

Terms of Reference for Study on Financing of Literacy Programmes in Pakistan

Background and Justification

Education FOR All (EFA) target year, 2015, is less than 5 years away. 72 million children in the world are still out of school and 759 million adults remain without literacy skills, majority of them being girls and women. According to the Asia-Pacific Regional Overview of the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010, EFA Goal 4 (achieving 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015) will be narrowly missed in the East Asia and the Pacific region. The picture is more daunting in South and West Asia. Despite increasing adult literacy rate by 17 % from 1985-1994 and 2000-2007 to reach 64%, South and West Asia accounts for more than half of the world's illiterate adults. Gender dimension of the adult illiteracy is a major issue in the Asia and Pacific Region. In East Asia and Pacific, 70% of the total illiterate adults are women. In India, Nepal and Pakistan, it is said that women are twice more likely to be illiterate than men.

In Pakistan, although literacy rate has been slowly and gradually increasing, illiterate population has increased 200% during 1951 to 1998. According to latest Population Census (1998), over 50 million people of age 10+ were illiterate. Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement (PSLM) Survey (2007-2008) indicates overall literacy rate of 56 % in the country, with only 44% literate women as compared to 69 % literate men. Gender and geographical disparities in the area of literacy are sharp and present a dismal picture. In rural areas, 66 % women can not read and write. In Sindh and Balochistan 58 % and 77 % female population, respectively, is illiterate. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 67 % women are illiterate. 60% women in rural areas of Punjab are illiterate. In Sindh, 80 % rural women can not read and write compared with 81 % literacy rate among urban males in the same province.

Since the 1960s, countries as well as international agencies have made significant effort to improve literacy through various initiatives such as major mass literacy campaigns that were once popular in the 1960 and the 1980s. Although some countries (e.g., China) achieved significant improvement over the decades, this is not the case in many other countries. Why has the state of literacy improved so little after so many years? Why has the literacy problem persisted?

A combination of factors accounts for the slow progress in literacy. Insufficient funding devoted to literacy is often cited as one of the major obstacles to improving the literacy situation among youths and adults. UNLD International Strategic Framework for Action (September 2009), of the outcomes of a comprehensive regional and global mid-decade review of activities undertaken within the framework of UNLD, identifies "inadequate financial resources" as one of the major challenges to achieving "Literacy for All". According to the document, the national budget devoted to youth and adult literacy is frequently less than 1%. The Framework recommends a benchmark of 3% while calling for an increased allocation of external aid to literacy. This issue was also highlighted during CONFINTEA VI (1-4 December, 2009). The Belem Framework for Action, adopted by participating countries at this major international conference on adult learning, strongly recommends seeking investment of at least 6% of GNP in

education and to work towards increased investment in adult learning and education, especially for disadvantaged groups such as women, rural populations and people with disabilities.

Pakistan has not been spending enough on education. Whereas international forums have recommended a minimum of 5 to 6% of GNP for the education sector, education budget and expenditure in Pakistan has remained around 2% of GDP only. In the recent years, expenditure on education has declined. At present, Net Enrolment Rate at primary level is about 61 % only (Economic Survey of Pakistan 2009-10), which shows that about one third or 39 % children of age 5-9 are not enrolled in schools. Although, out of school and dropped out children have been causing continuous addition to the illiterate population, Pakistan has not invested enough on adult literacy and Non-formal Basic Education programmes to reach the unreached. During the last 20 years, expenditure on adult literacy has been less than 1% of the education budget.

Literacy is a basic human right and a foundation for social, economic, political and cultural development of the nations. None of the MDGs and EFA Goals is achievable if a country has a high rate of youth and adult illiteracy. At the same time, studies show that investment in adult education with literacy can be as productive as investing in formal education (Oxenham, 2009)¹. In spite of such findings, information on financing literacy programmes is extremely limited compared to information available on financing the formal education system. In many cases literacy and adult education is the weakest component of national education planning often resulting in less budget allocation and weak human resource in the sector. Understanding the current financial situation for literacy programmes will be an important first step towards better planning and for making an evidence-based case for increasing funding for literacy.

2. Participating countries

UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education (Bangkok, Thailand) has launched a Regional Review of Financing Literacy Programmes. Five countries of Asia-Pacific are participating in this Regional Review or Study, namely; Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, PNG and Lao PDR (TBC).

3. Expected outputs

This Regional Review or study is expected to generate following outputs:

- Review of funding allocation to adult literacy and NFBE in Pakistan
- Existing alternative funding sources (other Ministries, donor agencies, NGOs and Private Sector) identified
- Innovative funding mechanisms for literacy showcased
- Financial gap for literacy identified both in terms of on going per unit cost and quality programmes of literacy (Using Literacy Benchmarks)
- Capacity of national personnel for undertaking research studies in selected countries on funding for literacy enhanced
- Recommendations to call for increased funding where the funding gap is most severe developed

¹ Oxenham, J. (2009). Returns on Investment in Literacy in Training and Education for Adults – Quantitative Findings. Adult Education and Development v73. DVV International.

4. Proposed outline of the review (Specific to Pakistan)

Original outlines of the Regional Review have been adjusted (expanded) to the specific situation and needs in Pakistan. In the context of Pakistan, study will be planned and completed keeping in view following outlines:

1. Policy framework for literacy
 - Definition of literacy in the policy documents (e.g., issue of minority languages)
 - Policy provisions for use of provincial/regional languages as medium of instruction in schools and Adult literacy centres
 - Public sector organization(s) implementing or coordinating literacy programmes
2. Funding by the public sector (or equivalent)
 - Constitutional/legal responsibility of federal, provincial and district governments with respect to financing of education, including adult literacy and NFBE
 - Funding for adult literacy and Non-formal Basic Education in the recent 5 years (including share of adult literacy and NFBE funding in the GDP and share of funding for literacy in the total education budget)
 - Funding formula (if any) – calculating per illiterate budget for adult literacy and per out of school child budget for NFBE, on yearly basis
 - Comparative review of funds allocated for literacy in the budget, actually released by Finance Department and utilized (Data of last 3-5 years).
 - Break up of funding for literacy in Development and Non-Development or Recurring (for institutionalization or systemic support)
 - Allocated budget and/or expenditures by items including:
 - Salaries (teachers/facilitators, administrators)
 - Teaching materials
 - In-service training for teachers/facilitators (total and per teacher allocations)
 - Maintenance of the venue
 - Organizational cost of conducting literacy training
 - Professional development of literacy managers and field functionaries
 - Mass mobilization, motivational drive, advocacy etc.
 - Supervision, monitoring and evaluation
 - Research
 - Examination and certification etc.,
 - Average per head (per neo-literate) cost – in actual terms compared with need for sustainable literacy/National Literacy Curriculum (2007) requirements and international Literacy Benchmarks (2005)
3. Funding from other sources
 - Ministries and offices involved in literacy programmes and their funding in the recent 5 years
 - Funding from external donors (UN Agencies, multilateral & bilateral agencies, INGOs, and NGOs) in the recent 5 years
 - Availability or practice of mobilizing community contribution and potential/prospects

4. Funding gap and challenges
 - Results of the financial simulation and funding gaps (based on Dakar Goals and NPA, and 86% target of National Education Policy 2009 or National Literacy Plan)
 - Challenges in increasing financial allocation to literacy programmes
5. Recommendations
 - Possible strategies to ensure more public budget for literacy and NFE
 - Possible strategies to attract donor funds into literacy and NFE

6. Methodology

Desk study

Government's laws, guidelines and strategies as well as budget documents on education funding from Central, provincial and local levels will be reviewed to identify their implication to financing literacy. Documents from relevant ministries other than Ministry of Education/Provincial Department of Education and Literacy (e.g., Ministries and Provincial Departments of Finance, Labor, Social Welfare, and Women Development, donors and NGOs will also be reviewed in order to understand funding from alternative sources for adult literacy.

Interviews

Interviews with policy makers from ministries as well as staff members of relevant organizations/agencies may be required to obtain in-depth information on financing mechanism (e.g., formula for determining funding). It is also desirable that the researcher(s) will interview literacy facilitators and beneficiaries to identify the gaps between the funding needed and the funding provided.

Financial simulation

Where applicable and possible, researcher(s) are encouraged to use a financial simulation model/system employed by the Ministry of Education/Provincial Departments of Education and Literacy to calculate the gap between the current funding level and the funding required to achieve national goals of reducing illiteracy.

7. Timeline

The study is to be completed within 3 months time period after formally assigning the contract to an organization to be selected for this purpose. Tentative time span for planning, conducting, and completing this study would be from 01 July to 30 September 2010.

8. Eligibility

Public and private sector organizations (NGOs) with demonstrated experience and interest in research work, particularly in the field of financing of social sector, are encouraged to apply.

9. Submission of Proposals

Interested organizations should send Technical and Financial proposals, along with organizational profile. Proposals along with organizational profile should be sent to Administrative Officer, UNESCO Islamabad in a sealed envelop marked Proposal for Study on Financing of Literacy Programmes in Pakistan. Sealed envelop can be delivered at UNESCO Office, H. No 17, Street No 8, Sector F-7/3, Islamabad

10. Estimated Financial Range:

UNESCO has allocated up to a maximum of **US\$ 7,000/-** for the study. This includes all costs and expenditures on designing and conducting of the study, including procurement of budget documents/relevant reports, data collection from various sources at federal and provincial level, travel to four provincial capitals, computerization of data, analysis of data, report writing, sharing of draft report with stakeholders and finalization of report. Organizations applying for award of this study should keep in view this ceiling while preparing their technical proposals and budget.

11. Contact and payment schedule

An Implementation Partnership Agreement (IPA) will be signed with the selected firm, as per UNESCO rules and procedures. Payment to the selected organization will be made in installments, against agreed upon deliverables and their acceptance by UNESCO. Last installment of funds will be released on completion of work and submission of final report, and its acceptance by UNESCO.

12. Scrutiny and acceptance of the proposal

UNESCO reserves the right to postpone or cancel the study, or reject any or all proposals without assigning any reason

13. Deadline: Last date for receipt of proposals is 25 June 2010

14. Queries and additional information

For any queries or further information, following may be contacted on working days and during office hours only:

1. Arshad Saeed Khan, Senior National Specialist (Education), UNESCO, Tele + 92-51-2611170 up to 2611173- Extension: 24, Email: as.khan@unesco.org
2. Iram Mubashara, Project Assistant, UNESCO, Tele: + 92-51-2611170 up to 2611173 Extension: 27