



**23-25 September 2024**

26 September Field Trip (Optional)

**In-person and Online**



# Read. Rise. India.

Foundational Literacy & Numeracy for All



# Welcome to SYNERGY 3.0

Literacy is at the heart of all SDGs and government of India's highest priority in education. India's NIPUN Bharat Mission was created with the aim to achieve universal Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) by 2026/27. Beyond the half-way time, we are still struggling to realize its vision. Why? Can a pedagogical revolution and a joint effort make this possible?

Your participation at **Synergy Summit 3.0, 23 – 25 September 2024**, in Lucknow, will undeniably enrich the conversation and lead to critical action. There will be field trip to Lucknow's government schools where ALfA, a groundbreaking pedagogy is challenging the status quo.

Please confirm your attendance by completing the registration form.

**Register Now**  
Click or Scan QR



**Dr. Sunita Gandhi**

Convenor Synergy Summit  
Former Economist, The World Bank, USA  
Ph.D., Physics, Cambridge University, UK  
CEO, DEVI Sansthan  
(Dignity Education Vision International, India and USA)



# Catalytic & Rapid

India's Hon. Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** with **Sunita Gandhi**

If 45 days could make a person foundationally literate & numerate, would you not do it?

“

Promoting disruptive learning is the need of the hour.

”

“

If you think education is expensive, try adopting illiteracy for once.

”

“

If Government, Civil Societies, Education Institutes, Government Development Agencies, and Donor Agencies work in unity, we can hope to achieve the cherished goals for our Country and the whole world.

”

Rajnath Singh



Kindly click or scan the QR Code to listen to Rajnath Singhji's views on ALfA



# Literacy a Lift off for All SDGs

Achieving universal literacy is crucial for meeting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – from fighting poverty to gender equality, from improving healthcare outcomes to citizen empowerment, from

environmental sustainability to civic participation. The table below shows the key interlinkages between different SDGs and literacy.

SDG		Intersection with Literacy
1.	Ending poverty	If all students in low-income countries left school with basic reading skills, 171 million people would be lifted out of poverty. Ending poverty directly contributes to ending hunger. <sup>1</sup>
2.	Ending hunger & malnutrition	
3.	Good health & well-being	Literacy has a huge impact on lowering child mortality, and increases ability to engage with the healthcare system. <sup>2</sup>
4.	Quality education	Literacy is the foundation of all education; without literacy, education is impossible.
5.	Promoting gender equality	Literacy empowers women, helping them gain greater self-confidence, respect and freedoms. In Africa, 20% of illiterate girls are married before they turn 18, compared to 4% of literate girls. <sup>3</sup>
6.	Clean water & sanitation	Literacy improves awareness of water, sanitation & hygiene (WASH) issues, enabling people to advocate for clean water.
7.	Affordable & clean energy	Literacy improves employment prospects and income. Literate workers earn more than those who are illiterate, and nations with higher literacy rates have higher rates of economic growth.
8.	Decent work & economic growth	ALfA_Accelerating Learning for All focuses on 6C skills – collaboration, communication, critical thinking, creativity, citizenship and character – which is crucial for innovative industries, including renewable energy. <sup>4</sup>
9.	Industry, innovation and infrastructure	
10.	Reduced inequalities	Literacy fosters greater social equality, empowering people from disadvantaged castes and classes to stand up for their rights. <sup>5</sup>
11.	Sustainable cities	Literacy aids greater awareness of environmental issues, and is also critical in reducing population growth, particularly by empowering women to choose their family size. <sup>6</sup>
12.	Responsible consumption & production	
13.	Climate Action	Compared to many literacy programs, ALfA booklets are extremely thin (just 72 pages to reach FLN), thus helping save paper and reduce deforestation.
14.	Life below water	
15.	Life on land	
16.	Peace, justice and strong institutions	Literacy is critical to people's ability to know their rights and engage in civic institutions, including the judicial system.
17.	Partnerships for the goals	ALfA's paired learning process embeds communication and character skills, helping build a generation of collaborators.

# Literacy Matters

“

**Being a non-literate member of a community, has innumerable disadvantages, including the inability to:**



do basic financial transactions



compare the quality/quantity with the price



fill out forms to apply for jobs, loans, services, etc.



comprehend public circulars and articles in the news media



make use of the internet and other technology



comprehend safety directives on medicines, etc



help children with their education



be aware of rights and responsibilities as a citizen of India



pursue employment in medium or high-productivity sectors that require literacy

**Source: India's New Education Policy, Chapter 21**

”

# Synergy Summit 3.0

## Threads

### Public-Private Synergies: Catalyzing Literacy through Collaborative Efforts

- **Focus:** Showcasing successful collaborations between government and corporate sectors in literacy programs.
- **Session Content:** Case studies of successful public-private literacy initiatives.
- Strategies for effective partnership formation and management.
- Discussion on policy frameworks that facilitate public-private collaborations.

### Community Alliances: Empowering Local Networks for Sustainable Literacy Impact

- **Focus:** Strengthening community involvement and local partnerships to create a sustainable impact on literacy.
- **Session Content:** Best practices for engaging local communities in literacy efforts.
- Role of grassroots organizations and community leaders in promoting literacy.
- Tools and methods for assessing and scaling community-based literacy programs.

### Global Partnerships: Adopting International Best Practices for Literacy Advancement

- **Focus:** Learning from international collaborations and implementing best practices in literacy programs.
- **Session Content:** Success stories of global literacy partnerships and initiatives.
- Comparative analysis of literacy strategies across different countries.
- Adapting global best practices to local contexts.

# Program Structure

## CSR/Donor Community

Time IST	Schedule for 23-25 each day
9am to 10 am	Registration & Welcome
10 am to 10.30 am	Address by Chief Guest
10.30 am to 11.45 am	Plenary 1: In-person
11.45 to 1 pm	Plenary 2: In-person
1 pm to 2.30 pm	Lunch & Networking
2.30 pm to 3.45 pm	Plenary 3: Online
3.45 pm to 5 pm	Plenary 4: Online
5 pm to 5.30 pm	Honoring Ceremony
5.30 pm to 6 pm	High Tea & Networking

Witness  
remarkable  
successes in the  
field

Interact with those  
making it happen

Visit public &  
private schools  
embracing  
change

Get informed of  
latest research  
findings

26 September: Optional Field Visit to Government Schools to witness  
impact of a revolutionary new education

## Contact us

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yusra@dignityeducation.org

*Networking Partner*





# CSR/Donor Agencies TAKEAWAYS

## EMPOWERMENT

Understand the needs, data, and gaps in Foundational Literacy & Numeracy and Quality Education (SDG4).

Learn about solutions and their ROIs.

## NETWORKING & SHARING

Network with other CSR heads.

Discover national and international trends in philanthropy.

Share successes and receive certificates.

## PARTNERSHIPS & RECOGNITION

Sign MOUs to collaborate on ready-made projects with governments and NGOs.

Make a large-scale, visible impact. Amplify your impact. Get recognized.



# Introducing Synergy Awards Elevating Education & Literacy



Synergy 3.0 would also celebrate impactful initiatives and achievements in education, focusing on critical goals: promoting innovative pedagogical practices, enhancing

access to quality education, fostering gender equality, driving innovation, and advancing equity and inclusion within learning environments. The award categories include:

- 1. Foundational Learning & Numeracy (FLN) Excellence Award:** Recognizing exceptional dedication and success in promoting foundational literacy and numeracy skills.
- 2. Girl Education Empowerment Award:** Highlighting contributions to advancing girl education and empowering girls to access quality education and reach their full potential.
- 3. Innovative Education Technology Award:** Celebrating innovative use of technology to enhance educational outcomes, with a

- focus on inclusivity and equity.
- 4. Community Engagement in Education Award:** Acknowledging initiatives that engage local communities to support education and enhance learning opportunities.
- 5. Educational Equity and Inclusion Award:** Honoring efforts to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in education, ensuring equal opportunities for all learners and fostering inclusive learning environments.

# Past SPEAKERS Include



**NIXON JOSEPH**

CEO, Children's Love Castles Trust



**ARCHANA JOSHI**

Director  
Deepak Foundation



**K P FABIAN**

Former Ambassador



**THIRUMALA AROHI**

Senior Vice President  
Infosys Ltd.



**KAMAL GAUR**

Deputy Director  
Programs Education  
Save the Children



**SANTOSH PHAD**

Founder  
Thinksharp Foundation



**ANUSHREE MISHRA**

Director of Programs  
Plan International



**SHAVETA SHARMA KUKREJA**

CEO & MD, Central Square Foundation



**PRADEEP KUMAR**

Director, Programs &  
Partnerships, Worldreader



**VAIBHAV CHAUHAN**

Project Manager  
HCL Foundation



**SWATI JHA**

Program Director  
American India Foundation



**NANDITA RAVAL**

Core Team Member  
Piramal Foundation



**HEMANT MADEGOWDA**

Head, CSR  
Bangalore International  
Airport Ltd.



**NEELIMA CHOPRA**

HCL Foundation



**BHASKAR CHATTERJEE**

Chief Executive Officer  
Anil Agarwal Foundation  
(Vedanta Group)



**ASHWINI SAXENA**

Chief Executive Officer  
JSW Foundation



**AZADAR H. KHAN**  
Senior Vice President  
Corporate Relations & CSR  
Sun Pharmaceutical Ind.



**SUDARSHAN SUCHI**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Bal Raksha Bharat



**PRATYUSH DAS**  
Manager  
American Indian  
Foundation



**Amit Chandra**  
CEO, Centre for  
Civil Society



**PROF. PRANATI PANDA**  
National Institute of  
Educational  
Planning & Administration



**ROBIN  
SARKAR**  
Project Director, Shiksha  
Shiv Nadar Foundation



**TSERLING  
YANGDOL**  
Head of Department  
DIET, Leh, Ladakh



**GAMBHIR  
AGARWAL**  
Group Head, CSR  
Relaxo Footwears



**ANTONY  
NELLISSERY**  
Vice President  
CSR, Sterlite Power



**MAMTA  
SAIKIA**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Bharti Foundation



**PREETI  
MUNJAL**  
Executive Director  
IIMPACT



**JOANNE TELSER  
FRERE**  
Director of Program  
Development  
Literacy Chicago



**KUMAR ANURAG PRATAP**  
Vice President & Head  
CSR & Sustainability,  
Capgemini India



**VIKRAM KUMAR**  
Head Partnerships  
& Communication  
NIIT Foundation



**SANDEEP SAHU**  
Co-Founder & Director  
17000ft Foundation



**GAURI MALAVIYA**  
Lead Partnerships  
Thinkerbell Labs

# Just 45 Days to Literacy?

ALfA: India's Fastest Growing Program for Literacy

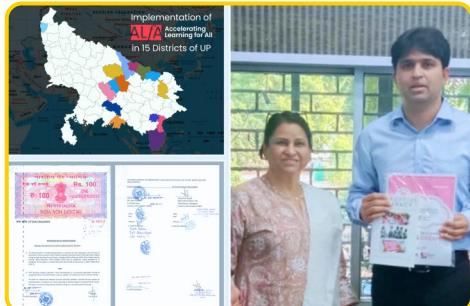
Supported by Evidence from Harvard University

2022  
20 Schools | 2 Districts



2024  
15000 Schools | 28 Districts

## LITERACY OF CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS



Signing MOU with Shri Vijay Kiran Anand\*  
\*Director-General School Education, UP



School Education Program  
in Sambalpur, Odisha



School Education Program  
in Uttar Pradesh

## WOMEN & ADULT LITERACY



Neo-Literate Literacy Program  
in Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh



Mother Literacy in West Bengal



Adult Literacy in Mizoram

## COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS



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



Literacy Camp for children of  
Jawahar Nagar, Lucknow



Community Children reading newspapers  
with understanding

# ALfA Global Learning Lab

**MALDIVES**

Research implementation supported by UNICEF



**KENYA**

Community implementation in Mombasa with PATH Youth NGO



**PERU**

Schools of Iquitos, Peru, in collaboration with Arca Beta



**USA**

Adult Literacy in Chicago, USA, in collaboration with Literacy Chicago



**MALAYSIA**

Schools in Malaysia with Baha'i community



**TRINIDAD & TOBAGO**

Hindu Schools



# Children Read India Rises

## Why ALfA FLN Matters?

Speed is of the essence. India is lagging far behind FLN goals even at half-time for NIPUN Bharat Mission. There are at least 3 reasons why ALfA greatly speeds up learning and makes it more effective:

**'Known to unknown' pedagogy.** Drawing upon children's prior knowledge, using cognitive connections to discover new learning.

**Designed for paired work** Children learn and retain more when they interact with each other.

**Child-led learning process.** Teachers empower children to learn by themselves.



# FAST FLN

- **DISRUPTIVE PEDAGOGY** Children learn in pairs using thin visual booklets that engage children in a self-discovery process to scaffold learning from known to unknown.
- **SLIM & ATTRACTIVE MATERIALS** In the first ten pages, children read, on their own, some 1000 words. From just half page numeracy modules, they learn multiple concepts on their own.
- **SPEED** Children learn FLN skills in just 45 school days compared with 3+ years.
- **CLIMATE CHANGE** ALfA makes low-to-no carbon footprint with its thin booklets and ed-tech solutions. Children carry out twice the written work. No need for workbooks.



- **21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SKILLS** Paired learning allows children to develop the 4C skills of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. The process promotes 4 attitudes and values of character, citizenship, climate consciousness and connectedness (social-emotional-mental well-being).



# Climate Education Through ALfA

Education needs to address the climate crises in new and creative ways, for example, reduce carbon footprint by saving millions of tons of paper and ink wasted each year in printing textbooks and workbooks. Learners also need to become climate actors.

## Climate Footprint

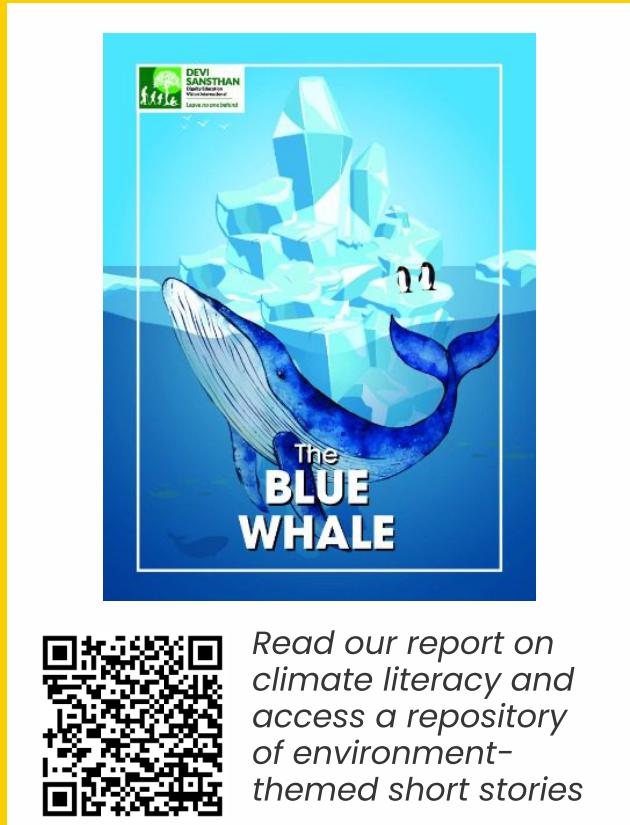
Imagine if we could use 1/10<sup>th</sup> or 1/20<sup>th</sup> of the paper currently used in textbooks and workbooks! ALfA booklets are thin, and paper use is further halved when two learners work as a pair. ALfA digital resources are also freely available.

## Climate Consciousness

Children avoid plastic and learn to select and use sustainable materials like pebbles, shells and leaves for hands-on activities.

## Climate Action

Climate action is integrated in the activities. Further, the learners enact roleplays and read stories that inspire climate action.



The image shows the cover of a children's book titled "The BLUE WHALE". The cover features a large blue whale swimming in the ocean, with a cluster of icebergs above the water. The title "The BLUE WHALE" is written in white capital letters at the bottom right. In the top left corner, there is a logo for "DEVI SANSTHAN" with the text "Learn and Live Together".

Read our report on climate literacy and access a repository of environment-themed short stories



# Women Read, Women Lead

When women can read, they can lead even more widespread change in their communities. Literacy is an inter-generational issue: literate girls become literate women, who in turn ensure a better education of the next generations. At DEVI Sansthan, we seek to invest in both women and girls' education. This has the world's highest returns on investment in development.

Hundreds of millions of girls and women around the world are not able to read, write and do basic arithmetic. Despite the best efforts of many NGOs and governments, numerous roadblocks remain, including ineffective & slow pedagogy, lack of community ownership, and poor coordination between different stakeholders.

At DEVI Sansthan, we are bringing literacy a step closer to being solved by adopting a pedagogical approach that allows women to become literate and numerate in days, not months or years. They also learn digital and financial literacy. The learning builds on what the women already know and uses cognitive mind connections to construct learning. This ensures learning is long-term empowerment, not just a signature.

## Permanent Change: Pedagogy to Policy

### Pedagogical Innovation

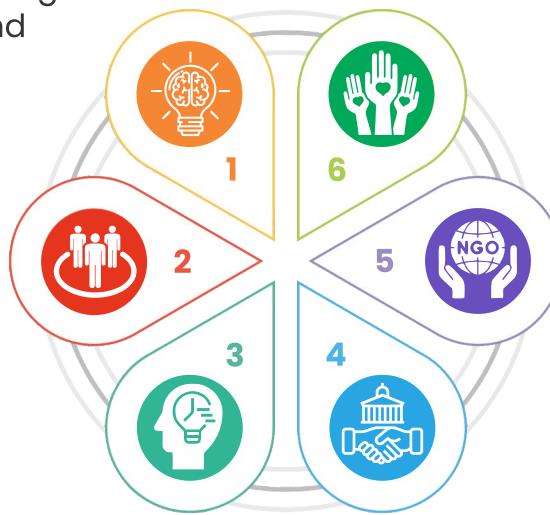
Accelerating Learning for All uses a groundbreaking paired-learning pedagogy. With modules designed to foster gender equality and social inclusion, it fosters collaborative learning.

### Community Ownership

Our literacy work is not just programs, but rather is run by the community, for the community. This often means women take leading roles.

### Speed of Learning

Many literacy programs take more than a year to teach foundational skills. This demotivates many adult learners. In contrast, ALfA requires just 30 instructional hours.



### Mobilising Volunteers

We mobilise students for the Each One Teach One literacy campaign.

### Partnerships with NGOs

We run online & offline training workshops and provide literacy materials to boost the impact of our partners' work.

### Working with Governments

We collaborate with local, state and national governments to help them refine and scale up literacy programs.

# Women Literacy

The Numbers Tell a Story

2  
/3

Two thirds of all illiterate people are women. Around the world, 16% of women cannot read. **UNESCO**

19%

The women's literacy rate in Chad is the lowest in the world. Other such countries include: Mali (22%), Afghanistan (23%) and C.A.R (26%). **World Bank**

10%

Each additional year of schooling boosts a girl's lifetime income by an average of 10%. **Save the Children**

5X

Girls in sub-Saharan Africa are 5 times more likely to be married by the age of 18 if they cannot read. **Save the Children**

## New Education Policy

### Prioritising Adult Literacy

“

Literacy and basic education open up whole new worlds of personal, civic, economic, and lifelong-learning opportunities for individuals that enable them to progress personally and professionally.

”

“

At the level of society and the nation, literacy and basic education are powerful force multipliers which greatly enhance the success of all other developmental efforts.

”

Extensive field studies and analyses demonstrate that volunteerism, community involvement and mobilization are key success factors of adult literacy programmes, in conjunction with political will, adequate financial support, and high-quality capacity building of volunteers.

Strong and innovative government initiatives for adult education – in particular, to facilitate community involvement and the smooth and beneficial integration of technology – will be affected as soon as possible to expedite this all-important aim of achieving 100% literacy.

# Transformational Testimonies

## STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

### Gaurie Singh

#### Grade 8 | Study Hall School

The person I taught was none other than my trusted maid. It was a great experience for me. We had a lot of fun together. She was a very keen and fast learner. After each lesson she used to ask for one more lesson and would extend the lesson 40-50 minutes sometimes.

### Shivangi Kashyap

#### Grade 6 | Loreto Convent

I found a girl called Gunjan who was very eager to study. But unfortunately her parents were not able to send her to school. Gunjan found it really tough in the beginning but she has learned so much that she can now read a newspaper. Through this experience I have got to know Gunjan and her family really well.

### Vidushee Singh

#### Grade 11 | Canossa School

I loved doing this project because I saw the joy and opportunities a person gets by doing this project. For simple things like making groceries list or reading something in the bill she was dependent on others. But now she can do these things on her own. It's not a big deal to spend 10-15 min of your time to help someone become literate.



Want to learn more about how ALfA is making a difference in the lives of women and girls? Read the report.

# Research by DEVI Sansthan Adult Literacy

Our groundbreaking research directly testing the reading ability of 1.06 million adults in Lucknow district to throw light on the literacy crisis.

## Key Findings

- Literacy rates are substantially lower than Census estimates (65% vs 77%)
- There are major caste, gender, age and geographical inequalities in literacy rates.
- Sociodemographic factors interact with each other powerfully, to create compounding effects. For instance, our survey found that just 10% of rural SC/ST 51-60 year old women could read.



Published in two journal articles and an in-depth report:

AUGUST 21, 2021  
**Economic & Political WEEKLY**  
A SANDEEPKAARTIKA PUBLICATION

**EDITORIAL**  
■ Right to Represent's Right to Representation  
**COMMENT**  
■ Afghanistan: Present Tense, Future Imperfect  
**FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK**  
■ Social Research by Trust  
**STRATEGIC AFFAIRS**  
■ Looking Back at the Indo-Soviet Treaty  
**COMMENTARY**  
■ Income Support Schemes: Evaluation of PM KISAN vis-à-vis State Government Scheme  
■ Regulation of Cryptocurrency:  
An Indian Perspective  
■ India-Gulf Labour Migration in the Aftermath of the COVID-19 Pandemic  
■ Nobel in Auction: A Farce into the 2020 Nobel Prize in Economics  
■ Sustaining the Sustainable Development Goals  
**BOOK REVIEWS**  
■ India's Unfolding Realities  
■ Bombay Before Mumbai: Essays in Honour of Jim Moser  
**PERSPECTIVES**  
■ Labour Invisibility' during COVID-19 Times  
**SPECIAL ARTICLES**  
■ Did Employment Rise or Fall in India between 2011 and 2017?  
■ Constitutional Asymmetry in Indian Federalism: The Union Territory Model  
■ The Inconvenient Truth of Illiteracy Inequality  
**CURRENT STATISTICS**

**Policy-induced Invisibility**  
An account of the course of labour policy highlights its role in aggravating the precarity of living conditions for those in informal employment, which culminated in the migrant workers crisis. [page 37](#)

**Federalism and Union Territories**  
The status of union territories is analysed through the principle of weighted and differentiated equality in India, in the context of asymmetrical federalism. [page 53](#)

**Cryptocurrency in India**  
A model legislation regulating all aspects of cryptocurrency is required to recognise it as a legal tender with appropriate safeguards and monitoring mechanisms. [page 18](#)

**Socio-demographics of Literacy**  
A study on adult illiteracy in Lucknow examines the intersectional impacts of gender, geography, caste and age on literacy rates and analyses the factors compounding educational disadvantage. [page 61](#)

**Income Support Schemes**  
The progress of the PM KISAN scheme is critically assessed along with an evaluation of the income support schemes of different state governments. [page 13](#)

JNE

**Journal of New Economics**  
Ideas Really Do Matter in Economics  
Special Issue  
Matching The Core Focus Of COP26  
Volume 1, No. 2, November 2021

**ACCELERATING ADULT LITERACY**

3.44 LAKH CHILDREN BETWEEN 6 & 14  
3.96 LAKH HOUSEHOLDS  
3957 TEACHERS AS SURVEYORS  
3 URBAN WARDS  
8 RURAL BLOCKS  
15.44 LAKH INDIVIDUALS BETWEEN 6-60

**GLOBAL DREAM SURVEY REPORT**

The  
Inconvenient  
Truth of Illiteracy  
Inequality.



**Economic & Political Weekly**

The Inconvenient  
Truth of Indian  
Illiteracy  
Inequality.



**Journal of New Economics,  
Glasgow University**

Accelerating  
Adult Literacy.



**DEVI Sansthan Report**

# Peer Reviewed Article

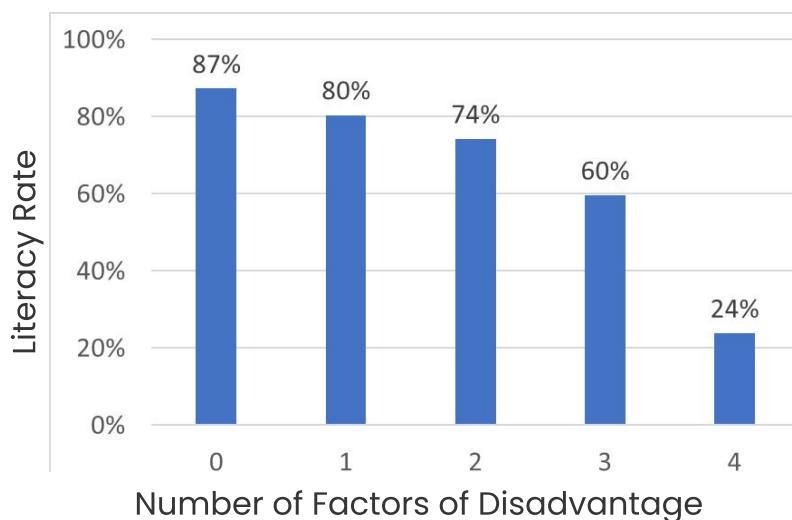
## QUOTES FROM EPW & JOURNAL OF NEW ECONOMICS

“ Much as the impacts of climate change disproportionately affect the disadvantaged around the world, so too there are severe inequalities in literacy rates between different geographical regions, castes, age groups and genders. Strong political will is urgently needed to increase literacy equity and climate resilience. ”

“ Demographic factors have substantial impact on literacy, and also interact strongly: people who experience multiple factors of disadvantage have disturbingly low literacy rates. Rural, 51–60 year old SC/ST women in Lucknow district have a literacy rate of just 10%, far lower than we would expect if the dimensions of disadvantage operated independently. ”

“ This study shows the urgent need for programmes to increase adult literacy, with a focus on underprivileged populations, and particularly those with multiple disadvantages: minorities, oppressed-castes, older and rural women. ”

“ A large body of literature suggests that increasing adult literacy rates boosts school enrolment (Chudgar 2009). Investing in adult literacy thus has intergenerational benefits, as helping adults become literate also catalyses literacy improvement for the next generation. ”



**DEVI's groundbreaking research showed that factors of socio-demographic disadvantage – including age, gender, caste, and geography – compound each other.**

# A Community-based Reading Revolution

Karauni is a small village around 30 kilometres southwest of Lucknow's city centre. Out of a population of 4,365, our survey revealed that 1,211 people aged 7–70 were illiterate in their mother tongue, Hindi; two-thirds of them were women.

With our modest financial and human resources, it was clear that a conventional approach—renting literacy centres, paying tutors, heavily structuring and supervising a program—would not work to reach this large group of people. We started wondering: is it possible for people of all ages and qualification levels to become literacy tutors? Would people be willing to volunteer without a payment?

To begin, we knew we had to motivate people and generate interest. We organised songs and marches for literacy, tapping into local art forms and folklore to mobilise potential

learners and volunteers. This culminated in a village level meeting, gathering curious people to explain the program. It is crucial for literacy movements to generate and harness the power of social momentum.

We found 22 women who were willing to become mentors—and give their time to this cause, without payment. The group was quite diverse: some of them were college graduates, whereas others had only passed Grade 5. Many were young and unmarried, but plenty of older, married women were also there.

We conducted a four-hour training for this group of mentors on how to teach literacy. We provided each with a Literacy Box containing enough materials to teach 20 people: mats, chalk and slates, and the literacy booklets. This tiny group then set forth with a big mission: to make the village literate.



Village leaders, volunteers and government officials pose with the ALfa Literacy materials in front of Karauni school

The mentors, whom we had drawn from several hamlets across the village, started spreading the word amongst their neighbours, relatives, and friends. Quickly and organically, small groups of women started meeting in open spaces or in the mentors' houses, typically for an hour or so each afternoon, to learn how to read and write. Along with learning literacy, these groups provided a conducive environment for socialising and building community networks.

These 22 literacy mentors reported that the first batch of 180 women had become literate in just two months. In August 2015, these women sat the National Literacy Mission test. For some of them, this monitored exam was their first time inside a school! 135 formerly illiterate women passed the test on their first attempt. The women were delighted to receive certificates of literacy from the Government of India—certificates which they could now read.

In subsequent batches, hundreds more have become literate. Many of the neo-literates have continued meeting to further their education, including some learning English and a few pursuing formal qualifications. Some have formed self-help groups and built livelihoods together, running small pickling or craft-making businesses. Most have felt the impact of literacy in multiple spheres of life, from greater domestic dignity to empowerment in broader society.

Karauni stands as a powerful example of what community mobilisation for literacy can achieve. With minimal expenditure and limited external inputs, hundreds of women learnt to read and write within a short period, which ultimately led to greater social and gender equality.

## Learners speak



**Ms. Shanti Devi**

When I go to the hospital I can sign and get the registration slip immediately and this is convenient for me.



**Ms. Nirmala**

Previously I was not able to read and write and used to give thumb impression, but now I can read.

# Hindustan Times

A week ago, 40-year-old Gudiya, a native of Karauni village in Lucknow's Sarojini Nagar block, went to a nationalised bank to inquire about the balance in her savings account. The bank staff told her a figure, but Gudiya insisted he recheck it. When the staff refused, she told him that only that morning she had

received a text message, according to which ₹15,000 had been credited into her account. The staff rechecked and found her to be right. He apologised. 'I told him I wasn't illiterate. I learned how to read and write ever since the Global Dream Literacy Mission started in my village,' Gudiya told HT.

Sunday, September 8, 2019



See more  
news reports

# THE LARGEST SCHOOL IN THE WORLD

## Host for Synergy 3.0



**Late Dr Jagdish Gandhi**  
Founder Manager



**Dr Bharti Gandhi**  
Founder Director



**Dr Sunita Gandhi**  
CEO, DEVI Sansthan,  
Chief Academic Advisor



**Prof. Geeta  
Gandhi Kingdon**  
President & MD



City Montessori School (CMS), is a K12 school in Lucknow, India. It is the world's largest school, a Guinness World Record holder since 1999, and recipient of the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education, 2002.

CMS was founded by Drs. Jagdish and Bharti Gandhi in 1959. CMS upholds the motto of Jai Jagat: 'Let glory be to the entire world'!



DEVI Sansthan—Dignity, Education, Vision International, is a global non-profit founded by Dr. Sunita Gandhi, daughter of the founders of CMS.

DEVI Sansthan has created disruptive solutions to solve the world's biggest crises of foundational literacy and numeracy in education and of climate change through education.



# Global Advisory Committee

**Aïcha Bah Diallo**

Founding Member of  
FAWE, Guinea

**Alesha Anderson**

Senior Program  
Officer at Pro-  
Literacy Worldwide,  
USA

**Alexandre Romanovsky**

Advisor to Companies  
Dedicated to the  
United Nations, USA

**Bill Graham**

Vice Chair, NGO  
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# Amplify Your Work: 10X Good Magazine



## Fast-Tracking Mother-tongue Literacy in the Age of AI & Climate Change

- By Dr. Sunita Gandhi

Accelerating foundational literacy in the age of AI and climate change is vital for empowering individuals and communities to address urgent challenges

In the age of AI and climate change, the need for fast-tracking mother-tongue literacy becomes even more crucial. Climate change poses unprecedented challenges that require informed and engaged individuals to drive sustainable solutions. Foundational



Literacy is at the heart of all SDGs and climate action. It is one action that can bridge the digital divide in the age of AI. Mother-tongue literacy need not take years as it has taken in the past. New tools and a vastly more transformative pedagogy are capable of filling the literacy gap within weeks.

6 | 10XGOOD



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## FAST-FORWARD NIPUN BHARAT: DEVI SANSTHAN'S UNCONVENTIONAL BOLD NEW EDUCATION FOR FLN

Alfa isn't merely an education program; it's a call to action, compelling us to question our long-standing assumptions about what is achievable in the educational landscape

- By Mitali Halder

Change is often met with resistance, a natural reaction to stepping into the unknown. Yet, history has shown that embracing the seemingly impossible can lead to transformative shifts. One such example is ALFA (Accelerated Learning for All). ALFA holds the power to revolutionize education and address India's greatest need in education: Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN).

### Breaking the Mould: Paradigm Shifts That Reshaped History

Throughout history, there have been pivotal moments that reshaped the world by challenging conventional thinking. Consider the once-unthinkable idea of flying – the Wright brothers dared to defy gravity, and their invention transformed the way we traverse the skies.

The automobile was initially deemed impractical and incapable of replacing horse-drawn carriages. Electricity faced doubt and was met with fears of danger. From the civil rights movement to the digital revolution, bold changes have often led to advancements that were previously unimaginable. In science, shifts in paradigms met with initial skepticism but eventually expanded our understanding of the universe.



## 45-Day Literacy Revolution: The Dramatic Impact of an Unconventional Pedagogy

This write-up investigates ALFA (Accelerated Learning for All), a groundbreaking literacy education method, contrasts it with traditional techniques, and emphasizes its capacity to enhance literacy results swiftly and efficiently

Improving literacy rates is a critical step in reducing poverty and promoting economic growth. One extra year of schooling can increase an individual's earning power by 10% on average.  
— The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD: 2019)

"Literacy is a key factor in achieving economic and social development, as it is associated with higher earnings and better employment opportunities. Literacy also has a positive impact on health and social participation, as well as on women's empowerment and gender equality."  
— UNESCO

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## Fulfilling SDG4 with ALFA

By combining pedagogical expertise with technological innovations, ALFA—Accelerating Learning for All accelerates the process of learning, ensuring that the world's children not only learn but do so at a pace that aligns with the urgencies of our times

In the ever-evolving landscape of global development, education stands as the bedrock of progress, the keystone that supports a structure of equality, empowerment, and enlightenment. With the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 at the heart of global educational objectives, the focus is clear: ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Yet, as imperative as this goal is, its realization requires innovations that aren't just transformative but are also agile and adaptive.

Literacy is not just a foundational skill—it's the lifeblood of sustainable development. As we grapple with the challenges of the modern world, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a roadmap to a

better future. Yet, at the core of these 17 global goals lies one crucial enabler: literacy. It's an action with unparalleled return on investment. Whether it's gender equality, reduced inequalities, good health, or quality education, the ability to read and understand sits at the heart of every single SDG.

And this connection extends to even seemingly unrelated SDGs. Consider SDG13, which targets climate action. An informed populace, equipped with literacy skills, is better positioned to understand and act upon the complexities of climate change. They can read, comprehend, and contribute to environmental solutions. In essence, literacy amplifies the efforts to combat climate challenges.



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# Why Lucknow?

After two successful editions of Synergy Summit hosted in India's national capital, the Synergy Summit is heading to Uttar Pradesh, the country's most populous state. Embracing the renowned hospitality of Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh, Synergy 3.0 eagerly awaits your presence.

- Experience firsthand the impact of Alfa on children, including those from vulnerable backgrounds, in both government and private schools.
- Shift the focus of Synergy from metropolitan areas to tier 2 cities and surroundings aspiring for development.
- We would like you to immerse yourself in the rich culture of Lucknow and join us in exploring its famous old-world architecture, renowned globally. Additionally, indulge in some of the most authentic Lucknow delicacies during your visit.



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