



To develop a long-term literacy programme to empower communities and individuals to build a productive, secure, literate nation

[Ministry of Education Five Year Strategic Plan: 2006]

Literacy

As Afghanistan launches into a new era of development the Ministry of Education will be prioritising literacy and non-formal educational initiatives. Becoming a literate nation is the foundation upon which the hopes of this country will be built. Despite the many difficulties we have faced, in the past and now, the people of Afghanistan have demonstrated that education can be the bridge that transforms an emergency situation into one of hope and promise. However for us to become a literate nation where children, youth and adults become active, healthy, productive participants in our country's development efforts – Afghanistan still has a long difficult journey ahead.

Achievements and Challenges

The demand of the Afghan people to become literate is greater now than at any time in our country's history. Almost 2 million adults have participated in a range of literacy courses provided by Government and Non-Government organizations. Despite this however, Afghanistan's literacy rate, particularly amongst women, is one of the poorest in the world. In the rural areas where some 75 percent of the people live, 90 percent of women and 63 percent of men cannot read or write. Making Afghanistan a literate nation in the next 20 years will require the implementation of a massive, coordinated, low-cost, demand-driven and community-supported literacy strategy that can be taken to scale across the country. Despite the enormous need for a comprehensive national literacy programme for Afghanistan, literacy has not received the attention and the investment that is required to make a real difference to the livelihoods of adult Afghan's.

The Ministry has recently launched a collaborative, coordinated effort between the Afghan Ministries and all donors to develop, fund and implement a Plan for National Literacy which will enable Afghanistan to achieve its committed targets for the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All and its social and economic development objectives.

The new national literacy programme will facilitate flexible learning options in rural and urban areas. It will develop, implement and monitor policy and national standards of teacher training and student assessment; ensure coordination amongst stakeholders; support and approve appropriate curriculum and supplementary materials; develop and manage a teacher training and support system at the national, provincial and district levels; collect and disseminate data; and monitor and evaluate achievements and issues nationally. This will provide the system of support for implementation, rather than direct provision.

The Ministry's national literacy programme is expected to reach at least 10 million people over the coming five years, improving literacy rates in Afghanistan by 50 percent and ensuring that the people of Afghanistan are able to become active and productive citizens in our nation building efforts.

Major Objectives: 2006- 2010

- Develop a system so that at least 10 million Afghans will become literate, at least 60% of whom to be women.
- Develop a national system for the provision of literacy
- Develop close partnerships with communities, government and the private sector to deliver literacy programmes
- Improve literacy rates of all Afghan's by at least 50% by 2010
- Develop a range of literacy learning modules that are relevant to the every day lives of all Afghan's, both men and women
- Establish a system for literacy facilitator support and training.

Budgetary Requirements

Current Funded Amount: \$ 15 mil

Funds Required: \$125 mil

Total Shortfall: \$110 mil

Key Partners

USAID, UNICEF, UNESCO, JICA, international and national NGOs