



Literacy Policy & Practice: A Country Comparison

By Katy Anis, September 21, 2006
Consultative Workshop on
National Adult & Nonformal Education
Strategy

THIS IS THE STORY
OF A YOUTH

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Dies one Tuesday
morning of AIDS
complications, while
lying on the street

WHO DID NOT
LEARN TO READ

And so, he....

Cannot find a job

Lies on the street
begging for change

Crosses the line of
legality one day– and
engages in theft

Spreads AIDS to 7
other women

Is caught by police

Catches AIDS
from a prostitute

Is sent to prison

Learns the way
of the street

Mixes with
hard criminals

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THIS IS THE STORY
OF A MAN

But this you and I will
never know because
it is done in the dark
and kept in the dark

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And so he...

WHO DID NOT
LEARN TO READ

Engages in
agriculture like his
father

And ends up abusing
his wife

Cannot get up to
date market
information

And so he turns to
drinking to forget his
problems



Cannot take
advantage of latest
crop methods

Cannot cope with the
economic pressures

Spends what he
earns, without being
able to save

Must take care of 8
children himself

Has an unsuccessful
harvest

He cannot pay for a
doctor or read to
know what to do
about her illness

Cannot read enough
to fill out the forms
for social assistance
and benefits

And because of
this disaster, his
wife becomes
sick

Is hit by
disaster

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She is able to influence others to make choices about schooling, saving, and family planning

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THIS IS THE STORY OF A GIRL

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She missed the first years of schooling

WHO LEARNED TO READ

But then she entered a nonformal education center . . .

She gradually gains a greater position of leadership in the community and becomes active in PTA

She is able to complete 3 grades and re-enter the formal school

With the earnings, she sends 1 more child to school

She learns the national language

Starts a poultry raising enterprise

Learns a little English and some computer skills

She is able to save enough to participate in the savings group & later leads the group

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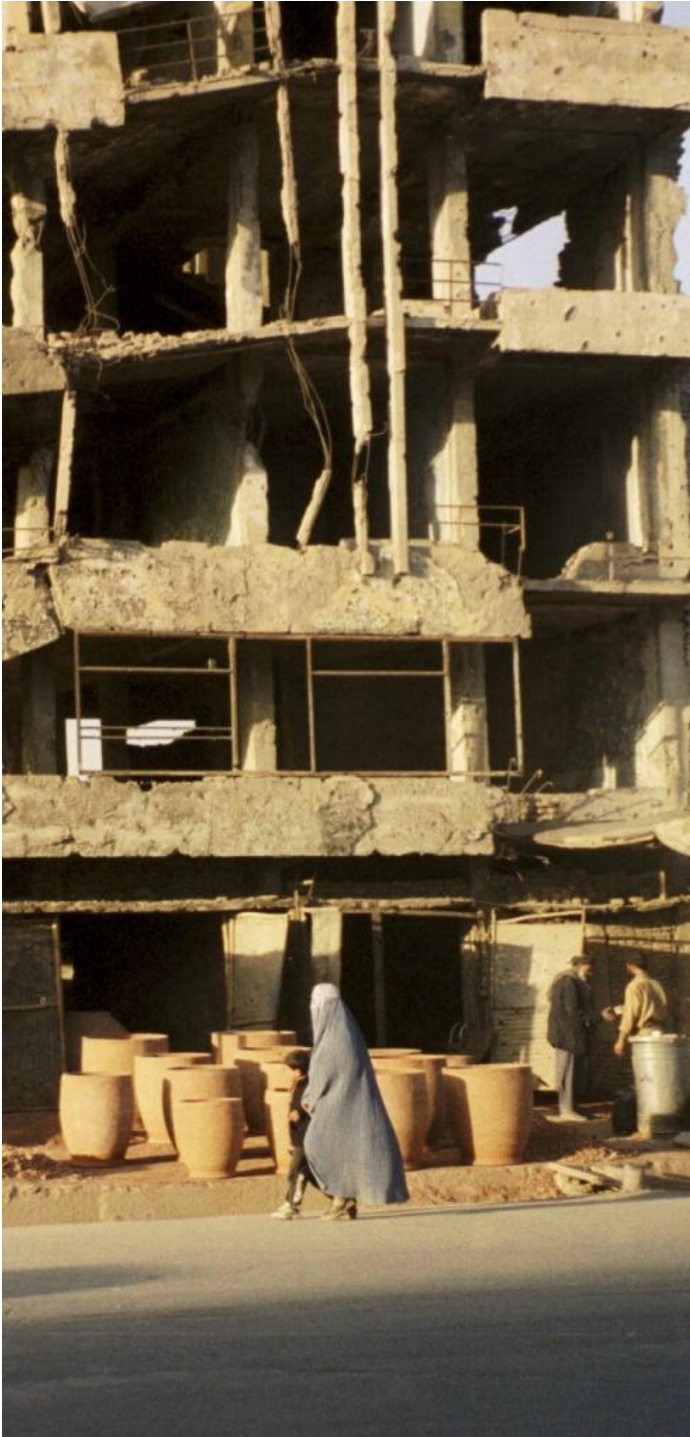
She can afford to send 3 of his 5 children to school. She sends 2 girls and 1 boy

Has access to some family planning material. When does marry she decides to have 5 children , instead of 8

Finds a job
Delays marriage

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THE AFGHANISTAN CONTEXT

- 23 years of war
- Complete destruction of education system
- Girls not allowed to go to school. Boys receive poor quality
- Unknown literacy figures and non-existent data at first
- Literacy currently estimated at 43% for men, 14 % for women

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POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- Revision of Archaic Curriculum
- First Workshop on Curriculum Development
- Attempt to coordinate donors and actors
- Build on the efforts of other coordinated actor efforts like Teacher Education Program
- Development of a strategy
- Release of new strategy by Minister

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IMPLEMENTATION

Develop nationwide programs to reach target populations

Learning for Life

National Solidarity Program

Facilitate Communication with MOE efforts

- Make MOE's Department of NFE a resource for implementers
- Develop equivalency criteria and accreditation systems
- New program will soon be released

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INNOVATIONS

- Active Learning
- Gender-focused
- Learner-centered
- Competency-Based
- Multigrade
- Locally Available Resources
- Fostering Innovation of the Curriculum-
Teacher-Generated Lesson Planning
Learner-Generated Materials
- Feedback from Field Circulated Back into the
System
- Forging Ahead under Difficult Circumstances

پروسیس کار کے کارکن اجتماعی
پروسیس ہمت ملی طور کے است
از کارکن اجتماعی داخل قریہ شہ اشہ
اہم از اشخاص کلیدی زبان و سران را
مجلس مقدماتی را تشکیل می دهند،
نمایندہ ها انتخاب می شود، و شورائت
نمایندہ ها (شوراء) مشکلات
قریہ را دریافت نمودہ دست می نما
اولویت هات
پروپوزلہ (درجہ
راترتیب میہ
بعداً پسندھا
بہ انکشاف دہات فرسیا
سپس پول خود را بہ دست می





SIMILARITIES & DIFFERENCES

Similarities

- Complex scene of actors and donors
- Massive challenge
- Coming of out change after instability

Differences

- The vastness of destruction
- relatively stable operating environment
- Seasoned professionals and experience and sophistication in development
- Excellent access to resources and information



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A photograph of a classroom setting. In the center is a dark chalkboard with the text 'WHAT CAN ETHIOPIA LEARN FROM AFGHANISTAN?' written on it. To the left and right of the chalkboard are white papers with handwritten text in Arabic script. The background shows a green and blue patterned curtain. In the bottom right corner, a person's hands are visible holding a piece of paper.

WHAT CAN ETHIOPIA LEARN FROM AFGHANISTAN?

- The success of rallying stakeholders together around one action
- Taking the opportunity to introduce transformative concepts into the sector
- Unleashing a passion for learning from the people that sustains literacy activities
- Moving the policy forward

CUBA

- Topped virtually all other poor countries in health and education statistics
 - Called an "anti-model " and challenged World Bank assumptions about good economic development policies
 - Literacy campaign began in 1961
 - Has developed the Si , Yo Puedo approach which works rapidly, with low cost, for large population, using broadcast and media
 - Has boasted a 90% success rate
- Si, Yo Puedo was exported to a number of countries and is claimed to initiated 1.3 million people in Venezuela as neo literates
- Currently have reached a 99.8 literacy rate
 - Spending on education amounts to 6.7 percent of gross national income, twice as much as in other Latin American countries

BRAZIL

- Earlier research -increase in literacy due to expansion of public education and gains in adult education.
- Illiteracy regionally concentrated, following socio-economic lines
- Education for youth left behind was considered secondary
- Home to Paulo Freire- who launched literacy movement in early 1990s.
- First 5 years, little attention and resources.
- Policy Efforts – constitutional amendment to make education free and compulsory for youth who missed it at the proper age.
- 1997- 3 landmark materials produced.
- EJA Program –enrolled 2.8 million youth in school based courses
- Solidarity in Literacy program pioneers partnerships between municipalities, higher ed, and business
- Since 2003 Literate Brazil -Currently seeking to expand partnerships with local governments and further decentralize.

EGYPT

- President highlighted literacy as a policy for the 1990s and created implementation framework to sustain it
- Policy targeted 15-38 year olds and rural illiterates, in particular females.
- Some of Egypt's innovations include:
 - Volunteer "free contract" teachers
 - Mobile education caravans
 - Inviting private sector to contribute
 - Use of television for distance education
 - Piloting experiences of NGOs
 - Free self-learning tools
 - Printing of Braille books
 - Multipurpose center establishment
 - Post-literacy support (newspapers, etc.)
- Trained 121, 758 teachers
- Efforts resulted in a 15% drop in literacy over 15 years

LITERACY FOR LIFE

Summary and Analysis of Country Experience in Literacy Policy and Practice shows that literacy policy should:

- Be considered as central to the entire EFA framework
- Employ a 3 pronged approach
 - Assuring quality formal schooling
 - Scaling up literacy programs for youth and adults
 - Developing rich literate environments
- Take careful account of multilingualism
- Place literacy as central to education sector plans and poverty reduction strategies

POLICY & PRACTICE

Key to Successful Implementation of Policy

- Strong sustained political commitment, at highest levels, to investing in youth and adult literacy
- Partnership between agencies and service providers, and at local and national levels
- Responding to learner demand & creation of motivation for literacy

Policies should:

Promote good practice in the learning and teaching of literacy

Scale up adult literacy program

Bring coherence to national policies

Engage the international community

INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKS ON ADULT LITERACY

- 1 Literacy is about acquiring and using reading, writing & numeracy skills, active citizenship, improved health & livelihoods, & gender equality.
- 2 Literacy should be seen as a continuous process that requires regular, and sustained learning. There are no magic lines to cross.
- 3 Governments must take the lead responsibility, providing leadership, and resources, working in systematic collaboration with civil society and decentralising budgets and decision-making.
- 4 Governments should invest in ongoing feedback evaluation mechanisms, data systematization and strategic research.
- 5 Facilitators should be paid at least the equivalent of minimum wage of a school teacher for hours worked.
- 6 Facilitators should receive substantial initial training and regular, refresher training, professional, development.

INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKS ON ADULT LITERACY

- 7 Facilitators should work with groups of no more than 30 learners with at least one trainer/ supervisor to 15 learner groups.
- 8 Learners in multilingual contexts should be given an active choice about the language of instruction.
- 9 Learners should be actively stimulated through the use of a wide range of participatory methods and issues of relevance to their lives.
- 10 Governments should stimulate the market for production and distribution of suitable reading materials and should support production of materials by learners and facilitators.
- 11 Governments should commit between US\$50 - US\$100 per learner per year for at least 3 years.
- 12 Governments should dedicate at least 3% of their national education sector budgets to adult literacy. International donors should fill any remaining resource gaps.

