



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

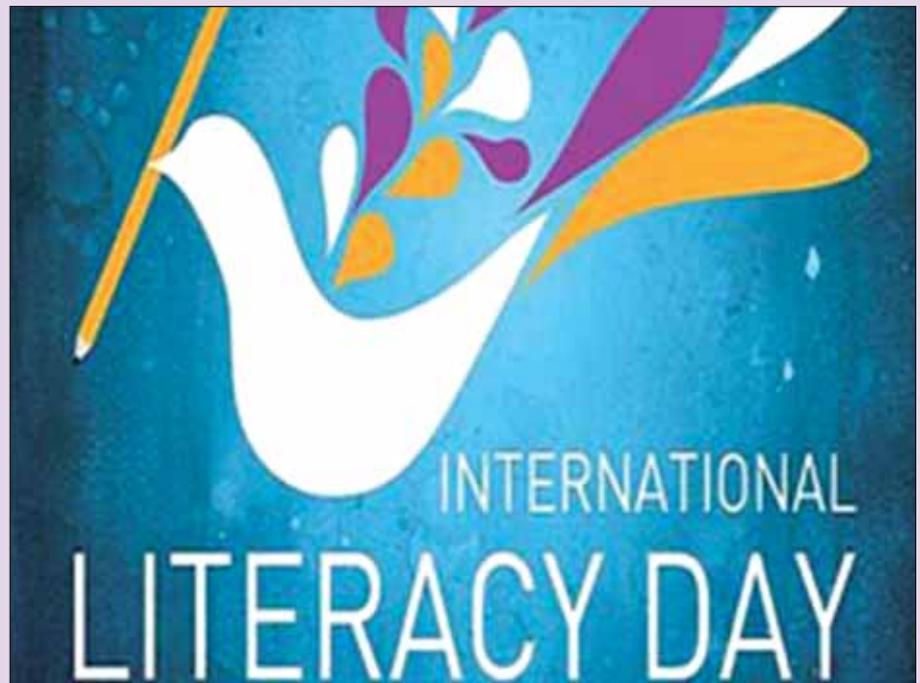
Featuring ICT & LITERACY

UNESCO - PACADE NEWSLETTER



NO. **3** 2012

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Lahore Association
of NGOs



Asia Pacific Bureau of
Adult Education



International Council of
Adult Education

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A Word about PACADE

PACADE is the national NGO for Literacy and Continuing Education in Pakistan. It was established in 1984. It is a registered society and has its head office at Lahore with representation in Peshawar, Karachi, Quetta and Islamabad. It is affiliated with ASPBAE (Asia and Pacific Bureau of Adult Education) and ICAE (International Council of Adult Education). It is a member of LANGOS (Lahore Association of NGOs) and has been linked to CIVICUS (The World Alliance for Citizens).

PACADE has held a number of conferences, seminars and workshops for the promotion of adult and continuing education in Pakistan. Mention may in particular be made of the South Asian Conference held in 1987 on the subject of Continuing Education - Key to Effective Living. It has held meetings on law and the citizen, health, education, environment issues and networking. Seminars and workshops on literacy methodologies, functional literacy, community involvement, monitoring, post-literacy and joy of learning have also been held in Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi and Islamabad. PACADE has made more than 6000 village women literate. It has run Female Literacy Centres in villages near Lahore primarily to test literacy methodologies. PACADE has been particularly keen to highlight and propagate the cause of Female Literacy. It also has had a programme for research on literacy and continuing education including a Journal published for a number of years, another magazine of and for newly literate women as also a number of books. PACADE has of late been working in the field of Gender and has organized a number of workshops to sensitise elementary teachers in 36 districts of the Punjab. More such workshops are on the cards.

One of PACADE's major roles has been to lobby with the government, international organizations and NGOs for the promotion of EFA. In this connection it remains in touch with the central and provincial governments in Pakistan, National Commission for Human Development, education foundations, universities and international agencies including UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF, Asian Development Bank, and NGOs.

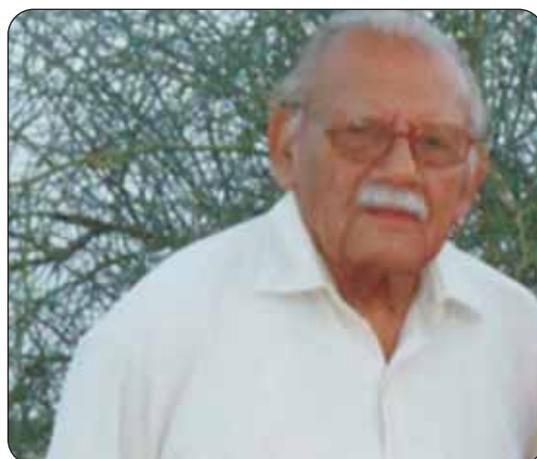
As a partner organisation with UNESCO, it has besides other tasks, helped prepare the national strategy for the Implementation of EFA National Plan of Action in Pakistan. Some of PACADE's significant contributions include helping organize Media Forums for EFA as well as the start of a Parliamentary Forum for Literacy. Mention may be made of The Literacy Forum consisting of leading literacy NGOs - an idea pioneered by PACADE and organising the first ever National Literacy Review Roundtables in collaboration with UNESCO and NCHD.

PACADE President was the first Chairman of the National Commission for Literacy and Mass Education. He also held the offices of Federal Secretary and Ambassador. He has been involved with environment education and was invited by the World Bank (EDI) to participate in a number of environment related workshops in India and Nepal. He has been actively participating in the UNESCO, ICAE, ASPBAE and CIVICUS conferences held in Beijing, Hamburg, Melbourne, Dacca, Buenos Aries, Cairo, Beirut, Delhi, Colombo, Bangkok and other places. He was invited to the UN World Conference of NGOs in New York where the proposals for the following UN Millennium Summit were formulated in the year 2000. In his capacity as a newspaper columnist, he has been writing for the promotion of literacy and education helping UNESCO Islamabad to involve the media and the parliamentarians in literacy. He has contributed more than two dozen articles on the state of literacy in Pakistan. He was chosen to write the Research paper on Adult Literacy in Asia and Pacific for the prestigious International Handbook (A publication of the Asia-Pacific Educational Research Association). He has also edited the first ever publication on Continuing Education in Pakistan.

FROM PACADE PRESIDENT's DESK

We live in the age of Information Technology. One of UNESCO's objectives is to promote the use of ICT in various fields of human endeavour especially in Education and Media.

This issue of the Newsletter focuses on ICT and Literacy. Readers will find information in it regarding the use of information technology for the imparting of literacy and teacher education about public and private partnership and a note on the Software Technology Pak named after the brilliant late Arfa Karim, started in Lahore. There is also a write up about the UNESCO - aided project Mobile For Literacy in Pakistan.



There are brief notes about the International Literacy Day. Messages of UN Secretary General and DGUNESCO have been included. Notes have been added about the meetings held on International Literacy Day by the provincial governments in Sindh and Punjab as well as by NGOs in all the provinces - Most of these meetings were sponsored by UNESCO Islamabad. Some of PACADE's activities mentioned in the Newsletter include the International Literacy day Meeting at the Punjab Public Library, a PACADE supported Early Childhood Care and Education seminar at the Children's Library Complex and a special Literacy Day Meeting organized in a Christian Church along with Mr. David Dewan, Chairman Nirali Kitaben, under the auspices of The Lietracy Forum.

Mention may be made of the initiative taken by one of the PACADE teachers in Madianwala village to continue and in fact consolidate activities of the Learning and Skills Centre initially started by PACADE with UNESCO's cooperation. Another similar centre is being run by a former PACADE supervisor.

During the period under review PACADE has made special efforts to persuade the Punjab government to expand and upscale the provincial literacy programme. In this connection I have had a number of meetings with the Chief Secretary, Finance Secretary and Secretary Literacy and NFBE Department. Hopefully positive results will emerge in due course.

Inayatullah

UNESCO Islamabad Colleagues on "ICT and Literacy"

The researches around the globe have shown that use of ICTs in Education yields far better results as compared to conventional methods of teaching-learning. The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for the purpose of education could be in any form; some of the examples of effective ICTs are learning through Radio, Television, VCR, VCD, DVD, Personal Computer, Internet, Mobile-phones.

In recent times, the concept of sitting at one place and learn has become obsolete-- now it's the age of customization of learning resources according to the need and social setup of the learners. For example, online course materials or distance learning allows learners to access learning material according to their convenience, irrespective of time and location. Use of ICTs has reduced the distance between the instructor and learners. ICT-based educational delivery (e.g., educational programming broadcast over radio or television) dispenses with the need for all learners without any discrimination.



Fakhar-ud-din



Phyza Jameel

The impact of learning through ICTs is just not limited to improving teaching and learning practices but it also contributes a great deal to the people's empowerment. In the age of technology, where world acts as a global village, the use of technology carries an inbuilt feature of social modernization and bringing a change in the way people interact and express themselves. Use of social networks can play a great deal in bringing a community spirit and binding people with different experiences with a virtual platform. It's a tool allowing more freedom of expression and enabling communities to access information, which is important and relevant to people's life. In Pakistan, the high number of use of Mobile phones is one of the examples. In UNESCO Islamabad, the communication and Information sector, through implementation of effective ICT tools gauge the difference which happens to young women's life when they study through mobile phones.

UNESCO Islamabad has initiated several projects to uplift literacy in Pakistan using various modes of ICTs in Education. One of the flagship projects is "Mobile-based Post Literacy Programme"; a real example of public-private-partnership this project presents a pilot with effective collaboration of Govt. and local CSO's working on an ICT platform to delivering the best education material on literacy for young female adults and low capacity teachers. The project is right now piloted in Punjab and KPK province with 1750 young adult females and 100 female rural teachers, with the support of NOKIA and Mobilink.

By: Fakhar-ud-din
Focal Person for Literacy

Phyza Jameel
Focal Person for C&I

What is ICT & Why ICT is useful ?

Information is basically data, which with the addition of learning becomes knowledge. In other words learning which is based on the capacity to find, access, apply and transform information into new knowledge. Important competencies which learners require to make this transformation are often called information literacy competencies and include awareness of the need for information, the ability to critically analyse information and evaluate its usefulness and ultimately to be able to apply the information, turning it into knowledge.

Communication is that simple act of dialogue between peoples and cultures that takes on a new dimension when combined with 'information' and 'technology'.

Technology is not strictly limited to the Internet and includes simpler technology such as CD ROM, video, television etc although the term 'information technology' does imply the use of the Internet and telecommunication networks. Certainly in educational practices, information technology falls into two parts: computer technology which is computer based courses, computerized tests, word processors, graphics software, spreadsheets, databases and presentation software; telecommunications software which offers distance courses, distributed educational resources, e-mail, videoconferencing, bulleting boards, whiteboards and chat' (Serdiukov 2001:5).

In brief, the application of ICT can take many forms and has the ability to 'revolutionise the way teaching and learning occurs. The concurrent use of multimedia and computers permits the development of new pedagogical approaches involving active and interactive learning' e.g. using computer based learning methods, problem based learning, project based learning, online, video conferencing, satellite links (Salmi 2001:116-7).

Dale Spender (2001), an Australian IT commentator, makes some useful comparisons between traditional teaching and learning indicating that ICT can lead to interactive, constantly changing, two way, customised or individualised teaching and learning which allows users to do things with information and make something new - 'print is read, online is used; print is studied, online is making; print is knowing, online is doing' (Educating the global village, Delors 1998:177).

(Source: By Madeleine Woolley, Director, Adelaide Institute)

Purpose

The main aim of ICT in education means meaningful use of ICT equipment and tools in teaching and learning process as a media and methodology. The purpose of ICT in education is generally to familiarise students with the use and workings of computers, and related social and ethical issues. ICT has also enabled learning through multiple intelligence as ICT has introduced learning through simulation games; this enables active learning through all senses.

Categories

ICT in education can be broadly categorized in the following ways as:

1. ICT as a subject (i.e., computer studies)
2. ICT as a tool to support traditional subjects (i.e., computer-based learning, presentation, research)
3. ICT as an administrative tool (i.e., education management information systems/EMIS)
4. ICT as a medium of knowledge exchange

(Source: Wikipedia)

ARFA SOFTWARE TECHNOLOGY PARK

Arfa Software Technology Park is the Country's largest Information and Communications Technology Park. The 17 story building is the first international standard facility in Pakistan and is located at Lahore.

This project was started as "Lahore Technology Park". On January 15, 2012, Lahore Software Technology Park was renamed as Arfa Software Technology Park by Chief Minister of Punjab, Mian Shahbaz Sharif. Arfa Karim was the youngest Microsoft Certified Professional who died at the age of 16. Chief Minister Punjab announced to change the name of Lahore Technology Park in recognition of her achievements.



Arfa Software Technology Park (ASTP) will help share the Government of Punjab's IT vision with the IT industry and the general public. ASTP is a one-window operation to attract local software companies and foreign investors to start IT and IT-enabled businesses in an expeditious manner. This initiative of Punjab Government will surely bring technology revolution in the region.

ASTP is a smart, efficient, secure and functional business venue, which hosts a diversity of modern-day business necessities under one roof. ASTP offers an array of high-quality facilities to businesses operating within the technology park with luxurious state-of-the-art business facilities like Tier III Data Center, Disaster Recovery Sites, water-proof pathways, high-tech security, advanced fire protection system, RFID controlled parking for over 1000 vehicles. The plug-and-play facilities and customized offices ensure business continuity, while conveniences like medical clinic, food courts, health club/Gym and travel agency are thoughtfully set up within the ASTP, making working life a conducive experience for employees of the tenant companies/business partners.

To ensure a failsafe and efficient environment, an IP based Building Management System(BMS) is installed at ASTP which enables the centralization and optimization of the monitoring, operating, and managing of the entire building. The high-performance HVAC digital control system manages the heating, ventilating, zoning, humidification and air cleaning systems of the building while cutting energy and equipment costs.

Facilities

1. IT
2. Utilities
3. Security

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UNESCO and Intel jointly train teacher educators on ICT integration - 16.08.2012

Without questions, the advance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has dramatically changed educators' paradigms in terms of universal access to education, equality learning and teaching, policy-making, and education management. Educators have found themselves in new pathways of teaching, which upgrade their capacities. Long distance is not an obstacle anymore when students living in remote areas can study through the Internet and online community.



With these innovations, ICT has great impact on education not only in terms of how to effectively provide education but also in terms of how to effectively reach education and study.

Through the collaborations of UNESCO, Bangkok and Intel Asia Pacific, and supported by Korean-Funds-in-Trust, the first Regional Teacher Education Institutions (TEI) - Resource Distribution Centres (RDC) Training Workshop was held in Bangkok, Thailand in July 2012. Twenty-eight lecturers and officials of TEIs from 15 countries in the Asia Pacific participated in the Workshop, together with three UNESCO Field Officers from India, Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

This four-day regional workshop on 3-6 July was divided into two parts: the Intel Teach Elements Project-Based Approaches Course; and Teaching with UNESCO ICT Multimedia tools. The participants were being trained to understand and apply project-based approaches in the 21st Century classroom such as project training and project assessment, and to use ICT pedagogy-integration of UNESCO's free multimedia resources and interactive tools into teacher's actual lessons.

All participants were representatives of UNESCO Resource Distribution Centres (RDCs), which are actively engaged in distributing resources throughout the Asia Pacific region. In the Asia Pacific region, ICT in Education resources and tools have been published, in a form of seven CD-ROMs, and approximately distributed more than 30,000 copies by UNESCO Bangkok and the RDCs over the last five years.

Sani Alhaji Garba, PHD-research fellow at University Sains Malaysia and workshop participant, said: "I think this workshop is very useful on the issue of how, when, and where to integrate ICT."

The workshop was designed as an interactive course for participants to practice and reflect to each other through training, and this also was a great opportunity for people working in the education sector to share their experiences, challenges, and obstacles they faced, and how to utilize ICT to upgrade their views on education.

Gwang-Jo Kim, Director of UNESCO Regional Office, Bangkok, said in his opening remark that "I hope that this workshop leads to more active and effective dissemination of the resources through discussing together and coming up with some innovative ideas of using the resources in teaching and learning. Eventually I would like to see that this workshop becomes a good seed to grow into ICT-integrated curriculum for pre-service and in-service teacher training in your respective organization and will be replicated in the future."

Note: For further information about this workshop please visit: www.unescobkk.org/

UNESCO is looking for initiatives promoting women's role in Free and Open Source Software

(21.08.2012 - Communication & Information Sector)

UNESCO's Gender Equality in Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) community is looking for groups and initiatives that promote women's role and representation in FOSS. This will allow building a comprehensive repository of FOSS Groups and Initiatives by and for Women and Girls.

Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) is liberally licensed software that grants users the right to use, study, adapt and distribute its design through the availability of its source code. Such approach to the use and development of software encourages innovation and skills-building.

FOSS has dramatically changed the way software is produced, distributed, supported and used. However, most of the problems pertaining to gender inequalities in the software industry have been duplicated in the FOSS field. According to UNESCO's Report on Gender Equality and Free and Open Source Software, globally less than 20 per cent of ICT developers and FOSS users are women. Furthermore, women's entry level wages are only 17 per cent of men's wages. Figures are especially worrying in FOSS. Only 2 per cent of professionals working in FOSS are women, compared to 28 per cent in proprietary software.

For this reason, UNESCO calls on FOSS communities to build a comprehensive list of FOSS Groups and Initiatives for Women and Girls. UNESCO encourages women's and girls' active participation in all aspects of the development and use of FOSS at all levels: cultural, economic, political and technical.

The objectives of the repository are the following:

1. to raise awareness about the gender gaps in FOSS;
2. to give more visibility to women-led FOSS groups and activities, including their important role as models and mentors for women and girls interested in FOSS;
3. to highlight women's representation and achievements in FOSS, and dedicated activities;
4. to provide a platform where different FOSS groups can create collaborative efforts, exchange information through relevant NGOs, associations, business, academia and the public sectors, and promote initiatives contributing to women's participation and advancement in FOSS.

Please send your contributions by e-mail to: [foss \(at\)unesco.org](mailto:foss@unesco.org) or join the [UNESCO FOSS community](#) by providing the following information:

1. for groups: name of the group, national or regional scope, a brief introduction and the link;
2. for initiatives/activities: title and a brief introduction including goals, status and achievements.

(Source: www.unesco.org/mediaservices)

UNESCO Advocates Free Education, Health and Safety in Schools of Sindh

UNESCO Advocates Free Education, Health and Safety in Schools of Sindh, in collaboration with Education & Literacy Department, Government of Sindh, organized a seminar on Right to Education and Health Standards in schools. The seminar was organised on 18th July, at Public School, Hyderabad and was attended by a large number of participants from different walks of life. Sindh Education Minister, Pir Mazhar-ul-Haq was the chief guest.



Speaking at the occasion, UNESCO Representative to Pakistan, Dr. Kozue Kay Nagata, said that Article 25-A of the 18th Amendment of Constitution has recognized access of all children aged 5-16 to free and compulsory education as a fundamental right, and that all four provinces and territories are expected to legislate their own provincial Acts for the implementation of Article 25-A. The participants were informed that UNESCO has extended technical assistance to the Senate of Pakistan for drafting of the Bill, which has now been passed for Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

The speakers underlined the need of Education for All, health and hygiene practices among children in schools and also advocated the need of having safe schools. It was recommended that School Health and Safety should be firmly adopted as an important strategy for achieving Education For All goals. Dr. Nagata showed her confidence in the representatives of people of Sindh and Education & Literacy Department led by Pir Mazhar-ul-Haq, to pass the bill on the right to free and compulsory education in Sindh and to ensure school health and safety standards in the province.

Senior Minister for Education, Pir Mazhar-ul-Haq appreciated the consistent efforts of UNESCO for advocating free education and raising awareness on healthy and safe schools in Sindh. He affirmed that Sindh Government was committed to Article 25-A and soon a bill on right to free education will be presented in the provincial assembly for legislation.

This seminar was in line with UNESCO's Article VIII of Dakar Framework of Action, which states "Create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments, conducive to excellence in learning..." (Article 8.viii).

Public Private Partnership on Use of Mobiles for Literacy in Pakistan

Mobile-Based Post Literacy Programme - funded by Government of Spain and Private Sector (Nokia & Mobilink)

Why Public-Private Partnership:

To create an enabling environment for achievement of Education For All Goals in Pakistan, Nokia & Mobilink has partnered with UNESCO on the projects using mobile technologies in Education and Literacy. The program, which was first launched in 2009, is a unique initiative that utilizes mobile technology to improve literacy for female adults, aged 15 to 25 years, of rural and deprived areas.

Aims and Objectives of the Project:

The main objective of the project is to develop a mobile-based literacy programme where the newly literates receive literacy materials as messages on a mobile phone, read and respond to the messages. This programme is designed not only to provide appropriate reading materials to learners in order to maintain and develop their literacy skills through a medium which has become an indispensable means of communication among the youth today, but also to promote knowledge in many aspects of life.

The rationales of the programme:

1. Mobile phones, therefore, would make a good medium for new literates to sustain their interests in reading and writing. Mobile phones, which are provided by the programme, become the property of the learners at the end of programme.
2. Sending email messages and monitoring learners' participation in the mobile-based literacy programme only requires a simple web-based system and is cost effective.



Literacy Programme:

The duration of the programme is six months. The programme is divided into two stages:

The first stage lasts two months. During this stage, learners attend a basic literacy course at a community literacy centre which meets two-three hours per day and six days a week. They learn to write the alphabets and to read with emphasis on phonics. Recently, computers and internet were introduced in the basic literacy course. UNESCO's interactive DVD "Becoming Literate" has been used by the learners.

For the second stage, following the two-month basic literacy course, learners are provided with free mobile phones. Originally approximately 600+ messages were developed on 17 different topics for the mobile-based programme. The topics include Islamic teaching, numeracy, health, general knowledge, local government, beauty tips, food recipes, jokes, and riddles. Then additional 200 messages were created on the topics such as disaster risk management, economy, the right to free compulsory education, cultural diversity, culture of Pakistan, culture of peace, human rights, rights of persons with disabilities, freedom of expression, and the voting process. Learners receive short message service (SMS) on their mobile phones 6-8 times a day. They are instructed to read them, practice writing them in their workbooks, and answer questions. Simple math is also taught using the calculator function on the mobile phones. Recently, Nokia Pakistan uploaded mobile phones with the contents of the UNESCO's interactive DVD through a software application called "e-Taleem App" (e-EducationApp).

Public Private Partnership: (i) UNESCO Islamabad (ii) Government Institutions (iii) Nokia Pakistan (Hardware part) (iv) Mobilink Pakistan (Software part) (v) Implementing Partners (NGOs):

Phase-1: April - September, 2010

After pilot phase's success, 50 literacy centres were established in the rural areas of 4 districts of Punjab where 1250 learners participated. During this phase, a notable improvement in learners' literacy skills was reported..

Reports and learners' testimonies from the two previous phases

Learners were learned how to read, write and solve small money problems through calculations. Learners can now read the Urdu newspaper, signboards and simple Urdu books. They can also understand the Holy Quran via its Urdu translation. Learners reported exchanging messages among fellow learners. Below are selected learners' testimonies:

It had been difficult for me to join a school to get formal education but through this diverse way of learning it has become easy for me as it is less time consuming. I still go there. I have also gained a lot of confidence.

I would like to say thanks to UNESCO and BUNYAD for facilitating us. Before joining this programme I did not know how to read and write but now I have come to know how to read and write. We come to know about many useful things through the messages sent to us by the head office.

(Note: the above was translated from Urdu to English).

**Up-scaling of the Project & Institutionalizing ICT & Literacy in the Public Sector:
(UNESCO - Private Sector - Government Partnership):**



New Phase: March to date + 2013:

Following the success of the pilot phase, 1) Dhaka Ahsania Mission Pakistan, Islamabad; and 2) public sector organization, Punjab Department of Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education, Lahore joined the project. Fifty additional literacy centres were established in the Punjab province in collaboration with the Bunyad Foundation; twenty in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province in collaboration with Dhaka Ahsania Mission Pakistan, Islamabad; and thirty in the South Punjab province in collaboration with Punjab Department of Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education, Lahore. An additional 2500 learners are expected to complete the programme.

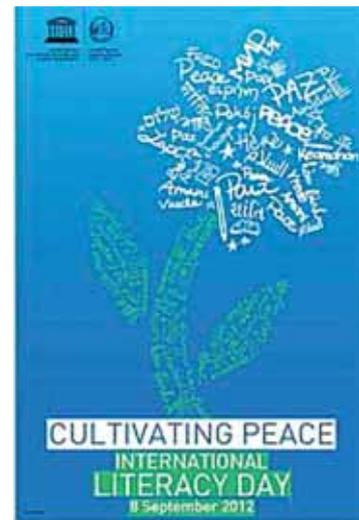
Another pilot project on Teachers' Training on ECE Methodologies through Mobile Technologies has been launched in collaboration with Ministry of Capital Administration and Development, Islamabad, wherein 150 ECE teachers of Islamabad Capital Territory will be trained.

Why is Literacy important?

Literacy is a human right, a tool of personal empowerment and a means for social and human development. Educational opportunities depend on literacy.

Literacy is at the heart of basic education for all, and essential for eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy. There are good reasons why literacy is at the core of Education for All (EFA).

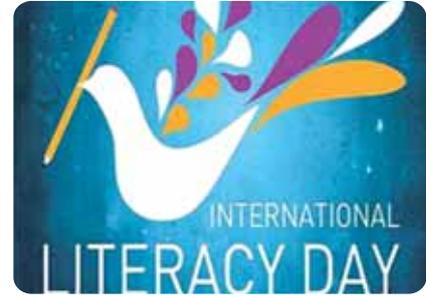
A good quality basic education equips pupils with literacy skills for life and further learning; literate parents are more likely to send their children to school; literate people are better able to access continuing educational opportunities; and literate societies are better geared to meet pressing development.



International Literacy Day - 8 September 2012

On International Literacy Day, UNESCO reminds the international community of the status of literacy and adult learning globally.

International Literacy Day 2011 focused on the link between literacy and peace. During a ceremony in New Delhi, India, UNESCO awarded the international Confucius and King Sejong literacy prizes to projects in Burundi, Mexico, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the United States of America.



Despite many and varied efforts, literacy remains an elusive target: some 793 million adults lack minimum literacy skills, which means that about one in six adults is still not literate; 67.4 million children are out-of-school and many more attend irregularly or drop out.

Following was the schedule of events organized by UNESCO Islamabad in collaboration with its Implementing Partners in Pakistan:

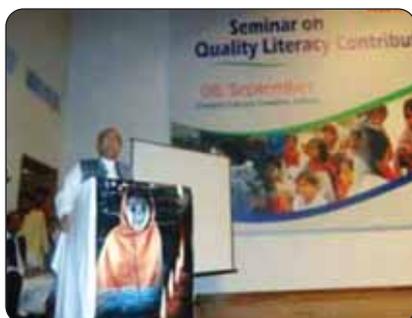
S.NO	Activity, Date & time	Organizer	Venue
1.	Seminar on International Literacy Day 8 th September, 2012 0930 – 1500 hours	Sindh Directorate of Literacy & Non-formal Basic Education, Karachi. Chief Guest: Pir Mazhar-ul-Haq , Senior Minister for Education, Government of Sindh	Sindh Madarsa-Tul-Islam University, Karachi
2.	Seminar on Literacy 8 th September, 2012 1400 – 1700 hours	Punjab Department of Literacy and Non-formal Basic Education, Lahore Chief Guest: Mian Mujtaba Shujaur Rehman , Minister for Education, Government of the Punjab	Children's Library Complex Lahore
3.	Literacy Day Walk 8 th September, 2012 1000 – 1130 hours	National Commission for Human Development, Islamabad Chief Guest: Syed Nayyer Hussain Bokhari , Chairman Senate of Pakistan (TBD) and Mr. Nazar Muhammad Gondal , Federal Minister for Ministry of Capital Administration & Development, Islamabad (TBD)	Start from China Chowk End at Parade Ground in front of National Assembly. Speeches at Parade Ground
4.	Seminar on "Literacy and Peace" (to be held) 25-30 Sept, 2012 1000 – 1500 hours	National Commission for Human Development, Islamabad Chief Guest: Sheikh Waqas Akram , Federal Minister For Ministry of Education & Training, Islamabad	Hotel Margalla, Islamabad
5.	Display of 100 Banners on the Theme "Literacy and Peace" in Islamabad 8 th September, 2012	National Commission for Human Development, Islamabad	Islamabad
6.	Seminar on International Literacy Day 8 th September, 2012 1000 – 1400 hours	Gul-e-Arzu Development Organization, Islamabad	Hotel PTDC, Bahawalpur
7.	Seminar on International Literacy Day 8 th September, 2012 1000 – 1400 hours	National Trust for Population Welfare (NATPOW), Islamabad	Shaheed Benazirabad District, Mehar Colony, UC Pir Zakiri, Tehsil Sakrand
8.	Seminar on International Literacy Day 8 th September, 2012 1000 – 1400 hours	National Trust for Population Welfare (NATPOW), Islamabad	Lahore (Chuhang Village)
9.	Seminar on International Literacy Day 8 th September, 2012 1000 – 1400 hours	National Trust for Population Welfare (NATPOW), Islamabad	Charsadda
10.	Seminar on International Literacy Day 10 th September, 2012 1000 – 1400 hours	National Trust for Population Welfare (NATPOW), Islamabad	Kohat

Seminar on Literacy and Peace: 8th September, 2012 Literacy & Non Formal Basic Education Department Govt. of Punjab, Lahore

After 18th amendment in Pakistan the government has established separate Literacy Department in the province of Punjab to combat the menace of illiteracy. The Department started its operations with a vision to have 100% literate Punjab by the end of 2020. The Department is working hard to achieve its target with the help of all stakeholders in the province. On 8th September, 2012, the Department celebrated International Literacy Day in collaboration with UNESCO & JICA. Mian Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman (Minister Education Punjab) was the Chief Guest on the occasion while Mr. Justice Khalil-Ur-Rehman Khan, Chairman Commission of Free & Compulsory Education Punjab was the Guest of Honor on the occasion. Secretary School Education Department was also present on the occasion. Different political figures, representative from National & International NGOs, Agencies and Donors (Like JICA, UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO, Bunyad, Pacade, Avicenna etc.), Non Formal School Learners & teachers were present on the occasion of seminar. Staff of Literacy department from all over province participated in the celebrations. Learners from Non Formal Basic Education Schools performed on Tableau and Milli Naghma on the International Literacy Day celebration.



Mr. Issa Sekongo, Administrative Officer, UNESCO Islamabad and Mr. Arshad Saeed Khan, Senior National Specialist (Education) represented UNESCO in the Seminar. Mr. Issa Sekongo read the message of Director, UNESCO Islamabad on the occasion of International Literacy Day, 8th September, 2012



Minister Literacy Punjab Mujtaba Shuja-Ur-Rehman & Justice Khalil-Ur-Rehman Khan were the Chief Guest and Guest of Honor on the International Literacy Day.

Literacy for Peace: International Literacy Day celebrated with fervor and enthusiasm in Sindh Education Department, Government of Sindh, Karachi

8 September 2012 - International Literacy Day was celebrated with fervor, zeal and enthusiasm in all parts of Sindh. The main event was organized at Sindh Madressatul Islam University at Karachi, the historic institution where the founder of nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah received his early education.

The event was participated by a large number of students, jubilantly dressed up in colorful clothes, highlighting the theme of EFA in their colorful and impressive tableaux. A large number of educationists, teachers and representatives of civil

society organizations, media, education department and other stakeholders joined the literacy day celebrations.

Jointly organized by Education & Literacy Department, Govt. of Sindh and UNESCO, the International Literacy Day celebrations were marked by beautiful and colorful tableaux, presentations of cultural gifts, documentary on education and speeches by Educationists, parliamentarians and representatives. Among the notable speakers were Senator Taj Haider, Ms. Sharmila Farooqui, Dr. Muhammad Memon, Anwar Ahmed Zai and Sadeqa Salahudin. Speakers threw light on the importance of education and literacy in creating peace and socio-economic development of the people of province.

Senior Minister, Pir Mazhar-ul-Haq in his speech reiterated his commitment and dedication to education and literacy in Sindh. He said that if in the world there would ever be peace, it would be through literacy. He resolved to keep up his efforts for narrowing the enrollment gap between primary and secondary education. He shared that Government of Sindh is in process of promulgating Right to free and compulsory education through provincial assembly. He said that important progress in this regard has been made. He thanked UNESCO for its commitment and continuous support to the cause of literacy and education in Sindh.

Dr. Roshan Chitrakar, Education Specialist, UNESCO, while reading Director UNESCO Islamabad, Dr. Kozue Kay Nagata's message, emphasized the importance of literacy in building peace in the minds of men and women. He said that literacy is a tool for personal development and social empowerment. He said that literacy rate in rural Sindh is alarmingly low and that more than half or 58% rural population of Sindh is illiterate. He emphasized that constitutional right to education ought to be enforced to block further addition of illiterate youth and adults in the existing lot of illiterate population. He said that we hope that Govt. of Sindh, under its dynamic leadership, will soon take concrete actions in this direction.

When asked about the importance of education, Saira Iqbal, student of class IX, NJV High School, said enthusiastically that she is the only among her four sisters who has studied beyond class V. She said that education has changed her life and now she is determined to convince her parents for her higher education. She said that she want to become a doctor and would serve her people in the best interest of her country and nation.

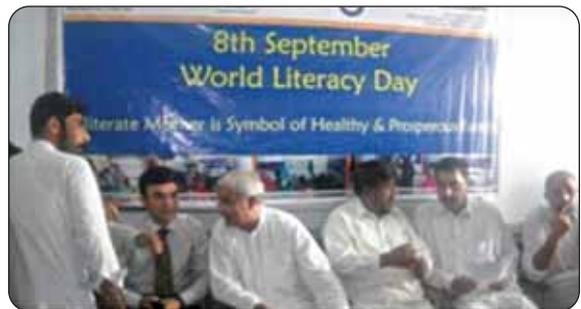


UNESCO & National Trust for Population Welfare (NATPOW) celebrated International Literacy Day in Charsadda, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Charsadda

Competing with the zeal and excitement of International Literacy Day events organized in Whole country, in Charsadda; district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, the day brought together over 100 participants including teachers, students, representatives from civil society, education department officials, representatives from parent's teacher's councils, religious scholars, and people from other walk of life. The event was organized at a local school, with support of UNESCO funding.

Eminent religious scholar, Mufti Abdur auf Shakir, elaborated religious perspective of literacy and peace. Mr. Attaullah Khan Minakhel, District Officer for elementary and secondary education, Charsada, thanked UNESCO and expressed his views about importance of. Message of UNESCO Director, Dr. Koziue Kay Nagata was read on her behalf by Mr. Waqar Shams, Provincial Coordinator of UNESCO in Khyber Pakhtun Khuwa province.

A song on importance of literacy presented by local school children was presented and was well received by the audience of the event. After the ceremony, to raise the awareness among general public a symbolic walk to Press club Charsadda was organized.



International Literacy Day in Baluchistan Government of Baluchistan, Quetta

The ILD was celebrated in Baluchistan this year on 18th of September instead of 8th. Directorate of literacy took the lead in collaboration with different organizations. Minister for Higher Education Mr. Tahir Mehmood was the chief guest where as Secretary Social Welfare was the guest of honor. Prominent scholars and civil society activists were also present. Director literacy welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of literacy and this year's theme which was literacy and Peace. He said that despite shortage of funding we are able to celebrate this day. He also announced the formation of Literacy forum at Provincial level .The purpose of this forum

will be to highlight the importance of Literacy and also to provide a platform for organizations to share good practices and to work jointly for the uplift of literacy rate in the province.

Minister for Higher Education again affirmed his personal and government's resolve and commitment to this noble cause. He said the theme is suited best to Baluchistan which is in real state of war and insurgency .He further said that investing in NFBE/Literacy is like investing in future and without this investment we can't move forward.



Civil activists including Dr. Quratulain Bakhtiari stressed on different aspects of literacy and peace. Language issue was specially highlighted and most of the participants talked about literacy in local languages. Progress of Baluchistan against MDGs was also shared. NCHD played a pivotal role in this entire affair and also held functions in different districts of Baluchistan.

Speaking on behalf of UNESCO I read the messages of Director General UNESCO and Director Pakistan. Moreover, I further shared the work UNESCO has been doing in Baluchistan and assured the Secretary Social Welfare that UNESCO is ready to contribute for the welfare of people of Baluchistan especially in literacy but we also need support from Government too.

Secretary social Welfare thanked the organizations and audience for their time and support. He specially mentioned UNESCO and its funding. He further assured UNESCO that he will leave no stone unturned to get funds from GOB.

International Literacy Day in Bahawalpur Grass-Roots Collaboration

UNESCO & Gul-e-Arzu Development Organizations celebrated International Literacy Day in Bahawalpur on 9th September, 2012

UNESCO Islamabad and Gul-e-Arzu Development (GEA) Organization jointly organized an advocacy event to celebrate International Literacy Day 2012 on 9th September, 2012 in Bahawalpur. GEA started its celebrations on 7 September, the key features of which were:

- A poster competition on "Parha Likha Pakistan (a Literate Pakistan)"
- A Speech contest on, "Auraton ke liye ta'aleem kyon zaroori hae" or why is it important for women to receive education
- A poem competition on the related theme

On 9 September, the event started with an introduction, of GEA Community Learning Centres by Ms. Farhat Gul, Executive Director, followed by an inspiring address by Malik Habibullah Bhutta, well-known writer/columnist, popularly known as the Father of the City (Bahawalpur). Mrs. Kausar Shah, District Education Officer, also present on the occasion shed light on the significance of literacy in the region. Mrs. Kausar shared with the audience that the District Education Department has decided to exempt admission fee of children seeking admission in schools between 8 to 15 September 2012. Moreover, she promised unrestrained cooperation to GEA for promotion of literacy and skills in its CLCs.



Mr. Fakhar-ud-din read out the message issued by Dr. Kozue Kay Nagata on the occasion of the International Literacy Day, the theme of which was "Literacy and Peace". He also appreciated GEA's efforts and encouraged the teachers and learners from the CLCs to move ahead with unshaken determination.

Jointly the three honourable guests gave away special prizes of a disc-matic sewing machine and a manual sewing machine to two Community Learning Centres for "the most cooperative and hard-working team"; and a consolation prize to express support and encouragement.

Prize-winners of events concluding on 8 September were also awarded with prizes of cell phones and paper organizers on 9 September 2012 by Mr. Fakhar-ud-din, Malik Habibullah and Ms. Kausar Shah.



Urdu Science Board

An Organization Striving for the promotion of Science and Technology in Urdu Language

Urdu Science Board is a national organization working for the promotion of science and technology in Urdu language. Urdu Science Board (formerly Central Urdu Board) was established as an autonomous body of the Ministry of Education in 1962 to fulfill the constitutional obligation to develop Urdu as the National Language. In 1982, the Board was renamed as Urdu Science Board and in 2004, the Board was recognized as a subordinate office of the Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.

After the dissolution of the Federal Ministry of Education, in accordance with the 18th amendment in constitution, Urdu Science Board is now working under the newly established Ministry of National Heritage and Integration.

Major Functions / Objectives

- To remove existing deficiencies in Urdu in the field of science, mathematics and technologies and develop and publish learning materials for primary, secondary and higher secondary schools, literacy and a adult literacy institutions as well as institutions of technologies.
- To develop and publish instructional materials in Urdu for science, mathematics and technical subjects being taught in the teacher-training institutions of the country.
- To produce encyclopedias of science and technologies for use by individuals, schools, technical and other institutions.
- To work in collaboration with all the organizations engaged in the promotion of science and technical education in Urdu in the country.

The Board has published more than eight hundred books up till now. These books are related to a vast range of natural sciences, social sciences, reference books, dictionaries, encyclopedias and technologies. About 30 books published by the board have received different kinds of prestigious awards and certificates.

Urdu Science Encyclopedia published by the Board is a highly informative encyclopedia of science consisting ten volumes. Each volume is full of authentic information and colourful illustrations and diagrams. It is useful for the students of high and higher secondary classes, teachers as well as the general readers.

Urdu Science Board is publishing Quarterly Urdu Science Magazine regularly. This is a distinctive magazine with a beautiful layout and authentic articles from learned scholars and subject specialists.

The Board actively participates in book fairs and exhibitions arranged by different organizations at local and national level. These book fairs and exhibitions not only provide opportunities to introduce USB to the people interested in books and reading, but also help to develop the reading habit among the general public.

The spacious and graceful Head Office building of the Board was constructed through the sale proceeds of books seeking no funds from the government. It comprises a large library, conference room, the main hall, two big stores for books, office of the Director General, and a guest room as its main features.

The Board has launched its website www.urduscienceboard.org.pk. Internet users can visit this site to get information about our organization.

Urdu Science Board works in collaboration with different national and international organizations like UNESCO, PNCU, WWF, Pakistan Science Foundation, NEEC etc. The Board has developed 20 booklets of adult literacy in collaboration of PNCU for neo-literates. The Board has published two publications for UNESCO Islamabad to create awareness among the students of high and higher secondary classes about HIV/AIDS and reproductive health.



PACADE's Initiatives on International Literacy Day September 8, 2012 Literacy day at the Punjab Public Library

The meeting held at the Library Hall was chaired by the head of the Punjab Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Education, Ch. Javaid Sahib.

The meeting was addressed by the Chairman of the Mass Communications Institute, Punjab University, MPA Punjab Assembly, Madam Nighat Sheikh, Additional Secretary Literacy & NFBE, Mr. Nadeem Butt and President PACADE, Mr. Inayatullah.

This is the first time that International Literacy Day has been held in the prestigious Punjab Public Library.

Mr. Inayatullah President PACADE also chaired the International Literacy Day meeting organised by the FGA Adult Literacy and Welfare Institute at Lahore where Dr. Qaser, Mr. Obed Fraz and Mr. Davd Dewan also spoke. The meeting was held in a Church.

PACADE's Cooperation with Children's Library Complex

PACADE cooperated with the Punjab Government Children's Library Complex in organizing a seminar on Early Childhood Care and Education at the beautiful Complex building in Lahore.

The meeting was attended by hundreds of school children and was addressed by school teachers, students, Director General Urdu Science Board, Director CLC and Mr. Inayatullah, President PACADE.



Mr. Inayatullah presiding over the Seminar

PACADE Community Learning Centre

A fortified PACADE Community Learning Centre is located at Mandianwala near Wagha Border - thanks to the enterprising PACDAE CLC teacher Ms Sidra Bin Yamin who with PACADE's help has made special efforts to establishes the Centre on a regular basis.



A SPECIAL LITERACY MEETING IN PARIS

Reaching the 2015 Literacy Target: Delivering on the Promise! - High-Level International Round Table on Literacy

On 6 and 7 September, as part of the celebrations for International Literacy Day (8 September), representatives from those 41 countries that face the largest literacy challenges, including 14 ministers and vice-ministers of education, attended a high-level event in Paris titled "Reaching the 2015 Literacy Target: Delivering on the promise". They were joined by participants from other UN agencies, literacy experts, civil society stakeholders and participants from the private sector to identify ways of accelerating progress to meet the 2015 deadline. UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, UIL, as the co-convenor, chaired the opening session and provided input to a discussion process which provided country delegates much opportunity to share experiences and opinions on advocacy, partnerships, resource mobilisation and forward looking strategies to tackle the literacy challenge by translating vision into action.



A Paris Communiqué on Scaling Up Literacy was adopted by participants to intensify efforts to reach the Education For All Goal 4 of a 50% improvement in adult literacy rates by 2015. UNESCO was requested to provide assistance with the implementation of related National Action Plans to reach the EFA Goal 4 (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/education-building-blocks/literacy/advocacy/international-literacy-day/action-plans/>). In a Technical Session with Senior Officials from countries represented in the High-Level International Round Table, partners and experts, UIL shared the key findings and recommendations resulting from the LIFE mid-term evaluation. UNESCO's Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) is a ten-year (2006-2015) framework of collaborative action for enhancing national literacy efforts in 36 Member States.

In the context of the International Literacy Day, the award ceremony for the 2012 UNESCO literacy prizes and a ceremony to nominate in a special ceremony the Ivorian singer A'salfo UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for literacy took also place.

Readers will notice a brief reference in this Newsletter to a special meeting held at UNESCO Headquarter (Section for Literacy and Non-formal Education) France, Paris to review the progress of Dakar EFA goals. In this Paris Meeting representatives of UNESCO (particularly UIL), other UN agencies as well as governmental and civil society organizations and stakeholders. Resolved to intensify efforts to reach the Education For All Goal 4 of a 50% improvement in adult literacy rate. The Central Government and all the four provinces of Pakistan should without delay review the existing literacy plans and programmes as these fall far short of the number of literacy centres required to be opened if even 2/3^d of the Dakar goals. UNESCO which has already proposed the launching of Literacy Movement in Pakistan may take up the matter (with PACADE) to ensure that the above resolution is implemented in Pakistan.

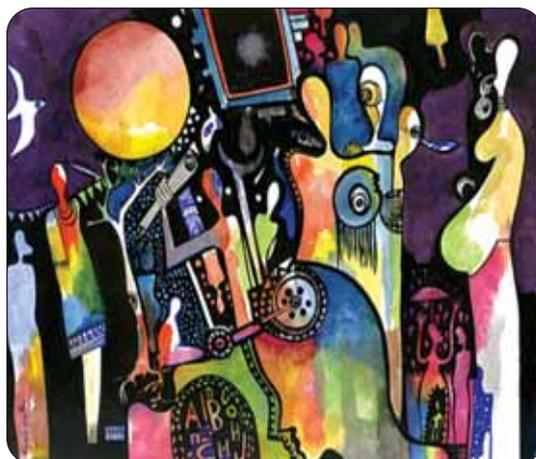
2012 Report Youth, Skills & Work

Many young people around the world - especially the disadvantaged - are leaving school without the skills they need to thrive in society and find decent jobs.

As well as thwarting young people's hopes, these education failures are jeopardizing equitable economic growth and social cohesion, and preventing many countries from reaping the potential benefits of their growing youth populations.

The 2012 Education for All Global Monitoring Report will examine how skills development programmes can be improved to boost young people's opportunities for decent jobs and better lives.

The Report will be launched on 16 October 2012.



PACADE's Publications



Message from Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO on the occasion of the International Literacy Day, 8 September 2012

This year, International Literacy Day has a special focus on the fundamental relationship between Literacy and Peace.

This has tremendous relevance in our current turbulent times. Countries with patterns of violence have some of the lowest literacy rates in the world. Conflict remains one of the major barriers to the attainment of the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Conflict-affected countries are home to over 40% of the world's out-of-school population of primary school age.



We must not allow conflict to deprive children and adults of the crucial opportunity of literacy. Literacy is a fundamental human right, and the foundation of all education and lifelong learning. Literacy transforms the lives of people, allowing them to make informed choices and empowering individuals to become agents of change. Lasting peace depends on the development of literate citizenship and access to education for all. Amidst political upheaval and escalating violence in many parts of the world, literacy must be a priority in the peace-building agenda of all nations.

Peace and sustainable development are interdependent, and it is crucial for the two to develop and strengthen simultaneously. Literacy is also a development accelerator, enabling societies to grow more inclusively and sustainably. Literacy programmes can become a key component of future development strategies, opening new opportunities and skills for all. All of this is vital to achieving Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals.

Progress has been made toward reaching the 2015 targets for literacy, but formidable challenges remain ahead. These challenges need to be met with stronger international resolve, if we are to deliver on the promises made in Dakar in 2000. UNESCO estimates that the global adult illiterate population stands at 775 million, while there are still 122 million illiterate youth worldwide. Women and girls make up nearly two thirds of the illiterate adult and youth population. Great potential is being lost.

We can end this cycle of exclusion. We all have a shared interest in ensuring that the world becomes a more literate place. As we approach the Education for All deadline in 2015, we have gained new momentum. UNESCO has worked tirelessly to place education and literacy at the top of the global development agenda. The United Nations Secretary-General's "Education First" initiative, to be officially launched later this month, shall be a strong advocacy platform at the highest level.

The winners of this year's UNESCO International Literacy Prizes demonstrate how successful literacy programmes can achieve outstanding results. They are living examples of the central role of literacy in promoting human rights, gender equality, conflict resolution and cultural diversity.

Today, I call upon stakeholders at all levels to strengthen partnerships that will accelerate quality literacy provision. It is essential that literacy programmes incorporate the values of peace, human rights and civic values, if literacy is to become a true means of empowerment. It can be the harbinger of peace and development. Let us make this happen, together and faster.

PRESS RELEASE



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE ON INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY 8 September 2012

ISLAMABAD, 7 September 2012 (UN Information Centre) – *The Day was adopted by Resolution 1.141 of the 14th session of the UNESCO General Conference. For over 40 years now, UNESCO has been celebrating International Literacy Day by reminding the international community that literacy is a human right and the foundation of all learning.*

*The theme of International Literacy Day 2012 is **Literacy and Peace***

The UN Secretary-General issued the following message on this Day:

“Literacy provides tools for men and women to better understand the world and shape it to meet their aspirations. It is a source of individual dignity and a motor for the healthy development of society. International Literacy Day is an opportunity to celebrate this transformative force and mobilize to make the most of it.

Great strides have been made during the United Nations Literacy Decade that closes this year. Across the world, individuals, communities and countries have reached out to children, youth and adults to enable them to read, write and transform their lives. As a result, some 90 million young men and women and adults have become literate.

We must now go much further. An estimated 775 million young people and adults around the world still cannot read or write; 122 million children of primary and lower secondary school age remain out of school; and millions still graduate with inadequate literacy skills. Women account for two-thirds of the world’s illiterate population. The persistence of such numbers hobbles our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to build the inclusive knowledge societies we need for the 21st century.

We must move faster to reach the most marginalized and uphold this basic human right. The global movement for education needs a big push. That is why, later this month, I will be launching a new *Education First* initiative.

The initiative focuses on three priorities: putting every child in school; improving the quality of learning; and fostering global citizenship. I call on world leaders and all involved with education to join this initiative. The cost of leaving millions of children and young people on the margins of society is far greater than the funds required to reach the international goals for education.

A DISAPPOINTING LITERACY PROGRAMME**INAYATULLAH**

According to a recent newspaper report, a revised literacy programme for 2012 - 2013 has been approved by the Punjab Development Working Party. A total outlay of Rs. 2.3 billion has been agreed for it for a period of 4 years as against Rs. 5.92 billion asked by the Department. In other words less than half of the requested amount has been sanctioned.

In the Punjab province according to a conservative estimate close to 30 million persons are utterly illiterate. They cannot read the number of a bus. Instead of enhancing the allocation for the literacy programme to make up the time and opportunity lost during the previous years, if inflation is taken into consideration, there has been a net reduction in the allocation. This deficiency taken with the kind of programme taken up is bound to adversely affect the achievement of the committed targets.

In a sense the programme is looks ambitious but in fact is severely inadequate. Not even a half of the required literacy centres will be started. And the allocation provided could have resulted in much larger number of literacy centres. This explains why the project provides for 40 centres in only 23 districts with none in the remaining 13. Not even in Union Councils where the rate of illiteracy is still quite high. Provision however has been made for out of school children in 30 selected unions in 35 districts.

These figures are based on the press report. Despite repeated requests, the literacy department has not provided to this writer details of expenditure to be incurred on each centre.

The proposed steps need to be examined in the light of the Education For All commitments as well as the "Policy Actions" specified in the 2009 National Education Policy. Four of these Policy Actions ignored in the Punjab literacy programme are: One, literacy rate shall be increased up to 86% by 2015 through up-scaling of ongoing programmes of adult literacy and non-formal basic education.

Two, sustainability of adult literacy and NFE programme shall be ensured by strengthening organizational structure, coordination and enhancing budgetary allocations.

Three, provinces and district governments shall allocate a minimum of 4% of education budget for literacy and non-formal basic education (NFBE).

Four, Government shall develop guidelines for post-programme initiatives. Regular follow-up shall be made a part of the literacy programmes.

Now a word about the administrative set up sanctioned for implementation of the project. At the provincial level, the whole time minister of the department has been replaced by giving the additional charge to Education Minister who is already much too busy to find adequate time to pay attention to literacy department matters. Secondly, most unfortunately, post of the EDO Literacy in the districts has been abolished. And the charge of the department given to EDO Education who is already over burdened with the affairs of thousands of schools and colleges and can pay only a perfunctory attention to the district literacy matters.

There is another reason for EDO Educations indifferent performance for literacy duties. The approach followed in literacy and basic schools is NON-FORMAL while EDO and his staff steeped as they are in formal methodologies are not conversant or interested in non-formal ways of imparting education. The downgraded head of the district literacy department has to act under an other wise very busy and often uninterested official. According to the press report, all that he has under him is a set of 4 literacy mobilizers. Thus the reduced complement of one officer and a few subordinates who would be mostly away at the centres - mobilizing and supervising - will hardly be able to attend to his functions even moderately satisfactorily.

Education For All Global Monitoring Reports year after year, has found Pakistan failing to achieve the agreed goals arrived at in the year 2000 at Dakar Senegal. For Pakistan EFA and MDGs targets are 86% literacy and universal primary education by the year 2015: UNESCO's office in Pakistan keeps reminding central and provincial governments to accelerate efforts to rapidly increase volume and quality of literacy programmes. But for their goading and persuading little might have been achieved.

UNESCO has hailed the addition of Article 25-A in the Constitution after the 18th Amendment and has been exhorting and assisting the provincial governments to promulgate the enabling law to enforce the Constitutional Right To education to every child/boy/girl of the age of 5 to 16. A law has since been passed in the senate. The progress however in the provinces has been extremely slow despite ITA's successful one-million signature campaign.

It may come as a bit of a shock to readers to know that the average world literacy rate today is more than 84% while we claim to have reached 58%. While more than 5 ½ crore Pakistanis cannot read or write in this day and age, initiatives are already in hand in most of the developing countries to plan ahead of 2015 to equip their populations with capabilities required to cope with new challenges and adopting diverse ways of doing things.

In this connection, a most welcome development is UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon's new Initiative: Education First: Unleashing Potential.

Here are a few excerpts from the Concept Note of his Vision: "Today, the potential of education to contribute to the world we want is at risk. As financial crises loom, there are many threats to the progress we have made. Large segments of society - particularly girls living in poverty and young people caught in humanitarian crises - have and increasingly continue to be left out...The convening power of the Secretary-General can sustain momentum to reach the MDGs and EFA goals by 2015 while at the same time set a bold course for the future of education by: 1) raising the political profile of education and rallying together a broad spectrum of actors, 2) spurring a global movement to bring about a paradigm shift that unleashes the potential of education to create the future we want, and 3) generating additional and sufficient funding through sustained advocacy efforts... To do this Education First will focus on three priorities: (a) Unleashing the potential of those excluded: every child in school....(b) Unleashing potential of every person: learning....(3) Unleashing the potential of humanity: global citizenship....As we approach 2015, we (including the private sector and the civil society) must act as one to make global education goals a top priority. We cannot stop until every child has the opportunity to go to school, learn well, and be prepared to positively contribute to society. Together, we can unleash the potential of the human spirit through education.

Hopefully these scintillating words of the UN Secretary General will come to the notice of the Khadm-e-Ala and Chief Secretary Punjab and they in the light of the analysis done above, will not hesitate to upscale the literacy programmes and strengthen the sinews of management of the literacy department.

The writer is an ex-federal secretary & ambassador and a freelance political and international relations analyst.

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SMI celebrates Literacy Day

Education is basic right of every child:

By Ahtesham Azhar

KARACHI: Sindh Education and Literacy Minister Pir Mazharul Haq has said that measures taken by the present democratic government for education would yield qualitative results soon, while those who could not praise such measures should not even criticise about them.

He expressed these views while addressing a seminar entitled 'International Literacy Day Celebrations', jointly organised by Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation at Sindh Sindh Madressatul Islam (SMI), on Saturday. Senior minister, Pir Mazhar-ul-Haq was the chief guest, while the event presided over by Secretary Education.

A large number of stakeholders in education, including Dr Muhammad Memon, Anwer Ahmed Zai and PPP Secretary General Taj Haider, also participated in the seminar while students of various schools presented tableaux.

Senior minister said that the standard of education was better during the era of candles as compared to the contemporary era of electricity. "If in this world, there would ever be peace, it will be through literacy," he added. He resolved to keep up his efforts for narrowing the enrollment gap between primary and secondary education. Pir Mazhar shared that Government of Sindh is in process of promulgating right to free and compulsory education through the provincial assembly.

He said that professors and teachers of previous decades were responsible and loyal with their jobs and were still remembered in good words. People who commit negligence in their duties are like enemies of the nation. He alleged that previous governments appointed many teachers on the basis of favouritism, however, this government eliminated that system and started appointments on merit besides legislating over the issue, so that the upcoming governments do not appoint any blue-eyed teacher.

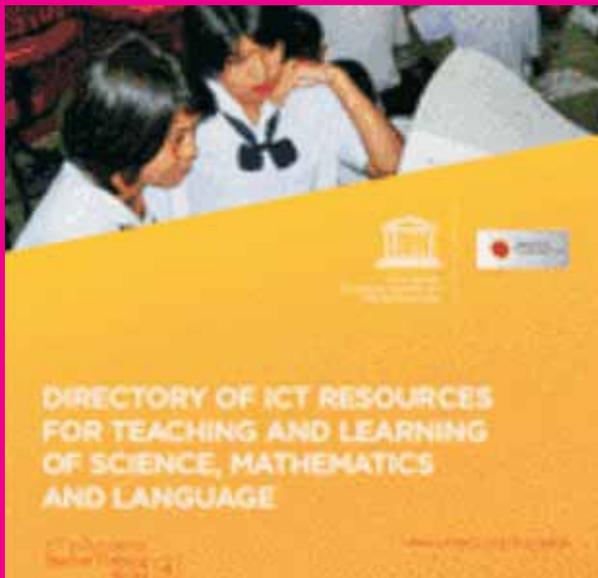
Senior minister said that celebration of literacy day was not held for speeches every year but to inspect the progress of education department. This day helps ascertain how better the department got, how many schools had been constructed and how many children were receiving education, he said.

He said according to Article 25, education is the basic right of every child and legislation in this regard is in its last part. Haq said that providing education to children was the joint responsibility of government and parents.

He informed that for providing standard education to each and every child, department would establish 23 new degree colleges whose construction work was in progress. "In the localities, where degree colleges are not present, 78 of them will be established," he added.

Pir Mazhar also urged the members of civil society, officers and teachers to work for spreading education. Dr Roshan Chitrakar, Education Specialist, UNESCO, underlined the importance of literacy in building peace in the minds of men and women. He said that literacy is a tool for personal development and social empowerment. He said that literacy rate in rural Sindh is alarmingly low and that more than half or 58% rural population of Sindh was illiterate.

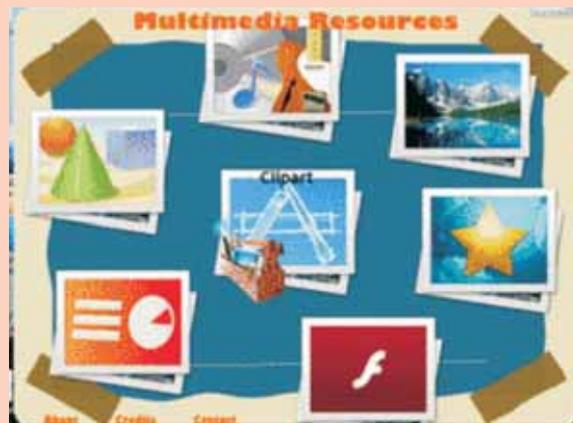
DIFFERENT MODULES FOR ICT - EDUCATION



Collection of E-Learning Tools. Recommended for Advance Learners
Directory of ICT resources for Teaching and Learning of Science, Mathematics and Language



Web Tools for Education



Multimedia Resources



Free Software for Education



UNESCO Bangkok ICT in Education Resource Distribution Centers