



In-person and Online

23-25 September 2024

26 September Field Trip (Optional)

Read. Rise. India.

Foundational Literacy & Numeracy for All





Welcome to SYNERGY 3.0

Literacy is at the heart of all SDGs. It is also the government of India's highest priority in education. India's NIPUN Bharat Mission aims 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-person and online, will undeniably enrich the conversation and leading to critical action. Those attending in-person will be able to witness the fast and holistic ALfA (Accelerating Learning for All) at work, enabling children to become literate and numerate in 45 days versus 3 years or more typically.

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)



Chief Guest Shri Rajnath Singh

Hon. Minister of Defence, India, with Dr. Sunita Gandhi, CEO, DEVI Sansthan

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

The Government is proactively and diligently working to improve FLN outcomes among children as per the visionary approach adopted in National Education Policy, 2020, which gives the highest priority to achieving universal literacy and numeracy in primary schools.

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.



Click or scan the QR Code to listen to Rajnath Singhji's views on ALfa

I want to congratulate Sunita Gandhi for her concept and program ALfa: Accelerating Learning for All that is running in different parts of the country. I hope in the coming times, this program becomes more successful and gets wider reach.

How Literacy is 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.
2. Ending hunger & malnutrition	Ending poverty directly contributes to ending hunger. ¹
3. Good health & well-being	Literacy has a huge impact on lowering child mortality, and increases ability to engage with the healthcare system. ²
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. ³
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. ⁴
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. ⁵
11. Sustainable cities	
12. Responsible consumption & production	Literacy aids greater awareness of environmental issues, and is also critical in reducing population growth, particularly by empowering women to choose their family size. ⁶
13. Climate Action	
14. Life below water	
15. Life on land	Compared to many literacy programs, ALfA booklets are extremely thin (just 72 pages to reach FLN), thus helping save paper and reduce deforestation.
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.

Eminent Speakers



**GAGANPAL
SINGH**

Sr. Program Lead
Vision Spring



**PROF. INDRANI
BHADURI**

Head, Educational
Survey Division NCERT
Ministry of Education,
India



**JATIN
UPADHYAY**

Lead Education
Vertical,
Adani Group



**KANUPRIYA
MISRA**

Education
Specialist,
The World Bank



**LOPAMUDRA
PRIYADARSHINI**

Assistant Vice
President, Hindalco
industries limited



**MANISHA
TRIPATHI**

Regional Director
North American Indian
Foundation



**NIXON
JOSEPH**

CEO,
Childrens Love Castles
Trust



**ROBIN
SARKAR**

Founding Director,
Shiksha Initiative
Shiv Nadar Foundation



**PREETI
MUNJAL**

Executive Director
IIMPACT



**SANDEEP
SAHU**

Co-Founder &
Director
17000 ft Foundation



**SHAWETA
BERRY**

Global Thought
Leader & VP Marketing
Mahanadaya Universal



**COL. DR. ZAHID
SIDDQUI**

Director General
Axis Colleges &
University, Kanpur

Why Literacy Matters

Source: India's New Education Policy, Chapter 21



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

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

The presenters will speak in the Plenaries on timings as below on the threads as relevant on the previous page. The program will be relayed on Zoom for registered participants, and on YouTube/@devisansthan (live) for everyone else to view.

Witness

Interact

Learn

Lead

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

26 September: Join in the optional Field Visit to Government Schools. Learn about a revolutionary new education in action.

Contact us for speaking engagements and other queries

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DEVI SANSTHAN
Dignity Education
Vision International
Leave no one behind





CSR/Donor Agencies TAKEAWAYS

EMPOWERMENT

Understand the needs, data, and gaps in Foundational Literacy & Numeracy and for a Quality Education as per SDG4.

Learn about solutions and their ROI.

NETWORKING & SHARING

Network with other CSR heads.
Discover national and international trends in education philanthropy.
Share successes and receive recognition for your work.

PARTNERSHIPS & RECOGNITION

Sign MOUs to collaborate on ready-made projects with governments.
Make a large-scale, visible impact.
Amplify your impact.
Get honoured for your work.



Get Recognized for Elevating Education & Literacy



Synergy 3.0 also celebrates 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, including but not limited to:

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

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

REAL CHANGE

VISIBLE

IMPACTFUL

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

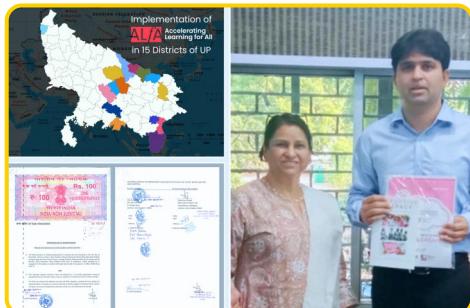
Just 45 Days to Literacy

ALfA: India's Fastest Growing Program for FLN

2022
20 Schools ➤ 2024
15000 Schools

Supported by Evidence from Harvard University

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 and adults



Neo-Literate Literacy Program
in Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh



Mother Literacy in West Bengal



Adult Literacy in Mizoram

Ed Tech / Community / Multi-generational / Out-of-School Children



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



When Children Read India Rises

Speed is of the essence. India is lagging way behind its NIPUN Bharat Mission deadline of 2026/27. There are at least 3 reasons why Alfa greatly speeds up learning of foundational skills in 45 days versus 3 years or more.

'Known to unknown' pedagogy

Children derive first sounds of 'known' pictures from their environment, then add the first sounds to make real words from day 1. No rote learning of the alphabet first, or letter-sound associations. Saves one year or more. Speeds up learning.

Paired work

Children learn better and faster, and they retain more when they learn in interaction with each other in a 1:1 setting. They also learn to collaborate and communicate in an inclusive classroom.

Child-led learning

Teachers are galvanisers; they empower children to learn by themselves, with each other. When children lead their own learning, they learn more, faster.



High Impact | Low-Cost

- **HIGH IMPACT** The cost:benefit ratio of an ALfA program is 1:800. The best programs as per Copenhagen Consensus 2023 have a cost:benefit ratio of 1:105.
- **LOW COST** The literacy booklets are just 24-40 pages long depending upon language, The numeracy books are 16-24 pages long, that's all. Each book is shared among two children, making them highly cost-effective. Compare these with 150-300 pages of textbook / workbook combined in typical year long programs.



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.

LOW CLIMATE FOOTPRINT

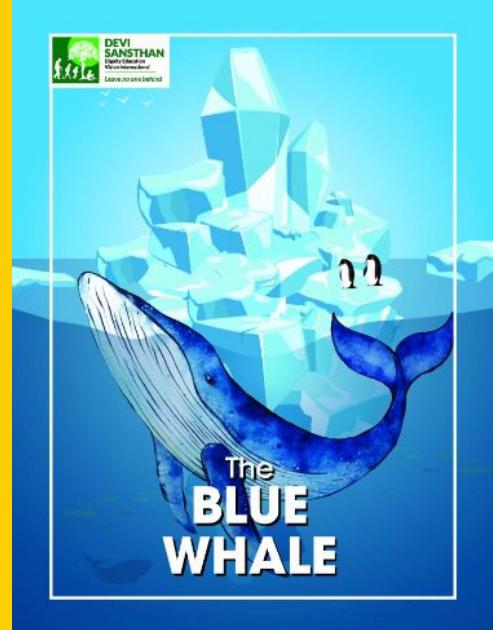
Imagine if we could use 1/10th or 1/20th of the paper currently used in textbooks and workbooks! ALfA booklets are thin, and paper use is further halved when two learners work as a pair. No need for workbooks. ALfA digital resources are also freely available making a low-to-no additional carbon footprint.

CLIMATE CONSCIOUSNESS

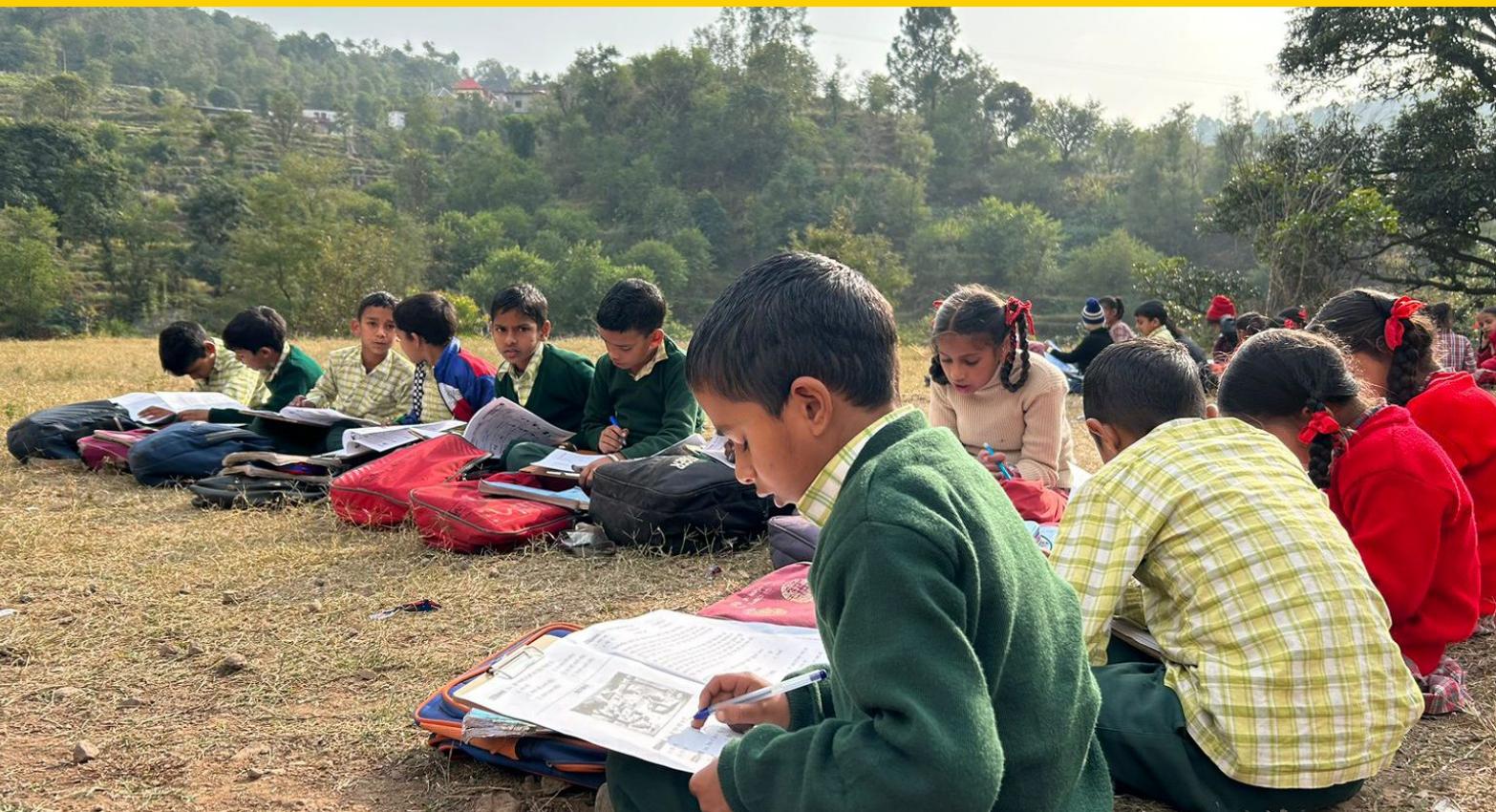
Children avoid plastic and learn to select and use sustainable materials for activities.

CLIMATE ACTION

Climate action is integrated. Learners enact roleplays and read stories that inspire climate action.



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.

System-wide Change: Pedagogy to Policy

Pedagogical Innovation

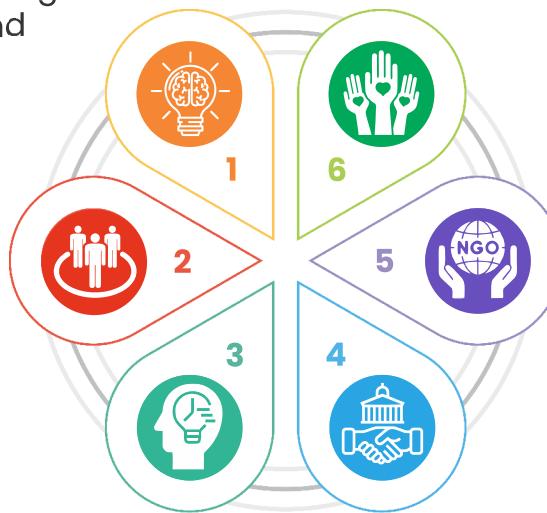
Accelerating Learning for All uses a groundbreaking paired-learning pedagogy. With modules designed to foster gender equality and social inclusion, it fosters collaborative learning.

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 Tribes: 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

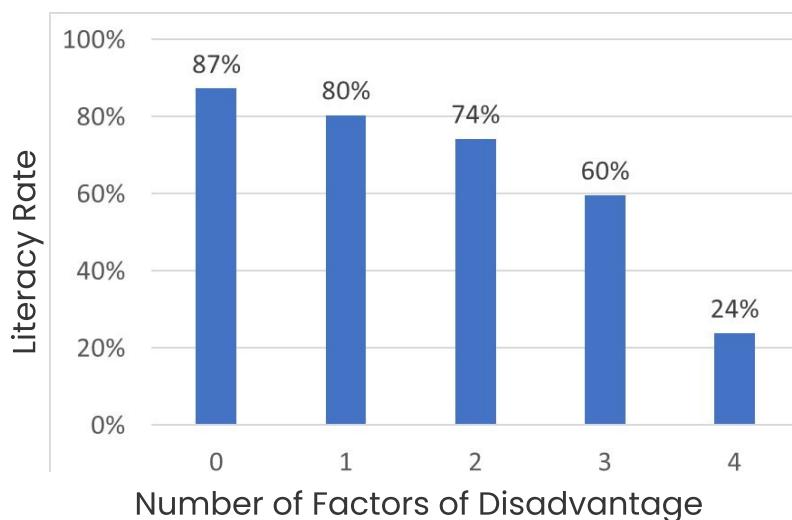
QUOTES FROM EPW & JOURNAL OF NEW ECONOMICS

“ 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-
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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 equips people with the knowledge and critical thinking skills needed to understand the consequences of climate change, protect their families and communities from the consequences of climate change, and actively participate in climate action initiatives.



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.

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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.

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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.



Read. Rise. India.

Foundational Literacy & Numeracy for All

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Participants may attend online. Link will be provided after registration.



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