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LITERACY WATCH COMMITTEE OF NEPAL

BULLETIN NO. 5

Special Issue on Literacy Campaign

1998 July

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Mr. T.M.Sakya- Editor In Chief

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Mr. Dil Bahadur Shrestha

Mr. Uttam Karmacharya

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Nepal Needs a New Approach to Promote Mass Education

Everybody says that a great progress has been achieved in the field of Education in Nepal since 1951. Following statistics shows the progress in Education in Nepal between 1951 and 1995:

Progress in Education

<u>Items</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1995</u>
No. of Primary Schools	321	21473
Lower Secondary Schools	11	5041
Secondary Schools	-	2654
High Secondary Schools	-	332
Universities	-	4
Campuses	1	200

But the present real enrollment rate shows that only fraction of the respective school going aged children and youth have got chance to go to the respective schools.

Net Enrollment rate in the Schools

	<u>Primary</u>	<u>L. Secondary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Total</u>
Total	67.5	26.1	17.3	47.0
Boys	74.7	32.1	22.3	55.9
Girls	55.6	18.1	12.0	37.5

From the above table, it is clear that only through the increase of the schools all the children and youth of Nepal will never be able to receive education .

At present His Majesty's Government of Nepal spends billion of the Rupees from the Regular Budget raising tax from the poor people of Nepal. Similarly the Government has borrowed billion of US \$ from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank to finance the Primary Education Project. Even then the absolute number of illiterate persons are increasing in Nepal.

Literacy Situation

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1998</u>
6+ population	12180000	15148000	18047000
Literacy Rate	23%	39%	48%
Literate Population	2801400	5907720	8662560
Illiterate Population	9378600	9240280	9384440

The above table shows that the illiterate population has increased between 1980 and 1998. In Nepal literacy rate increases only by 0.86% P.C (Male 1% and female 0.53%), whereas population grows at the rate of 2.6 percent every year. (Source : BPEP Master Plan 1997-2002)

Therefore, Nepal needs new approach to education. But the planners both inside and outside the Government still equate education with schooling. They do not think that education is much broader than schooling. Education can take place at anytime, any place and by any method.

More serious problem is lack of knowledge about the intimate/ positive correlation between literacy and development among our political, social and economical leaders.

From all the studies and researches carryout in different countries have proved that (beyond doubt) without literate population development is not possible. If the people are illiterate, program like family planning, nutrition, environment etc will not succeed. Economic growth also will not be achieved without literate farmers and laborers

Therefore, it is ironical to think to develop the country keeping the people illiterate. In a country where there is a massive problem of illiteracy, literacy program or project approach will not succeed. . Such countries need Mass Literate Campaign. This has been proved by the experiences of many countries. The countries like China, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Mynamar and recently India have achieved remarkable successes through Mass Literacy Campaign. Therefore, there is no alternative for Nepal except to accept the reality. The Mass Literacy Campaign has its own approach. If we do not follow the method correctly it will not succeed. There are certain conditions to be considered. Therefore, we should not use the name of literacy campaign without fulfilling necessary conditions.

Education for All

At the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, March 1990), the international community reaffirmed the right to education and committed itself to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adult. These needs comprise the basic learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving) and the knowledge, skills, values and attitude require by humans to survive, to improve the quality of the lives, to make informed decisions and to continue learning.

The conference agreed on an << expanded vision of basic education<< that includes instruction at the first or foundation level, on which subsequent learning can be based. It encompasses early childhood and primary (elementary) education for children, as well as education in literacy and numeracy, general knowledge and life skills for youth and adults.

BEGINNING LITERACY AND DEVELOPMENT THE VIRTUOUS CIRCLE

The pace of social development is conditioned in large part by the level of education of a population. While the provision of basic education has been expanding for decades around the world, countries at all points on the development spectrum still face important problems, but also new opportunities, in meeting the basic learning needs of their people.

Social development is about people, their well being, and their quality of life, their creativity and productivity. Education affects all of these. In fact the educational level of population correlates closely with several important social and economic factors that contribute to economic and social development. These interrelationships can be seen clearly with respect to adult literacy rates, especially female literacy rates.

AS THE LITERACY LEVEL OF A POPULATION INCREASES, FERTILITY RATES DECLINE

because literate women tend to marry later and are more likely to use family planning methods.

LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH RISES

because children with literate parents are more likely to survive infancy and receive better nutrition and health care.

FAMILY SIZE DECLINES

because, with more children reaching adulthood, literate parents do not feel the need to ensure their own << social security >> by having many children.

WORKER PRODUCTIVITY RISES

because literate workers are more likely to seek ways to improve their work and to adapt to changing situations.

THE PROPORTION OF WOMEN IN THE WORK FORCE RISES

because literate women are more motivated and better able to seek paid employment outside the home.

FAMILY INCOME RISES

because literate parents tend to have fewer children and are more likely to find better paying jobs and set aside savings. Figure below shows how per capita income rises as adult literacy rates rise.

There is also evidence that as the educational level of a population rises, certain social dynamics become possible that are necessary for sustainable social development. Education provides the tools for critical thinking and continued learning. It provides a common core of knowledge and values that encourages social integration.

Educated adults tend to be more active citizens. They have better access to information and know how and exercise their civil rights and responsibilities. They are better able to make informed decisions, so their participation in civic life makes democratic institutions more viable and stable.

Although education is no panacea, it is an essential ingredient of social and economic development. Basic education, especially of women, has been shown to be a key investment with high returns for society and the individual. Together with other progressive policy measures, the provision of basic education for all can set in motion a <<virtuous circle >> of human development. Countries that have acted on this insight have made rapid progress in this century and are better prepared to face the challenges of the 21st Century.

Note :- Correlation do not establish causality, nor are they necessarily valid everywhere at all times. For a more thorough discussion of the correlation between basic education and social development, the reader may consult the Report Education for All: Status and Trends/1994.

(Source: Division of statistics UNESCO 1994
World population prospects 1992 revision UN
Human development UNDP 1994)

EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN ASIA AND OCEANIA

The tables that follow present certain educational and socio-economic indicators for Asia and Oceanian developing countries. Most data shown are drawn from official sources, including estimates by international agencies. Data refer to the year indicated or to the latest year available (LYA).

East Asia/ Oceania

	1	2		3	4		5		6	7	8	9		10
		M	F	M+F	M	F	M	F				M	F	
China	7-11	97	95	5	90	73	46.651	119.522	0.05	2.0	23	70.0	74.0	470
Indonesia	7-12	99	95	9	90	78	6.783	14.724		2.7	57	63.0	67.0	670
Korea, Rep.of	6-11	98	100	(*)	99	97	124	573	0.12	1.8	18	69.0	75.0	6.790
Malaysia	6-11	93	93	(*)	89	78	682	1.374	0.15	3.2	12	70.0	74.0	2.790
Thailand	6-11	82	81	1	96	92	829	1.784		1.9	23	68.0	73.0	1.840
VietNam	6-11	95	91		96	91	785	2.131		3.5	31	64.0	66.0	

South Asia

	1	2		3	4		5		6	7	8	9		10
		M	F	M+ F	M	F	M	F				M	F	
Bangladesh	6-10	74	66	7	49	26	19.057	26.025	0.06	4.4	96	55.0	55.0	220
India	6-11	92	68	4	65	38	108.01 7	182.688	0.11	3.5	77	62.0	63.0	310
Nepal	6-11	80	44	27	41	14	3.762	5.387		5.0	89	57.0	56.0	170
Pakistan	6-11	37	21		50	24	20.433	28.260	0.13	5.6	88	61.0	52.0	420

In above table, the first six column shows the crude snapshots of a country's basic education situation, including gender disparities whereas columns 7 through 10 present data on four socio-economic variables that generally correlate significantly with adult literacy rates, a commonly used indicator of a population's educational level. Column 10, Gross National Production (GNP) per capita gives a rough indication of a country's economic situation and capacity to finance education.

Sources of data:

Columns 1-6 : Division of Statistics, UNESCO, 1994, 1995

Columns 7-9 : Population Prospects, 1992 revision, United Nations

Columns 10 : World Development Report 1994, World Bank

Sporadic Efforts to launch Literacy Campaign in Nepal

There are many examples that many countries have successfully launched Mass Literacy Campaign and they have achieved remarkable success. In Nepal there were sporadic efforts to launch Literacy Campaign.

His Majesty's Government had launched a Literacy Campaign on 8 Sep. 1988 in the District of Surkhet.

The aim of Surkhet Literacy Campaign was to eradicate illiteracy from Birendra Nagar and three other villages in the Surkhet valley. It was hoped that the literacy campaign will stimulate adult participants to form small groups and make concerted efforts toward solving their problems.

Out of 3,756 adult participants who completed literacy programme. 3,541 (94 %) passed the literacy test (a shortened version of literacy test used in this evaluation study) and were awarded literacy certificates.

A major goal of non-formal adult education program is to disseminate developmental messages as well as to enhance the functionality of practical information.

Although the information acquired by adults in such areas as importance of latrine, ORT solution and kitchen garden may be considered satisfactory, the coverage of important functional areas in literacy program has been found to be quite limited. It is much more severe with respect of practical application of functional knowledge. Perhaps the shortened duration of literacy program (4 months instead of regular 6 months) did not permit the organization of practical activities in and outside AL centers. (Source: Evaluation of Surkhet Literacy Campaign 1989)

After the Mass Literacy Campaign in Surkhet, the Government tried to launch another Mass literacy campaign in Kapilbastu, Nuwakot and Siraha Districts. But they were discontinued before completion.

In 1992 another district called Tanahu launched a Mass Literacy Campaign. The Mass Literacy Campaign was assisted by the

Government and INGOs called the World Education and Private Agencies Collaborating Together (PACT).

One of the success stories of Mass Literacy Campaign was of Banepa Municipality. Banepa Municipality launched Mass Literacy Campaign in 1992 and by now it claims that Banepa has 94% P.C. of its 6+ aged population literate. UNESCO and CEFA have been closely associated with Banepa Municipality Literacy Campaign.

In 1997 the National Council of Non-Formal Education Ministry of Education decided to launch Mass Literacy Campaigns in five districts (one each in each Development Region) of Nepal.

1. Taplejung in Eastern Region.
2. Parsa in Central Region.
3. Lamjung in Western region.
4. Dang in Mid Western region.
5. Achham in Far Western region.

Activities undertaken in the Mass campaign districts were: -

- a) Household survey of illiterates.
- b) Five months literacy class for the illiterates.
- c) Out of school education classes for 8-14 yrs children.
- d) Post literacy class for neo-literates.
- e) Literacy Committees were established at village and town levels.
- f) One literacy supervisor was appointed for each district.

The National council of NFE has made statement that the Mass Literacy Campaign will be gradually expanded in more districts.

But the Mass Literacy Campaign launched in Nepal looks like only a change of name. It lacks commitment, continuity and enthusiasm from top to the field level, which is essential to make it a success. Therefore it will not be surprising if the present campaign also meets same fate as the earlier campaigns did.

Why Are Mass Literacy Campaigns Necessary?

Within a policy-making framework, three program options for literacy promotion within societies may be conceptualized: (a) the diffusion approaches, (b) the selective-intensive approach, and (c) the mass approach.

The diffusion approach assumes that literacy will come through Universal Primary Education. As the graduates of the primary schools enter adulthood and join the economy and as the older generations pass away, literacy will have been diffused throughout the society. This, the 'long siege' approach, seeks to eradicate illiteracy through attrition.

Those who promote this approach believe that childhood and adolescence are the best periods of life for learning; and that, on the other hand, adults are not competent learners. Even when adults do have the mental capacity for learning, they are supposedly overwhelmed by obligations to the family and to the community. If adults have survived without literacy thus far, why not, it is asked, let them muddle through life, instead of taking already scarce educational resources away from the children?

We have already shown some of these assertions to be untenable. Adults are excellent learners since as they learn they also increase their learning ability. And no adult should be too busy to learn because of family and community obligations. Indeed, learning to read and write should be seen as an unfulfilled obligation to the family and the community, which must no longer be neglected. Moreover, the resources for adult literacy are seldom diverted directly from elementary education. Quite often a program for adult literacy would mean greater overall allocations to education. We must also remember that expenditures on adult literacy are likely to improve the rate of returns on formal elementary education (Bhola, 1979).

Quite apart from the logic of the arguments for and against, the experience of developing countries in the post-colonial period indicates that, in most countries, our hopes of eradicating illiteracy through attrition will not be fulfilled for decades, in the context of existing demographic trends.

The selective and intensive approach seeks to promote literacy among those select economic regions, select occupational groups and select age cohorts which offer the highest promise of economic returns, and to work with them intensively for maximum effect. This approach accepts the central role of literacy in the process of development, but it makes segmented commitments. The hope is that after the economic take-off within the selected sectors, there will be spillover to other economic sectors and these will then become eligible for intensive material and literacy inputs. In the meantime, the unstated assumption is that mass literacy will be a waste.

The literacy campaign approach is a mass approach that seeks to make all adult men and women in a nation literate within a particular time frame. Literacy is seen as a means to a comprehensive set of ends, economic, social- structural, and also political. There are many examples to show that a national literacy campaign can serve as a moral equivalent of the 'Long March' (Bhola, 1979). In too many countries of the Third World, the struggle for independence has been outside the direct experience of the masses. Independence has been good news, but most people have been spectators rather than participants in their independence movement. The mobilization necessary for a successful literacy campaign can provide the people with a deeply felt political experience resulting in a sense of nationhood.

The launching of a mass campaign is a declaration of 'business not as usual'. This can allow for a mobilization of commitment and resources impossible to achieve under other

conditions. By giving the campaign a mass orientation, a large part of the population is able to participate in it as learners or instructors or in one of the many other roles that a campaign requires and creates.

Mass Literacy Campaign (MLC) requires a commitment of political and administrative leadership. A MLC launched without such commitment could have frustrating results, and would prove dear in the long run.

MLC has to be based on a clear appreciation of the futility of center-based approach in bringing about a real change in the literacy situation on a large scale. Under the center-based approach literacy program is run through facilitators (sometimes also called instructors) who are paid a monthly honorarium and are charged with responsibility to impart literacy to 20 to 30 learners within a predetermined duration. By and large, such programs don't pay enough attention to learner motivation or to learning outcomes. There is no example in Asia of such an approach having succeeded in eradicating illiteracy in a sizeable geographical area-country, province or a district.

A decision to shift the strategy from running of center-based program to launching of mass literacy campaign has to be taken at the highest political and administrative level. Such a decision signifies a national determination to use the instrument of literacy for bringing about a transformation in the living and working conditions of the masses.

MLC, however, is a novel approach. Its implementation requires rigorous preparation, particularly in areas of pedagogy and management along with mass mobilization. This new approach should, therefore, be tried out in the beginning on a small scale. Success on such a scale will reinforce commitment of the leadership and will enable the "educated classes" in overcoming the attitude of cynicism and despair.

The change of literacy strategy proposed here is not of cosmetic nature, not even a reorganization of the existing design; it is a radically different approach. Mass Literacy Campaign should stir up enthusiasm among all people involves. This approach is based on the belief that people want to receive education and if they are actively involved in the campaign, they have the innate strength and capability to organize themselves for literacy and development. What is necessary is to enable them to clearly perceive the benefits of literacy and to give them the confidence that government proposes to do everything necessary, and possible, to eliminate the hurdles in their receiving and achieving literacy.

Mass Literacy Campaign in Different Countries

Many countries have launched and successfully achieved remarkable success not only to reduce illiteracy rates but also to create completely a new social environment. But there are many hurdles, which are mentioned below:

Mass campaigns or functional literacy programmes

In seeking ways to best serve the vast number of illiterates and simultaneously respond to their diverse needs and conditions, literacy planners often enter the endless debate of choosing between mass literacy campaigns and the more intensive and selective functional literacy programs. Both approaches have been undertaken within the region. In many countries (China, Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos), national efforts had been mobilized to enable the often-massive illiterate populations to learn to read and write within a relatively short time. At the same time, different forms of functional literacy programs, which relate literacy attainment to various aspects of development, have been implemented in a large number of countries, including the Philippines, India and Malaysia.

From experience, it is generally agreed that mass campaigns can be effective in uniting national efforts to tackle the massive problem of illiteracy. Mass campaigns, however, tend to be possible only in countries where strong political will exists and where there also exists an effective institutional framework to translate those policies into concrete actions. Furthermore, adequate attention must be given to the qualitative achievement of learners, as well as to post-literacy and continuing education, to prevent a relapse into illiteracy, as has occurred in many countries following successful mass campaigns.

On the other hand, functional literacy programs have been found to be effective in motivating learners' participation, in developing meaningful levels of literacy and in linking literacy to livelihood. But the cost of providing such intensive functional literacy efforts is often high and, therefore, coverage is limited.

Many countries, however, have modified and adopted both approaches so that each complements the other. In Indonesia, after the conclusion of the mass campaign, the country implemented a basic education program and later the large-scale and more functional Kejar Paket A.

In Thailand, a compulsory mass literacy campaign was launched in 1940 to prepare the largely illiterate adult population for participation in democratic forms of government. A few years after implementation, during which over one million people were reached, the compulsory law was abolished, the mass campaign discontinued and participation in literacy programs became voluntary. For the next twenty years, various forms of functional literacy programs were explored to effectively respond to the needs of the target learners. However, only a small number of people - around 50,000 per year - could be served through this intensive approach. In about 1983, as part of the government's policy to reach the 'poorest of the poor', a second mass literacy campaign was launched to mobilize literate persons within the nation and unite government efforts in serving the remaining illiterates scattered in different communities throughout the country. Functional literacy programs were not abolished but were further strengthened to serve minority groups, tackle pockets of intense illiteracy, and provide continuing education to neo-literates. Prior to the completion of the second campaign, communities were urged to continuously assess literacy conditions and organize literacy and post-literacy programs.

Experiences within the Asia-Pacific Region clearly suggest that there is no one formula for success. Literacy strategies must be diverse and adaptive. They should be planned to maximally capitalize on prevailing political support and institutional capabilities; they should reinforce past achievement and prepare for future courses of action.

These are some countries, achieving remarkable success through Mass Literacy Campaign. The countries are:

- a) Tanzania launched MLC in 1971-1983
- b) Vietnam 1975-1978
- c) Thailand 1940 & 1983
- d) Myanmar
- e) Indonesia

Most recently India has also launched Mass Literacy Campaign in the name of Total Literacy Campaign since 1989. First districts, which achieved success, was a district called Ernakulam of Kerala. Now more than 300 districts out of 500 districts of India have declared themselves illiteracy free districts. Nearest to Nepal where such Mass Literacy Campaign has been able to free whole district free of illiteracy is Bardhaman district of west Bengal.

Nepal should study the experience of other countries including India and try to launch Mass Literacy Campaign in true spirit.

Source : Campaigning for Literacy, UNESCO 1984
Education for ALL, UNESCO Bangkok 1989
UNESCO Literacy Mission to Nepal 1994

National Resource Center for Non-Formal Education (NRC-NFE) Literacy Resource Center (LRC) Major Activities

NRC-NFE/ ACCU/ LRC Building

With the generous assistance of Asia / Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO, Japan (ACCU) and donation of land by Mr. T.M. Sakya and Mrs. Ratna Maya Sakya, LRC Building was constructed at Talchhikhel, Satdobato, Latitpur in 1998.

The NRC-NFE and Center for Education for All (CEFA) have been operating in the new building now.

The LRC building has fully furnished Conference Hall, Resource Center and several Training Rooms.

Development and Production of Low -Cost Literacy Materials

NRC-NFE has developed and produced the following were materials on May 1998.

<i>S.N.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Cost Per Copy</i>
1.	Let us Use Compost Manure and Increase Production (Booklet)	Rs. 12.00
2.	Women's Co-operative (Booklet)	Rs. 12.00
3.	Let's Work Together and Be Self Reliance (Poster)	Rs. 20.00

The materials have been distributed as a sample to concerned organizations working in the field of literacy. The materials are available on sale at reasonable cost.

Visitors of NRC-NFE/LRC

1. ACCU's Mission Comprising of Mr.Shigeru Aoyagi, Director of Literacy Promotion Division and Ms. Saori Kando, Program Specialist of same Division have visited LRC from June 3-7, 1998 and discussed about the LRC activities.

2. Ms RikaYorozu, Head, Network Section, Literacy Promotion Division, ACCU and Mr.Nyeny, Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (PROAP) has visited LRC on June 24, 1998.
3. UNESCO Tripartite Evaluation Team of APPEAL Activities (12-15 July 1998) has visited LRC on July 13,1998. The Team also visited Banepa community Learning Centers and Banepa Municipality in same day.
The Team members:
 1. Dr. A. Yousif, Director of Literacy, Non-Formal Education, UNESCO, Paris
-Team Leader.
 2. Ms. Ellen Carm - Representative of the government of Norway.
 3. Mr. Norihiro Kuroda - representative of government of Japan.
 4. Mr. D.A. Perera - Consultant.
4. The Participants of study visit to Bhutan, Nepal and India under the project on Training of Non- Formal Education Personnel (17 June- 5 July 1998) organized by UNESCO, Bangkok have visited LRC on 5 July 1998.
5. Twenty-one participants from Nepal Red Cross under the Training of Trainers for Literacy Program has visited LRC-NFE on July 9, 1998.

Organization of training activities

The CEFA and the NRC-NFE jointly organized three pilot training of literacy personnel in following places utilizing the Guidebook for Literacy Personnel Based on ATLP.

Training Program of 1997

<i>Place</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>No. of Participants</i>
1. Kathmandu	19-28 October 1997	31 participants from five Regions.(25 NGOs, 3 GOs, 2 T.U. and 1 Municipality)
2. Jhapa (East Nepal)	30 Nov – 5 Dec 1997	22 participants (9 NGOs and 2 GOs)
3. Kapilbastu (West Nepal)	8-13 Dec 1997	20 participants (6 NGOs and 2 GOs)

NRC-NFE/CEFA is also jointly organizing five more Regional Training Workshops for Literacy Personnel in different five regions this year.

Training Program for 1998

<i>Venue</i>	<i>Date</i>
Central Region, Kathmandu	9-18 September,98
Mid Western Region, Pokhara	28Oct.-6 Nov. 98
Eastern Region, Dharan	17-26 Nov.98
Western Region, Dang	16-25 Dec. 98
Far Western, Kanchanpur	24 Jan-2 Feb 98

Members of Literacy Watch Committee, Nepal

1	Mr. T.M. Sanya	Chairman	- NRC-NFE, CEFA
2	Ms. Indira Koirala	Member Secretary	- IIDS
3	Dr. Sambhu Pd. Dungana,	Member	- NGO Forum
4	Mr. Chij Kumar Shrestha	Member	- World Education
5	Dr. Suman K. Tuladhar	Member	- CERID
6	Mrs. Kanta Singh ,	Member	- Nepal Women's Association
7	Mrs. Prema Regmi,	Member	- ABC, Nepal
8	Mr. Prakash Singh Adhikari	Member	- IFCD
9	Mr. Rohit Pradhan	Member	- TMUC/Nepal
10	Dr. Uttam Karmacharya	Member	- CEFA
11	Dr. Samira Luitel	Member	- CERID
12	A Representative from the National Council for NFE	Member	

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