

1. Resource Persons' Papers

(7) Adaptation of Existing Literacy and Continuing Education Materials at Local Level

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1. Background

Myanmar has undertaken literacy campaigns in the last two decades which were recognised by UNESCO, resulting in the award of Literacy Prize. There has been a shift in the literacy movement which started in 1968 towards functional and skills-based literacy. The Myanmar Education Research Bureau (MERB) has initiated a pilot programme of the Development of a Non-Formal Functional Literacy System in 6 townships, which aims to bring literacy, life and learning skills to the out-of-school population. In 1990, MERB, with UNDP and UNESCO's assistance, launched a project on the Expansion of Skills-Based Literacy Programme for Women and Girls.

MERB, after gaining experiences in NFE area, is now a focal institution organising NFE programmes in the Union.

2. Development of Literacy Materials in Myanmar

Apart from the traditional monastic education and post-independent literacy activities, literacy programmes in Myanmar have been organised in the following two separate periods:

(1) Mass Movement (1965-1989) by Burma Central Literacy Committee

a. The Committee

Burma Central Literacy Committee (BCLC) was responsible for literacy movement in the whole country. At the central level, BCLC was assisted by three main sub-committees:

- 1) Organising Sub-Committee,
- 2) Curriculum Development and Production of Adult Primers and Supplementary Readers Sub-Committee, and
- 3) Promotion of Reading Habits and Literacy Movement Sub-Committee.

b. Strategy

The strategy of the movement adopted by the BCLC was based on the characteristics of; mass movement with community participation, utilising local resources on a voluntary basis in a selected area or township or State/Division throughout the year, until the whole campaign area or township or State/Division becomes literate.

c. Development of Literacy Materials

A common and uniform curriculum has been developed by the Curriculum Development and Production of Adult Primers and Supplementary Readers Sub-Committee. To avoid a relapse into illiteracy, a wide variety of post literacy activities were employed. Educational posters, booklets, leaflets, handouts, folders, and other simple reading materials relating to agriculture, health, co-operative, general knowledge were jointly produced by the committee and these were distributed to the township concerned. Some materials are ready for use in current literacy programme.

(2) NFE programmes (1990-2000) by EFA Central Co-Ordination Committee

a. The Committee

(The details are explained in; (6) An Overview of NFE in Myanmar, page 37)

b. Strategy

(The details are explained in; (6) An Overview of NFE in Myanmar, page 38)

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c. Development of Literary Materials in Recent Years

Literacy is a commitment of the country, and all ministries, departments and organisations are to participate in this programme. There is no NFE Department and also no specific institution directly assigned for the implementation of literacy programme. Since MERB is the focal institution of EFA/NFE programme, formulation of plan, production of materials, training of literacy personnel, and monitoring and evaluation of the programme become part of main functions of MERB.

MERB has been producing literacy materials since 1990 in co-operation with UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO and ACCU. These materials are the outcome of series of workshops where many other departments and organizations actively involved in the development of curriculum and materials in simple literacy, functional literacy and skill-based literacy covering a wide range of areas such as; family, agriculture, handicraft, animal husbandry, health, and marketing. This shows strong linkages among departments and organisations in producing literacy materials. The learners can get benefits from these packages since these are the work of experienced experts and specialists in respective fields.

Literacy Materials Produced

Material	Quantity (kinds)	Organization
1. Basic Literacy Packages	3	MERB/UNICEF
2. Functional Literacy Packages	32	MERB/UNICEF
3. Skill-based Literacy Packages	32	MERB/UNESCO/UNDP
4. Skill-based Literacy Modules for Out-of-School Children and Youth	8	DTAVE/UNICEF
5. Learning Packages for Women With Limited Reading Skills	23	IOE/UNDP
6. Learning Packages for Minority People (Shan)	21	MERB/ACCU
7. Vocational Packages	20	MERB/ACCU
8. Reading Cards	14	NERB
9. AJP Materials in National Version	10	DBE/UNDP/ACCU
10. AJP Materials in National Version (With three Video Tapes)	3	MERB/ACCU
11. Materials for Post-Literacy (Leaflets/ Booklets, Video, Etc.)	10	MERB

3. Development of Literacy and CE Materials

Various teaching-learning materials have been developed and produced during these two separate periods. Those materials can be adapted at all the reading centres and CLCs.

List of Literacy and CE Materials

Title	No. of copies
1 Basic Literacy	
Basic Literacy Booklets	900,000
Guide for B.L Packages	15,000
2. Post-Literacy	
Shan-Myanmar Primer (1 & 2) (ACCU workshop)	8,000
To Help Who Wish to Learn (ACCU workshop)	4,000
Ma Ni Smiles (Shan) (ACCU Workshop)	4,000
Reading Cards (8 Kinds)	40,000
Revised Booklets (10 Kinds)	20,000
3. Functional and Skills-based Literacy	
Functional Literacy (MERB/UNICEF)	64,000
Skills-based Literacy (MERB/UNDP)	64,000
4. Income Generation	
Plastic Duster (Reading Card)	15,000
Mushroom Growing	50,000
Reading Cards (8 Kinds)	10,800
Fun/Hat Marking (ACCU workshop)	64,000
Basket Weaving (ACCU workshop)	2,000
Masonry	2,000
Dress Marking	2,000
Grafting (MERB-ACCU)	35,000
Bamboo Handicraft (MERB-ACCU)	35,000
5. Video	
Ma Ni Smiles (Myanmar/Shan)	
Malaria (ACCU workshop)	
Marking Bean Sprout	
Marking Rosali Juice & Jam	
Plastic Duster (ACCU workshop)	
Mushroom (ACCU workshop)	
Ma Ni's Village and River	
Grafting (ACCU workshop)	

4. Distribution of Teaching-Learning Materials

The above mentioned CE materials are now ready for project townships. Some materials are needed to be reprinted for distribution. Sources of fund for these publications are the government budget and donations and contributions from agencies and organisations. MERB, as the focal institution of NFE programmes is distributing CE materials to respective townships to organise reading centres and CLCs.

5. Adaptation of Teaching-Learning Materials at Local Level

The existing materials can be adapted at the reading centres and CLCs in the form of reading circles and libraries. Some mobile libraries can also organised in simple manner by using bags and small kits. To have enough materials for CE programmes, the following arrangements can be organised by the Township and Village EFA Committees.

- (1) Collecting reading materials from the community (old newspapers, magazines, journals, comics, etc.)
- (2) Receiving donations from the community and organisations (radio, TV, audio cassette, video cassette, training facilities, machines, and tools for IGP, etc.)
- (3) Developing local materials;
 - a. wall posters and signposts.
 - b. news letters and village newspapers, and
 - c. newspaper cutting.
- (4) Collecting extension literatures produced by development agencies such as health departments, agricultural extension services, etc.
- (5) Providing training programmes with the help of experts.

6. Learning Strategies Identified for CE Programmes

For Systematic and effective running of CE programmes, the following learning strategies can be organised:

- (1) Learning strategies using printed media (textbooks, supplementary reading materials and extension literature in the form of book, booklet, photonovella, and comics.);
- (2) Learning strategies using printed non-book (posters, leaflets, wall newspapers, flip charts, picture story-telling hard board set, cards, etc.);
- (3) Learning strategies using electronic media, (film, movies, videos, slides, tapes, radio and TV programmes.);
- (4) Rural libraries, mobile exhibitions and museum as learning strategies; and
- (5) Traditional folk media and games as learning strategies (folk theatre, drama etc.).

7. Conclusion

Organising CE programmes and CLCs is not only the work of a department. It is the concern of every department, organisation, agency and also the whole community. Not a single institution or an organisation can organize such a big task. It needs to have good networking, co-operation and collaboration among respective agencies with strong commitment of the community, the local popular. After careful arrangement, CLCs can be organised mobilising all resources so as to provide opportunities for needy youths and adults to have access to basic education.



Myanmar version of AJP materials: Bamboo handicrafts (left) and Let's Grow Better Fruits by Grafting (right)

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List of Teaching-Learning Materials

Non-Formal Education Project: Development of Non-Formal Functional Literacy System

- (1) Our Family
- (2) Income Generation in Family
- (3) Personal Hygiene
- (4) Our Environment
- (5) Duties Of Parents
- (6) Selection of Work for Income Generation
- (7) Family Nutrition
- (8) Maintaining Mineral Resources
- (9) Duties of Sons And Daughters
- (10) Investment
- (11) Keeping Our Village Clean & Pleasant
- (12) Finding Solutions for Water Problem
- (13) Our Village
- (14) Income Generation (1)
- (15) Preventive Measures for Diseases
- (16) Solutions for Fuel Problem
- (17) Villages
- (18) Income Generation (2)
- (19) Traditional Sport/Games
- (20) Preventive Measure for Natural Disasters
- (21) Village Tradition & Custom
- (22) Income Generation (3)
- (23) Modern Sport/Games
- (24) Climatic Condition Depending on the Forest
- (25) A Good Citizen
- (26) A Good Management for Successful Achievements
- (27) Traditional Medicine
- (28) Village Sectory Diseases
- (29) Our Country
- (30) Marketing
- (31) Village Health Services
- (32) Man and His Surroundings

List of Teaching-Learning Materials

Expansion of Skills-based Literacy Programme for Women and Girls (RAS/88/013)

- (1) Family Reproducibility & Happiness
- (2) The Importance of Water
- (3) Income Generation in Family
- (4) Personal Hygiene
- (5) Utilization of Leisure Time
- (6) Good Crops From Good Soil
- (7) Selection of Work For Income Generation
- (8) A Clean Environment for Good Health
- (9) Family Education
- (10) Compost for Fertiliser
- (11) Investment
- (12) Family Nutrition
- (13) Family's Dealings with Community
- (14) Garden Fruits
- (15) Prevention of Communicable Disease
- (16) Income Generation by Mung Bean Sprouts
- (17) Child Development
- (18) Insects and Betel Leaves
- (19) Bamboo-based Handicrafts
- (20) Reproductive Health
- (21) Myanmar, Tradition and Customs
- (22) Selection Handicraft for Income Generation
- (23) Domestic of Good Stock
- (24) Ante-natal Health
- (25) Ethics
- (26) Manageable Live-Stock Breeding
- (27) Business Management
- (28) First Aid
- (29) Family Management
- (30) Knowledge about Animal Diseases
- (31) Marketing
- (32) The Dangers of Narcotic Drugs

MERB/ACCU/UNESCO PROAP JOINT PRODUCTION (AJP)

- (1) Grow Mushroom (Step by Step)
- (2) How to Make Bamboo Cup
- (3) How to Make Bamboo Chop-sticks
- (4) How to Make Bamboo Basket
- (5) How to Make Bamboo Fan-hat
- (6) How to Make Bamboo Fan
- (7) How to Make Paper Fan
- (8) How to Make Duster
- (9) Bamboo Handicrafts for Additional Income
- (10) Let's Grow Better Fruit by Grafting
- (11) Help Those Who Want to Learn (play-Shan)
- (12) Mina Smiles (Shan)
- (13) Variety of Shan / Myanmar Reading Materials (prose)
- (14) Variety of Shan / Myanmar Reading Materials (poems)