



Best Practices Database

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Solidarity in Literacy Programme, Brasilia *Brazil*

Best Practice

New for 2002

- Categories:**
- Gender Equity and Equality:
 - access to resources
 - empowerment
 - gender roles and responsibilities
 - gender specific needs
 - Poverty Eradication:
 - income generation
 - job creation
 - vocational training
 - Social Services:
 - education
 - health and welfare
 - recreation

Level of Activity: National

Ecosystem: Tropical/Sub-Tropical

Summary

The Solidarity in Literacy Programme was created in 1997 by the Solidarity Community Council, a forum for the development of social actions based on partnerships between the federal government, private organizations, and civil society. The Programme is managed by a non-governmental organization, the Association for the Support of Solidarity in Literacy Programme and is coordinated by a team of around 200 consultants with headquarters in Brasilia, the federal capital of Brazil.

The Programme's principal objective is to institute provision of education for youths and adults through focus on municipalities that have the highest illiteracy rates in the country. The Programme model is based on modules of semester literacy training that take place through a simple partnership between the government, civil society, and the academic community. One month is dedicated to the training of the literacy trainers. These trainers are selected from within the community that will be served. The remaining five months are used to offer classes to the illiterate community. One of the principal strategies of the Programme is systematic evaluation, which allows for the eventual improvement of pedagogic directions or the permanence of applied methods.

Initiated in 38 municipalities with the highest illiteracy rates in Brazil (63% to 82% illiteracy rates), the Programme currently exists in 2,010 municipalities (where 72% of the classrooms are in the rural district). The Programme is also operational in seven metropolitan regions. As of December 2001, 2,400,000 students had been served and over 120,000 literacy trainers had been qualified. In November 2000, the Programme was replicated in East Timor and while in Mozambique and Sao

Tome and Principe it was introduced in October 2001

Narrative

Situation before the initiative began

The Programme initiated action in 1997 with a pilot project serving the 38 municipalities with the highest rates of illiteracy in Brazil (registered in the 1991 Demographic Census from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE), above 55% in the 15 year and older age group. The last Demographic Census from IBGE after 1991 occurred in 2000. The following comparative table shows the rates for the 38 municipalities from 1991 and 2000.

Municipality	Federal Unit/ Region	Index1991 (%)	Index 2000 (%)
1. Adustina	BA/NE	65.7	45.5
• Araioses	MA/NE	66.6	48.3
• Branquinha	AL/NE	72.2	54.6
• Buique	PE/NE	61.2	52.0
• Campo Grande	AL/NE	64.2	53.0
• Canapi	AL/NE	66.0	52.6
• Cel. Joao Sa	BA/NE	79.3	54.9
• Craibas	AL/NE	71.4	50.9
• Dona Ines	PB/NE	63.0	48.4
• Envira	AM/NO	78.0	51.9
• Igreja Nova	AL/NE	66.3	48.7
• Inaja	PE/NE	68.7	45.1
• Inhapi	AL/NE	67.4	52.8
• Itaiba	PE/NE	67.8	50.7
• Itamarati	AM/NO	86.2	60.0
• Itapororoca	PB/NE	60.1	49.7
• Jaicos	PI/NE	66.2	46.9
• Japura	AM/NO	73.2	34.1
• Jaramataia	AL/NE	72.1	46.3
• Joaquim Gomes	AL/NE	67.5	49.9
• Lagoa de Pedras	RN/NE	68.3	44.2
• Maraa	AM/NO	54.2	36.5
• Mata Grande	AL/NE	57.8	50.0

• Melgaco	PA/NO	70.7	41.9
• Olho D'Agua Grande	AL/NE	71.8	52.5
• Pauini	AM/NO	82.0	51.7
• Pedro Alexandre	BA/NE	78.0	48.7
• Poco Redondo	SE/NE	68.2	46.9
• Porto de Pedras	AL/NE	63.1	51.8
• Ribeira do Amparo	BA/NE	68.0	46.0
• Salitre	CE/NE	67.0	51.6
• Santana de Mangueira	PB/NE	68.8	46.1
• Sao Jose da Lagoa Tapada	PB/NE	59.2	49.6
• Sao Jose da Tapera	AL/NE	70.5	50.3
• Simoes	PI/NE	72.6	42.2
• Tapaua	AM/NO	71.2	46.0
• Traipu	AL/NE	66.0	53.1
• Tupanatinga	PE/NE	69.5	52.2

Establishment of Priorities

Illiteracy is still one of Brazil's principle social problems. For this reason it was a priority for the Council for Solidarity Community, which made provisions for education programmes in its innovative action plans. The principle objectives of Solidarity in Literacy are: concentrating focus on regions with the highest illiteracy rates; prioritizing service to youths without excluding adults; and introducing public Education for Youths and Adults to ensure continuity after they leave the programme.

Formulation of Objectives and Strategies

The Program was created based on six axes:

- 1) National Mobilisation ensuring actualization from all society, respecting diversity of concepts and models;
- 2) Pilot Description of initial project as a model to be applied, supported, evaluated, and improved;
- 3) Seek out and foment partnerships to provide lasting solutions for illiteracy bringing together government, private sector, universities, and individuals;
- 4) Permanent evaluation, with university support and ensuring continuity of programme and the future of students;
- 5) Mobilisation of youth literacy trainers from the municipality where they live

Mobilization of Resources (financial, technical and human)

Financial: Finances were mobilised through fundraising by the civil society in general (public and private businesses and private individuals) through marketing and visibility strategies, demonstrating results and real-life stories. Transparency is a constant Programme concern. All partners (universities, businesses, individuals, municipalities) are constantly informed about Programme action progress and receive periodic financial statements. Businesses receive a monthly bulletin and all partners receive a bimestrial Informative Bulletin, "Writing Together" magazine. Additionally all partners are invited to visit municipalities and classrooms for in loco confirmation that their contribution is giving new

dimension to each student's life and to the community.

Technical: The Programme performs all actions within a definite structure. Around 200 consultants undertake the training in the Programme's network. Infrastructure from the municipalities is also used, organising classroom structure, substantially reducing costs.

Human: University professors are mobilised and perform their training and evaluation duties voluntarily, receiving a stipend to cover travel and meal expenses. They are attracted by the possibility of applying what is discussed in the academic world in the field. The literacy trainers are representatives of the community and are important during social mobilisation and school enrolment. They receive a monthly grant and are selected by the university professors.

Process.

The accomplishments achieved by the Solidarity in Literacy Programme are only possible through the participation of a wide variety of partners in the process. These include university professors, deans, community literacy trainers, students, solidarity citizens, businesses, governments, governmental agencies and international organisations (UNESCO). While numerous difficulties exist, they are overcome through the efforts of each of these partners.

1) To guarantee the continuity of the students when they leave the Programme, a direct project was developed with each Mayor's office, focusing on obtaining federal resources to construct classrooms for Youth and Adult Education, aiding in the development of projects and monitoring the fulfillment of certain requirements to assure financial resources from the National Fund for the Development of Education and the RESTART Programme from the Ministry of Education. Beyond this, the Solidarity in Literacy Programme obtains supplementary resources that allowed for the creation of the Emerging Action Project, which benefits the municipalities that increased the number of classrooms for Youth and Adult Education from 2000 to 2001. By the end of 2001, 70% of the municipalities served by the Programme had installed classes of education for youths and adults and student enrollment numbers in these classes increased 114% between 2000 and 2001 in the municipalities served by the Programme.

2) The majority of students in the Programme live in inaccessible rural districts. Most students are engaged in child labour in the plantations and/or menial labour. In many cases they do not have access to electric lights or running water. One of the principal causes of dropping out of the programme is students' vision problems. In order to try to solve this problem the "To See" Project was initiated, distributing eyeglasses to the public in partnership with higher learning institutions and Mayor's Offices.

3) In the Large Urban Project that serves students from the Brazilian urban centers, there is difficulty in identifying the illiterate. This is so because people do not openly admit to not having had access to education because they are afraid they will not be socially accepted. A cultural project has been developed to attract students with artistic and musical activities and classrooms are put in the localities where there is a need for literacy classes has been established e.g. in neighbourhood associations, public schools, hospitals, and prisons. This always occurs in partnership with neighbourhood and resident associations, NGOs, agencies, and religious movements.

Results Achieved

The partnerships established in the sphere of the Programme are fundamental for guarantee of positive results, but they benefit from them as well:

- Private sector - socially responsible businesses receive a positive response from society, above all because they act without direct market interest;

- Universities: the Programme provoked dialogue between partner universities, which resulted in significant academic research and solutions tackling the illiteracy problem among Youth and Adult

Education in the country. Specific subjects in the area were absorbed at the curricular level while specialisation courses emerged as well as new theoretical and practical guidelines. Before initiation of the Programme, fewer than 10 higher learning institutions worked with education for youths and adults. Today there are 204.

- Governments - A specific programme was created at federal level in order to finance service to students who had left the Solidarity in Literacy Programme for formal education for youths and adults. In 2002 resources have been invested through the RESTART Programme according to an agreement signed in December 2001. The resources will be redistributed through the National Foundation for the Development of Education (FNDE) and 749 municipalities will benefit. On the state level, consciousness of the importance of the battle against illiteracy was generated and today seven state governments have adopted the Programme to serve their municipalities. At municipal level, there is a growing public interest emphasising the need to offer education to the local population. This is demonstrated by the institutionalisation of Youth and Adult Education in 71% of the served municipalities by December of 2000.

- Municipalities - The contribution of the Programme in the eliminating illiteracy is notable, as well as the increase in school enrolment and capacity building of the population as a whole, especially of the literacy trainers qualified by the Programme (over 100,000 since the initiation of actions). Many of the literacy trainers have gone on to join the formal education system. There is improved enrolment rates by school going children. This has also seen a increase in number of education related cooperatives created can be seen.

Sustainability

The simplicity and richness of the model of partnership network is one of the basis on which the Programme relies for its sustainability. The exchange of experience and the richness of the various methodologies implemented by the universities are also a way of guaranteeing sustainability.

Lessons Learned

The optimisation of available resources and the synergy of partnerships were two of the lessons learned and applied to the Programme model. In addition to this, there is a need to guarantee sustainability of actions that will influence political support for education policy for the youth and adult: this is the most efficient method of guaranteeing the continuity of the education process introduced by the Programme's actions.

Transferability

The Programme model is simple. It is a low-cost and easily applicable Programme, which relates the growth in the number of municipalities, students, and the partnerships established. The Programme began in 38 municipalities and today exists in over 2,010 municipalities, approximately 45% of the municipalities in Brazil. "Partnership Engineering" (an expression coined by the Director of the Hamburg Institute/UNESCO, Mr. Adama Ouane is the principle recipe for the success of the Program and is a foundation to facilitates applicability, transference, and sustainability.

Interaction with the academic field is fundamental for the pedagogic success of the programme, in the preparation of the training and qualification methods for the literacy trainers, in process evaluation, in process improvement, and consequently, in its reproduction. In addition to knowledge of working in partnerships, the Programme enjoins the eccentricities and specificity (characteristics and cultures) of each region. In this regard, several countries have replicated the Literacy Programme: bilingual literacy in Portuguese and Tetum in East Timor, and literacy in Portuguese in the company of the many other idioms in the African countries. This is credited to the working partnership with the higher learning institutions. Three Portuguese speaking countries: East Timor, Sao Tome and Principe, and Mozambique are carrying out the literacy programme with astounding results. Other countries in the pipeline (n 2002) to adapt the education programme are Guinea Bissau, Cabo Verde, and Angola. One

point that deserves mention is that all of the work executed by the higher learning institution partners is volunteer work. Many of these institutions even assume the pedagogic coordination for over ten municipalities, at times in different states.

Key Dates

- 1- 1997: Creation of the Program by the Solidarity Community Council .
- 2- November 1998: Creation of the "Association for the Support of the Solidarity in Literacy Program", a non-governmental non-profit organization.
- 3- November 2000: Beginning of international action in East Timor (in 2001, it will be Mozambique and SAo Tome and Principe's turn).
- 4- September 2000: Creation of "Literacy Week," an event that will institutionalize the celebration of International Literacy Day.
- 5- December 2001: The 2000 Census confirms the results of the Program: national illiteracy rate falls

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- 2) Title of Article: Alfabetismos ou analfabetismos. (Literacies or Illiteracies)
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Source: Magno de Aguiar Maranhao, Gazeta do Povo-PR (newspaper), Educacao, Mar.12 2000.
- 4) Title of Article: Jovens e Adultos (Youths and Adults)
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Type of Organization: Non-governmental organisation (NGO)

Nominating Organization

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Partners

Bank for Economic and Social Development

National Fund for the Development of Education / the Alvorada Project

Ministry of Agrarian Development

Financial Profile

Year	1999	2000	2001
Total Budget	Â	Â	Â
Ministry of Education	5,183,333.33	5,130,341.88	5,128,204.58
State Governments and Non-governmental Agencies	9,525,938.17	18,810,488.46	24,621,480.45
Businesses and Private Institutions	4,742,071.69	4,314,009.71	4,489,191.06
Individuals	217,031.18	675,878.37	297,213.33

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