

Meeting of Experts on New Phase of AJP Programme for Model NFE Materials Development and Utilization in Asia and the Pacific Tokyo, 26-30 July 2004
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Country Report

Philippines

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PART I. AJP Programme

This Country Theme Report presents the synopsis of the ACCU-AJP material development and utilization in the Philippines. Specifically, it outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the local production and utilization of AJP local version and how it influenced the non-formal education material development and production in the country. It also attempts to review the strength and weakness of the ACCU-AJP processes in the prototype material development and suggests ways to improve the proposed new phase, if any, of the AJP Program.

The report seeks to present the national scenario in non-formal education material development in the Philippines through the experiences of the Department of Education - Bureau of Non-formal Education, the Philippine agency mandated to implement the country's Non-formal Education.

A. Strength and weakness of AJP local production and utilization in the Philippines

In the Philippines, the production and utilization of AJP local version is being undertaken by the Department of Education (Dep. Ed) through its Bureau of Non-formal Education (BNFE).

In performing these tasks, the Dep. Ed-BNFE has experienced and taken down notes of some strengths and weaknesses in the process. While it can not be denied that there are problems encountered, there are also significant gains from the production and localization of the AJP materials, not only on the part of the learners but also the literacy facilitators.

a) Strengths:

- The production and utilization of AJP materials in the Filipino language has opened *greater opportunities in improving non-formal education delivery and processes* in the field. It is attributed to the fact that learners tend to learn better in a language where they are more familiar and comfortable with. The use of the AJP materials in local version has effectively: (1) served as springboard for discussion; (2) made learning more fun and enjoyable; (3) provided opportunities for multi-sensory learning; (4) reinforced and sustained literacy gains among learners; and (5) supplemented existing modules in the Basic Literacy Program.
- The Philippine experience in the production and utilization of the AJP materials has accounted for its success in *extensive dissemination and timely distribution* to all the regions of the country for use of non-formal education facilitators and personnel in the conduct of learning sessions and management of learning centers.
- This was attained by contracting the delivery and distribution of the localized version of the AJP materials as part of the printing contract package giving the Dep. Ed-BNFE ease in systematic and speedy disposing of the materials to the end-users.
- Some of the AJP materials that were adapted and translated in the local version in the Philippines

are in the form of video and cassette tapes. *The use of the materials in video and cassette forms provided the learners exposure and access to new technology.* The experience provided another dimension of learning on the part of the learner and a greater challenge on the part of the literacy facilitators.

- Some adapted/translated materials in the local version *address directly the actual needs and demands of the learners.*

b) Weaknesses:

- There is *lukewarm attitude* on the part of some local Dep. Ed personnel *in the translation of the Filipino version to the local dialect or “mother tongue”.*
- *Owing to the limited funds* allocated for the reproduction of the localized version of the AJP materials, *only limited copies were produced for distribution* to the literacy facilitators in the field. With the influx of learners in all regions, the ratio of the localized AJP materials against number of learners suffers severely.
- There is *lack of intense monitoring and evaluation on the utilization* of the AJP localized materials.

B. Strength and weakness of AJP program as Asia Pacific as Asia-Pacific regional cooperation

a) Strengths:

- The Program provides *opportunity* for the Philippines and other participating countries *to participate in the material development and other training courses.* This training opportunity of Philippine personnel and material developers and experts leads to a strengthened capacity in the area of material development for non-formal education in the country.
- The provision of prototype materials and the *opportunity to be able to translate the materials in local version with corresponding funding* for better understanding of the content of the non-formal education learners is a big leap in the Dep. Ed-BNFE's effort to enhance learning outcomes.
- The AJP prototype materials *cover very relevant topics that are attuned to the current global development issues and concerns.*
- The involvement of the Philippines in the AJP program has *improved tremendously the community-based material development processes* in the country.

b) Weakness:

- Opportunity of BNFE staff members to participate in the training of personnel in the materials development in the regional and sub-regional activities is limited.

C. Whether and how AJP programme/materials influenced the NFE production in your country

The impact of AJP Program was evaluated by the BNFE personnel as part of the regular monitoring and evaluation of non-formal education programs and projects in the 17 regions in the Philippines. The activity determined the impelling and compelling power of the AJP materials and activities to bring about changes in the Philippine literacy and continuing education programs. In general, the shortlist of impact involved quantitative as well as qualitative aspects.

The quantitative aspect included an assessment of the growth in number, size, as well as the related increase in the nature and scope of the program areas in focus. The qualitative aspects on the other hand covered the extent of integration of distinct strategies, techniques and principles into the current scheme of the materials development and personnel training.

It is perhaps important to note that this impact evaluation was conducted neither a relatively short period, over and above the regular duties and hours of the personnel involved with very limited resources available at hand and limited sampling needed to establish the country's status.

a) Materials Development:

- The ACCU assistance has awakened the creativity of literacy material developers in producing various formats for motivational, instructional, follow up and participatory materials. The Dep. Ed – BNFE has hosted at least three materials development workshops apart from the attendance of more than a dozen officials and participants in international activities which facilitated the upgrading of materials developed in the country. It was remarkably noted that the year 1997 was the most productive year for the ACCU local material development. In fact, on that same year, an original material entitled “Recycling is Fun” written by the author of this report was chosen as one of the two drafts for the Dissemination Scheme of the AJP Program for adaptation in local version by participating countries. Among those developed and reproduced are booklets, posters, games and other formats such as video, leaflets, banners, songs, dances and audiotapes. Topics covered include literacy advocacy, social issues and problem solving, child care, health and sanitation, income generation through various home projects and environmental care were very relevant to the current issues and concerns. A number of AJP materials developments, principles, strategies and techniques has been adapted and integrated into the current scheme creating a positive impact.

D. Suggestions for new phase of AJP programme

- Theme of new materials for development should be anchored on global concerns such as peace and order advocacy, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases’ awareness and prevention.
- The new sets of candidate learning materials may be grouped or sorted by topics to produce a new format for a single material incorporating the aggregated subject and important points from several candidate materials.
- Training courses on the packaging and development of new AJP materials should be provided to the representatives from all participating countries.
- New AJP materials should be developed using “core life skills” which is defined in the Philippine context as “abilities for positive and adaptive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands, challenges, experiences and situations of everyday life. Recognizing the physical, psychological, mental, cultural and spiritual needs and concerns of Filipino children and youth, an enabling and supportive environment has to be developed for the enhancement of their life skills.”
- The identified life skills envisaged to be developed, enhanced and reinforced among Filipino children and youth are: self-awareness, empathy, effective communication, interpersonal relationship skills, decision-making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, dealing/managing/coping with emotions, dealing/managing/coping with stress and production (entrepreneurship) skills.

PART II. Part II. Non Formal Education (NFE)**A. Legal and Working Definition of Non-formal Education**

Non-formal education (NFE) is any structured educational activity that takes place outside the established formal education system. It is designed to complement or extend, as well as provide an alternative to the formal education system. In the Philippines, there are very high expectations from NFE. The Education for All (EFA): A Philippine Plan of Action views NFE as a means to reducing the incidence of poverty by providing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that people can use to mobilize themselves toward greater productivity.

The Department of Education - Bureau of Non-formal Education (BNFE) is mandated to set national standards and a national policy framework for the implementation of non-formal education programs of the Philippine Department of Education (Dep. Ed). The Dep. Ed-BNFE has adopted a definition of functional literacy that was developed by the Philippine Literacy Coordinating Council in 1998.

Functional Literacy is defined as a range of skills and competencies – cognitive (intellectual), affective (emotional), and behavioral – which enable individuals to: (1) live and work as human persons; (2) develop their potential; (3) make critical and informed decisions; and (4) function effectively in society within the context of their environment and that of the wider community (local, regional, national, global) in order to improve the quality of their life and that of the society.

The foregoing definition is operationalized in terms of five major indicators or learning strands, as follows: communication skills, problem-solving and critical thinking, sustainable use of resources/productivity, development of self and a sense of community and expanding one's world vision.

B. Overview of NFE Material Development and Utilization in the Philippines

a) Development:

- Literacy is an important tool for development. Any literacy intervention using carefully planned, designed and developed materials can be very meaningful to the learners of the unreached population in the Philippines.
- Development of non-formal education materials is a complex and rigorous task.
- Previous efforts on learning materials development for non-formal education in the Philippines was seen to be fragmented. However, since the development of the Curriculum Framework for the Non-formal Education Accreditation and Equivalency (NFE A&E) System in the Philippines, the development of learning materials in non-formal education became more focused and holistic in approach.
- The learning skills and competencies specified in the NFE Curriculum Framework are within the five learning strands stated earlier.
- *Materials development for non-formal education in the Philippines involves a cycle of important steps and activities* such as: identifying learners; needs assessment; formulation of objectives; selection of content and topics; deciding on format; selection of strategies; writing and putting illustrations; field testing; revising and finalizing the learning materials.
- *Learning materials have to essentially reflect the actual needs, aspirations and goals set by the learners for themselves.* In doing so, curriculum and material developers need to go to the community level to find out the real needs of the target end-users of the material. Local experts are also being tapped to provide the “local color” in the material development.
- The same level of consultation takes place in the field testing of the materials to ensure acceptability, effectiveness and efficiency of the materials.

b) Utilization:

- *Learning materials for non-formal education in the Philippines come in various forms*, some are interactive, self-directed and self-paced. Meanwhile, there are learning materials that are facilitator-aided and supported by other learning materials. Modules in the different literacy levels contain lessons, interactive materials, activities, illustrations and self-assessment exercises.
- *Choice of learning materials or modules is based on the learner's personal interests and learning needs.*
- In the Basic Literacy Program (BLP), the learning materials were designed and developed to cover the five learning strands earlier enumerated. The BLP encourages the use of other learning materials especially those that are locally available.
- The Dep. Ed-BNFE and the Dep. Ed field offices make available to other organizations that serve as service providers and facilitators the AJP materials to supplement the existing NFE materials that they can borrow and reproduce.
- The Dep. Ed-BNFE also encourages the development of indigenous literacy materials, which are directly related to the unique needs of the learners especially in cultural communities. For example, if there are special learning needs not covered by the materials, then new learning materials have to be developed to address them. These materials may be developed cooperatively by various groups involved in the delivery of non-formal education.

- Aside from the videos, learning packages and indigenous literacy materials, there are other supplementary materials that the learning groups can avail themselves of. Among these are materials that the learners have to read to meet their daily needs such as grocery labels, sales invoices, job advertisements and the like.

c) Scope and Format of NFE Materials:

- The non-formal education materials in the Philippines for both the basic literacy and continuing education cover a host of topics and subject matter, both print and non-print. The development of these learning materials was anchored on the five learning strands set in the Philippine Non-formal Education Curriculum Framework. Target users of the non-formal education materials are out-of-school children, youth and adults.
- The basic level materials are facilitator-aided while the materials for the continuing education are mostly self-paced and self-directed. Materials for both levels contain lessons, interactive materials, activities, illustrations and self-assessment exercises.
- The basic level materials and modules are available in Filipino and other seven major Philippine languages while the continuing education materials and modules are written in English and Filipino.
- Samples of non-print non-formal education materials include videotapes, audiotapes, posters, pamphlets, comics, flip charts, card games and others.

d) Name and Short Description of Outstanding Manuals and Teaching Handbooks:

- *Basic Literacy Learning Materials (BLLMs)*: These are learning materials for out-of-school youth and adults who lack basic literacy competencies, specifically in reading, writing and numeric. These materials come in a set of 29 learning materials with an accompanying Facilitator's Guide, an Exercise Booklet and a General Guide. The BLLMs are facilitator-aided. They are intended for learners who have very little or no reading, writing and counting skills at all. They can also be used for group or cluster learning. These learning materials were translated in seven (7) major Philippine languages, namely: Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Ilocano, Bicol, Waray, Maguindanao and Tausog.
- Non-formal Education Accreditation and Equivalency (NFE A&E) Modules – These are the most important learning support materials and the main source of learning of NFE A&E System. These 535 modules are like booklets which the learners read and study and contain information on different topics of interest and include discussions, activities, self-assessment exercises, drawings, articles and other sources of information.
- There are modules intended for Lower Elementary Level, Advanced Elementary Level, Secondary Level and Bridging Level.
- The modules come in two versions: English and Filipino and cover various topics including health, science, math, environment, society, culture, work, personality improvement, home management, etc.

e) Innovative Examples of NFE Materials Development:

- Very recently, the Dep. Ed-BNFE has attempted to modify sets of learning modules for the basic level (BL), elementary level (EL) and secondary level (SL) by incorporating the “core life skills” in the existing learning materials.
- The attempt to revise the materials included a pool of experts and teachers who provided the content and context for the learning material. The teachers who took part in the material development come from one area to ensure that the context of the material shall be anchored on the particular municipality where the teachers are from and where the revised materials shall be pilot-tested.

f) Process of Capacity Building of Personnel and Institutions for Strengthening NFE Material Development and Utilization:

- The New Participatory (NP) method has been adapted and integrated into the current training scheme of Dep. Ed-BNFE personnel in material development. The NP method which

facilitated problem identification and need mapping along with cooperative problem-solving through democratic processes to ensure more relevant and effective materials proved to be a very good approach in capacity building of personnel to strengthen NFE material development.

g) Cases of Utilization of NFE Materials for Formal Education or Vice Versa:

Considering the diversity of topics and content of the non-formal education learning modules and other non-print materials in all levels, they are now being used in the formal system as supplementary and reference materials.