

Regional Meeting of  
**Asia and Pacific LIFE Countries**

21 - 24 January 2008, Dhaka, Bangladesh



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# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
Background	3
Objectives of the Regional Meeting on LIFE	4
Expected Results	5
Strategies	5
Participants	6
<b>Proceedings</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Day 1: 21 January 2008</b>	<b>7</b>
Inaugural Session	7
Agenda Item 1: Presentations and Exchange of Experiences	8
Plenary Discussion Highlights	9
Synthesis	11
<b>Day 2: 22 January 2008</b>	<b>15</b>
Agenda Item 2: Implementation of LIFE in the Asia-Pacific Region	15
Agenda Item 3: Literacy Assessment	19
Agenda Item 4: Literacy in Multilingual Contexts	20
Synthesis	22
<b>Day 3: 23 January 2008</b>	<b>25</b>
Field Visit to a Community Learning Centre ( <i>Ganokendra</i> ) in Narshingdi	25
<b>Day 4: 24 January 2008</b>	<b>27</b>
Agenda Item 5: Effective Practices to Improve Quality of Literacy	27
Agenda Item 6: How Can the LIFE Framework be Used to Strengthen Capacities for Effective Literacy Policy and Programmes at the Country Level?	32
Agenda Item 7: Planning the Way Forward	35
<b>Closing Ceremony</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Annex 1: Meeting Agenda</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Annex 2: List of Participants</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Annex 3: Meeting Evaluation</b>	<b>47</b>

## CD Attachment Contents

Regional Meeting of Asia and Pacific LIFE Countries (PDF)  
Country Reports  
Draft Work Plans  
PowerPoint Presentations  
Photos



# Executive Summary

The second regional meeting of the nine Asia and Pacific countries which participate in UNESCO's Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) programme took place from 21 to 24 January 2008 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. It was jointly organized by UNESCO Dhaka, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and the Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education/Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL). LIFE focal points from both national governments and UNESCO offices reviewed what has happened so far, exchanged and learned from prior experiences, discussed the LIFE implementation strategy, and also analyzed innovative approaches to literacy and non-formal education (NFE). The meeting was attended by 30 participants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea, as well by participants from the related UNESCO field offices, UIL and APPEAL Bangkok. Bangladesh and Pakistan were represented by a number of civil society organizations.

The meeting contributed to a deeper understanding of LIFE as a platform for collaborative action to accelerate literacy efforts in the countries where it operates by putting literacy high on political agendas, mobilizing resources, strengthening capacities and intensifying South-South cooperation. It was emphasized that countries do not have to wait for "their turn" (i.e., to be selected for extra-budgetary support by UNESCO according to the three-phase model) to start their LIFE process. All LIFE countries were invited to immediately take up the literacy challenge, irrespective of resource allocation from UNESCO.

As an overarching framework, and instead of being a stand-alone or separate new programme, LIFE should build on existing literacy initiatives in the country, giving them a larger scope and a new sense of urgency. As a way of making literacy a mainstream issue, LIFE should promote the literacy agenda towards the achievement of Education for All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) and the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). As a national platform for renewing literacy efforts, LIFE should bring together key actors from national and local governments, NGOs, civil society organizations, the private sector and local communities. Through networking, twinning arrangements and the sharing of experience and tools, LIFE is also a mechanism for strengthening South-South cooperation.

The sharing of experiences from Bangladesh and Pakistan was at the centre in the meeting because both of these countries are benefiting from an extra-budgetary-funded LIFE project as part of UNESCO's Capacity-Building for EFA Programme (2006-2008). Participants reported that the different capacity-building activities have already had a visible impact, and have resulted in a closer partnership between government and civil society.

National presentations about each country's current literacy situation and experience with LIFE made clear that important achievements and progress have been made. However, there are still huge challenges and gaps to overcome. These challenges include a lack of political will; absence of a consistent policy; scarcity of resources; and lack of coordination, research and a (test-based) literacy assessment system. These concerns need to be addressed by evidence-based advocacy to influence political commitment and to mobilize the required resources. This advocacy work includes the use of benchmarks and tested literacy statistics. Moreover, there is a need to increase capacities for improving the quality of learning opportunities; to establish literacy and NFE within the education system with equivalencies and accredited certificates; to professionalize the management, monitoring and evaluation of literacy and NFE programmes; to raise the professional level of literacy personnel; and to design special strategies to reach marginalized groups and to strive for gender equity.

The meeting showed that there are many examples of effective practice and innovative approaches to literacy within the participating countries and within the region. The challenge remains to embed these approaches in into national literacy policies and programmes. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity to exchange and learn from each other's experiences. It also provided a forum in which to explore opportunities for South-South cooperation. Most of the LIFE country teams pointed out that the activities listed in their plans for 2008–2009 will require financial and technical support from UNESCO. The way forward will require a well-designed support strategy and strong partners for implementing LIFE.



Children enthusiastically greeted participants during the field trip to Narshingdi.

# Introduction

## Background

UNESCO's Dhaka Office, Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok organized the second Regional Meeting of Asia and Pacific LIFE Countries for the nine countries that participate in the LIFE initiative – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea. The meeting took place from 21 to 24 January 2008 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

LIFE is being implemented in 35 countries – nine in the Asia and Pacific region – that have a literacy rate of less than fifty percent and/or an adult population of more than ten million people without literacy competencies. It was initiated by UNESCO as a ten-year key operational mechanism (2006–2015) within the United Nations Literacy Decade, to accelerate literacy efforts in those countries that are at risk of not reaching EFA Goal 4 by 2015.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, LIFE contributes to each of the six EFA goals, and also supports the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) that address poverty reduction, women's empowerment, HIV and AIDS prevention, and sustainable development.

According to the definition laid out in the LIFE Vision and Strategy Paper (3rd Edition, 9/2007), LIFE is:

- a framework for collaborative action to enhance and improve national literacy efforts;
- a process in support of literacy that is country-led and country-specific;
- embedded in national policies and strategies; and
- a mechanism for technical support services and facilitation by UNESCO in the areas of policy, advocacy, partnership building, capacity-building and innovation.

In other words, LIFE is not a project or a programme and does not replace government policies and programmes in LIFE countries.

The overall goal of LIFE is to empower people, especially women and girls, who have inadequate literacy skills and competencies. The immediate objectives of LIFE are:

- To reinforce national and international commitment to literacy through advocacy and communication;
- To support the articulation of policies for sustainable literacy within sector-wide and national development frameworks;

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<sup>1</sup> EFA Goal 4: Achieving 50 percent improvement in adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

- To strengthen national capacities for programme design, management and implementation; and
- To enhance innovative literacy initiatives and practices.

The first LIFE regional planning meeting took place in Islamabad, Pakistan, from 20 to 22 March 2006. That meeting focused on launching the LIFE initiative. The objectives were to assist participating countries (seven out of the nine) to develop the overall framework for conducting literacy needs assessments, to prepare outlines of plans for LIFE implementation at the national level, and to arrive at an understanding of an effective support mechanism for LIFE implementation at national, regional and global levels. Issues addressed at this meeting included: common challenges in the region, the literacy needs of excluded groups, implementation strategies, and the needs assessment process. Country teams also prepared draft country needs assessment frameworks and a LIFE Country Plan.

After this first meeting, UNESCO held two literacy conferences in the region in cooperation with national partners. The first of these (for East Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific) was held from 31 July to 1 August 2007 in Beijing, China. The second conference (for South, South-West and Central Asia) was held from 29 to 30 November 2007 in New Delhi, India. In recognition of the particular challenges that the region is facing,<sup>2</sup> the conferences came up with relevant conclusions and recommendations which, in turn, provided the basis for the second Regional Meeting of Asia and Pacific LIFE Countries.

This meeting, which took place at the beginning of the new 2008-2009 biennium, was one of three regional meetings that have taken place to include representatives from the 35 LIFE countries that are currently active within the Arab States, Asia and Pacific, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean regions.

During the second meeting, the LIFE focal points from both national governments and UNESCO offices met to review what has happened thusfar, to exchange and learn from prior experiences, to discuss a refined LIFE implementation strategy and concrete activities and to analyse innovative approaches to literacy and NFE that may enrich existing policies, strategies and programmes.

## Objectives of the Regional Meeting on LIFE

- 1) To build a common understanding of LIFE and how it can contribute to effective implementation of literacy policies, strategies and programmes at the national level.

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<sup>2</sup> According to UNESCO statistics, approximately 130 million illiterate adults reside in East Asia and the Pacific, and more than 380 million adults in South and West Asia lack literacy skills.



- 2) To share experiences and lessons learned through LIFE activities, related literacy initiatives, and extra-budgetary-funded CapEFA LIFE projects.
- 3) To discuss a monitoring and evaluation strategy as part of national LIFE processes and based on analysis of each country's literacy situation.
- 4) To share experiences and discuss strategies for effective advocacy of literacy.
- 5) To learn about innovative approaches to literacy and adult basic education in different countries.
- 6) To network and plan the way forward.

## Expected Results

It was anticipated that the meeting would provide participants with:

- 1) A common understanding of LIFE as a strategic framework
- 2) An overview of the progress and challenges related to literacy and LIFE through analysis of country reports
- 3) Experiences ("lessons learned") from literacy and LIFE-related activities
- 4) Strategies for situational analyses, monitoring, evaluation, and other support mechanisms for LIFE implementation at the national level
- 5) Increased awareness about the importance of developing effective advocacy strategies
- 6) A broader understanding of sector-wide and innovative approaches to the development of literacy and NFE policies and strategies
- 7) Ideas about ways of working together in the region (networking and South-South cooperation) in the field of literacy and NFE

## Strategies

The 4-day meeting was conducted through plenary sessions and small group discussions. On the first day, the sessions focused on building a common understanding about LIFE, presenting country reports, and exchanging experiences, particularly those of first-round LIFE countries (Bangladesh and Pakistan). On the second day, participants looked at strategies and mechanisms for implementing LIFE at the national level, particularly emphasizing the situational analysis, monitoring, evaluation, and advocacy. The third day was devoted to a field visit of community-based literacy learning centres that had been developed along the CLC model. The final day was used to discuss effective practices and innovative approaches to literacy, networking and planning the way forward.

Prior to the meeting, relevant documents were circulated and each national focal point was asked to compile a country report. All participants were asked to bring relevant documents related to their LIFE and literacy activities, which were subsequently exhibited to enhance exchange between countries.

## Participants

Thirty participants attended the meeting:

- a) LIFE focal points (directors of governmental literacy offices) from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea (India and Indonesia were not represented by governmental authorities)
- b) LIFE focal points from the UNESCO offices in Apia, Beijing, Dhaka, Islamabad, Jakarta, Kabul, Kathmandu, New Delhi and Tehran
- c) The regional LIFE focal point (APPEAL/ UNESCO Bangkok)
- d) LIFE coordination office (UIL, Hamburg)
- e) Literacy experts and key partners from government, NGOs, bi-lateral and multi-lateral partners in Bangladesh
- f) In addition to the LIFE focal points, four members of Pakistan National LIFE Steering Committee
- g) In addition to APPEAL staff, resource persons from UNESCO Bangkok's Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) unit, which also represents the Office of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) Regional Advisor, and DAM Bangladesh
- h) Guests from the host country's government and civil society were invited to the inaugural session as well as the reception dinner.

[Note: *The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are annexed to this report and contained within the attached CD-Rom.*]

### Plenary session



# Proceedings

**Day 1:  
21 January  
2008  
Inaugural Session**

The inaugural session of the Regional LIFE Meeting, which was chaired by Malama Meleisea, Director and Representative of UNESCO Dhaka, and moderated by Hassan Keynan of UNESCO Dhaka, began with a recitation from the Holy Qur'an. Around 40 participants attended. In his welcoming address, Mahmudul Hassan, Secretary of the Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO (BNCU), emphasized the common goal of this meeting, namely Literacy for All!

Ulrike Hanemann, from the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, provided an introduction to UNESCO's Literacy Initiative for Empowerment, which supports the UN Literacy Decade and contributes to the achievement of EFA and MDGs. She emphasized a broad concept of literacy as the foundation of basic education within a context of lifelong learning. Furthermore, she provided an overview of what has happened so far in LIFE, its main achievements and key challenges. LIFE emphasizes concrete action at the national level. This requires high levels of coordination, flexible responses and innovative approaches to literacy.

Hameed Hakeem, from UNESCO APPEAL in Bangkok, provided an overview of LIFE from the regional perspective. More than 60 percent of the world's adult illiterate population lives in the Asia and Pacific region, with 34 percent in India alone. The gender disparity in literacy remains unchanged since the early 1990s: two-thirds of all illiterates are women. It will be possible to meet Dakar Goal 4 by 2015 only if governments accept their full responsibility to provide high quality literacy learning opportunities for all of their citizens. Hakeem also summarized the developments and challenges of LIFE in the region. He addressed the tendency for participant countries to see LIFE largely as a source of extra-budgetary funds. He emphasized that sufficient progress would not be made if LIFE countries simply "waited their turn" for funding before starting literacy activities.

The inaugural address and formal opening of the meeting was presented by M. Musharraf Hussain Bhuiyan, Secretary of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME). By placing LIFE within the national development agenda, he shared what the Bangladeshi government is doing in the area of literacy and NFE. He also underlined that Bangladesh has greatly benefited from UNESCO's support so far. He stressed that sustainable democracy and good governance are not possible without education for all.

Malama Meleisea, Director and Representative of UNESCO Dhaka, warmly welcomed the participants, particularly those who had come from other countries. In his reflections on the term 'empowerment,' he gave examples of how 'unempowered' illiterate people can be in their everyday lives through deprivation of basic civic rights. He also emphasized the responsibility we bear as promoters of literacy and stressed the close connection between

literacy and people's pride in culture and identity. He used the image of an extra shot of coffee in order to highlight the importance of LIFE's strengthening of literacy efforts. He called on participants to use the second regional meeting to re-energize LIFE.

## Agenda Item 1: Presentations and Exchange of Experiences

### Chairs:

Part I: Willie Jonduo (Papua New Guinea)

Part II: Muhammad Saleem (Pakistan)

Part III: Moharram Aqazadeh Ghourvali (UNESCO Tehran)

### Presenters:

Md. Rafiquzzaman, Director Bureau of Non-formal Education, Bangladesh

Muhammad Saleem, Deputy Education Advisor, Projects Wing, Ministry of Education, Pakistan

Shafiq Qarizada, Advisor to the Minister for Literacy, Ministry of Education, Afghanistan

Jin Yang, Deputy Director General of the Department of Basic Education of the Ministry of Education, China

Huma Masood, UNESCO, New Delhi

Mohammad Mehdizadeh, Senior Advisor at the Literacy Movement Organization (LMO), Iran and Mr. Moharram Aqazadeh Ghourvali, UNESCO, Teheran

Laxman Khanal, Director NFEC/MOES Nepal

Willie Jonduo, Director of National Literacy Awareness and Secretariat Office of Libraries and Archives, Department of Education, Papua New Guinea

Each presenter provided a summary of the country report that each LIFE focal point was asked to compile in preparation of the meeting. Guidelines sent out with the invitations asked the focal points to include the following elements in their presentations:

- a) Brief background information about the country;
- b) Overview of the LIFE process in the country;
- c) Efforts and results of the LIFE process in the country (advocacy, communication, policy, capacity and innovation); and
- d) Overall assessment of the LIFE process and future directions in the country.

[Note: *PowerPoint presentations and country reports are available on the attached CD-Rom.*]

## Plenary Discussion Highlights

The first two presentations were on Bangladesh and Pakistan, the two LIFE countries that have benefited from a US\$1 million grant provided through UNESCO's "Capacity-building for EFA" programme. Since mid-2006, different activities have been developed within these 'LIFE projects,' and have achieved visible impact in strengthening the capacity of GO/NGO managers and policymakers in advocacy, planning, implementation and monitoring of literacy programmes. These activities include improving the quality and scope of literacy programmes, gender mainstreaming, developing a national curriculum, establishing NFE-MIS systems, creating an inventory of ICT software on basic learning needs, conducting ICT-related training, establishing CLCs and strengthening existing CLCs, establishing community-based resource centres (CRCs), as well as identifying and promoting innovations.

In **Pakistan**, LIFE has brought together key stakeholders from the government, civil society and the private sector. All of these are represented in a core group that coordinates literacy activities. The LIFE project is coordinated by a LIFE steering committee with public and private representation from the four provinces and other administrative areas of Pakistan. A parliamentary caucus on literacy was set up for advocacy purposes. Through roundtable meetings, the literacy situation was reviewed at the national and provincial levels. This debate stimulated action on literacy awareness and advocacy. The Pakistan delegation presented these examples of very fruitful experiences as stages in building sustainable partnerships for literacy.

In **Bangladesh**, a key focus of NFE policy is community ownership of the literacy and NFE programme to ensure its sustainability. The development of a community-based network of learning centres forms the cornerstone of the strategy to boost literacy efforts. It is hoped that links can be established between the literacy, post-literacy and continuing education programmes of various agencies, thereby paving the way for an institutional lifelong learning system in Bangladesh.

In **Afghanistan**, a major achievement of LIFE has been to establish a coordination mechanism, thus bringing together key partners (UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID, JICA, WFP and NGOs) that had previously worked independently of each other. A major LIFE project proposal has been developed and will be funded by the Japanese government. Moreover, a needs assessment has been conducted. Building on these achievements, authorities hope to establish a High Commission for a national literacy programme (at national and provincial levels) and develop a LIFE country action plan. It is also hoped that 'positive discrimination' in the form of literacy courses targeted specifically at women will help to reduce the huge gender gap (almost 33%). LIFE is closely linked with the Afghan Girls Education Initiative.

An important issue discussed in plenary was the need to clearly demonstrate the difference LIFE is making in terms of overall progress in literacy. What is

the added value that can be attributed to LIFE inputs? It was emphasized that LIFE is a framework that brings all players together. Consultation was mentioned as a very important success factor, in addition to political will. Afghanistan reported that some agencies were not happy when UNESCO first introduced the LIFE initiative. However, once they had been involved and consulted, they became part of the process. Bangladesh and Pakistan emphasized the importance of concrete action that LIFE projects had made possible.

LIFE has been interpreted and adopted in different ways. While LIFE in Bangladesh has been incorporated into the broad framework of NFE policy, in Pakistan LIFE constitutes one of several strategies or actions to address literacy and NFE. In Afghanistan, LIFE was accepted as the common framework for a national literacy initiative.

In **China**, the major challenge is to reach the final 9.08 percent of the adult population who are illiterate. Many of the people are over fifty years of age and live in rural areas with poor literate environments. As a result of rapid urbanization, local governments and civil society have reduced their literacy efforts. Many village and township adult cultural and technical schools no longer function properly. In addition, some village schools or teaching sites have been closed as a consequence of the recent school mapping, and it has become hard for primary school teachers to continue providing evening or weekend literacy classes. There is a great shortage of literacy resources in the regions with higher rates of illiteracy. These tend to be remote, mountainous and poverty-stricken rural areas, and are mostly inhabited by ethnic minorities.

Led by the National Literacy Mission (NLM), **India** has made impressive progress, increasing literacy rates by 21 percent in two decades. However, it is still facing the biggest literacy challenge worldwide. In an attempt to link post-literacy with issues of gender, sustainable development, health and empowerment (in the framework of LIFE), the National Institute of Open Schooling, together with UNESCO New Delhi, has developed training modules on health, safe motherhood, life skills, harmonious living, economic empowerment and responsible citizenship.

**Iran** also has long-standing experience in literacy education with the Literacy Movement Organization (LMO). Millions of learners have enrolled, including Afghan refugees. Some of the innovations developed by the LMO include the yearly “literacy thanksgiving feast” (which aims to cultivate a culture of literacy in communities) and the production of primers at the provincial level that respond to learners needs in a more relevant way. The integration of ICT into literacy programmes and meeting expectations of communities undergoing major social changes pose significant challenges. Lack of functionality and opportunities to use newly acquired literacy skills are jeopardizing the success of efforts to reduce illiteracy rates in Iran.

**Nepal** reported a similar challenge as Afghanistan; namely the difficulty of reaching learners that are geographically scattered and living in remote places. The gender gap of 23 percent also poses a major challenge. There have been attempts to link literacy and NFE programmes with grassroots-based development programmes. Community learning centres are gaining ground in the rural areas as delivery mechanisms and are seen as an important instrument in promoting lifelong learning. NGOs are encouraged to develop their own literacy materials. Centrally-defined standards of quality are applied as controls by the competent authorities to ensure the quality of these materials. However, NGOs that want to work at the local level are required to register with the district development committee. District Education Officers appoint facilitators who are paid based on results. Local bodies enjoy autonomy in the financial management of literacy and NFE provisions. It is hoped in this way to strengthen the local sense of ownership.

The most striking feature of **Papua New Guinea's** national reality is the presence of more than 869 cultures and languages. Other challenges the national literacy strategy has to contend with include high population growth, significant gender and socio-economic disparities, and increasing incidence of HIV. Another key challenge is that there is "almost no room or home for literacy and NFE" in the national education system. The national literacy policy is currently under review. Papua New Guinea is moving from a simple towards a more functional and diversified notion of literacy. The previous LIFE initiative funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) did not succeed. Now LIFE has been brought back by UNESCO and is expected to create and maintain a new momentum for literacy ("LIFE has to give the extra shot").

Both Nepal and Papua New Guinea have adopted LIFE as a broad framework for their actions in the field of literacy, and also receive technical support from UNESCO. Other countries have yet to start their LIFE processes. In the plenary debate, it was stressed that there is a need for a common understanding of LIFE. In general, participants agreed that LIFE is aiming at the acceleration of literacy efforts in participating countries.

## Synthesis

Based on the country presentations, Ehsanur Rahman (Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Bangladesh) produced the following **synthesis of issues, challenges and lessons learned**:

The implementation of LIFE, as a key operational mechanism for achieving the goals and purposes of the UNLD, was presented as a mosaic of achievements and gaps. It was mainly the gaps which were flagged for further analysis and discussion.

The main **concerns** mentioned in the presentations were:

- Lack of political will
- Absence of a consistent policy

- Scarcity of resources
- No separate budget for adult literacy
- A lack of coordination between existing literacy programmes
- Lack of research
- No institutionalized national literacy programme (for some years)
- Absence of systematic literacy assessment and recording of learners progress and achievement

In the following paragraphs, the issues, challenges and lessons learned are clustered into ten areas:

### **1. Policy, Strategy and Plans for Literacy**

- Goals of literacy policy, strategy and plans contribute to the national development agenda
- Goals of literacy through (formal) primary education, and literacy through (non-formal) skills development are often presented as competing goals
- Coverage
  - Current illiteracy rate/literacy rate vs. benchmarks set for 2010/2015
  - Absolute numbers show the real scale of the challenge
  - Identifying and targeting illiterate populations
  - Priority groups (age, location, socio-economic, linguistic factors)
- Resource allocation (government, donors, private)
- Use of resources

### **2. Management of National Programmes**

- Management structure and distribution of roles
- Decentralization – state, province, district, and local authorities
- Community ownership
- Capacity-building at the various levels and fronts (management, research, training, resource development)

### **3. Delivery Mechanisms**

- Main literacy activities
- Teaching-learning process
- More flexibility is required in delivery mode, contents and assessment
- Rapid urbanization as a challenge
- With regard to the use of ICT: capacity, accessibility, affordability
- Contextually-appropriate learning materials
- CLC as approach: role difference between literacy centre and CLC; networking between CLCs
- Open and distance learning systems
- Appropriate learning spaces

### **4. Partnership, Coordination and Networking**

- GO-NGO-private



- Link between education and health departments
- Focus on poverty reduction strategy
- Link between literacy, post-literacy, skills development and continuing education programmes
- Core group – multi-sector representation
- Inter-ministerial coordination committee
- Joint planning

#### **5. Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Availability of and accessibility to data
- Setting standards for assessment
- MIS structure at various levels
- Learner performance assessment
- Participation of stakeholders in the process
- Development of national/regional testing system
- Measuring trends of change/achievement
- Identifying gaps and needs at regular intervals
- National literacy review round table

#### **6. Research and Documentation**

- Promoting good practices
- Sharing information
- Promoting innovation
- Evidence-based advocacy for literacy

#### **7. Development of Human Resources**

- Professionalizing literacy tutors, supervisors and managers
- Scope for on-going updating training of literacy personnel
- Institutional structures to support literacy personnel

#### **8. Reaching Marginal Groups**

- Geographically, socially and economically excluded
- Literacy in multilingual and multicultural contexts
- Urban/rural divide
- Children in hazardous work situations
- People with disability
- Advocacy to reach these groups
- Capacity to reach those as yet not reached
- Creating literate environment

#### **9. Quality Concerns**

- Meeting learning needs
- Sustaining literacy and scope for continuing education
- Adequacy and availability of literacy/information materials
- Equivalencies between formal and non-formal education
- Setting quality standards (national, regional)

## 10. Gender Mainstreaming

- Gender disparities
- Creation of safe and acceptable learning spaces for female learners
- Gender-sensitive curricula and materials

Some general conclusions were summarized in the **end notes**:

- The challenges are contextual and depend on each specific situation.
- There is a need to combine macro planning with adapted micro-initiatives to create a full 'menu'.
- There are many examples of good practice in literacy from the different LIFE countries.
- The challenge remains to replicate these good practices in national literacy plans and programmes.
- An exchange of experience across the region will certainly benefit literacy agencies in different countries.

Plenary session



Mr. Malama Meleisea, Director and Representative of UNESCO Dhaka



Mr. M. Musharraf Hussain Bhuiyan, Secretary of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education



## **Day 2: 22 January 2008**

### **Agenda Item 2: Implementation of LIFE in the Asia- Pacific Region**

#### **Chairs:**

Part I: Md. Rafiquzzaman (Bangladesh)

Part II: Laxman Khanal (Nepal)

#### **Presenters:**

Hameed Hakeem, APPEAL/ UNESCO Bangkok

Ulrike Hanemann, UIL

Marina Patrier, UNESCO Kabul

Yayoi Segi-Vltchek, UNESCO Apia

Kiichi Oyasu, APPEAL/ UNESCO Bangkok

Tapon Kumar Das, CAMPE, Bangladesh

Shaheen Attiq-ur-Rehman, Bunyad Foundation, Pakistan

Iqbal-ur-Rehman, NCHD, Pakistan

Ehsanur Rahman, DAM, Bangladesh

[Note: *PowerPoint presentations of presenters are available on the attached CD-Rom.*]

These sessions focused mainly on the implementation of LIFE and regional specificities. In particular, they were concerned with sharing experiences about the implementation of LIFE by the first-round countries Bangladesh and Pakistan, as well as by other countries.

Hakeem began his presentation with a review of issues raised during the first meeting, such as the need to map literacy activities and providers, to set standards and benchmarks, to strengthen coordination and policy cohesion, to manage literacy programmes at the local level, to contextualize learning materials, to establish partnerships, to involve key stakeholders and to more accurately measure the extent of the literacy challenge. He then provided an overview of the key issues and challenges that LIFE would need to address in the region. These included the need to address language and literate environment, specialized institutions for support and training of literacy personnel, decentralization policies, persistent disparities (gender, marginalized groups), credible equivalency and accreditation mechanisms, evolving and broader understanding of literacy, as well as flexible approaches and innovative curricula.

The discussion revolved around how to use existing capacities and innovations. Delegates from Pakistan shared their experience in the Literacy Forum where different actors come together to exchange and analyse information and experience. A national exhibition was organized to showcase adult learning materials. The Ministry of Education placed a newspaper advertisement asking organizations and institutions to send in materials. As a result, the Ministry of Education received many materials. A consultant analysed these materials and identified the gaps. Some of the existing materials were updated and new primers and materials were developed. Papua New Guinea reported that their Literacy Authority uses training materials from NGOs (for example, about HIV/AIDS) and translates them into different languages. DAM/ Bangladesh stressed the challenge involved in making optimal use of the diverse existing materials.

Another topic that was raised in the discussion was decentralization leading to 'cost sharing' by national and local governments. While some of the local authorities took the initiative to lobby for additional funds, others do not place literacy particularly high on their agenda. Increased decentralization involves the challenge of coordination and capacity-building. In particular, the delegation from Pakistan pointed out the lack of a central mechanism to hold local authorities accountable and monitor progress towards EFA. In Bangladesh, coordinating mechanisms include inter-ministerial meetings at the central level, as well as meetings between the government and NGOs chaired by the BNFE. However, without sufficient funding, there was seen to be little chance for a strong coordination authority. The Literacy Authority of Papua New Guinea provides a forum to bring major stakeholders together. The process of sharing experiences is conducive to generating new ideas and building capacity.

Participants saw the **generic benchmarks on adult literacy** (proposed by Action Aid and the Global Campaign) as useful tools for advocacy, mobilization and monitoring. They were encouraged to adapt them to specific country situations, to support certain neglected issues and to focus on the most relevant key areas. The formulation of benchmarks needs to be based on research that helps understand the needs of individual countries.

The **situational analysis**, which is recommended as a preparatory step for LIFE, would provide in-depth information on national literacy and allow for a fresh look at the strategic gaps that need to be addressed as priorities. In her presentation, Ulrike Hanemann emphasized that situational analysis is not necessarily about coming up with a new action plan, but about improving the existing plans and strategies.

UNESCO Kabul shared experiences on conducting the situational analysis in **Afghanistan**. The process faced a number of challenges, such as the lack of baseline data, different statistical information from different agencies, the security situation (which prevented researchers from meeting learners and facilitators in the field), and the problems partners from other organizations had in understanding LIFE as a framework for literacy activity. Learning lessons from these difficulties, a LIFE coordination mechanism was established. Key considerations were advocacy and bringing all the partners on board before starting the process. It was also important to have gotten wide-ranging feedback on the draft report from the very beginning and to have had more consultation with community partners, religious leaders, key government institutions and ministries (defence and interior) as well as the private sector. Literacy should be conceived as a cross-cutting issue. There is also a need to compile information on promising practices and innovations around the country.

In **Pakistan**, the situational analysis began with the constitution of a core group that formulated the terms of reference and will approve the end

product. Four provincial reports were drafted before a consultant developed a consolidated report. However, experience showed that there was neither capacity nor sufficient understanding at the provincial level to conduct this kind of in-depth analysis properly. The lesson learned is that there is a need to set up a simple structure and bring in external expertise to first build local capacity. The delegate from Pakistan took the view that LIFE only makes sense if there is clear support for capacity-building.

In **Papua New Guinea**, leadership in conducting the situational analysis was taken by the National Literacy Authority, with the participation of all Literacy Task Force members and with technical assistance from UNESCO. It consisted mainly of a documentary analysis, consultations and a survey (in different languages). It was concluded that the situational analysis constitutes a critical tool for evaluation and assessment of work undertaken so far; it is a foundation for strategic, evidence-based planning for future work, and provides an excellent opportunity for capacity development and partnership-building, a basis for inclusion in the UN Country Programme and UNESCO's National Education Support Strategy (UNESS), and a prerequisite for the future development of LIFE.

Much of the discussion following the sharing of experiences on the situational analysis centred on how this experience can be best used to progress LIFE, to strengthen partnerships and to attract funds (Ministry of Finance, international donors) with a well-designed and workable plan. It was suggested that situational analysis reports be shared between LIFE countries.

**Building effective partnerships and a momentum for LIFE** constitutes an important component of the LIFE implementation strategy. Kiichi Oyasu introduced the theme by presenting experiences with two regional networks devoted to literacy and NFE: the APPEAL Resource and Training Consortium (ARTC) and the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) Network of Literacy Resource Centres (LRCs). ACCU also provides a literacy database ([www.accu.or.jp/litdbase](http://www.accu.or.jp/litdbase)). These regional networks provide forums for sharing innovations, generalizing experiences and generating resources. However, though they initially succeeded in mobilizing interest, it has not been easy to maintain this and to update information on a regular basis. There is a need to explore different possibilities for funding and re-energizing these efforts.

The **Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)** is a coalition of more than 1,000 NGOs involved in literacy and NFE in Bangladesh. It was formed in 1999 to help realize EFA. Its principal strategic areas of action are partnership-building, networking, researching and advocating to influence policy. Three concrete examples of CAMPE's activities are the joint mapping of NFE activities and capacities, a partnership with the Open University for disadvantaged populations, and partnering at the grassroots level to create opportunities for continuing (lifelong) learning.

The Pakistani **Bunyard Foundation** is linked to networks at the international, national and local levels. In her presentation, Shaheen Attique-ur-Rehman emphasized the need to address poverty in integral ways. She emphasized that literacy is only one component in a holistic strategy (for example, UNICEF's Camel Jockeys' Project). She also pointed out that LIFE is still not understood by practitioners at the district level, and suggested that more effort should be given to raising awareness about LIFE within civil society, particularly at the community level. She expressed that LIFE's greatest relevance in Pakistan is for adolescents and women. She also proposed an Internet-supported network on LIFE for exchange among all regions.

The **National Commission for Human Development (NCHD)** was created in 2002 to promote primary education, adult literacy and primary health care in 90 districts of Pakistan (70% of its budget comes from public funds). Its activities are based on a broad range of partnerships, including local communities, structures of the Education Ministry at all levels, NGOs/CSOs, universities, the corporate sector and international organizations. The Pakistan Cricket Board and the Khushali Bank are among these partners. Among the issues or challenges with regard to partnerships, Iqbal-ur-Rehman mentioned the low priority of literacy, the weak professional base and a lack of coordination.

The key to advocacy in **Bangladesh** is the development of a **multi-stakeholder network** to make a case for literacy. Experiences such as a Literacy Assessment Study or data provided by the CAMPE Education Watch Report demonstrate that evidence is vital for strong advocacy work. Ehsanur Rahman showed in his presentation how different actors working together can attain specific goals. He drew attention to the changing roles of government and NGOs. While in the past NGOs were the main actors in adult literacy, presently, under the leadership of the governmental BNFE, NGOs implement government and donor-funded projects. The future role for the government will be to take charge of policy development, quality control, monitoring and overall coordination; whereas the NGOs will provide technical support in planning, target and standard setting, and facilitation of community-base organizations (CBOs) and local governmental bodies. In addition to strong partnerships, it is also important to have convincing arguments for adult literacy.

The discussion mainly revolved around advocacy for literacy. How can one create an effective demand for literacy? How can political will be created to invest in adult literacy? The challenge involves marketing literacy in such a way that people actually demand it. It is difficult to demonstrate with concrete results the impact of advocacy work. Strong coalitions such as CAMPE and major NGOs such as BRAC provide very useful platforms for advocacy at all levels. The discussion also addressed the difficult relationship between governments and NGOs. Though much progress has been made, there is still a lack of mutual trust. NGOs must play a catalytic role while adjusting to the framework provided by governments. The need to find

viable solutions for sustainable partnerships – in particular between government and civil society – is an on-going process.

The session concluded with a presentation by Ulrike Hanemann on **monitoring and evaluation strategy as part of national LIFE processes** proposed by UIL and developed in an international workshop with participation from LIFE countries and experts from specialized organizations. The reports that national LIFE focal points were asked to compile in preparation for this meeting followed the proposed structure for monitoring the implementation of LIFE. Participants generally agreed with this proposal. However, UIL emphasized its interest in improving and adjusting the structure to evolving processes.

### Agenda Item 3: Literacy Assessment

**Chair:**

Shafiq Qarizada, Afghanistan

**Presenter:**

Subramaniam Venkatraman, AIMS-UIS/ UNESCO Bangkok

This session aimed at providing an **overview on the rationale, main trends and currently used tools of literacy assessment**. Subramaniam Venkatraman, from the Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) Unit of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) based at UNESCO Bangkok, explained that there are two major sources of literacy statistics: reported literacy statistics (the common scenario) and tested literacy statistics (assessment). He mapped out a broad range of literacy measures from comparative cross-national assessment surveys to declarations and mini-tests, and literacy tests as part of wider evaluation activities. Among the data issues related to literacy he listed definitions, comparability, availability, timeliness and quality of the data. With regard to the concept and definition of literacy, it is increasingly accepted that there is a spectrum of literacy skills that can be broken down into different measurable categories. The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), for example, assessed literacy skills (prose, document and quantitative) at five levels.

UIS has developed the Literacy Assessment Monitoring Programme (LAMP), which defines and measures a spectrum of literacy skills within a country. This helps to obtain more realistic information on the distribution of literacy skills in the aged 15+ population. AIMS-UIS has developed the Household Survey-based Literacy Module. This simple tool and methodology requires limited financial, technical and operational resources, and provides more informative statistics than are currently available in many countries. A special feature of this module, which is currently being piloted in Sri Lanka, is that it tries to assess an individual's literate environment (i.e., access to reading material, languages spoken, educational background and use of literacy skills) and their behaviour in relation to this. Though they are complementary, LAMP and the literacy module are two different

tools. While LAMP involves a cognitive test, the module assesses the literate environment. Venkatraman informed participants that LAMP is currently under revision and will be adapted from an international to a country-specific assessment tool. There is also the possibility of adapting the literacy module to specific contexts.

Following the presentation, the issues of usage and impact of assessment tools, as well as costs and potential alternatives to LAMP, were discussed. There was general agreement on the need to move away from self-assessment as a measure of literacy and to increase accuracy in assessing different levels of literacy. However, participants were aware that literacy assessment can be a highly sensitive and political issue. It is often hard for governments to accept test-based statistical realities that will very likely show a worse picture of the literacy situation than was previously recognized. The meeting clarified that there is no specific literacy assessment strategy recommended for LIFE countries. However, the more countries use a standardized method, the better it works as a tool to monitor progress. There is still a great diversity, even among UN organizations, of benchmarking and data collection methods. The criticism was made that official statistics come only from governments. There is an urgent need to further strengthen national capacities to produce accurate figures. The point was also made that LAMP is too dependent on UIS. It was suggested that priority be given to simplified versions of tests and surveys. It was also recommended that countries which have already conducted literacy surveys (e.g., Kenya, Laos) share these experiences. At the end of the session, participants were challenged with the question: Are you satisfied with the accuracy of the information you have on your national literacy situation? One point became very clear in this very important session: It is imperative to produce and use test-based literacy statistics for better planning and monitoring.

#### Agenda Item 4: Literacy in Multilingual Contexts

**Chair:**

Anwar Alsaïd, UNESCO Jakarta

**Presenters:**

Hameed Hakeem, APPEAL/UNESCO Bangkok

Willie Jonduo, Papua New Guinea

Tap Raj Pant, UNESCO Kathmandu

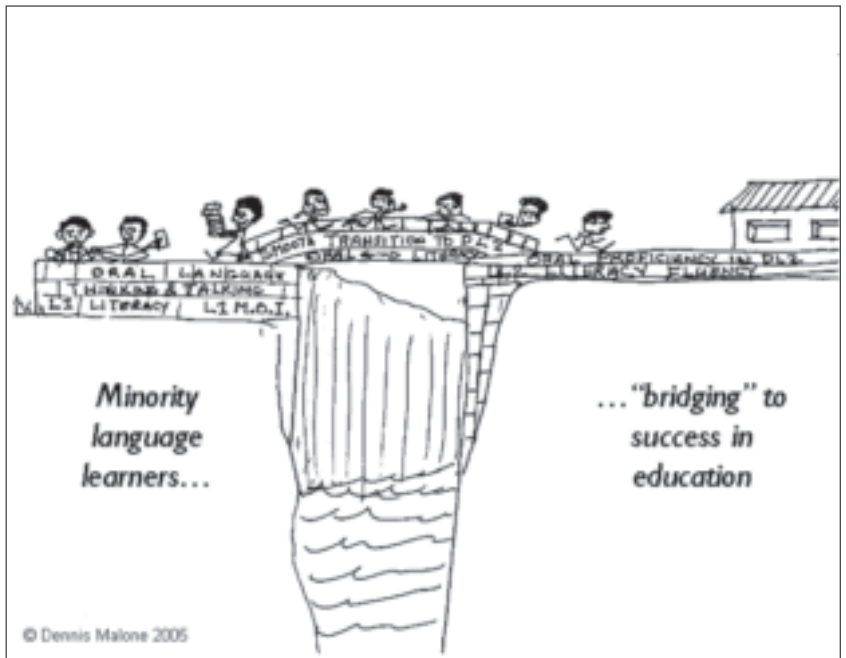
Huma Masood, UNESCO Delhi

At the start of this session, participants were reminded that the United Nations has proclaimed 2008 the International Year of Languages and that **multicultural and multilingual diversity is the reality in many countries of the Asia and Pacific region**. Hamed Hakeem showed a video of a case study recorded in Cambodia. It presented the processes involved in starting a literacy programme in the mother tongue of an ethno-linguistic minority group. By using illustrations, he showed how minority language learners who are not familiar with the language used when they enter school or



an education programme are prone to fail, and how they may effectively make the step to learning in the dominant language if they begin learning in their mother tongue. It is nowadays generally accepted that the mother tongue should be the language of instruction and literacy for building a strong foundation and a good bridge in multilingual contexts.

Willie Jonduo then shared the experience of literacy in the multilingual context of **Papua New Guinea**. With more than 850 languages, Papua New Guinea has tried to address this highly complex situation with innovative approaches. These include making communities responsible for the first years of primary education, which is provided in vernacular languages, before English as the national language is introduced at Grade 4. In this context, community leadership has proven to be meaningful, concrete and beneficial. The curriculum, which is decentralized, provides only guidelines and leaves much room for innovation and adaptation. Also, learning materials are developed at the local level. This not only promotes creativity, but also avoids too much dependency on external funding. The motto is: Make do with what you have, then ask for assistance! This has strengthened local sense of ownership. Future plans include the establishment of a National Language and Literacy Institute. Participants asked several questions about the decentralized curriculum, the use of media, oral traditions and the strategy of developing multilingual skills. Jonduo explained that a curriculum framework was developed by one language group, and that others use and continuously improve it. Where oral traditions are so strong, the greatest challenge is to create a literate environment that sustains literacy gains.



The experience of **Nepal** was presented by Tap Raj Pant. The Nepal-specific EFA Goal 7 promotes the right of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education in their mother tongue. Consequently, curricula and learning materials have been developed in different languages. Pant shared the experience of a literacy project in a Tharu community which uses a bilingual mother tongue approach. The outcomes of this project include the development of positive attitudes – particularly among the younger generation – towards preservation and further development of Tharu as a written language and towards improving living conditions. The lessons learned include the need to upgrade mother tongue literacy programmes to address the needs of different language groups and to go beyond basic literacy (to post-literacy programmes, income-generating training and continuing education). A lot of support is required for the promotion and preservation of indigenous skills. Hakeem informed the meeting that this pilot project is part of a series of twenty projects in the region. He expressed the hope that governments will take notice of the encouraging results and help to build on these experiences.

The **Indian** government promotes the Three Language Policy in education (mother tongue, Hindi, English). Using India as an example, Huma Masood addressed the issue of translating policy into practice. She posed the question: Are we honouring our commitments? She emphasized that the additive model of multilingual education is the most suitable in a multilingual context. She also shared experiences about different initiatives for multilingual education in tribal areas in India. The discussion evolved around the need to adjust the language approach in education to demand and the growing demand for English language skills, which needs to be addressed by NFE systems. In the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan, literacy classes in Urdu are an impediment to learning for female Pashto speakers. It was stressed that there is a need to have a sound system in place to assess learners' needs, codify local languages, develop materials, train facilitators and promote literacy first in the mother tongue before other languages are taught.

## Synthesis

Based on the presentations and discussions during the second day, Jin Yang (China) presented the following synthesis of issues, challenges and lessons learned:

### 1) Overview

- Low priority is given to literacy and weak political will
- Strong governmental commitment (at both national and local levels) and policies are required (the literacy goal is the least likely of the six EFA goals to be achieved)
- Good advocacy is required
- Proper benchmarks need to be developed, not just literacy rate

## **2) Situational Analysis**

- Vital role of evidence
- A prerequisite for meaningful action and the way forward
- Shared vision of all stakeholders
- Awareness of the significance of the analysis
- Capacity-building for implementing the analysis

## **3) Building Effective Partnerships**

- Working together throughout the process of LIFE (Dream together is reality!)
- Multi-ministerial and multi-agency partnership, so as to link LIFE with other initiatives (e.g., livelihoods skills development and poverty reduction, health, etc.)
- International and national NGOs are considered as strategic partners (Bunyard, CAMPE, NCHD, etc.) The devil is in the detail!
- Build links with donors and corporate sector
- Creating vertical partnerships: grassroots – national – international organizations
- Universities/civil society/communities/volunteers
- Integration of formal and non-formal education

## **4) Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy**

- M&E is necessary to identify what has worked and what needs to be done
- M&E has to be linked to the objectives of LIFE
- M&E needs to be carried out at district, national and international level (annual, mid-term, final)
- UIL has developed a framework for country-level M&E with both vertical and horizontal dimensions
- Capacity for M&E needs to be enhanced

## **5) Literacy Assessment**

- Conventional indirect assessments have been widely used in household surveys and censuses (reported literacy statistics)
- Direct assessments are needed to make well informed policy decisions (tested literacy statistics)
- UIS has developed LAMP with testing instruments (suitable at the national level)
- UNESCO Bangkok has developed AIMS (module and manual) in the Asia-Pacific region (suitable for sub-national levels and sample assessment)
- Capacity and possibility for full-scale direct assessment?

## 6) Literacy in Multilingual Contexts

- The Asia-Pacific region is very diverse, culturally and linguistically
- The choice of language is a political and culturally sensitive issue
- Children and adults quickly acquire a high level of competence in their mother tongues and the languages they use most in everyday life
- Community leadership: a bottom-up approach in the language choice, catering for and respecting the rights of the speakers of various languages
- Multilingualism is better in the globalizing world
- Efforts and support are needed to locally develop multilingual materials, to train teachers, and to develop orthographies

Dinner reception with  
live music hosted by  
UNESCO Dhaka



## **Day 3: 23 January 2008**

### **Field Visit to a Community Learning Centre (Ganokendra) in Narshingdi**

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) organized a full day field visit to sites operated under their Community Learning Centre Programme in the Narshingdi district. Participants were divided into four groups. Each group was accompanied by DAM field staff on visits to two different community learning centres (CLCs) and one community resource centre (CRC). The four groups started their field trip with a visit to the local DAM field office.

DAM has been running different projects in Narshingdi since the 1990s to raise the socio-economic condition of this disadvantaged community. The entry point for all activities is basic literacy and continuing education. CLCs perform a facilitating role to help poor communities gain sustainable access to the world of work and to participate in social and economic development. CLCs are linked with CRCs. CRCs are equipped with ICT facilities and training supports. Each CRC supports about 10 CLCs. Each CRC has a management committee with members drawn from CLCs; their function is to coordinate activities among the CLCs.

#### **Some basic information about the working area at Narshingdi:**

- CLCs (Ganokendra): 92
- CRCs: 5
- Beneficiaries: 8,587

#### **Functions/Activities:**

- Literacy learning
- Resource mobilization
- Income-generation activities
- Raising awareness about gender, environment, use of safe water, hygiene, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and civic rights
- Cultural activities
- Use of information and communication technology at CRCs

#### **Innovative features of the Ganokendra project:**

- The centre is organized and run by the community.
- Post-literacy learning support is not time-bound. It addresses the learning needs of neo-literates and therefore promotes lifelong learning.
- Users strive to reach an advanced level of literacy.
- Activities are accessible to all people in the area, not just neo-literates from literacy centres.
- Activities are linked with socio-economic and environmental programmes.
- The project provides an information centre where newspapers, newsletters and information materials from other agencies are available, helping to generate a rich literate environment
- The project provides educational and financial services (micro-credit) – either from its own funds (matching funds) or in partnership with other NGOs.

- The facility is used as a service delivery centre by other agencies, including government extension

**Outcomes:**

- Literacy practice has been increased in the area of CLCs.
- Solidarity has increased within the community.
- The socio-economic condition of CLC members has improved.
- There is a marked growth of interest among community members in ICT.

Learners and CLCs in Narshingdi



## **Day 4:** **24 January** **2008**

### **Agenda Item 5:** **Effective Practices** **to Improve Quality** **of Literacy**

#### **Chair:**

Huma Masood, UNESCO Delhi

#### **Presenters:**

Kiichi Oyasu, APPEAL/UNESCO Bangkok

Ulrike Hanemann, UIL

Nasreen Gul, UNESCO Islamabad

Hassan Keynan, UNESCO Dhaka

At the start of this session, participants were asked to report their impressions gathered during the field visit.

The Nepalese participants were impressed by the level of community ownership and the strong female participation. They also noted the effective links between CLCs and CRCs, and both vertical and horizontal communication. The weaknesses identified included repetition in the adult literacy classes and low governmental involvement/support.

Other members of this group noticed a difference between the two CLCs visited: The first CLC evolved over time through a process of social mobilization, with the community gradually taking on greater responsibilities; by contrast, the second CLC was dominated by the community member responsible for literacy classes. This group also identified the impact of CLCs in bringing about awareness and empowerment, economic independence (poverty reduction), improved environment and sanitation, a higher rate of literacy, and a significant increase in primary school enrolment. Committees have been formed with responsibility for different tasks such as enrolment, birth registration, health services, and prevention of early marriage. The group produced the following suggestions:

- a) Provide more learning and reading materials in the CLCs;
- b) Increase male participation, also with regard to skills training and income-generating activities;
- c) Address the problem of out-of-school adolescents; and
- d) Link literacy with continuous learning to ensure the sustainability of interventions.

The second group observed a number of positive aspects, such as the diversity of activities under the auspices of the CLCs, the availability of learning materials on site, the use of self-developed and readily available materials, multi-age groups, empowerment of women and girls, the combining literacy with life skills, and vocational training. The weaknesses observed included excessive emphasis on income generation and too little on literacy learning, the lack of a local market, and the persistence of long-standing problems such as lack of electricity and insufficient space in the CLCs.

The group report listed a number of findings and identified the key requirements for an integrated community-based approach to CLCs:

- a) Owned and supported by the community;
- b) Local government support/participation;
- c) Funds raised by the community and managed through own bank account;
- d) Providing second chance to school leavers;
- e) Linked to other programmes;
- f) Both CLC and CRC have board management;
- g) Land is donated by land owner; and
- h) Programmes offering life skills.

A major problem identified by the group was the lack of a market in which to sell products generated via the CLCs. Other group members emphasized the high degree of self-confidence observed among participants (particularly among female participants), as well as their ability to assume leadership in community affairs.

The fourth group was impressed by the full support of the local community. They also pointed out that the DAM team's commitment and effective monitoring has contributed a lot to the success of the CLC programme. DAM has provided support through capacity building, resource materials and funding. A systematic approach helped girls to participate in the centre. The centre's close proximity to the community also plays a role in the success of literacy provision. The CLC serves as a multipurpose centre. Links were established with other line departments and NGOs for the promotion of health and sanitation. Creative ways were adopted to provide micro credit, raise community awareness, promote health, offer access to ICT, as well as provide practical services such as mobile phone repair. However, more women need to be promoted to management and supervisory positions to ensure gender balance. It is not enough that women participate in training; they must also be genuinely involved in decision-making. Child labour was a key issue addressed by the CLC. Boys, in particular, are often prevented from taking part in primary education due to work. However, 30 percent of children who dropped out were brought back to their education via the CLCs. The community contributes 1 taka (approx. \$1.015) per month per head as well as benefits in kind (crops) to support the development of CLCs.

In reaction to the feedback, Ehsanur Rahman, DAM, made clear that CLCs have not been established overnight, and cannot be expected to fully function immediately. Rather, they have evolved over time, and gone through ups and downs. Some of them have been running for ten years as joint community / DAM efforts. CLCs aim to serve people of all ages and with a diversity of purposes. Based on Rahman's experience, unity among community members has been a major success factor in keeping



the CLCs running for so many years. He recognized a neglect of the literacy component, which was mainly due to the lack of an overall literacy policy and of a qualifications framework at the national level. This would also facilitate, among other things, links with the Open University. Furthermore, Rahman addressed the issue of monitoring CLC performance. DAM uses a set of standard indicators that allows for country-wide comparative monitoring.

In the ensuing discussion, participants raised some additional concerns: resource mobilization should not be used as an indicator for monitoring progress since some communities are too poor; government involvement is too weak; and CLCs are overburdened in providing secondary education, which is still inaccessible for most of the rural population. Another issue of concern was the limited potential of CLCs for absorbing major numbers of illiterates. One participant asked whether the CLC model is really able to make the impact for which LIFE is striving. Should CLCs not focus rather on post-literacy? It was suggested that a proper assessment of CLCs' outputs be initiated. It was noted that CLCs could not show what support they get and how they are using this. Other participants proposed using CLCs as change agents and as a demand-driven provision. Some observed that, after 14 years of implementation, evidence of overall development in the community served by the CLC was not very impressive.

DAM stressed again that having CLCs act as change agents involves long-term processes. It is very important that related institutional mechanisms be established. An exit strategy already exists. Many lessons have been learned; for example, that capacity-building is "a must" or that projects initiated by the community are most likely to last. A bottom-up approach is not only more effective, but also less expensive. Social engineering takes time. What participants found in the field are the fruits of years of work!

Before summarizing **new trends among CLCs**, Kiichi Oyasu made clear that CLCs respond to a demand coming from Member States to provide a community-based delivery mechanism for continuing education. It is not a UNESCO intervention, though UNESCO is facilitating the development of a community-based model to provide education and training. The major challenge is sustainability. This needs to be addressed through policy support for resource allocation and mobilization, external support with new ideas, decentralization and effective implementation. Effective sustainability strategies include community ownership, resource mobilization, capacity-building, linkages and networking, monitoring and evaluation. Oyasu also conveyed experiences from regional equivalency, literacy and life skills programmes. In this context, CLCs proved to be venues for continuous learning and for the promotion of sustainable community development. The value added to needs-based and rights-based approaches through CLCs are their comprehensiveness, their ability to identify gaps in the community, and their capacity to guarantee the role of duty bearers.

In her presentation on **pedagogical approaches to literacy acquisition**, Ulrike Hanemann began by defining learning outcomes, strategies and wider policy goals in relation to a skills-based approach, a functional approach (application of literacy for specific purposes) and an empowerment and transformative approach. Then she particularly focused on the literacy curriculum. The different dimensions of a literacy curriculum (awareness, functionality, flexibility, diversity, appropriateness of learning relationship, activity orientation) can act as a bridge between the different approaches and emphasize the need for contextual relevance. Ideally, literacy education will be embedded in other activities that are meaningful to people. In this way, literacy becomes indispensable for learners and it is more difficult to relapse into illiteracy. The challenges that curriculum developers face can be best addressed by striking a balance between what is relevant to local context and wider opportunity; between what motivates learners and broader development needs; and between facilitating accreditation and making the curriculum relevant to immediate everyday needs. Arguments for a prescriptive or centralized approach to curriculum were balanced against those for an open and decentralized approach. She stressed that the (intended) curriculum alone is not the only determinant of literacy learning quality. It is also important how it is implemented (facilitators' training). A good curriculum should be suited to the country, the learners and the facilitators, as well as fulfill learning criteria. In addition, it should be realistic and feasible, and be open to on-going revision and improvement.

Nasreen Gul shared the experience of **gender responsive literacy programmes in Pakistan**, where the national average of gender disparity in literacy rate is 25 percent. Sixty percent of the illiterate population in Pakistan is female. The project activity consisted mainly of reviewing the national policy and programmes from a gender perspective, conducting research on gender disparities to determine the root causes of low female literacy rates, developing advocacy material on gender mainstreaming and implementing sensitization workshops. One striking finding was that women have little or no say in policy decisions related to literacy. One of the key strengths of the literacy programmes reviewed was their efforts to address the barriers that traditionally impede women's participation. Ninety percent of the literacy programmes are for girls and women, and learners appreciated teachers' efforts to provide informal counselling as part of the literacy classes. However, a lot still needs to be done in order to attain the gender-related EFA goals. In conclusion, Gul stressed that literacy programmes must address gender as a key issue and must be gender responsive (need for gender analysis). Gender equality must become a cross-cutting and multi-dimensional issue.

In order to address the difficulty of reaching excluded population groups, and in order to accelerate progress in literacy provision, UNESCO Dhaka has started a pilot project that is **using ICTs to teach literacy**. The project presented by Hassan Keynan was developed from the outset with the involvement of learners. An electronic version of the literacy primer was

devised based on interviews to assess local needs and included the 600 most frequently used words. Participants were shown a demonstration of one learning unit. This ICT-based primer and a related workbook are currently being tested.

The discussion tackled the multiple approaches to curriculum development, learner-generated materials, personalized approaches to curriculum and the use of ICTs to achieve this. Also discussed were the need to build gender sensitivity into guidelines for material development and the need to move from perceived needs towards broader and wider issues of social interest (i.e., rights). The trend at the international level is increasingly towards taking a decentralized, personalized and flexible approach to the curriculum. It was stressed that decentralized and contextualized approaches to the curriculum need to be paired with longer-term capacity-building activities. It is also important that curriculum developers are critical enough not to accept everything coming from 'outside' and that they make informed choices. Participants debated over the role that CLCs should play for achieving gender equality. It was suggested that the transformational role of CLCs be emphasized. It was also noted that CLCs should involve women more in curriculum and material development.

#### Plenary session



## Agenda Item 6: How Can the LIFE Framework be Used to Strengthen Capacities for Effective Literacy Policy and Programmes at the Country Level?

**Chair:** Hameed Hakeem, APPEAL/UNESCO Bangkok

The discussion in this session, which was arranged in preparation for the subsequent workshop session where country teams would draft LIFE work plans for 2008, began with the question: **How can LIFE add value to on-going literacy efforts in LIFE countries?** In particular, those countries that had already begun their LIFE processes were asked to share their experiences about how LIFE was used to generate greater momentum for literacy.

The delegation from **Pakistan** began by explaining how LIFE has helped expedite literacy efforts in the strategic areas of policy, advocacy, capacity-building and innovation. In the field of policy, LIFE has helped to raise awareness through national and provincial debates. Also, the parliamentary caucus has helped mobilize people and the media for advocacy. A policy revision process has already taken place. In the area of capacity-building, around 150 workshops were conducted to train mainly managers and facilitators. Innovations included the development of an ICT-based literacy course. All this has happened within the national framework. However, more input and energy are needed at the district level. Also, more involvement of NGOs and civil society organizations is needed. Universities should be involved in research and extension work. One of the achievements of LIFE is the preparation of the National Literacy Curriculum. The situational analysis was carried out last year (first at the provincial level and then at the national level), which resulted in a national report. This, however, was not implemented due to a lack of capacity. A steering committee was established as a national coordination mechanism for LIFE. All in all, the process has gotten off to a good start.

NGO delegates also shared their views. Pakistan is one of the countries piloting the 'One UN System.' An Education Sector Meeting was also held to consult stakeholders. Literacy was declared a priority and UNESCO was asked to provide leadership. In the first regional LIFE meeting in Islamabad during 2006, the role of NGOs in LIFE was emphasized. Much work remains to be done to make this a reality. For example, there is still a need for a clearer coordination mechanism. Funding often does not reach the provinces and districts or, even worse, remains unspent. During the last two years, some of Pakistan's provinces did not undertake any new work on literacy.

The delegation from **Bangladesh** continued sharing their experiences with LIFE. A situational analysis was undertaken and a National Action Plan developed. The new NFE policy incorporates all four strategic areas of LIFE, and involves all stakeholders. UNICEF and UNESCO have both supported capacity-building activities. DAM has helped to build capacities within UNESCO's extra-budgetary funded LIFE project. There has been a greater participation of NGOs in designing policy and programmes. LIFE has managed to bring government and civil society together to create a strong partnership. The UN system is likewise involved. LIFE has actually provided new ideas and a vision to fulfil certain targets. While not all achievements can be clearly attributed to LIFE, the delegates reported that "LIFE has given

us new thoughts." CAMPE (Campaign for Popular Education), representing a network of 1,000 NGOs in Bangladesh, reported that numerous innovations promoted by LIFE are underway. These are building the capacities of the NGOs. LIFE should try to involve more NGOs and to raise greater funding for literacy.

**Afghanistan** has recently initiated the LIFE process. The biggest achievement so far has been the establishment of a coordination mechanism. This LIFE Committee includes national and international stakeholders, UN agencies and NGOs. A clear plan now exists to move forward. Extra-budgetary funds for a LIFE project have been provided by the Japanese government. LIFE has also helped the Afghan government to raise funds for literacy, and is recognized by the UN in Afghanistan as the overall framework for literacy activities.

After the 2006 Regional LIFE Meeting in Islamabad, **Nepal** developed a 10-year literacy policy framework. In meetings with donors, the concept of LIFE is being disseminated. Donors have shown willingness to work within the LIFE framework. From the UN perspective, literacy should be a priority in Nepal. A LIFE focal point was designated. There is also a lot of networking with NGOs. Capacity-building of CLC managers and pilot testing of an equivalency programme are some of the activities being undertaken to advance literacy. A situational analysis has also been undertaken, and a draft report is available. The plan is to create a momentum for LIFE and literacy.

**Papua New Guinea** reported joining the initiative. A situational analysis has been conducted. There is now a task force in place to formulate a work plan. LIFE will provide quality-assurance support to existing initiatives. Unfortunately, UNESCO Apia is 12 hours away by plane, so support to the LIFE process in Papua New Guinea poses a real challenge.

China emphasized that LIFE is a necessity, and that it is ready to start the process in 2008. Since one of the criteria for participation in LIFE is an illiterate population of more than 10 million, China, because of its very large population, will most likely remain a LIFE country forever. One of UNESCO's tasks should be to persuade the wealthier countries to provide greater funding for literacy programmes.

In **India**, UNESCO has already announced that LIFE is established. A LIFE Committee or task force will have to be set up in order to develop a work plan. UNESCO Delhi has prepared and disseminated a LIFE training kit. LIFE will also be an opportunity to re-think old strategies. Innovations will be promoted and new activities such as the development of in-built monitoring and evaluation systems will be identified. Technical support will be needed from UNESCO Bangkok as well as strong partnerships.

The **Iranian** government has allocated 200 million dollars for literacy. Various universities and ministries have been mobilized. The empowerment of girls and women is at the core of the literacy programme.

Country teams draft work plans (China, Afghanistan, Nepal, PNG, Iran, Pakistan)



Participants were asked to **work together in country teams to plan the way forward**. They were asked to consider what can be done to re-invigorate literacy programmes. LIFE needs to be incorporated into existing processes. Where possible, synergies should be used. Planning should also be done with a longer-term perspective. Countries should also explore possibilities of supporting each other within a South-South cooperation and solidarity scheme.



## Agenda Item 7: Planning the Way Forward

Chairs: Ulrike Hanemann and Hameed Hakeem

Presenters: Country teams

The last session of the meeting began with the presentation of action plan outlines that each country team had drafted during the previous work session. The teams were asked to map out the key challenges, the main strategies and activities to address them, and the support needed. This exercise was seen merely as an initial approach to the plans of countries in the framework of LIFE for 2008 (and even beyond), since the plans would still need to be validated by the competent ministries, other stakeholders might need to be involved and no complete information about budgetary and extra-budgetary resources was yet available for LIFE.

The key strategies of the **Country Action Plan for Pakistan** include activities related to a national policy for literacy, advocacy, adaptation of generic benchmarks to Pakistan's situation, mapping of NGOs in literacy, piloting one CLC as well as an ICT-based literacy programme in each district, literacy assessment system and tools, using the 2008 census to include indicators on literacy, decentralized literacy delivery at district level, and the development of a LIFE Action Plan. Support is required from the government (all levels), corporate sector, communities, UNESCO and international donors. This includes financial and technical support as well as support in mobilizing the illiterate population.

The **Work Plan** presented for **Bangladesh** lists six priority areas: preparation of an operational plan in line with the NFE policy and NPA; advocacy; human resource development; an equivalency framework; NFE-MIS; and decentralization. The required actions include a mapping of NFE, a participatory planning process, capacity building for effective advocacy, promotion of partnership and networking, development of a national equivalency framework together with standards and an assessment system, and the development of a comprehensive database for NFE. Technical and financial support is needed from UNESCO to implement these activities.

In an initial proposal for **China's LIFE Work Plan**, the team suggested four clusters of action:

- a) To conduct a situational analysis on the literacy situation and organize a policy forum to raise awareness;
- b) To build a work structure through the existing national steering committee for adult literacy, establish a coordinating mechanism at provincial and county levels, and involve experts from relevant fields;
- c) To revitalize rural adult cultural and technical schools, to advocate increased funding, and to strengthen the pedagogical components (curriculum, materials, training, use of ICTs) at local levels; and
- d) To conduct capacity-building workshops for planners, promote research and pilot literacy assessment to produce tested literacy statistics.

In 2010, there will be a national census in China that should be used to obtain more accurate data on the literacy situation. Funds and technical assistance (UIL, UIS and RBE) are needed from UNESCO.

The **Papua New Guinea** team presented the **Draft 2008–2009 Work Plan** with the overall goal of revitalizing the status and work of literacy, increasing political and financial commitment, strengthening leadership and coordination, improving the policy, monitoring and evaluation framework, and building capacities. The main activities required to achieve this goal include finalization of the situational analysis, review of the National Literacy Policy, development of an M & E framework, review of the national leadership and coordination mechanism, and capacity-building in training, advocacy and networking. For this, financial and technical support is required from UNESCO.

In their **Work Plan for 2008**, the country team from **Iran** grouped their planned activities under four major challenges:

- a) Need to extend ICT to pave the way forward towards a knowledge-based society;
- b) Lack of attention to life skills and related materials;
- c) Diversity of learning needs and interests (quality is the main problem, not quantity); and
- d) Regression to illiteracy.

The activities planned to address these challenges include piloting ICT-based learning programmes, integrating life skills into the curriculum, developing materials and training in active learning methods, diversifying literacy programmes and developing post-literacy programmes and materials. This requires technical and financial support from UNESCO.

The main activities of the **LIFE Work Plan 2008–2009 for Afghanistan** include the finalization of the needs assessment study and the development of a National Literacy Action Plan, the preparation and implementation of the (Japanese-funded) LIFE project, the monthly meetings of the LIFE Coordination Group and establishment of the following institutions and mechanisms: a High Commission for National Literacy Programme; Literacy Commissions at provincial level; a LIFE Steering Committee; advocacy activities (translation of LIFE brochure to Dari & Pashto) and capacity-building for NFE-MIS. In addition to the expected funds from the Japanese government, support is expected from UIL and UNESCO Bangkok.

The **Nepalese** team presented in their outline of the proposed **LIFE Work Plan 2008** five key challenges: disparities in language, lack of contextualized and culturally appropriate literacy material; high school drop-out rates; lack of a literacy database; and lack of capacity, advocacy and awareness on literacy. The activities planned to address these challenges include the development of mother tongue literacy material, culturally appropriate



literacy programme, equivalency programme for school drop-outs, NFE-MIS, capacity-building workshops for NFE personnel and CLCs, awareness-raising programmes, advocacy materials and the establishment of literacy benchmarks. Nepal needs financial and technical support from UNESCO, as well as from other international organizations (e.g. DANIDA, JICA).

In the discussion that followed the presentations of the country work plans, participants explored possibilities of **South-South cooperation** and of using regional structures and events to network and support national LIFE processes. For example, within the upcoming preparatory process towards the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), taking place from 25–29 May 2009 in Brazil, a Regional CONFINTEA VI Meeting for the Asia and Pacific countries will be held in South Korea in October 2008. This event could be used to organize a side meeting with LIFE focal points to coordinate further exchange on experiences and South-South cooperation.

UIL presented the proposal for **LIFE-Line**, a network and online platform for LIFE that would be accessible through the UNESCO Literacy Portal (launched in September 2007). The main goal of LIFE-Line would be to strengthen the facilitation of the LIFE framework through exchange between LIFE focal points, literacy experts and other key actors with a focus on effective literacy policies and practices. In addition to the cross-country and cross-regional communication possibilities, it would provide access to first-hand country-specific information (database with documents) and it may also be used as an online discussion forum moderated by experts whom UIL would invite to address specific topics. Participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire that UIL prepared in order to explore potential demand and interests with regard to these proposals.

In a further discussion of **networking possibilities**, some participants suggested using existing platforms such as the ACCU Literacy Database (which needs to be updated) and the APPEAL Resource and Training Consortium (ARTC). Networking among literacy resource centres, such as the State Resource Centre in India, could also be strengthened. However, the effectiveness of some of these networks needs to be reviewed, in particular with regard to the support they may provide to LIFE in the region. Participants identified a particular need for advocacy tools. Study visits were also recommended as a way of allowing exchange of experts and further developing capacities. The Pakistani delegation emphasized that these types of regional LIFE meetings provide excellent opportunities to network. They also contribute to strengthening partnerships between governments and NGOs. It was also considered important to develop the capacities of top-level policy makers. UNESCO shall provide support in this regard.

Before the closing ceremony, participants were asked to **evaluate the meeting**. In the evaluation sheets, most of the participants ranked the *field visit, selection (appropriateness) of topics for sessions and opportunities*

*for networking and getting new ideas for local adaptation as 'very good.' Quality of presentations, exhibition and displays and attainment of objectives of the meeting were ranked by most of the participants as 'good.' Only one participant expressed dissatisfaction, and this was only with regard to opportunities for networking and gaining new ideas for local adaptation.*

In the **conclusions and evaluation round**, participants expressed the view that this meeting had been very important for them (and according to one participant: "The most successful workshop I have attended in a long time!"). The participants stated that the meeting had been well organized and that a large number of issues had been addressed in a short time. However, they regretted that there was not more time for discussion and reflection. It was suggested that the next regional meeting should focus on how progress in literacy can be accelerated and on how to learn lessons from examples of countries that are advanced as well as from those that are lagging behind. From the point of view of follow-up work to the high-level regional meetings in support to global literacy held in Beijing and Delhi, this meeting brought together people from the implementation level to follow up on the recommendations that came out of the two conferences. LIFE has to use a two-pronged approach: On the one hand it has to create a momentum, make a case for literacy and reach a quantitative impact; on the other hand, it has to work with a sustainability focus and contribute to the development of long-term responses and capacities. LIFE should not to be seen as a one-shot intervention, but as a process that builds capacities for facing emerging and future challenges.

Some concern was expressed about the fact that the national LIFE focal points from Indonesia, India and China did not participate. It was also proposed to ask the Director-General of UNESCO to meet with ministers of the Asia and Pacific LIFE countries who would be attending the upcoming E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting in Bali during March 2008. UNESCO participants were asked to convey to their directors the need to have LIFE included in the agenda of the Heads of Field Office meetings immediately prior to the E-9 meeting. Participants were encouraged to work together with universities in their home countries to come up with case studies that provide evidence of the benefits of investing into literacy. These examples from participants' own countries could help to make a strong case for investing in literacy.

# Closing Ceremony

**Chair:** Malama Meleisea, Director and Representative, UNESCO Dhaka Office

On behalf of the participants, Shaheen Attiq-ur-Rehman thanked the organizers and stated that the meeting had been a very useful learning experience. She reminded participants of the fact that the Asia-Pacific region represents more than half of the world's illiterate population, and the responsibility that implies for participants. The best thing about the meeting, she said, was that participants learned from each other; for example, about the good relationship between the Bangladeshi government and NGOs, or about the work of DAM in empowering communities. She appealed that LIFE goals be seen within the greater framework of the Millennium Development Goals. Votes of thanks were given to the Dhaka UNESCO team for organizing the event so efficiently.

Ulrike Hanemann pointed out that she had learned a lot from the participants and that the meeting had been extremely beneficial for advancing LIFE in the region. She expressed her hope that this was the 'extra shot' that LIFE needed to take off and become fully viable. Hameed Hakeem was encouraged by the positive feedback received from the participants in the workshop evaluation questionnaire. The meeting had been a good start to planning together. He expressed his hope that this will continue. He also felt encouraged by the fact that countries were keen to take follow-up action on developing national versions of the generic benchmarks for advocacy.

Hassan Keynes called the meeting a result of a collaborative effort involving partners such as UIL; the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok; the Government of Bangladesh, in particular the Secretary of the Ministry of Education; BNFE; DAM and BRAC staff; the UNICEF representative; and colleagues from UNESCO Dhaka. He also thanked the countries for their participation; in particular Apia and Papua New Guinea who managed to come from so far away.

Malama Meleisea concluded the closing ceremony with his reflections on empowerment and the responsibility to help people disempowered by illiteracy. Lack of political will is a very important factor. The 'extra shot' that LIFE is meant to give implies efforts to accelerate progress in literacy. He cautioned that this should not mean merely doing more of the same. There is a need to try out different and new approaches. For example, the use of ICT needs to be further explored, along with capacity-building of literacy facilitators (especially in rural areas) and better use of existing resources. In order to make LIFE more viable, it needs to be integrated into existing frameworks (MDGs, DESD, EFA). He also reflected on how LIFE would sound when translated into Bangla or other local languages. It should be catchy, so as to capture the attention of illiterates and politicians. He also supported the idea of holding an NGO meeting to share experiences. He closed his speech by wishing LIFE good luck for the next eight years!



Closing ceremony,  
exhibition of literacy  
materials, and  
participants after the  
meeting.



# Annex 1: Meeting Agenda

Monday, 21 January 2008	
08:30 - 09:00	Registration for the Participants
09:00 - 10:15	<p>Inaugural Session chaired by Malama Meleisea, Director and Representative, UNESCO Dhaka Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recitation from Holy the Quran</li> <li>• Welcome Address by Mahmudul Hassan, Secretary, Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO (BNCU)</li> <li>• Vision and Strategy of LIFE by Ulrike Hanemann, UIL</li> <li>• Regional Perspective of LIFE by Hameed Hakeem, APPEAL, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education Bangkok</li> <li>• Inaugural Address and formal opening of the meeting by Musharraf Hussain Bhuiyan, Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME)</li> <li>• Concluding speech by the Chair</li> </ul>
10:15 - 10:45	Tea Break
10:45 - 12:00	<p>Presentations and exchange on experiences of participating countries:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Bangladesh</li> <li>2) Pakistan</li> </ol>
12:00 - 13:00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Afghanistan</li> <li>2) China</li> </ol>
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 - 15:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) India</li> <li>2) Indonesia</li> <li>3) Iran</li> </ol>
15:30 - 16:00	Tea break
16:00 - 17:00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Nepal</li> <li>2) Papua New Guinea</li> </ol>
17:00 - 17:30	Synthesis of the issues, challenges and lessons learned by Ehsanur Rahman, Deputy Executive Director, Dhaka Ahsania Mission.
17:30	End of Session
Tuesday, 22 January 2008	
09:00 - 10:30	<p>Implementation of LIFE in Asia and Pacific</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Overview on what has happened so far- issues and challenges by Hameed Hakeem, APPEAL, UNESCO Bangkok</li> <li>2) Situational analysis as a preparatory step for LIFE               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Situational analysis by Ulrike Hanemann, UIL</li> <li>b) Experiences with situation analysis by Marina Patrier, UNESCO Kabul, Muhammad Saleem, MoE Pakistan, and Yayoi Segi-Vltchek, UNESCO Apia</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>Discussion</p>
10:30 - 11:00	Tea break

11:00 - 13:00	<p>1) Building effective partnerships and a momentum for LIFE by Minja Yang, Director UNESCO New Delhi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiences with partnerships in Bangladesh by Tasneem Athar, CAMPE</li> <li>• Experiences with partnerships in Pakistan by Shaheen Attiq-ur-Rehman and Iqbal ur Rehman</li> <li>• Experiences with advocacy in Bangladesh by M Ehsanur Rahman</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul> <p>2) Monitoring and Evaluation strategy as part of national LIFE processes by Ulrike Hanemann, UIL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange on experiences of countries with monitoring and evaluation, discussion of proposed framework, and agreement upon strategies for implementation of LIFE at the country level (situation analysis, monitoring and evaluation, reporting, etc.)</li> </ul>
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 - 15:00	<p>Literacy assessment</p> <p>1) Rationale, overview and tools by Subramaniyam Venkatraman, AIMS-UIS, Bangkok</p> <p>2) Benchmarks on Adult Literacy by Hameed Hakeem, APPEAL, UNESCO Bangkok</p> <p>Discussion</p>
15:00 - 15:30	Tea break
15:30 - 17:00	<p>Literacy in multilingual context</p> <p>1) Overview on current trends, issues, challenges, innovative approaches and lessons learned in Asia &amp; Pacific by Hameed Hakeem, APPEAL, UNESCO Bangkok</p> <p>2) Country experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Papua New Guinea (Willie Jonduo)</li> <li>• Nepal (Tap Raj Pant)</li> <li>• India (Huma Masood)</li> </ul> <p>Discussion</p>
17:00 - 17:15	Synthesis of the issues, challenges and lessons learned by Yang Jin, UIL
17:15 - 17:30	Briefing on field visit and end of session
<b>Wednesday, 23 January 2008</b>	
07:30	Departure for field visit
09:30 - 15:00	Field visit to the Community Learning Centres in rural areas of Narshingdi district (about 60 km from Dhaka).
17:00	Return to Dhaka

Thursday, 24 January 2008

09:00 - 11:00	<p>Effective practices to improve quality of literacy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Sharing of field experience from previous day by the participants. Exchange on experiences with CLCs and their potential for addressing the literacy challenge.</li><li>2) Pedagogical approaches by Kiichi Oyasu, APPEAL, UNESCO Bangkok and Ulrike Hanemann, UIL</li><li>3) Gender mainstreaming by Nasreen Gul, UNESCO Islamabad</li><li>4) ICT for Literacy by Hassan Keynan, UNESCO Dhaka</li></ol> <p>Discussion</p>
12:30 - 13:30	<p>Lunch Break</p>
13:30 - 15:30	<p>Work session for country-teams to draft work plans for 2008 on the basis of an analysis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Key challenges</li><li>• Required action to address them</li><li>• Support needed</li></ul> <p>Plenary to present the main results</p>
15:30 - 16:00	<p>Tea break</p>
16:00 - 17:00	<p>Planning the way forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Networking, exploration of possibilities for South-South cooperation (mapping offers and demands for support)</li><li>• Regional LIFE support mechanism</li></ul>
17:00 - 17:30	<p>Conclusions and evaluation of the meeting</p>
17:30 - 18:00	<p>Closing ceremony, chaired by Malama Meleisea, Director and Representative, UNESCO Dhaka Office</p> <p>Address by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One participant</li><li>• UIL</li><li>• APPEAL, UNESCO Bangkok</li><li>• Advisor, Ministry of Education, GoB</li><li>• Vote of thanks</li><li>• Closing remarks by the Chair</li></ul>

# Annex 2: List of Participants

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