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USAID Evaluation of Women's Literacy Activities

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the evaluation, as specified in the Scope of Work, was to assess the adult literacy components of nine USAID/Nepal projects implemented since 1979. The evaluation focused on documenting or determining:

1. Literacy gains made by adult literacy participants;
2. Adult literacy impacts on overall project goals;
3. Beneficiaries' perspectives on methodology and materials of adult literacy;
4. Programmatic and organizational strengths and weaknesses of each adult literacy component, such as instructor selection and training, materials development and dissemination; and
5. Contextual constraints and opportunities for conducting adult literacy programs.

Public literacy has not grown as quickly as increased access to primary schooling would suggest. Currently, only about one-third of those starting primary school will eventually finish Grade 5. While such low rates of school participation should not be considered acceptable, it is realistic to assume that literacy education will be a necessary complement to formal schooling for millions of Nepalis for the foreseeable future. The current literacy rates in Nepal are estimated to be 40 percent overall (with 25 percent for females and 55 percent for males).

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare (MOEC/SW) provides technical support (literacy materials, training, supervisors) for literacy programs, and provides grant funds to the District Education Offices (DEOs), which then are supposed to provide funding to NGOs for actual provision of literacy training. Currently, only 0.3 percent of the central MOEC/SW budget is targeted for literacy. In addition, there are over 150 organizations providing literacy education in Nepal, which meet only three percent of the need.

USAID/Nepal has supported adult literacy education since 1979 through nine projects in women's development, health and family planning, agriculture and natural resources management, and direct assistance to literacy programming. In the past three years, these projects have supported literacy through 1,239 centers to 30,477 Nepalis. Additional support has been given through the training of 380 literacy trainers and 804 literacy facilitators.

This evaluation was conducted to assess the contributions and value of these literacy components and glean lessons learned for future adult literacy programming. These programs are reviewed below.

Results

World Education, Inc. (WEI), Private Agencies Acting Together (PACT), United Mission to Nepal (UMN) and Save The Children Foundation/USA (SCF/USA) maintain in-house literacy education capabilities, which have resulted in development of literacy education materials by each organization, and target audiences and methodologies unique to each organization.

World Education, Inc. has demonstrated strengths in literacy education policy, curriculum and materials development, and training. The Nayo Goreto curriculum and materials, developed by WEI, are still the national standard and are used by other USAID-sponsored literacy projects. The advisory role that WEI plays with the National Council for Nonformal Education is valued by its chairman and is well placed in the establishment of the newly formed council. The policy studies undertaken by WEI are substantive and contribute to the knowledge base in literacy education in Nepal.

PACT has demonstrated strength in developing and delivering curriculum and materials for the training of literacy trainers and facilitators. The classes run by PACT appear effective, are consistent with their stated methodology, and are reported to be valuable by graduates of the course. PACT's policy advisory role is based less on institutional linkages and more on recognition of its expertise and experience in literacy in Nepal.

UMN also maintains in-house capability for materials development and training, with a focus on supporting committees and users groups which are delivering literacy education. UMN emphasizes curriculum materials development and distribution, training, and follow-up support to the local groups implementing the literacy classes. UMN is somewhat unique among the projects as it claims to use literacy exclusively as an instrumental tool for other community development objectives, yet devotes significant resources and expertise to its literacy component, to the degree that it has the stature of a primary development objective.

SCF/USA has a multi-sectoral development agenda within which it has developed a strong community-focused delivery system for literacy education. The home office has a non-formal education section, which is responsible for development of literacy materials, coordination with donor agencies and GON offices, timely training of supervisors and facilitators, and timely delivery of teaching materials. Part of its strength in the literacy program lies in its supervision system, from the home to the field offices.

SCF/USA field offices also contain a non-formal education section to develop locally produced materials, manage training of supervisors and facilitators, and to supervise and conduct literacy classes on schedule.

Four of the remaining five projects use literacy explicitly as a field intervention for facilitating other community development objectives, and rely on outside expertise for training of literacy supervisors and facilitators. Of these four organizations, IIDS appears to have the greatest strength in delivering literacy. CARE, CEDPA, and the WDOs in the Rapti Zone include community mobilization and functional linkages for literacy as important components, yet dedication of expertise and supervision for the literacy activities does not appear to be as strongly emphasized in these programs as in the SCF/USA and IIDS programs.

It was reported that the functional literacy components in the two health projects, HEAL and CEDPA, accomplished their goals of raising awareness and knowledge among participants of health practices. With this new knowledge, however, has come a keener realization of participants' economic circumstances and ability to act on their new knowledge. For example, participants in the HEAL Project were reported by the Makwanpur District Public Health Officer (DPHO) to know the importance of washing and using soap, but did not have the resources to buy soap. Similar comments about secondary literacy outcomes were made in regard to the CEDPA project.

The limitations of literacy expertise, supervision, and follow-on activities in CEDPA, CARE, and MLD/WDO do not automatically represent criticism of these projects, but are indicators of their agenda priorities. To the degree that these projects are focused on natural resources management, family planning and health, and integrated rural development, it can be said that they are providing a good service in literacy education. If the focus were more exclusively on literacy, then their in-house literacy expertise, curriculum, and supervision would be seen to need strengthening.

Costs

A model for estimating costs, developed by World Education, Inc. (1993), shows a per person rate for participation in literacy education of NRs 295.77 (US\$ 6.04). The rate for completers is NRs 492.95 (US\$ 10.06). These cost estimates exclude administrative costs, which can vary significantly. World Education, with several donor agencies, such as UNICEF, has recently established a norm reference cost of NRs 340.00.

Of the six USAID-funded projects which directly provide regular literacy programs, four have reported cost data. The average cost per participant is NRs 393.44. The cost category with the largest variance is "supplies," both expendable and non-expendable, followed by "training costs" and "supervision."

All of the USAID-funded projects can be considered cost-effective when compared with formal primary schooling. The highest cost delivery of literacy by a USAID-

funded program is NRs 12,720, or NRs 509 per participant. With a course completion rate of 72.2 percent (dropout rate of 27.8 percent), the cost per *completer* is NRs 704.71.

The per student cost for providing Grades 1-3 of formal primary school is NRs 1,680.00 (NRs 560 per year). The cost per *completer* of three grades of public schooling is NRs 2,709.66. This is nearly four times the cost of providing literacy and numeracy through literacy education, which the GON considers to be equivalent in knowledge and skills.

Overall Conclusions

1. Literacy programs are more effective when coupled with post-literacy activities.
2. Other development activities, in communities with low literacy levels, are more effective when coupled with literacy programs and groups.
3. Literate individuals and groups, especially those who have successfully completed a Naya Goreto adult literacy education class, are better able and more likely to undertake initiatives in improving their social, economic, and political circumstances.
4. The programs which appear most successful in delivering community literacy programs also exhibit strong facilitators and supervisory systems.
5. Literacy programs are cost-effective when compared with three years of formal schooling, by a 4:1 ratio.

Program Recommendations

I. Program and Project Development

1. Nepal Literacy Expansion Project II (WEI).

- a) WEI should complement its "literacy map" of Nepal with a bibliography of literacy materials available in Nepal. This bibliography should (a) include materials by language group, (b) include sources of materials, costs and instructions on how to obtain them, and (c) be made available to NGOs through the District Education Office.
- b) WEI should complement its assistance to the NCNFE with assistance to selected DEOs in literacy grant disbursement and management. This will allow feedback to the NCNFE on its new policy of supporting NGOs in delivery of

literacy education, and provide the information necessary to develop a prototype training for DEOs in grants management.

- c) WEI should support their grantee NGOs in obtaining funds through the DEOs, in order to field test the NCNFE policy of DEO grants for literacy.
- d) WEI should be able to track and assess GON's delivery of literacy education.

2. Strengthening NGOs Activity in Nepal (PACT).

- a) PACT should develop a clear plan of action on an annual or semi-annual basis. This should include categories of effort, funding sources, types and number of trainings, and resources dedicated to NGO support. A plan of activities and training schedule will provide the basis for assessing of PACT's plan for contributing to Nepal's annual literacy effort, and to allow NGOs and others to better plan their own participation in PACT training.
- b) Future grant proposals from PACT to USAID should clearly delineate activities needing USAID support, with cost breakouts, so that USAID grant inputs can be more clearly associated with subsequent PACT activities.

3. Self-Reliant Development Program for Marginal Women (IIDS).

- a) IIDS should further strengthen its literacy expertise within its own staff, by providing additional training for motivators and supervisors, or by acquiring an in-house literacy expert. This additional expertise is justified by IIDS's integral use of literacy for the formation of effective women's groups, and the central role of women's groups for meeting project goals.

II. Health and Family Planning

4. Child Survival/Family Planning Services: Health Education and Adult Literacy Project (WEI)

- a) As WEI is bringing its literacy expertise to bear on raising functional knowledge of health practices, closer attention may be paid to the health aspects of the project. For example, a baseline survey of health knowledge and practice would have benefitted WEI's assessment of project impacts, especially against its health objectives.
- b) WEI's evaluation of its pilot phase could usefully include an assessment of the potential of the women's groups to carry on other development activities, such as income generation.

c) If possible, a follow-up study would provide useful information on the translation of health attitudes and knowledge into changed practices, and how any changes may relate to the retention of literacy skills.

5. Increase Community Projects in Family Planning, Health, and Women's Development in the NGO Sector in Nepal (CEDPA)

a) CEDPA should consider the costs and benefits of strengthening its literacy expertise within its own staff, by providing additional training for motivators and supervisors, or by acquiring an in-house literacy expert.

b) CEDPA should assess the potential for further linking its literacy, health and family planning activities with additional development activities and, possibly, with NGO formation.

c) The effort to form women's groups and provide literacy training could be considered as a "sunk cost," which could be built upon in obtaining and providing small community or household development grants.

d) CEDPA should consider alternate methods of remuneration to literacy facilitators and supervisors, so that their motivation and participation in literacy education is perceived more clearly to be based on community service. While this may raise new issues in recruitment, selection, and supervision of literacy personnel, there may be a longer term payoff in terms of enthusiasm and effectiveness of the community groups, and their longer term prospects for undertaking continued development activities.

III. Agricultural and Rural Development

6. Natural Resources Management (CARE)

a) CARE should strengthen its literacy expertise within its own staff, by providing additional training for motivators and supervisors, or by acquiring an in-house literacy expert. This additional expertise is justified by CARE's integral use of literacy for the formation of effective community groups, and the central role of community groups for meeting project goals.

7. Community-based Integrated Rural Development (SCF/US)

a) USAID should consider the costs and benefits of funding various SCF literacy activities. For example, should USAID support be used for providing basic literacy education programs with functional linkages and wider audiences, developing materials for specific language groups, or experimental programs, such as the family literacy program?

8. Nepal Resource Management (UMN)

a) USAID should consider the costs and benefits of funding various UMN literacy activities. For example, should USAID support be used for providing basic literacy education programs with functional linkages and wider audiences or developing pre- and post-literacy materials for specific language groups?

9. Rapti Development Project (MLD)

a) The WDOs should strengthen the literacy expertise within their own staff, by providing additional training for motivators and supervisors, or by acquiring a WDO literacy expert. This additional expertise is justified, as literacy is a core activity, yet is supervised by WDO staff who do not have literacy expertise.

b) The WDOs should make provision for identifying and training literacy facilitators from remote villages, so that remote women will have better access to WDO services, such as literacy. Supervision of remote literacy classes will need to be conducted by a WDO representative who is trained in literacy methodology and will visit remote sites routinely.

Overall Recommendation

Lessons learned from USAID's varied experience in literacy education, such as the importance of supervisory follow-up and ancillary activities, should be included in future literacy program designs.

Acronyms

CARE	--	Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere
CEDPA	--	Center for Development and Population Activities
CHV	--	Community Health Volunteer
CPR	--	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
BPEP	--	Basic and Primary Education Programme
DDC	--	District Development Committee
DEO	--	District Education Officer
DPHO	--	District Public Health Officer
FED	--	Forum for Environment and Development
GO	--	Government Organization
GON	--	Government of Nepal
IIDS	--	Institute for Integrated Development Studies
INGO	--	International Non-governmental Organization
MOEC/SW	--	Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare
MLD	--	Ministry of Local Development
NFEC	--	Non-Formal Education Council
NFE	--	Non-Formal Education
NCNFE	--	National Council for Non-Formal Education
NGO	--	Non-governmental organization
NRMP	--	Nepal Resource Management Program
SCJ	--	Save the Children Japan
PACT	--	Private Agencies Collaborating Together
PCRW	--	Production Credit For Rural Women
SCF/USA	--	Save The Children/USA
UMN	--	United Mission to Nepal
UNESCO	--	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	--	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	--	United Nations Population Fund
USAID/N	--	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	--	Village Development Committee
WDO	--	Women Development Officer
WEI	--	World Education Inc.

Explanations

Naya Goreto	--	Two basic books for adults
Naulo Bihani	--	Two basic books for out-of-school children
Cheli Beti	--	"Sisters and daughters": a literacy program for out-of-school girls
Facilitator	--	A person who helps participants to learn in a literacy class
Supervisor	--	A person who supervises facilitators
Trainer	--	A person who trains facilitators and supervisors
Motivator	--	IIDS term for local organizer and supervisors
Education Assistant	--	Save the Children Japan term for supervisors

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- II. Description of the Evaluation Study
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USAID Evaluation of Women's Literacy Activities

Section I: Introduction

USAID/Nepal has supported adult literacy education since 1979 by incorporating it into nine projects in other sectors, such as health, agriculture, and women in development.

An evaluation of the Nepal Literacy Expansion Project II, undertaken by The World Education, Inc. (WEI), was due in the fall of 1993. Instead of carrying out the evaluation of this single activity, it was proposed to conduct an evaluation of the adult literacy components included in all nine projects (shown in Table 1) to assess the contributions and value of these literacy components and glean lessons learned for future adult literacy programming.

Section II: Literacy in Nepal

Nepal has made considerable gains in literacy given its status following a long period of isolation and control by the Rana regime. During the Rana rule, education was available only to a very select few. Following the first democratic revolution in 1951, communities throughout the country began establishing schools and the government has increasingly taken responsibility for expanding access to education.

In 1951 there were 312 primary schools in Nepal. The number of primary schools expanded to 4,000 within a decade and numbered 18,694 in 1991, with 2.88 million children registered in primary schools.

The current GON has expressed unequivocal support for expanding access to basic education as a foundation for *"...nation building in the broadest sense. This broad instrumental view of education in no way demeans education's intrinsic value but recognizes the overarching importance of national development"* (G.R. Joshi, Minister of Education, Culture, and Social Welfare, 1993).

Table 1

USAID-supported Projects with Literacy Education Components

S.No.	Project Name/No.	PACD	LOP (\$000)
I. PROGRAM AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT			
1.	Nepal Literacy Expansion Project II (WEI) 367-0159.10	08/95	1200
2.	Strengthening NGOs Activity in Nepal (PACT) 367-0159.06	03/93	350
3.	Self-Reliant Development Program for Marginal Women (IIDS) 367-0159.24	09/93	4
II. HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING			
4.	Health Education and Adult Literacy Project (Child Survival/Family Planning Services: (WEI) 367-0157	07/95	17
5.	Increase Community Projects in Family Planning, Health & Women's Development in the NGO Sector in Nepal (CEDPA) 367-0159.03	07/93	368
III. AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT			
6.	Natural Resource Management (CARE) 367-0159.04	10/93	899
7.	Community-Based Integrated Rural Development (SCF/USA) 367-0159.11	07/95	450
8.	Nepal Resource Management (UMN) 267-0159.28	08/93	130
9.	Rapti Development Project (MLD) 367-0155	07/95	14

Educational leaders of Nepal have espoused the belief, shared by many developing and newly industrialized nations, that the *"...social and economic development of nations is fundamentally an educational process in which people learn to create new institutions, utilize new technologies and alter their patterns of behavior. The evidence is overwhelming that schooling and other forms of education can make major contributions to the complex processes of technology transfer, economic productivity, building of social and political institutions, and enhancement of the quality of life"* (Adams, 1993).

The contribution of education to the development of other sectors in Nepal has recently been articulated by a member of the National Planning Commission. In his paper, *Public Investment in Education*, Baidya (1993) argues that the GON will resist pressures from other sectors for resources dedicated to education because of education's direct contributions to changes in behavior which improve the quality of life. Baidya goes on to specify direct linkages between educational attainment and (a) improvements in agricultural productivity and (b) knowledge and adoption of health and family planning practices.

Public literacy, however, has not grown as quickly as increased access to primary schooling would suggest. The contribution of formal education to literacy has been constrained, in that approximately 70 percent of primary school children do not finish the five-year cycle. For every 100 children who start Grade 1, 18 will complete primary school (through Grade 5) in five years, and 37 will drop out in the first five years. The remaining 45 students will repeat grades, with about 15 eventually finishing the primary cycle and the other 30 eventually dropping out. Overall, then, only about one-third of those starting primary school will ever finish Grade 5, with most dropping out after Grade 1 or 2 before they even acquire basic literacy or numeracy skills.

While such low rates of school participation should not be considered acceptable, it is realistic to assume that literacy education will be a necessary complement to formal schooling for millions of Nepalis for the foreseeable future.

The history of nonformal education in Nepal has been one of limited coverage. More than 150 organizations provide literacy education in Nepal, yet are meeting less than three per cent of the need. The literacy effort, however, has resulted in high quality materials and attracted a number of committed individuals and organizations for its delivery.

Table 2

Literacy Rates in Nepal (in percent)

	1961	1971	1981	1991
Total	8.1	14.4	23.5	40.0
Female	1.8	3.7	11.5	25.0
Male	16.3	24.7	34.9	55.0

Source: World Education, Inc. (1994)

The World Education Inc. began collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare (MOEC/SW) for research, design and field testing of the National Literacy Program in Nepal, with primary funding from USAID/Nepal, and supplemental funding from UNFPA, UNESCO, UNICEF, and Action Aid. This collaborative effort resulted in the publication of the *Naya Goreto* 1, 2, 3 and 4 -- four books which are based on Paulo Freire's keyword approach for teaching adults, and *Naulo Bihani* 1 and 2 -- a two book series, with a total of 270 pages, for the children who are not participating in formal schooling, often referred to as the "Out-of-School Program (OSP). The MOEC/SW, in cooperation with the World Education Inc., recently revised the four books -- *Naya Goreto* into two books, with the deletion of the materials related to the previous regime and the addition of voters' education and democracy.

Naya Goreto presents a six months course, with meetings two hours a day, six days a week. Many facilitators find it difficult to complete the course within this period. The *Naulo Bihani* is a nine months course, again 2 hours a day, six days a week. After completing this course, children are eligible to sit for a matriculation exam to directly enter into the third or the fourth grade.

The UNDP-sponsored Seti Project for rural development has developed and implemented the *Cheli Beti* (sisters and daughters) program, especially for out-of-school girls. The course materials are relevant to the girls' daily lives in rural areas. The *Cheli Beti* course follows the "keyword" approach, acting around a young village girl who eventually turns out to be from Nepal's lower caste. The course duration is one year but is flexible to suit the timetable of the young women in rural Nepal.

Each of the three courses mentioned above are intended for the delivery of three main components: 1) literacy and numeracy 2) development messages and 3) participation in development.

A recent evaluation (1993) of the Save The Children/USA literacy programs, which use the Naya Goreto materials in conjunction with SCF materials, concluded that the impacts of literacy education were: (a) greater self-confidence; (b) increased participation in the community and civic affairs; (c) improvement in productivity and income; (d) greater use of available services such as rural banking, postal services or agricultural extension; (e) increased concern about the education of one's children; and (f) greater awareness about community, social and economic issues.

Government Implementation of Literacy Programs

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare (MOEC/SW) provides technical support (literacy materials, training, supervisors) for literacy programs, and provides grant funds to the District Education Offices (DEOs), which then are supposed to provide funding to NGOs for actual provision of literacy training. In 1988, only one percent of the education budget was targeted for literacy; now only 0.3 percent of the central MOEC/SW budget is targeted for literacy. The rationale for making such a small government budget allocation for literacy programs is not clear, though it may be based on real and anticipated donor assistance in the subsector.

The GON has acknowledged that they can not handle the "backlog" of literacy needs in the country. At most, the GON claims that they will reach only one-third of the illiterate population and that the remaining two-thirds must rely on NGOs for literacy education. Consequently, the MOEC/SW is focusing its delivery system on the formal system, and has developed the following guidelines for disbursing funds to implement literacy education programs in the districts:

1. First preference is to be given to NGOs which have some resources, but need help with literacy materials and training of trainers.
2. Second preference is given to NGOs with the capability of running literacy programs, but which have no resources.
3. If there are no NGOs in the districts with resources or the ability to run literacy programs, then the District Education Office is expected to run the programs.

In the past, DEOs were assigned uniform quotas which were determined according to the budget allocation for literacy programs. This was found to be unrealistic as the capacity for using the grant varied from district to district.

Beginning with the 1993/94 budget cycle, DEOs are expected to make program and budget requests to the MOEC/SW which are based on demand for literacy programs. "Demand" will be estimated by the number of classes which can be run in the district each year.

Issues in Literacy Education in Nepal

Comings et al (1992) and Shrestha (1993) have presented the current issues in literacy education in Nepal and have drawn conclusions from the literacy literature. These issues and conclusions are presented below:

Female Participation: The disproportionate number of women who are illiterate requires special programs that target women and girls, if substantial literacy gains are to be realized. When literacy classes are provided in a convenient manner, women and girls can overcome the social and household barriers to their participation in education.

Skill Acquisition: The GON considers the Nepal Literacy Program (Naya Goreto) materials to be equivalent, in literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills, with Grades 1-3 of formal primary schooling. The equivalency is based on a content analysis of the two programs conducted by the MOEC/SW Adult Education Section with assistance from World Education.

Admittedly, the two programs differ in that: (a) Grades 1-3 offer additional subject content, such as history and geography; (b) the Naya Goreto basic course offers development messages and participatory methods not available in formal schooling; and (3) Grades 1-3 and the Nepal Literacy Program address different populations. Comparative data on actual attainment of knowledge and skills is not currently available. Of the participants completing the Nepal Literacy Program, about half will score above 50 percent on a composite test of reading, writing, and math skills covered in the class.

A literacy program can be successful in a national language with participants whose local language is different, and improved oral fluency in a national language can be an additional outcome of such a program.

Changes in Attitudes and Knowledge: The literacy materials incorporate issues and information on several development topics, such as family planning, health, ecology, and agriculture. Literacy classes can serve as an effective mechanism for teaching knowledge and attitudes in relation to these other development sectors.

Dropout Rates: A concern in adult literacy programs is what appears to be a high dropout rate, with "high" usually viewed at 50 percent. High dropout rates are often considered as an indication of poor program design or that potential participants are uninterested in attending literacy classes.

A 50 percent dropout rate, however, does not necessarily indicate that materials and instructional design need improvement. Instructional delivery and post-literacy linkages should also be considered as key variables. Once a program has good

materials and a good instructional design, the dropout rate can be significantly lowered by attention to facilitator selection, training, and supervision.

Assessment of Literacy: There is no "real" national definition of literacy in Nepal. For the purposes of recording literacy information for national censuses, however, the Central Bureau of Statistics has used the following definitions:

- 1952/54 Census thru the 1971 Census : The ability to read and write in any language.
- 1981 Census : The ability to read and write in any language with understanding.
- 1991 Census : The ability to read and write in any language with understanding, and do simple arithmetic.

This lack of standardization has made it difficult to assess progress in literacy attainment. In addition, the Central Bureau of Statistics has never been able to administer a functional literacy test to measure literacy. Because literacy rates are based only on oral responses, there are some obvious biases (e.g., parents exaggerate their children's abilities). A problem with using literacy tests is that people are not necessarily test literate, and results from tests may bias estimates downward.

Effect on Primary Schooling: Research and anecdotal evidence indicates that positive attitudes are developed among literacy participants toward sending children, particularly girls, to school.

Program Delivery: Costs can be significantly less than the cost of three years of primary school needed to acquire the same skill level. In addition, economies of scale can significantly lower per-participant costs in literacy programs.

Section III: Results of the study

Literacy has been the main focus of two of the nine projects and has been used as an entre and support mechanism in the other seven projects. As a support activity, the literacy information has been "embedded" in other program information. Part of the results of this evaluation activity has been to identify and describe the literacy component of each project. These descriptions are presented below, including outcomes and costs, and are followed by conclusions and recommendations.

I. Program and Project Development

1. Nepal Literacy Expansion Project II (WEI). This project is being implemented by World Education, Inc., to support the national literacy program of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare (MOEC/SW). This project is a follow-on to an earlier project, also assisted by WEI, which produced the original Naya Goreto series, generally accepted as the best basic literacy materials available in Nepal. Under the earlier phase of the project, 350,000 males and females were provided with literacy education, and the program was expanded to serve approximately 100,000 a year. The focus of this second phase of the project is on supporting improvement and expansion of the national program to provide access to literacy for 1,900,000 people during the life of the project.

WEI's assistance has been primarily focused on technical assistance to the Adult Education Section of the MOEC/SW, regarding a) policy, b) curriculum and materials, more recently for post-literacy materials, and c) MOEC/SW NFE staff and DEO staff training. With the formation of the National Council for Nonformal Education (NCNFE), which is chaired by the Minister, WEI has realigned itself with the newly formed council, since that is the new locus of NFE policy and programming in the Ministry.

With support from WEI, the NCNFE has developed "Guidelines for the Implementation of the Nonformal Education Program." These guidelines establish the roles, procedures, criteria, and standards for implementation of the government's literacy program. Included in these guidelines is the encouragement of NGOs for provision of literacy on behalf of government.

IN 1993, USAID/Nepal added additional funds to provide support to NGOs. The objective of this support is to improve NGO capacity to deliver functional literacy programs for women, by training NGO trainers and facilitators, and by providing grants to some NGOs for implementation of literacy education. WEI has provided training to 99 literacy trainers in the past year.

This additional grant also includes provision to print additional materials to meet the demand for NGOs working under USAID funding. This new grant also includes development of post-literacy materials and a training of trainers manual, with a focus on gender issues. WEI has provided literacy education through 94 centers to 2,350 participants in the past year through this component. Additional support has been given through the training of 106 trainers and 94 facilitators.

Conclusions

World Education, Inc. has demonstrated strengths in literacy education policy, curriculum and materials development, and training. The Nayo Goreto curriculum and materials, developed by WEI, are still the national standard and are used by other USAID-sponsored literacy projects. The advisory role that WEI plays with the National Council for Nonformal Education is valued by its Director and is well placed in the establishment of the newly formed council. The policy studies undertaken by WEI are substantive and contribute to the knowledge base in literacy education in Nepal.

Recommendations

- a) WEI should complement its "literacy map" of Nepal with a bibliography of literacy materials available in Nepal. This bibliography should (a) include materials by language group, (b) include sources of materials, costs and instructions on how to obtain them, and (c) be made available to NGOs through the District Education Office.
- b) WEI should complement its assistance to the NCNFE with assistance to selected DEOs in literacy grant disbursement and management. This will allow feedback to the NCNFE on its new policy of supporting NGOs in delivery of literacy education, and provide the information necessary to develop a prototype training for DEOs in grants management.
- c) WEI should support their grantee NGOs in obtaining funds through the DEOs, in order to field test the NCNFE policy of DEO grants for literacy.
- d) WEI should be able to track and assess GON's delivery of literacy education.

2. Strengthening NGOs Activity in Nepal (PACT). The primary focus of the Private Agencies Acting Together (PACT) Project is in training of literacy trainers (272, thus far) and facilitators and, secondarily, in supporting local NGOs for delivery of community literacy programs. The PACT methodology, both with training and NGO development, is to support local participatory processes. PACT has developed a curriculum for the training of trainers and facilitators which uses the Naya Goreto materials and methodology, giving particular attention in the training to the instructional methods, reinforcing empathy of the facilitator with the literacy learners and encouraging individual participation and group work.

Geographically, PACT responds to demand, with more experience in the west than east of the country, which is where PACT sees the greatest need. Trainees have been from NGOs as well as the GON. This past year PACT was requested by the

GON to train all trainers of the MOEC/SW and National Council for Nonformal Education (NCNFE).

In a recent training, PACT provided four classes, simultaneously, in Kavre district to village-level facilitators. With 30 facilitators in each class, 120 facilitators were trained during the ten days' course. If each of the facilitators takes on a maximum literacy class load in their villages (30 per class), PACT may count that training as contributing to the literacy of 3,600 persons. This, of course, will be tempered by not all facilitators holding classes, enrollments of less than 30, and dropout rates. PACT costs for providing training of trainers is estimated to be NRs 83,504 per training or NRs 2,456 per participant.

PACT also serves a policy advisory role, as the resident expatriate director has been called upon to consult with the NCNFE. His advice most recently was sought in the review and revision of the newly condensed Naya Goreto materials (from four volumes to two).

PACT support to NGOs is in the supply of small grants (29 thus far in the life of the project), and in training, such as management and leadership, proposal writing, etc. NGOs which deliver post-literacy activities and are literacy veterans, are given preference for the grants. The average grant is expected to be NRs 80,000. Over the past year, PACT, in conjunction with the NCNFE and UNICEF, has supported literacy education in 448 centers to 13,440 participants through this component.

Conclusions

PACT has demonstrated strength in developing and delivering curriculum and materials for the training of literacy trainers and facilitators. The classes run by PACT appear effective, are consistent with their stated methodology, and are reported to be valuable by graduates of the course. PACT's policy advisory role is based less on institutional linkages than on recognition of its expertise and experience in literacy in Nepal.

PACT's grant and training support to NGOs is a new component of the project. Although 29 have been given out thus far, its impacts in this area are yet to be demonstrated.

PACT's "field orientation" is laudable, as all staff seem to be dedicated to delivery of quality training and NGO support. Equally laudable is PACT's response to training demand. It was difficult, however, to obtain a clear picture of PACT program priorities and how PACT is focusing its resources to meet its goals. In this same vein, it was not possible to obtain a schedule of training for the upcoming year. This appears to represent PACT's orientation to keep free of long term commitments to allow rapid responses to demand for delivery of services.

Recommendations

- a) PACT should develop a clear plan of action on an annual or semi-annual basis. This should include categories of effort, funding sources, types and number of trainings, and resources dedicated to NGO support. A plan of activities and training schedule will provide the basis for assessing of PACT's plan for contributing to Nepal's annual literacy effort, and to allow NGOs and others to better plan their own participation in PACT training.
- b) Future grant proposals from PACT to USAID should clearly delineate activities needing USAID support, with cost breakouts, so that USAID grant inputs can be more clearly associated with subsequent PACT activities.

3. Self-Reliant Development Program for Marginal Women (IIDS). The Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS) Project provides economic opportunities to rural women, through formation of women's self-reliant groups. Other outcomes of the project are to build self-esteem and self-confidence among the women and to increase their social and economic status by providing them with earning opportunities. The project currently has sites in Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Kavre, and Kapilbastu districts. The women served are those in the most extremely disadvantaged villages.

Priority for literacy classes is given to women's groups, especially those pursuing income generation. This past year, IIDS enrolled nearly 500 literacy participants in its classes, with 72 percent completing the course. Classes have begun this year in Kapilbastu, with 1,548 participants enrolled in 50 centers.

In the IIDS approach, an IIDS community motivator forms the women's groups for the establishment of a group savings and credit scheme. In most sites, the groups have come to request literacy, as a group activity, which IIDS provides to further strengthen the process of empowering women. In several new sites in Kapilbastu, however, literacy is being used as a means of forming the group, with savings and credit to accompany or follow. In most cases, the women's groups also undertake local development projects, such as pit latrine construction, trail widening, and kitchen gardening.

Table 3

Project Literacy Outcomes

Activity: Project:	Dates	No. of Centers	No. of participants	No. of trainers (t) or facilitators (f)
1. WEI: Nepal Lit Exp II	1993-94	94	2,350	106 (t) 94 (f)
2. PACT	1993-94	448	13,440	272 (t) 286 (f)
3. IIDS	1992-94	69	1,892	2 (t) 19 (f)
4. WEI: HEAL	1992-93	75	1,500	75 (f)
5. CEDPA	1992-93	50	1,242	
6. CARE	1990-93	100	2,000	100 (f)
7. SCF	1993-94	110	2,200	
8. UMN	1992-93	220	3,923	230 (f)
9. MLD/WDO: Rapti	1992-93	73	1,930	
TOTAL		1,239	30,477	380 (t) 804 (f)

The motivators tend to be outsiders with qualifications of SLC pass or greater, a rural orientation, and local language skills. The use of outsiders for the motivator role is thought to be an asset to their effectiveness. Facilitators have a minimum of Grade 8 education and are selected by the women's groups.

IIDS also runs literacy classes for girls, if there is a demand in the village. The literacy classes generally are intended for the women's groups who will be forming the credit groups. But it is difficult to turn the girls away and, if they join the class, their quicker

learning and tendency to be more outspoken discourages the older women. Consequently, a separate class is offered to allow the older women to maintain their focus on learning, and to mature as a group. IIDS experience also indicates that homogeneity of ethnicity, as well as age, adds to the success of the classes.

IIDS has designed a literacy test, but they are finding that only 68% of the literacy course completers have passed it. They believe that the problem may lie in "test illiteracy" of the participants and in properly defining the level of skill which constitutes being "literate."

The IIDS group coordinates with the VDC for mobilizing the women's groups and coordinates with the DEO in the provision of literacy training. IIDS places particular attention on the monitoring and supervision of motivators and facilitators to keep accountability and motivation high and to allow problem solving at the earliest stages.

IIDS indicated that it would be reluctant to scale up quickly for greater national impact, as management, supervision, and quality work in the community would be threatened.

Conclusions

Five of the nine projects use literacy explicitly as a field intervention for facilitating other community development objectives. Four of these five projects rely on outside expertise for training of literacy supervisors and facilitators. Of these five organizations, IIDS appears to be the strongest in delivering literacy. The other four projects include community mobilization and functional linkages for literacy as important components, yet dedication of expertise and supervision for the literacy activities does not appear to be as strongly emphasized in these programs as in the IIDS programs.

Recommendations

- a) IIDS should further strengthen its literacy expertise within its own staff, by providing additional training for motivators and supervisors, or by acquiring an in-house literacy expert. This additional expertise is justified by IIDS's integral use of literacy for the formation of effective women's groups, and the central role of women's groups for meeting project goals.

II. Health and Family Planning

4. Child Survival/Family Planning Services: Health Education and Adult Literacy Project (WEI): The HEAL Project has been implemented by WEI as a pilot project in Makwanpur and Chitwan for the past two years to provide women with functional

literacy regarding health, family planning, and birth spacing services. The HEAL course is 21-months, and includes the female Community Health Volunteer. As with other "literacy cum functionality" courses, it begins with six months basic literacy training, with health and family planning content comprising 20 per cent of the content, complemented by additional HFP supplemental classes.

The post-literacy course is presented in two phases. The first is focused directly on further information on the content areas, e.g., birth spacing, children's nutrition and school attendance, and on applications of the content to participants' lives.

Preliminary evaluation results showed that a high percentage of the completers of the basic literacy course within HEAL had positive attitudes (96%) and knowledge (87%) about family planning, though it is not clear how large a gain that represents. Other outcomes which appear to be attributed to the HEAL Project include more interactions with the Community Health Volunteer (CHV), formation of mothers' groups, and improved hygiene.

Conclusions

The HEAL Project provides an interesting and promising pilot, in that it has a functional focus on health, yet has been designed and implemented by WEI, with its acknowledged expertise and experience in literacy. A preliminary self-assessment of the HEAL Project by World Education, the implementor, indicates positive outcomes. With success, though, comes additional concerns. It was reported that HEAL had accomplished its goals of raising awareness and knowledge among participants of health practices. With this new knowledge, however, has come a keener realization of participants' economic circumstances and ability to act on their new knowledge. For example, participants in the HEAL Project were reported by the Makwanpur District Public Health Officer (DPHO) to know the importance of washing and using soap, but did not have the resources to buy soap.

Recommendations

a) As WEI is bringing its literacy expertise to bear on raising functional knowledge of health practices, closer attention may be paid to the health aspects of the project. For example, a baseline survey of health knowledge and practice would have benefitted WEI's assessment of project impacts, especially against its health objectives.

b) WEI's evaluation of its pilot phase could usefully include an assessment of the potential of the women's groups to carry on other development activities, such as income generation.

c) If possible, a follow-up study would provide useful information on the translation of health attitudes and knowledge into changed practices, and how any changes may relate to the retention of literacy skills.

5. Increase Community Projects in Family Planning, Health, and Women's Development in the NGO Sector in Nepal (CEDPA): The primary goal of the Center for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) is to develop a strong cadre of NGO managers, particularly women, who are able to effectively develop and implement health and family planning services and educational programs in their communities. CEDPA's literacy programs currently are running in Makwanpur and Dang. These programs also include provision for box libraries.

CEDPA's literacy program model tends to rely more on inputs and incentives than other NGO models. For training of trainers, CEDPA hires experts from organizations such as WEI, FED, and MOEC/SW. Facilitators work on a "contract basis" where they are paid on outcomes (number of literates.) A literacy facilitator expects to make NRs 600 per month. Supervision is carried out by sending consultants to the field to assess the literacy training.

CEDPA's literacy programs initially recorded high drop-out rates. Participation and completion rates have subsequently increased. CEDPA attributes the increase to the demonstrable benefits of literacy.

In 1992-93, CEDPA provided literacy education to 1,242 persons, reaching 77.6 per cent of their target for the year. The CEDPA staff has produced an inventory of literacy issues and lessons learned which are fairly consistent with the literature and the experience of other literacy providers.

CEDPA reported that in sites where literacy classes have been conducted, the Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) has been much higher, although data were not available to support this assertion.

Conclusions

CEDPA reported that their functional goals of raising awareness and knowledge of health and family planning practices among literacy participants had been accomplished. Indeed, the number of persons receiving literacy through this health and family planning project is impressive. During the field visits, however, CEDPA staff commented on the need for follow-on activities, such as the provision of safe drinking water and kitchen gardens, so that program completers can act on their health knowledge. While this lies outside the scope of a health literacy project, the

project mechanisms, such as group formation and literacy attainment, provide a fruitful basis for follow-on activity.

An additional concern was raised during the field visit regarding CEDPA support for the quality of literacy education. CEDPA's focus on inputs and incentives was felt by some field staff to make literacy facilitators and supervisors appear self-serving in the eyes of local participants. It was not determined how widely this perception was held. This perception of self-serving behavior could also be a function of participants' frustration with little access to improved conditions as a direct result of their literacy training, while the literacy staff receive remuneration for their participation.

To the degree that CEDPA is focused on health and family planning, it could be said that they are providing a good service in literacy education. If the focus were more exclusively on literacy, then CEDPA's in-house literacy expertise, curriculum, and supervision would be seen to need strengthening.

Recommendations

a) CEDPA should consider the costs and benefits of strengthening its literacy expertise within its own staff, by providing additional training for motivators and supervisors, or by acquiring an in-house literacy expert.

b) CEDPA should assess the potential for further linking its literacy, health and family planning activities with additional development activities and, possibly, with NGO formation.

c) The effort to form women's groups and provide literacy training could be considered as a "sunk cost," which could be built upon in obtaining and providing small community or household development grants.

d) CEDPA should consider alternate methods of remuneration to literacy facilitators and supervisors, so that their motivation and participation in literacy education is perceived more clearly to be based on community service. While this may raise new issues in recruitment, selection, and supervision of literacy personnel, there may be a longer term payoff in terms of enthusiasm and effectiveness of the community groups, and their longer terms prospects for undertaking continued development activities.

III. Agricultural and Rural Development

6. Natural Resources Management (CARE): CARE's previous work was focused on technical areas, such as agro-forestry, water supply, agricultural improvement, and bridge construction. In 1990, based on community needs assessments, CARE also

began providing literacy classes. CARE believes that literacy education has proven an effective mechanism for community development, especially for bringing women into the development process. The project has also assisted VDC's in registering local NGOs for literacy and other development activities.

CARE provides a basic six months' literacy class, with a follow-on advanced course, focusing on health, sanitation, kitchen garden, etc. CARE has found that the Naya Goreto materials are adequate for their basic course. CARE has also found that materials distribution from the MOEC/SW is improving, though they believe that it still is difficult for local NGOs to coordinate in advance for timely receipt of the materials. CARE's estimates of course participation rates were 70% completion in the basic course, 90% follow-on into the advanced course, and 90% completion in the advanced course.

CARE has scaled up its literacy program over the past four years, increasing their annual rate of training from 76 participants in 1990, to approximately 1,000 in 1993, providing training to a total of approximately 2,000 participants over the past four years. CARE literacy programs are now operating in seven districts.

In the CARE approach, identifying literacy participants takes 2-3 months, through community consultation to determine and validate real needs and illiterate participants. CARE has found that large age variations within classes detracts from the effectiveness of the literacy classes and concludes that 15-19, 20-35, and 36-45 may be more appropriate age groupings.

Following an advanced course with good facilitators, some women were reported to have rejoined Grades 4 or 5 in primary school, though no figures were available.

CARE has attempted to provide training of facilitators near the sites of classes, just prior to the beginning of classes. This has proven logistically problematic, however. In Mahottari, CARE has joined with SCF/US and SCF/Japan in coordinating literacy programming and in joint training of supervisors.

A main strength of CARE's literacy programming is in including women in the development process. This practice has been cited as an effective intervention in breaking the Parda system of binding women to the household. The classes help change men's perception of the women in their communities. A consequence of participation in the literacy classes is increased participation by women in decision-making, especially in development activities.

CARE has identified the need to make improvements in its program, mainly in the areas of taking on more NFE technical personnel and in improving supervision of literacy classes. This was confirmed by observation and discussion with CARE field staff.

CARE indicated that it would be reluctant to scale up quickly for greater national impact, as the quality of their work in the community would be threatened.

Conclusions

CARE uses literacy explicitly as a field intervention for facilitating other community development objectives, and relies on outside expertise for training of literacy supervisors and facilitators. CARE includes community mobilization and functional linkages for literacy as important components, yet dedication of expertise for the literacy activities does not appear to be strongly emphasized in this program.

The limitations of literacy expertise, supervision, and follow-on activities, however, do not automatically represent criticism of this project, but are indicators of CARE's agenda priorities. To the degree that CARE is focused on natural resources management, it can be said that they are providing a good service in literacy education. If the focus were more exclusively on literacy, then their in-house literacy expertise, curriculum, and supervision would be seen to need strengthening.

Recommendations

a) CARE should strengthen its literacy expertise within its own staff, by providing additional training for motivators and supervisors, or by acquiring an in-house literacy expert. This additional expertise is justified by CARE's integral use of literacy for the formation of effective community groups, and the central role of community groups for meeting project goals.

7. Community-based Integrated Rural Development (SCF/US): SCF is working in eight districts for delivery of literacy programs. In three districts SCF is sole implementor; in five districts, SCF is working in partnership with other NGOs. SCF's has developed its own literacy program, called Basic Education for Least Educated Communities (BELEC). SCF charges participants registration, books, and tuition fees, which are deposited into a fund for use by the literacy group. The fund is used to make small loans for participants for family projects, such a chicken raising and kitchen gardening. SCF credits this practice for low dropout rates.

SCF has also produced a set of post-literacy materials, "Koseli," "Jamarko," and learner-generated books for use in a six months' post-literacy class. For out-of-school youth who complete the course, SCF facilitates their re-entry to formal schooling and provides stationery as an incentive.

In Gorkha, a family literacy program has been piloted. This program involves the entire family, with the school teacher, in tracking and recording events in the lives of the children. While time consuming for the teachers, this approach is expected to

focus interactions and discussions within families around significant family events using the written word.

For ethnic groups who do not have Nepali language skills, SCF is experimenting with a language experience approach. Pre-literacy materials, which are derived from the group rather than pre-designed, are used for reading and writing.

SCF is also providing technical support to NGOs for training of supervisors, trainers, and development of learner-generated materials. SCF facilitator training includes a follow-up in-service course of 2-3 days, which focuses on the introduction of functionalities into the literacy methodology.

Conclusions

SCF/USA has a multi-sectoral development agenda within which it has developed a strong community-focused delivery system for literacy education. Their in-house capability in the central and field offices has resulted in a strong and effective delivery system for literacy curriculum, training and classes. In addition, SCF has developed interesting experiments in literacy approaches, such as the family literacy program.

Recommendations

a) USAID should consider the costs and benefits of funding various SCF literacy activities. For example, should USAID support be used for providing basic literacy education programs with functional linkages and wider audiences, developing materials for specific language groups, or experimental programs, such as the family literacy program?

8. Nepal Resource Management (UMN): The United Mission to Nepal (UMN) is a multi-sectoral development organization and one of the largest employers in the country, second only to the GON. For UMN, literacy is considered an important program component but has undertaken it primarily for its value as a tool for field work. In 1992-93, UMN has included literacy as a program component in 220 centers in nine districts. These centers have provided literacy education to 3,923 participants, 91 per cent of whom were female.

The Naya Goreto materials are valued by UMN for their focus on participants' discussion of village-related problems. The benefits of the materials are awareness, literacy, functionality, and behavioral changes. UMN stressed that focusing only on literacy misses the point. An example was cited of a 50-year-old woman participating in a literacy class who could recognize the letters but scarcely could read. However, she had become very active in the functional aspects, creating a kitchen garden and sending all of her children to school.

The UMN program is run for 9-12 months. This is up to twice as long as most, but UMN feels that the longer time is important as it represents a more realistic learning pace and allows for incorporation of functional topics. UMN feels that the six months course is unrealistic and unfair to participants.

The UMN basic literacy course is complemented by one of four functional areas: further education, health, rural development, and industrial development. UMN's experience is that the older students tend to be more interested in the functional aspects and the younger students more interested in literacy.

UMN inputs focus primarily on coordination, training, and materials development. Actual implementation of the literacy classes is done through local committees or user groups. Coordination includes obtaining textbooks at cost from MOEC/SW and distributing them to the literacy sites. Supervision and training follow-up are UMN's strengths in literacy programming, with supervisors reported to visit literacy sites twice a month, at minimum.

UMN facilitator training is eight-ten days in length, with a two-day follow-up in-service training, two months later. Pre- and post-literacy materials have been developed and distributed by UMN, including scripts developed and written by literacy participants.

UMN is cautious of scaling up quickly for national development, as a longer term commitment to the functional aspects of literacy requires a greater commitment of time and resources to communities, which they feel is necessary for the success of the literacy program. The physical terrain of Nepal and the current limitations on its infrastructure will also limit the ability to effectively implement and supervise a scaled-up program.

Conclusions

UMN articulated a clear vision and role for its literacy program and demonstrated an in-house literacy expertise for materials development, training, and supervision, with a focus on supporting committees and users groups which are delivering literacy education. UMN emphasizes curriculum materials development and distribution, training, and follow-up support to the local groups implementing the literacy classes. UMN is somewhat unique among the projects as it claims to use literacy exclusively as an instrumental tool for other community development objectives, yet devotes significant resources and expertise to its literacy component, to the degree that it has the stature of a main development objective.

Recommendations

a) USAID should consider the costs and benefits of funding various UMN literacy activities. For example, should USAID support be used for providing basic literacy

education programs with functional linkages and wider audiences or developing pre- and post-literacy materials for specific language groups?

9. Rapti Development Project (MLD): The Rapti Project is a multi-sectoral integrated rural development project. The literacy component is conducted through the Ministry of Local Development's District Women's Development Office (WDO). The WDO's conduct adult literacy education and Cheli Beti classes. The WDO has a small staff, without literacy or NFE expertise. However, the WDO staff takes training from the DEO NFE expert, and supervises the facilitators who are trained in NFE and use the Naya Goreto materials. This past year, the WDO's in Rapti conducted 73 literacy classes, providing education to 1,930 women.

Conclusions

The WDOs appear committed to their service programs for women and exhibited a full agenda of activities, including literacy classes. It was observed, however, that remote women may not have equal access to WDO services. In Pyuthan, for example, the literacy classes tended to be centrally located, as proximity and safety were concerns of the female literacy facilitators.

The WDO literacy classes appeared to have good enrollments, with enthusiastic facilitators, but it also appeared that the facilitators were not as strong in the Naya Goreto methodology as expected. Supervision of the literacy classes was being done by WDO staff without literacy expertise.

Recommendations

a) The WDOs should strengthen the literacy expertise within their own staff, by providing additional training for motivators and supervisors, or by acquiring a WDO literacy expert. This additional expertise is justified as literacy is a core activity, yet is supervised by WDO staff who do not have literacy expertise.

b) The WDOs should make provision for identifying and training literacy facilitators from remote villages, so that remote women will have better access to WDO services, such as literacy. Supervision of remote literacy classes will need to be conducted by a WDO representative who is trained in literacy methodology and will visit remote sites routinely.

Costs

The program costs of providing literacy training varies among programs (and approaches) and the geographic location of the participants. A model for estimating costs, developed by World Education, Inc. (1993), has been used to show an average cost for literacy participants and completers. Using a sample of eight large-scale

programs, the per person rate for participation is NRs 295.77 (US\$ 6.04). The rate for completers is NRs 492.95 (US\$ 10.06). These cost estimates exclude administrative costs, which can vary significantly.

The purpose of using the cost per participant rate is that it shows the resources required to run a literacy program. The purpose of using the rate per completer is that it shows what is required to train one newly literate person. A comparison of the two costs, per participant and per completer, shows what program efficiency would be realized if the number of literacy drop-outs could be reduced.

Of the six projects which directly provide regular literacy programs, four have reported cost data for delivering a single program. The average cost per participant for these four projects is NRs 393.44, with participant costs ranging from NRs 306.00 to NRs 508.80. The norm reference cost established by World Education, with several donor agencies, such as UNICEF, is NRs 340.00.

The component of literacy education with the biggest variance of cost is supplies, both expendable and non-expendable. IIDS spends NRs 4,000 per program on expendable and non-expendable supplies (lanterns, kerosene, blackboard, chalk, etc.), which is twice the norm amount set by World Education, and 78 per cent more than the average of these projects. The provision of supplies by these projects tends to be tied to the philosophy and methodology of each project, and what is believed to be necessary and fair to provide to community participants.

Training costs shows the next highest variance among the projects. IIDS reported spending NRs 1,920 for the training necessary to provide one literacy class (60% more than the norm and average costs), whereas SCF reports spending NRs 500 per training (59% less than the norm and average costs).

Supervision is next in cost variability: all USAID projects spend at least 70 per cent more than the norm amount of NRs 600, with a high cost at IIDS of NRs 1,500.

As mentioned above, some cost differences are attributable to differing philosophies and goals of each project at the community level. (It should be remembered that literacy is an instrumental tool on these projects toward achieving other project goals.)

Table 4

Literacy Participant Costs (NRs)

	Norm	IIDS	SCF	CEDPA	CEDPA-OSP	MLD/WDO
Category:						(Rapti)
Facilitator Salary	2,400	2,400	2,700	2,850	4,725	
Textbooks	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,600	1,600	
Textbook transport	0	600	600	600	600	
Training	1,200	1,920	500	1,200	1,200	
Supervision	600	1,500	1,050	1,040	1,040	
Non-Expendable Supplies	900	1,800	850	625	400	
Expendable Supplies	1,100	2,200	150	1,330	1,000	
Evaluation/Reporting	500	0	0	0	0	
Other	0	500	0	0	0	
TOTAL	8,500	12,720	7,650	9,245	10,565	9,000
If 25 participants per class,	25	25	25	25	25	26.4
then cost per participant =	340	508.8	306	369.8	422.6	360

Sources: 1. "Norm" presented in Shrestha, 1993.

2. All other data from project personnel or records

Notes: 1. IIDS was the only project reporting costs for transportation of textbooks; their cost was applied to all other organizations.

Table 5

Training of Trainers Costs (PACT)

Category:	NRs
Participants' per diem	45,900
Transportation	10,544
Trainers' fees	9,000
Facilities	2,825
Tea & snacks	4,914
Training kits	7,000
Training materials	720
Stationery & Supplies	2,601
TOTAL	83,504
No. of participants per class:	34
Cost per participant =	2,456

-- Figures for a nine (9) day training of trainers
in Biratnagar

Costs of Literacy vs. Formal Schooling

All of the programs listed above can be considered cost-effective when compared with formal primary schooling, if (1) it is accepted that completing the basic literacy course is equivalent to a Grade 3 education and (2) the other desirable outcomes of formal schooling are not considered. (The fact that literacy education completers can be matriculated into formal primary school tends to discount the latter concern.)

The highest cost delivery of literacy by a USAID-funded program is for IIDS, which costs NRs 12,720, or NRs 509 per participant. IIDS has reported a course completion rate of 72.2 per cent (dropout rate of 27.8 per cent). Consequently, the cost per *completer* is NRs 704.71.

In order to assess the cost-effectiveness of delivering literacy through nonformal education, it is helpful to compare the costs and outcomes with formal education. The GON considers the Naya Goreto basic course to be equivalent, in literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills, with Grades 1-3 of formal primary schooling. The equivalency is based on a content analysis of the two programs conducted by the MOEC/SW Adult Education Section with assistance from World Education.

Admittedly, the two programs differ in that (a) Grades 1-3 offer additional content in subjects, such as history and geography; (b) the Naya Goreto basic course offers development messages and participatory methods not available in formal schooling; and (3) Grades 1-3 and the Naya Goreto course address different populations. Comparative data on actual attainment of knowledge and skills is not currently available.

The per student cost for providing Grades 1-3 of formal primary school is NRs 1,680.00 (NRs 560 per year) (Manandhar, 1993). However, by Grade 3, 38 percent will have dropped out of school and another 14 per cent will be repeating Grade 3 (MOEC/SW, 1993). Even counting the repeaters as Grade 3 completers (which is possible), the cost per completer of three grades of public schooling is NRs 2,709.66. This is nearly four times the cost of providing literacy and numeracy through literacy education.¹

Section IV: Lessons Learned and Conclusions

The lessons learned on providing literacy education in Nepal, presented below, are based on an analysis of the current literature, consultations with project, GON, and donor representatives and field staff, review of project documents, and observations of literacy and training classes and discussions with class participants. These lessons learned are:

1. Facilitators

- a) Literacy programs are only as good as the facilitators' delivery and the participants' learning.
- b) Facilitators need to be trained in methods for (1) conveying literacy and numeracy, (2) conveying the messages from Naya Goreto, and (3) group processes and learner participation.
- c) Identification and selection issues:
 1. Formal school teachers tend to have high literacy and numeracy skills, tend to use formal rote methods, and tend to be less committed to

literacy as it is a second job. Non-teachers have lower literacy and numeracy skills, but have a greater likelihood of using Naya Goreto methods, and are more committed to the literacy classes as it is their primary employment.

2. Non-locals represent a wider range of choice for talent. Locals represent greater local language proficiency and higher group investment and identification.
3. Males are more likely to have higher academic attainment, but will have lower group identification in women's classes, with resulting lower course retention and completion. Females are more likely to have lower academic attainment, but will have higher group identification and course retention, and completion.
4. Implementor selected facilitators may come from a pool of higher talent. However, implementor selected facilitators tend to be less accountable, as supervision is periodic and they are not locally known. Facilitators which are participant group selected tend to have less academic attainment, but group investment and identification makes them more accountable.

d) **Qualifications:**

1. Facilitators with lower levels of academic attainment (post-literacy - Grade 7 pass, or Grade 8-10 pass) have less content mastery but tend to be more reliable in the use of NFE methods.
2. Facilitators with higher levels of academic attainment (Grade 10+ /SLC pass) have more content mastery but use NFE methods less reliably.

2. Supervision

a) Technical expertise of supervisors should include mastery of three main dimensions of literacy programs: (1) conveying literacy and numeracy, (2) conveying the messages from Naya Goreto, and (3) group processes and learner participation.

b) Supervisors should have the ability to demonstrate literacy class management and instructional methods and techniques, for facilitators and classes, when and where needed.

c) Supervisors should sit with facilitators during 10 days' facilitators training, and should also complete a supervisors' training. Even if supervisors have previous literacy training and experience, s/he should sit with facilitators during

their training, to assess facilitators strengths and weaknesses, and to promote team building.

d) Supervisory visits to classes should be at least twice monthly and include class observation and rating of facilitators on the three dimensions; demonstrate where necessary; provide feedback to facilitators (after class) on observation and dimensional rating; and discuss/consult with participants regarding class management, progress, and other issues.

3. Materials and Methods

a) The basic Naya Goreto materials should continue to be used, with minor adaptations for mountain, hill, terai.

b) Functionality of literacy: there is a consensus among literacy providers that the application of literacy skills is essential for the retention of those skills. Literacy applications range from post-literacy classes and availability of reading materials, to household and income-generating activities. Literacy alone does not appear to be as effective as when it is linked with other development activities. Likewise, other development activities appear to benefit considerably from literacy classes, particularly if Naya Goreto methods are used.

c) Pre- and post-literacy materials are areas for further development.

4. Language

a) The Naya Goreto materials assume knowledge of spoken Nepali. In non-Nepali speaking areas, the facilitators were translating into local languages as part of instructional methods.

b) There is a need for appropriate pre-literacy and post-literacy materials, especially for major language groups.

5. Outcomes/Impacts

a) Literacy and numeracy skills attainment are increased when accompanied with applications to personal life.

b) Understanding of Naya Goreto materials should be evidenced by verbal and material indicators of application to participants' lives.

c) Continuation or reformulation of the literacy group for other development purposes is a legitimate and expected outcome.

6. Program Management

- a) Timely delivery of materials and payment of salaries.
- b) Back-up support for, and supervision of supervisors.
- c) Maintain overall program profile, by supervisory area, of all facilitators' strengths and weaknesses

7. Scaling Up

a) INGOs and Nepalese NGOs

1. Stated preference was to scale up very slowly, to maintain (a) quality (boutique approach -- doing what they do well), (2) community development approach, (b) and longer term commitments and relationships to communities.
2. Scaling up quickly, using current models, would appear to make it difficult to realize any economies of scale, as there would not be time for organizations to evolve into larger efforts but would likely need to replicate current organizational delivery mechanisms. In addition, quality assurance would not be likely.

Scaling up current programs slowly would better maintain quality, but would have limited national impacts.

b) Local NGOs

1. Scaling up local NGOs quickly would need corollary support in organization, supervision, and training; much accountability for day-to-day delivery would rest with communities.
2. Local organizations with national coverage, such as the Jaycees or Red Cross, may provide economies of scale for establishing central support and coordination and "local" delivery.
3. If local NGOs successfully deliver literacy programs, then a local capacity for NGO development assistance will have been initiated and established.

c) GOs (line agencies)

- 1. MOEC/SW's administrative structure for literacy programs is nationwide and functional. It is already the single largest single implementor of literacy programs.**
- 2. DEO capacity for training facilitators is adequate, at best. A key factor which inhibits this capacity is the limited time spent at a given assignment, because of frequent transfers and departures for other employment. It is questionable how much this program component can handle if the HMG program were scaled up quickly.**
- 3. DEO supervision of facilitators appears to be already lacking. It probably would not be strengthened under a scaled-up program.**
- 4. WDOs (MLD) exhibited good programs, though they are dependent on outside assistance for facilitators' training. Scaling up the WDO program would require scaling up outside training capacity to support the WDOs.**

d) GOs (political entities)

- 1. VDCs were not observed to have their own programs (this needs further verification). VDCs, did hold roles in other programs, such as orientations for new programs, support for group formation, and supervision of facilitators. Potential for implementing literacy programs appears to exist.**
- 2. DDCs' potential for literacy programs appears to be in training and supervision.**
- 3. Municipalities appear to have good potential for launching and implementing literacy programs, as they are local entities with their own resource base.**

8. Overall Conclusions

- a) Literacy programs are more effective when coupled with post-literacy activities.**
- b) Other development activities, in communities with low literacy levels, are more effective when coupled with literacy programs and groups.**

c) Literate individuals and groups, especially those who have successfully completed a Naya Goreto adult literacy education class, are better able and more likely to undertake initiatives in improving their social, economic, and political circumstances.

d) The programs which appear most successful in delivering community literacy programs also exhibit strong facilitators and supervisory systems.

e) Literacy programs are cost-effective when compared with three years of formal schooling, by a 4:1 ratio.

f) USAID/Nepal has demonstrated success in (1) assisting in literacy education policy and (2) delivering literacy education through several modalities and functional applications.

Section V: Overall Recommendations

1. USAID/Nepal's current efforts in literacy merit continuation, as they are consistent with project objectives and appear to be effectively implemented.

2. Further USAID/Nepal investment in literacy education is justified, based on USAID/Nepal's varied and successful experiences and the high demand for literacy education in the country.

3. If USAID proceeds with a new literacy program, then the lessons learned from this evaluation should be considered as fundamental design issues.

4. No one single project, in the set of nine currently running literacy activities, exhibits full capability, from policy and curriculum, to community implementation and follow-up of literacy classes. If a new program is designed with this full range of components to be addressed, and if current projects are to be considered for scaling up to meet the needs of the new project, then these nine projects should be carefully considered according to their demonstrated strengths in each component area.

5. A new project design should consider new combinations of inputs delivery, in order to achieve greater national impact while maintaining quality of literacy delivery. New combinations may require organizations to focus more fully on curriculum materials, training, NGO strengthening, or community-level functional linkages, rather than asking organizations to handle all inputs and components, with responsibility for delivery.

6. Future coordination with the GON, especially with the NCNFE and DEOs should be encouraged, especially if it results in (a) facilitating release of district level grants to NGOs for literacy education and (b) improved district-level GON-NGO partnerships.

7. Municipalities should be considered as local literacy implementors, where it can be demonstrated that municipalities can manage and deliver literacy programs.

8. Research and evaluations for future programs should include baseline surveys to guide program design and determine impacts, and assessments as to which literacy components are contributing most to (a) learning of literacy and numeracy, (b) functional applications of literacy to personal, family, and community development, and (c) greater participation in social, economic, and democratic institutions.

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Attachment I: USAID Support for Adult Literacy in Nepal

Since 1953, USAID has placed emphases on all levels of education, from primary schools to higher education and adult literacy programs in the development of Nepal. The U.S. Operations Mission (USOM), predecessor of USAID, targeted adult literacy in 1953 as a means to provide the adult population with the skills to participate in a democracy. USOM hired an expert to prepare basic materials for adult literacy instruction. His work produced some of the first Devanagari alphabet charts.

In 1979, USAID provided a grant to World Education Inc. to develop a pilot for a nonformal adult education program. Since then, USAID support to World Education continued to develop adult literacy materials and programs, which have produced the Naya Goreto materials used for today's national program. USAID plans to assist GON efforts in expanding the national literacy program and in supporting efforts to upgrade post-literacy skills, especially for women.

Attachment II: Description of the Evaluation Study

Evaluation Design

The evaluation team was comprised of (1) one expatriate evaluation specialist, who served as team leader, and (2) one USAID/Nepal evaluation specialist from PPD. The team worked jointly in the office and the field and jointly produced the evaluation report.

This evaluation initially focused on documenting:

1. Literacy gains made by adult literacy participants.
2. Adult literacy impacts on overall project goals.
3. Beneficiaries' perspectives on methodology and materials of adult literacy.
4. Programmatic and organizational strengths and weaknesses of each adult literacy component, such as instructor selection and training, materials development and dissemination.
5. Contextual constraints and opportunities for conducting adult literacy programs.

Data Collection Procedures

A seminar of literacy education donors and experts was conducted at the Hotel Himalayan on November 9, 1993 to frame the current issues in evaluation and focus the evaluation questions.

Observation of field activities (literacy classes, women's group meetings) and consultation with project home and field staff, and program participants were conducted for the nine projects.

Constraints on Conducting the Evaluation

1. Literacy has been the main focus of two of the nine projects and has been used as an entre and support mechanism in the other seven projects. As a support activity, the literacy information was "embedded" in other program information. Project information generally was not readily accessible for further investigation and analysis under the timeframe for the evaluation. More time was spent collecting and organizing the basic rationales, approaches, methods, costs and outcomes of the literacy components than anticipated. While this constrained more desirable analytic work, such as estimating projects' costs and benefits, it does provide the service of collecting and synthesizing scattered and incomplete information on literacy efforts in various projects into a complete set of lessons learned.

2. Given the focus the evaluation and the resources dedicated to it, secondary data, wherever available from project staff and third sources, were accepted as valid.

3. The nine project implementation sites were located throughout the country. While we were able to observe and consult with personnel and/or staff of eight of the nine projects at their field locations, we would have preferred to spend more time interviewing participants about the village context and benefits of literacy.

Evaluation Data Collection

Project	Document Review	Consultation w/persons	Consultation w/participants	Observation
1. Nepal Literacy Expansion Project II (WEI)	KTM	KTM	none	none
2. Strengthening NGOs Activity in Nepal (PACT)	KTM	KTM; Kavre	none	Kavre (1 site)
3. Self-Reliant Development Program for Marginal Women (IIDS)	KTM	KTM; Kapilbastu	KTM; Kapilbastu	KTM; Kapilbastu (7 sites)
4. Health Education and Adult Literacy Project	KTM	Makwanpur	none	none
5. Increase Community Projects in Family Planning, Health & Women's Development in the NGO Sector in Nepal (CEDPA)	KTM	Makwanpur	none	none
6. Natural Resources Management (CARE)	KTM	KTM; Mahothari	Mahothari	Mahothari (2 sites)
7. Community-Based Integrated Rural Development (SCF)	KTM	Siraha; Gorkha	Siraha; Gorkha	Siraha; Gorkha (4 sites)
8. Nepal Resource Management (UMN)	KTM	KTM	none	none
9. Rapti Development Project (MLD)	KTM	KTM; Pyuthan; Dang	Pyuthan; Dang	Pyuthan; Dang (2 sites)

Attachment III: Persons Contacted

<u>S. No.</u>	<u>Name of Persons</u>	<u>Title/Position</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Location</u>
1.	Dr. Ishwor P. Uphadhyay	Secretary	MOEC/SW	Kathmandu
2.	Dr. Tirtha Khaniya	BPEP Director	MOEC/SW	Kathmandu
3.	Dr. Shiva Raj Lohani	NFEC Chief	MOEC/SW	Kathmandu
4.	Dr. David Walker	Chief	PACT	Kathmandu
5.	Dr. Badri Kayastha	Chief	No-Frills	Kathmandu
6.	Ms. Saloni Joshi	Program Specialist	USAID/Nepal	Kathmandu
7.	Mr. Cliff Meyers	Program Officer	UNICEF	Kathmandu
8.	Ms. Mana Rana	Chief	CEDPA/Nepal	Kathmandu
9.	Ms. Sharada Gyawali	Program Officer	CEDPA/Nepal	Kathmandu
10.	Ms. Indira Koirala	Prog. Coordinator	IIDS	Kathmandu
11.	Mr. Udaya Manandhar	Ed. Prog. Officer	SCF/USA	Kathmandu
12.	Mr. Krishna Ghimire	Chief NFE	CARE/Nepal	Kathmandu
13.	Mr. Sri-Bhakta Subasi	Chief NFE	UMN	Kathmandu
14.	Ms. Norma Kehrbery	n/a	UMN	Kathmandu
15.	Mr. Chij Shrestha	Chief	WEI/Nepal	Kathmandu
16.	Dr. Narayan N. Khatri	Division Chief	SFDP/ADB/Nepal	Kathmandu
17.	Mr. Benu Kumar Bhattari	Program Officer	SFDP/ADB/Nepal	Kathmandu
18.	Mr. Duman Thapa	Chief	NRMP/UMN	Kathmandu
19.	Mr. Chitra Niraula	Field Coordinator	SCJ	Janakpur
20.	Mr. Gopal Shrestha	In-Charge, NFE	CARE/Nepal	Janakpur
21.	Mr. Buddhi Man Shrestha	Trainer	SCF/Nepal	Janakpur
22.	Ms. Shova Kumari	Education Assistant	SCJ	Janakpur
23.	Ms. Manu Neupane	Education Assistant	SCJ	Janakpur
24.	Mr. Ramesh Prasad Jaiswal	Education Assistant	SCJ	Janakpur
25.	Mr. Ghanashyam Thapaliya	Supervisor	SCF/USA	Janakpur
26.	Mr. Dilli Ram Adhikari	Rural Dev. Officer	CARE/Nepal	Janakpur
27.	Mr. Upendra Das Joshi	Project Manager	CARE/Nepal	Janakpur
28.	Ms. Radha Koirala	WDO	SCJ	Janakpur
29.	Ms. Dhana Malla	Act. Project Coord.	SCF/USA, Ilaka I	Siraha
30.	Mr. Mahesh Kumar Ray	Education Assistant	SCF/USA, Ilaka I	Siraha
31.	Mr. Gopal Tamang	Account Officer	SCF/USA, Ilaka I	Siraha
32.	Mr. Surya Binod Pokharel	Ag. Res. Cons. Off.	SCF/USA, Ilaka I	Siraha
33.	Mr. Arjun Thapaliya	Office Assistant	SCF/USA, Ilaka I	Siraha
34.	Mr. Jyoti Shrestha	Chief	DPHO/GON	Hetauda
35.	Ms. Chitralekha Upadhaya	Project Manager	CEDPA/Hetauda	Hetauda
36.	Mr. Dhasaratha Dhital	Education Assistant	SCF/USA, Ilaka I	Gorkha
37.	Mr. Dhirga Gandhari	Productivity Officer	SCF/USA, Ilaka I	Gorkha
38.	Mr. Lilamani Sharma	Project Manager	SCF/USA, Ilaka I	Gorkha
39.	Mr. Tanka Kunwar	Ed. Coordinator	SCF/USA, Ilaka VII	Gorkha

40.	Ms. Nirmala Tiwari	Field Coordinator	SCF/USA, Ilaka I	Gorkha
41.	Ms. Durga Regime	WDO	SCF/USA, Nuwakot	Gorkha
42.	Ms. Shashi Rijal	WD Prog. Officer	SCF/USA, Kath.	Gorkha
43.	Mr. Jagadish Aryal	Acting DEO	GON	Gorkha
44.	Mr. Gokul Thapa	Sr. Motivator	IIDS	Kapilbastu
45.	Mr. Arjun Prasad Sapkota	Sr. Motivator	IIDS	Kapilbastu
46.	Mr. Mohasin Chaudhari	Facilitator	IIDS, Hathihawa	Kapilbastu
47.	Ms. Sarjabala Pandey	Facilitator	IIDS, Hathihawa	Kapilbastu
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58.	Mr. Bomb Bdr Kunwar	Facilitator	WDO, Dang	Ghorai
59.	Ms. Pabitra Mahara	Facilitator	WDO, Dang	Ghorai
60.	Mr. Madhup Dhungana	Project In-charge	Rapti Dev. Project	Ghorai