

How  
MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION  
CAN PROMOTE



# EDUCATION

Girls'

Project Design No. 6

## USING SPECIAL PROGRAMS TO EDUCATE OUT-OF-SCHOOL GIRLS

### WHY SUPPORT GIRLS' EDUCATION?

Girls and women are vital to a country's economic and social development. They are human resources whose importance to a country's development must not be overlooked. Their potential to contribute substantially to society is significantly increased when they are educated. Girls' education, particularly basic education, is perhaps the single most important investment that can be made to improve a country's quality of life. Yet, it is estimated that, around the world, some 300 million children are not in school and approximately 60 percent of these out-of-school children are girls, mostly in developing countries. Many girls in developing countries, therefore, are at risk. Primary education provides individuals with the skills they need for their personal development and to be able to contribute to the well being of their family, community, and country.

### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BARRIERS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR GIRLS?

Some of the barriers that prevent girls from completing their primary education include:

- **Household responsibilities and limited family resources.** Low-income families usually send boys to school and keep girls at home to help with household chores or to earn money by selling items at a local market.
- **The distance from a girl's home to school, lack of female teachers, and cultural taboos.** Distance from a school often prohibits or deters girls' enrollment and attendance, and the absence of female teachers often means that young girls do not have role models. In some countries as well, cultural taboos discourage girls from enrolling in school or from completing more than just a few grades.
- **Inflexible education policies, rigid curricula, and inflexible school calendars.** School curricula can be inflexible, dull, and irrelevant. Curricula designed for urban, school-age students tend to focus on academic learning. Such curricula do not meet the practical needs of students in rural areas.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL GIRLS?

Given the desirability of educating girls and the barriers that they typically confront, what alternatives exist when there are too few schools, when those that do exist are inaccessible, or when social or cultural factors discourage girls from enrolling in school? In fact, there are many possibilities. Not all learning must take place in classrooms, and even when classrooms are available, a girl's family or economic situation may not permit her to enroll in a traditional educational environment. For girls (and boys) who cannot attend regular schools during the day, there are many options, as the following examples suggest.

- **Indonesia's Program for Out-of-School Youth.** In the mid-1980s, local communities and school officials in Indonesia launched a successful program of evening and Saturday classes for young people who had to work weekdays. The participants were primarily dropouts who were too old to attend primary schools but who wanted to qualify for secondary school without having to leave their jobs. Other students did not want to go to secondary school but wanted to become functionally literate and numerate to become employed or to get better-paying jobs. Instead of using conventional textbooks, students used special modules or teaching-learning packages that allowed students to progress at their own rates. Some classes were held in existing primary schools. Teachers, who were members of the school's regular teaching staff, supervised and facilitated learning activities. Program expenses were met through community donations and minimal school fees. These expenses included electricity or oil for lamps, school supplies, honoraria for part-time teachers and coordinators, teaching-learning modules, and examination fees for those wanting to qualify for secondary school. The modules for the program were designed by Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia.
- **Second Chance for Maori School Dropouts.** In New Zealand, a Community Training Centre is used as a vehicle for providing a "second chance" for Maori school dropouts (Van Meijl 1994). Through an emphasis on communication, life-long learning, and student participation in decision-making, the program seeks to: 1) facilitate the development of the talents of school dropouts and the unemployed so that they can participate in the community and the wider New Zealand society; 2) encourage the development of practical business skills; 3) integrate the Maori's historical experience and cultural values into the curriculum and classroom instruction; and 4) focus on the uniqueness and strengths of Maori culture and language.
- **The Philippines' Instructional Management by Parents, Community and Teachers (IMPACT) Program** of Self-Study for Older Students is an instructional system developed in the mid-1970s. Its purpose was to provide a cost-effective alternative to mass primary education that would help solve problems common to the countries of Southeast Asia. IMPACT succeeded in reducing the number of dropouts by allowing some children to study at home using specially designed self-instructional modules. The modules facilitated learning by working children, such as those required to help on farms during the planting and harvest seasons, and children home-bound by illness. The program was soon expanded to include out-of-school children who wanted to reenter primary school without having to attend daily classes. When students completed a set of modules, they returned to school to take the module tests and to receive the next set. The program's estimated cost was about half that of conventional schools.
- **Nepal's Cheli Beti ("young girl") Project** provides one-year literacy and numeracy training to girls between ages 5 and 13, in one of the least developed areas of Nepal (Chlebowska 1987).

Classes are held six mornings a week in a local house or out-of-doors. Classes start at 7:30 a.m. and end at 9:00 a.m., before the girls do their chores. The teachers are female secondary-school students who are trained in teaching methods and provided with materials and a chalkboard. Annual project costs are estimated to be \$50 per girl. Materials are free, and there is no tuition.

- The **Naulo Bihana Project**, also in Nepal, offers a nine-month program equivalent to the first three primary grades for out-of-school children from 8 to 14 years of age. Classes, held during the day, are scheduled at times convenient for students. The program uses nationally developed teaching and learning materials that promote active learning, peer teaching, and group work. Although the program is for both sexes, most of the students are girls. Annual project costs per student are estimated to be about \$15. Materials are free, and there is no tuition.

Another community-based program in Nepal is a three-year program of nonformal education that combines literacy training with the development of functional skills in such areas as agriculture and livestock. Classes are held for approximately two hours, six evenings per week, in a community-provided shelter. High levels of motivation have been observed among the students, particularly the girls. The community's attitude toward sending children to school has become more positive. Students are charged a small fee.

Other successful programs similar to those described above have been undertaken in Bangladesh, the Dominican Republic, India, and Thailand. Information on these projects can be found in *Educating Girls: Strategies to Increase Access, Persistence, and Achievement* (Tietjen 1991), a publication of the U.S. Agency for International Development's Advancing Basic Education and Literacy (ABEL) Project.

## **HOW CAN YOUR MINISTRY ESTABLISH PROGRAMS FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL GIRLS?**

When establishing programs for out-of-school girls, first identify the program's objectives and then choose its curriculum. This decision should be based on what a community needs and what is feasible, given available resources. You may draw ideas from the examples previously discussed or the following strategies:

- Accreditation for reentry into the formal school system
- Literacy and numeracy
- Literacy and numeracy, combined with health, nutrition, and parenting
- Literacy and numeracy, combined with practical skills and crafts

After the curriculum has been decided, determine how the program will be structured and organized. Consider the following options:

### **Facilities**

- Use existing school facilities
- Use community center or home(s) made available by community members

### **Staffing**

Teachers or tutors may be one or a combination of the following:

- Primary school teachers working after regular hours
- Retired teachers
- Paraprofessionals paid a nominal honorarium
- Qualified community volunteers (including high school students or graduates, boy scouts, girl guides, older siblings, parents, etc.)

### **Materials**

- Use the texts and teachers' guides of the regular school system
- Use specially designed teaching and learning packages or modules that permit progression at an accelerated pace. If this option is used, some development, production, and training activities must be added to the plan and to the budget.

### **Schedule**

- Offer evening classes only
- Offer Saturday/weekend classes only
- Offer a combination of evening and weekend classes.

### **Teaching-learning modes**

- Direct instruction by a trained teacher/tutor
- Small-group learning with specially designed modules or self-instructional materials, with some supervision by a tutor
- Self-study with specially designed modules or self-instructional materials, with supervision by a tutor.

### **Other features**

- Students may be allowed to leave and reenter as necessary for legitimate reasons
- Literacy program may admit adults on request.

A shared vision, careful planning, and teamwork are needed to launch a good program. Below are some suggested steps for implementation. You may change the sequence and add or delete steps in accordance with community needs.

## **IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM**

**Needs analysis:** Conduct a survey to find out how many girls are out of school, why they are out, and what their needs are. Prepare a brief report that can be shared with others.

**Awareness campaign:** Contact concerned opinion leaders in the community to share the findings and to discuss what can be done. Publicize the issue through the media. Consider short radio programs, news items or advertisements in the local newspapers (donated space), posters, or dramatizations and short plays on the stage ("village theater"). Hold town and village meetings to present the issue and discuss what the community can do.

**Analysis and mobilization of resources:** During the town or village meetings, community members who are able and willing to help plan and manage the program should be identified. Organize them into an advisory body, a steering committee that will provide leadership for the program's planning and management and in identification and mobilization of resources.

**Planning:** In collaboration with officials of the Ministry of Education, the steering committee should prepare a project plan. The plan should list the program's objectives and then describe the preferred curriculum, instructional materials, and instructional strategies. Next, determine staffing requirements (coordinator, teachers/tutors, others), time tables, recruitment strategies, record keeping, and policies regarding promotion, reentry, and accreditation.

Draft a tentative budget for the program. This should include personnel, instructional materials, classroom space, furniture, supplies, equipment, electricity or oil for lamps, travel, transportation, materials, monitoring and evaluation, and administrative costs. Plan how to implement, supervise, monitor, and evaluate the program. Establish a means to ensure that the community continues to be informed and involved.

**Staff recruitment and implementation:** Launch the program with publicity. Recruit the staff and procure instructional materials and supplies. Enroll the girls and place them in appropriate classes according to their needs and their age and grade levels. Start the classes immediately after the inauguration ceremonies. Invite parents and community members to visit classes as often as possible.

**Monitoring and formative evaluation:** Using the instruments and procedures suggested in the monitoring and evaluation plan, monitor the program regularly. This responsibility should be shared by members of the steering committee, the community at large, and Ministry of Education officials (particularly in accreditation programs for reentry into the formal primary school or entry into secondary school). Modify the program based on the data collected. All those concerned, especially the girls who are the program's beneficiaries, should agree to changes before they are implemented.

**Expansion and establishment of linkages:** Plan for the future. Establish linkages with other sectors to ensure that graduates are assisted in reentering the formal school system or in seeking employment. This is essential for the program's sustainability. Make sure that there is room for program expansion.

## **WHAT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY SHOULD BE USED?**

Programs for out-of-school girls attempt to enable girls to complete primary education or acquire a level of literacy and numeracy equivalent to primary school. These programs require a shared vision, commitment, and joint support from the community and the Ministry of Education. This means that the implementation of the program should be a collaborative effort from the beginning. To ensure cooperation, the steering committee should include representatives from the following: community or opinion leaders, parents, the Ministry of Education, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), businesses, industries, or employer groups, civic organizations, retired educators, health agencies, and others that the community may suggest.

Responsibility for managing and overseeing the program rests with the steering committee. Representatives from the Ministry of Education should guide the decisions.

- Make sure that you inform and involve opinion leaders such as religious leaders, the town or village chiefs, other community leaders, officials from a parent-teacher association, local educators, and government officials in decision-making and implementation.
- Plan for the future. Make contingency plans for events that might endanger the program’s existence.
- Establish an ongoing commitment with the media to keep the community informed and involved.
- As much as possible, have the community own the program. One way of doing this is to have the community establish a community and reading center.
- Hire the program’s graduates as tutors.

## HOW SHOULD RESOURCES BE ALLOCATED?

The following matrix shows how funds can be allocated, by percentages, to budget items anticipated for each of the programs suggested earlier.

Budget Items	Program Description			
	Accreditation for reentry into formal schooling	Literacy/ numeracy	Literacy/ numeracy and health/nutrition and parenting	Literacy/ numeracy and practical skills/ crafts
Textbooks, teachers’ guides, instructional materials	35%	30%	30%	35%
Classroom space and furniture	(Donated or existing school facilities)	(Donated or existing school facilities)	(Donated or existing school facilities)	(Donated or existing school facilities)
Supplies and equipment	5%	10%	10%	10% (Donated or partially donated)
Electricity or oil for lamps	5%	5%	5%	5%
Travel, transportation, distribution	5%	5%	5%	5%
Honoraria for personnel (coordinator, teachers, and tutors, as needed)	20%	25%	20%	20% (Donated or partially donated time)
Development and production of special materials or modules; training on use of new materials	(35%) <sup>1</sup>	(35%)	(30%)	--
Monitoring and evaluation	10%	10%	10%	10%
Other direct costs <sup>2</sup>	15%	10%	10%	5%
Administrative costs	5%	5%	10%	10%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

<sup>1</sup> Development/production cost estimates if special materials/modules are used.

<sup>2</sup> Includes examination fees, if any, for entry into secondary school.

## HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM?

The best time to start is as soon as possible, when you find people who will listen and who are interested in the issue. The program should last for as long as there are out-of-school girls who need the program and who are unable to attend or benefit from regular classes in existing schools.

Activities	Month												Yr 2 onward —>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
Awareness campaign	X													
Needs and resource analysis	X	X												Reanalyze based on formative data
Mobilization and organization of steering committee		X												Reorganize as needed
Planning		X	X											
Mobilization of resources (financing, donations, etc.)			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Continue as needed
Recruitment of staff				X										Add or change as needed
Launching					X									
Implementation: a) Recruit/enroll girls b) Organize classes c) Start teaching-learning activities					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	XXX...
Monitoring and evaluation; feedback to community							X							XX...
Establishing linkages		X	X	X										XX...
Expansion														XX...

## HOW SHOULD THE PROGRAM BE MONITORED?

Monitoring and evaluating project and student progress should be conducted regularly. You can use participatory research activities such as interviews, observations, meetings, performance assessments, and accreditation procedures, and ask questions such as the following:

- Are all the out-of-school girls participating in the program? If not, why? How can this be remedied?
- Are those participating attending regularly?
- Are the students learning?

- Are the teachers and tutors performing well? If not, why? What kind of help do they need?
- Are the instructional materials and strategies effective?
- What kinds of improvements need to be made?
- How can the program's effectiveness and efficiency be improved?

## **SUMMARY**

Many girls who would like to complete primary school are out-of-school for reasons beyond their control. If provided with special educational options and opportunities through an alternative program, these girls can be educated and given a chance to succeed and contribute to the well being of their family, community, and country. Such programs can succeed and become viable if the community and Ministries of Education combine their efforts and resources to make this happen.

## **WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION...**

For more information, contact your ministry or department of education for a list of schools and organizations working in education in your region.

This paper is one of a series of project designs on activities to promote girls' education. The series includes:

1. *Enhancing Girls' Education through Community Schools*
2. *Improving the Physical Environment in Support of Girls' Education*
3. *Investments That Yield High Returns: Scholarships for Girls*
4. *Using Incentives to Promote Girls' Education*
5. *Using Mentoring to Promote Girls' Education*
6. *Using Special Programs as a Strategy to Educate Out-of-School Girls*
7. *Using Girls' Clubs to Promote Girls' Education.*

You can obtain copies of these reports from the Girls' and Women's Education Activity, American Institutes for Research, 1815 N. Ft. Myer Drive, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22209, USA. Tel: (703) 527-5546; Fax: (703) 527-4661; e-mail: [girls\\_education@air-dc.org](mailto:girls_education@air-dc.org)

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## INFORMATION SOURCES

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Pasigna, A. 1989. *The Sustainability of Low Cost Learning Systems: Indonesia's PAMONG System*. Unpublished manuscript.

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Van Meijl, T. 1994. "Second Chance Education for Maori School 'Dropouts': A Case Study of a Community Training Centre in New Zealand," *International Journal of Educational Development*, 14(4), 371-84.

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