



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

Regional Literacy and CONFINTEA VI  
Preparatory Conference in Latin America  
and the Caribbean  
*"From Literacy to Lifelong Learning:  
Towards the challenges of the 21 Century".*  
(Mexico City, Mexico, 10-13 September 2008)

“ALTA (Adult Literacy Tutors Association)”



## United Nations Literacy Decade

### EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Presented at the Regional Literacy and CONFINTEA VI Preparatory Conference in Latin America and the Caribbean, 10-13 September 2008, Mexico City, Mexico

**Programme name: ALTA (ADULT LITERACY TUTORS ASSOCIATION)**

**Implemented by: ALTA – Adult Literacy Tutors Association**

### Basic facts

Country: Trinidad and Tobago

Starting year: 1992

Outreach: 1500 learners per year

Target Population: low-income adults, 16 years and over

Language of instruction: English

Operating in: 60 venues including libraries, schools, church halls, community centres

Facilitator/Beneficiary ratio: 1:8

Main Funding: United Way of T&T; JB Fernandes Memorial Trust (via Rockefeller Foundation); Price Charities

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### Brief Description

ALTA, the Adult Literacy Tutors Association of Trinidad and Tobago, provides literacy classes for those 16 and over who would like to improve their reading and writing. Instruction is free as ALTA students usually have low and irregular incomes. It is done by specially-trained volunteers. Every year, ALTA trains 100 new volunteers. ALTA makes sure the content of the teaching is relevant to the needs and interests of adults in Trinidad in order to make an impact on their everyday lives. The aim is to equip students to function independently in their society. Indigenous Creole English is the starting point for teaching writing and Standard English.

While ALTA is not specifically a family literacy programme, feedback from ALTA learners shows the huge impact the newly literate adults have on their children's motivation to learn. Many mothers do come to ALTA classes to be able to help their children with school work. Some pass on the skills learnt to their children and start reading and learning together. It is not unusual for several family members to attend ALTA. At one venue a grandmother, her son and granddaughter were all awarded ALTA certificates. In addition, the literacy programme includes lessons on parenting, childcare, domestic violence and the role of the father.