moreover, as a consultancy support, LABE has developed teaching materials for Invisible Children, an organization that provides livelihood-led literacy.

In addition, all parents are encouraged to participate in a weekly intergenerational learning activity with their children at school. This helps parents to participate in their children's learning and creates a functional home-school link. This activity, managed by teachers with the support of PEs, takes place during the designated literacy hour on the primary school timetable. During the activity, parents sit next to their children in class to encourage them to take part in learning activities such as taking turns to read stories aloud or completing jigsaw puzzles.

3. After-school learning activities for children

In addition to engaging in school-based mother-tongue learning activity with their parents, children take part in after-school learning. As an emergent literacy activity, pre-school children (3–5 years) take part in the learning activity. The activity falls into two categories:

- **Children-only learning activity:** This type of learning activity takes place at least twice a week. Children engage in storytelling, riddling and drawing. It is organized by a parent educator at each

HLC. Pre-school children learn how to open books and hold writing materials.

- **Home-based intergenerational learning activities:** At home, children and their parents read story-books together or to each other. Parents are also encouraged to help children with learning at home.

TEACHING METHODOLOGIES

The teaching methodologies applied are specific to each category of learner: parents/family members, children and teachers. In the case of parents or adult learners, a participatory group learning approach is taken. Small group discussions, participatory drawings/visualizations, rankings and traditional folklore are among the techniques used to help adult learners present and share new information and ideas. LABE believes that this methodology enables adult learners to contribute their perspectives, life experiences and ways of communicating to the learning situation.

A whole family learning approach, bringing parents and children together in school-based learning, is used. This method is intended to prepare both pre-school and school-age children for school and increases parental engagement through school-based literacy development. In the HLCs, PEs also use methods of direct instruction, such as read-aloud demonstrations, so that learners are better able to focus in reading new words or numbers. In addition, they use collaborative methods, pair work and games, for example, in completing activities such as jigsaws and picture puzzles. The learning process is engaging to learners, using activities such as storytelling, story acting and traditional folklore.

To make their learning more enjoyable, parents, children and PEs are trained to apply ICT materials, such as digital cameras, camcorders, laptops and mobile phones, in learning and in producing learning materials in their local languages.

The teaching methodology used in training teachers draws on the 'communities of practice' approach, which places strong emphasis on mutual understanding and engagement among community members with common goals and interests. LABE has supported the development of networks among teachers so that they can share their experience with each other, as well as developing support materials and facilitating

community sensitization, to improve teachers' knowledge of mother tongue-based instruction and their skills in delivering it.

MATERIALS USED AND DEVELOPED

The learning content for children, teachers and parents is based on the official primary school curriculum for lower grades. However, the project goals, and the particular needs of the target groups, are considered in the development of specific curricula.

Learning material is developed by teachers, with technical support from the area language boards. LABE ensures that reading materials are developed in each local language, using authentic knowledge and cultural experiences familiar to the learners. In the first phase of the programme, more than 25,420 copies of storybooks in five local languages were printed and distributed to schools, families and HLCs.

Materials for Parents and PEs

The Parenting Education Resource Book has been developed for parents. It contains worksheets, booklets, charts and posters (such as local language calendars), and guidelines on writing children's storybooks. PEs use this book as a source of reference and instructional material during parenting education. In addition, family story bags are distributed to each family. These story bags serve as mini-libraries and many families hang their story bag on the wall and use it as a practical tool to store and organize their reading materials. This is a good way of encouraging parents and children to practice their literacy skills at home.

Materials for Children

LABE develops storybooks for children in their own local languages. Cards, board games, jigsaws and picture/flash cards are used as materials for children's learning activities. The children also develop magazines of their own, hand-written in their own style and language. In the first two years of the programme alone, around 16,000 copies of magazines were produced and distributed to project schools and HLCs to be used as learning resources.

Materials for Teachers

LABE and the NCDC has jointly developed *The Pedagogy Handbook for Teaching in Local Language*, a book cur-

Table 1: The number of programme beneficiaries and materials developed and distributed.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Teachers	150 (79 female [F]; 71 male [M])	1,190 (555 F; 635 M)	1,305 (597 F; 708 M)	1,491 (682 F; 809 M)	1,491 (682 F; 809 M)
Parents	1543 (11,891 F; 7,438 M)	19,329 (11,891 F; 7,438 M)	20,332 (12,427 F; 7860 M)	21,144 (12,935 F; 8,164 M)	13,500 (9755 F; 3745 M)
Parent educators	240 (80 F; 160 M)	720 (278 F; 442 M)	840 (327 F; 513 M)	808 (325 F; 483 M)	183 (46 F; 137 M)
P1–P3 children	108,000 (53,680 F; 54,320 M)	156,168 (78,026 F; 78,142 M)	146,584 (73,422 F; 73,162 M)	141,733 (72,260 F; 69,473 M)	31,533 (16,179 F; 15,354 M)
Copies of story-books distributed	31,200	23,500	31,200	23,500	3,000
Copies of magazines written by children	2400	53,800	10,000	15,000	5,000

rently used in project areas as well as in other parts of Uganda as a national document for in-service teachers to promote and improve the implementation of mother-tongue education. Orthographies of local languages (four of the five have been jointly developed by LABE and the area language boards. These are available for teachers to use in proofreading local language materials. In addition, teachers are trained to produce supplementary teaching materials in local languages, such as syllable cards, work cards and posters, following guidance in the *Pedagogy Handbook*.

LEARNING ASSESSMENT

Adult Learners/Parents

Adult learners who pursue adult literacy in addition to parenting education are assessed every nine months by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, which is responsible for monitoring the implementation and quality of the national Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) programme. LABE's other programme, Family Basic Education, is recognized by the ministry's 2012–2016 National Action Plan for Adult Literacy as one of the best adult literacy initiatives in Uganda. LABE, therefore, connects parents who attend the parenting and adult literacy course with the district community development departments that oversee FAL, so they can take part in the annual FAL assess-

ments. The learners take a national pen-and-paper literacy assessment in their local language. On passing the test, parents receive a certificate of recognition.

Teachers

Primary teachers trained in the MTE programme are supervised and assessed by their outreach teacher educators as part of their continuing professional development. LABE, therefore, does not directly assess their competencies in mother tongue-based instruction, as it lacks a mandate to do so. However, to complement this traditional assessment approach, which focuses on teachers' capability deficits, LABE promotes the establishment of professional learning communities among P1–P3 teachers, as an innovative approach to professional development as well as an assessment tool. In this way, teachers co-learn, self-assess and co-assess their professional progress, including capacity in mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

Children

LABE trains PEs to work with parents to assess the school-readiness and transition of pre-school children. PEs and parents use a checklist of indicators, as listed in the Parenting Education Resource Book, to assess their pre-school children's transition from home to school.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A variety of mechanisms are used to share experiences and good practice among programme stakeholders and within LABE itself. Within LABE, quarterly programme management meetings are held to discuss project progress and any problems arising. LABE programme officers organize regular review meetings and focus group discussions with government partners and community members in order to share report findings and develop action plans.

To be accountable to stakeholders, the wider public, government and civil society, LABE produces periodic publications, such as annual reports. Additionally, mid-term and end-of-project evaluations have been carried out, with reports published and widely shared. These publications highlight the major achievements and challenges of the reporting period and consider how any problems encountered can be addressed.

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

As Table 1 shows, a number of stakeholders are involved in and benefit from the programme. The programme also develops a variety of learning and teaching materials which are distributed to project areas. It should be noted that numbers decreased in 2014, as LABE phased out of some old project schools in order to focus on fewer programme objectives and activities in the second phase of the programme.

Enrolment of children in primary school grades P1–P3 has increased as a result of learning in local languages. For instance, in just one year of the programme, the enrolment of children in P1–P3 increased by 44.6 per cent across 240 project schools, from 108,000 learners in 2010 to 156,168 learners in 2011. Moreover, school-children involved in the programme have shown greater confidence and improvements in reading and writing in their mother tongue.

The enrolment of parent learners in the parenting and adult literacy courses has also increased, from 1,543 in 2010 to 19,329 in 2011. This is mostly due to the immediate benefits parents gain from literacy classes and the learning process. With their newly gained or improved literacy skills and self-confidence, they have become not only more supportive of their children's

education, but also more active in community activities. For example, parents are now able to write their own names, sign visitors' books at schools and understand what their children are learning. Some parents, especially mothers, have taken up leadership positions in their communities and introduced new activities, including income generating work, to their literacy groups. Some parents have formed self-help groups so that they can discuss their problems and share skills.

At community level, the programme has bridged the gap between homes and schools, mostly through school-based sessions involving both parents and children. The parents' own local languages are employed as the medium of instruction in adult literacy courses and the early primary school curriculum, which means they feel more at home in the school environment.

Another significant achievement is the development and publication of two important books: Implementation Strategy for Advocacy of Local Languages in Uganda (2011), and Pedagogy Handbook for Teaching in Local Language (2013). These books are recognized by the NCDC as important resources for promoting change in schools. They are available nationwide.

TESTIMONIES

'My life is now better. I can now read and address a public gathering!' **Aate Zubeda, mother and adult learner.**

'I have learned how to read and write my name, I can copy some Acholi words written by our teacher, although I can't yet read all the comments in my children's books.' **Florence, mother and adult learner.**

'My attendance at school was so irregular, sometimes I went to school twice in a month and so I could not cope. Eventually I dropped out in P4. It hurt me to leave school and now I concentrate on my literacy class and I actively support all my children to stay in school and finish school.' **Christine, mother and adult learner.**

'I have realized that teaching in local language is interesting because there is full participation from learners and saves time because there is no need for translation unlike in the past.' **Dramani Samuel, P3 teacher.**

CHALLENGES

Despite the enactment of policy to make local languages the medium of instruction in Ugandan primary schools, there have been a number of structural and pedagogical challenges to its effective implementation. These include a lack of interest from more advantaged sections of society, negative community perceptions about the use of local languages in instruction, a scarcity of instructional materials in local languages, and inadequate teacher training. According to LABE, resistance to learning in one's mother tongue is more prevalent among better-educated and wealthier people than it is in rural communities. Because of their political and economic dominance, and their control of print and electronic media, elites can easily influence attitudes toward local languages. The challenge for LABE and its partners is to counter this at grassroots level. Moreover, the power of English in the national education system is well established, with stable financial support from international institutions such as the British Council and the World Bank. It can be difficult to obtain financial support for developing publications in local languages.

Another challenge is to increase the number of parent educators, due to the low stipends offered to them. Sometimes, especially during rainy seasons, the number of participants in the adult literacy programme is quite low, since parents are occupied with farming work.

LESSONS LEARNED

In the first phase of the programme (2009–2013), LABE sought to simultaneously address the ideological, ethno-linguistic and pedagogical aspects of the challenges that hinder the success of MTE. However, LABE has learned that, as an organization, it is important to focus on core issues, while working with others to create deeper impact. Hence, in the second phase, LABE's main focus is on pedagogical issues, such as lack of language standardization and teachers' capacity development. Ideological aspects, such as public awareness, are best addressed through working with related government partners at national and regional levels.

Another lesson learned concerns the use of oral literature and traditional folklore as an important lit-

eracy resource. At the outset of the programme, LABE thought that it would be a challenge to obtain resources for learning materials from communities that lack of written literature. However, it turned out that almost all adult participants in the literacy programme not only possessed a rich knowledge of oral literature and folklore, but also were ready and motivated to share their knowledge. Thus, LABE asked community members to provide more information to participants at local materials-writing workshops.

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Functional Literacy Programme of Women of the Argan Cooperative through Amazigh (Berber) Language DVDs

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

32,599,000 (2012)

Official Language

Arabic, Berber

Poverty

(Population living on less than USD 1.25 per day)
3% (2000–2009)

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GNP

5.5 (2010)

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 2005–2010)

Total: 79%; Men: 87%; Women: 72%

Statistical Sources

- UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report
- UNICEF: Info by Country
- World Bank: World Development Indicators database

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Functional Literacy Programme of Women of the Argan Cooperative through Amazigh (Berber) Language DVDs (Projet d'alphabétisation fonctionnelle des femmes coopératives d'argane moyennant un DVD en langue amazigh)

Implementing Organization

Association Ibn Albaytar (national NGO)

Language of Instruction

Arabic, Berber (Amazigh)

Funding

International NGOs and foreign donors

Programme Partners

National Centre of Development and Literacy (Centre National de Développement et d'Alphabétisation – CNDA), Nutrition Act and the international cooperation of Monaco

Annual Programme Costs

€60 000 (USD 80 000 – first year including DVD production costs),

€25 000 (USD 34 000 – second year)

Cost per Learner: €104 (USD 140)

Date of Inception

December 2008

COUNTRY CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Morocco is an emerging country ranking 130 out of 187 in the 2013 Human Development Report (UNDP, 2013). Agriculture makes up 15% of the GDP (World Bank, 2013) with 40% of the active labour force employed in its activity in 2010 (UNDP, 2011).

The Argan oil trade is unique to the country, its activity mainly being carried out by women in rural areas. While the oil is used in cooking, it is also renowned in the cosmetics industry and known for its medicinal virtues. Situated in central and southern Morocco, it serves as a buffer against desertification from the

Sahara desert in the south. Due to the threat of excessive human exploitation, the Argan tree became not only the focus for conservation, but also for socio-economic development and research. In 1998, through the UNESCO Man and Biosphere programme (MAB), the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve was designated, its core area comprising the Souss-Masaa National Park. A secondary aim of this programme besides environmental protection, is also to promote and demonstrate a balanced relationship between people and nature.

With a population of over 32 million, literacy rates in Morocco stand at an average of 56%, representing over 10 million people lacking basic literacy skills. With liter-



acy programmes frequently being carried out in urban areas, opportunities for women in poor rural areas to acquire these skills are relatively few and far between.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The association Ibn Al Baytar (AIB) was created in 1999 and is registered as a national NGO in Morocco. It has 30 members and an Administration Council made up of 9 people. The main aim of the association is to bring together social and economic progress with the preservation of the environment. Its programmes focus on the autonomy of women in rural areas, encouraging the protection of the environment and medicinal plants. Literacy classes are coordinated with income-generating activities and provided for women working in one of the Argan women's cooperatives.

The association was among the first to set up cooperatives in the Argan sector in Morocco, starting with Amal cooperative in 1996 employing 16 divorced or widowed women. Many of these women had never acquired literacy skills and so from 2003 the association also started to include literacy training as part of their programmes. This came to benefit over 3000 women in the Argan trade. A diagnostic study in 2006 brought to light that the need to consolidate

literacy skills was being overlooked, also the fact that many of the women spoke Berber, some of whom could only speak very little Arabic. This led to the implementation in December 2008 of a new literacy programme designed to address these needs in Amazigh, a Berber language spoken by the women participating in it.

The programme is implemented in five provinces of the region Souss Massa Draa in central Morocco. Each year 240 women and girls from rural areas participate in the programme with a total of over 480 rural women benefiting from it since its inception. The programme's focus on rural women sets it out from other organizations whose main field of action is in urban areas. It is also the first literacy programme in Morocco to produce and use audio-visual material in the Amazigh language.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The literacy programme for groups of women in the Argan cooperative aims at:

- Making the cooperative's women aware of the importance of environmental protection and preservation
- Making the cooperative's women aware of the importance of the Argan Biosphere and what is at stake in the preservation of the Argan forest

- Making the cooperative's women aware of the primary importance of cooperative and solidarity organisation
- Endowing the cooperative's women with knowledge of legislation and cooperative management
- Endowing the cooperative's women with skills in the areas of quality norms/standards and traceability procedures in Argan oil production
- Increasing women's awareness of the obstacles/constraints in Argan sales and the value of promoting fair trade
- Endowing the cooperative women's knowledge of new family laws, especially those concerning the status of divorced women and the basic principles of family management.

The simplification of audio-visual pedagogical tools in the Amazigh language for the women of the Argan cooperative looks at:

- Increasing women's awareness of the importance of the cooperative as an economic structure for solidarity
- Initiating women into cooperative legislation
- Accompanying cooperative women in the implementation of good cooperative governance
- Mobilizing women to adhere to efforts made to establish, respect, and improve quality standards and to implement a traceability system within the cooperatives
- Reinforcing the cooperatives on an institutional level
- Increasing women's awareness of the Argan Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) and the importance of fair trade.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

TEACHING – LEARNING APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

Classes are held during six months of each year with an average of 25 learners per group.

At the beginning of each session a review is made of the previous session, helping participants to consolidate what they have already learned and retain the key elements. It is also used to evaluate what they know and what they have acquired.

Participative methods are principally used, ensuring full involvement of each learner. Brainstorming is one such technique, used to create a debate between the cooperative women based on their knowledge and conceptions and also to ascertain to what level they master the subject under question. Women are able to freely share their own opinions and points of view. The brainstorming is followed by the use of audio-visual material on the same theme. As this material is in the mother-tongue of the participants they are able to follow it closely and also understand it. The content projected during the showing is then used to rectify, where necessary, some of the women's ideas or viewpoints expressed during the preliminary discussion while continuing to promote free expression.

Group work is then used to consolidate and put into action what has been discussed and covered. It is also a means for the facilitator to discern the level to which each participant has mastered the subject under discussion.

PROGRAMME CONTENT (CURRICULUM)

The association Ibn Al Baytar (AIB) has been working in the field of adult literacy since 2003 for the benefit of the Argan oil cooperations. This experience has greatly contributed to the curriculum in place for this programme. The principal manual used helps learners to acquire and maintain literacy skills combined with improving their management skills in the Argan trade. A key difference between this programme and former ones is the language of instruction, classes being held and manuals being used are no longer in Arabic but in Amazigh, the main language spoken by participants.

Principal themes covered in the curriculum include the:

- Protection of the environment
- Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve
- Cooperative: definition and membership (part 1)
- Cooperative: principals, rights and obligations (part 2)
- General Assembly of the Cooperative
- Accountancy for the Cooperative
- Traditional and mechanical oil extraction methods
- Quality and traceability
- Marketing and PGI (Protected Geographical Indications) of Argan oil
- Family law

Audio-visual material is a key feature of the programme. An expert in pedagogy was recruited to specifically design and plan the contents of these materials and sessions. The artistic development and final production of the material was entrusted to and carried out by a company specialising in artistic productions. A total of 12 pedagogical films were created to be used in the programme.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

All facilitators follow a programme to be trained as facilitators. They are given a pedagogical kit comprising of a facilitators guide in Arabic and a DVD in Amazigh. They follow a technical outline for each session. Facilitators are paid DH2800 per month (USD 340) and oversee two groups of 50–60 learners. They all have experience in the field of adult literacy and undergo three specific training sessions: literacy teaching, cooperative legislation and health and legal education. Extended training also includes andragogy, facilitation and communication techniques, evaluation methods, use of audio-visual supports, among other things.

ENROLMENT OF LEARNERS

The main target groups are women and girls. Women working in the women's cooperatives who wish to follow the programme offered by the association Ibn Al Baytar can be enrolled. Each year 240 participants benefit from the programme.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

During sessions, the facilitator uses different exercises to assess the participants' acquisition and assimilation of the subjects covered. At the end of each module participants are given a test to evaluate their knowledge and what they have acquired. These tests include different formats such as true or false questions, multiple choice, connecting information and carrying out tasks.

Following the evaluation, the facilitator runs reinforcement sessions, helping participants to extend and refine their newly acquired skills and knowledge. These evaluations also serve to fine-tune the curriculum and methodologies as recurrent deficits in the programme may be brought to light, they can also be addressed, adjusted and rectified as appropriate.

At the end of each year, all participants take an examination as part of a final evaluation. They receive a final grade, but no certificates are issued.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Pedagogical supervisors visit the different training units once a month to insure the pedagogical follow-up, aid the facilitators and help solve any problems which have come up during literacy classes. During each visit, the supervisor will check the pedagogical documentation including technical documents, participants lists, timetables, attendance rosters, monthly reports and agendas. The supervisor then submits a report to the association Ibn Al Baytar at the end of each visit.

Further evaluations are made by external consultants or doctoral students studying impact at this level.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Three thousand woman have participated in the literacy programme in Arabic since its inception in 2003. In 2009 and 2010, over 480 women benefited from the literacy programme with the DVD in the Amazigh language and attendance rates have increased since its outset. Success rates for the programme in Amazigh are at 84% compared to previous rates of below 50% for the programme in Arabic.

Various benefits have also been recorded relating to improved quality and traceability in Argan oil production and more transparency in the cooperations. Women are demonstrating greater initiative in contacting or consulting administration in the cooperative sector. They have also become more aware of the need to protect the environment and the Argan trade.

As the programme is being implemented in key areas of the Souss Massa Drâa region, notably the provinces of Agadir Idaoutanane, Chtouka Ait Baha, Taroudant and Tiznit, more and more requests are being received to extend the programme further. It is now being used as a model in other women's cooperatives in other sectors besides Argan.

One learners' manual has been produced and a second is under way. In addition there is an instructor's manu-



al on literacy with a second focusing on skills training for instructors.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The implementation and day-to-day running of the programme has met with its own set of challenges. The buildings housing the literacy centres are in a precarious state, lacking adequate tables and chairs, missing windows and with roofs in disrepair. Participants do not have the necessary equipment, such as televisions and DVD players, to enable them to view audio-visual material at home. Many participants have expressed a need for the courses to be longer than six months, finding this length too short to fully assimilate the whole programme.

The programme has also learned from and overcome various challenges. The social climate and different political events, such as the electoral campaign, have had an impact on the programme, most often disturbing the regularity of classes. One year, the annual harvest had been good and harvesting started as early as April in certain zones. As a result, many women were pushed to stop their classes to help their families with the harvest and associated activities. To counteract this, timetables were modified and arrangements were made for participants to be able to catch up with what they had missed.

Some cooperatives invest heavily in this programme while others, lacking their own means, are constrained to wait for financial aid from other NGOs or foreign donors.

SUSTAINABILITY

The long term sustainability of the programme depends on a continued demand for literacy training

by groups of women and women's cooperatives as well as the continued investment of financial partners. There are now 180 cooperatives for Argan, which represent 4500 women, each a potential beneficiary of the programme. The demand for literacy training is great, but needs the financial backing to be able to keep up with it.

In 2008 the Minister of Agriculture in Morocco launched the *Projet Vert* (Green Plan) to promote income-generating activities in other sectors and for other products than Argan and in 2010 it started to be implemented in the field. The experience and expertise gained in the Argan sector could be adapted and later used for these new activities. Requested are already being received to use the programme in cooperatives in other sectors.

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- UENSCO (2013) Man and Biosphere programme
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- Worldbank (2012) Data

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Isirawa Language Revitalization Programme (ILRP)

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

249,866,000 (2013)

Official Language

Bahasa Indonesia

Other spoken languages

Javanese, Sundanese, Batak and Bugis

Poverty

headcount ratio at 2 PPP USD a day (% of population)

43.3 (2013)

Access to Primary Education –

Total Net Intake Rate (NIR)

96% (2006)

Total Youth Literacy Rate (15–24 years, 2015)

Men: 98.9%; Women: 99.1%; Total: 99%

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 2015)

Male: 96.3%; Female: 91.5%; Total: 93.9%

Statistical Sources

- UNESCO UIS

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Isirawa Language Revitalization Programme (ILRP)

Implementing Organization

SIL International-Indonesia

Language of Instruction

Isirawa and Indonesian

Funding

Papua Office of Education, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and churches

Date of Inception

2000

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Indonesia has made impressive strides in providing education opportunities to its citizens in recent years. In addition to enrolment rates of 96% in primary education, the total literacy rates for youths and adults are 99% and 90% respectively. The total percentage of illiterates among the adult population (aged 15 years and over) fell from 15% in 1990 to 10.2% in 2003 and 6.91% by the end of 2007. During the period 2000–2006, it was estimated that around 14.8 million adults were illiterate.

However, in a vast, transcontinental and multi-ethnic country that comprises 17,508 islands, there are inevitably ethnic, gender and regional disparities with regards to access to education. Thus, despite the visible progress made in literacy rates, the rate of illitera-

cy is substantially higher among ethnic minorities and indigenous people living in remote and economically marginalised areas. At the end of 2007, 23.41% of the three million inhabitants of Papua, the nation's largest province, were estimated to be illiterate. Gender disparities in the province were similarly high, with illiteracy rates of 16.39% and 30.43% for men and women, respectively. Similarly, illiteracy rates in other marginalised regions such as the East Nusa Tenggara (11.25%), are above the national average.

The Isirawa people (indigenous Papuans living in the province of Papua) are among the most socially marginalised groups in Indonesia, with limited access to basic socio-economic services such as health and education. A majority of the Isirawa people depend on subsistence farming. Alarmingly, the Isirawa culture – in particular, their customs, language and production methods – is

being eroded by urbanisation and the changing systems of livelihood. The major problem, from the perspective of traditional community leaders, is that the Isirawa are “a forgotten people” whose language and culture are not being retained by their youth. Similarly, they point to a lack of national interest in preserving the cultural identity of ethnic minorities such as the Isirawa. In light of this, SIL International-Indonesia initiated the Isirawa Language Revitalization Programme, a community-led and mother-tongue-based literacy programme designed to empower the Isirawa people to combat the erosion of their culture.

ISIRAWA LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION PROGRAMME (ILRP)

The ILRP stems from the desire of the Isirawa people and their leaders to revitalise and preserve their unique cultural identity, which is currently under threat from the influences of urbanisation and multiculturalism. The Isirawa traditional leaders are particularly interested in encouraging the preservation of their language and culture among the young, many of whom reportedly see little future in their Isirawa identity, and are therefore less inclined to participate in the development of their communities. The programme also emerged from the realisation that the Isirawa people would be unable to face the linguistic and social pressures of their urban-influenced context without a strong linguistic and cultural identity.

Although the Isirawa were generally motivated to participate in the programme because they wanted to preserve their cultural identity, many female participants opted to join in order to learn how to care for the health of their children and families. Furthermore, observations at the beginning of the project revealed that although some Isirawa people had already acquired basic reading and writing skills in Indonesian, they tended to view literacy as of little relevance to their daily lives and cultural identity. Hence, the ILRP was designed to empower the entire Isirawa community not only to revive and preserve their cultural heritage but also to become functionally literate in both Isirawa and Indonesian languages. This was intended to enable the Isirawa to use their multilingual skill effectively in order to promote community and national development. With strong sup-

port from community leaders, the project offered literacy skills training to the whole community, including mothers, who are among the most active participants in health education and literacy efforts in Isirawa village networks. Community libraries have been set up that include materials in both Isirawa and Indonesian. To date, the programme has operated in six of twelve Isirawa villages near the Papuan town of Sarmi.

The ILRP includes the following major activities and components:

- Organization of workshops and seminars celebrating the Isirawa language and encouraging people to learn to read and write in Isirawa.
- Development of bilingual libraries for children to read books in both Indonesian and Isirawa.
- Translation of health materials into Isirawa to encourage better hygiene and to teach people about how to treat common diseases.
- Building of clean water facilities in a number of Isirawa villages.
- Organization of sewing and embroidery workshops to build skills.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The ILRP aims to:

- revitalise and preserve the Isirawa language by encouraging Isirawa youth to be proud of their unique language and culture;
- combat inter-community conflicts regarding two competing Isirawa language dialects;
- promote multilingual (Isirawa and Indonesian) functional literacy skills among the Isirawa in order to empower them to function effectively in a multilingual context; and
- empower the Isirawa (particularly mothers and youth) to spearhead development and problem-solving in their communities, in part through the provision of basic social services, without imperiling their cultural identity.

THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS

- Literacy for lifelong learning
- Literacy for health
- Literacy in a multilingual context

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

Various actors and stakeholders are involved in the implementation of the programme, including:

- The Isirawa Literacy Committee (ILC), made up of Isirawa community leaders, which coordinates programme activities at the grassroots level, including the mobilisation of learners and recruitment of facilitators. With assistance from SIL International-Indonesia, the ILC is principally responsible for overseeing the development of context-relevant reading and educational materials using the Isirawa language.
- SIL International-Indonesia, which has the primary task of providing financial assistance, technical expertise in literacy and language development, and training sessions for teachers and tutors. To this end, SIL has provided two professional literacy consultants who worked alongside the ILC and the Papua Office for Non-Formal Education.
- The Papua Office of Non-Formal Education, which shares the responsibility of facilitating the tutor training programme in the Isirawa communities.
- Programme Facilitators, currently comprising approximately 25 well-trained and community-based Isirawa literacy tutors. These provide bilingual (Isirawa and Indonesian) literacy teaching services to their local communities.

TEACHING-LEARNING METHODOLOGIES

The programme integrates teaching approaches from the formal and non-formal education sectors. It has been particularly successful at facilitating learning through mentoring and strengthening social networks. Much learning in Isirawa culture takes place in a relational and participatory context outside of a formal classroom. One of the initial foci of this project was a village-based embroidery group attended by a group of mothers, which also indirectly provided health education and literacy training. Participants in these embroidery groups would then disseminate this information amongst their social networks in different villages.

Many Isirawa have already had previous exposure to Indonesian, but have found it difficult to learn the language well enough to engage in a classroom setting.

Thus, although the programme is bilingual, much of its success stems from the extensive use of the Isirawa language.

In order to ensure the programme's effectiveness and sustainability, a number of aids and methodologies are used in the teaching-learning process, including:

- MULOK; This stands for Locally Made Curricula. In the case of the Isirawa, MULOK was used as a platform to develop graded reading materials.
- Big Books: Although reading in Western cultures tends to be a solitary activity, in Isirawa culture it is a community activity. Big Books are A3-sized story books which are easily read by a group or in front of a class.
- Audiovisual media: In Isirawa culture, information is often first received orally. Instructional media can accommodate this by pairing an oral recording of a health booklet with a large flipchart for participants to follow simultaneously.
- Shell books: These are simple booklets on health or agricultural topics which can be easily translated from Indonesian into a local language. The format is often bilingual, with both Indonesian and the local language on the same or opposite pages. Illustrations are selected to suit the region, such as Papua, and the contents of the booklet are presented in a culturally appropriate narrative.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

30 participants attended a series of basic health workshops on topics such as malaria and HIV/AIDS. Over 50 people have attended transitional literacy sessions facilitated by Isirawa tutors. Six village libraries have been established and equipped with books and other educational materials in an effort to promote lifelong learning.

The main impact has been a change in attitude on the part of the Isirawa people, including traditional leaders and youth. They now accept that there is a way to participate in national activities without losing their unique linguistic and cultural identity. One programme participant said, "We heard about this disease called AIDS from an outsider when we were in Jayapura, but only believe it now because we have heard it from someone we know and trust."

LESSONS LEARNED

It was observed that literacy projects are more effective when they are based on communal perceptions of culture and cultural preservation. In light of this, communal dialogues are central to both literacy learning and cultural propagation. In addition, revitalising the linguistic and cultural identity of the Isirawa people, as well as fostering community engagement in the process, has actually encouraged the Isirawa to engage constructively with the outside world. For example, as a result of the communities' experiences of working together on the literacy committee and transition workshops, community leaders spearheaded the development of an airstrip, providing a much-needed alternative form of transport to the Isirawa area. They have also succeeded in getting an Isirawa person elected to political office at the regency level of local government.

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Wānanga Embedded Literacy

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

4.21 million

Official Languages

English, Maori and Sign Language

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GDP

(2006) 6.2%

Access to Primary Education –

Total Net Intake Rate (NIR)

99.9% (2005)

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 2005–2010)

Total 99%; Women: 99 %; Men: 99%

Statistical Sources

- UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report
- UNICEF
- World Bank: World Development Indicators database

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Wānanga Embedded Literacy

Implementing Organization

Te Taihū o Ngā Wānanga (the national association of Wānanga)

Language of Instruction

2009 (Wānanga were established long before the literacy programme began)

Programme Partners

New Zealand Government, Tertiary Education Commission

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

New Zealand is considered to be a very developed country across many sectors, including education. In fact, the UNDP's latest Human Development Report states that the country has very high human development, ranking 5th worldwide in the Human Development Index, an index that combines various indicators of health, education and personal wealth. New Zealand's adult and youth literacy rates are both reported to be over 99 %. However, this basic measurement falls short of a significant and contextual statistic, in a society where basic literacy skills alone are not sufficient for everyday life. Research undertaken in 2006 found that as many as 43 % of New Zealanders have insufficient literacy skills to fully participate in a knowledge society, and 51 % did not have the numeracy skills required for the demands of everyday work and life.

Indeed, it is recognised across New Zealand's business and industrial sectors that improvements in Literacy, Language and Numeracy (LLN) across the population might go some way to improve New Zealand's poor

levels of productivity. According to the OECD, New Zealand's labour productivity is such that for each hour worked, the economic gain is only 60 % of that of the United States of America, and 80 % of that of Australia. It is hoped that a more educated population will continue to build a high-skill, high-wage economy, and an inclusive society where everyone can participate.

With this in mind, in 2008 the government's Tertiary Education Committee (TEC) launched the *LLN Action Plan 2008–2012*. The plan was developed in cooperation with New Zealand's public and business sectors, and provided an additional NZD 163m for the development and implementation of new initiatives for LLN.

One significant area of the population which has been identified for investment in LLN programmes is the indigenous population; a recent survey identified 14.6 % of the population as Māori, with a further 6.9 % from other Polynesian ethnicities. In 1998, the Ministry of Māori Development published a report titled *Progress towards Closing Social and Economic*

Gaps between Māori and non-Māori, which reported significant disparities in the educational opportunities and attainments of Māori and non-Māori people. It is also significant that Māori rank highly in the negative statistics of social indicators from education to health. For example, the Māori unemployment rate is three times higher than that of non-Māori.

Māori society has historically embraced the acquisition of knowledge, as a part of their *mana*, the concept of an impersonal force or quality that resides in people. For generations, the *Whare Wānanga*, where knowledge from the elders is passed down to a selected few of the next generation, has been a key institution in Māori society. The Wānanga continue today across all of Aotearoa New Zealand, providing skills development in a culturally relevant context.

In 2009, the strategic document *He Whakapahuhu Kahukura* was published, identifying holistic literacy as an important aspect of conscious wellbeing, and setting guidelines for the embedding of LLN in Wānanga programmes. The plans were drawn with assistance from the TEC, in line with their *LLN Action Plan*.

THE WĀNANGA

The Wānanga is a very established institution in Māori tradition, with a strong learning culture. As they have always been, Wānanga are established, directed and controlled by the *iwi* (Māori society), in order to diffuse knowledge and meet the developmental needs of the *iwi*. *Mātauranga Māori*, defined by the National Library of New Zealand as the *complete body of knowledge or everything that is known or understood in the universe*, is central to the activities and programmes of the Wānanga. The Wānanga is designed to encourage active participation from all sectors of the *iwi*, and provides programmes for all levels, from basic certificates to degree programmes; since 1989, three Wānanga are officially recognized and accredited Tertiary Education Institutions (TEI), and they are represented by the collective national association *Te Taihū o Ngā Wānanga*.

The Wānanga recognise the importance of TEC's plans for Literacy, Language and Numeracy (LLN), which they label a 'functional literacy' that prepares people to function successfully at work and in the com-

munity. However, the Wānanga has a responsibility to ensure that all of its activities are underpinned by *tikanga* and *āhuatanga Māori* (Māori tradition), and the *He Whakapahuhu Kahukura*, published in 1999, helps to establish a framework for this. The document identifies three pillars of literacy – cultural literacy, critical literacy and functional literacy – the latter of which incorporates the concept of LLN. The document explains that these three pillars of literacy contribute to achieving cultural, social, economic and intellectual transformations, and to the identity and wellbeing of Aotearoa. An understanding of this framework is essential, since if the functional literacy is separated from its other two pillars, then it does not support the advancement of *Mātauranga Māori*, to which the Wānanga is essentially dedicated. To demonstrate the importance of this to participants, some tutors commented in focus group sessions that functional literacy (LLN) had to be taught subconsciously through Wānanga's traditional programmes.

At the time of research, the embedding of LLN into the Wānanga was in a pilot phase, with only 35 tutors currently using the new framework. This pilot testing phase is considered a means of testing effective methods of embedding LLN before it is rolled out across more than 80 Wānanga in Aotearoa New Zealand.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Three basic objectives of Wānanga are:

- to pursue knowledge to the greatest possible depths, and to broaden horizons;
- to empower all Māori to claim and develop their cultural heritage;
- to acquire knowledge that allows an understanding of the past and present, and the ability to claim a place in the future.

The introduction of LLN in Wānanga activities can be seen as a response to the third objective, which looks to the present and future needs of Māori society. Through embedding LLN into Wānanga activities, Te Taihū o Ngā Wānanga hopes to eliminate barriers that have previously prevented people from participating in tertiary education, including economic, geographical and social barriers. The programme aims to break the intergenerational cycle of non-participation in tertiary education by:

- reducing poverty and associated social issues;
- improving the wellbeing of those with previous negative educational experiences;
- revitalising *matauranga Maori*.

This process is known as a *whanau* transformation through education; *whanau* refers to a construction based on a mix of both descent and cause.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The embedding of LLN into the Wānanga has been conceived as both a ‘top-down’ and a ‘bottom-up’ approach. The strategic initiative is ‘top-down’ as the TEC has worked with the collective national association of Wānanga (Te Taihū o Ngā Wānanga) to create a rough framework for how LLN fits into the Wānanga principles. However, the direct implementation has been left to the pilot programme, the tutors of which will be able to make a direct assessment of effective implementation strategies that will form the substance of any future national implementation strategies, therefore representing a ‘bottom-up’ approach. Detailed information about processes is therefore emerging, rather than final.

The Te Taihū o Ngā Wānanga represents the three major Wānanga which have state accreditation. The association meets three times a year to devise and coordinate strategies that will benefit and develop each of the Wānanga, and it is responsible for the coordination of nationwide and universal Wānanga initiatives. The association also represents the interests of the Wānanga at various other meetings and on other boards that deal with issues concerning the Wānanga. For its internal organizational structure, each Wānanga follows a similar organisational structure:

- A steering group comprising of a wide range of stakeholders – governmental officials, the business sector, trade unions, and some local facilitators and community members – is responsible for the decision making process and coordinating the implementation of the literacy embedding programme; such tasks include managing the budget, developing curriculums, and designing

mechanisms for student support, assessment and staff training.

- A strategic advisor liaises with external agencies, and continuously assesses the mechanisms designed by the steering committee in order to provide strategic advice and feedback to them.
- Two project coordinators are responsible for implementing the strategies of the steering committee, including the tutor training and the embedding of literacy into Wānanga activities whilst ensuring ‘business-as-usual’.
- Reporting directly to the project coordinators are the tutors, who provide the training to participants.

This structure is based on a top-down approach, but as previously mentioned, the approach in the pilot phase is much more flexible, with tutors being given great freedom to develop their own strategies and report their relative successes to senior staff.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

More than 1.350 staff members are employed by Wānanga in more than 80 centres across the country. These staff members often come directly from the communities where the organisation operates. This gives more potential for the voice of the local population to reach the internal organisational and decision making structure of the Wānanga.

The professional development of Wānanga tutors is taken seriously. The final framework for training tutors in the implementation of literacy embedding is not yet confirmed, but one probable strategy that has been identified is to bring learning support staff, such as students, to be literacy specialists. This group of staff would then be responsible for assisting tutors with training sessions as well as training tutors in literacy techniques. Additionally, the Wānanga has invested in training its staff with professional accreditations; since 2007, large groups of staff have participated in the National Certificate in Adult Literacy. A further potential plan is to continue to provide formal training to tutors over a three year period, developing “distinctive and powerful Wānanga educators” (focus group participant) that may be officially accredited and receive monetary recognition.

The TEC have also provided two culturally sensitive progression trainers, to assist Wānanga tutors in the transition. As with the learners, a delicate approach is required to demonstrate the relevance of LLN to the tutors, in the context of matauranga Maori; this represents a substantial part of the staff training process. Some tutors that champion the introduction of the LLN programme are given temporary roles as national advocates, and work with the TEC progression trainers to train other tutors at local level.

TRAINING-LEARNING METHODS AND APPROACHES

Wānanga offer very unique learning environments. All learning is centred on Māori tradition and culture, as it has been for as long as the concept of the Wānanga has existed. Through this learning environment, the Wānanga teach students about themselves and their heritage, so that they become at ease with themselves and their learning environment, and are then better equipped to learn.

Wānanga tutors strongly uphold the traditional moral values of the institution. Tutors are therefore entirely dedicated to their students; in a focus group situation one tutor commented that the Wānanga is about “having programmes, making decisions and having directions that are about what the students need, not what is required from the funders or anyone else.” Many tutors therefore feel uneasy about how LLN fits into their programmes, since the majority of participants are coming to the Wānanga to learn a specific vocational skill, or to learn more about their heritage, and many are not interested in the development of their LLN skills. As one tutor commented, “we have to be really careful that our literacy programme does not take them in a direction they did not to go...and then they pull out...because for many of them this is the only chance that they will get to re-engage with education, and if we do not get it right then the stakes are high.”

Therefore, the approach that is most popular amongst the tutors is to embed LLN skills into other programmes, in a seemingly natural way. One tutor said that “separating subject knowledge and literacy and numeracy can be quite isolating for some of our students. So if we embed literacy, it becomes a natural part of the learning.” Essentially, the tutor identifies the skill that the

learner wants or the interest that they have, and they make the LLN a part of that learning programme in a way which will not discourage the learner.

The Wānanga offers extremely flexible training to its learners; fees are kept to a minimum and learning hours are made as flexible as possible, in order to minimise participation barriers. Teaching styles are customised according to the students’ preferred learning style, and group dynamics also vary according to the needs of the group.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

As they are accredited Tertiary Education Institutions, the Wānanga are regularly monitored and assessed by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. Several criteria must be met for programme and degree accreditation, including having appropriate facilities, financial resources, qualified teaching staff, support staff, a commitment to research, transparent regulations and no barriers to entry.

In addition to this external monitoring, the Wānanga are constantly evaluated by their own internal organizational structure, with the strategic advisor collected information from project coordinators and teaching staff to feed back to the steering committee, on a continuous basis.

IMPACT

The Wānanga experienced phenomenal growth in the early part of the last decade, with the largest Wānanga (Te Wānanga o Aotearoa) growing from 3,127 students in 2000 to 66,756 students in 2004.

In 2010, one year from the official introduction of LLN, 38 % of enrolling students had no academic qualifications and 30 % were unemployed. The programme is too recent for any significant evaluation of impact, but initial indicators of student satisfaction are high, with 91 % of students being ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with their tutor, and 90 % ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with their learning environment. Students also recorded high levels of satisfaction with the quality of their programmes, learning resources and facilities.

In 2010, the Wānanga achieved a course completion rate of 78 % and a student retention rate of 81 %.

CHALLENGES

The most significant challenge for the Wānanga, is in reaching a consensus about the approach which should be taken on the introduction of LLN. Many managers and tutors still admit that they are struggling with the concept, or feel uneasy with its introduction in programmes. In focus groups, some tutors were outspoken that they did not think literacy should play a part in Wānanga programmes, whilst some others thought that it was a very valuable part of the learning experience, but only as long as the student wants it. One tutor reported that if the students have literacy issues then she sends them to Literacy Aotearoa or another organisation, as she does not feel that the Wānanga is able to offer such training. These are considered teething problems that are inevitable after the introduction of a new concept in such an established institution. It is hoped that through the 'bottom-up' approach of the pilot programme, tutors might use the opportunity of experimenting with their approaches to learn more themselves about the value of LLN. Those tutors who are clear about the ways in which embedded functional literacy works, and who support it, are working with other tutors to help them in the transition period. Nevertheless, this represents a significant challenge in making a smooth transition and a lasting effect.

A further challenge, which is closely related to this problem, is the misalignment of the ideologies of the Tertiary Education Commission and the Wānanga. A number of tutors felt that the TEC was uncomfortable with the Wānanga's focus on 'cultural literacy', which sits outside of the policy direction identified in the LLN Action Plan. If the Wānanga are not left to develop and operate their own strategies for implementing LLN in a way in which they are comfortable, the programme's success is likely to be compromised. One tutor said: "if we do not own the strategy, then how likely are we to honour it?"

Another challenge lies in the resourcing of the Wānanga. Part of its commitment to participation involves the minimisation of fees for students, but as an accredited TEI the Wānanga is required to make a

3–5 % profit each year. Therefore, it is difficult to keep up with the demand; moving into 2011, the Wānanga reduced its student headcount by around 10 % due to budgetary constraints.

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The Parkari Literacy Project

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

182,143,000 (2013)

Official Languages

Urdu, Pashto, English, Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi

Poverty

(Population living on less than USD 2.00 per day)
60.2%

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GNP

2.5 (2013)

Access to Primary Education –

Total Net Intake Rate (NIR)

Total: 71.9% (2013); Male: 76.6%; Female: 66.7%

Total Youth Literacy Rate (15–24 years)

Total: 70.8% (2011); Male: 78%; Female: 63.1%

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 2010–2011)

Total: 54.7% (2011); Male: 67%; Female: 42%

Statistical Sources

- UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

The Parkari Literacy Project

Implementing Organization

Parkari Community Development Programme (PCDP)

Language of Instruction

Parkari, Sindhi and English

Funding

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and Wycliffe

Programme Partners

Digni; Wycliffe Norway; Micah International; Summer Institute of Linguistics International (SIL); Church World Service, Pakistan/Afghanistan (CWS); Advocacy, Research and Training Foundation (ARTS); Institute of Applied Linguistics (IAL); Kacchi Community Development Association (KCDA); Sindh Language and Development Programme (SLDP); Participatory Village Development Programme (PVDP); Society for Safe Environment and Welfare of Agrarian (SSEWA); Pak Mission Society (PMS); Government of Sindh, Pakistan (Education Department); National Database and Registration Authority, Pakistan (NADRA); Men's and Women's Village Committees in Parkari communities.

Annual Programme Costs

1,789,875 PKR (approximately USD 17,178.51)

Date of Inception

2000

COUNTRY CONTEXT

The persistence of border conflict and tensions related to security and governance in Pakistan create challenges that hinder economic growth and development. The security challenges are reflected in expenditure on education. Pakistan spends approximately seven times more on the military than it does on primary education (GMR, 2012). Moreover, despite the overall increase in expenditure on education in South Asia over the last decade, Pakistan has reduced it and, in 2013, allocated less than 12 per cent of its total resources to education (the average for South Asia is 18.5 per cent). The percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) spent on education increased slightly in 2013, to 2.5 per cent, but is still below the level required if Pakistan is to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on education (World Bank, 2015).

According to the 2011–12 Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM, 2013), the country faces particular challenges in achieving Goal 2, universal primary education, and Goal 3, the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Although the primary-level net enrolment rate rose between 1999 and 2013 from 58 per cent to 72 per cent, inequalities of access remain, especially for girls and women and those living in rural areas. It is estimated that Pakistan has the world's third-largest population of adults with low or non-existent literacy skills – 49.5 million, of whom two-thirds are women (GMR, 2012).

These difficulties are even more acute in Sindh, a disadvantaged province on the border with India. Less than half of the population aged 10 years or older, and only one of every four girls or women, have ever attended school (PSLM, 2013). The area is home to the 1.2 million-strong Parkari community, which is scattered throughout Lower Sindh. Almost everyone in the community earns a living from farming, either as owners of land in the Thar Desert or by working for non-Parkari landlords in the irrigated parts of the province. Only 5 per cent of men and 1 per cent of women are literate (PCDP, 2015). Most villages lack basic essentials such as clean water and health and educational services.

The Parkari community suffers from cultural and religious discrimination, mostly because of the caste

system. Many members of the community are exploited as a source of inexpensive labour by non-Parkari landlords (PCDP, 2015). In addition, as a result of their precarious living situation, most Parkaris are not registered with the National Data Registration Authority (NADRA), meaning that they have no access to government facilities, and are excluded from legal help and political participation. The community's mother language is Parkari, but primary education, in line with to the government's primary curriculum, is offered in Sindhi, the recognized language of the Province. For the Parkari community, this is an additional obstacle in accessing education.

The written form of the Parkari language only began to be developed in 1983, by the Parkari Language Committee. Within ten years, a large number of Parkari-language materials had been produced, on many topics. However, because of the high rate of illiteracy within the community, very few people have been able to read them.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The Parkari Community Development Programme (PCDP) was founded in 1996 in order to create and distribute the first of these texts to the Parkari community. It soon developed a wide range of activities to help members of the community to become independent readers.

Today, the PCDP runs several projects to promote the social and economic development of the area and to reduce poverty. These include an advocacy and awareness project, a health care programme and a development and relief project. One of the core PCDP programmes is the Parkari Literacy Project (PLP), a community-based literacy development programme launched in 2000. PLP aims to enhance both children's and adults' literacy skills. Up to now, thirty-eight adult education classes have been completed, and eight are currently running. Moreover, twenty-four PCDP primary schools have been established for children. Overall, the project has reached 510 isolated villages.

The most innovative feature of the programme is its multi-lingual education (MLE) approach. At the early stages of education, the medium of instruction is Parkari,



the students' mother language, rather than Sindhi, the language of the provincial primary curriculum. This helps learners to transfer reading skills later, when Sindhi and English are introduced in the MLE curriculum.

Communities, through the establishment of village committees, are encouraged and trained to manage the schools and adult centres independently, in preparation for the handover of responsibilities to the communities after two years of PCDP support. There are currently fifteen community-operated self-help schools running.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Overall, the Parkari Literacy Project endeavours to develop 'an empowered Parkari community; literate, healthy, self-reliant, socially integrated and free from socio-economic oppression', through skills training and community involvement.

Its specific objectives are to:

- Enhance literacy and numeracy skills among adults and facilitate literacy acquisition through the use of their mother language.

- Empower adults through courses focused on civil and political rights.
- Promote awareness among adults of the importance of education, both for them and their children.
- Promote capacity-building and support autonomy among members of the village committee in the management of schools.
- Promote the use of the Parkari language as the most effective means of involving members of the community and as a symbol of unity and self-determination.
- Expand the number of written texts and materials available in Parkari.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Adult education is key to the empowerment of the Parkari community. Through the strengthening of their reading, writing and numeracy skills, men and women can become more involved in the community, participate actively in the development of village activities, and be more aware of their basic human and political rights. Better literacy skills, for example, enable farmers to check their accounts with landlords, and help them become more aware of their rights.

During 2013/2014, PCDP ran 37 adult literacy centres and the literacy course was completed by around 925 community members. Literacy learning activities currently take place in fifteen adult education centres, which are part of the wider PLP project to promote capacity-building among members of the community. Two village committees, one for men and the other for women, are established in villages willing to participate in the project. PLP provides the committees with training in the management of school, so that men and women can cooperate in the smooth running of their community-based schools and adult centres.

The community's responsibilities include providing land and building the school (usually a hut), selecting teachers from among village members, taking part in village committees to manage the school, ensuring regular school supervision, and organizing meetings and other events with parents. The community is also responsible for arranging fees to provide salaries to the teacher when the project passes from PCDP's hands to theirs.

CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

In the adult education centres, literacy courses are developed to reflect human, civil and political rights-based themes relevant to the lives of Parkari community members. The course lasts one calendar year, with classes meeting five times per week, for two hours.

The medium of instruction is, in the beginning, Parkari. Students are supported in acquiring the written form of the language in which they are already fluent, which gives them a better insight into the curriculum. Sindhi and English are introduced later, as second and third languages, in accordance with PCDP's multi-lingual education approach.

PCDP fosters development in Parkari communities through a structured cluster mechanism called the 'Community Development Network' (CDN). Each cluster contains five units and each unit consists of five villages. Currently, there are 13,822 households in 510 villages registered with the CDN. The governing mechanisms introduced in the villages include village committees and discussion groups for community members.

Classes were designed to engage and maintain the attention of adults during literacy instruction. Classes always start with oral discussion of a topic arising from

the storybook. Themes are based on the daily needs of the community and the struggles and challenges community members face. The teachers are trained to lead discussions by asking open-ended questions. In this way, adults have the chance to speak about their personal issues, and also discuss appropriate solutions. Afterwards, the teacher reads a story and opens up further discussion related to the given theme.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF STAFF

The programme trains adults from local communities to become teachers and facilitators (the latter being responsible for the supervision of teachers). The village committees propose a list of potential teachers from within their community, and PCDP selects them on the basis of their skills, qualifications, experience and interest. The minimum certification teachers must hold is a middle- (Grade 8) to intermediate-level qualification (Grade 12), while facilitators must possess a qualification between intermediate and degree level.

Teacher training reflects the multi-lingual education approach, according to which literacy skills are initially taught in the mother language of the learners, with other languages introduced only later. Besides being tailored to adult learners' needs, the teacher training is also focused on equipping teachers with leadership, advocacy and social mobilization skills, and on improving their language and ICT skills. On completing the training, teachers are ready to establish and manage an adult education Centre, and receive certification. This certification is not recognized at national level but is acknowledged and accepted by other local NGOs, creating opportunities for PCDP-trained teachers to work for other NGOs in the future.

So far, the programme has recruited and is offering its services through:

- thirty-nine teachers working in multi-lingual education schools;
- forty-seven teachers employed in community self-help schools;
- five teachers employed in secondary schools;
- fifteen teachers running adult literacy projects.

Teachers are guided and trained by PCDP facilitators who have been trained for their role by Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) International literacy

consultants. Facilitators are responsible for providing training to those the community has selected as teachers for adult literacy classes.

With the literacy rate in the Parkari community only around 2 per cent, it is very hard to find people within the community who have the literacy skills level necessary to become a teacher. The teachers selected often have little experience of teaching. The typical teacher is between the ages of 18 and 35, with few older than 40. Facilitators, on the other hand, usually have 15 years' experience as PCDP facilitators.

ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS

Students are recruited through a baseline study that collects information of the interests and needs of a community. Through the collection of data, PLP also finds out which adults might benefit and which would like to attend the programme.

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

The curriculum was initially developed by Parkari teachers, community members and school supervisors in writers' workshops, supervised and supported by SIL International literacy specialists. The community-based adult literacy programme aims to promote and teach literacy to adults in their mother tongue. In developing the curriculum, community members, including men and women from a range of age groups, were invited to participate in the writers' workshops. They were presented with a series of topics and asked to identify which should be included in the curriculum. A brainstorm session followed in order to develop drafts of stories in collaboration with participants from the community, who were divided in groups. At the end of the session, each group presented their draft to other participants and SIL International literacy specialists, who took notes on the grammar and language used in each draft. Feedback was provided, including what changes should be made to each story. By the end of the workshops, drafted material was ready for final revision by the literacy consultants.

PLP provides the Parkari community schools with a local library of books, mostly in Parkari. The books cover issues such as community development, human rights, health, culture, language and environment. Teacher training books and didactic materials related

to the syllabus used in the community schools are included as well. Moreover, a collection of audio-cassettes on different cultural topics is available so that those who struggle with literacy are not excluded and can be supported in the process of literacy acquisition. The printed and the audio materials are produced by PCDP and distributed throughout the community during regular field visits. The programme's materials include:

Teachers' resources:

- Teacher guide.
- A book on Parkari history and culture called *Lok Sager Ja Moti* (The Pearl of the Ocean).
- A book of Parkari proverbs and riddles called *Gayon ro Gupt Dhan* (The Hidden Treasure of Wisdom).

Texts for students:

- Rights-based storybooks for students in terms 1 to 4 (each book contains between eight and ten stories).
- Maths book in Parkari.
- Parkari literacy book (big book and small book).
- Transfer primer: transition from Parkari (L1) to Sindhi (L2).
- Parkari early reader book.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of their training, teachers are able to plan and organize monthly oral and written tests for their learner, for example reading out loud from a text or dictation. The mid-term and final exams are conducted by the PLP project team.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The quality of programme implementation is assured by field visits carried out by PCDP monitoring and evaluation staff. PCDP staff regularly meet with beneficiaries and stakeholders in the targeted villages where PCDP is working. Feedback is collected to improve the programme and plan future activities effectively.

The head office programme team conducts field visits once a month. Field staff (i.e. school supervisors) conduct visits on an almost daily basis and prepare reports about teacher and student performance, shared during monthly meetings at the PCDP head office. Twice a year, all adult literacy centres carry out examinations to assess the performance of teachers and facilitators.

The programme is also externally evaluated periodically every two years by one of the donor agencies.

IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

ACHIEVEMENTS

When the project started in 2009, PCDP had planned to establish seven adult education centres. However, more than 30 villages applied asking for support, suggesting that the Parkari community was strongly interested in adult education and empowerment.

Since its inception, PCDP has opened 75 adult education centres and offered 78 courses. So far, 1,649 Parkari adults (1,199 men and 450 women) have successfully completed the course. Between January 2015 and August 2015, fifteen new adult centres were opened (the remaining 60 closed as learners had completed their courses), offering classes to a total of 264 adult learners (193 men and 71 women), from 25 different communities. All participating communities become part of PCDP's Community Development Network (CDN).

The overall positive impact of the Parkari Literacy Programme can be summarized in the words of an elderly participant who had never been to school before or seen the written form of his mother language: 'I am lucky that before my death I have seen this good thing. I never even dreamed that this marvellous work could happen. This whole work shows and proves that the bad days for the Parkari community have all gone and the future looks bright'.

The programme and the governance mechanisms introduced in the villages (village committees and discussion groups) have been successful in stimulating a sense of ownership within the Parkari community. A clear sense of community empowerment can be observed in the following changes and activities:

- The Parkari community has built a strong network with other communities.
- Learners and programme alumni participate more in community events and encourage each other to participate.
- Community members have made preparations within their clusters to provide help to victims of

natural disaster. Such help involves the collection door-to-door of food and non-food items.

- Parkari community members have created savings plans in order to buy land for permanent settlement and break free of the control of landlords.
- Community members have started self-help activities, such as running community self-help schools, young people teaching literacy skills through the Each One, Teach One campaign, and initiatives to address water, sanitation and hygiene issues.
- The entire community has committed to school ownership by financially supporting them.
- Increased participation of women in decision making.
- Increased self-respect and self-confidence among girls and women.
- A positive behavioural change among men in the Parkari community. Men show more respect to their wives and do not prevent them from attending community meetings and programmes. Some might stay at home with children specifically so that their wives can participate in village meetings. Parents value their daughters' education and send them to schools.

TESTIMONIES

'Before attending the class I was very unconfident and nervous to do any job or to start any business... I started to go [to PCDP's Parkari Literacy Project] just to pass time but ... day by day my interest was growing and I noticed that things were changing in me. I was learning numbers, doing simple sums in maths, reading and writing Parkari, my own mother tongue. But, alongside that, I felt that my personal development was improving ... I am able to think about the basic problems of my community by using rights-based books ... After completing one year, I can see the big change in myself. I am now more confident and in the position that I can choose the ways to improve myself. While attending the class I have started a small shop and it is running very well. Now I have some more future plans for me and my family.'

Daji s/o R., from the Tharparker district.

'I have been working as a labourer in the irrigated area for many years ... this is the only way to fulfil the needs to my family. I am an uneducated man because my family was quite poor so they could not stand educational expenses ... When I meet my old-

est and childhood friends ... especially those who are educated, I have noticed that they all are very confident ... They have all necessary things in their homes and are living happily. I felt sad deep down in my heart and start thinking of how good it would be for me to read and write like my other friends. In 2012, I migrated from the irrigated area to Nagarparkar, the desert area ... There, I got the chance to attend a meeting conducted by PLP ... [It] was about starting the adult literacy centre in this village. It did not take me time to decide that I also wanted to be a part of this class. When the adult education centre began, I started my study ... After the class, I used to go in the field to work but I [would bring] my books with me for studying ... Soon ... I realized that I could read and write a bit so I decided to open a shop ... Now my shop is giving me a good income and I can keep simple financial records properly on a daily basis. Now my home situation is getting better day by day and my family became very happy ... not only I am able to do this trade but my all children are also going to PLP's ... school. I am grateful to PCDP.'

V., from Nagarparkar.

CHALLENGES

Large areas of Lower Sindh are affected by severe drought which causes famine and forces villagers to migrate to find grazing for livestock and temporary work. This causes discontinuities in course attendance and can hinder the improvement of literacy skills. Socio-cultural constraints play a role as well. The programme has faced bitter opposition from landlords who felt they were being deprived of their inexpensive labour source.

Other difficulties encountered in the implementation of the programme concerned specific didactic issues. At the programme's inception, the Parkari community resisted the opportunity to study in their mother tongue, since formal school syllabuses in the area are in Sindhi. The community felt there was no point in learning literacy and educating their children in Parkari. Although this had a negative initial effect on motivation, applications to form new adult centres steadily grew.

Another issue concerned the skills of the teachers. Some teachers have little experience of good schooling, and this can have a negative impact on their capacity to give teach Urdu, English and Maths in schools. To address

this, PCDP organizes special training and monthly teacher meetings to help teachers and facilitators in these subjects. Overall teacher training has improved, as have the capacities of training facilitators.

LESSONS LEARNED

Since its establishment in 1996, PCDP has been committed to the empowerment of the disadvantaged Parkari community, supporting schools in which children can learn literacy skills in their mother language. However, in an area where the majority of adults have never had the opportunity to go to school themselves, the adult component of the Parkari Literacy Programme is also crucial. The establishment of adult education centres supports adults in developing the literacy skills they need in everyday life, for example in their working relationships with landlords.

The adult component of the programme is the key to effective and long-term achievement. According to a recent survey (PSLM, 2013), the main reason for girls aged between 10 and 18 in the rural areas of Sindh not attending school is that their parents did not allow them, or that they had to help at home. To break this cycle, the involvement of families in the education process is essential. The experience of PLP through the adult education centres demonstrates that the literacy course, while offering direct benefits to adults, also indirectly benefits their children, because the family is more willing to allow them go to school. The impact is evident in the increased enrolment of both girls and boys.

The programme's role in fostering community empowerment was another important source of lessons. The use of the mother language in the early stages of education is not only a means to facilitate the learning process, but also an important symbol of unity and self-determination. Being able to read and write in mother language means being able to record, transmit and have access to the cultural heritage of the community.

SUSTAINABILITY

The programme is funded by foreign donors, SIL International, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Norwegian Agency for Development



Cooperation (NORAD) and Wycliffe Norway. However, sustainability is assured by the village committees, which assume ownership and responsibility for managing and running the adult centres. Village committees provide the land for the schools, and build and maintain them. They are offered five days of training at the beginning of the programme, during which they learn to manage and allocate community resources. PCDP supports the committees in their responsibilities for the first two years, and trains the teachers. These responsibilities are then fully transferred to the village committees, which thereafter oversee all income-generating activities to maintain the schools. These activities have included crop-sharing as a means of paying school fees during harvest season. With the support of the community, school management committees and PCDP have organized events to raise funds and contribute to the schools' sustainability. These include a special day on which students give performances based on what they have learned.

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Patani Malay – Thai Bilingual / Multilingual Education

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

66,790,000 (2012)

Official Language

Thai

Poverty

(Population living on less than USD 2 per day)
25%

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GNP

5.2

Primary School Net Enrolment/Attendance

94 (2000–2007)

Total Youth Literacy Rate (15–24 years)

98% (2000–2006)

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 2000–2006)

Female: 92%; Male: 96%; Total: 94%

Statistical Sources

- UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report
- UNICEF
- World Bank World Development Indicators database

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Patani Malay – Thai Bilingual / Multilingual Education in Thailand's Deep South (PM-MLE)

Implementing Organization

Resource Center for Documentation, Revitalization, and Maintenance of Endangered Languages and Cultures, Research Institute of Languages and Cultures of Asia, Mahidol University

Language of Instruction

Thai, Patani Malay

Funding

Thailand Research Fund; Mahidol University; UNICEF; Southern Border Provinces Administration Center; Thailand Ministry of Education

Programme Partners

Thailand Research Fund; UNICEF; Thailand Ministry of Education; SIL International; Yala Rajabhat University; Prince of Songkla University; Local Communities; Local Muslim Religious Leaders; Local Thai Government Agencies

Annual Programme Costs

USD 260,000

Date of Inception

Preliminary research: 2007. Teaching started in 2008

COUNTRY CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Thailand is one of the biggest development success stories in South East Asia. After the Asian financial crisis in 1997-98, the country managed to achieve remarkable economic growth and poverty reduction. According to World Bank figures, the poverty rate decreased from a height of 42.6% in 2000 to 13.2% in 2011, and the economic growth was sufficiently strong to lift Thailand from a lower-middle income to an upper-middle income country. Thailand is also likely to reach most of its Millennium Development Goals (World Bank). The educational sector in Thailand benefited from the National Education Act implemented in 1999, which

guarantees every person the right to free quality education. The Decentralization Act of 1999 addressed the linguistic and cultural diversity in Thailand, because it established a framework for regional, specific planning of educational policy. Thailand has managed to come close to universal primary education. However, people with a low socio-economic status and people from diverse ethnic communities, especially in the North, Northeast and Deep South, still have limited access to education (UNESCO Bangkok).

The Research Institute of Languages and Cultures of Asia of Mahidol University has pointed out that government policy to promote national unity established

a primarily Thai-only educational system, which does not take the needs of ethnic minority children into consideration. For example, children from the Muslim Patani Malay minority in Thailand’s Deep South tend to perform worse than their Thai majority counterparts. One example is the Thai writing test taken by all third graders. In 2008, 42.11% of third graders in the Deep South failed the test compared to 5.8% nationwide.

Around one million Patani Malay people live in Thailand’s Deep South. After years of dormancy, the conflict in Thailand’s South broke out again in 2004. The conflict is fuelled by the fears of the Patani Malay people of becoming assimilated by the Thai majority. This led to resentment and a sense of alienation among the Patani Malay people, resulting in a violent insurgent movement. Since 2004, the World Bank estimates that 5000 people have died in the conflict. Government schools, which are perceived as instruments of Thai assimilationist policies, have become targets. Many have been burned or bombed, and over 150 teachers have been killed. In 2013, the Thai government increased its efforts towards peace and reconciliation by agreeing to peace talks with insurgent representatives. Thai officials are also supporting the Patani Malay – Thai Bilingual/Multilingual Education in Thailand’s Deep South—the literacy programme described in this case study—which incorporates the linguistic and cultural identity of the Patani Malay people into the educational approach. This reduces the resentment of the Patani Malay people against the Thai majority, by showing respect and appreciation for their unique cultural heritage. The PM-MLE project therefore is making key contributions to peace and reconciliation efforts in Thailand’s Deep South, and the multilateral teaching approach also provides Patani Malay children with an education that better suits their individual background (World Bank 2013, Mahidol University).

OVERVIEW

The Patani Malay – Thai Bilingual/Multilingual Education in Thailand’s Deep South (PM-MLE) programme is one of 23 minority language revitalization projects conducted by the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia of Mahidol University.

The Resource Centre as part of the Institute and local PM-MLE project staff in the south of Thailand jointly implement the PM-MLE literacy programme. In addition, the programme is facilitated and guided by three other committees. The Steering Committee is responsible for overseeing the programme and for advocating it on a national level. The task of the Implementation Committee is to assist the facilitators with the implementation of the programme at the local level, and the Patani Malay Language Committee helps with questions regarding Patani Malay word usage and grammar.

The PM-MLE project was initiated by the Mahidol University in 2008, with authorization from the Thai Ministry of Education and local Southern education authorities. The programme wants to provide children, families and communities of the Patani Malay minority with a quality multilingual education in both Thai and Patani Malay. By taking the unique cultural and linguistic identity of the Patani Malay into consideration, the programme providers aim to support peace and reconciliation efforts in the south by reducing Patani Malay people’s fears of being assimilated by the Thai majority through a Thai-only educational system. Since its inception, the programme has reached around 1200 students by taking place in 4 Thai government schools. The participating children and families are from the communities in which the schools are located. In 2012, the number of schools was expanded to 16, and an additional 50 schools have asked to join the programme.

PROGRAMME

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- The school performance of Patani Malay speaking children will be raised, enabling them to pass the National Test (given in primary grades 3 and 6), improve their job prospects, and enhance their overall quality of life.
- Other schools are expected to adopt the curriculum and methods of the PM-MLE project due to the benefits of mother tongue based multilingual education.
- The unique Patani Malay language and cultural heritage will be preserved.
- The empowerment of Patani Malay communities

through the fostering of self-esteem and promotion of positive attitudes towards education.

- To benefit the peace and reconciliation process in the South as the government school system honors the local language and culture.
- To develop models and best practices that can be adapted for other minority language groups in Thailand and other Asian countries.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Teaching – Learning Approaches and Methodologies

The teaching methodology of the PM-MLE project follows a child-centered approach that recognizes the specific cultural and linguistic background of Patani Malay children and takes their experiences and knowledge into consideration when setting up the teaching-learning content.

Another feature of the PM-MLE literacy programme is an emphasis on interpreting the meaning of concepts and developing the critical thinking skills of students (aspects often given little attention in the rote learning based Thai education system). There is also a strong emphasis on bridging from one skill to another, and one language to another.

The teaching of several languages, including Patani Malay, Thai, Standard Malay and English, is one of the central innovative features of the PM-MLE project. Both Thai and Patani Malay are used as languages of instruction. In Kindergarten and primary grade 1, the language of instruction is Patani Malay, while some basic Thai is also taught as a subject. For primary grades 2 to 6, Thai and Patani Malay are both used as languages of instruction, albeit for different purposes and at different times in a lessons. Teachers introduce new concepts and Thai academic terms in Patani Malay, after which Thai is used to extend concepts and to complete textbook assignments. Afterwards, Patani Malay is used to review and check for comprehension of concepts. In the early grades, the children learn Patani Malay reading and writing using a subset of the Thai based script. This familiarizes children with the larger Thai alphabet, thus making the eventual learning of Thai easier for students. Once students have acquired strong literacy skills in Patani Malay and Thai, they learn the historic Arabic-based Jawi

script used for Central Malay in the 3rd year of primary school (although they will have had some exposure to the Jawi script in their Islamic Studies classes, starting in grade 1). In addition, students in upper primary grades start to learn English and basic Standard Malay, as spoken in neighboring Malaysia. For both English and Standard Malay, the students develop listening and speaking skills before they are introduced to the Roman-based English and Standard Malay alphabets. This approach is in contrast to most Thai schools, where heavy emphasis is given to reading and writing English even though the students have no listening or speaking skills.

The general language teaching is separated into two tracks. The Meaning Track focuses on understanding, processing and articulating ideas and concepts in a student-centered, creative, confidence building way. The Accuracy Track deals with pronunciation, word and sentence formation, spelling and other specific skills.

Besides language development, other learning activities include academic development and socio-cultural development. Academic development refers to the teaching of content according to the standards of the Thai Ministry of Education, while also taking pre-existing knowledge and experience of students into consideration. Socio-cultural development is also part of the teaching methodology, which means that the learning activities and materials reflect the values and goals of the local students' communities. Additionally, students receive an education in values and respect for other languages, cultures and religion, so that they can develop both their local identity and a national identity as citizens of Thailand.

PROGRAMME CURRICULUM

The needs of learners are determined by taking the expectations of the Ministry of Education and the cultural, linguistic and religious values of the local community into account. The decision on the content of the curriculum requires extensive cooperation between community members, teachers, education administrators and project staff. Several workshops done in cooperation with community members ensure that the curriculum has the support of the local population. In Thailand, this is an innovative approach to deciding on a teaching curriculum since the curriculum

for other schools is usually very centralized, set by the Ministry of Education without input from local communities. The collaboration between Thai Buddhist researchers and educational specialists and Patani Malay Muslim villagers is innovative in Thailand, given the country's strong social hierarchy and the cultural/religious divide in the Deep South.

The main topics covered are language learning and literacy, mathematics, cultural knowledge, science, social science, health, arts and other subjects. The courses take place during the two-semester academic year that is used in all Thai government schools. Children participate in the programme for a total of 8 years, with two years in kindergarten and six years in primary school.

TEACHING MATERIAL

A variety of teaching materials are employed by the PM-MLE programme. Books are used for small group and individual readings. Additional teaching materials are games, listening and picture stories as well as posters of cultural scenes. The language education is supported by a Patani Malay primer and a Patani Malay-to-Thai transitional primer. In addition to this, other language learning materials are utilized to conduct language education. For example, songs and a school dictionary were specifically created for the PM-MLE project. The project schools along with communities and education officials develop the teaching material with support from the project staff in order to ensure that the teaching material meets the expectations of the Patani Malay culture and of the Ministry of Education. Program students will also benefit from the Ministry of Education's plan to supply tablet computers to all first graders nationwide.

RECRUITMENT OF FACILITATORS

There are numerous different facilitators working on the project. The government staff of school officials and teachers are paid and employed by the Thailand Ministry of Education on a full time basis. Some Mahidol University staff also work on the project, either on a part or full-time basis with their salary being paid by the university. Furthermore, there are twelve project staff members and several Patani Malay-speaking teacher assistants who work directly for the programme. While all pre-primary classes have

a Patani Malay speaking-teacher, some primary school classes do not have Patani Malay speaking-teachers. Hence, the programme providers make sure that these Thai speaking-teachers are supported by Patani Malay speaking assistants to allow for a bilingual education. These teacher assistants receive a monthly stipend from the PM-MLP project. A number of unpaid volunteers also support the PM-MLE programme in various ways.

The number of students in each classroom varies, therefore, the learners/facilitators ratio varies from 20-30: 1 in pre-primary classes. In some primary classes, there are two teachers, one speaking Thai and the other one speaking Patani Malay. Hence, the learner/facilitators ratio in such classrooms fluctuates from 10 – 15: 1.

TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

New teachers and teacher assistants are trained by teachers who already have experience in multilingual education. In cooperation with the project staff, they mentor and help new teachers to become used to the multilingual teaching framework. Much work is done to help ethnic Thai teachers who do not speak Patani Malay to understand their role in the programme. The Faculty of Education of the Yala Rajabhat University is developing a curriculum to teach university students to become teachers for multilingual education. Yala Rajabhat University is also assisting in teaching new PM-MLE facilitators to become accustomed to teaching in Thai and Patani Malay.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

PM-MLE project providers and several project partners conduct regular monitoring & evaluation. For example, the Thailand Research Fund conducted a survey that evaluated 100 parents and community members on their feelings about the project. The responses were overall positive. It was found that the PM-MLE programme increased the confidence of Patani Malay community members in the Thai educational system. Additionally, parents reported that the programme has had a positive impact on the social and academic development of their children. In addition, the Faculty of Education at the Yala Rajabhat University undertakes annual testing of the primary grade students.



The PM-MLE project organizers conduct annual pre-tests and post-tests for each of the two kindergarten years. The project staff is also in contact with teachers and school administrators in order to keep informed of developing issues, to review learning materials and make adjustments as necessary. In cooperation with local education officials, the programme providers perform an evaluation of teaching and learning activities once per semester. Moreover, all primary grade 3 students in Thailand undertake a national test that assesses their academic achievement. During the academic year of 2012-13, the first group of PM-MLE students took the national test.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Yala Rajabhat University's (YRU) longitudinal study of the project compares the academic performance of PM-MLE students to the performance of students in control schools. The study organizers have found that students who take part in the PM-MLE project tend to achieve 40-60% higher scores in all subject areas compared to Patani Malay students in monolingual Thai classrooms. In addition, Patani Malay boys in

PM-MLE schools are 123% more likely to pass their Thai exams than their non-PM-MLE school counterparts. Another result is that girls in PM-MLE schools have a 156% higher chance of passing their mathematics test than girls who do not attend one of the PM-MLE schools. Furthermore, the PM-MLE project enjoys support of local Patani Malay communities. As outlined above, the programme also contributes to long-term peace and reconciliation efforts in Southern Thailand. The Thai Parliament's Committee on Culturally Based Solutions for the Southern Crisis is therefore in frequent contact with the programme providers.

The PM-MLE project also has a positive influence on the families in communities with PM-MLE schools by bringing the generations closer together. Because the education takes place in Patani Malay, parents and grandparents can better relate to their children's schooling. In a Thai-only curriculum, Patani Malay speaking parents and grandparents feel alienated by their children's education and they have no opportunity to help their children with their school work. If part of the schoolwork is done in Patani Malay and deals with cultural issues of the Patani Malay people, all family members are able to read and discuss

the school work as well as to share their experiences and knowledge, as parents with basic Thai literacy skills find it easy to learn the Thai-based Patani Malay script. As a result, the family becomes closer and the self-esteem of all family members is enhanced.

The project also has a nationwide influence. In light of the success of the PM-MLE programme, the Thai Royal Institute, Thailand's premier academic body, drafted a comprehensive national language policy that supports the right of all Thailand's ethnic minority children to obtain an education that incorporates their mother tongue. The policy was signed by Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva in 2010 and by his successor Yingluck Shinwatra in 2012. Although the policy has yet to be implemented throughout Thailand (as of September 2013, the implementation plan is being finalized by a committee headed by the deputy prime minister), it shows that the PM-MLE project has a pioneering role in the field of bilingual and/multilingual education in Thailand.

CHALLENGES

Over time, the PM-MLE programme has faced criticism from numerous political and social actors. Thai civilian and military officials expressed concerns that using any other language in school besides Thai might threaten national security. On the other hand, some Patani Malay Muslim leaders accused the PM-MLE project of being just another attempt of the Thai majority to undermine their cultural, linguistic and religious heritage. Moreover, some Thai educational specialists have raised doubts as to the effectiveness of multilingual education, as they feel that only Thai-English bilingual education is truly valuable. Some parents voiced concerns that speaking Patani Malay in the classroom would make their children less likely to learn Thai, thus worsening their future job prospects. A few school teachers and administrators feared that PM-MLE students might fail the primary grade 3 national exam, thereby negatively influencing the reputation of their schools. However, the concerns and criticisms have eased over time due to the success and proven positive results of the programme.

Security issues are a major challenge to the implementation of the programme. Since the programme is implemented in a conflict zone, larger meetings

between stakeholders and teacher training organisations have to take place in safe areas, which is a financial and logistical challenge. Some of the teachers are also dependent on military escorts to make it to school every day. Due to the security environment, the military escorts take place at different times each day. If a potential threat is discovered by the military, teachers have to stay at home for the entire day. The time teachers can actually spend in the classroom thus varies on a day-to-day basis. The same holds true for the PM-MLE project staff, who also have difficulties observing the implementation of the programme in the schools and providing feedback to the PM-MLE teachers.

The project implementers also have found that teachers need more pre-service and in-service training than originally predicted, because the bi/multilingual teaching method is significantly different from the Thai-only teaching approach. Native Thai speaking teachers were afraid they would lose their jobs, because they do not speak Patani Malay, and it took much discussion to convince them that they are still important.

Another challenge of the programme relates to the use of the Thai based orthography to teach Patani Malay instead of the Arabic based orthography, which is preferred by some of the educated Patani Malay elite. The programme providers decided to use the Thai based script as the main orthography for teaching Patani Malay because the Arabic based script is mainly used for religious purposes, and represents a dialect that is quite different from modern day Patani Malay. The use of the Thai-based script was also supported by the majority of nearly 1000 Patani Malay villagers surveyed during the project planning phase. The idea of using a Romanized script for Patani Malay - as it is used in Malaysia - was met with opposition from local communities because they were unfamiliar with it, and stressed it would make the transition from Patani Malay to Thai harder for students. Furthermore, the Romanized script idea was not appreciated by Thai officials, who worried that this script would make the Patani Malay people feel they belong to Malaysia and not to Thailand. Nevertheless, some Patani Malay elites were in favor of either the Romanized or Arabic based script to the exclusion of any Thai based script. The question of which script to use is of strong symbolic significance. Finally, the discussion was settled

by the compromise to start with the Thai based script and then move on to teach the other two scripts as well. By incorporating all three scripts into the curriculum, the project contributes to peace and reconciliation because it meets the interests of all the stakeholders involved.

SUSTAINABILITY

The financial sustainability of the programme is promoted by the project staff through cooperating with the Ministry of Education and the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Center (SBPAC), which increases the likelihood of receiving budgetary support in the future. This cooperation with policy makers also increases the chances of continued policy support, which will allow the project to expand to other schools in the south. The programme also receives key support from the parents of PM-MLE children. Their advocacy to friends, neighbours, journalists and government officials is important to sustain the programme.

In 2012, twelve additional schools joined the programme and an additional fifty schools have expressed interest in taking part in the programme. At one point, ninety schools asked whether they could join the programme as well, but the PM-MLE project staff plans to expand the programme on a smaller scale to preserve its quality.

To ensure the sustainability of the programme, the incorporation of bi/multilingual education into the teacher training curriculum of Yala Rajabhat University (YRU) is important and innovative, because many successful pilot programmes disappear if there are no sustainable training programmes for teachers. Through cooperation with YRU, the PM-MLE programme aims to avoid such a fate. The YRU staff have taken a great interest in participating in the programme through teacher training and evaluation due to the programme's potential to contribute to peace in the region.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. The whole community needs to be involved in order to successfully undertake an MLE programme.
2. Consultation and dialogue are important to find solutions that are acceptable to all parties, particularly in a conflict zone.

3. Multilingual approaches to the education of linguistic minorities seems to be the best way forward for promoting peace and reconciliation, but it involves careful implementation that incorporates sound MLE teaching methodology and sensitivity to cultural, religious and linguistic factors.
4. Security issues can become an obstacle to the efficient delivery of literacy programmes.

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Bilingual Education Programme

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

66,790,000 (2012)

Official Language

Thai

Poverty

(Population living on less than USD 2 per day)
25%

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GNP

5.2

Primary School Net Enrolment/Attendance

94 (2000–2007)

Total Youth Literacy Rate (15–24 years)

98% (2000–2006)

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 2000–2006)

Female: 92%; Male: 96%; Total: 94%

Statistical Sources

- UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report
- UNICEF
- World Bank World Development Indicators database

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Bilingual Education Programme (BEP)

Implementing Organization

Office of Non-formal and Informal Education (ONIE)

Language of Instruction

bilingual (Thai and Karen)

Programme Partners

UNESCO Bangkok and SIL International

Date of Inception

2003



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Thailand has made impressive strides in providing educational opportunities to its citizens. The State provides free and compulsory education to all persons below the age of 14 or up to grade 12. Consequently, in addition to achieving primary school net enrolment/attendance and completion rates of 94% and 86%, respectively (2000–2007), the country has also achieved a near-universal literacy rate for adults (94%) and youth (98%). However, research indicates that ethnic minority groups such as the Pwo Karen people have hardly benefited from these educational developments. Indeed, studies suggest that because of poverty and language constraints (Thai is the official language of instruction in schools), school completion rates are lower among non-Thai speaking students. Because of the high school dropout rates, illiteracy is generally more prevalent among ethnic minorities.

The Pwo Karen people are among the most socially deprived and marginalised groups in Thailand, with limited access to basic socioeconomic services such as health and education. A disproportionate majority of them still depend on subsistence agriculture and have limited contact with the outside world. Like other children from ethnic minority groups, school performance and retention rates among Pwo Karen students are generally lower primarily because of the language barrier. Against this backdrop, the *Office of Non-formal and Informal Education* (ONIE), formerly *Office of Non-Formal Education Commission* (ONFEC), in partnership with UNESCO and SIL International initiated the Bilingual Education Programme (BEP) in 2001 in an effort to ameliorate the challenges faced by Pwo Karen to access and complete their education.

THE BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME (BEP)

The BEP was initiated in Thailand following the participation of ONFEC officials at the UNESCO-organised Regional Workshop on Functional Literacy for Indigenous Peoples (26 November–01 December 2001). ONFEC's principal motivation in adapting the concept of targeted literacy programmes for marginalised groups, was to improve school attendance/enrolment and completion rates among Pwo Karen children through bilingual edu-

cational instruction. The programme is currently being implemented in Omkoi district – Chiang Mai province.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The programme aims to:

- increase Pwo Karen children's access to quality and culturally relevant education
- improve the school retention and performance rates among Pwo Karen children through bilingual instruction
- preserve the cultural identity and integrity of ethnic minorities through the provision of mother-tongue literacy skills training assistance to young people
- expand equal opportunities and provide free basic non-formal education for all
- mobilise local resources such as local wisdom, local literacy teachers and volunteer teachers to support and carry out literacy classes.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION:

APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

The design/development and implementation of the BEP involved the active participation of many stakeholders: the Pwo Karen communities; ONFEC and Community Learning Centre (CLC) officials, teachers, academics, students and SIL International.

Before the BEP was piloted, ONFEC with technical support from SIL International conducted a series of community-based consultative workshops and qualitative research in order to study the Pwo Karen language (linguistic analysis) and establish people's learning needs and challenges. Afterwards, programme partners developed a contextually relevant curriculum, teaching-learning materials and most importantly, a Thai script-based orthography (alphabetical chart) for the Pwo Karen language which had only existed in oral form.

Writers' workshops were also organised to produce teaching-learning materials in Pwo Karen language. To date, various forms of written materials have been produced in Pwo Karen language including:

- six 'big books' for literacy teaching and learning
- six 'small books' for individual reading
- an alphabet chart
- a picture dictionary

- a spelling guide
- posters and charts
- card games for developing literacy skills
- 13 booklets generated by learners
- a manual for writing in Pwo Karen
- a basic Pwo Karen primer.

Finally, bilingual Pwo Karen and Thai-speaking teachers or facilitators were recruited and trained in non-formal education principles and bilingual teaching-learning methods. The programme established and maintained a low teacher to class ratio in order to enable teachers to effectively attend to individual children's distinctive learning needs.

TEACHING-LEARNING APPROACHES AND METHODS

The programme employs a bilingual approach to classroom instruction. As such, classes from pre-school up to grade 6 are conducted in the local Pwo Karen language in order to enhance children's capacity to master basic literacy skills and, afterwards (from grade 7), to comprehend class instruction in both the local and Thai language.

Teachers are encouraged to use participatory and child-centred teaching-learning methods such as games, debates, story-telling, and key words in order to develop literacy skills and other life skills among students. Within this context, emphasis is placed on stories and primers. The former involves the use of whole texts (e.g. stories from 'big books') to emphasise literacy skills to be learned. The primers, on the other hand, base learning around individual sounds of the language and the letters of the alphabet, improving the learners' decoding skills.

PROJECT IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT

The BEP has positively empowered Pwo Karen communities. Apart from the active involvement of many members of the community in the planning and implementation of the programme, over 200 children have directly participated in and benefited from the BEP. The programme has enabled Pwo Karen-speaking children to easily and effectively master basic literacy concepts and skills in their mother-tongue and, ultimately, to make

an easy transition to the national Thai language-based educational system. Indeed, many beneficiaries noted that learning in their mother-tongue gave them a better understanding of how Thai words are constructed.

Through the BEP, a culturally relevant curriculum which addresses the specific needs of the communities, as well as the written form of the Pwo Karen language has been developed. Similarly, appropriate learning materials were also produced and widely distributed within the local communities. These strategies to literacy development have greatly motivated parents to send their children to school not only because education is now reflective of their distinctive needs and aspirations but also because their cultural heritage, integrity and identity is being preserved and transmitted to the next generation within a learning context. Furthermore, the BEP has also empowered and improved young people's awareness and appreciation of their cultural inheritance and identity.

In addition, the use of a bilingual approach to educational instruction also facilitates the integration of the Pwo Karen communities into the mainstream or majority Thai society by dismantling the language barriers that separates peoples. The social integration of the Pwo Karen into the mainstream society could enhance the long-term developmental prospects of their communities.

CHALLENGES

Perhaps the major challenge is that the bilingual approach to education is new to the country and as such, many officials lack experience of how to implement the programme efficiently and effectively. Furthermore, most of the literacy programmes currently use the curriculum and guidelines designed for majority language (Thai) learners and despite efforts to adapt the curriculum and teaching-learning approaches to suit the needs of ethnic minorities, the bilingual approach is rarely used in practice.

SUSTAINABILITY

The programme has strong support from the State (Ministry of Education) and plans are underway to compile and develop a Pwo Karen-Thai dictionary as well as to set up village libraries that would also serve as cultural centres.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Because language is emotive, particularly among marginalised ethnic minority groups, the success of bilingual educational programmes strongly depends on the active participation of the entire community. As such, the communities should be consulted for their input at every stage of the programme's development.
- Use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction is crucial for effective learning and acquisition of literacy skills. To this end, bilingual programmes should develop the written form (alphabet/orthography) of minority languages where they do not exist, and strengthen them where they do exist.

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Family Learning – Learning Together



COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

9,546,000 (2013)

Official language

Swedish

Other officially recognised languages

Finnish, Meänkieli, Sami, Romani and Yiddish

People at risk of poverty or social exclusion

15.6% (Eurostat, 2012)

Total expenditure on education as % of GDP

6.8 (2011)

Access to primary education –

Total Net Intake Rate

Total: 98% (2011); Male: 98%; Female: 98%

Adult literacy rate (15–65 years)

PIAAC test results – percentage of adults scoring at each proficiency level in literacy (Level 1 represents the lowest level of proficiency, Level 5 the highest):

- Below Level 1 and Level 1: 13.3%
- Level 2: 29%
- Level 3: 41.6%
- Levels 4 and 5: 16.1%

Statistical sources

- EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2013–14
- OECD Skills Outlook 2013
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics
- World Bank
- Eurostat

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Family Learning – Learning Together

Implementing Organization

Municipality of Linköping, Sweden

Language of Instruction

Swedish, Arabic and Somali (others planned)

Annual Programme Costs

SEK 500,000 (USD 57,000) (2015).

Annual programme cost per learner:

SEK 1,500 (USD 172) (2015)

Date of Inception

2013

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Sweden is the third-largest country in the European Union by area, but it has a relatively small population of 9.8 million and a low population density of 24 inhabitants per square kilometre (World Bank, 2015). However, in recent years, the population has grown considerably. In 2014 there was population growth of 0.9 %, the highest yearly increase for 70 years. Immigration has been the major driving force behind the growth.

In 2014, immigration to Sweden increased by 10 0.9 % to a record 127,000 (OECD, 2015). Syrian nationals were the largest immigrant group (17 0.9 %), followed by returning Swedish nationals (16 0.9 %). Many immigrants arrive in Sweden having fled conflict zones such as Syria, Afghanistan or Somalia, resulting in an increase in the number of applications for asylum (OECD, 2015). This trend continues due to ongoing armed conflict. In December 2014, foreign-born residents numbered 1.6 million and comprised of 17 0.9 % of the Swedish population (OECD, 2015).

Foreign-language immigrants tend to have low levels of literacy and language proficiency in Swedish, and score much lower than native-born and native-language Swedes (OECD, 2015). This might be expected, given that Swedish is not their native language. However, the difference in literacy proficiency between foreign-language immigrants and native-born Swedes is the biggest of the 21 industrialized countries examined by the OECD in 2015. Furthermore, foreign-born adults experience significant difficulties in entering local labour markets, compared to native Swedes. The employment gap between foreign-born and native-born residents, was among the highest in the OECD in 2012 (OECD, 2015).

Linköping, a Swedish municipality with a population of around 150,000 people, is one of the fastest growing cities in Sweden, due in large part to the arrival of increasing numbers of immigrants. Around 16 0.9 %, or 21,000, of Linköping's inhabitants were born abroad, with by far the largest population groups coming from Iraq (3,736) and Somalia (2,019). Syrians constitute the fastest growing foreign-born community (Linköping, 2015). Linköping has become a multicultural city with heterogeneous districts. However, pupils attending

schools in Linköping's multicultural areas tend, on average, to perform worse than students attending schools in more homogeneous areas. There are a number of reasons for this. On the one hand, newly-arrived children usually lack adequate language skills in Swedish. On the other, parents with foreign backgrounds are sometimes unable or unwilling to become actively involved in their children's schooling. Language barriers and cultural differences have led to a lack of cooperation between school and home and limited participation among foreign-born parents in parent-teacher meetings or other school activities.

Reflecting on the relatively wide literacy and employment gaps between immigrant and native adults in Sweden (including Linköping), the 2012 Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) survey emphasizes the need to develop stronger and better-targeted measures to improve immigrants' employability. One measure, already enshrined in Swedish school law, is to ensure that children who use a mother tongue other than Swedish at home have the opportunity to develop both Swedish and their mother tongue. Mother tongue education is voluntary and mainly takes place outside of school hours. Swedish schools increasingly employ teachers fluent in one or more of the languages spoken by foreign-born children/parents. The objective is to make use of pupils' proficiency in their mother tongue to facilitate their acquisition of Swedish. In Linköping, about eighty school and pre-school teachers are employed specifically to support this work.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Between 2010 and 2013, the Public Health Agency of Sweden (Folkhälsomyndigheten) initiated a project to deliver universal parenting support within cities, regions and universities. The municipality of Linköping, its Department of Education and the University of Linköping were included in the project, which led, among other things to the development of Learning Together.

Linköping's Department of Education is responsible for organizing pre-school and primary and secondary school provision. Its resource and support section provides schools with specialist support and training,

to support pupils with special needs, for example. Parenting courses were set up in 2000 and, by 2010, Linköping had developed a structure of support for parents with children aged up to 18. Most of the courses were delivered in Swedish, however, which meant that parents with limited Swedish language skills were not able to participate. As the number of immigrants arriving in Linköping increased, the need for parenting support and adult learning for people with limited Swedish skills became more apparent. The project in Linköping began to adapt its parenting programme to the needs of foreign-born parents and their children.

LEARNING TOGETHER

Since September 2015, Linköping has been cooperating with the Swedish agency for family and parenting support (Myndigheten för familjerätt och föräldraskapsstöd). By the end of that year, the municipality of Linköping was organising three different kinds of courses to target families of foreign origin from multicultural areas. These offer, respectively:

- information about civic society
- parenting support
- education (family learning)

The education course comprises the Learning Together programme, which draws on insights from family learning to create intergenerational learning processes. The course is organised by the Linköping Department of Education's resource and support section. The programme is fully financed by the municipality, as are the other two. This case study concentrates on Learning Together.

Learning Together aims to increase literacy skills in general, and Swedish language skills, in particular, as well as the numeracy skills of parents and their children. The first courses started in 2013. Their use of family learning principles to promote literacy and language skills is a novel approach in Linköping. It was developed in response to a need identified by headmasters and teachers in schools and pre-schools: many pupils born abroad/with foreign-born parents had difficulty achieving their educational goals. Furthermore, their parents often had limited Swedish language and/or literacy skills and lacked information about civic society, especially with regard to education.

To address this, Learning Together targets parents and their children (aged between 3 and 10 years) and aims to promote understanding among parents, who are, after all, their children's most important teachers. Through this, the programme aims to enable parents to significantly support their children's cognitive and emotional development. To establish a programme that would provide families from different cultural backgrounds with training and help them become more active citizens, insights from previous parenting courses in Linköping were used. These courses found that the best and most reliable way to reach foreign-born families with limited literacy and language skills was to involve compatriots who had lived in Sweden for at least five years and were well established in Swedish society. They are able to function as role models and teachers, as they have once been in the same challenging situation as the target group. The Municipality of Linköping began to provide training for tutors from different cultural backgrounds with language skills in Somali and Arabic to act as 'bridge builders' for the Learning Together programme. Their involvement as tutors helped ensure that courses taking place in the multicultural areas of Linköping raised plenty of interest from the target group.

Since the programme's inception, thirty courses have been delivered: nine in 2014 and twenty-one in 2015, with approximately 175 parents and 210 children participating. Roughly 80 per cent of the children were between 4 and 6 years old. Courses usually include learners from one district and take place in child health centres, schools or pre-schools in the same neighbourhood. So far, Somali- and Arabic-speaking families from three multicultural areas in Linköping have taken part. Each course is mentored by two tutors, at least one of whom has the respective foreign language skills. These link people have proven indispensable in reaching the target group, as they, as well as functioning as language tutors, can authentically inform and motivate participants.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Learning Together aims to:

- Make the participating children acquire Swedish language, literacy and numeracy skills that match the average skill level among Swedish-born children of the same age.

- Increase parents' skills to better support their children.
- Make participating parents aware of their important role in their children's learning.
- Promote the understanding that learning happens outside, as well as inside, schools, in order to promote the learning of both parents and children at home.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

Courses can start at any time of the year, as determined by the course coordinator in cooperation with school or pre-school staff, who normally suggest the families to participate. A course consists of between five and ten sessions and takes place once a week for two hours. Five or six families of the same language background – between ten and fifteen people in total – usually take part. Where children with particular individual needs are participating, groups might consist of only two or three families. The course is always led by two tutors, one of whom speaks the mother tongue of the participating families.

Among other things, the course aims to improve the Swedish language and literacy skills of parents and children. Children and adults often have similar Swedish language proficiency levels and can work on the same exercises together. Learning exercises that promote literacy and language skills include joint book reading, role play (e.g. going shopping), playing board games and using newspapers/advertisements in arts and crafts. The sessions are generally given in Swedish, but the link person's mission is to ensure the content is understood by every participant.

The teaching and learning is, to a great extent, based on 'family learning', an approach which assumes that learning processes can be improved through the involvement of the whole family in educational settings, as family members can support and encourage each other. Children attending school or pre-school will quickly learn their first Swedish words and sentences. The parents, on the other hand, are often occupied at home or at work and have fewer opportunities to acquire Swedish language skills. Thus, Learning Together wants to create opportunities for both par-

ents and their children to improve language and literacy skills through cooperative learning.

CONTENT AND TEACHING MATERIAL

Teaching material for the Learning Together programme has been developed by the Department of Education. In part, the material was either translated or fundamentally inspired by programmes run by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (now the Learning and Work Institute) in the UK and the Clare Family Learning Programme that promotes adult literacy in Ennis, Ireland. Linköping has entered into cooperation with Clare Family Learning, borrowing ideas and adapting their materials to the Swedish context.

Before a course begins, tutors are provided with vast amounts of material, including suggestions about themes and the structure of lessons. This helps ensure the focus remains on literacy, language and numeracy skills development for both parents and their children. Material is developed by tutors as well. Generally, the aim is to assemble groups with relatively homogeneous literacy and language skills in Swedish, in so that participants can work on the same exercises.

The courses organised in the programme have the same broad structure, though they may vary in theme and content. Depending on the needs and interests of the group, their current level of literacy and language skills and the age of the children, teaching material for the following thematic areas and activities are used: useful everyday language and words, prepositions, images and words, joint book reading, playful maths, different strategies of learning, Swedish holidays and the Swedish school system. The learning focus is always on improving literacy, language and numeracy skills. However, certain themes are used to simultaneously provide information about Swedish society.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

Usually, tutors are recruited from among the staff of the Department of Education. Requirements include pedagogical experience and good knowledge of Swedish society and language. The link people work part-time on the programme, and are usually also employed elsewhere as mother-tongue teachers. They tend to be immigrants who have lived in Sweden for

at least ten years and have worked for several years in the municipality. They are familiar with the Swedish school system and speak Swedish, as well as at least one language spoken by the participating families.

To maintain quality and further develop the methodology of Learning Together, qualified, trained staff organize regular training sessions for the tutors. They are invited twice a year to exchange experiences and ideas. The first training session, involving 21 facilitators, was conducted in 2014 by Mary Flanagan, coordinator and course manager at Clare Family Learning. In addition, two professionals from Linköping municipality went on an EU-funded study trip to Ireland in October 2014, where they participated in a training course on family learning. The two now train other facilitators. In October 2014 and June 2015, further training was delivered, including 45 professionals from Linköping municipality, among them pre-school teachers, pre-school managers, and tutors with foreign language skills.

ENROLMENT OF LEARNERS

The programme targets children aged between 3 and 10 years and their parents. They can be families who have recently arrived in Sweden or those who have been in Sweden for some time but have not yet developed adequate Swedish language skills.

Teachers are often the best judge of their students' literacy, language and numeracy skills, and usually stay in close contact with the parents. They are able to identify students and families with specific needs and recommend them for the Learning Together programme. Families also choose to participate on their own initiative after finding out about the programme, for example through meeting former participants in family centres.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

After attending the course, participating parents and, where possible, children fill in short questionnaires to evaluate their progress. They are asked to describe their learning achievements and the usefulness of their newly acquired knowledge in everyday life. The facilitators do not evaluate the outcomes in a structured way – the focus, rather, is on how parents can help improve their children's language and literacy skills. However, at the end of the course, the partici-

pants receive a diploma. This is often very much appreciated, as, for some participants, it is the first 'official' document they have received in Sweden and can be included in their CV and in job applications.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- After the first courses of Learning Together were delivered in family centres in 2014, the Department of Education was in close contact with tutors to evaluate the implementation of the programme, later analysing their reports.
- On completion of the course, parents are asked to give feedback by filling in a questionnaire. If the parents' literacy or language skills are limited, they are asked to provide oral feedback.
- Tutors are expected to report course outcomes to the coordinator of the programme. Tutors' reports include an overview of course evaluations by participating parents and themes covered.
- Ongoing interaction between the Department of Education and headmasters, pre-school managers and teachers ensures continuing evaluation, assessment of further needs and monitoring of the programme's impact.

IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT

Overall, internal evaluations indicate the positive experience of parents, children and professionals. After a period of testing, it was concluded that Learning Together is a successful method through which to develop the literacy, language and numeracy skills of the target group. As well as enabling the acquisition of those skills, Learning Together is about building confidence, sharing ideas and promoting the enjoyment of learning in a way that suits the specific needs of the group.

A researcher from the University of Linköping recently finished an evaluation of Learning Together. The study involved twenty children and their mothers and its aim was to examine whether family learning had a positive impact on the children's learning and social relationships, child-parent interaction and the relationship between home and school. The results show that family learning has a significant positive effect on knowledge development, social skills and home-school interaction involving foreign-born parents and their children.

The literacy and Swedish language skills of participating parents and children have improved. However, the most valuable achievement of Learning Together is an increased awareness among participating parents of the importance of actively supporting their children's development. Previous experience in Linköping had shown that many parents in the target families had not been involved in their children's school or pre-school activities. Furthermore, teachers had mentioned that some parents often felt insecure at school meetings. Limited Swedish language skills and low awareness and understanding of opportunities for involvement at their children's school have been identified as the main barriers by teachers and link persons. It has been reported that through Learning Together, parents' willingness to interact with school and pre-school staff has increased. Furthermore, Learning Together has led to greater interaction within families: parents and children report that they increasingly engage in activities together, doing homework, playing games or baking at home, for example. Through participation in the courses, families widened their networks and met new friends.

ACHIEVEMENTS THROUGH LEARNING TOGETHER:

Children:

- Improved literacy and language skills
- Improved social ability
- Increased overall knowledge

Parents:

- Improved literacy and language skills
- Increased awareness of their importance in their child's emotional and cognitive development
- Increased knowledge about their rights and possible engagement in school or pre-school, resulting in more interest and interaction
- Increased overall knowledge
- Increased positive interaction with their children
- Increased self-confidence
- Widened and new networks

Facilitators:

- Tutors report that they find their group's improvement and enjoyment stimulating and that it gives them energy in their ordinary work, e.g. as school

teachers. They also report that interaction between Swedish and non-Swedish cultures has helped them to be more open and understanding of cultural diversity.

Community:

- The improvement in children's literacy and language skills has several benefits: it enables them to better participate in school or pre-school and increases their chances of positive education outcomes throughout their academic careers. This might, ultimately, lead to improved integration in society. Through this, communities can benefit from children who positively participate in communal activities. The provision of information to parents and their increased engagement in the education system means fewer misunderstandings between parents and professionals.

These testimonies from interviews with participating mothers demonstrate the positive impact of Learning Together:

It was very good to be together with others. He [her son] was happy, he felt he could show me ... what he could do and what he'd learned.

My daughter told me, 'I've learnt by doing this, why don't we do this every day?'

CHALLENGES

Up to now, most participants in the programme have been mothers, with fathers and extended family members, such as grandparents, less involved. The participation of elderly people has, however, been increasing, while the participation of fathers remains low, perhaps due to evening working hours.

Occasionally, difficulties with the participants' punctuality have arisen. For some parents it is hard to find time for the courses, in addition to their regular duties, studies or work obligations. Normally, tutors and families decide on the session times together. However, as the courses of Learning Together are supplementary to regular school lessons, it can be an effort for children to attend courses after school. It has been a challenge to find a time of day that suits all participants. In future, fewer obstacles should be put in the way of

participating families, especially with regard to transportation and course schedules.

Feedback from parents indicates that they would prefer courses to be held during the summer holidays, something that is planned to happen in 2016. This will avoid giving children a double workload while providing meaningful activities at a time when other activities can be rare.

Some participants reported that they would have liked more time with some exercises. Tutors also mentioned difficulties related to the limited time available to plan sessions, as they normally organize the courses in addition to their regular full-time teaching roles. Some tutors raised concerns that certain board games used on the courses do not sufficiently support the acquisition of literacy and language skills. The material used in the courses needs to be evaluated regularly to assess its effectiveness for learning.

LESSONS LEARNED

Learning Together has highlighted one of the biggest advantages of family learning: that the method can be adapted to different participants and groups. An appropriate curriculum can be created according to the age and requirements of the parents and their children.

The wide dissemination of the method, the interest in working as an instructor, the enthusiasm of the professionals, and parents' and children's positive reactions to the courses all indicate that Learning Together works well for the target group. It has proven particularly effective in identifying families who might benefit from the programme, through the suggestions of school teachers.

One of the key success factors of the programme is the employment of link people who share common language skills and cultural backgrounds with their respective group. The link people have proven to be indispensable in supporting foreign-born parents and their children, and are an integral part of Learning Together. They function both as role models and language tutors, help avoid misunderstandings through their common language skills, and can inform as well as motivate participants.

Feedback from children shows that they appreciated the small-scale learning groups of between five and eight children, which meant they received more attention from tutors and parents. The approach of Learning Together means that more attention can be given to children who have difficulties in regular classrooms. The use of a family learning approach, including both parents and children in education classes, has contributed to the success of Learning Together.

SUSTAINABILITY

It is expected that the influx of foreign-born families to Linköping will continue, at least for the near future. Learning Together, therefore, remains an important programme for the municipality. As the same development is taking place in many regions of Sweden, the positive experiences of Learning Together can be further disseminated around the country. Link people with skills in the languages of the target families are continuously being trained in Linköping to ensure the future success of the programme. To widen its scope in the future, and to include foreign-born families with different language backgrounds, mother-tongue teachers with languages other than Somali and Arabic are being trained.

The municipality organizes and funds the coordination, development and delivery of the programme in Linköping. The programme's current budget of around 500,000 SEK (2015) is expected to increase in the future, as Learning Together is currently expanding. Working with foreign-born families and their children – especially to improve literacy and language skills – is increasingly required in Sweden. Thus, a continuation and expansion of the programme is expected.

The Department of Education in Linköping is currently working to spread the approach of Learning Together to other Swedish cities and regions. Unfortunately, Linköping has so far been the only city in Sweden to use the approach. However, the cooperation with Clare Family Learning, which has been valuable in the implementation phase of Learning Together, shows that by building on previous projects, other successful programmes might follow. Thus, the lessons learned from Learning Together might be a useful resource for future projects, in Sweden and beyond.



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Schenk mir eine Geschichte – Tell me a story

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

8.306 Million

Official languages

German, French, Italian, Romansch

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GDP

5% (2012)

Statistical Sources

- World Bank (2013)

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

“Schenk mir eine Geschichte – Tell me a story”

(French name: “1001 histoires dans les langues du monde”)

Implementing Organization

Schweizerisches Institut für Kinder- und Jugendmedien (SIKJM) (Swiss Institute for Children’s and Youth Media)

Languages of Instruction

German, Albanian, Arabian, Chinese, English, French, Farsi, Italian, Kurdish, Croatian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Tamil, Tibetan, Tigrinya, Turkish, and Urdu.

Programme Partners

Numerous local partners (city/district governments, community centres, libraries, social organizations, etc.) throughout Switzerland.

Funding

Public funding, local partners and private foundations: Mercator Foundation, Arcas Foundation, Avina Foundation, Sophie and Karl Binding Foundation, Ria & Arthur Dietschweiler Foundation, Gamil Foundation, Hamasil Foundation, Landis & Gyr Foundation, Ernst Göhner Foundation, and Thoolen Foundation.

Annual Programme Costs

CHF 120,000 (USD 124,000) for national coordination, further education and implementing new locations (not included are local running costs)

Date of Inception

2006

COUNTRY CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Migrants in Switzerland face multiple disadvantages in the Swiss educational system. Children with a migration background tend to have less access to pre-school education, are more likely to go lower tier secondary schools and are underrepresented among college graduates. For example, around one-fourth people with a second-generation migrant background finish their education after the mandatory minimum of 9 years as opposed to 16 % of the population without migration background. The number of people with second-generation migrant background completing secondary and tertiary lower than the educational attainment of the non-migrant population: While individuals with a migrant background show secondary and tertiary completion rates of 50 and 25 %, people without migrant backgrounds complete secondary and tertiary school at rates of 53 and 30 % respectively (Bundesamt für Statistik 2014). The main reasons for the disadvantages faced by children with migration backgrounds are language barriers, smaller financial means of parents, and lower involvement of parents into their children’s education (20 Minuten 2011, Becker 2010).

The programme *Schenk mir eine Geschichte* (literally “Give me a story”) – *Tell me a story* addresses the problems of language barrier and increases parent involvement by reaching out to families with migrant backgrounds in an effort to improve language and literacy development of children in their native language. This underlies the premise that knowing their native language greatly supports children in learning the language of the home country. As such, *Schenk mir eine Geschichte* plays an important role in addressing the educational needs of underserved populations in Switzerland.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW/SUMMARY

The programme *Schenk mir eine Geschichte* provide story-telling courses to families with migrant backgrounds in an effort to promote language and literacy development of children between the ages of two and

five. In addition, the programme aims to involve parents into their children's educational attainment.

After its first implementation in Zurich and Basel in 2006, *Schenk mir eine Geschichte* gradually expanded to other cities and communities. Local partners of the Swiss Institute for Children's and Youth Media (SIKJM, for its acronym in German) such as libraries, community centres, and city/district governments organize and finance the programme in their localities, while SIKJM supervises the programme and supports local partners through creating teaching materials and providing introductory and continuing training of facilitators. As of 2014, the programme is offered in 14 Kantonen (states) throughout Switzerland including Basel, Bern, Lausanne, and Zurich. In 2014, 1,500 families participated in 1,663 classes held in 17 languages that were facilitated by 130 teachers. Each class has ten participants on average. From 2006 to present, 8670 classes took place in total with approximately 87,000 participants.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The programme *Schenk mir eine Geschichte* has the following goals:

- Promote literacy development of children aged two to five with migrant backgrounds in their native language
- Induce parents to support literacy attainment and language foundation of their children at an early age by introducing reading and writing activities in their daily lives
- Educate parents that incorporating literacy activities at home plays an important role in their children's literacy attainment.
- Educate parents that their children should be literate in their native language because this is an important foundation for learning the official language(s).
- Introduce parents to available resources in their community such as language classes for adults and children, libraries, and pre-school classes.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

LEARNERS' ENROLLMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT OF LEARNING NEEDS

The programme *Schenk mir eine Geschichte* targets families with migration background, who usually do

not attend comparable educational courses for parents. The programme facilitators emphasize low-threshold access to the programme, which means that all interested families are able to attend classes at any time, even if a particular course has already started. Participating is also free and families do not need to register prior to attending. Usually eight to twelve families participate in one course, which includes mothers, fathers, grandmothers, and aunts. In most cases, children are accompanied by one parent or family member.

The facilitators play a central role in enrolling families into the program through frequent outreach in-person activities and over the phone. Other methods to reach families include word of mouth promotion, outreach to friends & relatives, promotion in kindergartens & schools, language classes, and family services. Programme implementers also use social media such as What's app and Facebook to spread information about the next story-telling event. Enrolling new participants ultimately requires gaining the trust of parents and overcoming cultural challenges. Examples for such cultural challenges are that at times parents feel ashamed about their own schooling level, or that there might be some restriction for women to move around in public spaces, and negative experiences with Swiss government institutions.

TEACHING – LEARNING APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

The programme offers mostly storytelling sessions for groups of families with the same language background, who receive classes in their native language. Further, heterogeneous groups can attend classes offered in German, which also incorporate native languages in games and social activities. Parents and children attend classes together.

The facilitators conduct classes with a holistic, multi-faceted approach that actively involves children and parents in the learning process. In addition, the facilitators structure their teaching around reoccurring formats, which separates language and reading exercises from games and other social activities. Typically, language and reading activities are most commonly held in a classroom type setting, where facilitators issue instructions and ask questions. Hereby, par-

ents play a supporting role by helping their children remain focused during the class. Other activities such as games, crafting and group activities take place in a family type setting, whereby parents take on a much more prominent role in working with their children.

The central component of *Schenk mir eine Geschichte* is story-telling, which facilitators approach differently. Some teachers prefer to tell stories in their own words supplementing their story-telling with acting and gestures. Other teachers prefer to read the stories from children books and discuss the stories with the children afterwards. These two approaches are suitable for the purpose of the programme because both story-telling methods emphasize the importance of dialogue.

TEACHING CONTENT

During classes facilitators tell & read stories and encourage parents to participate in games and activities such as singing, crafting, role playing, and individual reading. Families are also encouraged to write, draw or tell their own stories. Another major component of the programme is to introduce parents to available literacy resources. The focus lies hereby on familiarizing parents with libraries to facilitate easier access to books in both their native language and German.

Facilitators also educate parents on how they can support their children's literacy and language development within the family. Specifically, parents learn how to handle a bilingual education and receive advice and information on other educational issues and available family resources such as parent meetings, language classes, and social groups. For this purpose, SIKJM creates and distributes information material in the native language of participants. In general, facilitators have the freedom to customize course content according to the background of participants.

As of 2014, the programme was offered in several languages including German, Albanian, Arabian, English, French, Farsi, Italian, Kurdish, Croatian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Tamil, Tibetan, Tigrinya, Turkish and Urdu. The programme is open to adding new languages should demand arise. One course usually consists of eight to twelve 90-minute classes, which take place weekly or bi-weekly in community centres, libraries, or schools. Eight to twelve

families usually participate in one course. Most families come the groups on a regular basis attending two out of three times.

FACILITATORS

Volunteers who know the language and are familiar with the cultural background of the families attending the courses carry out the programme. SIKJM provides these intermediaries with basic knowledge on language and literacy development, methods of storytelling, bilingual education, parent education, and media usage. SIKJM offers both introductory and continuing education to facilitators and observers their activities during classes offering support and advice to improve if necessary. Facilitators are required to attend training sessions. However, pedagogical education is not a prerequisite to becoming a facilitator. As such, most facilitators are "semi-professionals."

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The programme received two major external evaluations: the first evaluation was conducted in 2008 by the teacher training college in Zurich and the second evaluation took place in 2014 by the Marie Meierhofer Institut für das Kind (please find links to both documents at the bottom). Internally, SIKJM has analyzed all courses on the following aspects: number of attendees, attendance frequency of families, level of involvement of parents, and the information parents receive about family learning and community resources.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The programme allows children to improve their language and literacy skills because they receive help from their parents and teacher and are able to play with other children. Specifically, children acquire new words and improve text understanding. In addition, children become more interested in stories and books, which contribute to a sustainable impact of the programme. Testimonies of parents point out that their children learn something new every time they attend classes and enjoy listening to the stories. They also value other class activities such as artwork and drawing because it makes their children proud to create something with their parents.

Further, the programme promotes intergenerational family learning because it teaches parents how to support their children in their educational development by implementing learning activities at home. Most notably, both parents and children gain self-confidence from participating in the programme because they feel that their language and culture is publicly acknowledged and they meet people with similar backgrounds. The programme is therefore also a source of motivation for parents to support their children's literacy development. For example, one mother explains that she and her husband started to rent out children books from a library to read stories to their daughter, which they did not do previously to attending the programme.

Moreover, the programme has a positive effect on the education of parents as many become interested in reading and visiting libraries on their own time. Parents also appreciate the strong social component of the programme as they meet new people with similar backgrounds and interest while attending classes.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The way a story is told matters for the literacy development of children. Facilitators who tell stories in their own words with gestures and acting allow children to recreate the stories with their own imagination, which improves their verbal understanding of texts and promotes their ability to add additional information to texts. Reading stories aloud improves understanding of texts but has the added benefit to introduce children to written language. Further, discussing the stories with children afterwards shows children how written language translates into spoken language and it allows them to see if their own understanding of the story was correct.
- The incorporation of parents into the learning process is crucial for the success and sustainability of the programme. Achieving this challenging goal requires a well-defined concept with a clear teaching approach as well as ongoing coaching and support for facilitators.
- The location of classes matters for the outcome. Generally, classes should take place in separate rooms and not in public settings such as the public space of a library. In public settings, children get

distracted easily and parents feel less confident to participate in the learning process.

- Establishing trust between facilitators and parents is crucial for the success of the programme. Gaining the trust of parents is not only necessary to change inner-family literacy practice and to motivate parents to actively support their children's literacy development but it is also the most effective way to enroll new families into the programme. In fact, successfully enrolling families from specific migration backgrounds (e.g. Albanian families) depends on key facilitators who are well integrated into the community. Those facilitators often come from the same community and are in close contact with families are best able to incorporate parents into the learning process during classes.
- The implementation of the programme requires time. Specifically, parents require time to become comfortable with participating in the programme, especially if classes take place in public spaces. In addition, establishing trust relationships and changing learning dynamics within families is a long-term process.
- Having groups with families from the same cultural background is highly conducive to family learning, as otherwise parents would be more reluctant to engage in learning activities with their children in different settings.

CHALLENGES

- The teaching approach of the programme could benefit from a more structured and goals-oriented approach. The facilitators design classes and activities after their own preferences while putting less emphasis on general goals because they are often unaware of how much the teaching approach matters (the method of story-telling is an example). The programme could improve from more a structured and coherent approach that defines each teaching format such as story-telling and games in more detail.
- Incorporating parents into the learning process is a central challenge of the programme. For example, some facilitators find it challenging to engage with parents in front of their children, when they see that parents need help with their children (e.g. a mom struggling to control her son). Another small problem

is that, sometimes, one parent does not want the family to attend classes, which can cause families to stop participating. Some facilitators also struggle to work with older and disinterested children.

- Access to books and other media in native languages is another challenge, especially when courses do not take place in international libraries.
- The enrolment of participants highly depends on the individual ability of facilitators to reach out to families with migration backgrounds.

SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability of the program depends on the willingness of local partners to organize and finance classes. However, public authorities grow more and more reluctant to finance the programme leading to scarce financial resources.

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Plazas Comunitarias

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

320,051,000 (2013)

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GDP

5.22

Access to Primary Education –

Total Net Enrolment Rate (NIR)

96% (2011)

Adult literacy rate (ages 16 to 56) –2012

PIAAC test results: percentage of adults scoring at each proficiency level in literacy (level 1 represents the lowest level of proficiency, level 5 the highest):

Below Level 1: 3.9%

Level 1: 13.6%

Level 2: 32.6%

Level 3: 34.2%

Level 4: 10.9%

Level 5: 0.6%

Statistical Sources

- UNESCO Institute for Statistics
- OECD

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Plazas Comunitarias

Implementing Organization

The Instituto Nacional para la Educación de Adultos (INEA) [National Institute for Adult Education], the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) [Secretariat of Public Education], the Instituto para los Mexicanos en el Exterior [Institute for Mexicans Abroad] and the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE) [Secretariat of Foreign Relations].

Language of Instruction

Spanish

Funding

Public budget of the United Mexican States; also financed in part by the civil society organisations within the Unión Americana.

Programme Partners

The Mexican consular network and local civil society

Annual Programme Costs

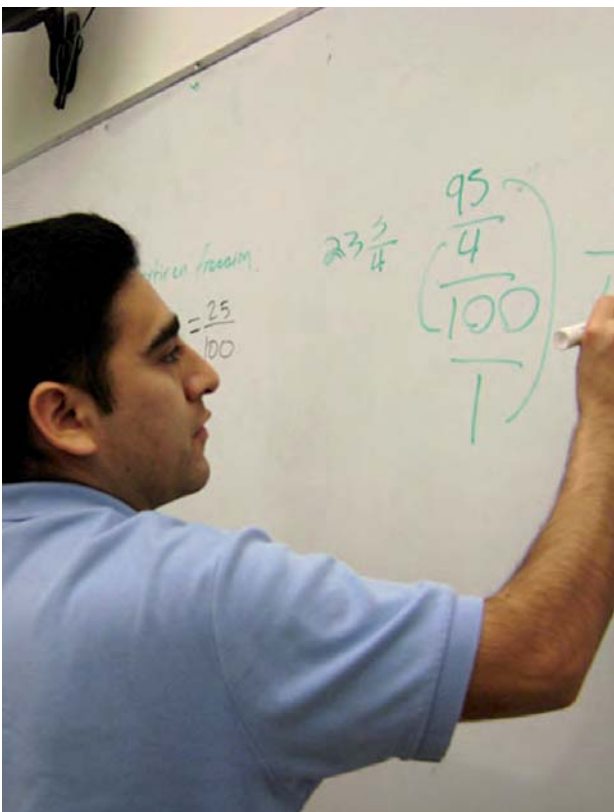
The organisations that implement Plazas Comunitarias assume operational and equipment costs of, on average, USD 350,000 per year.

Date of Inception

2001

COUNTRY PROFILE

Mass migration from Mexico to the USA is a phenomenon that emerged at the beginning of the 20th century. It resulted on the one hand from the economic, social and political instability that existed in Mexico, and on the other from the demand for more manpower in the USA. But, with the recession of 2007-2009 and with education and work opportunities in Mexico improving, the number of Mexican residents migrating northwards has been on the decline for the past few years. Despite these falling numbers, however, Mexicans continue to be the largest immigrant group in the US. According to the data published for 2008 by the United States Census Bureau, the Mexican diaspo-



ra in the country amounts to approximately 34.8 million people. This number comprises immigrants who are residents (11.6 million in 2013) as well as people of Mexican descent born in the United States of America. Compared with other populations in the US, immigrants from Mexico are on average younger, have a lower level of education, are more likely to work in unskilled jobs, and have less financial resources than other immigrants and US citizens. It is important, however, to see the migratory flow from Mexico as permanently evolving. Indeed, recent years have seen a particular interest in migration to the US emerging among higher-income, better-educated populations in the country's north.

Although the literacy testing conducted in the US within the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) is carried out exclusively in English and can therefore only provide limited information, it does give us an idea of the literacy levels among the immigrant population. According to the results of this testing, only 28% of the immigrant population has a literacy level of 3 or above (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest level and reflects only a basic knowledge of the alphabet, and 5 is the highest level and reflects an ability to make high-level inferences). Within this group, members of the Hispanic population not born in the USA had the lowest literacy levels. Within the population of Mexican origin, literacy and numeracy levels were found to be lower among immigrants who had arrived in the US before 2007, a reflection of the fact that these people had not benefited from recent improvements in Mexico's education system.

Promoting improved numeracy and literacy levels among Mexican immigrants living in the USA is relevant not only to the USA itself, but also to Mexico. After all, among the phenomena that link this population to its country of origin are the financial contributions that Mexicans living abroad make to Mexico. According to World Bank data, Mexicans living abroad sent a total of USD 22 billion back to Mexico in 2013. This figure, which is based only on the amounts sent back via official channels, constitutes 2% of Mexico's gross domestic product. It is therefore in the interests of both Mexico and the USA that Mexicans living in the latter strengthen their literacy and numeracy skills. Not only would this result in greater financial

contributions for both countries, it would also raise living standards.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME

For the past 13 years, the Instituto Nacional para la Educación de Adultos (INEA) [National Institute for Adult Education] has been offering educational support to Mexicans who have settled outside Mexico through "Plazas Comunitarias", learning programmes run by civil society organizations. The collaborative Plazas Comunitarias project is permanently overseen by the Instituto para los Mexicanos en el Exterior (IME) [Institute for Mexicans Abroad] via the network of Mexican consulates in the United States of America.

The Plazas Comunitarias are educational facilities open to the community. The educational programmes and services they offer are aimed primarily at young people and adults who have so far not managed to complete elementary education. They enable these people to gain official qualifications that are valid in Mexico. People can also use the Plazas Comunitarias to obtain information on vocational training options, to exploit the communication and information opportunities that these facilities offer, and to use the online services made available to them. Plazas Comunitarias therefore enable young people and adults to access to a wide range of complementary educational resources through which to advance their learning.

The Plazas Comunitarias emerged as part of a medium-term project launched by the *Consejo Nacional de la Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo* (CONEVYT) [National Council on Education for Life and Work] the aim of which was to combat lagging education standards. By July 2015, the Plazas Comunitarias programme was being promoted by 46 consulates in the United States and had been implemented across a total of 358 centres.

Each Plaza Comunitaria is a basic operational unit comprising a group of pupils who convene at a pre-arranged time and place with the aim of studying, resolving queries, and exchanging ideas and experiences under the guidance of one or more tutors. The study groups tend to be very flexible in terms of scheduling and integration of new students, and can therefore be held in all types of space.

Plazas Comunitarias in the US offer:

- Elementary education: primary and secondary literacy courses;
- Diverse services depending on the organisation. These include:
 - Access to new communication and information technologies for developing reading, writing, communication, logical reasoning and IT skills with a view to facilitating pupils' entry onto the job market;
 - Supporting the community by providing a communal space for educational, recreational and cultural events that serve the interests and needs of the local area.

All these services and educational materials, which are also available online, are provided to students in advance and free of charge.

All Plazas Comunitarias have three spaces:

- A room for individual or group tutoring. The groups of pupils can use this room for shared learning purposes, to organize projects or to take examinations in.
- A multi-purpose room. This is an educational space used to show videos that correspond with the interests and needs of the young people and adults who are students of the Plaza Comunitaria. The room is therefore dedicated to fostering educational processes by means of audiovisual resources and bibliographic material.
- Computer room or classroom with networked computers for internet access to information material, courses, exercises, digital libraries, educational institutions, vocational training programmes, and other sites that benefit the students' education.

The Plazas Comunitarias also serve as programme offices and, as such,

- as a venue for examinations, taken either on paper or online;
- as the location at which to apply for and obtain certificates for primary and secondary qualifications.

Because education is a human right, elementary education is offered not only to Mexicans, but also to other Spanish-speaking people. The certificates that they can gain at the Plazas Comunitarias will in some cases be recognized in their countries of origin due to corresponding international agreements.

Every year, an average of 6000 pupils register for Plazas Comunitarias courses in the US. In August of 2015, there was a total of approximately 63,000 pupils registered in the *Sistema de Seguimiento y Acreditación de Comunidades en el Exterior* (SASACE) [System of Accreditation and Automatic Tracking for Communities Abroad]. Unfortunately, however, not all of these students are currently active or have completed their respective courses.

OBJECTIVES

The programme's objective is to tackle the challenges presented by migration by offering services that focus on and are tailored to the social and economic realities faced by citizens living abroad. The Plazas Comunitarias emerged out of a need to help young people and adults with educational deficits, providing physical spaces for learning as well as comprehensive, high-quality education materials. Members of the community can avail of a wide range of education and training options, and of the communication and information opportunities that the facilities offer.

The Programme's specific objectives are as follows:

- To initiate, promote, operate and monitor basic educational services (literacy, primary and secondary school qualifications) for Mexicans aged 15 upwards who live outside Mexican territory
- To expand education opportunities
- To promote educational continuity
- To enrol, qualify and certify pupils

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing a Plaza Comunitaria will require the following:

1. a person responsible for the project;
2. pupils;
3. appropriate space, resources and an adequate infrastructure so as to facilitate pupils' access to the services;
4. Submission to the local consulate of a request to open a Plaza Comunitaria.

After submitting said request to the consulate, consulate officials will visit the premises in which the Plaza Comunitaria is to be established in order to evaluate the conditions and determine whether they meet

the requirements. Once all requirements have been met and INEA has been contacted, the three entities involved, i.e. the organization seeking to set up a Plaza Comunitaria, the consulate and INEA, enter into a corresponding agreement, a so-called “Programa de Trabajo”.

TEACHING AND LEARNING. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The education process at the Plazas Comunitarias is based on the general methodological approach set forth in the Modelo Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo (MEVyT) [Guideline on Education for Life and Work]. According to this approach, lessons should be based on one guiding topic and be designed to strengthen pupils mentally. This is done by encouraging them to actively contemplate the importance of knowing more about the topic in question, and to engage in problem-solving activities. The approach comprises four interrelated phases:

1. Gathering knowledge. Presentation and discussion of problems to gain a clear understanding of what the person or group concerned thinks, knows or can contribute.
2. Search for and analysis of new information. Guidelines on collecting information within and outside the module, classifying and complementing data with a view to inferring new information.
3. Comparison, reflection, confrontation and change. Complementation, comparison, discussion and resolution of questions, among other things.
4. Synthesis, reconceptualization and application of the lessons learned. Activities involving comparison, development and re-development of texts; development of outlines, synoptic tables, maps and projects; resolution of problems, both real and hypothetical, through argumentation.

To find out more about the MEVyT, please visit:
<http://www.unesco.org/uil/litbase/?menu=16&country=MX&programme=39>.

PROGRAMME CONTENT AND INSTRUCTION MATERIAL

The program is divided into modules. To receive a certificate of elementary education, pupils need to com-

plete 10 basic modules (three initial-level modules, which are included in the total number) and 2 diversified modules according to the pupil’s areas of interest. To receive a certificate of secondary education, pupils need to complete 8 basic modules and 4 diversified modules according to the pupil’s areas of interest.

The levels and their corresponding basic modules (which are the same for all pupils) are divided as follows:

Initial level

- Words for beginners
- mathematics for beginners

Intermediate level - primary

- Reading and writing
- Numbers
- Useful stories
- Knowing how to read
- Figures and measurements
- Let's get to know
- Let's live better

Advance level - secondary

- Talking helps people understand each other
- Let's write!
- For continued learning
- Fractions and percentages
- Information and graphs
- Advanced activities
- Mexico, our home
- The Earth, our planet

The content of the various diversified modules has been designed to be of interest to all pupils. The topics covered include the importance of citizens’ civil rights and responsibilities, health (including reproductive health), the environment, promoting anti-violence, finances, migration, and information on how to increase and improve work opportunities and conditions.

The elementary and secondary education programs offered will vary in duration depending on pupils’ previous knowledge, on their personalities, on how regularly and how intensively they study, on the complexity of the module content and the way in which this is treated, and on the progress pupils have made or the level at which they are studying.

The people key to the programme's implementation within the US are the Programme manager within the respective organisation, the tutors, the consulate official responsible for community affairs, and all the students.

THE PLAZA COMUNITARIA PROGRAMME MANAGERS AND TUTORS

The Programme manager is the person responsible for a Plaza Comunitaria. He/she holds responsibility for ensuring that activities proceed correctly. This person has a fundamental educational role, which involves providing help and assistance, assuming managerial duties, enrolling students, monitoring, and tending to students' specific needs. The Programme manager profile is as follows:

- Is older than 18
- Holds a 1st-level university degree (educación media superior)
- Can speak, read and write in Spanish
- Is service-oriented, responsible, respectful and honest
- Is skilled at organising resources and activities
- Has good computer skills

The Plaza Comunitaria manager is the main contact for the consular network and for the tutors. He/she is also involved in the monitoring process, keeping registration lists of students up-to-date and organizing and allocating staff so as to ensure the smooth running of the system.

The tutors, who tend to work on a voluntary basis, are the people who facilitate basic education classes and coordinate the other services offered by the Plaza Comunitaria. The number of tutors within each organisation will vary depending on the number of students. Each Plaza Comunitaria will have its own approach to finding tutors and volunteers interested in becoming part of the programme. Often, these people will already be very involved in the community, have heard about the Programme and want to support it. Plaza tutors are therefore not subject to a specific requirements profile, but should meet certain basic criteria, for example that of having completed secondary education.

All consultants receive a training on the INEA, the educational model and the *Sistema de Acreditación*

y Seguimiento Automatizado para Comunidades en el Exterior [System of Accreditation and Automatic Tracking for Communities Abroad]. Additional more specialized training courses can be offered in coordination with the academic management. These courses aim to strengthen participants consulting skills and impart more in-depth knowledge of the MEVyT.

PROFILE AND ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS

To enrol, students must present proof of identification. This could be their passport, consular registration card (matrícula consular), birth certificate, unique registration number (Clave Única de Registro de Población (CURP)) or voting card. It is important to emphasize that, although the Programme is implemented on US soil, the documents submitted must have been issued by the government of the student's country of birth. This is because Programme participants could encounter difficulties obtaining their certificates of elementary or secondary education if the documents they use to apply for them are documents recognized and issued by the American government.

Students find out about the Plazas Comunitarias mainly through the consulates. Some students learn of the Plazas Comunitarias through their communities and make enquiries at the Plaza directly. Anyone in need of basic educational services can register with a Plaza Comunitaria. But the process of applying for a final course certificate will require them to present an official document of some kind.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME

With a view to developing specific strategies aimed at improving the Plazas Comunitarias Programme abroad, INEA has proposed that indicators be created through which to analyze the Programme's ongoing operations. These indicators can then be used to measure the success of the strategies implemented on the basis of the initial evaluation. Efforts in this respect began only recently, which is why the indicators as well as the information they are set to measure and verify, are still undergoing modifications.

For INEA, a highly educationally efficient Plaza Comunitaria is one that focusses mainly on providing basic educational services using the Modelo Educación

para la Vida y el Trabajo (MEVyT) [Guideline on Education for Life and Work]. Thus, the first indicator of educational efficiency is the indicator “Proportion of basic educational services” (Servicios Educativos Básicos (SEB). This efficiency indicator defines the proportion of basic educational services provided by the Plaza Comunitaria in question in relation to the other services it provides. Other types of service often offered by Plazas Comunitarias include preparatory courses for the *General Education Development* tests (the GED diploma is considered equivalent to a high school diploma), courses in English as a foreign language and computer courses.

The Plazas Comunitarias are monitored in various ways, for example through analysing the degree to which they focus on basic education, through keeping track of the applications for certificates that arrive at the offices of INEA and through the registrations and activity recorded by the SASACE [*System of Accreditation and Automatic Tracking for Communities Abroad*]. If INEA notices that a Plaza Comunitaria has not registered any activity for the past year, it contacts the respective consulate to request confirmation that the Plaza is still in operation. If the Plaza is not in operation, the consulate concerned informs INEA, whereupon the facility is closed or its access to the SASACE is temporarily suspended. This process ensures that the Plazas Comunitarias whose results and activities are recorded are operating efficiently.

EXPERIENCES

The experiences gathered so far have shown the Plazas Comunitarias Programme to be an effective means of providing quality education to adults. It is important to acknowledge the important role that the organisations helping to implement the Programme (including assuming the costs) play in achieving this success. Each of these organisations structures itself to be able to offer the Programme within the framework defined by INEA, using their own resources and taking into account the specific needs of their participants. In the following, we present three examples of organisations that implement the programme in the US:

1 Carlos Rosario School – Washington, D.C.

The mission of the Carlos Rosario School is to provide educational services to adult immigrants living in

Washington, D.C. Its aim in doing this is to bring forth active and involved members of American society, who can support their families and contribute to the community.

Founded over 40 years ago, the Carlos Rosario School offers a programme of educational and support services that includes literacy courses, life skills courses, occupational training, psychosocial support, financial literacy courses, and health and career guidance services.

In 2008, the Carlos Rosario School signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Mexican consulate, thus undertaking to implement the Plazas Comunitarias programme as part of its General Education Development programme. Students attending the Carlos Rosario School benefit from the sound collaboration framework that exists between the tutors, the facilitators, the counsellors and the employment officers.

The objectives of the Plaza Comunitaria at the Carlos Rosario School are as follows:

- to prepare students for the GED tests;
- to improve literacy through basic adult education services;
- to help students advance their personal, educational and professional development;
- to improve participants’ digital literacy and interpersonal skills.

Students who have basic education and who enrol in GED courses at Carlos Rosario, begin taking classes at the initial level and, on one day per week, participate in an educational measure provided by the Plaza, advancing through various modules with the help of one instructor and one facilitator. On the remaining days, the students focus on the GED study plan, which includes mathematics, natural sciences, social studies and language (reading, writing, talking, listening).

Students of the Plaza share the following characteristics:

- they are 18 or above;
- their educational career in their country of origin was interrupted;
- they come from one of 18 different countries;
- many of them are mothers or fathers;
- they work either full-time or part-time, or they have other responsibilities outside their schooling.

The Plaza's facilitators are experts in adult education and feel an affinity with the students' backgrounds, often because they share a similar background. They work closely with the facilitators of the GED program to ensure that the educational approaches provided meet the needs of the students and that they allow integration of educational services.

Since 2008, 307 students have earned elementary school diplomas and 111 have achieved secondary school diplomas. Many of these obtained the GED diploma or are continuing classes with a view to obtaining it. Jaydar O., a student with the Plaza, comments, "Carlos Rosario [School] has given us immigrants the opportunity to complete the schooling we were not able to finish in our countries".

The Plaza Comunitaria program offers students the opportunity to strengthen the basic skills required to complete the GED programme. Moreover, the organisation has established that working towards the Plaza qualifications before obtaining a GED helps students to define and achieve shorter-term goals, something that is key to the success of adult education approaches. The ongoing success of the Plaza Comunitaria at the Carlos Rosario School is thanks to its long-term collaboration with the Mexican consulate, to its effective integration of the Plaza's curriculum with the GED programme, and to the associated services provided to each student.

There are however still some challenges to be overcome with regards to implementing the programme at Carlos Rosario school. For example, the programme facilitators need to remain aware of and cater to the wide range of Spanish dialects spoken by students. Some of the terms used in the curriculum are difficult for or unfamiliar to students, in which case alternatives need to be found.

Due to the nature of adult education, students at the Carlos Rosario School often work around complex schedules and have to give priority to other areas of their lives. As a result of such circumstances, some students take longer to complete their GED courses, which creates problems for both the students and for the programme. This is why the programme is designed to be flexible, allowing students to take

breaks from their studies to tend to their immediate needs, and to then return to them when they are able to. Carlos Rosario also offers a programme of support to help its students overcome any difficult phases that life presents them with.

2 El Paso Community College-Community Education Program – El Paso, Texas

The mission of the El Paso Community College-Community Education Program (CEP) is to provide educational and support services to adults based in El Paso county, who are in difficult financial circumstances and who have not yet had the opportunity to go to school or to complete their school studies. The CEP provides its range of programmes, which are based on the needs of the community, to around 500 adults every year. Over 98% of its students are Mexican immigrants. Other services it offers include elementary education classes, classes to prepare students for the GED diploma, classes on health and hygiene, and workshops to raise awareness of and prevent domestic violence.

The Plaza Comunitaria classes began in 2006 and receive financial support from the US Department of Education within the scope of its High School Equivalency Program, and from the Mexican IME. Both organisations aim to support immigrants and temporary workers in continuing their schooling, gaining their high school equivalency qualifications, and advancing educationally via other formative services. The facilitator staff working at the CEP Plaza are all professionals from Mexico. Some of them are retired educators.

Because many of the students are mothers or fathers, the challenge of a lack of childcare options regularly gets in the way of their schooling. To be able to attend the Plaza courses, they need someone to look after their children while they are in class. But because they don't have the financial means to pay for childcare and often have no family in the area to support them, they find it hard to make such arrangements. The geography of the El Paso region is another obstacle to regular attendance. The region's urban area sprawls over many kilometres, and this coupled with a lack of affordable public transport services often makes it difficult for students to get to their classes.

But despite these problems, the Plazas Comunitarias programme at the CEP has so far provided services to 1229 students. Of this number, 1029 have completed the programme and received their elementary education diploma. These achievements have led to the Plaza being recognized at local, state and federal level for its services to adult education. Many interesting projects have emerged from the students who started at the Plaza and went on to attend other CEP classes. The students on the writing course, for example, are in the process of finalizing their essays for the essay series *Memorias del Silencio – Huellas de la Tierra de Frontera*. In the series, the students examine the difficulties they have experienced in their efforts to find respect and opportunities for their families in the US.

3 “Federación de Clubes Michoacanos” in Illinois/ Casa Michoacán – Chicago, Illinois

The Federación de Clubes Michoacanos en Illinois (FEDECFMI) [Federation of Michoacán clubs in Illinois] was founded in 1996. In 2004, it became the cultural and education centre “Casa Michoacán”, reaffirming its commitment to improving the quality of life and promoting the active participation in society of people from Michoacán on both sides of the border. In addition to offering support services and championing the rights and opportunities of people from Michoacán and of Mexicans in general, the Casa Michoacán also has an educational centre. Here it provides courses and services to diversify and deepen participants’ knowledge and skills with a view to bringing forth proactive citizens within a binational context. The FEDECFMI currently has 35 registered clubs, whose members originate from different communities or municipalities across the Mexican state of Michoacán.

The Plaza Comunitaria in Chicago began offering services in 2008 and today has 388 registered students and has seen 222 people graduate with elementary and secondary school diplomas. It also has an independent sister office in the nearby city of Joliet, which was opened in 2011 thanks to an agreement between the University of St. Francis and the Casa Michoacán. Joliet is located about 44.5 miles away from Chicago and has a population of approximately 12,763, of which 12.2% are of Mexican origin.

The Plaza Comunitaria branch in Joliet has 59 registered students, 29 elementary school graduates and 5 secondary school graduates. Classes at the Plaza are given by one coordinator and two tutors, all of whom provide their services on a voluntary basis.

In general, students find out about the courses on offer in different ways. The Casa Michoacán is part of a *Hometown Association* of local clubs that offers a range of events for the Latin American community (while the majority of Casa Michoacán participants are Mexican, you do get some participants from other Central American countries). Future participants can also find out about and avail of the various services and of the Plazas via the network of churches in the region, which serve as important gathering places for the Latin American community. The Casa Michoacán also attracts new students by publicizing its services through radio and newspaper advertisements, and through referrals from the Mexican consulate.

Other services include:

- Distance courses to obtain the “Bachillerato” qualification (equivalent to high school diploma): the Colegio de Bachilleres de Michoacán has 95 students enrolled. So far, 22 students have graduated from the course, 7 of which are continuing with a distance learning degree (one of these is on a master’s level course).
- Computer skills for adults: a programme certified by the Instituto de Capacitación Técnica para el Trabajo de Michoacán [Michoacán Institute of Technical Training for Vocational Purposes] (basic, intermediate and advanced levels). On average, 120 students graduate per year.
- Health education workshops such as that on the early detection of HIV, a workshop offered in collaboration with the Centro de Salud Integral para la mujer [Centre for Comprehensive Healthcare for women] and the Ford foundation.

THE IMPACT AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE PROGRAMME

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The programme’s success is reflected in the amount of certificates INEA issues to the Plazas in the US. On average, it receives requests for and issues 1000 certifi-

icates for graduates of Plaza courses per year. Between 2003 and 2015, a total of 48,618 people completed an educational level at a Plaza (24,449 literacy-level graduates, 12,404 elementary-level graduates and 11,765 secondary-level graduates [source: SASACE]). This does not necessarily mean that all these people requested their certificate.

The Plazas Comunitarias have a positive impact on the community by creating an environment of trust and learning, an environment in which people living in a foreign country can gather to celebrate their culture. Become literate or completing elementary or secondary schooling generates educational continuity. Similarly, spending time in a learning environment inspires students to continue with their education and many of them end up availing of other further education services offered by the Plazas Comunitarias, for example of the GED diploma courses.

LESSONS LEARNED

Over the years, INEA has become more stringent in its following up of applications received from Plazas Comunitarias, and has tried to speed up its response time. The Plazas conduct their work on a voluntary basis, keen to serve the needs of the community. INEA feels that helping the Plazas and assisting them as best they can, it promotes the continuity of the service.

CHALLENGES

Among the challenges commonly faced by the Plazas are the following:

- Tutor turnover
- Low attendance rates among students, primarily due to other problems in their lives.

Challenges of a more institutional nature include the issue of sending educational material to the Plazas Comunitarias: not only does it need to be ensured that enough materials are available, all organisations involved (INEA, IME) need to have a sufficiently large budget for the printing and dispatch of the materials. A further challenge faced by the Plazas is the need to raise funds in order to be able to continue offering basic educational services to students free of charge. The different Plazas apply different strategies in this respect: some offer other types of services at a cost, while others conduct fundraising activities.

SUSTAINABILITY – THE FUTURE OF THE PLAZAS COMUNITARIAS

The INEA is keen to focus more attention on elementary education and to define corresponding short- and mid-term strategies in the US in collaboration with the organisations and regions offering basic educational services there.

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Proyecto de Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

15,061,000 (2013)

Official language

Spanish

Other languages

Quechua, Shuar and 11 other indigenous languages

Poverty

(Population living on less than 1 USD per day): 10.6% (2012)

Access to primary education –

Total net intake rate (NIR)

Total: 95.2% (2012) Male: 94.4% Female: 95.9%

Youth literacy rate (15–24 years)

Total: 98.7% (2011), Male: 98.6%, Female: 98.8%

Adult literacy rate (15 years and over)

Total: 91.6%, Male: 93.1%, Female: 90.2%

Statistical sources

- UNESCO Institute for Statistics
- EFA Monitoring Report 2013–2014, UNESCO Statistics

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Proyecto de Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos (Basic Education for Young People and Adults)

Implementing Organization

Ministry of Education, Ecuador

Language of Instruction

Spanish, Quechua and Shuar

Funding

Government

Programme Partners

The Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry Coordinator of Social Development, the Social Registry, the Ministry of Social and Economic Inclusion, the Vice-Presidency of Ecuador, the Ministry of Justice (Human Rights and Worship), non-governmental organizations and local government

Annual Programme Costs

USD 34,751,452

Annual programme cost per learner

USD 223

Date of Inception

2011

COUNTRY CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The population of Ecuador is culturally and ethnically diverse. Minority groups in the country include 14 distinct indigenous peoples, among them Quechua, Achuar and Shuar, mostly identified with the Andean and Amazonian regions of Ecuador. Afro-Ecuadorians are another minority group, located largely in the Pacific coastal region (Minority Rights Group International, 2008). While Ecuador's 2010 census reported that 7% of the country's population is indigenous, native people's organizations, such as the *Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador*, suggest the figure is closer to 40% (INEC, 2010). Ecuador also hosts the largest refugee

population in Latin America. In 2013, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported that 123,051 refugees were residing in Ecuador, 122,276 of them originating in Colombia (UNHCR, 2014).

The country's 2008 constitution recognised that Ecuador is an ethnically plural nation and guaranteed the rights of both indigenous peoples and Afro-Ecuadorians. These include the rights to bilingual education and cultural patrimony. However, evidence indicates that, in most cases, these rights have not found their way into practice. In 2001, one third of the indigenous population was illiterate compared to 4.8% of whites (Minority Rights Group International, 2008).

The high illiteracy rate is one of the main challenges the country has to deal with, alongside extreme poverty, too few rural schools, insufficient teachers, high drop-out rates at primary-school level, lack of parental support and low motivation among literacy learners.

It is in this context that *Proyecto de Educación Básica de Jóvenes y Adultos* – the EBJA programme – contributes to Ecuador’s obligation to provide quality education to all its citizens, regardless of their ethnic and cultural background.

The EBJA programme must be understood in the context of an overarching process of restructuring in the public sector in Ecuador. Since 2006, the Ministry of Education, and other public-sector bodies, have embraced a new management structure, allowing for greater decentralization of educational administration. This involves the division of the Ecuadorian territory into zones, provinces and cantons, with the aim of supplying communities with the educational services they require. The Ministry of Education has been involved in the implementation of around 140 district boards and 1,200 educational services on a national level, since 2012.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The EBJA programme was founded by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education in 2011. The programme addresses the challenge of providing continuous literacy classes to non-literate people in ways sensitive to Ecuador’s culturally and linguistically diverse population. Its main aims are to tackle illiteracy and strengthen adult continuing education. The goal is to ensure access to quality education for population groups affected by inequality, exclusion and discrimination. This especially concerns the Montubio people (who live on the coast and are of mixed race and indigenous descent), and the indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian populations, who live in remote areas and often have difficulties in accessing educational services.

Since 2013 a new model of territorial management and planning has operated in Ecuador in order to ensure equity in access to educational services. It is split into nine zones, 140 educational districts and 1,117 educational circuits. The programme has a steering role in

each educational district and runs in all nine zones, 24 provinces and 112 cantons, providing basic literacy courses of six-months’ duration. Learners are allocated a course to address their specific needs, according to their mother tongue, literacy level and physical condition. The project generally attracts between 25 and 30 learners per group, assisted by one teacher, trained in delivering basic education to both young people and adults.

Aligned with the aims of the Ecuadorean National Plan for Good Living 2009–2013, and 2013–2017, the EBJA programme strives to develop the literacy skills of 30,000 people of indigenous ethnicity, 15,000 of the Montubio population and 120,000 people aged 50 years or above, by 2017.

In order to achieve these goals, it is essential that the programme has the human, financial and material resources to establish cooperative agreements with governmental and non-governmental organizations, to provide ongoing human resource training, and to ensure the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Two agreements for inter-institutional cooperation signed between Cuba and Ecuador’s Ministry of Education in 2011 and 2013 have made it possible to address specific issues, such as education for young people and adults, while fostering a culture of peace within the region. The cooperation has generated ongoing social research to create innovative solutions for priority groups, such as children, adults, youths, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. It has also involved the Cuban Ministry of Education, which has offered advice to the programme based on the methodology of the *Yo, si puedo* (Yes, I can) literacy programme. Fifty-two Cuban advisors were dispersed across the country to coordinate literacy activities on the ground. During the implementation of the consultancy, Cuban coordinators provided ongoing training for EBJA programme personnel.

The programme has entered into agreements with the Ministry Coordinator of Social Development, to ensure access to the social registry database, and with Cuba’s Ministry of Education, for advisory support in using the *Yo, si puedo* methodology. Moreover, the

Ministry of Health and Ecuador's Vice-President have made important contributions by providing support to participants through medical check-ups for visually and hearing-impaired, as well as for elderly people. These efforts support the aim of getting the non-literate population involved in local entrepreneurship and income-generating activities, and, by doing so, to improve their living conditions.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The programme aims to do the following:

- Promote social participation to contribute to the national goal of increasing the literacy rate to more than 96%;
- Implement a management model to articulate various literacy-oriented methodologies with the support of institutional actors, civil society and women in rural areas, under the leadership of the Ministry of Education;
- Implement an educational proposition which takes into consideration the needs and potential of both young people and adults, and which is oriented towards the completion of general basic and secondary education level;
- Improve literacy levels, especially among the Montubio, indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian populations, and teach indigenous peoples in their native languages;
- Provide an educational offer to meet the needs of priority groups such as indigenous women from rural areas, ethnic minorities, elderly people, people with disabilities, people from border zones, and non-literate prisoners.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

The facilitators work on full-time contracts and are remunerated according to their professional competency. The usual monthly salary of an EBJA teacher, working with an average of 30 students, is USD 530. Additionally, the project has created a number of 'territorial teacher' roles for staff supervising the work of teachers in each territory, who are paid USD 585 per month. The territorial teachers (or technicians) provide technical and pedagogical support to EBJA teachers,

develop partnerships with local authorities, coordinate and conduct meetings with teachers about classroom teaching and learning, and provide monthly activity reports to the Ministry of Education, also registering the information in the EBJA computer system.

So far, the EBJA programme has hired 40,983 teachers for young and adult learners, and 330 territorial coordinators.

The project also organizes a training programme for facilitators which operates on three levels. First, an intense, systematic course of training takes place, jointly coordinated by the national team and the Cuban coordinators. Second, on the provincial level, the national team and 52 Cuban advisors provide training for coordinators in the 140 educational districts, both in Spanish and bilingually. Third, at the local level, both the EBJA coordinators and the Cuban advisors conduct training sessions for territorial technicians and teachers.

ENROLMENT OF LEARNERS

The programme's main target groups are adults, out-of-school youth, women and girls, indigenous people, and minority groups. All the courses provided by the programme target illiterate people and aim to support the development of basic skills in reading, writing and numeracy. However, during the registration process a diagnostic assessment is carried out by teachers in order to place participants on courses relevant to their particular needs. This enables the facilitators to place the participants in suitable EBJA centres close to where they live.

Generally, the participants are placed on different courses according to their language entry profile. The programme divides learners into three groups, mainly referring to their entry levels of literacy:

1. People who never attended school;
2. People who attended school for some time but whose learning fell into disuse; and
3. People with acoustic, visual or physical constraints.

Literacy learners are recruited using statistical and demographic information, provided by Ecuador's National Institute of Statistics and Census, and population information from rural areas characterized by extreme

poverty, obtained from the Interconnected Register of Social Programmes.

EBJA teachers make door-to-door visits to assess whether a person is eligible to participate in the programme.

Participants who, following a successful interview, enrol on the programme are reported to the Coordinating Ministry of Social Development, which is responsible for providing additional benefits, such as health and housing, and for agricultural production projects.

TEACHING AND LEARNING: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

All courses provided by the EBJA programme follow the principles of adult learning. However, they are organized differently, according to the teaching methodology applied. In the course for Spanish-speaking people, the Cuban *Yo, sí puedo* approach is used. The Cuban methodology uses a set of 65 video classes intended to ensure continual interaction between learners and facilitators.

For Spanish-speaking people with disabilities, prisoners, and people who live along Ecuador's border, the Ecuadorian *Manuela Sáenz* method is used. This approach includes the use of Braille. The course for bilingual indigenous people is based on the Ecuadorian *Dolores Cacuango* method, which builds on the indigenous *Weltanschauung* or philosophy of life.

Each of the three methodologies has its own distinct characteristics:

Manuela Sáenz

This methodology is applied in remote areas of the country. Course modules use a rights-based approach and relate closely to the kinds of learning environment used in the communities in question, as well as to their social and cultural traditions. It also includes a module for the development of reading, writing and numeracy skills. The learning structure is based on a syllabic methodology which participants find easy to understand.

Dolores Cacuango

The content aims at strengthening intercultural identity using a reflective-critical methodology which

reflects the experience and worldview of indigenous peoples to generate processes of teaching and learning for young people and adults, including the linguistic approach to learning the Spanish language.

Yo, si puedo

This approach uses videos both as a learning resource and as a prompt for debate among participants and teachers. It aims to develop critical thinking and learners' ability to generate ideas and opinions about their lives and communities. This Cuban methodology has been implemented in other Latin American and African countries.

The methodologies and materials used promote participants' self-esteem and give them motivation to persevere with their learning. Importantly, they are oriented to the needs of both Spanish-speaking and bilingual populations. The latter is, for instance, reflected in the use of indigenous languages, reinforcing respect for different cultures, as upheld in the Ecuadorian constitution. Brochures have also been produced to supplement the Cuban methodology, addressing issues such as training, mathematics and nutrition.

The local non-governmental organization, *Desarrollo y Autogestión*, supports the EBJA programme with pedagogical material and technical assistance.

PROGRAMME CONTENT

The EBJA programme pursues the following objectives for learners:

- To read and understand simple words, sentences, phrases, simple texts and a paragraph of about 50 words, written with a basic and colloquial vocabulary relevant to learners' lives and experiences;
- To write their complete name and form a signature;
- To write a paragraph of about 50 words, making proper separations between each word; and
- To write numbers up to 30 and resolve mathematical problems up to two digits.

The curriculum content reflects the needs, interests and motivations of learners in Ecuador, which, as noted above, is characterised by cultural and social diversity. The main topics of interest are agreed on with the community and include health, nutrition,

family, gender-oriented issues, community participation, social development, and intercultural issues, in the case of bilingual settings. Additionally, the EBJA project highlights the formation of values, knowledge about human rights, citizenship and life skills.

The EBJA project strives particularly to engage non-literate women as part of a government strategy to combat malnutrition among children aged up to five years. This strategy, led by the Ministry Coordinator of Social Development and coordinated with the Ministry of Education, aims to introduce nutritional issues into literacy classes in order to teach mothers from rural communities the use of highly nutritional traditional Andean products in order to properly feed their children and families.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring processes are undertaken on a continual basis to ensure that teachers and technicians meet the guidelines established by the EBJA project. Moreover, performance evaluations are applied to staff and learning assessments to participants. Teacher performance is formally evaluated twice a year in order to ensure staff do their work correctly and should continue to work with participants.

In partnership with the Ministry Coordinator of Social Development, the EBJA team has developed a computer-supported system to monitor, evaluate and manage the key activities of the project. This system is not only used to ensure that the annual operational plan of EBJA is followed, but also provides an effective tool to handle statistical information and to review the whole process.

Learning centres are visited by EBJA personnel at least twice during the implementation phase. These visits aim to ensure that participants attend classes regularly and that each centre has the necessary physical resources to support appropriate teaching and learning. In addition, each teacher is responsible for documenting attendance in their classes. This information is useful in that it indicates which participants are at risk of dropping out. If that is the case, the teacher is expected to provide pedagogical support to ensure learners stay enrolled. This attendance record is verified by the territorial technicians during their monitoring visits to each centre.

Field visits are the main means by which processes such as the registration of participants, the opening of educational centres, budget discipline, training, teaching methodologies, the progress of participants, the delivery of didactic material and recruitment are monitored and assessed.

The information collected during each of the three phases of the literacy project between 2011 and 2013 has helped to continuously improve the implementation processes.

Monthly evaluation reports are provided by EBJA coordinators, both in Spanish and bilingually, to share information about budget execution and the academic progress of participants. The project also produces two final evaluation reports, at the end of the first two educational phases. The reports are focused on the social impact and management of the project, as well as on learners' progress.

Additionally, inquiries and interviews have been carried out with key actors – participants, their families and the communities in which they live – in order to assess the impact of literacy courses on the participants' lives, and those of their families and communities.

The EBJA project has also established community boards to oversee the activities and to ensure a personalized support of women, older people, people with disabilities and ethnic-minority groups. The boards also ensure that teachers attend fully to meeting the educational expectations of the community. This has played a crucial role in the sustainability of the project and provided tangible outcomes to communities, motivating former participants to continue with their education.

PROGRAMME IMPACT

Up to 2013, 324,894 people had completed the EBJA programme at national level. Some 229,740 of this group were women, with 137,096 coming from rural and mostly indigenous areas of the country. The number of participants aged 65 years and above during this time period was 76,031, 23% of the total.

Many former participants of the EBJA project continue their education after they complete the literacy

course. The EBJA computer system (see Monitoring and Evaluation) records learning progress and this is then accredited by the Ministry of Education. In addition, each registered participant who successfully completes the course receives a certificate signed by the competent authorities of the Ministry of Education. Learners are thereby enabled to continue their studies in institutions for adult learners, taking, for example, advanced literacy courses or bachelor degree courses in science or in a technical subject.

Some 5,250 educational centres for young people and adults have been opened each semester in parts of the country shaped by population dispersal, poverty, lack of basic services and the marginalization of indigenous and bilingual people, as well as in areas where women have limited access basic education.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

One of the challenges faced by the EBJA programme concerns the large budget that is needed in order to operate on a national level. Another major challenge regards the local outreach of learning centres. Clearly, transportation in hard-to-reach areas such as the Andean and Amazonian regions is difficult. The location of learning centres in urban areas also constitutes a challenge as it has become increasingly difficult to engage some groups of adults, particularly those living in extremely remote areas which teachers can only locate using cartographic plans.

Moreover, the replacement of traditional structures within provincial educational offices with new administrative structures, under the framework of territorial management in Ecuador, has made both programme implementation and the learning process difficult, particularly with regard to the decentralization of the project's financial resources.

A constant challenge is to keep participants engaged in the learning process, particularly older learners. People abandon the process because of many factors, including health problems, migration to another part of the country, and even, in the case of women, problems to do with discrimination. Unfortunately, there is no monitoring mechanism to track what happens to these people after dropping out.

Another challenge concerns coordination with the bilingual offices in order to ensure that indigenous territories can benefit from the Dolores Cacuango methodology. Between 2011 and 2013 there were offices of bilingual education in each province. Their role was to monitor literacy progress in the Quechua and Shuar languages. This involved offering events and training which were not included in the other methodologies, requiring additional resources for every office paying special attention to native languages.

SUSTAINABILITY

One of the main ways in which the EBJA programme is attempting to guarantee its sustainability is to maintain the interest of the non-literate population in the learning process. That is why the programme uses three different methodologies, to give it the best possible chance of meeting the diversity of needs of the target population and, thereby, of increasing their motivation.

EBJA contributes to the reduction of social, ethnic and cultural inequality by improving the educational level of people struggling with literacy. Each participant comes away with increased self-esteem and a better relationship with their family and their community. This, in turn, increases the opportunities for participants to engage in productive activities generated locally by government institutions or private entities, thus enabling them to improve their standard of living. There is an intergenerational benefit too, with participants encouraging their children or grandchildren to complete their basic education.

In addition, between 2011 and 2013, 44,021 people from indigenous communities in Ecuador became literate in their native language, ensuring the promotion of cultural identity and ancestral rights, and supporting them in securing their income, generally gained through activities related to agriculture and livestock, or tourism. All these impacts have been instrumental in encouraging the government of Ecuador to continue financial support for basic literacy education.

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Bilingual Literacy for Life

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

112,336,538 (2010 census)

Official Languages

Spanish and 364 Indigenous Language Variants
e.g.: Nahuatl de la Huasteca, Náhuatl de la Sierra Negra, Maya, Mixteco, Zapoteco, Tseltal, Tsotsil, Otomí

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GNP

4.5

Primary School Net Enrolment/Attendance

98% (2005–2009)

Total Youth Literacy Rate (15–24 years)

Male: 98%; Female: 98%; Total: 98%

Adult Literacy Rate

(15 years and over, 1995–2004)

Male: 94%; Female: 91%; Total: 93%

Sources

- UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report
- UNICEF: Information by country
- World Bank: World Development Indicators database

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Bilingual Literacy for Life (BLL) / *MEVyT Indígena Bilingüe (MIB)*

Implementing Organization

The National Institute for Adult Education (INEA)

Language of Instruction

Spanish and indigenous languages (bilingual)

Funding

The Federal Government (through the Ministry of Education and the National Commission for Development of Indigenous Populations – CDI)

Programme Partners

The Federal Government of Mexico (through the Ministry of Education), State Adult Education Institutions (IEEAs), NGOs, Local governments and professional institutes (see below under Institutional Partnerships)

Date of Inception

2007



CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

In recent years, Mexico – one of the most populous, ethnically diverse and economically advanced countries in Latin America – has made significant progress in promoting access to basic education for all through increased public funding of education and the implementation of various educational programmes. A recent study noted that “since the 1980s, public spending on education has been steadily increasing in absolute and relative terms [and] represented about 26% of the federal budget in 1999, up from about 12% in 1983”. Universal access to basic education has also been promoted through the institutionalisation of various educational policies and programmes such as the promulgation of the universal education law (which guarantees every child aged 6 to 15 years access to primary and junior secondary education), the OPORTUNIDADES (opportunities) programme which provides financial assistance to school children from poor families); the *Telesecundaria* (which promotes distance learning through the use of multi-media tech-

nologies at secondary school level) and the Educational Model for Life and Work (Modelo Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo – MEVyT), which provides basic education to youths and adults.

As a result of these proactive measures, Mexico's educational system has expanded rapidly at all levels, the most significant being the expansive growth in the net student enrolment rates across the entire formal educational system. According to government reports, school enrolment rates increased more than eightfold from 3.25 million students in 1950 to 28.2 million in 2000, of which 81% were enrolled in basic education. By 2006, the net primary and secondary school enrolment rates had risen to 98% and 77%, respectively. The primary school completion rate also increased from 74% during the 1993–94 school year to 83% by 1997–98 and to 87% by 2000–2001. As a result, the percentage of people with 9th grade education (i.e. basic education) rose from just 9% in 1970 to 41.4% in 1998. Overall, the 2010 national census established that Mexico had achieved near-universal primary school net enrolment and youth literacy rates while adult literacy rates had improved significantly (see above).

Despite the impressive progress in promoting access to basic education for all, Mexico's education system continues to be plagued by major challenges such as the lack of basic learning resources, shortages of qualified teachers and the lack of gender equity with regard to access to education. These challenges, which are more acute in rural than in urban areas and are exacerbated by the high levels of poverty among rural families and the predominant use of Spanish as the language of instruction, have created significant barriers which preclude the meaningful participation of indigenous peoples in the public education system. As a result, school enrolment, retention and achievement rates are particularly low in rural areas and, more specifically, among indigenous people. According to recent studies, indigenous Mexicans have an average of 4.6 schooling years compared to a mean of 7.9 years among non-indigenous people. The 2010 national census established that the illiteracy rate for indigenous people was about 27.2% while the national average was 5.4%. Illiteracy rates are substantially higher among indigenous women (about 40%), due in part to entrenched cultural practices which often put the girl child at a

disadvantage including less parental support to access education. At a local level, literacy rates in the more developed areas such as Mexico City and Nuevo León exceeded 95% as of 2005 to 2008 but were around 75% in the less developed (and mainly indigenous) states such as Chiapas, Guerrero and Oaxaca during the same period. Overall, one third of the indigenous population is considered to be functionally illiterate.

Hence, in an effort to address these challenges and disparities, and in particular to create quality and sustainable learning opportunities for the traditionally disadvantaged indigenous communities, the federal government (through The National Institute for Adult Education – INEA) initiated the Bilingual Literacy for Life Programme (BLLP) / MEVyT Indígena Bilingüe (MIB) in 2007.

INEA: A BRIEF HISTORY OF ITS ORIGINS AND CORE MANDATE

The National Institute for Adult Education (INEA) was established in 1981 as the federal agency in charge of non-formal education – including literacy and basic adult education – in the country. Since then, INEA has developed and implemented various educational programmes – including *Plazas comunitarias* (Virtual Community Centres), and life skills training programmes for youths and adults. The main objectives of these programmes, which are part of the comprehensive MEVyT programme, were to create an alternative and sustainable route for disadvantaged population groups such as women / girls, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, to gaining access to basic education; improve levels of literacy rates in the country; address the specific learning and livelihood needs of various ethnic groups and promote national socio-economic development. Accordingly, people who participate and graduate from INEA programmes are provided with recognised certificates which are equivalent to those provided to learners who follow the formal educational system. In a nutshell, INEA was instituted and is motivated to continue providing a wide range of non-formal educational programmes because the federal government believes that education is a basic human right which should not be denied to any citizen and also one which affords participants the opportunity to appropriate knowledge and skills necessary

for both personal and national development. The Bilingual Literacy for Life Programme (BLLP) / MEVyT Indígena Bilingüe (MIB) is indeed one such programme that aims to achieve these integrated goals.

THE BILINGUAL LITERACY FOR LIFE PROGRAMME (BLLP) / MEVYT INDÍGENA BILINGÜE (MIB)

The BLLP is an integrated and bilingual non-formal educational (basic literacy and life skills training) programme which primarily targets non-literate and semi-literate people (aged 15 years and above) from socio-economically disadvantaged indigenous communities within Mexico. The programme – which is conducted in Spanish and in local indigenous languages – particularly targets women and out-of-school girls (to date, women have constituted about 92% of the total of programme participants) not only because they constitute a social group that is highly disadvantaged within indigenous communities but also because a majority of indigenous women have, traditionally, failed to effectively benefit from the formal education system. This is due to the fact that most parents prefer to educate boys, as one female programme participant testified: “My father did not want us to study. He told us that as women we would not work so it would be useless”. As such, more than 65% of the illiterate indigenous population are women and are therefore in need of targeted educational interventions.

The programme is currently being implemented in 15 federal states (comprising of 2,223 localities in 263 municipalities) with the prospect of increasing this to 17 states.

The populations of which consist predominantly of indigenous people. To date, the programme has been implemented in 42 main indigenous languages found in the 15 participating states. The fundamental goal of the BLLP / MIB is to create sustainable learning opportunities for indigenous communities in order to address the challenges that limit their ability to access formal basic education (see above) as well as to facilitate their integration into mainstream Mexican society by enabling them to learn and speak in Spanish which is spoken by about 90% of the national population. It also endeavours to empower and promote sustainable

development within indigenous communities. To this end, the programme provides learners with literacy and contextually relevant life skills training covering a range of themes including:

- basic and functional literacy (in Spanish and indigenous languages);
- livelihood- or income-generating skills training (including practical skills and business management training);
- life skills training / civic education (including: health awareness, nutrition, reproductive health, human rights awareness, gender awareness, conflict management / resolution, citizenship);
- environmental management / natural resource conservation; and
- social / intercultural studies.

THE BLLP / MIB CURRICULUM

The bilingual indigenous MEVyT (MIB) programme is based on an integrated, comprehensive and structured curriculum which covers the basic or initial literacy learning level and the middle or functional literacy skills learning level. MIB modules have to take into account the particular linguistic and cultural situations of each ethnic and linguistic regional group, as well as their interests. For this reason, the modules are developed differently by teams located within the State institutes.

As depicted in the picture below, the initial level of the bilingual indigenous MEVyT programme with Spanish as a Second Language (MIBES) has five learning modules (MIBES 1–5) while the middle level has seven learning modules – two specifically for indigenous learners (MIBES 6–7) and five for MEVyT learners in Spanish – but with some activities in indigenous languages. It takes learners an average of 18 months to complete initial level, and 6 to 10 months to complete middle level.

Each module of the integrated curriculum is intended to equip learners with particular literacy and life skills which will enable them to advance to a higher learning level where the previous skills are reinforced. The modules are built as follows:

- **MIBES 1** – (I start reading and writing in my own language) – the module provides literacy training in the

learners' mother tongue. The module employs brief and easily comprehensible texts covering themes relating to the learners' everyday experiences such as social life, environment and culture.

- **MIBES 2** – (Let's speak Spanish) – this module introduces learners to Spanish as a second language, through communication in everyday situations. The teaching-learning approach at this level is predominantly oral because the primary goal is to develop the learners' Spanish oral and comprehension skills and thus to enable them use Spanish in different situations.
- **MIBES 3** – (I read and write in my own language) – this module is also produced in the learners' mother tongue and takes the approach of MIBES 1 but is intended to enable learners to develop more complex literacy skills and to use these skills to solve everyday problems. In short, the module intends to equip learners with functional literacy skills in their mother tongue.
- **MIBES 4** – (I start reading and writing in Spanish) – this module is produced in Spanish. It primarily aims to enable learners to read and write texts in Spanish and further develops oral communication skills in Spanish.
- **MIBES 5** – (I use written language) – this module is bilingual and aims to enable learners to advance their indigenous and Spanish functional literacy skills.
- **MIBES 6** – (Numbers and calculation) – this module, is part of the MIB middle level and addresses necessary aspects of mathematics in primary education, based on both traditional indigenous and western mathematics.
- **MIBES 7** – (I read and write my mother tongue) – this module is written in Spanish and in indigenous languages and is addressed to facilitators for developing their own skills in reading and writing in their mother tongue. It intends to increase language awareness of teaching staff, in particular with regard to grammar, spelling and use of their mother tongue. The module also works for young and adult learners studying the advanced level of MIB in order to keep them reading and writing in their mother tongue.

It must, however, be noted and emphasised that this integrated curriculum only acts as a guide for field

technical teams and facilitators because the specific themes covered and learning activities undertaken in each module have to be adapted to suit the participating group's mother tongue as well as their specific needs and interests. To achieve this, INEA works closely with the communities and local state institutes in order to integrate their specific and unique suggestions into the modules.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In addition to the fundamental goals of the programme highlighted above, the BLLP / MIB also endeavours to:

- raise literacy levels among indigenous peoples through the creation of sustainable bilingual educational opportunities that address their specific learning needs;
- equip learners with bilingual functional literacy skills that are necessary in solving everyday problems,
- promote equal access to quality basic and life skills education (i.e. to reduce regional, gender and ethnic disparities with regard to access to education);
- nurture a culture of lifelong learning among indigenous peoples;
- empower indigenous peoples to be self-reliant and to improve their living standards by enabling them to acquire practical and relevant life skills;
- facilitate the integration of indigenous peoples into mainstream Mexican society through the learning of Spanish as a second language;
- promote development in indigenous communities;
- combat the socio-economic marginalisation of indigenous peoples; and
- empower indigenous peoples to value and preserve their culture and cultural identity.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The learning modules have been developed and provided to the indigenous population by the principal partners of the programme:

- INEA Headquarters
- 14 States Institutes for Adult Education
- 3 INEA's delegations

In order to facilitate the effective and sustainable implementation of the BLLP / MIB, INEA has estab-

STATE	STATE INSTITUTE
Chiapas	Instituto Estatal de Educación para los Adultos en Chiapas
Oaxaca	Instituto Estatal de Educación para los Adultos en Oaxaca
Guerrero	Instituto Estatal para la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos de Guerrero
Puebla	Instituto Estatal de Educación para Adultos en Puebla
Veracruz	Instituto Veracruzano de Educación para Adultos
Hidalgo	Instituto Hidalguense de Educación para Adultos
Yucatán	Instituto de Educación para Adultos del Estado de Yucatán
Chihuahua	Instituto Chihuahuense de Educación para Adultos
San Luis Potosí	Instituto Estatal de Educación para los Adultos en San Luis Potosí
Quintana Roo	Instituto Estatal para la Educación de los Adultos en Quintana Roo
Campeche	Instituto Estatal de Educación para Adultos en Campeche
Durango	Instituto Duranguense de Educación para Adultos
Tabasco	Instituto Estatal de Educación para Adultos de Tabasco
Nayarit	Instituto Nayarita de Educación para Adultos
	INEA'S DELEGATIONS:
México	Delegación del INEA en el Estado de México
Querétaro	Delegación del INEA en Querétaro
Michoacán	Delegación del INEA en Michoacán

lished functional working partnerships with local communities (through their representatives) and a wide range of NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs) and specialised federal and state institutes. These include:

- National Indigenous Languages Institute (INALI);
- the Linguistic Directorate of National Anthropology Institute (INAH);
- Anthropologic Research Institute (IIA – UNAM);
- Philological Research Institute (IIF– UNAM);
- Maya Language Academy in Yucatán;
- Maya Language Academy in Campeche;
- Veracruz Languages Academy;
- Intercultural University of Veracruz;
- Intercultural University of Guerrero;
- Intercultural University of Estado de México;
- Ayuujk Study Center (Oaxaca State);
- Mixe People Services (Oaxaca State);
- State Center of Indigenous Arts, Languages and Literature (CELALI; Chiapas State);
- Center of Study and Development of Indigenous Languages (CEDELIO; Oaxaca State);
- State Center of Culture and Indigenous Languages of Hidalgo (CELCL);

- Nahuatl Language Academy (Hidalgo State);
- Querétaro Autonomous University;
- Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL); and
- Organization of Translators and Interpreters in Indigenous Languages (OTIGLI).

These organisations provide INEA with critical technical support in the design and development of appropriate teaching-learning materials and translation of Spanish texts into various indigenous languages. Such invaluable professional support has not only enabled INEA to tailor the BLLP / MIB according to the particular needs, interests and language-systems of different learning groups but also to implement the programme cost-effectively because some institutions provide their expertise on a no-cost basis. In addition, the institutions also play a critical role in mobilising learners and ordinary community members to support the programme.

DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING-LEARNING MATERIALS

INEA has developed various monolingual and bilingual illustrative training / learning materials (including five modules and posters) with technical support

from learners' organisations and institutional partners with expertise in indigenous languages. These illustrative teaching-learning materials are distributed free of charge to all learners.

As noted above, the themes covered in each module are not uniform across the 15 states because they are informed by and adapted to reflect each group's specific worldviews, culture, existential realities and linguistic characteristics as well as addressing its needs and aspirations. In addition, INEA has also produced teaching modules for use by programme trainers / facilitators using the same format.

The production and free distribution of these teaching-learning resources not only intends to facilitate the efficient and sustainable implementation of the BLLP / MIB but also to motivate learners and communities to participate in the BLLP / MIB as well as nurturing a culture of lifelong learning (and thus preventing learners from relapsing into illiteracy) by enabling learners to keep and continue to use the materials long after participating in the programme.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

The practical implementation of the BLLP / MIB is heavily dependent on a cohort of locally or community-based volunteer trainers or facilitators. As of 2011, INEA had trained about 5,000 volunteers (72% of whom were women and 28% men) to act as BLLP / MIB promoters and trainers. Most of these have basic education qualifications while a few are high school students and graduates and professionals working with local schools (teachers) and community development organisations. In all cases, however, volunteers are required to be proficient bilingual (Spanish and indigenous language) speakers. The volunteer trainers work under the supervision of an INEA technical team based in each of the 15 participating federal states.

Given that an overwhelming majority of the volunteers have lower educational qualifications and no professional training and practical experience in non-formal educational practices, INEA's state-based technical teams – with support from INEA's various specialised institutional partners (see above) – provide them with professional training, in order to ensure the effective

and efficient implementation of the BLLP / MIB. The norm includes 72 hours for initial training, and at least 32 hours of permanent training.

The training-of-trainers and mentoring scheme for programme facilitators focus on:

- reinforcement of reading and writing in the mother tongue, since most of the facilitators speak their mother tongue fluently, but do not use it in writing;
- the educative model (MIB) and pedagogy (focusing on non-formal education teaching-learning methods or approaches);
- design and development of appropriate teaching-learning activities mother tongue teaching methodologies;
- Spanish as a second language teaching methodologies; classroom management practices; and
- assessment and evaluation of teaching-learning outcomes.

Once trained, each facilitator is entrusted with teaching a class of between 4 and 15 learners over the two-year duration of the programme. For this, they are paid a monthly stipend of 722 Pesos (USD 58). In addition to providing training services, programme facilitators are also required to evaluate the learning processes and outcomes on an on-going basis as well as assessing the changing needs and aspirations of the learners in order to assist INEA technical staff to further develop the curriculum to reflect these "new" needs. Facilitators are also required to organise and manage the virtual community centers, to promote the programme within their communities and to recruit new learners.

RECRUITMENT OF LEARNERS

INEA's technical field teams and programme facilitators, with support from community leaders, former learners, CBOs and NGOs, are responsible for mobilising and recruiting new learners into the programme. This system is based on the 80 zone coordination offices that are involved in the 15 states.

Potential learners are invited and motivated to enrol by using state, zone or local institutional joint campaigns, local census, door-to-door invitations or linkage with other social programmes, such as Oportunidades (Opportunities) which brings economic benefits to

mothers who are responsible for their children's schooling and their families' health.

When individuals show an interest in studying, an initial interview is held to find out about their background, interests, level of reading and writing skills, and degree of mono- or bilingualism. This step is very important, as it enables the learner to be placed on the best educational route to encourage learning, in particular literacy skills. Especially motivating for learners is the possibility of being registered on the national accreditation system and database (SASA-I) which has special provisions for the Indigenous Programme. For initial registration a valid identification (ID) is requested, and if the applicant does not have any, technical officers from the micro-region help to obtain it.

TEACHING-LEARNING APPROACHES AND METHODS

BLLP / MIB classes (or study circles) are conducted by facilitators but in some instances and often in response to learners' requests, facilitators also conduct home visits in order to provide learners or groups of learners with specialised or face-to-face assistance. Programme study timetables are flexible as they are often arrived at after consulting the learners. In this way, learners have the opportunity to choose the times which are best suited to their situations. For instance, during the agricultural season, classes can be conducted in the late afternoon after learners have tended to their fields while in the off-season, classes are often conducted mid-day.

Similarly, since each indigenous language has its own linguistic structure and characteristics, INEA does not prescribe the use of a unique method of literacy training across all the states. Nonetheless, facilitators are encouraged to use a variety of learner-centred (participatory) teaching-learning methods such as games, dialogues, formal activities and group discussions which are inspired by the "meaningful word-generating discussion" and the "meaningful topic-generating discussion" principles developed by Paulo Freire. Through this approach, the learners' literacy and life skills are nurtured by using their local environment and relevant teaching-learning aids as the basis of learning and thus for developing their literacy skills. While

learners develop their oral and written language, they also acquire life skills which enable them to cope with and improve their situations.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The impact of the BLLP / MIB, including student learning outcomes, is closely monitored, assessed and evaluated on an on-going basis by INEA's technical field teams, programme facilitators and learners themselves through a combination of class observations, final examinations at the end of each module and student self-evaluation. In order to facilitate student self-evaluation, for example, INEA has developed standardised instruments such as questionnaires which guide learners through the process of assessing not only their learning progress and achievements but also the teaching methods and the overall impact of the programme on their lives. Additionally, external professionals are also engaged by INEA on an annual basis to undertake summative evaluations of both the student learning outcomes and the impact of the programme on literacy and community development. To date, several external evaluations have been undertaken by various experts (see sources below). Together, these programme evaluation and assessment processes feed into the national information system, the Automated System for Monitoring and Assessment (SASA-I), "which aims to collect reliable data on the progress of the adults who enter the INEA programmes" with a view of, among other things, facilitating the certification or accreditation of learners and future planning.

IMPACT

As established by several evaluation studies, the BLLP / MIB has created alternative and viable learning opportunities for indigenous peoples. In so doing, the programme has played (and continues to play) a critical role in combating the scourge of illiteracy and cultivating a culture of learning among indigenous peoples as well as in promoting social empowerment, economic development and poverty alleviation within indigenous communities. More specifically, the major impacts of the programme include:

- creation of educational opportunities: since its inception in 2007, the BLLP / MIB has created an

alternative route for about 90,474 indigenous learners (92% of whom have been women) in gaining access to basic literacy and life skills training. As such, the programme is making a major contribution to improving levels of literacy among indigenous peoples as well as in promoting the development of literate environments in their communities;

- social Integration: being a bilingual programme, the BLLP / MIB also enables learners to engage more equitably with mainstream Mexican society by enabling them to read, write and speak in Spanish;
- social empowerment and community development: the BLLP / MIB has been a major vehicle for empowering traditionally disadvantaged and marginalised indigenous communities. This is particularly the case for women who are often disadvantaged both within their local communities and at the national level. Hence, by equipping such groups with functional skills, the BLLP / MIB empowers them to be self-reliant, to exercise their rights and to participate in the development of their communities, all of which enhances their self-esteem, confidence and living standards. The programme has also empowered parents to proactively participate in the education of their children, as one participant testified: “[...] I have two children and now I can help them with homework at school. So this way, they will not feel embarrassed because of their mom”. In addition, the programme has also empowered adults to be less dependent on others in undertaking everyday activities such as writing and reading letters: “[...] since I was a child my parents would ask me to take care of the cows in the countryside, so there I grew up and I couldn’t go to the school. [...] When I started (to learn), I didn’t know even how to grab the pencil, letters were very difficult to me but little by little I could do it. I now know how to write my name well, and to sign, I know the numbers. [...] I like to read every kind of paper that I reach or somebody gives me. I like to know what it says”.
- The BLLP / MIB has been a major catalyst in the development of indigenous languages which, in turn, has improved literacy rates among indigenous peoples. This phenomenon is exemplified by the formation of 51 small technical groups which are currently engaged in the development of relevant teaching-learning materials in indigenous lan-

guages within the 15 participating states and two others. Given that most indigenous languages had only existed in oral form, it can be concluded that the institutionalisation of the BLLP / MIB has been a major force that has promoted the development of indigenous languages in written form.

In light of this, INEA was awarded the 2011 UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize for this programme (more information is available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/education-building-blocks/literacy/literacy-prizes/2011/>).

CHALLENGES

Despite its major contributions towards the development of indigenous communities as noted, the BLLP / MIB is also encumbered by numerous challenges. These include:

- Inadequate support from the government: notwithstanding the government’s public statements regarding the need to facilitate development in indigenous communities in order to enable them to catch up with the rest of Mexican society, governmental support in this endeavour has generally been inadequate. Thus, within the education sector, the State has also been rather lethargic in funding programmes such as the BLLP / MIB that aim to create sustainable educational opportunities for the traditionally disadvantaged communities. Therefore the implementation of the BLLP / MIB is encumbered by the lack of financial and human resources due to limited State support;
- The lack of adequate funding has also prevented INEA from hiring highly qualified facilitators; as these demand higher remuneration; as well as from undertaking intensive research on indigenous languages. This has, in turn, affected the quality of training provided to learners and INEA’s capacity to extend the programme to other States.
- Since indigenous languages continue to be marginalised at the national level, there is little incentive for people to participate in the programme (e.g. proficiency in one or several indigenous languages does not enhance one’s employment prospects because Spanish continues to be the only useful language).

- Although indigenous peoples' perceptions on modern education are changing, some people still place little value on education and therefore prefer to continue leading their 'traditional' lives. As such, BLLP / MIB field practitioners have often found it difficult to mobilise community members (especially men) to participate in the programme and most importantly, to continue learning once enrolled in the programme.
- Most learners face challenges in mastering Spanish and therefore cannot proceed beyond MIBES 1.

LESSONS LEARNED

Over the past few years of implementing the BLLP, several critical lessons have been learnt. These include:

- The promotion of bilingual educational programmes expands the educational opportunities available to minority groups and thus enables the State to achieve the central goals of education for all (EFA).
- Non-formal educational programmes act as a critical catalyst for rural development and social empowerment.
- To be viable and sustainable, bilingual educational programmes must be adapted not only to the needs of the communities concerned but also to the goals and vision of the entire state.
- The use of learners' respective mother tongues as well as relating learning practices and themes to their culture and everyday experiences plays a critical role in enhancing indigenous peoples' ability to grasp more complex literacy skills. With regard to the former, a BLLP / MIB beneficiary testified that, "I am a peasant from Cuilapan Guerrero, I like a lot INEA's programme, literacy in mother tongue because I understand more my facilitator's explanation. Besides, I understand other things more than before about my own Nahuatl language". As such, intensive research and formalisation of local languages is a critical prerequisite for the success and sustainability of bilingual educational programmes.
- The proactive involvement of critical stakeholders involved in indigenous issues is central to the success and sustainability of bilingual educational programmes.
- Bilingual educational programmes are a critical vehicle for cultural preservation as well as for social

mobilisation, integration and cohesion within multi-ethnic societies,

- Engaging locals as programme promoters and facilitators enhances the potential success of bilingual non-formal educational programmes not only because local facilitators can effectively communicate with learners but also because they motivate their family and friends to aspire to achieve similar levels of educational success,
- Formal accreditation of learning motivates learners to continue learning.

SUSTAINABILITY

The long-term sustainability of the BLLP / MIB hinges on several critical factors including:

- The active involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. More specifically, the Federal Government has made practical commitments to fund basic education programmes, particularly those that address the needs of the traditionally disadvantaged population groups such as indigenous communities. In light of this, the federal government is currently contributing more than 50% of the USD 6.8 million annual budget of the BLLP. In addition, INEA has also nurtured strong institutional networks with several specialised and interested stakeholders (see above) who can be trusted to promote the programme on a long-term basis.
- INEA has developed and adopted an integrated curriculum that specifically addresses participants' basic and multiple existential needs. As result, the programme continues to be attractive to youth and adult learners.

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Ñane Ñe'ẽ

(Our word)

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

6.8 million (2013)

Total expenditure on education (% of GDP)

5% (2011)

Official languages

Spanish and Guaraní

Access to primary education – net enrolment rate

81.9%

Youth literacy rate (15–24 years) in 2010

Total 98.6 %; Men 98.5 %; Women 98.7 %

Adult literacy rate (15 years and above) in 2010

Total 93.9%; Men: 94.8%; Women: 92.9%

Statistical sources

- UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS)

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Ñane Ñe'ẽ (Nuestra palabra – Our word)

Implementing Organization

Dirección General de Educación Permanente (DGEP), Ministerio de Educación y Cultura (MEC)
– Directorate-General of Lifelong Education in the Ministry of Education and Culture

Language of Instruction

Spanish and Guaraní

Programme Partners

departmental governments,
local governments, civil society organizations,
other state organizations

Funding

Public treasury

Annual Programme Cost

Gs. 1,538,754,282 (approx. USD 327,000)

Annual Programme Cost per Student

Gs. 2,051,672 (approx. USD 436)

Date of Inception

2010

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Although Paraguay has made great progress in facilitating equal access to education for all people, for example through its multiple national and international adult literacy initiatives, access to educational programmes among the country's rural population continues to be very limited. The group with least access is the female rural population living in poverty or extreme poverty.

Despite successes in reducing the illiteracy rate in the country, equal access to education continues to pose enormous challenges; illiteracy is after all among the key causes of social exclusion and therefore an issue that still needs extensive tackling in Latin American countries (Bareiro, 2013).

In Paraguay, the illiteracy rate is 5.4%. The illiteracy rate for rural areas (9.4%) is considerably higher than for urban areas (2.9%). Lastly, the rate of illiterate women is higher (6.1%) than that of illiterate men (4.6%) (Encuesta Permanente de Hogares, 2014).

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

The Dirección General de Educación Permanente (DGEP), via its Departamento de Alfabetización (Literacy Department), implements non-formal literacy and post-literacy programmes for young people and adults. Its objective is to promote literacy among people of fifteen and above who have no literacy (people who can neither read nor write), and those who have functional literacy (people whose reading and writing skills are inadequate to manage daily living and

employment tasks that require reading skills beyond a basic level). In addition to literacy, the programmes also offer complementary employability skills and vocational training courses.

The programmes implemented are as follows: PRODEPA Prepara and *Ñane Ñe'ẽ*. The following section describes the post-literacy programme *Ñane Ñe'ẽ*.

The post-literacy programme *Ñane Ñe'ẽ* is a non-formal, bilingual (Spanish–Guaraní) programme for young people and adults of fifteen and above who have so far been unable to complete their formal basic education. It is aimed at vulnerable groups in particular, including the rural farming population, the indigenous population, people deprived of their liberty, and people living in extreme poverty, and comprises two phases: the *Fortalecimiento* (Strengthening) module, and the *Consolidación* (Consolidation) module.

The programme enables its participants to improve their literacy, to recognize their fundamental rights, to get involved in local organizational matters, and to capitalize on the vocational skills they have developed by establishing commissions promoting self-employment.

PRINCIPLE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

The principal objectives of the post-literacy programme *Ñane Ñe'ẽ* are as follows:

- To consolidate the reading, writing and basic mathematical skills of young people and adults who have participated in literacy programmes, using a problem-solving orientation and enabling a critical reading and transformation of their reality.
- To contribute to social inclusion and to the integral development of young people and adults, raising their literacy levels in order to promote their participation in the productive, social and political life of their country.
- To improve the range and the quality of vocational education for young people and adults, and to provide them also with career guidance within the framework of the literacy programme (*Programa de Alfabetización*).

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The post-literacy programme *Ñane Ñe'ẽ* is based mainly on the ethical-pedagogical ideas of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire: “It involves generating spaces for dialogue with the participants that promote development of a critical conscience. Through dialogue, participants express their opinions and listen to others, they discover concepts that make them better able to understand their reality, they select ideas and questions that they consider valid. That is to say, they reflect collectively,” (DGEP, 2011).

This pedagogical approach draws on the following premises:

- It is necessary to “read” the world around us to be able to understand it and act within it.
- This understanding of the world requires a constant process of action and reflection.
- Dialogue with other people is the medium that facilitates such reflection and new action.
- All forms of reflection and action imply an ethical commitment to changing one’s reality.

The programme comprises two modules:

1. The *Fortalecimiento* (Strengthening) module:

This module strengthens participants’ reading, writing and basic mathematical reasoning skills and encourages them to reflect on topics such as the environment, health, social change, gender relations, and human rights. It involves 24 aligning sessions (participants varying levels are brought into alignment) and 48 strengthening sessions.

2. The *Consolidación* (Consolidation) module:

Through reflection and action, participants consolidate their reading, writing and basic mathematical reasoning skills. This module also requires them to take part in a community project in which they reflect on the principles of gender equality, democratic participation, sustainable development and human rights. It lasts eight months.

The community projects within the *Consolidación* module are the culmination of a process that sees participants reflect on, analyse and identify the basic needs of their community. They involve participants

passing from the reflection phase to the action and intervention phase. This action and intervention can involve responding to some of the more urgent individual or collective needs of their communities. These can be needs within the area of public health (vaccination, mother-and-child care, better road access) or needs relating to active citizenship and participation rights, for instance to obtain identity cards, participation in public audiences or in productive projects (e.g. in the cultivation of domestic or community gardens, in volunteer environmental work, in the building of community centres with municipal support, etc.)

In the year 2014, a total of 232 participants began the *Fortalecimiento* module, with 197 completing the post-literacy process. Of these 197 people, 95% were women and 5% men. The participants were distributed across 13 learning circles: 7 in the district of Horqueta, 6 in the districts of Yby Yau and Concepción, and 1 in Asunción. Around 13% of participants dropped out.

The programme works with learning circles in which the literacy facilitators encourage participants to learn from each other. The task of creating new learning circles takes place once the regions in which the programme is to be offered have been selected. The criteria and indicators used in the selection process focus on identifying regions with high levels of poverty and of illiteracy.

The following people are involved in the programme:
Facilitator (now called non-formal adult educator): Person in charge of implementing the non-formal literacy programme's methodology within literacy and/or post-literacy learning circles made up of young people and adults aged 15 and above. This person teaches the learners how to read and write.

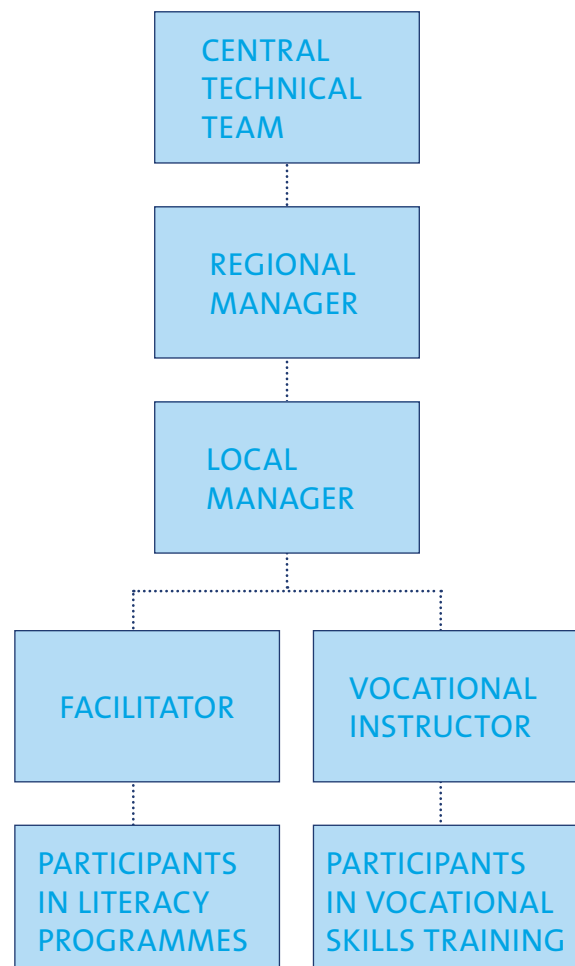
Regional manager and/or pedagogical supervisor: Person designated by the Coordinación Departamental de Supervisiones Educativas y/o Supervisiones de Apoyo Técnico Pedagógico Nivel III (Office for the Departmental Coordination of Educational Supervision and/or Supervision of Pedagogical Technical Support Level III) to manage operational tasks and supervise the pedagogical aspects of implementing the non-formal literacy programmes in the region in question.
Local manager: Person in charge of training local

staff, promoting the programme, and supervising the setting up, implementation and monitoring of literacy and post-literacy learning circles.

Vocational instructor: Person in charge of developing professional and vocational training courses for the literacy and post-literacy learning circles in the applicable departmental zones. The courses cover areas such as health and beauty (hairdressing), crafts, electrical wiring, cookery, community development (horticulture) and dressmaking.

Central technical team: Persons in charge of monitoring the programme's implementation – from advertising strategies through to selecting staff and monitoring training courses and literacy/post-literacy learning circles – in the regions focussed on.

The following graphic shows all the roles involved in implementing the programme:



As regards staff remuneration, every facilitator and vocational instructor receives a stipend of 4,800,000 guaraníes for the development of the programme, which corresponds to 7 months of work, divided into three payments of 1,600,000 guaraníes. At the current exchange rate, this is equivalent to 1,020 US dollars. In Paraguay, an adult educator receives a monthly salary of 1,824,055 guaraníes or 389 US dollars.

TEACHING – LEARNING METHODOLOGY

In the circles, much of the learning takes place on a reciprocal basis through the dialogue that occurs both among the participants and between the participants and their educators. Such dialogue, which is driven by the life experiences, feelings and knowledge that participants contribute, effectively turns the participants themselves into teachers. The role of the educator, then, is to guide participants and to help them capitalize on the knowledge they already have and further develop in the sessions, by advancing their reading, writing and mathematical skills.

The literacy programme comprises a series of non-formal learning circles. These are get-togethers at which reflexive and comparative learning of reading and writing of language and mathematical reasoning is enabled.

The programme provides for sixty such get-togethers, which take place twice a week, with the purpose to develop reading, writing and mathematical skills. The *Formación Profesional/Capacitación Laboral* courses (vocational and employability skills courses) comprise approximately 100 hours and involve two meetings per week for a period of five months. Each meeting lasts for around 2 and a half hours. Once participants have completed the *Fortalecimiento* stage, they automatically transfer into the *Consolidación* stage.

The get-togethers are planned by a facilitator; each has a beginning (where the session content and objectives are explained), a development phase, and a close (where participants summarize what they have learned). Learning in the *Formación Profesional* (vocational skills training) courses is based mainly on practical exercises; the sessions here vary in duration according to the topics they focus on and the characteristics of the group.

In the *Programa de Pos Alfabetización* (post-literacy programme), learning takes place through a process of critically analyzing and then collectively reflecting on the participants' situations, with a view to then inspiring the necessary changes in participants' realities.

The literacy classes or get-togethers are conducted in both Guaraní and Spanish (40% and 60% respectively). It is fully bilingual programme in all its components, allowing for focus on participants' mother tongue and adding a second language. In order to promote bilingualism, participants are provided with a bilingual dictionary, a bilingual alphabet and with a bilingual copy of the national constitution.

The following table provides a few examples of the lessons given both in Guaraní and Spanish to demonstrate the bilingual methodology adopted.

PROGRAMME CONTENT AND TEACHING MATERIALS

The *Fortalecimiento* module is imparted via get-togethers and is based on five interrelated themes. Each get-together covers one or two of these themes.

The interrelated themes dealt with are as follows:

- Human rights
- Work and production
- Community organization
- Health and the environment
- Gender

The vocational areas covered in *Formación Profesional* are cookery, hairdressing, crafts, horticulture and electrical skills. The programme incorporates the reading, writing and mathematical skills developed into the aforementioned vocational courses.

To be able to respond in a flexible manner to the learning requirements of the participants, the programme does not have a fixed curriculum. It does however have documents that serve to guide the educational process. These orientation materials are provided to the managers and facilitators.

The materials used in the sub-programme *Ñane Ñe'ẽ* (post-literacy component) are as follows:

Table: Examples of the lessons given both in Guaraní and Spanish

TITLE	LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION	TRANSLATION
Declaration of Human Rights.	Spanish	---
Right Ojeikovévo Rehegua	Guaraní	Human rights
Right to freedom	Spanish	---
The right to individual and collective property	Spanish	---
Ñande rapicha ika'arúmava rekove	Guaraní	Rights of adults
Responsibilities within the community	Spanish	---
The right to a public defender	Spanish	---
Jahapejoko mba'asy	Guaraní	Prevention of illnesses
Family planning	Spanish	---
Care during pregnancy	Spanish	---
Mitãra'y ñemokambu rehegua	Guaraní	Breastfeeding
Responsible motherhood and fatherhood	Spanish	---
Love, sexuality and family	Spanish	---
Nahí'ài Jajahéi Ojuehe Ogapyé	Guaraní	Violence in the family
Domestic violence	Spanish	---
Types of abuse	Spanish	---
Ñorairò Ogapyé	Guaraní	Violence among family members
Reporting abuse	Spanish	---

- The learner's workbook: material created for use by the participants; contains information and exercises covering the subject areas of Spanish, Guaraní and mathematics while also incorporating the topics of human rights, health and the environment, work and production, gender, and community development.
- The facilitator's workbook: material providing step-by-step guidance to facilitators; corresponds with the content of the participant's workbook.
- An abacus: didactic material with which to teach mathematics.
- Booklet containing useful information: material to support facilitator. Contains ideas for motivating and encouraging participants and general guidance for the facilitator.
- Bilingual copy of the national constitution: a version of the "Magna Carta" in both official languages. The topics of debates held during the get-togethers will be based on articles from the constitution.
- Bilingual dictionary.
- Bilingual alphabet: contains the alphabet in Spanish and in Guaraní.
- Kits of learning utensils for participants: contains a notebook, pencils, erasers and a pencil sharpener.
- Kits of teaching utensils for facilitators: contains a notebook, pencils, erasers, a pencil sharpener, a ruler, cards, markers, adhesive tape and paper.

The materials used within the *Formación Profesional y Capacitación Laboral* courses include:

- A guideline for the instructor of the subject area in question. This document is provided per subject area and describes the activities to be covered.
- *Formación Profesional* kits per subject area. These kits contain the equipment required to develop and conduct the practical classes.

The materials used in the literacy and vocational courses were developed by the *Equipo Técnico* (Technical Team) of the MEC (Ministry of Education and Culture) and of the DGEP (Directorate General of Permanent Education).

ORGANIZATION AND DURATION OF THE COURSES

The scheduling and duration of the sessions are agreed on between the participants and the facilitator.

The programme duration is approximately seven months. The start date is decided on by the state treasury, but tends to be between March and June. The sessions are conducted in learning circles held on the dates and at the times agreed on by the participants and facilitators.

HIRING AND TRAINING THE EDUCATORS

Selecting from the subject areas offered within *Formación Profesional* involves reaching a consensus between the participants. The subject areas offered are: hairdressing, basic cookery, electric skills, dressmaking, crafts and community development (horticulture).

The facilitator is a known and accepted member of the community. Each learning circle has one facilitator and one vocational instructor from the beginning to the end of the course. Each facilitator and vocational instructor pairing is in charge of a learning circle of between fifteen and twenty participants.

The process of selecting and training staff comprises the following stages:

1. Raising awareness for, publicizing and promoting the programme:

The first step is taken by the DGEP, who presents the programme (which is to be implemented by local authorities) in the departments targeted. After this, a

variety of awareness-raising measures are taken with a view to attracting participants. These include meetings, work fairs, and radio and TV advertising.

The next step is to organize the process of selecting the staff to implement the literacy and post-literacy circles and of pre-enrolling potential participants.

2. Selecting staff:

The *Equipo de Evaluación y Selección* (Evaluation and Selection Team), created by the “Equipo Técnico Central de la Dirección General de Educación Permanente (Technical Team of the Directorate General of Permanent Education), is responsible for receiving the corresponding application documents (together with local education authorities); it then evaluates the documents using specific methods and, based on the results of this and on the rules governing the selection process, selects the staff.

The requirements to be fulfilled by candidates for the position of facilitator are as follows:

- Must be of legal age (at least 18 years old), as set forth in Article N° 1 of law 3031/2006.
- Must have trained as a teacher, be in training to qualify as a teacher, be a university graduate or a student (in at least the second year of studies) and preferably have studied/be studying an education-related subject.
- Must have experience working in or leading community projects.
- Must have a good written and oral command of the official languages: Guaraní and Spanish.
- Must be able to demonstrate mathematical ability.
- Must live in the community, district or locality in which the learning circle will take place.
- Should be recognized within and have the approval of the community or district in order to be able to fulfil his/her role effectively

The requirements to be fulfilled by candidates for the position of Vocational Instructor are as follows:

- Should be a member of the community.
- Should have completed 6th grade of elementary school education, general elementary education, or his/her Bachillerato.
- Should have taken part in at least 320 hours of

training in the subject area concerned, and be able to present corresponding certificates.

- Must have experience working in or leading community projects.
- Must have a good written and oral command of the official languages: Guaraní and Spanish.

The requirements to be fulfilled by candidates for the position of Local Manager are as follows:

- Must have training as a teacher or have commenced university studies (and be in at least the second year of university studies), preferably in an education-related subject.
- Must be of legal age (at least 18 years old), as set forth in Article N° 1 of law 3031/2006.
- Must have experience in community work.
- Must have experience in planning and/or implementing training measures and courses.
- Must have a good written and oral command of the official languages: Guaraní and Spanish.
- Must be able to demonstrate mathematical ability.
- Should be able to work full-time on implementing the measures associated with the literacy programme, or only have one other job.
- Should live in the area in which the programme is being offered.
- Should have a means of transport at his/her disposal to be able to travel within the area covered by the programme.

In accordance with the objectives of the literacy programme, the process of evaluation and selection assesses the profiles, previous positions and application documents of the applicants. It then uses specific criteria and evaluation instruments, which include an interview, a written test of mathematical ability and a test in each of the languages.

It is worth noting an important achievement in this respect, i.e., the signing of the Resolución Ministerial (Ministerial Resolution) No. 12.519 of 29 May 2015, which sets forth the requirements, profile types and professional experience to be considered when selecting educational staff with a view to implementing the Programa de Alfabetización No Formal para Personas Jóvenes y Adultas (Non-Formal Literacy Programme for young people and adults).

3. Staff training:

Facilitators are given three training sessions during the process of implementing the literacy programme: one at the beginning of the programme and two during its implementation. The technical staff from the Departamento de Alfabetización (Literacy Department) of the DGEP train the local and regional managers in the capital city of Paraguay (Asunción); the local managers then train the facilitators in the regions/zones in which the programme is implemented.

Vocational instructors are provided with two training sessions. In the first session they are trained by technical staff from the DGEP, and in the second, by specialists from the respective subject areas and professions.

ENROLMENT OF THE LEARNERS

The first phase comprises raising awareness for the programme; it involves events in the communities that serve to motivate potential participants to sign up. It also involves promotion via the press.

During the awareness-raising and dissemination phase, prior to the get-togethers in the communities, working groups were set up with the authorities and with local leaders to define the districts to be focussed on. The aforementioned get-togethers are then held after this process of definition. The involvement of the local authorities and of members of the communities is key in terms of securing logistical support across all phases of the programme.

For every non-formal learning circle there is an enrolment sheet and attendance is checked by the facilitator at the beginning of each session. There are no specific admission requirements. Participants must merely have completed a non-formal literacy class or have attended less than three years of primary school. Participants do not need to provide written proof of this however; they are simply required to declare that it is the case.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

Two methods of assessment are used in the literacy classes:

- 1) The first is an assessment upon admission, through which participants' initial reading, writing and mathematical levels are ascertained.

- 2) The second involves the ongoing self-assessment of participants, taking into account their attendance, their contributions to group work, their performance in individual tasks, their participation in community life, etc.

At the end of the course, participants receive an attendance certificate.

Another key aspect of progress monitoring is the use of assessments to appraise participants' advances within the process. To this end, the programme records their levels upon entry and upon conclusion of the course. It does this by means of written tests to be taken by participants.

The results of participants' starting and leaving assessments undergo qualitative analysis, with the advances and achievements of each participant being assessed and compared.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME

From the beginning, and on an ongoing basis, the Local Managers monitor the progress of all learning circles on an individual basis, while the central technical team monitors progress on an overall level. To do this, they apply specific monitoring guidelines. These have been developed to identify the most important implementation indicators.

All of the information gained through monitoring and evaluation is then processed and used to devise programme improvements.

Moreover, members of the *Equipo Técnico Central* (Central Technical Team) of the MEC (Ministry of Education and Culture) use monitoring instruments to conduct representative sampling, while the local manager and the regional technical staff in the supervisory teams apply other instruments to monitor the programme in all learning circles. Using a database created for this purpose, the data collected via these instruments is downloaded and analyzed by those responsible for monitoring.

The performance of the facilitators and instructors is monitored by the local managers and the Central Technical Team of the DGEP.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

To measure the impact of the programme, it is important to assess the level of community organization that the thirteen communities managed to achieve, as well as the assessed reading, writing and mathematics levels of participants leaving the programme.

There is only a 13% drop-out rate and, as such, an 87% retention rate. In total, 197 participants have completed the programme. Of this number 187 are women and 10 are men.

The programme has succeeded in improving participants' sense of self-esteem and organizational skills. It has also helped establish contacts between peers and improve relations in families and communities.

The non-formal bilingual approach and the fact that the sessions are organized according to participant's schedules and held in spaces made available by the community are the programmes most innovative aspects. The incorporation of professional/vocational components into the post-literacy courses is also key to the programme's success. The programme values the progress made by its participants, who in most cases make great advances in terms of their ability to express themselves, their organizational skills, and their cohesion as a group.

Following the professional/vocational courses that have taken place so far, the respective communities have organized themselves with the aim of developing and selling of their own products, in doing so creating jobs for themselves and generating income for their families.

CHALLENGES

In 2014, the programme was implemented in the departments of Canindeyú, Concepción and Central, and in the country's capital city of Asunción. 197 participants completed it. The general objective of the non-formal literacy programme for 2015 is to increase its number of literacy and post-literacy learning circles from 13 to 200, and to teach 1500 young people and adults aged fifteen and above to read and write. These learning circles are also offered to indigenous populations and people in prison.

Another important challenge is to coordinate with other state and civil society organizations to ensure that the programme does not remain an initiative of the Ministry of Education and Culture alone. The objective of such coordination with these organizations is to be able to reach more regions and to tackle the issues of poverty and social exclusion simultaneously from a variety of positions. These communities have a range of needs including health, work, security, housing, and identity documentation. Improved coordination and collaboration with other organizations would enable the programme to spread to many other communities and departments. Currently, the programme can only cover a limited amount of regions due to the lack of resources.

LESSONS LEARNED

Among the lessons learned was how important a role the vocational training components play in the learning circles. This is reflected in the increasing numbers of people showing interest and enrolling in the programme as a result of these components. Moreover, attendance levels for these courses were very high, indicating that the content was able to hold participants' interest and motivate them to continue with the programme.

In previous years, the post-literacy programmes did not include vocational training components. The incorporation of these resulted from a strategy developed by the management team and technical team to make relevant vocational subjects a part of the programme. So, as of 2014, the programme was expanded to include vocational training components.

The inclusion of subjects such as health and beauty (hairdressing), crafts, electrical skills, cookery, community development (horticulture) and dressmaking, together with the provision of the equipment, tools and materials required for each subject area, has proven successful and worthwhile; it is therefore set to continue as a means of helping these more vulnerable members of the population.

The aforementioned equipment remained in the respective communities. Participants were able to use them to organize committees and to produce and sell their products and services, generating income for their families in doing so.

SUSTAINABILITY

The programme is now part of the national budget and as such has been classified as sustainable. Upon becoming part of the national budget, the project is now guaranteed to receive the funds needed to develop it in during the respective academic year. It is also feasible that in successive years, the programme will continue to be funded by the state treasury.

The local communities have developed committees through which they aim to devise strategies to promote self-employment and development, in addition to requesting the continuity of educational initiative. In the fiscal year 2015, the programme aims to expand to offer its non-formal post-literacy courses to an additional 34 communities.

The availability of local and regional technical teams will allow for the continuity and sustainability of the process.

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ATEK Reading Comprehension



COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

29,180,900 (2008 estimate)

Official Language

Spanish (recognised languages include Quechua, Aymara, Asháninka, Aguaruna, Pano-Tacanan, Kawapana and Arawa)

Poverty

(Population living on less than 1 USD per day):
12.5% (1990-2004)

Total Expenditure on Education as % of GNP

2.6 (2005)

Access to Primary Education –

Total Net Intake Rate (NIR)

86.4% (2006)

Total Youth Literacy Rate (15–24 years)

97% (1995-2004)

Adult Literacy Rate (15 years and over, 1995-2004)

Total: 88%; Male: 94%; Female: 82%

Sources

- UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report
- UNICEF: Information by country
- World Bank: World Development Indicators database

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Programme Title

Asociación Tawantinsuyuman Evangelioq
K'ancharinanpaq (ATEK) Reading Comprehension

Implementing Organization

Asociación Tawantinsuyuman Evangelioq
K'ancharinanpaq (ATEK, translation:
"Association Bringing the Gospel to the Quechua-
speaking World")

Language of Instruction

Quechua and Spanish

Funding

Wycliffe USA and Wycliffe Canada
(Global Partners International),
Peruvian Bible Society and local churches

Date of Inception

2003

OVERVIEW

The Asociación Tawantinsuyuman Evangelioq K'ancharinanpaq (ATEK) Reading Comprehension programme endeavours to empower Cusco Quechua people by facilitating access to literacy skills training and education. Although the Quechua constitute a large group (about 1.5 million), they have largely been socially marginalised. High rates of illiteracy and a lack of socio-economic opportunities have limited their ability to participate in national developmental activities. ATEK's literacy programme therefore endeavours to empower the Quechua with bilingual (Quechua and Spanish) literacy skills in order to enable them to improve their living standards, preserve their cultural identity and participate in national developmental activities.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Although Peru has made great strides in providing equal access to education for all through a national policy which guarantees free and compulsory pre-primary, primary and secondary education for all children up to the age of 16, the rural population's access to education remains extremely limited. More specifically, the government has failed to provide effective educational opportunities to the indigenous people who constitute about 45% of Peru's population. The Quechua, the majority of whom live in remote and 'inaccessible' villages in the Andean highlands, is one of the indigenous groups that have benefited least from national educational policies and programmes.

Access to education for the Quechua is hindered by several factors, including:

- limited governmental support to both primary and secondary schools in Quechua communities;
- limited governmental investment in the development of intercultural and bilingual education (IBE) programmes and the training of IBE professionals which could have enabled the Quechua to benefit from the education system through the use of their own languages. Spanish remains the primary language of instruction in most schools and as a result, the largely monolingual Quechua people face formidable linguistic barriers;
- the Quechua's farming and herding practices, which require the participation of all, including school-age children;
- male-dominated cultural practices that have limited educational opportunities for girls and women.

The net effect of these disadvantages is that illiteracy rates among the Quechua are very high. It is estimated, for example, that Quechua women attend school for an average of 4.6 years and that 70% of them are illiterate. Furthermore, 54.4% of the total Quechua population fail to complete elementary school. High rates of illiteracy have also perpetuated the socio-economic and political marginalisation of the Quechua.

To address this situation, the Asociación Tawantinsuyuman Evangelioq K'ancharinanpaq (ATEK), a native Quechua organisation for community development, initiated the Reading Comprehension Literacy Programme, which endeavours to empower ordinary people through literacy skills training. It is also intended to serve as a model of bilingual literacy and education programmes for indigenous people throughout Peru.

ATEK READING COMPREHENSION LITERACY PROGRAMME

ATEK's Reading Comprehension Literacy Programme is a bilingual project that is based on the basic needs of the beneficiaries, as determined by assessment surveys. The programme therefore seeks to promote both personal and social development through a holistic approach which uses literacy as the foundation for other community-based development projects. To this end, the literacy skills training programme is rooted in a number of thematic areas including health, agriculture, animal husbandry, income generation and civic education.

The programme is currently being implemented in Cusco province, covering remote and poor communities in the districts of Paruro, Chumbivilcas, Paucartambo and Canas, among others. Many of these districts are marginalised and therefore lack adequate educational resources. The programme is operating in a total of 90 locations across the province and is funded primarily by Wycliffe USA and Wycliffe Canada (Global Partners International) and the Peruvian Bible Society (PBS). The PBS, for example, provides funding for the salaries

of four regional supervisors and for the printing of all literacy materials used. In addition, local churches and private individuals also assist the programme with in-kind donations of goods, food and voluntary services.

PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

The programme has three major components which are taught over a minimum period of two years:

- The Basic Literacy Level is designed for male and female illiterates of all ages, but is particularly targeted towards monolingual women and women with basic bilingual literacy skills. It also focuses on participants who dropped out of primary school. At this stage, classes are mostly conducted in the learners' mother tongues in order to enable them to acquire basic literacy skills (reading and writing). Numeracy skills are not introduced at this level.
- The Transference Literacy Level focuses on training bilinguals who are able to read and understand Spanish. Male learners with varying degrees of literacy skills dominate this group, primarily because most acquired Spanish literacy skills during periods of labour migration.
- The Advanced Literacy Level is an open-ended stage designed to entrench the skills gained by graduates of the basic or transference literacy levels. The post-literacy phase enables readers to understand, interpret and apply more complex materials so they are able to integrate reading and writing into their lives and use literacy as a tool for ongoing self-directed learning. Basic functional numeracy and Spanish as a second language are introduced during this phase. Advanced level graduates are eligible to enrol in the government's alternative education programme (Educación Alternativa) in order to complete formal primary education.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The programme endeavours to:

- develop bilingual (Quechua and Spanish) functional literacy skills among learners;
- promote sustainable community development and poverty alleviation through literacy skills training;
- promote intergenerational learning by enabling parents and children to help each other learn and develop literacy skills;

- strengthen the capacity of families to co-exist peacefully and cater for their livelihood needs; and
- empower the Quechua to participate actively in national development activities.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

In order to ensure the effective and sustainable implementation of the programme, ATEK works in close partnership with local communities and institutions such as churches. As well as assisting ATEK with in-kind donations, these partners play a critical role in mobilising learners and facilitators. As a result, many ATEK literacy facilitators are recruited from within their communities after being recommended to ATEK by their church and community leaders because of their dedication to serving their community.

ATEK does not have a minimum educational requirement for those who aspire to be literacy facilitators. However, facilitators should have the necessary literacy skills to enable them to facilitate literacy training workshops. Successful graduates from ATEK's post-literacy programme are also eligible to volunteer and train as facilitators.

ATEK trains facilitators through a series of regular workshops (one for each primer) and refresher seminars which field supervisors provide during their regular visits and regional meetings with facilitators. All of the training workshops emphasise practical teaching activities such as lesson moderation and class management. Each facilitator teaches an average of 7 to 8 learners. However, facilitators do not receive any remuneration; they are volunteers nominated by churches that invite ATEK to provide literacy training in their communities. The facilitators therefore teach as a means of serving their communities and churches.

ENROLMENT OF LEARNERS

ATEK employs a community-based approach to recruit learners into the literacy programme. When the programme was first established, ATEK undertook a community-based outreach and sensitisation programme which involved the participation of community mem-

bers in public workshops where the benefits of literacy skills training were explained. Additional training workshops were held for selected but key community members, leaders and volunteers for similar purposes; however the participants were subsequently enlisted by ATEK as community mobilisers. These trained community facilitators and volunteers play a critical role in encouraging others to enrol in the programme. Equally importantly, ATEK has established strong partnerships with a number of local churches and these are now instrumental in motivating people to enrol in the literacy programme.

TEACHING-LEARNING APPROACHES AND METHODS

ATEK believes that adults learn best through dialogue and by integrating new information into their prior knowledge and experiences. Furthermore, ATEK believes that every learner must be intrinsically motivated in order to learn a new skill and that every challenging encounter stimulates critical thinking. Hence, in order to build on the learners' existing resources, facilitators are encouraged to employ learner-centred teaching methods that include the use of teaching aids or the creation of learning situations which stimulates debate, dialogue, interpersonal interaction (group work), problem-solving and critical thinking. With regards to learning motivation, ATEK has observed that most learners are motivated to participate in the literacy programme because of their desire to read the Quechua Bible. As a result, ATEK has used Biblical texts as a key teaching aid that enables learners to acquire broader reading and writing skills through a medium with which they identify closely. This furthermore enables class discussions to centre on and address the various social challenges which affect learners on a daily basis and has also attracted the active support of the church.

Following the principle of empowering learners while nurturing their decision-making powers, each literacy group decides where, when and how often to meet. As a rule, groups meet once a week for a minimum of two hours. ATEK has developed and provides facilitators and learners with teaching and learning materials (such as teaching manuals and aids, and learners' readers). Facilitators and groups are supported by ATEK personnel who visit classes regularly and provide regional refresher courses for facilitators every two months.

PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

ATEK field supervisors are responsible for continually monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning process. In addition, a professional, external evaluation of the programme is undertaken every 3 years by Wycliffe Canada or Wycliffe USA. The last evaluation took place in January 2007. This evaluation praised ATEK for establishing an effective literacy programme for socially marginalised people and made the following key suggestions:

- ATEK should incorporate a numeracy element into the programme. This has since been done.
- ATEK should develop better mechanisms for predicting and tracking the progress and results of the literacy programme. Again, much has already been done to establish such mechanisms.

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Reading Comprehension Literacy Programme has transformed the lives of the Quechua communities in terms of:

- improved literacy skills. Between 900 and 1000 monolingual and partially bilingual Cusco Quechua learners enrol in the programme every year. At the end of the training sessions, most programme participants are able to read and write fluently. Similarly, most graduates improve their analytical and interpretation skills. As a result, some are now able to read the Bible during church meetings, while others are being trained to produce and publish written materials in the Quechua language. Qualitatively speaking, the programme has boosted participants' sense of self-esteem, confidence, civic responsibility, solidarity and optimism for themselves and their communities.
- the empowerment of women. Given the patriarchal nature of Quechua society, one of the literacy programme's main achievements has been to empower women to play an active role in civic life. Some women, for example, are now serving as the leaders of various community-based organizations (CBOs) and are thus spearheading developmental projects in their communities. Others have become literacy programme facilitators primarily because both their literacy and communication skills have improved.

- graduate enrolment in formal education. Many programme graduates have enrolled in the government's Educación Alternativa programme for advanced primary education. This in turn has enabled them to proceed to secondary and tertiary education. For example, ATEK literacy programme graduates, Wilfredo Apaza and Marisol Martinez, completed formal secondary education and teacher training courses and have now been recruited by a local bilingual school to teach religion and literacy in Quechua. Others who succeeded in completing primary and/or secondary education have also been recruited by ATEK and other organizations to work in various community development projects. Overall, this indicates that in addition to empowering individuals, a community-based approach that offers opportunities literacy skills training and development has a strong and positive social impact which in turn lead to community development.
- further community-based projects. ATEK's partnership with local churches has made it possible for it to implement church-based literacy programmes as well as other community development projects. For example, the joint ATEK-church literacy programmes for children have spilled over into the local school system because school teachers often invite ATEK facilitators to teach Quechua reading in their classes.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

- Limited funding is one of the greatest challenges that ATEK faces. Since its inception, it has been largely dependant on funding from Wycliffe USA. Although other donors now cover about 20% of ATEK's financial needs, a lack of adequate funding has hindered its capacity to expand the literacy programme into other remote provinces with high rates of illiteracy among the indigenous population. There is therefore a need to maintain strong and functional social relationships with civil society, which has so far supported the programme by providing material resources such as food and lodgings for field facilitators, as well as encouraging literate people to become facilitators. In addition, there is a need to build strong relationships with other NGOs in order to access further financial and technical assistance. Furthermore, it is crit-

ical that the existing partnerships with the churches be continued, as they provide invaluable in-kind assistance programme field activities. Besides seeking external funding, ATEK is also implementing income-generating activities. These include selling books and audio visual resources, and hiring out recording studios to the Spanish-speaking community at a competitive rate. In future, such income generating projects will be tailored to benefit the communities in which ATEK operates.

- Given that most volunteer facilitators have basic formal education, there is need for constant supervision in order to ensure that the programme is being implemented effectively. However, due to limited manpower resources, ATEK is often unable to adequately supervise project activities in remote locations. However, bi-monthly facilitator meetings, which take place in a central location in each area, help to maintain contact with all the facilitators, and provide them with opportunities to learn from and encourage each other.
- ATEK's activities are often undermined by government literacy programmes which offer incentives and salaries which attract facilitators and participants alike. ATEK intends to make its programmes more competitive without requiring any financial incentives. However, there is a need to provide facilitators with a motivational stipend, and resources must be sought for this purpose.

LESSONS LEARNED

- As a community-based organization, ATEK depends on the goodwill of its benefactors and beneficiaries. While the role of beneficiaries in promoting the growth of community-based projects is often overlooked, ATEK has learned that the support from the wider community is critical in reducing the programme's running costs and in ensuring its sustainability. Although the communities in which ATEK works do not have the resources to pay for the literacy training programmes, they often provide in-kind assistance such as food and lodging for facilitators. Hence, one major lesson that has emerged from six years of programme implementation is that literacy projects are cheaper to implement, function better and are more sustainable when they are actively supported by their beneficiaries.



- Literacy participants are often motivated to attend literacy classes by the desire to read useful materials that help to improve their lives, such as the Bible. In order to sustain learners' motivation and make literacy programmes more effective and sustainable, the literacy curriculum should therefore be tailored to satisfy these needs and expectations.
- Similarly, literacy programmes are more effective and cheaper to implement when facilitators are motivated by a spirit of community volunteerism rather than a desire for financial gain. This became clear when facilitators who joined the programme expecting some kind of remuneration quit shortly afterwards. However, volunteer facilitators need consistent encouragement and moral support in order not to feel isolated and become discouraged in their work.

SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability of the literacy programme depends on two key elements: demand from the participants and secure funding. Given the high rates of illiteracy among the Quechua and other indigenous groups, the long-term demand for literacy skills training is guaranteed. In addition, the programme could be expanded to include a variety of vocational skills training activi-

ties. Furthermore, because ATEK works with local institutions which are a permanent part of the communities, such as the church, more could be done to link its activities with those of these institutions. However, the expansion of the programme, whether through ATEK or local institutions, depends on the availability of secure and sustainable funding.

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This compilation includes programmes which promote language and culture as resources and see them as an added value rather than a challenge for literacy teaching and learning. It also includes programmes designed to support migrants and refugees by equipping them for integration into mainstream society while strengthening their literacy skills in their native language. One of the important lessons which emerges from this publication is that the success of multilingual and multicultural approaches to literacy depends on participatory decision-making and the involvement of local communities in all stages of programme design and implementation.