

The Good Sight

The Changemakers

Literacy for all

DEVI Sansthan's Global Dream program offers an innovative pedagogy to enable foundational literacy and numeracy to be taught in just 50 hours!



Tom Delaney
Master Trainer, DEVI Sansthan

This article offers a summary of DEVI Sansthan's work towards Literacy for All. We begin by examining why literacy is important, and then look at the scale of the illiteracy crisis. We then share the principles underpinning Global Dream program, which enables literacy to be taught swiftly, by anyone, anytime, anywhere. We go on to explore partnerships and initiatives, and discuss outcomes, impact and ways forward.

Why Literacy?

Literacy is the foundation for all education, and is a crucial human right. Recognizing this, the SDGs aim to ensure that 'all children complete a quality education' (4.1) and 'all youth and a substantial

proportion of adults achieve literacy and numeracy' (4.6). Literacy impacts many crucial areas of life:

- **Self-confidence & empowerment.** There is often a sense of shame in using a thumb impression, whereas literate people tend to be much more self-confident. Learning to read is an important step on the journey of empowerment.
- **Civic participation.** Illiterate people struggle to engage meaningfully as citizens in the civic process; literacy strengthens democracy. Recent research has shown that literacy rate is strongly correlated with the desire to be governed democratically.
- **Population stabilization.** Growth in literacy rates leads to a decline in fertility rates, and hence



Literacy is the foundation for all education.

population growth rates. This is primarily through young women becoming more empowered to make decisions about when to have children and how many children to have.

- **Health.** Literacy has a huge positive impact on public health. Reading increases the ability of people to engage well with the healthcare system and follow basic public health measures. Literacy has a particularly powerful effect on lowering infant mortality.
- **Income.** There is a strong positive correlation between literacy and income level. This is true both at the individual level (literate people earn more) and the national level (countries with higher literacy rates tend to have higher per capita GDP).

The Problem: Illiteracy Crisis

Though literacy is a crucial skill, hundreds of millions of people still lack it. India has over 250 million illiterate adults – far more than any other country. We also suffer from low rates of learning in schools: only half of Grade 5 students can read a Grade 2 text in their mother-tongue, and even by Grade 8, one third of students can't solve a division problem.

This problem is not just India's. A recent World Bank report revealed that an estimated 53% of children in low-income-countries (LICs) around the world are in learning poverty. The situation has been further worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has

DEVI seeks to catalyze a people's movement for literacy.



The teacher acts as a facilitator rather than an instructor.



wiped out 2 decades of educational progress, and pushed millions of children into child labour and underage marriages.

Our Solution: Global Dream

To achieve literacy for all, we need to mobilize all for literacy. This requires simplified teaching-learning materials and methods, enabling anyone and everyone to teach swiftly and effectively. To this end, we have developed the Global Dream Toolkits, which uses an innovative pedagogy to enable foundational literacy and numeracy to be taught in just 50 hours. Global Dream is available in 13 languages.

The program is based on these key principles & practices:

- **Short modules:** We keep our sessions short, 15-

30 minutes. Rather than trying to teach the whole alphabet initially, each lesson introduces only 6-10 letters and gives the learner plenty of practice to master them.

- **Moving from known to unknown:** the learner is asked to recognize pictures and from there learn letters. Rather than 'a/ se anaar', we reverse the order 'anaar: /a/'. Similarly, in numeracy, we use hands-on materials before introducing abstract representations; an approach known as Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract.
- **Asking questions:** We ask questions of the learner, for example, 'What is this picture?', 'What is its first sound?' This is much more effective than

rote memorization, and ensures that learning is long-term and deeper.

- **Games & activities:** Lessons are reinforced and brought to life using many games and activities (for example, matching picture and letter cards).
- **Independent & Peer learning:** The process is learner-centred and driven, and the simple materials enable people to teach themselves and help their peers. The teacher acts as a facilitator rather than an instructor.

Our Initiatives

We are partnering with many stakeholders, striving to reach our target population of illiterate children

(both in and out of school) and adults (with an emphasis on women). DEVI Sansthan has partnered with SBI Foundation India and SBI Life to implement the 'Global Dreamshala Web-based Literacy Project' focusing on 10,000 illiterate out-of-school children and adults in Lucknow. DEVI seeks to catalyze a people's movement for literacy, by working with key sectors of society:

- **Government.** DEVI has partnered with state governments in Uttar Pradesh and Telangana to run programs to improve school education and mobilize school students to teach adults in their community how to read. An international partnership with the government of Maldives is also in the pipeline. The government-affiliated



Simplified teaching-learning materials and methods.



Global Dream Toolkits use an innovative pedagogy.



DEVI's Each One Teach One program mobilizes and trains school and college students to teach literacy.

National Service Scheme has also partnered with us in Lucknow, where we have trained and equipped college student volunteers to teach literacy in slums.

- **NGOs & community groups.** DEVI uses its skills and experience to partner with many NGOs, including Sahbhagi, Magic Bus, Teach for India and Oxfam. We provide training and materials, and are knowledge partners as they implement literacy programs in a wide variety of contexts, from schools to adult literacy centres.
- **Private schools.** DEVI's Each One Teach One program mobilizes and trains school and college students to teach literacy.

Outcomes, Impacts and Way Forward

Through our own initiatives and the excellent work of our partners and stakeholders, we are proud to have contributed to the struggle for literacy for all. Some of the key outcomes and impacts of our work include:

- We have distributed around 500,000 literacy toolkits, primarily to school and college student

volunteers; through which an estimated 200,000 people have become literate. This has had tremendous impact on the lives of the neo-literates: building self-confidence, social equality, economic resilience and general well-being.

- Innumerable school and college student volunteers report being profoundly impacted by their experiences, including a greater sensitivity to poverty and social issues, and a desire to work for change.
- In collaboration with the district government, we conducted a large-scale survey of literacy in Lucknow, finding that the literacy rate is much lower than the Census suggests. This culminated in a paper, *The Inconvenient Truth of Illiteracy Inequality*, published in *Economic & Political Weekly*.

We are looking to continue scaling up the campaign for literacy, through further initiatives:

- Launching the Disruptive Global Movement to End Literacy Poverty, a series of online and in-person conferences in which stakeholders commit to and report on action for literacy, share stories and are inspired.
- Global Dream App, containing a series of video lessons and interactive games, enabling literacy to be taught easily and for free, without requiring paper materials.
- Our book, *Ending Literacy Poverty: A Roadmap for Urgent Global Action*, is due to be published by Bloomsbury shortly.

DEVI – Dignity, Education, Vision International was formed under the leadership of Dr Sunita Gandhi in 1992 in Lucknow with the view that dignity is the most important propelling force and education is the most important driver of change in a human being; and we need to move towards a world embracing vision in which all people have equality of opportunity to receive a meaningful education and live with dignity.



Foundational Literacy and Numeracy: The Missing Ingredient

NIPUN aims to ensure universal FLN by 2026-27, but are our current reforms sufficient to reach this ambitious goal? Or are we missing something important?

A Literacy Crisis of Huge Proportions

Despite increasing recognition of the importance of literacy, children’s literacy rates are at a historic low, thanks to Covid-induced huge disruptions and lengthy school closures. World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF estimate 70% of

10-year-olds in low-and-middle-income countries (LMICs) are unable to read, write, and do basic arithmetic. In South Asia, the loss has been even more severe – some 78% of children are in learning poverty.¹

“We are looking at a nearly insurmountable scale of loss to children’s schooling,” says Robert

Jenkins, UNICEF Chief of Education, “Just reopening schools is not enough. Students need intensive support to recover lost education.”²

To understand why these low levels of learning are an emergency, we must recognize that global education levels in LMICs were low even before Covid: learning poverty rose from 53% in 2015 to

57% by 2019.³ Going back to ‘business as usual’ is not an option. Indeed, hundreds of millions of children are in danger of being lost to education altogether – with serious social, economic, and political consequences.

NIPUN Bharat and Pathway to Universal FLN by 2026/27



Children learn better through cognition. They also learn better when they take turns and work interactively with each other in a pair. Children of Shravasti, UP, in initial trial of the ALfA pedagogy.

Thankfully, India’s New Education Policy 2020 accords FLN the highest priority. The National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat) aims to reach universal FLN from Balvatika to Grade 3 students by 2026-27.

This has led to a flurry of school reforms nationwide including the following:

- *Detailed prescriptions.* Specific instructions for every period including time for learning, revision and practice in pairs and groups
- *Curriculum Add-on’s.* Elaborate workbooks for every child, supplementary hands-on learning materials (like shapes and currency cards), storybooks and print-rich environments
- *Testing and Remedial Measures.* Weekly testing on the key skills supposed to have been learnt, and use the test results to take remedial action in ability-based groups
- *Training.* More intensive teacher training, and provision of detailed and visual teacher guides
- *Supervision & Monitoring.* More rigorous

‘supportive supervision’ and use of innovative apps to monitor practice and teacher attendance

- *Systemic Change.* Appointment of more supervisory staff, and centralized policy and other changes at the system-wide level

What Trajectory Will Ensure India Is Literate By 2026-27?

Despite putting our best foot forward, we have not been able to reach pre-COVID levels one year after schools opened. ASER 2022 report released in January 2023 states that children’s basic reading ability has dropped to ‘pre-2012 levels’, reversing the slow improvement achieved in the intervening years.

What type of trajectory would be required to achieve the FLN goals – all children being able to read, write and do basic arithmetic by 2026-27? To grow from our current 40% of Grade 5 children to universal FLN in four years, a cursory analysis would suggest we need to move

¹World Bank. 2022. *The State of Learning Poverty: 2022 Update*. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/e52f55322528903b27f1b7e61238e416-0200022022/original/Learning-poverty-report-2022-06-21-final-V7-0-conferenceEdition.pdf>

²UNICEF. 2022. *Scale of Education Loss Nearly Insurmountable, Warns UNICEF*. <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/covid19-scale-education-loss-nearly-insurmountable-warns-unicef>

³World Bank. 2022. *The State of Learning Poverty: 2022 Update*. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/e52f55322528903b27f1b7e61238e416-0200022022/original/Learning-poverty-report-2022-06-21-final-V7-0-conferenceEdition.pdf>

with great speed to 55%, 70%, 85% and 100% respectively from the 2023-24 session to the 2026-27 session. If we think of Grade 3 children reaching the NIPUN skills, we have to move up a much steeper trajectory at a much faster pace. Are the current measures enough? Are the directions we are taking today sufficient to lead us out of literacy poverty? Maybe, we need to be far more circumspect.

We also need to go back to the drawing board and ask some bold new questions.

1. Are the measures given above both necessary and sufficient to reach the NIPUN goal of universal FLN by 2026-27?
2. What have been the gains this academic year when the entire nation has been working their utmost best, and when it has been India's topmost priority in education post-Covid?
3. How are we going to achieve what we could not accomplish historically in the past decades, when the best historical efforts could only reach FLN to 50% of the children after five years of schooling?
4. What pace of progress do we need now to reach universal FLN in the next four years?
5. What new policies and measures can drastically improve FLN now and change the direction of education?

Let's accept that refinement of the old is not going to work. Education as in the past has had its day. We need new design thinking, new ground-breaking and transformative education that can forever change the fortunes of our children, and make the schooling experience far more empowering for the teacher and the taught. Let such a new education not just deliver on academic skills quickly, but also empower the children with real 6C Skills of the 21st Century: Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Character and Citizenship. These are important outcomes of education in India's New Education Policy 2020.⁴



Children are more engaged when they work without direction and constant vigil of the teacher. Here the children of Shamli schools are learning in pairs. The program has been supported by M3M Foundation.

⁴https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

Let's acknowledge that the old processes are incapable of delivering on the 6Cs. These were designed for an age gone by, for fulfilling the needs of employers in a rapidly industrializing 19th century. Our schools are still working with teacher-led, though often child-centric processes such as more joyful hands-on learning, and children often working in groups and pairs. However, rote learning and teacher-led environments still dominate. It is hard to break the old moulds. We no longer need even the finest of landline phones. We need, instead, the smart phone. For this, we need to think dramatically differently.

Not only in the NEP 2020, as early as 1986, India's National Policy on Education stated: "The most important aspect of this reform will be to make education a joyful, inventive and satisfying learning activity, rather than a system of rote."⁵

Ensuring Inputs versus Driving Outcomes

The reforms above are often inputs. They are fine-tuning and incremental changes to the archaic education system – new worksheets, more teacher training, more supervisors, more monitoring, and

⁵https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/upload_document/npe.pdf

the like. With the teachers being held accountable on the detailed prescriptions, for example, what they do in every period, teachers do not have the time to think, or the freedom to deliver on outcomes.

Imagine the drastic change from a landline to a smartphone – nobody uses a landline anymore! But in education, we remain stuck with the landline: most of our pedagogy is outdated. It is as if we have polished the landline, given it some new buttons – group work, technology in the classroom – but the core remains unchanged. Imagine yourself as a cook who is given an extremely detailed recipe. If you follow it correctly, how will you feel if the dish is still not satisfactory? Instead, let us hold the cook accountable for the outcome, and like the master chefs who choose their own ingredients, deliver on a wonderful meal. This would surely foster the teachers' sense of professionalism and creativity. The same goes for accountability and supervision instead of measuring a to-do list, measure outcomes—how are the children performing on the different goals of NIPUN Bharat, and assist teachers with becoming more innovative with new, more disruptive ideas for change, more sessions for teachers to share with each other their classroom successes, and more. Other input-based prescriptions may also lack the desired

outcome. A print-rich environment is helpful – but how much can it achieve when children are unable to decipher the text? Regular testing can be useful – but merely grouping 'weak' children together may be counterproductive.⁶ Sorting children as 'remedial' can weaken their self-esteem, and become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Without new systemic changes, attempts at tinkering around the edges may amount to little more than a band-aid. Transformative change is urgently needed, no longer incremental change.

The Missing Ingredient: Pedagogical Transformation

Could it be that the detailed recipe we gave the cook is missing a key ingredient? Pedagogy. The way we teach, is at least as important as the books we use to teach, but is often taken for granted. Consider how reading is taught. India's schools continue to use whole language, even though the world's largest meta-analysis of research by Prof. John Hattie shows phonics works far better.⁷ Whole language emphasizes sight words. Using whole language approach, it takes one year or more to teach 'swar' and 'vyanjan', and another year or more to teach 'matras'. It is three years before many children can read full text, and even after five years of schooling, by their 10th birthday, over half of children cannot read with understanding.

ALFA Transformation: Beyond FLN in 45 Days

A new disruptive approach is ensuring children are learning the foundational skills in a mere 45 days.



Learning by themselves in Shamli. When the electricity did not work, they went under the trees and sat on pavement but learning in pairs did not stop. Many teachers initially thought it would be impossible to get the children of Grades 1 to work in pairs but soon they began to believe they can. Changing beliefs is one of the outcomes of ALFA. Not only can little children work without a teacher's help, they can also learn to read a newspaper in just 30 days. Teachers changed their beliefs once they saw the rapid learning by their children.

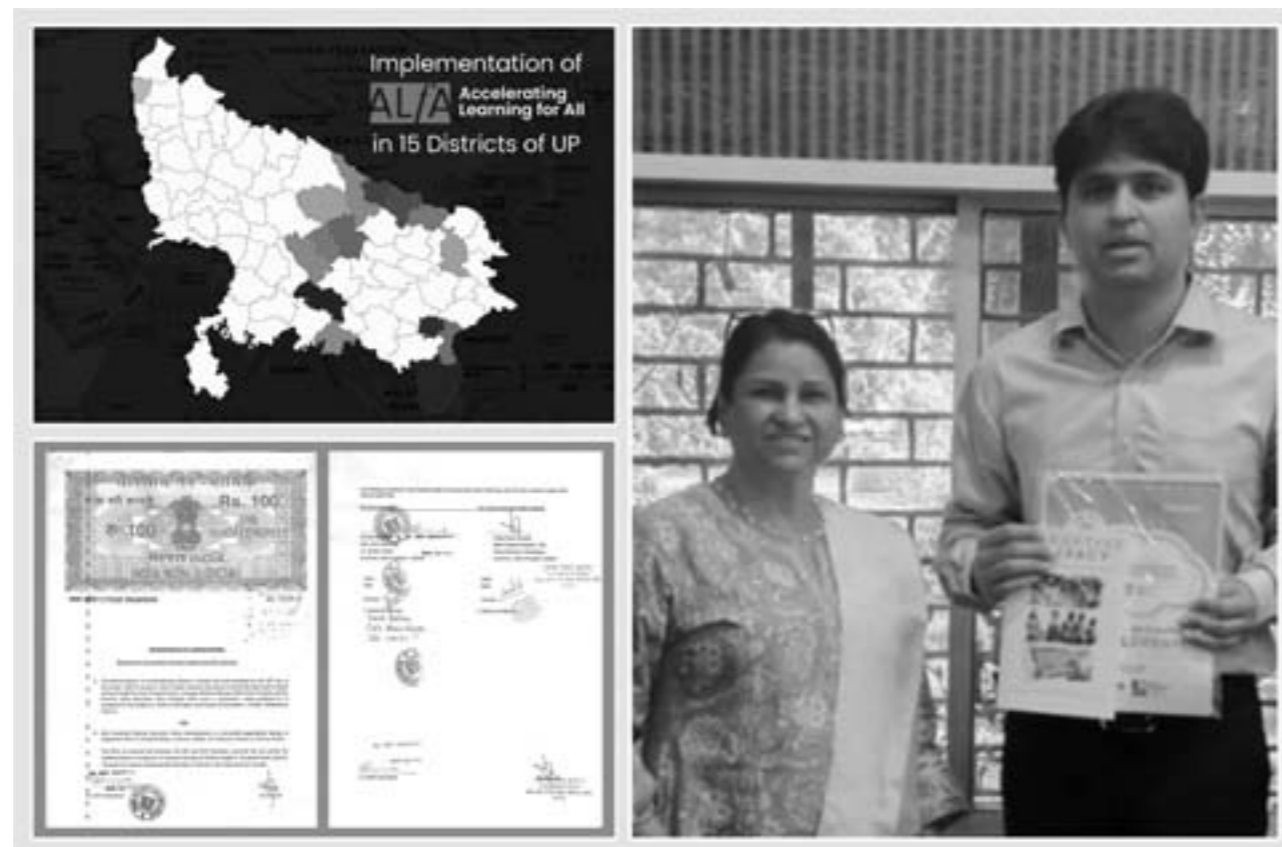
⁶Bright Hub Education. 2008. *The Pros and Cons of Ability Grouping*. <https://www.brighthouseeducation.com/classroom-management/19620-pros-and-cons-of-ability-grouping/>

⁷Hattie, John. 2018. *Visible Learning*. <https://visible-learning.org/hattie-ranking-influences-effect-sizes-learning-achievement/>

The Secretary, MOE, invited DEVI Sansthan in 2022 to work on FLN in two of India's Low-Performing Districts: Sambalpur in Odisha and Shamli in Uttar Pradesh. The results from the field were so compelling that after 30-school-days, the DM Shamli asked DEVI to expand its work from 20 to 290 schools (80 of these in the control group). Within 5 months of starting implementation, DEVI Sansthan received an MOU from office of the Director-General for School Education to work in 15 of the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh, in some 3000 schools.

In this unique approach called ALfA—Accelerating Learning for all, the children work in pairs as the entire modality for learning. They take turns to ask each other questions, decode and blend sounds to make words from the very first lesson. There is no need to learn the letters of the alphabet first – this saves a year or more. In this process, they learn 10 letters a day instead of 1 letter a week. In ten to fifteen days, the children not only master the letters in this upside-down manner and by working in pairs on their own, they also read some 400 words.

The lessons unfold easily for the children as the pedagogy is based entirely on going from known to unknown. Teachers do not need to interfere, teach, or facilitate. They need to demonstrate



Signing of MOU with Shri Vijay Kiran Anand, Director-General for School Education, UP in November 2022 to work in 15 districts of UP.

the lesson and what the children are expected to do. They prepare the environment and motivate. They act as 'galvanisers' to a pair-led discovery process. Children use visuals from their daily life

as provided in the modules of the ALfA booklets like batak (known) and derive its first sound /b/ (also known). They then blend first sounds of two or more objects to make words from day one. It

is interesting to note as our research shows: The children begin to associate with the unknown sound symbols very quickly.

In numeracy, ALfA adopts a concrete-to-abstract approach: children use manipulables like ice-cream sticks and matchsticks. They make or bring their own counters: leaves, pebbles, buttons, crumpled paper balls, and develop initiative, resourcefulness, and creativity.

Three Thin Booklets to FLN—that's all

There are three thin booklets that enable the children to quickly acquire the FLN skills: Reading (28 pages), Writing (12 pages) and Numeracy (28 pages).

The lessons are presented in half or one-page modules that are visual and easy for the children to understand by themselves. Teachers use the prompts provided at the bottom of each module to demonstrate the tasks for the pairs. Learning explodes. Children make questions for each other, and learn crucial critical thinking skills and creativity. They write more than in the traditional system. A starting point to making questions is given in the prompts. Teachers learn valuable skills on the job and learn-by-implementing change. Children learn all 6C skills by design.



It is a winning proposition when the booklets are thin. The children ask, "Is this all? We can do these in no time!" Pink book is for reading, blue for writing and green for numeracy.

Children enjoy taking responsibility for each other's learning. One makes a question, the other answers, then they reverse roles. There is random pairing, not pairing by performance level, nor grouping by ability. Children change pairs every day to learn the 6Cs.



The ALfA process is not only more enjoyable but learning also explodes. Primary-aged children can now learn basic FLN skills in just 90 working days on average. This is the kind of speed that will ensure every child in India and worldwide is reading, writing and doing arithmetic above grade level – within weeks and months, not years.

Speed Matters Most

One wonderful official was heard saying to one of our colleagues, “Why are you in such a hurry. We have until 2026/27!” What will happen to that child today in Grade 5 who is likely to drop out in Grade 6 without requisite foundational skills today? We don’t only need all hands on the deck but we also need to disruptive new pedagogies that can demonstrate massive impact in a short time.

Two ‘speeds’ that matter the most are:

- The speed with which children learn the FLN skills. It cannot be three to five years to learn to read and write, for example.
- The speed with which the governments embrace the disruptive methods. Old methods that take time to deliver on FLN need to give way to the new methods in a system-wide systemic change.

It is worth quoting here at length from a World Bank report:⁸

“Without recovery measures, learning losses may grow even more after children return to school, if the curriculum and teaching do not adjust to meet students’ learning needs. As students fall further behind the curriculum, the risk grows that many will become disengaged and ultimately drop out of school... Actions that countries take in the short term—even over just the next year—could therefore make a big difference for the longer-term learning trajectory of a generation at risk. Without action, the current generation of students now risks losing \$21 trillion in lifetime earnings in present value, or the equivalent of 17 percent of today’s global GDP.”

Embracing the ‘New’

Whenever something ‘new’ comes up, the ‘experts’ dismiss it. How many innovations we use today have had their critics who dismissed them for one reason or the other?

We need to be circumspect about:

- About ‘assuming’ what will work without evidence of its efficacy
- About ‘historical’ claims without dramatic impact on learning levels
- Shunning what ‘challenges’ established practices

Instead, we need to think afresh and trial the

new, just like we embraced the mobile phone and shunned the old landline phone. Mobile phones are doing a lot more than just connecting the world, they are completely changing the fundamentals of how we live.

NGOs need the opportunity to scale-up idea-in-action that are supported by evidence. A better enabling environment will truly help, for example, removal of overlapping teacher mandates, and a clearer path to scaling up those ideas that work at a district or wider level. Though they can leverage change, act as catalyst, or knowledge partners, NGOs cannot create the volume of change that a system-wide approach can create. Even the biggest NGOs in India continue to labour away as they have done for years and decades.

We need widespread change today by the acceleration of disruptive approaches to education’s transformation and measure 10x impact at the system-wide level, not 10%.

⁸World Bank. 2022. *The State of Learning Poverty: 2022 Update*. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/e52f55322528903b27f1b7e61238e416-0200022022/original/Learning-poverty-report-2022-06-21-final-V7-0-conferenceEdition.pdf>

The ALfA Program is

- **Swift and Effective**—2 periods a day for 45 school days (<9% of a year’s academic time)
- **Zero to Low cost**—Online version is free, printed version is low-cost (see Special Features below)
- **Quickly replicable in a new language**—takes just a month (currently available in 14 Indian and 15 International languages)
- **Expanding quickly**—from 20 schools to 290 schools in 1 district, to 3000 schools in 15 districts within 5 months of starting the program in UP

It took 8 years of trial and error to come with ALfA’s disruptive pedagogy by working in the slums and villages of Lucknow, leading to its first implementation in government schools by governments own teachers in 2022.

ALfA addresses:

- Gender equality
- Climate Change

ALfA’s Special Features are:

- Three very thin booklets 28-12-28 pages for FLN—reduces impact on climate
- Two children share the same set—halves the number of booklets required
- Schools keep the booklets—used for two or more years if maintained
- Workbooks are not required—saves tons of paper year after year
- Hands-on learning materials use recycled materials like newspaper, fallen leaves, beans, ice cream sticks—no plastic materials



Children learning FLN the ALfA Way in the Low Performing District of Sambalpur in Odisha.



These three thin booklets have the potential to make India literate and numerate in months, not years.



Two children share one book between them. Once they have understood their task is, they set aside the book and carry on with the learning with each other, taking turns to learn-by-doing.

Calls to Action

It is time to shift the focus towards outcomes – ensuring that all children learn the foundational skills – and help teachers adopt innovative approaches that accelerate learning for all. The program is available in 14 Indian and another 15 International languages including Swahili, French, Arabic and Spanish. The ALfA Toolkits can be replicated into any language within a month. We invite governments at all levels to implement:

Call to Action 1:

“Beyond-FLN-in-45-Days” Challenge

Using the 45*45 approach to ALfA’s implementation below, government schools have been going beyond NIPUN goals in 45-school-days for Kindergarten (Balvatika) to Grade 5. In another 45-school-days, the children have completed their textbooks.

- **45 minutes per day:** Spend just one period a day on either of literacy and numeracy, or two periods a day for both literacy and numeracy
- **45 instructional days:** Implement for 45 instructional days (with training and pre-test prior to implementation and a post-test after 45 days)

This may be implemented in a smaller or larger geography, at district levels, or as system-wide systemic reform at the State level. In UP, for

example, we grew in less than 5 months from 10 implementation + 10 control schools in mid-August to 290 (210+80) schools by 10 October, and from 290 schools in 1 district to an MOU with UP to work in 3000 schools in 15 districts by 20 November. DEVI already began with its 45-Day Challenge in three of the 15 districts of UP allocated to it, starting with training on 23 and 24 January 2023 near the end of the school year. The stakes in implementing ALfA are low. Two periods per day for 45 days represents just 9% of a year’s academic time (2 periods per day out of 6, 45 days out of 180). This minimal time investment can leverage the remaining 90% plus of learning at any level of implementation. In another 45 days, and often in less time, the children complete with greater understanding their own textbooks. They work in pairs and make questions for each other. They learn the 6C skills of the 21st Century: Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Character and Citizenship.

In another 45 days after ALfA’s implementation in Shamli, for example, not only did attendance improve, but many teachers also completed their entire year’s coursework over the next 45 days—in 90-school-days, or half the time they would have taken over a year (*Watch video ‘Beyond NIPUN Goals in 45 Days’ and other evidence and testimonies on www.YouTube.com/links*).

Call to Action 2:

Massive Open Online Training—MOOT

*3957 government teachers of Balvatika to Grade 5 being trained by DEVI Sansthan to carry out one-of-its-kind door-to-door literacy survey of 396,000 households covering 1.5 million 6–60-year-olds in 2015. This led to mainstreaming of 10,000 children, publishing of two policy reports and a research article in *Illiteracy Inequalities in Economic and Political Weekly of India**

Tom Delaney, DEVI Volunteer and Trainer, fielding questions from the trainees at the two-day teacher empowerment of teachers from three districts of UP 23-24 January, 2023.





It's literacy hands-on learning-by-doing. Teachers were engaged and empowered by the recent most training in January 2023. Immediately following the training, most of them have started to work with ALfA in their classes from the next day onwards.

Transforming teacher belief and practice are both important. DEVI Sansthan has developed a one-day free online training program for the training of the nation's teachers on a massive scale, and also teachers from across the world.

DEVI Sansthan has launched Massive Open

Online Training in 2023. An open online course was provided to 1500 school heads, MOE staff and teachers of the Maldives at the end of September 2022 as a pre-cursor to the MOOT launch in 2023. We also trained 1200 teachers of three districts in UP on 23 and 24 January, 2023, to develop a large-scale model of teaching. Our

First MOOT will be launched in February 2023.

Besides MOOT, a MOOC—Massive Open Online Course for teachers is underway for learning in asynchronous mode in their own time. We are seeking partners for this development.



Honouring of Shri Ravindra Kumar Baliyan, Headmaster, PS Kairi, Shamli, and Shri Arvind Kumar Baliyan, Teacher, Grade 2, also from PS Kairi by Shri Alok Ranjan, Former Chief Secretary, Uttar Pradesh, 24 January 2023.



A 78-member delegation of school heads and MOE staff from the Republic of Maldives in India studying the ALfA pedagogy hands-on, September 2022.

Training methodology includes empowerment in new and advanced processes of ALfA FLN implementation that the teachers can put to use immediately. It will empower teachers with a free online dashboard along with resources and processes they can use right-away to improve FLN levels.

DEVI Sansthan invites all governments to sign up for the free MOOT:

- a) All teachers of Balvatika to Grade 5 at government and budget private schools
- b) Principals and School Heads
- c) Government Middle-Level Managers like BSAs, SRGs, DCs, ARPs, BEOs, BRCCs, and others

India can reach NIPUN goals within 2023. Reach out today to work together for a fully literate India within months, not years. We look forward to our partnership.

Dr Sunita Gandhi

Founder-CEO, DEVI Sansthan, India
Former Economist, The World Bank, USA
PhD (Physics), Cambridge University, UK
Chief Academic Advisor, City Montessori School
(world's largest school)

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About DEVI Sansthan

DEVI Sansthan, based in Lucknow, UP, works on FLN both nationally and internationally. DEVI started its work on literacy in 2014 by creating its first Global Dream Toolkit which allowed a volunteer student as young as ten, to adopt a learner of any age and teach them to read within a month. Over 500,000 student volunteers from across India used the toolkits to teach someone (in 13 Indian languages before the Covid). During the Covid years, DEVI developed two important Ed-Tech solutions—the Pragati and the Literacy Now Apps.

In India, since 2022 DEVI Sansthan has been working with government schools in UP, Odisha, and Mizoram, and on women and adult literacy with foundations in West Bengal and UP.

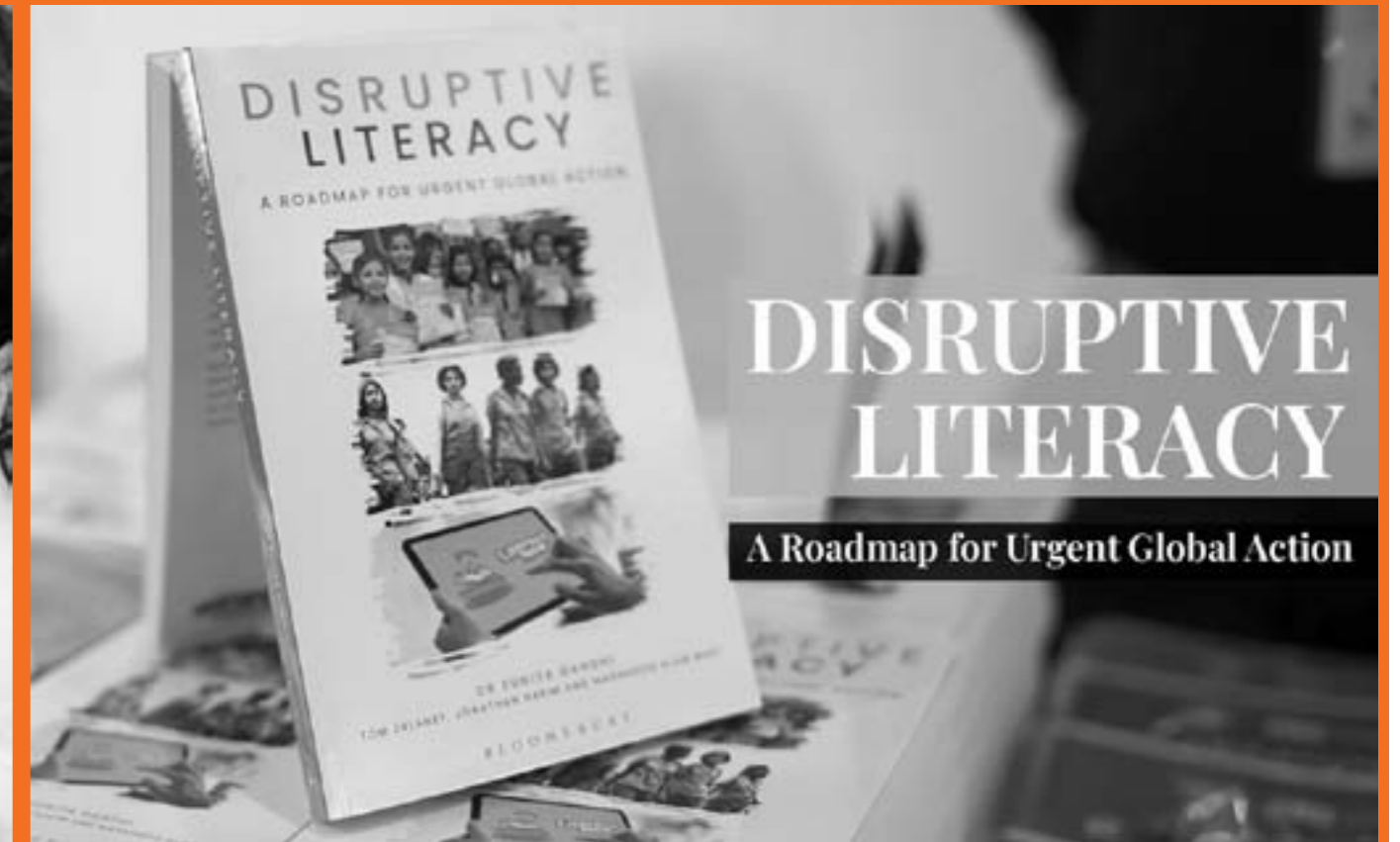
Internationally, DEVI has been working since 2022 at FLN implementation system-wide national level in the Maldives, and at pilot levels in several countries.

In July 2022, DEVI Sansthan held a Synergy Summit in Delhi for Stakeholders in FLN.

www.dignityeducation.org/links
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info@dignityeducation.org



A private school student volunteer (on the right) teaching a child from a nearby slum. Children have been provided uniforms and lunch. They are learning literacy skills using the mobile app supported by SBI Foundation.



DISRUPTIVE LITERACY

A Roadmap for Urgent Global Action

DEVI Founder and members also launched: Disruptive Literacy: A Roadmap for Urgent Global Action, published by Bloomsbury, India, July 2022.



Literacy is one of the best social investments, yet has often been neglected in CSR spending. The Covid crisis has greatly damaged our education system – we urgently need to build back better with innovative approaches to literacy which leave no one behind.

WHY INVESTING IN FLN SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED?

Tom Delaney

When we invest our money in a bank, we are happy to receive a 5% interest rate. Buy shares, and we might be lucky to receive a 10% plus return. But for every rupee

spent on literacy, society reaps a 700% return!¹

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) is one of the best social investments. Yet, it has often been neglected in CSR, national, and international

funding. The Covid crisis has greatly damaged our education system—we urgently need to build back better with innovative approaches to funding literacy which fill the learning gaps quickly.

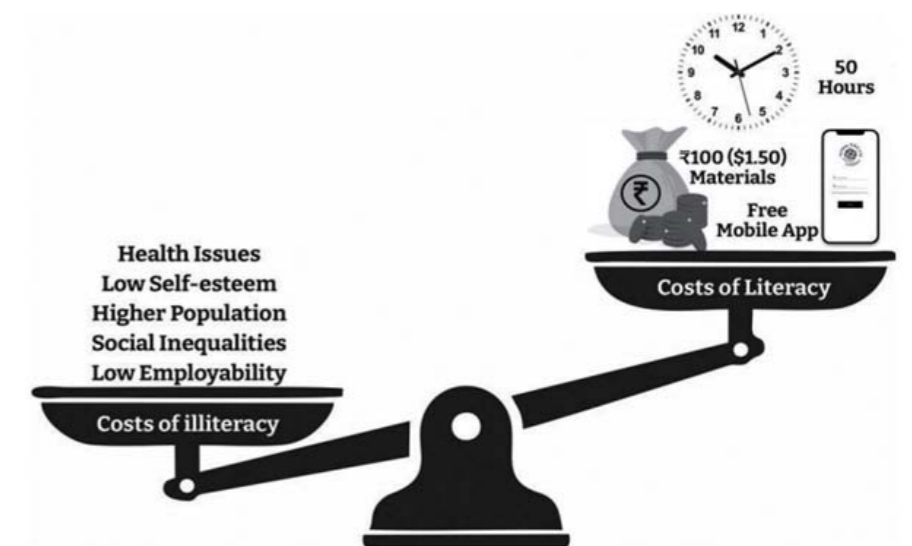
Children reading newspapers after just 30 instructional days using ALfA reverse methodology that Accelerates Learning for All.



The ability to read and write is a crucial determinant of a child’s future, in much the same way the literacy rate of a nation is a vital indicator of its prospects. Children who lack the foundational skills to read, write and do basic arithmetic, may well spend the rest of their lives in poverty. The cost of becoming literate is minimal, yet the cost of remaining illiterate is huge.²

Meanwhile, new pedagogy and technology are enabling low-cost scalable literacy programs. Improved techniques are bringing the cost of making someone literate down. We have no excuse for why hundreds of millions of fellow Indians remain unable to read and write. Just as prevention is much cheaper than cure in medicine, so too avoiding the costs of illiteracy. Investing in literacy is both a social responsibility and a smart move economically.

The costs of illiteracy are large and growing as the world becomes increasingly digitized and information-rich, leaving those who can’t access this information even further behind. Ask a person who is illiterate about their daily life and you’ll soon understand the huge inconveniences and inefficiencies they face—from not being able to read a bus sign to being unable to decipher a medicine label, from getting the wrong change to lacking the confidence to speak up.



¹Literacy Partners, New York

²Watkins, Kevin. 2021. *If Education is Such a Great Investment, it Deserves Serious International Backing.* The Guardian. <https://bit.ly/3nUX4Xj>

Student volunteers using the free Literacy Now App to teach learners from a nearby slum. Supported by SBI Foundation.



The importance of literacy has long been neglected until recently, and indeed India has more people who are illiterate than the next remaining top 10 countries globally added together! Further, the Covid crisis has thrown education systems worldwide into disarray. According to a recent UNESCO report, 70% of 10-year-olds in low- and middle-income countries post-Covid cannot read or understand a simple text, up from 53% pre-Covid.³ The scale of education loss is ‘nearly insurmountable’.

In the face of this massive challenge, we need a society-wide mobilization to ensure all children are in school and they are learning well. Governments bear the primary responsibility. However, CSR and philanthropic foundations also have a key role to play. CSR can take greater risks and invest in educational innovations and start-ups in a way that may be difficult for governments to do. Even a relatively small amount invested in the right way can catalyze a huge transformation.

Accelerating Learning for All: A disruptive new pedagogy to make India and the world literate

Accelerating Learning for All (ALfA) enables Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) to be taught in just 90 instructional days (or some 30-50 instructional hours). Contrast this with 5 years of schooling even after which half the children in Grade 5 in pre-Covid India lacked these



Learning-by-doing in M3M Foundation supported ALfA program in LPD Shamli, UP.

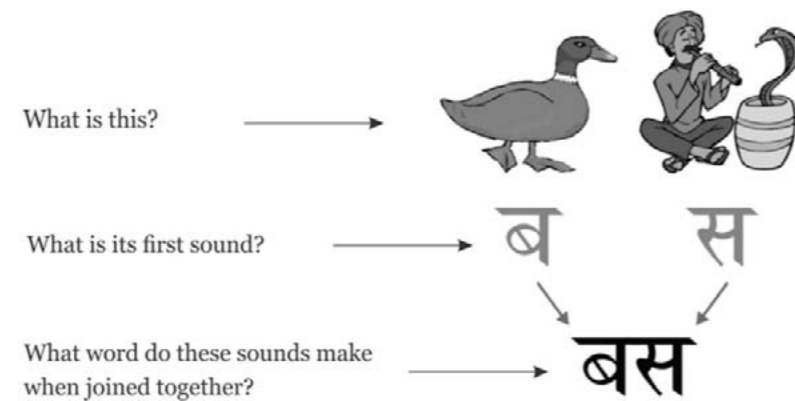


Slum-based Global Dreamshaala, community-based schools supported by SBI Life.

foundational skills.

Most learners using ALfA can begin to read newspapers within 30 days starting with zero knowledge of the letters. It works through the power of a reverse methodology, peer learning, students making questions for each other, and going from known

to the unknown. The short, visual modules enable children and adults alike to learn swiftly, building off existing knowledge of their environment. Pair learning enables children to learn crucial 6Cs of the 21st Century: Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Character and Citizenship.



³Accelerating Learning for All: A disruptive new pedagogy to make India and the world literate



FLN and Nutrition training through Global Dream for women in West Bengal.

I can personally testify to the power of this literacy program and its Global Dream Disruptive FLN Toolkits, as I've used these myself to teach over 100 children and adults in the slums of Lucknow. Some were child labourers, locked out of the education system by their desperate poverty. Many others were in school, but had been unable to learn even basic literacy there. I've witnessed kids learning more in 5 weeks with ALfA than they have in 5 years at school.

It's not just me who's been won over by ALfA pedagogy embodied in the Global Dream Toolkits. These innovative literacy materials were first tried by the children of City International and City Montessori Schools, Lucknow; as part of the Each One Teach One Campaign. Between 2014 and 2019, the campaign was adopted by some 500,000 school and college students across several cities in India (working with different language versions

of the Global Dream Toolkits). The student volunteers adopted a learner—a maid, a family member, a slum-dweller, a child or an adult—and taught them the foundational skills.

During the Covid period, we decided to develop online tools. Literacy Now app presents further new possibilities at zero cost. We are grateful for the support of SBI Foundation who helped us convert our literacy content into digital format and develop a free-to-use app, Literacy Now (learn.literacynow.app). The app was launched in May 2022 and

currently has 30,000 student volunteers. The app needs further support for numeracy and other developments to make it an increasingly more powerful tool to scale-up literacy programs across India and worldwide.

Together with my colleagues and ALfA founder, Dr Sunita Gandhi, a former World Bank Economist who returned to India to help improve the quality of education—we've chronicled the story of this remarkable program in *Disruptive Literacy: A Roadmap for Urgent Global Action* (Bloomsbury, July 2022).



College students run a community literacy class in the outskirts of Lucknow.

Adult Learners in Hardoi learning from Global Dream Toolkits. DEVI Sansthan as Training and Knowledge Partner for HCL Foundation

“Dr. Sunita Gandhi’s 30-hour literacy and numeracy model is highly innovative, and highly scalable, that can benefit school children, out of school children and illiterate adults.”

- Honorable Rajnath Singh
Defense Minister
Government of India

Accelerating Learning for All in Schools

Most recently, DEVI Sansthan has been asked by the Ministry of Education to help improve the literacy and numeracy levels of primary grades 1 through 5 in two of the ten ‘low-performing districts (LPDs), and to showcase results by the next National Achievement Survey in March 2023. We immediately began to raise funds.

We are extremely grateful to Dr. Payal Kanodia, Trustee M3M Foundation for her quick decision to partner with us in LPD Shamli, Uttar Pradesh. This has enabled us to get started instantly, and already realize some extremely encouraging results. In merely 30 instructional days, many children of Shamli as young as Grade 1 are reading with



Teachers of Shamli learn about the ALfA Pedagogy in the same paired setting as they will create in their classrooms. Training and program supported by M3M Foundation.

fluency and understanding their own textbooks. Many are reading the difficult language of the newspapers. Children are understanding the numeracy concepts by using locally available materials at zero or near zero costs—exceeding class level

Accelerating Learning for All (ALfA) enables Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) to be taught in just 90 instructional days (or some 30-50 instructional hours).

Disruptive Literacy, A Roadmap for Urgent Global Action, Bloomsbury 2022.



expectations in this very short time. You may view the results on www.dignityeducation.org/links.

We are still looking for partners for the other LPD allocated to us—Sambalpur, Odisha. We know we can help turn around these low-performing districts quickly, providing we can raise the crucial funds.

Accelerating Learning for All (ALfA) programs are now available in 25 Indian and International languages with more in the replication process. This is allowing us to begin making impact worldwide. The ALfA program has been adopted for nationwide implementation in the Republic of Maldives, with the World Bank as partner. Many other international partners and countries are now in the pipeline to collaborate towards the SDG 4 of learning for all.

Filling the colossal gap cannot wait another year or years, or we will lose tens of millions more to illiteracy. A disruptive approach that is swift and effective, and that can be easily understood by the volunteers and teachers alike, is the need of the hour. If you would like to review the evidence for the ALfA program, or reach out to us to partner together, please visit www.dignityeducation.org/links and www.dignityeducation.org.

Tom Delaney (tom@dignityeducation.org) is an Australian citizen but has been living in India many years. He is a volunteer literacy teacher and trainer with DEVI Sansthan.

A paradigm shift in FLN

ALFA— Accelerating learning for all, is a research-driven, ground-breaking pedagogy that ensures FLN levels are reached within weeks and months, and not years

The Government has its hands full. Challenging the status quo is a daunting task for anyone sitting in the Ministry of Education. It is kudos to the government that the last few years have been the most proactive for the education sector in India. For the first time in 34 years, there is a forward-looking agenda, and a new, progressive education policy, with no mingling of words. It is clear in its direction for education, and comprehensive in the coverage. It has led to new vocabulary and implementation modalities such as flip learning, and project-based learning. It has led to debates and discussions across the nation that have never occurred in the past, for as long as we know. These discourses have been re-invigorating, and reflect a genuine interest by the education community to embrace change. The new education policy 2020

With ALFA methodology 5 year olds are reading newspapers fluently in both Hindi and English.



is all-inclusive and touches upon the crucial aspects of education, including the back-end to which every educator plays the tune – assessments. Making assessments holistic presents the possibility of a far broader education than we have conceptualised in the past. Yet, many new policy reforms go to waste when not followed by implementation. The question

remains how can education go from its current state of inflexibility, tardiness, lack of motivation, past precedence, and old practices to a swift, fresh and creative approach.

Critical Issues

There are two critical issues at hand: (a) Bridging the gap in primary education, and (b)

Rethinking learning. In the aftermath of COVID, many children have left school, some permanently. Girls, especially adolescent girls, are most affected. These children are unlikely to return to school unless something is done immediately. Before the COVID, too, we had a learning problem. Now the problem is even bigger. In low- and middle-income countries, UNICEF reports “learning losses due to school closures have left up to 70 per cent of 10-year-olds unable to read or understand a simple text, up from 53 per cent pre-pandemic.”¹

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) is the Sustainable Development Goal 4 of the United Nations. India’s NEP states: “The highest priority of the education system will be to achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary school by 2025. The rest of this Policy will become relevant for our students only if this most basic learning requirement (i.e., reading, writing, and arithmetic at the foundational level) is first achieved.” Additionally, the NIPUN Bharat Mission launched in July 2021 aims to provide universal proficiency in foundational literacy and numeracy for every child by 2026-27. These are candid and clear goals.

The need for disruptive solutions, NOW!

The need is now. One more year can add to the disaster facing education post-Covid. If typical systems of pre-COVID could

not deliver on the promise of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in three years of schooling pre-Covid for a vast number of children, how can we expect a miraculous outcome within this year without transformational practice post-Covid.

Many of the children sitting in Grade 3 and attending school for the first time, or those attending Grades 4 and 5 after nearly two years of school closures, cannot read or write, or do basic arithmetic. One more year without filling of the gaps can mean the 5th grader dropping out of school in Grade 6.

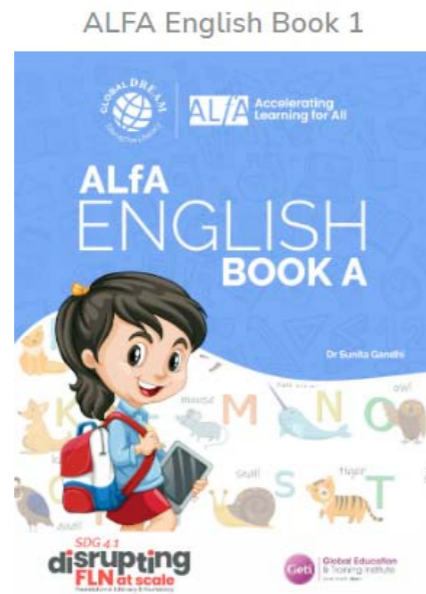
Transformational ALfA – Accelerating Learning for All

We invite the introspection and immediate trial by all potential partners.

ALfA—Accelerating learning for all, is a research-driven, ground-breaking pedagogy that ensures FLN levels are reached within weeks and months, and not years. Most children can go from ground zero to Grade 3 level proficiency in a language and numeracy within 90 days, followed by further practice of reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and mathematics for the rest of the academic year. The lessons can begin any time of the year and for children of all ages, and adults.

ALfA mainstreams paired learning, a process that is joyful, engaging and effective. ALfA

Accelerating Learning for All or ALfA modules.



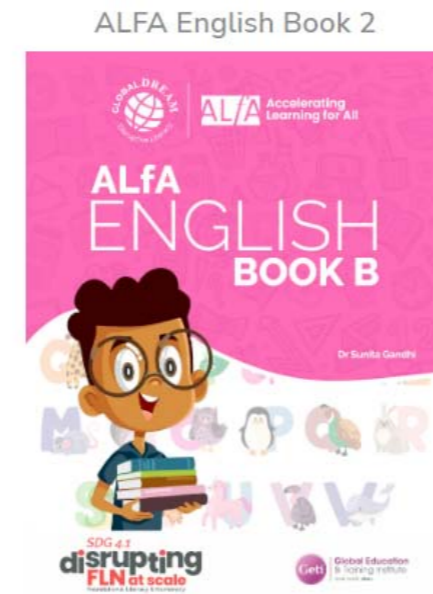
mainstreams 21st century skills of collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, character, and citizenship in the very fabric of the teaching-learning process itself. The teachers do not need extensive training in ALfA methods since the processes are clearly spelled out through ALfA prompts.

The teacher's roles change dramatically. As enablers, their job is to pair up children, read out the prompts, and motivate every child. ALfA prompts are the learning-by-doing empowerment that teachers never had. Implementing ALfA changes beliefs and practice, the most important transformation that education needs.

Transformation versus incremental change

Where is the paradigm shift in education?

ALfA is not to be taken as incremental change to an existing



system of education. Rather, it is transformative change, much like the smart phone is to the landline phone (anyone remember those?). No matter how much we keep fixing the old landline phone, it can never become the smart phone. Even the first bulky versions of these mobiles were distinct technology that

represented a paradigm shift to the old landline phone. The smart phone technology required different thinking and design. It required new guiding principles, and vastly newways of thinking – same with ALfA. It renders the old mobile technology of education redundant.

ALfA is a leap of faith. Just like the old grandmother who refuses to accept the mobile phone, as she is quite satisfied with her landline phone. It is hard to shed the past, partly because we survived using it. It served us good, and we understand it so well. We keep improving the old landline phone with incremental changes, just like we do in education, but the old landline phone will never transform into the new smart phone. We need completely new guiding principles as the two technologies are vastly different, and often opposed.



Paired learning is a regular activity that children practice in DEVI school.

Teachers were trained in Mizoram to take up FLN challenge using the Global Dream Toolkits.





Excited students in Shamli (UP) where the FLN program is all set to begin.

race to nowhere.

In 2001, I got a perfect laboratory in Iceland when I won the bid to run Iceland's first two charter schools. I was free to do whatever I wanted. My first research question was: Can every child sitting in a classroom maximize their learning potential and excel, or is this an oxymoron?

We gave every child a half-yearly test at the beginning of the year. This led to two major insights:

1. Children already know just over 50% of what they need to learn before we begin to teach them. Some children could solve almost everything, and did not need to study anything at all for that grade.
2. The year-on-year learning was very low, so by the end of grade 8, children did not know much more than grade 7.
3. When I implemented the same idea in India by giving the same exact test in English to the children of Grades 5, 6, 7 and 8. Guess what you might expect to be the results? Many children of grade 5 did better than children of grade 8, and the results were not at all what we expected, a natural progression of performance from grade to grade! This led to the conclusion that class-wise sitting of children is insane. The research in Iceland, India and the UK got published in 2017 in the UK: Ipsative Assessment and Personal Learning Gain – available for download on the net by Springer, UK.

Give new a try

The only way to change precedence is to give new a try, like the old grandmother who finally was coaxed into trying out the smart mobile. Now she is the one to explain its benefits better than we could have ever done with all our logic and might before she gave the new a try.

Implementing ALfA changes our beliefs dramatically about children's capacity to learn quickly. It puts us in a new plane of thinking about education. Once the paradigm shift takes place, we begin to see reality from a new vantage point. With each implementation of the new, we begin to think of deeper ways to engage with it, and we begin to improve it, year after year, just like new versions of the smart phone each year. Incremental change always follows transformational change.

There are no halfway houses between the old and the new. Paradigm shift is not a series of incremental changes. Improvement to the established ways is like adding a dash of cooperative learning to a system

that is designed for competition. It produces only incremental change at best. It does not lead to the profound change we are now seeking from an education in the 21st century.

We need change at the core, not at the margins of education. This is possible only when we go back to the drawing board and think afresh around new guiding principles such as collaboration over competition. What will an education based on collaboration look like? What does competing with self over competing with others look and feel like in a classroom? How can this be mainstreamed?

How we came to ALfA

Change comes from dissatisfaction. The program creator, Dr.Sunita Gandhi says: I have been very circumspect about education, as many of us are. Education from the past is not bringing out the best in all our children. We expect the normal distribution curve in every class with some children excelling, and some lagging behind. Everybody is stressed from teachers to the children, to us managers. It is a

These thin, swift and effective toolkits can actually change one's life for better.

We do not teach the letters. Children go straight to decoding and blending complete words from the first lesson. In fifteen days of just 15-20 minute sessions per day, they finish learning the letters of the alphabet in their languages, which is typically a year-long process in most schools.

After coming back to India, I took up new research work, this time on the literacy of children and adults. The slums provided the best insights. Given that the children and adults already knew their language, I wondered why it takes 3 years to teach them to read with matras in schools, and 6 months or more for an adult to learn to read. My research question was: Can a completely illiterate person learn to read a newspaper in just one month, or is this an oxymoron?

I converted my office into a literacy laboratory. This led to



the creation of Global Dream Literacy Toolkits with two thin booklets in Hindi and one for numeracy. These incorporate a reverse methodology and the ALfA process of learning. We do not teach the letters. Children go straight to decoding and blending complete words from the first lesson. In fifteen days of just 15-20 minute sessions per day, they finish learning the letters of the alphabet in their languages, which is typically a year-long process in most schools.

Multiplying Impact

The Global Dream Toolkits are available in 15 Indian languages and in another 14 international languages. They are easy to replicate in any language within a month.

ALfA has been taken up by some of the Indian States and Aspirational Districts recently, and has signed up the Republic of Maldives for a nationwide implementation at its 215 government schools. In many countries, ALfA is at various levels of implementation, for example, at Literacy Chicago and two

districts of California, USA, and in schools in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Guyana, Liberia, and Afghanistan.

Results from ALfA

Children of ages 5 to 7 are learning to read newspapers in three months. Don't believe us till you watch the evidence and news media coverage.²

We invite your participation because learning cannot wait for another year. Disrupting the status quo is required now, and this is not possible by making changes to an existing system. ALfA is the smart phone of education every child deserves.

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/covid19-scale-education-loss-nearly-insurmountable-warns-unicef>

² www.dignityeducation.org

DEVI Sansthan (Dignity Education Vision International) is a non-profit organisation founded in Lucknow, India. DEVI's vision is to achieve universal Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) for all children and adults.

Setting the tone for the Synergy Summit, Dr Sunita Gandhi, Convenor, Former Economist, The World Bank, and Founder, DEVI Sansthan: Dignity, Education, Vision International.



Synergy: Accelerating Learning for All

Synergy Summit brings together leading educational thinkers and practitioners to forge a path towards universal foundational literacy and numeracy

There is a global literacy and numeracy crisis. An estimated 70% of the world's 10-year-olds post-COVID cannot read, write or do basic arithmetic – up from 53% pre-pandemic.¹ Functional Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) has been a perennial problem in education, and there seems to be no end in sight.

Education as we know it has failed to provide foundational literacy and numeracy to the vast majority of children.

The National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat) was launched in 2021 “to ensure that every child in India gains foundational numeracy and literacy by the end of Grade 3.”²

We have a long way to go to if we are to achieve these ambitious goals by or before 2026-27.

“India’s learning crisis is not news. The National Achievement Survey of 2017 tells us that 1 in 3 students in Grade 3 cannot read small text with comprehension and that 1 in 2 students in Grade 3 cannot use math to solve daily life problems. The findings from the 2018 ASER report are even more stark - only 50% of children in Grade 5 in rural India could read a Grade 2 level text, and only 28% of children in Grade 5 could solve a division problem.”³

If this is the report card on our education after 5 years of schooling before the COVID, how will this change post-COVID? What new directions are we taking? How are we filling the 70% gap that now exists? How fast are we filling this gap? What new efforts since schools re-opened are bridging these gaps most effectively? What can we learn from these efforts? How can we scale up these efforts?

These are some of the questions

discussed during the first SYNERGY SUMMIT held at the India International Center in New Delhi on July 11 & 12. The theme of the conference could not have been more appropriate and timely, ‘A Paradigm Shift in FLN: Making India Literate in Months, Not Years’.

The Synergy Summit in New Delhi saw lively discussions among the stakeholders: government officials, CSR heads, NGO leaders, school and university heads. The consensus was unanimous. If we are to accelerate towards literacy for all, and bridge the huge literacy gaps exacerbated by the pandemic, we need a paradigm shift. This entails wholesale systemic reform – new leadership and mission-mindedness, new pedagogy & curriculum, new governance & accountability structures. Above all, we need to synergize, bringing together diverse stakeholders to act together in a mass movement for literacy.



Participants at the most strategic summit on FLN that really brought together different stakeholders and educational thinkers on one platform to speak on the literacy crisis.

¹UNICEF 2022; World Bank 2019

²NEP 2020

³ASER 2019 ‘Early Years’

The four **A C T S** of SYNERGY SUMMIT are:



The four ACTS of the Synergy Summit

The four ACTS of the Synergy Summit are: **A—Act, C—Commit, T—Transform, S—Share.**

A—ACT

Act swiftly, before a generation is lost to illiteracy

The government through its highly proactive policies NEP 2020 and NIPUN Bharat, has placed the highest importance of India’s education on Foundational Literacy & Numeracy. Many new and innovative efforts have begun Pan-India as a result. The directions are clear. For the first time, there is new energy in the education sector to speed up providing of FLN skills to all primary aged children.

Yet FLN, a perennial problem, is hard to solve.

We need all minds together, and all hands on the deck. The participants of the Synergy Summit recognized the need for bringing all segments of society to work together in greater synergy. The Synergy Summit also called for urgent action on all fronts: From Policy to Curriculum. It further called for more financial resources to pay for such effective measures as Conditional Cash Transfers and PPP, to boost attendance and to bring in greater innovation and a new accountability. Prevention is much cheaper than cure – it is far better to ensure a child remains in school and becomes literate than to cope with the fallout of illiteracy.

C—COMMIT

Commit to mobilize all stakeholders to take all possible actions for universal FLN

To mobilise all stakeholders for action, we need clear statements of commitment. A key goal of the Synergy Summit was to invite commitments towards the common goal of universal literacy by representatives of key stakeholder groups.

commitment to ‘find a solution’. (View on QR Code).



Union Defense Minister Shri Rajnath Singh in a moving video message highlighted the importance of greater

Shri Rajnath Singh said: “If India has to grow in terms of knowledge economy and if it wants to create a knowledge

society, then foundation literacy will be its first and most necessary step. If we look at the actual situation of our country, even after 75 years of our independence, due to various reasons, we have not been able to reach an ideal position in foundational literacy. There is an urgent need to figure out the problems and find a solution. In this direction, I would like to congratulate Ms. Sunita Gandhi

Lighting the Lamp of Learning at the Synergy Summit.



for her Accelerating Learning for All Program.”

The Synergy Summit was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, Dr. Abdulla Rasheed Ahmed, Minister of State for Education, Republic of Maldives. He argued that literacy and numeracy is the foundation not just of education, but also of life itself. He announced his commitment to bring FLN to all children in the Republic of Maldives by signing of an MOU between Ministry of Education, Republic of Maldives, and DEVI Sansthan for the implementation of Global Dream Accelerating Literacy for All (ALfA) program at the level of a nation at all its schools.

There were many country

representatives who attended the Summit. These have led to new discussions for the adoption of ALfA in seven other countries. DEVI Sansthan is now working across India and in several countries getting organizations to adopt a 90-Day FLN challenge, or take up system-wide implementation of ALfA—Accelerating Learning for All. This transformative pedagogy is making a huge impact as it is swift, effective, low or zero cost.

DEVI Sansthan and M3M Foundation signed an MOU for the implementation and advancement of FLN in Shamli district of Uttar Pradesh. Shamli is one of the ten Low-Performing Districts of India. Follow-on discussions have begun with

many corporates to support two LPDs, Shamli in UP, and Sambalpur in Odisha allocated to DEVI Sansthan and slated for turn-around by the office of the Secretary, Ministry of Education, India. Actions which have already begun in these two districts but they still need to be fully funded. Time is not on our side if we are to “transform the monotonous education system into an integrated, enjoyable, all-inclusive and engaging one”.⁴

Along with government representatives, numerous NGOs present also offered their commitments towards the cause. These are leading to new partnerships in India and across the world.

T—TRANSFORM

Transform practice

Our education system doesn't just need a fresh coat of paint, but rather, a complete transformation. Education needs to be rethought afresh – it's time for a broad-ranging paradigm shift, from policies to pedagogies, from TLMs to training. The Accelerating Literacy for All program harnesses the power of peer learning and student-led classrooms to achieve dramatic gains.⁵ But its potential can only be truly realized in the context of wholesale systemic reform.



Trustee M3M Foundation, Dr Payal Kannodia, during her address on Day 1 of the Synergy Summit.



Minister of State for Education Maldives, Dr. Abdulla Rasheed Ahmed, travelled all the way from his country to attend the Synergy Summit.

S—SHARE

Share successes for wider adoption

To achieve scalable transformation, it is vital to spread innovative ideas and disseminate best practices. Bringing together voices from around the nation and the world, the summit enabled a new synergy of ideas, and sharing of innovative practices for immediate replication.

The summit saw the launch of the book, *Disruptive Literacy: A Roadmap for Urgent Global Action*, authored by Dr Sunita Gandhi, Tom Delaney, Jon Hakim and Mashhood Alam Bhat. Published by Bloomsbury in July 2022, the book draws from the remarkable movements around the world. It is sprinkled with stories of grassroots educational work and ideas that can immediately be put into action. *Disruptive Literacy* is an easy-to-read but hard-to-ignore manifesto that will touch your heart and inspire you to action.

The book argues for a mass movement for literacy, analyzing notable historical examples such as Cuba (1961) and Ernakulam (1989). By bringing together three key elements – mission-minded government leadership, mobilization of all sectors of society, and materials & methods that accelerate learning – it is possible to achieve tremendous literacy gains.

⁴ NIPUN BHARAT

⁵ <https://thegoodsight.org/a-paradigm-shift-in-fln/>



The book on disruptive literacy, written by Dr. Sunita Gandhi along with three other co-authors was launched in the presence of the press and public at the 1st Synergy Summit at the India International Center.



An Eminent and Diverse Group of Speakers

The Speakers at the Synergy Summit included the following:

- Minister of State for Education, Dr. Abdulla Rasheed Ahmed
- Mr Khou Zaiyaoza, Embassy of Lao PDR
- Dr Payal Kanodia, Trustee, M3M Foundation
- Ms Archana Joshi, Director, Deepak Foundation
- Mr K P Fabian, Former Indian Diplomat
- Mr Thirumala Arohi, Senior Vice President, Infosys Ltd.
- Ms Kamal Gaur, Deputy Director Programs in Education, Save the Children
- Mr Santosh Phad, Founder, Thinksharp Foundation
- Ms Anushree Mishra, Director of Programs, Plan International
- Ms Shaveta Sharma-Kukreja, CEO & MD, Central Square Foundation
- Mr Nixon Joseph, CEO, Children's Love Castles Trust, Former CEO, SBI Foundation
- Mr Vaibhav Chauhan, Project Manager, HCL Foundation
- Ms Swati Jha, Program Director, American India Foundation
- Ms Nandita Raval, Core Team Member, Piramal Foundation
- Mr Pradeep Kumar, Director, Programs & Partnerships, Worldreader
- Mr Aishwarya Mahajan, President, M3M Foundation

Organizations that were felicitated for their excellent work in FLN

- Prangan Foundation
- Global Innovative Foundation for Transforming Society
- ICFAI University
- JBS Academy
- i-4 Connect Foundation
- Little Steps Montessori School
- AROH Foundation
- HCL Foundation
- SBI Foundation



Organizations were felicitated with certificates, gifts and trophies for the FLN work they have been doing in their own domains.

Some Recommendations from the Synergy Summit

Synergy: Looking at the problem of literacy from a system lens and designing methods which focus on all stakeholders. Government, Society and Market need to come together for betterment of education. Come together,

synergize and follow each other's experiences and replicate. Scaling Up: India is a minefield of successful pilots and failed scale-ups. Solutions that address the aspects of scalability and sustainability in the long run, need to be focused on. Work on schools with higher enrolment of students and make them model schools for the remaining to follow.

Funding: The corporates can be advised to redirect a certain fixed high percentage of their CSR funds towards Foundational Literacy and Numeracy for one financial year.

Gender: Extensive behavior change awareness needs to be done for solving the gender issue. Food: A hungry child will not learn or study, which makes

nutrition as the first stepping stone towards education.

Academics: Keeping the solution simple and pragmatic. Concept clarity and understanding of the subject should be given high importance and making education enjoyable while practicing. Learning to Read and then Reading to Learn should be followed as a concept, giving

practice a higher place on the shelf.

Students: Student involvement through practical application of concepts.

Teachers: Focus on upgradation of the last person in the delivery chain: Teachers

Parents: Responsive caregiving at home, involvement of parents and home encouragement for monitoring and helping the child reach FLN level. Recommend government employees to send their own children to government schools, this may help in enhancing the quality of schools.

Technology: Technology is a very powerful tool which in a very blended manner with the teachers and school system, augment the solution for literacy.

Enrolment: Invest in bridging the learning gap due to covid for grade 3 and below and ensure all of them come back to school, focus on learning being the next step.

Children of Migrants: Children of migrant laborers should be admitted immediately to the school where they relocate on the basis of some common card or document so that his education continues uninterrupted.

Each One Teach One: Every privileged student should teach at least one underprivileged student.

Conclusion

The ability to read and write has a powerful effect on a person

– building self-confidence, improving health, enhancing productivity. Literacy is a key determinant of a nation's social, political and economic progress.

The existing education system is failing us. If we want to build a fully literate society, we need a paradigm shift to accelerate learning for all. Together we can.

DEVI Sansthan

The Synergy Summit on A Paradigm Shift in FLN was hosted by innovative NGO DEVI Sansthan, Dignity, Education, Vision International (www.dignityeducation.org, +91 740 840 6000)

DEVI Mission is to catalyse transformation of education through sharing and implementation of evidence-based disruptive processes leading to system-wide adoption.

DEVI invites all stakeholders to join hands to scale up FLN in any context or geography.



We require a significant 10-fold transformation instead of merely a 10% gradual improvement to achieve the goal of providing every child not only with the ability to read but also with all the other skills that constitute Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

Beyond 10% to 10X: The radical transformation of education



After the pandemic, some 70% of the children in the Low- and Middle-Income Countries do not have the skill to read. The problem was not much better before the Pandemic. UNICEF estimates some 57% of the 10-year-olds could not read in 2019. These children need the skill to read now, not in 5 years from now, nor by 2030 as per the targets of SDG4.

Recent developments indicate that the teachers are working hard. They are being monitored and supported more than ever before. They are also getting more training now than in the past. Teachers and the children also have access to more elaborate workbooks, storybooks, and print-rich materials than they ever had.

Children are coming to school, as indicated by the high enrollment rates, but unfortunately, they are not learning the foundational skills fast enough to close the literacy gap.

We need to ask ourselves:

Why after five years of schooling, more than half of the children in Grade 5 cannot read?

Could outdated methods of teaching and rote transactional processes be responsible for holding back our children's ability to read? There are reading wars between two predominant approaches to teaching how to read - whole language and phonics - with strong proponents of both. However, neither of these

approaches seem fast enough to reach universal literacy quickly, or we would have had a more literate world already.

NIPUN Bharat Mission or India's National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy, has set ambitious goals, to achieve universal Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) in India by 2026/27. A simple projection of the present growth rates in literacy will clearly show it is impossible to attain the FLN goals by 2026/27, or even by 2030, unless we opt for a vastly more transformative pedagogy. Our historical growth rates have been less impressive. Incremental change is not enough to close the literacy gap quickly enough. We require a significant 10-fold transformation instead of merely a 10% gradual improvement to achieve the goal of providing every child not only with the ability to read but also with all the other skills that constitute Foundational Literacy and Numeracy. Furthermore, it is imperative to provide every child with a superior education that surpasses Foundational Literacy and Numeracy. We must also strive towards achieving more ambitious objectives, such as fostering global citizenship, enhancing mental and socio-emotional strength, and nurturing a passion for climate activism in every child.

But how can we achieve all of this when so many children lack even the most basic literacy and numeracy skills? The answer is simple: we need a broader and

bolder education system that addresses multiple goals at once. As we move forward into the future, there is a growing need for a paradigm shift in education.

A radical new education needs to provide the foundational literacy and numeracy skills 10 times faster than traditional methods while also addressing other important aspects of a quality education.

This is where we need to closely examine the work of DEVI Sansthan on creating a transformative education that delivers on a broader and bolder education as above. In 2014, Dr. Sunita Gandhi, who returned to India after 26 years abroad after a PhD in Physics and ten years as Economist with The World Bank and whose family runs the world's largest school, started researching whether learners of any age, child or adult, could learn to read a newspaper in just one month with only 20 minutes of learning time per day, without knowing a single letter at the beginning.

As a result of this research, the Global Dream Toolkits were created, alongside a campaign to promote literacy among adults and out-of-school children. The study indicated that student volunteers aged 10 years and older could utilize the toolkit to teach an individual the ability to read in a mere thirty days during the summer break. This challenge was taken up by about 500,000 student volunteers from various schools across India between 2014 and 2019. The availability of the Global Dream Toolkit in 13 Indian

languages enabled this feat. In the post-Covid era, the SBI Foundation-supported Literacy Now App has enlisted 40,000 volunteers in 2022, with many more expected to join in 2023.

After dedicating eight years to researching and fine-tuning the initial approach, Dr. Gandhi developed ALfA (Accelerating Learning for All) pedagogy and program for schools in 2022. This novel program enables students to learn the foundational skills ten times faster than traditional methods. Additionally, this comprehensive and forward-thinking education instills skills for world citizenship, climate consciousness, and socio-emotional well-being of children. ALfA empowers five-to-seven-year-olds to read the difficult language of the newspapers within a mere 45 school days. Within another 45 days, children complete their textbooks and workbooks for the year with greater ease and a better understanding of the material. They simultaneously gain greater reading fluency skills.

“If 90 days could make the world literate, would you not do it?”

Many may find a 45 to 90-day literacy and numeracy too good to be true, but a recent study conducted by the Harvard Graduate School of Education has validated ALfA’s success. The study, which is chronicled in chapters 8 and 10 of the book “Rebuilding Resilient Education Systems After the COVID-19 Pandemic” published on Amazon in March 2023 by Prof. Fernando

Reimers, et al., confirms the effectiveness of the ALfA program. In 2022, the Education Secretary of the Ministry of Education recommended introducing the ALfA pedagogy in two underperforming districts in India. Since then, the program has gained traction and is now being adopted by multiple states in India and at the national level in the Maldives.

By enabling children to learn at a rate 10 times faster than conventional methods, the ALfA pedagogy has proven its efficacy, and gained traction in numerous implementations of varying sizes globally. By introducing this revolutionary pedagogy, children can acquire not only foundational literacy and numeracy but also become world citizens with essential life skills.

ALfA: Paving the Way for Every Child’s Success



ALfA utilizes a reverse methodology that leverages cognitive mind connections and pair-led work to make learning both accelerated and enjoyable. Unlike traditional methods used worldwide, the teaching of the alphabet letters is not required. This alone results in saving one to two years of learning time, depending on the language. Instead, children utilize their

own cognitive mind connections to decode and blend sounds from known pictures, allowing them to read words instantly.

Once children can read words, the next set of goals are focused on achieving reading fluency, which is strongly linked to better reading comprehension and vocabulary development. In an astounding feat, children can read about 400 words within the initial ten to fifteen days, without requiring any knowledge of the letters first. Children as young as five to seven learn to read complete storybooks and their own textbooks within 45 school days. This is an extraordinary accomplishment.

The teacher’s role is to motivate, stimulate, and inspire children to become active participants in their own learning process. Consequently, ALfA is not just a child-centric teaching pedagogy; it is a “child-led” learning approach. Throughout the learning process, the teacher demonstrates how children can learn in pairs by utilizing the provided ALfA modules and prompts, which serve as triggers for pair-based learning. Teachers initially role-play these prompts within their classrooms. As a result, both teachers and students become exceptionally imaginative in implementing ALfA prompts, leading to a more engaging and enjoyable learning experience.

Revolutionizing Education: How ALfA Pedagogy is Transforming Learning

The ALfA booklets are structured to facilitate pair-based learning, and the Literacy/Numeracy learning goals are arranged into modules that feature images and straightforward prompts that outline the tasks children need to accomplish. It’s comparable to teachers acting as galvanizers, winding up a toy, and then watching as their students learn and progress independently. In this way, children learn more through their own efforts, and mistakes are considered to be an essential aspect of the learning process. Once the class is galvanized into action, both time on task and deeper engagement require teachers to step back and observe, instead of circulating around the classroom to assist students.



Transforming Literacy Education in a Multitude of Languages

The ALfA program teaches Hindi, among other languages, using a paired-learning approach that employs a known-to-unknown process. This approach involves making words from known pictures rather than memorizing

isolated letters, allowing children to learn all the vowels and consonants of the language in just five pages. With this cognitive process, children can derive words on their own and read nearly 400 Hindi words and short stories without matras within the first ten days. By utilizing this approach, ALfA promotes self-directed learning and builds children’s confidence in their ability to learn language skills quickly.

As the children progress, they advance to the second stage of

their reading, which involves words with matras across the next 12 pages. Here, the teacher once again employs a role-play to elaborate on how to read the words with matras using a known-to-unknown process. By practicing new words and reading complete sentences and short passages across the following six pages, including a newspaper article, the children can not only read their own storybooks and textbooks, but they can also challenge themselves to read the complex language found in newspapers.



Numeracy Redefined: A Novel Way to Grasp Complex Concepts with Ease

Rather than relying on counting on their fingers, or writing on paper, children learning numeracy first utilize concrete objects such as ice-cream sticks, matchsticks, or other available counters from the environment to solve numerical problems, including addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Seated in pairs, the teacher first

explains and demonstrates the concept, after which one child creates questions for their partner to solve using the concrete objects. They then switch roles, making mathematics more engaging and tangible. This hands-on, experiential learning approach is then coupled with written expression, culminating in children creating story sums

that incorporate several concepts together. They learn practical applications of mathematical concepts, such as measuring like a tailor with the fourteen measurements of a tailor. This approach results in improved concept clarity, better retention of mathematical concepts, and a more engaging and joyful learning experience, effectively eliminating maths phobia, and allowing students to surpass grade-level requirements within just 45 days of classes.

ALfA is a groundbreaking pedagogy enabling learners to become foundationally literate and numerate in just 45 days.

ALfA Benefits

- 10x faster. Children learn basic FLN in three months – instead

of three years.

- 10x lower climate impact. FLN in just 72 pages (averaging 18 pages per child - shared among two children, used for multiple classes) compared to 180 page

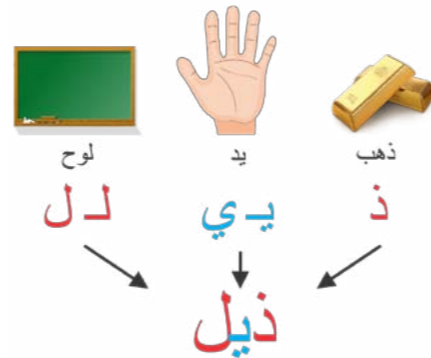


Peer learning through A4 sized books



textbook per subject + 180 page workbooks. No plastic, only reusable materials.

- 10x cheaper. Thin, low-cost booklets. Free mobile app & e-Learning materials.



Available in 30+ languages internationally

Use of locally available counetrs

Acquiring critical life skills, not just fundamental knowledge

In order to foster an environment for children’s learning that is conducive to their growth and development, we must transcend the mere acquisition of foundational literacy and numeracy skills and concentrate on developing world citizens who possess crucial life skills. A quality education should not only provide academic instruction but also encompass the holistic development of a child. In addition to developing cognitive skills, it is crucial to pay attention to a child’s social and emotional well-being, as it has a profound impact on their overall development. Incorporating mental health education and mindfulness practices in the curriculum can promote emotional regulation and help children cope with stress and anxiety.

Paired learning has been recognized as beneficial for students, but the ALfA program takes this approach to a new level. Instead of occasional pairing, ALfA requires students to work in pairs throughout the school day. Moreover, the learning materials are designed to suit paired learning, and the program includes prompts for each module that increase time on task and encourage deeper engagement. ALfA’s unique approach to learning has not only resulted in superior learning outcomes but also the development of crucial World Citizenship skills such as Collaboration, Communication,

Critical Thinking, Creativity, Cultural Competence, Civic Engagement, and Character. Additionally, ALfA’s emphasis on education for climate action and ethical decision-making further prepares children to become responsible global citizens.

Fostering Inclusive Education: Helping Every Child Thrive

The ALfA process creates an inclusive environment that allows every child to thrive, without being classified as

weak or strong. This approach promotes support and a sense of belonging, as all children work in a 1:1 setting that brings out their best qualities, including those who are shy, hyperactive, or have special needs. The process is joyful and emotionally supportive, empowering children to progress at their own pace. By emphasizing cooperation instead of competition, children develop essential skills for creating a future world that is more compassionate and caring.



Children learn to read newspapers within months



Clapping and Snapping activity to learn place value

Near Zero Costs	Swift & Effective	Available in 30 Languages	Addresses Climate Change	Embeds GC skills in process
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Unlocking the 10X Learning Advantage in Your Region

CHALLENGE

45-Days-to FLN Challenge / 90-Day Implementation



Climate Change & ALfA from reducing the carbon footprint of learning to explaining climate change in simple language.

Global Warming Causes Dramatic Increase in Forest Fires screamed the newspaper headline. Tara quickly skimmed the article and fell into deep thought. She wished she could do something to help protect forests.” – an excerpt from a Climate Change short story by DEVI Sansthan.

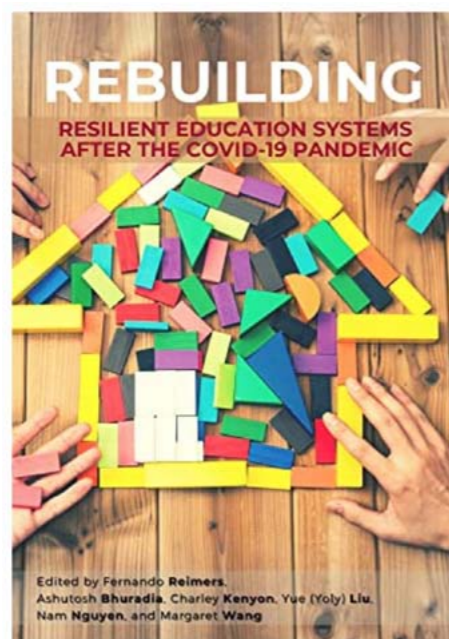
Governments are invited to participate in a “45-Days-To-FLN Challenge” on a system-wide or pilot basis. This entails allocating two periods a day for 45 days to literacy and numeracy education.

- The ALfA Program is designed to be efficient and effective, requiring only two class periods a day for a total of 45 school days, which is less than 10% of a year’s academic time. States and districts have two options to adopt ALfA: the 45-Day FLN Challenge, which allows them to gauge improvements between a control and intervention group of schools, or the 90-Day Implementation at the system-wide level within districts or the state, which provides unparalleled benefits as children complete their prescribed textbooks and workbooks within the 90 days, after learning to read, write, and do basic numeracy using the ALfA program.
- ALfA is not only effective but also low-to-no-cost, as it offers a free online version and a printed version that requires only an average of 18 pages per child per subject. This makes it both low-cost and climate friendly with a low carbon footprint.
- ALfA is rapidly scalable, and can be adapted to another language within a month. It is already accessible in 15 Indian and 15 international languages.

CASE STUDY: From a Single District to a

15-District Partnership in UP, Building a Strong Evidence Base: The Path to Effective Education

According to a study by Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE Chapter 8), the ALfA program expanded from 20 to 290 schools in UP’s Shamli district after only 30 days of implementation (210 schools in the intervention group and 80 in the control group). The initial randomized control trial involving the initial 10 intervention and 10 control groups showed a



highly significant effect size of 0.89 for Grade 5, as detailed in HGSE Chapter 8. The results of a new randomized control trial comparing 210 intervention schools versus 80 control schools is in the process of being finalized. ALfA’s groundbreaking approach to education makes it possible to achieve results in a remarkably short period of time.

The program grew from 1 district in UP to a 15-district MOU with the Department of School Education by November 2022.

HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION.

Chapters 8 & 10 are about ALfA implementation in India and the Maldives. Both showcase impressive results.

SCAN THIS QR to read a March 2023 report by



MOOT Scaling up ALfA through Massive Open Online Training of Teachers

We are encouraging governments to enroll their teachers in the free and highly effective Massive Open Online Training program. 93% of respondents have reported positive outcomes,

with 99% having takeaways for immediate implementation. The new online format for MOOT has made it even more effective than traditional in-person training, and its ability to make an immediate

and large-scale impact is unparalleled.

Additionally, the MOOT modality is being used to train master trainers and trainers globally to offer MOOT-like training in their own languages and regions, including physical training when necessary. In a recent example, a trainer from Honduras who is fluent in Spanish is training teachers in Peru.



FIRST MOOT DATA HIGHLIGHTS				
25,660	53	26	93%	99%
YouTube Views across 13 sessions	countries with representatives from all 6 continents participated	states of India participated	of participants found the online format of the training to be effective	of teachers said they had new take-away points from the training



Scan the QR codes to watch recordings of the MOOT Sessions

A Step Towards Rapid Reforms: Policymakers Conclave

The inaugural Global Policymakers Conclave was organized to encourage system-wide changes in education, and it received endorsements from several policymakers, including India’s Hon. Defence Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh who has been the former Education Minister of India’s most populous state of Uttar Pradesh.

The first MOOT and the Global Policymakers Conclave had participation from individuals across 53 countries and 26 states in India.



Adult Literacy Programs with a Focus on Women: Moving Towards Equality

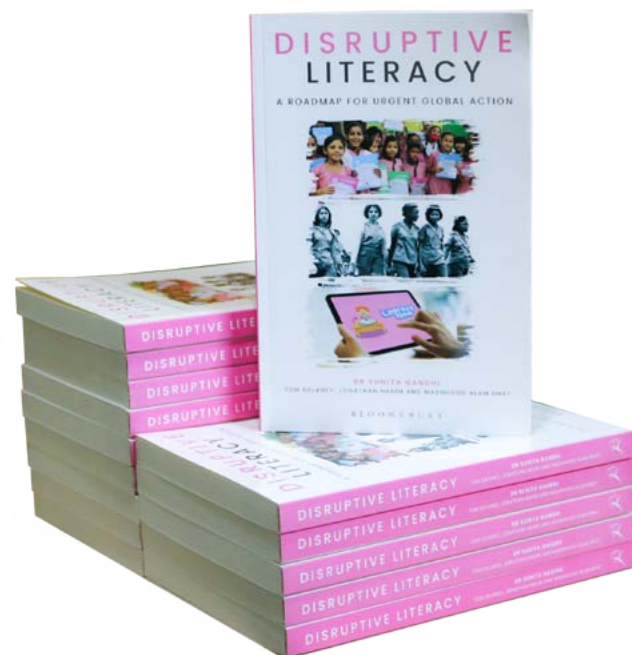


DEVI Sansthan has been working with HCL Foundation to advance literacy in Hardoi District of Uttar Pradesh, with the Government of Mizoram in three districts and with IImpact for the literacy of women in West Bengal. The free Literacy Now app developed with the help of SBI Foundation is available to assist.

The app is being adopted by 5 million children of middle and senior grades in Uttar Pradesh. Literacy Chicago in the US is also implementing the program successfully for adult learners.

We further aim to draw policymakers' attention to a people's movement for adult

literacy, as detailed in our book "Disruptive Literacy". The book includes a comparative analysis of successful movements worldwide. These demonstrate that government-lead mass movements can result in major gains in adult literacy relatively quickly.



FOUR ACTS, ONE CAUSE: UNIVERSAL LITERACY FOR ALL



Scan the QR to view other reports and videos on these four acts.

ALFA Implementation Successes

From a pilot to large scale implementation in 2022 in Uttar Pradesh, India's Most Populous State



One Program, Many Geographies. One Pedagogy, Many Uses.



Adult Literacy in Mizoram



Women's Literacy in West Bengal



Each One Teach One Program with Literacy Now App, Pan India



School Education Program in Sambalpur, Odisha

In Conclusion

Marcel Proust said: "The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes." We need to reconsider our approach to education and remain receptive to novel ideas and innovative methods. It is crucial to aim for a transformative change of 10x instead of settling for incremental change of 10%. The ALFA pedagogy provides a process that can enable children and adults globally to acquire literacy and numeracy skills on an unprecedented scale and within a fraction of the time frame.

Education plays a vital role in a child's growth and development; it is time for a shift in paradigm in the way we perceive and approach it. We need to act now and step up our efforts to achieve these goals.

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