

The Good Sight

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Solidaridad enables women to drive agro-supply chains pg-6

Powerful & Purposeful Pedagogy:

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Aao Badlein Bharat



The Good Sight

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Let's celebrate their work

Dear Reader,

The importance of social sector organizations in promoting a sustainable and equitable future cannot be overstated. These organizations are driven by a passion to improve the lives of those in need and to address the most pressing challenges facing our society. In this issue of The Good Sight, we have covered a few such organizations that are contributing to the greater good.

One of the most significant contributions of social sector organizations is their ability to innovate and find new solutions to complex problems. These organizations often operate in resource-constrained environments and are forced to be creative in finding ways to maximize their impact. They are also able to experiment with new approaches and learn from their successes and failures, which can lead to more effective and sustainable solutions in the long term.

Another key strength of social sector organizations is their ability to mobilize communities and bring people together around a common cause. By working closely with local communities, these organizations are able to understand the unique challenges and opportunities facing each community and develop solutions that are tailored to their specific needs.

As readers of The Good Sight, we should all be proud to support and celebrate the work of social sector organizations. Whether you are a donor, volunteer, or simply a supporter, your contributions make a real difference in the lives of those in need and in creating a better world for all. Let us take a moment to appreciate and acknowledge the hard work and dedication of these organizations and the positive impact they are making in our world. Happy reading!

Editors

Asit Srivastava
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Editor's Note



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

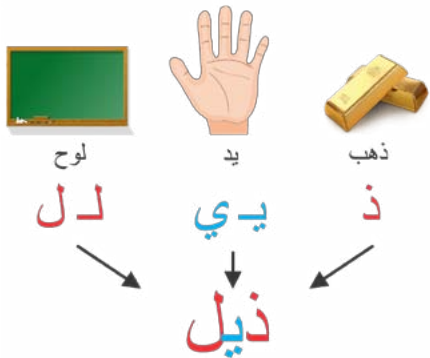
- of three years.
- 10x lower climate impact. FLN in just 72 pages (averaging 18 pages per child - shared among two children, used for mutiple classes) compared to 180 page



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 6C skills in process

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.

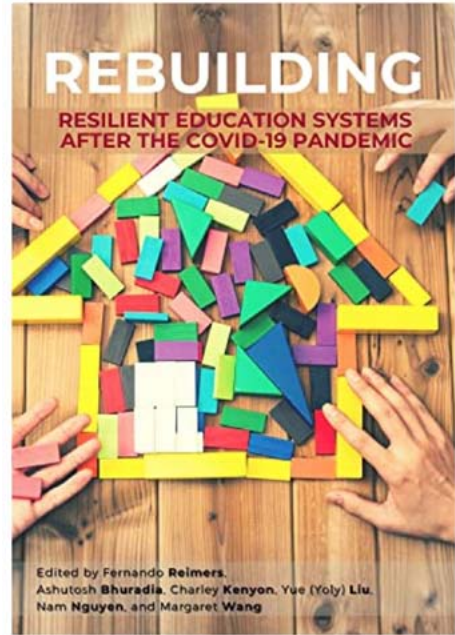
Governments are invited to participate in a “45-Days-To-FLN Challenge” on a system-wide or pilot basis. This entails allocating two periods a day for 45 days to literacy and numeracy education.

- 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

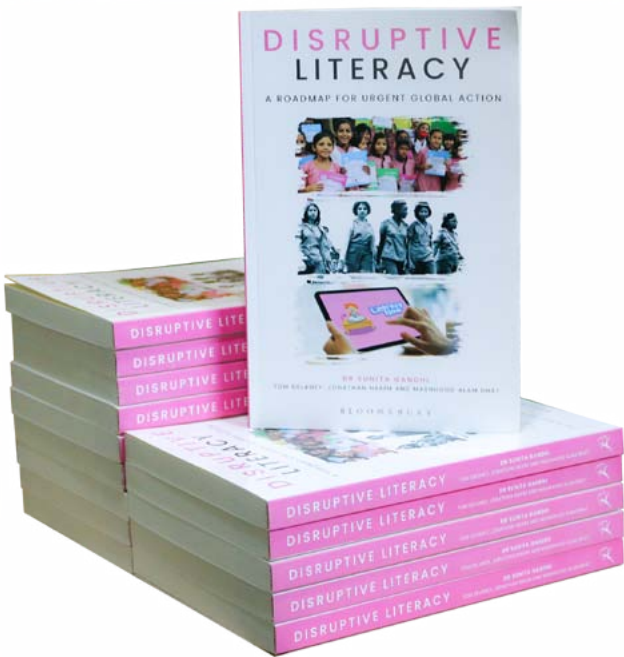


DEVI Sansthan has been working with HCL Foundation to advance literacy in HarDOI District of Uttar Pradesh, with the Government of Mizoram in three districts and with IImpact for the literacy of women in West Bengal. The free Literacy Now app developed with the help of SBI Foundation is available to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

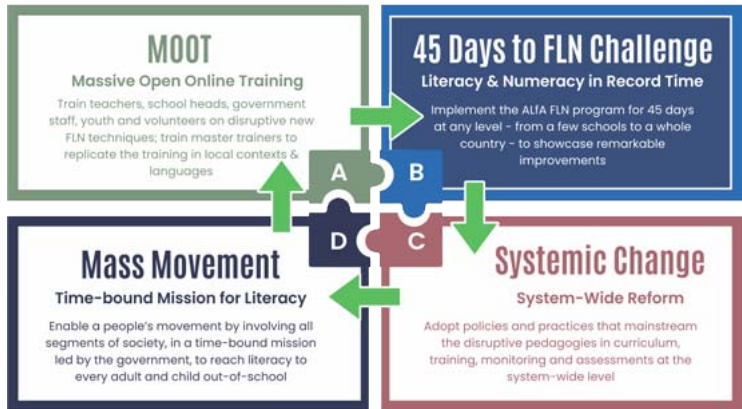
The app is being adopted by 5 million children of middle and senior grades in Uttar Pradesh. Literacy Chicago in the US is also implementing the program successfully for adult learners.

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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