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Implementing Basic General Literacy Programme in Afghanistan

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Annual General Meeting of Global Alliance for Literacy



Soghra Haidari

- 40 years old native of Bamiyan
- Joined UNESCO's Basic General Literacy class in February 2023
- Struggled to access education at her young age
- Believes illiteracy is the root cause of her difficulties
- Hopes that literacy learning will empower her and her community

Introduction to UNESCO Kabul Office's support to literacy



Amina Rasooli is one of UNESCO's literacy facilitators. She is a dedicated and enthusiastic educator who educates her students with passion every day. She was trained to use UNESCO-developed Basic General Literacy instructional materials to teach her class, which comprises 15 female learners, including adolescent girls.

- **Integrate literacy into education sector plans:**
UNESCO conducts [research studies and knowledge products](#) about the status of literacy in Afghanistan and develops [tailor-made literacy curriculum](#) relevant to Afghan context.
- **Improve learning opportunities and outcomes for disadvantaged populations:**
Basic General Literacy classes currently reach [over 25,000 learners](#) (over 60% women and adolescent girls) and [almost 1,700 facilitators](#) (over 60% female).
- **Foster innovation in literacy programmes through technological means:**
[Digitalization \(video- and audio-adaptation\)](#) of the Basic General Literacy curriculum is initiated.
- **Measure, monitor and evaluate progress on literacy:**
UNESCO uses [digital M&E tools](#) to monitor and evaluate literacy classes in different provinces. UNESCO also has a [complaints feedback mechanism](#) to record, follow up, and resolve complaints/feedback from beneficiaries/stakeholders. Moreover, UNESCO trains over 1,500 [Village Literacy Committees](#) to support enrollment, advocacy and monitoring of the literacy classes.
- **Mobilize resources and partnerships for literacy:**
UNESCO has mobilized funding from various sources to support literacy. UNESCO established and is [leading a platform](#) consisting of 100 members of national and international NGOs, UN agencies and other literacy stakeholders [for information sharing and coordination](#).



UNESCO Kabul Office's Basic General Literacy programme

A UNESCO personnel is on his way to an underserved area of Bamiyan to monitor how established classes works and how UNESCO has an impact on the lives of thousands of illiterates, who are eager to learn.

- UNESCO provides literacy, numeracy, and pre-vocational skills to **marginalized illiterate youth and adults**, especially women and girls, in Afghanistan.
- The programme reaches **over 25,000 illiterate women and men above 15 years old in 20 provinces** through 13 national implementing partners.
- The programme follows a **nine-month standardized UNESCO-developed curriculum** equivalent to Grades 1 to 3 of formal education.
- The current batch of learners will **graduate in October and November 2023**, after which the learners will receive certificates and will be encouraged to continue their education.

Female participation

- **Women** have been involved in various literacy activities:
 - **Implementation of Basic General Literacy classes**
 - Almost 50% master trainers
 - Almost 30% community mobilizers
 - Over 60% facilitators
 - 50% counsellors
 - 59% of field staff of national implementing partners
 - **Enrolment as learners in literacy classes**, in which 60% of our learners are girls and women.
 - **Review of UNESCO-developed literacy curriculum**
 - **Participation in UNESCO's literacy advocacy campaign** "Literacy for a Brighter Future", which featured females in TV advertisements and billboards.

In a literacy class in Bamiyan, some of these learners come from a far away. The woman with orange scarf walks 30 minutes each day to reach the class. She wishes that at the end of the class, she will become literate and can help her children with their school lessons.



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Pathways after graduation of Basic General Literacy

She is another facilitator who tries to help one of the learners how to correctly write the words written on the UNESCO-developed learning materials. All facilitators and learners received a full package of learning kit and teaching kit which consist of three textbooks, one learning assessment book, multiple notebooks, and stationery.

- Learners completing the nine-month literacy classes will be issued **a certificate, equivalent to graduation of Grade 3 of formal education.**
- Graduates may continue the **advanced level of the UNESCO-developed literacy curriculum**, equivalent to Grades 4 to 6 of formal education.
- Some may also choose to be enrolled in **Skill-based Literacy classes** or other non-formal courses for skills development.



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How UNESCO Kabul Office's literacy work makes our societies peaceful

A youth community in a marginalized area gathered and met one of the UNESCO personnel to express their gratitude and satisfaction to UNESCO. They announced their full support and wanted to further grow and continue the literacy programme.

- Literacy **improves the quality of life and livelihood** of the learners by enhancing their self-esteem, confidence, and autonomy.
- Literacy enables Afghan people to **access information and knowledge**, which can help them to understand and resolve conflicts, promote tolerance and dialogue, and foster a culture of peace.
- Literacy empowers youth and adult women and men to participate in **community engagement** and other affairs, which can contribute to **social cohesion**.
- Literacy **improves people's health and well-being**, as it enables them to access health information and services, prevent diseases, and adopt healthy behaviors. It also reduces maternal and child mortality, malnutrition, and poverty.

Success factors of the literacy interventions in Afghanistan

Part of the curriculum is to examine learners how much they learnt. UNESCO organized workshops for facilitators and taught them pedagogical approaches for youth and adults.



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- The programme receives **support of local elders and local authorities**, who value education for their communities.
- There is a **high demand for learning, especially in remote areas** which lacked education opportunities due to security and access issues prior to the political shift.
- The literacy interventions combine **literacy, numeracy, and pre-vocational skills** such as agricultural skills, first aid, and how to start a small business which **address the needs of the learners under the current operating context**.
- UNESCO, as the leading agency for Youth and Adult Literacy and Basic Education, **mobilizes literacy stakeholders**, including national and local implementing partners, **for strengthened coordination**.



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