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LITERACY Wis:

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL TASK FORCE ON LITERACY

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Number 8, February 1990

Literacy Messages to the World

VER 600 DELEGATES

from over 100 countries

gathered in Bangkok,

Thailand on January 12

for the People,s Launch of the United

Nation,s International Literacy Year.

The launch was held during the Inter-

national Council for Adult Educationis

Fourth World Assembly.

This colourful open air festival began

with the presentation of banners which

were carried on to the stage by partici-

pants in their national dress, one from

each of the seven regions of the world

(North America, Caribbean, Arab States,

Latin America, Asia and the South Pa-

K .c, Europe and Africa), containing a

statement of that regionis view on liter-

acy. The statement was read aloud to the

participants by a representative from

each region.

After the banner presentation, to the

music of a marching band, hundreds of

balloons with messages tied to them

which had been written by the regions

were released in the air by each partici-

pant, sending a message to the world in

support of literacy.

The festivities continued with the

official opening of the Book Voyage.

Symbolic books, brought from all seven

regions were paraded in a procession

with a marching band on to the stage by

learners and a representative of that

particular region. The books were pre-

sented to Dame Nita Barrow, President of

Halimatou Traore, Mali, Dame Nita Barrow, Barbados, Musari Al-Rawi,

Tunisia, Jong-Gon Hwang, Korea, Joyce Robinson, J amaica

ICAE, who signed her name in each book.

The six learners and one representative

from each region then signed their names

and inscribed their messages of hope to

the world. The books were then returned

to regional representatives to begin their

official voyages.

The ceremony culminated with the

Thai custom of the tlighting of the candle

of knowledge? Each participant held a

lighted candle as Dame Nita Barrow

lighted a larger candle and read the NGO

Call to Action. This was followed by a

fireworks display and a Thai folk dance.

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and calls ulsjq /,

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e -V ' Lalita Ramdas

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PUBLIC AWARENESS

A National Response to Literacy

On January 23 the National Association for Mass Education (NAME), St. Vincent, West Indies, held a press conference to announce its programme for International Literacy Year. Excerpts from the conference were carried on radio and television as well as in the national newspapers.

A full programme was provided to the press for comments and suggestions that would enhance the overall package.

The programme theme is *Illiteracy*:

Our National Concern – A National Response' and will be made up of monthly sub-themes on the following topics:

January Literacy and the
International Situation

February Literacy and the Media

March Literacy and Women

(with focus on children
and family)

April Literacy and the
Environment

May Literacy and the Worker
(Labour Education)

June Literacy and Culture

July Literacy and Disaster
Preparedness

August Literacy and the Farmer

September Literacy and Youth

October Literacy and National
Heroes/Independence

November Literacy and the
Community

December Literacy and Human
Rights – Right to Work

Some of the highlights of these monthly programmes will be panel discussions, workshops/seminars, radio and television quizzes, poster competitions, drama presentations, printing and use of posters, surveys, cultural shows, exhibitions, educational tours, use of the media, as well as marches and rallies.

For more information please contact:

Rebecca Jordan

Coordinator

NAME

P.O. Box 1443

St. Vincent, West Indies

Scotland

The aims of the Scottish Community
Education Council (SCEC) for International Literacy Year are:

to raise public awareness on the
extent of the problems related to low
levels of literacy and adult basic education provisions available to meet the
needs and

to gather and disseminate information and practices on adult literacy.

Some planned activities are:

publishing a handbook for employers on work-based education;

Nothing

A coordination committee functioning from the Regional Curriculum Base of the University of Ulster plans to:

present sixteen local radio programmes representative of each region;
produce support materials in folder form for use by students;
request the library service to help set up parent activities to help children to read;
hold a press conference with the British Minister of Education to launch
0 highlighting literacy needs among young people;
0 highlighting ILY at the annual ABE Organizers Conference;
0 production of a poster to raise awareness;
0 seeking funds for a research proposal on literacy needs;
0 production of press releases and statistics to highlight needs;
0 proposals to Scottish television for the promotion of ILY, including an education debate;
0 encouraging bookshops and publishers to support ILY through use of the logo on bookmarks;
' using local radio to highlight ILY.
Ireland
ILY, basic education receptions hosted by various departments, a major conference on March 10 on TABE and the Workplace with representatives from major industrial and commercial enterprises and a calendar of events for Northern Ireland;
0 set-up staff development projects at regional levels;
0 ask local publishers to use literacy logo;
0 host a cross-frontier meeting of representatives for ABE in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.
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_ STRENGTHENING STRUCTURES

Self-Help and Literacy

LEARNER'S CORNER

tPlease don't be a foreign
country to the learners
that you work for?

Robin Silverman, Toronto, Canada

Excerpt from speech made to the ICAE

World Assembly in Bangkok, Thailand,

January 1990

Learner Profiles

The following profiles were taken from interviews with learners who attended the 4th World assembly, Bangkok, Thailand, January 8-18, 1990

I Clemence Registe was born in 1932 in the Commonwealth of Dominica and is a self-employed mother of eleven. Most of her children now live abroad and she was not able to reply to their letters promptly as she had to depend on someone else to read them and write her replies. This inhibited both the children and herself from writing anything personal or important. This inability to read and write as well as a desire to keep accurate account of her money was what motivated her to learn to read and write.

Magdaleen Gathoni signs the Symbolic Book. Bangkok, Thailand

I Magdaleen Gathoni was born in Kenya, East Africa. She was unable to attend school because her parents could not afford to pay the school fees. As an adult she started working as a helper in a medical training centre. She was overlooked for a promotion because she could not fill out the form required for her to attend the interview. She then decided to start attending adult education and literacy classes. She is now able to read and write and to speak English. She is also the chairperson of a women's group.

SWANIRVAR BANGLADESH, a national private voluntary organization in a country where nearly 75% of the population is unable to read and write, discovered over the years that with motivation, planning and a coordinated approach, much could be achieved with scanty resources. Over the past decade, Swanirvar has helped in establishing some 10,000 literacy centres in various parts of the country. The average out-of-pocket expense has been about \$7.50 per person per year.

1 Many free contributions such as books, implements, accommodation and labour have been made.

Swanirvar's general approach is total development through self-reliance principles to all sections of society. Much of the work is done by 7 and from within the community.

1 Swanirvar does the initial motivational work and organizes five distinct socio-economic groups, namely, farmers, landless, women, youth and available vocational groups within the village who then form a village development committee with equitable representation from each group. The members of the village committee take

1 charge of different developmental
i activities such as agricultural produc-
tion, village infrastructure, cottage
. industries, education, health and
family planning. A detailed survey is
' carried out, a village development pl an
, is drawn up according to what the
villagers themselves think should be
'9; done for their own development and
then funds are collected from villagers
weekly savings. Although these fi-
nancial contributions are often not
sufficient, the local initiatives usually
stir enough interest amongst local
government officials to induce them to
support the programmes through ma-
terials and other types of assistance.
The needs of the landless and the
women figure most prominently in
Swanirvar sponsored development,
literacy and family planning receive
the highest priority. Literacy and
skill development are seen as package
programmes and short term loans are
available for the landless through the
Swanirvar credit scheme (about 70%
of the beneficiaries are women).
Various evaluations have indicated
that literacy rates in Swanirvar
villages are about twice that of the rest
of Bangladesh. The community in-
volvement in identifying its own de-
velopment needs triggers maximum
participation in planning and im-
plementation.

The literacy classes follow a flex-
ible schedule so that all students can
attend. Besides informal instruc-
tions, standard text books are fol-
lowed by both children and adults
and after completion of a six month
literacy course, adults receive skill
training in such courses as animal
husbandry, cane and bamboo work,
sewing, weaving, carpentry, hair-
dressing. The non-formal and pri-
mary education at Swanirvar has
traditionally looked at the needs
beyond literacy and on the basis of
community requirements.

Q&bambmAbmamamaamb

Welcome

We would like to welcome two new
funding partners to the ITFL:

0 The Mott Foundation, United States
' DaisHyaku Friendship Foundation,
Japan

We would also like to welcome two
new members to the ITFL:

0 International Council on Social
Welfare (ICSW), Austria

0 Ligue Internationale de
llEnseignement de llEducation et
de la Culture Populaire, France

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NCLUDED UNDER the Great
Debate section of the ILY News-
letter No. 4, J uly 1989, the follow-
ing statements were made:
To be literate is to become liberated
from the constraints of dependency.
To be literate is to gain a voice...
To be literate is...to become self-
assertive
To be literate is to become politically
conscious...
Literacy makes people aware of their
basic human rights.

These statements cause me much
concern. First, the goals mentioned in the
above statements are not likely to occur
unless one teaches learners how to
achieve these goals and most literacy
programmes do not. It is incorrect to
assume that these statements will be
fulfilled merely through the achievement
of literacy. There are many examples to
Our official launching of the Book
Voyage was a huge success due to the
participation of learners and adult
educators who attended the 4th World
Assembly of ICAE in Bangkok. What
about doing something similar to
launch your own books? The Thai cele-
bration was very colourful and elabo-
rate. Your ceremony however can be
just as impressive by organizing it in
your own special way. Please let us
know when you plan to do your launch.
If it has already happened let us know
how successful it was. If some of you
are still unaware about who your re-
gional coordinators are, here are their
names again:

Africa - Musa Njue Njiru, Kenya
Institute of Education
South Asia - Indira Koithara, c/o
Indian Adult Education
Association

Arab States - Hashim Abu Zeid El
Sail, Arab Regional Literacy &
Adult Education Organization
Caribbean - Miriam Moulton-
Campbell, c/o Organization of
GREAT DEBATE

illustrate why this is so. By themselves,
then, these statements are not necessar-
ily true. The outcome of these statements
can be fulfilled through literacy educa-
tion providing the education programmes
make the effort to teach these as learning
outcomes, and provide the political and
social climate which will nourish these
statements and will help to fulfil them.
Second, and related to the first point,
becoming literate will not automatically
free one from exploitation and oppres-
sion. Literacy has only the potential to do
so. Sadly, there are many examples
where new literates are still oppressed
and only have propaganda to read. These
two points are deeply philosophical and
the original statements are not to be
taken lightly or assumed to always be
true.

James Draper

Ontario Institute for
Studies in Education
Toronto, Canada
American States Office, Dominica
Latin America - Cesar Picon,
Naciones Unidas, El Salvador
Europe - Rosa Maria Falgas Casano
vas, Federacion de Asociacion de
Educacion de Adultos, Spain
North America - Louise Miller,
Regroupement des Groupes
Populaires d'Alphabetisation du
Quebec, Canada

- Elise Mennie, Movement for
Canadian Literacy, Canada
bbfii

Also we wish to welcome our new coor-
dinator Emilliana Afeaki who is re-
sponsible for the South Pacific Region:

Emilliana Afeaki
Head, Continuing Education
The University of the South Pacific
PO. Box 1168, Suva
Fiji

Telephone: 313900 Ext. 351

Cables: University, Suva

Telex: FJ 2276

Fax: (679) 300482

illiteracy has to be combated be-
cause it is the enemy of the people, it is
darkness, it makes people unrecep-
tive to new ideas and change, it hin-
ders development, it exposes people to
brutal exploitation and oppression,
and it is also an obstacle to people
participating fully in economic,
social and cultural activities."

Beyene Abraha, Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia

bbEs

Are we fully aware of and concerned
about the often destructive poten-
tial of our literacy endeavours and
indirect, negative influences and
repercussions on developmental
processes which are apparent in
phenomena like rural exodus, negli-
gence of traditional skills and cul-
tural heritage: bound to non-written
transfer?

Hizen, Hor, Leumer, Nieman, 1983

b&efn

Literacy is not the end of education
or even the beginning. It is only one of
the means whereby men and women
can be educated?

Kusmal Nanda Dondsena,
Orissa, India

Winner of the 1989 J. Roby Kidd
Award

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The following publications are available through the Unesco Institute for Education, Hamburg

1. Functional Illiteracy in Industrialized Countries: An Analytical Bibliography

2. Functional Illiteracy and Literacy Provision in Developed Countries: The Case of the Federal Republic of Germany

3. Learning Strategies for Post-Literacy and Continuing Education in Mali, Niger, Senegal and Upper Volta

4e Learning Strategies for Post-Literacy and Continuing Education: A Cross-National Perspective

5. Learning Strategies for Post-Literacy and Continuing Education in The Bahzili International Community and the International Council for Women are happy to announce the establishment of The Golden Rule Award. The award will be given annually to an organization or individual whose work has made an outstanding contribution toward the advancement of women.

In its first year, in recognition of the vital importance of International Literacy Year, 1990, the award, along with a \$1 000.00 cash prize, will go to an outstanding grassroots literacy project with a focus on women and/or girls.

The criteria for the Golden Rule Award will be in accordance with the common goals of the collaborating organizations, namely:

0 to promote equal rights and responsibilities for both men and women in all spheres by removing all forms of prejudice based on birth, race, sex, language or religion;

0 to promote recognition and respect for human rights;

. to support all efforts to achieve a unifying peace;

0 to encourage the integration of women in development and in decision-making bodies.

The Golden Rule Award
Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and
United Kingdom

6. Learning Strategies for Post-Literacy and Continuing Education in China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam

7. Learning Strategies for Post-Literacy and Continuing Education in Brazil, Colombia, Jamaica and Venezuela

8. Handbook on Learning Strategies for Post-Literacy and Continuing Education

To obtain a copy please contact:

Unesco Institute for Education
Feldbrunnenstrasse 58
2000 Hamburg 13

Federal Republic of Germany

The recipient of the award will be announced at a reception in the Fall of 1990.

Deadline for Application: June 30, 1990.

For further information please contact:

Nora El-Tobgy
The Golden Rule Award
866 United Nations Plaza
Suite 119
New York, NY. 10017 USA
Tel: (212) 486-0560
Fax: (212) 838-7027
International Community
Education Association
(ICEA)

The ICEA is hosting the first Asian regional conference on 7Community Education for a Learning Society in the Context of Asian Heritage? It will be held at the International Youth Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, September 17-20, 1990.

For more information contact:

International Community
Education Association
Britton Rd.
Coventry, England
CV2 4LF

ttThe object of research, like the object of the educational process, should be the liberation of human creative potential and the mobilization of human resources for the solution of social problemsfi

Tell Us Your History

The city of Newcastle upon Tyne would like to invite entries from around the world for an exhibition on The Right to Read? You are asked to write your page of history focusing on the need for reading and writing skills worldwide and why it matters to you or to someone you know to be able to read and write. Cash awards will be given to the entries deemed by our judges to be the most outstanding and unique. The awards will be used to promote further successful study.

For further information contact:

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Literacy Year in Newcastle
Heaton Education Centre
Trehitt Road
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 5DY,
United Kingdom

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1990 - INTERNA T/ONAL LITERAC Y YEAR

0 A special meeting of the ITFL was held in Paris, France February 6-7, 1990 to discuss the strategies of the three main NGO bodies, ITFL, Unesco NGO Standing Committee and Unicef NGO Consultation Committee on how best to organize and mobilize all the N GOs which will participate in the Tducation for All18 Conference to be held in Jomtien, Thailand, March 1990.

0 ITFL Publications: There is a charge of \$5.00 US for postage and handling for all copies and must be pre-paid. ITFL Posters and Pins: are available through the Toronto office. They are \$5.00 US each. The minimum order is five and must be pre-paid (includes postage and handling)

0 The international launch of the Book Voyage and the announcement of the NGO Call to Action on Literacy were made on January 12 at the International Council for Adult Educationis World Assembly of Adult Education which was held in Bangkok, Thailand.

0 Copies of the N GO Call to Action and a guide for the Book Voyage are available free of charge from your regional office.

0 A memo regarding the launching of International Literacy Year, with guidelines and useful ideas for events, was prepared and widely distributed to our member organizations, newsletter subscribers, literacy workers and learners.

% Preparations for the ITFL 3Roundtablei, and an exhibition for the World Conference on Education for All are underway.

30 This newsletter is free of charge. For copies in English and French please write the ITFL ofhce in Toronto. For copies in Spanish please contact: Consejo de Educacic'm de Adultos de America Latina, Correo 22, Casilla 6257, Santiago, Chile.

International Task Force on Literacy

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I 990 0 INTERNATIONAL LITERAC Y YEAR

8 The International Task Force on Literacy (ITFL) is a coalition of regional and Q, world-wide international non-governmental organizations to mobilize and stimulate activities of non-govemmental organizations prior to, during and after the International Literacy Year 1990 (ILY).

0 Approximately two thousand women and children participated in a symbolic meamer,s Marchi, organized by the South Asia office of the ITFL which was held in India on J anuary 1. The March officially ushered in International Literacy Year and was followed by literacy plays put on by learners

0 Two new literacy centres which 101 students have been admitted, have been opened in Sangli Apartments and Cop-ernicus Marg, New Delhi as a result of joint efforts by the Task Force and the Naval Wiveis Welfare Association

ii The South Asia Task Force is sponsoring and initiating various cultural activities and competitions for the promotion of literacy among adults and children. These events will take place from J anuary through June 1990 in many parts of India. They include:

poster competition

learneris conference

music competition

literacy fair

puppet shows

cultural concerts

filmets

television films

rallies

symposia on miteracy as Mass Movement8

poetry competition

essay competition in Hindi and English on the topic:

3A literate woman can make her child a more committed citizenti

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For more detailed information on any of the following activities please contact Indira Koithara:
International Task Force on Literacy
South Asia/India Office
c/o Indian Adult Education Association
17-B Indraprastha Marg
New Delhi - 110002 India
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