

## Successful Literacy Campaigns in the World

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### Abstract

*Although efforts to combat illiteracy in the Arab world began several decades ago, the illiteracy rate in Arab countries is one of the highest in the world, as there are more than 70 million illiterate people in Arab countries. By contrast, many countries in the world have succeeded in eradicating adult illiteracy within a few decades. The study reviews the experiences of countries that have succeeded in eradicating adult illiteracy, such as the United States, Russia, China, North Korea, South Korea, Vietnam, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, Tibet, Nepal, Nigeria, Panama, Brazil, and Mexico, and the success factors of those countries in eradicating illiteracy, the strategies they followed in eradicating illiteracy, and the obstacles that prevent eradicating adult illiteracy and how Arab countries can benefit from the experiences of other countries in eradicating illiteracy.*

### Introduction

Although efforts to combat illiteracy in the Arab world began a long time ago, the illiteracy rate in the Arab world is one of the highest in the world. As there are more than 70 million illiterate people in the Arab world. On the other hand, many countries such as Russia, China, Korea, Vietnam, Panama, and others, succeeded in eradicating adult illiteracy within a few decades. The twentieth century witnessed many campaigns for eradicating adult illiteracy, such as the literacy campaign in the former Soviet Union (1919-1939), the major literacy campaign in Vietnam (1945-1977), in China (1950-1980), in Cuba. (1961), in Burma in the sixties and eighties, and Brazil (1971-1981). Hence, this study aims to: (i) Review the experiences of countries that have succeeded in eradicating adult illiteracy, such as the United States, Russia, China, North Korea, South Korea, Vietnam, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, Tibet, Nepal, Nigeria, Panama, Brazil, and Mexico. (ii) Review the success factors of those countries in eradicating Illiteracy (iii) The methods used to eradicate illiteracy (iv) Obstacles that prevent adult literacy (v) How can Arab countries benefit from the experiences of other countries - especially poor countries - in eradicating illiteracy.

As a matter of fact, eradicating adult literacy has benefits for individuals and societies. In a study conducted by Padak and Rasinski (1997), students who learned to read and write reported that their self-confidence increased, they became better parents, they obtained better jobs, and became better social leaders. The learners reported that their basic skills, self-esteem and problem-solving ability, their involvement in community affairs, parenting skills and confidential relationships, and their children's desire to learn had increased. Adults and children enrolled in family literacy programs noticed an improvement in their attitudes toward learning, their reading achievement, their ability to write, their knowledge of science and mathematics, and an improvement in their status at work and their satisfaction with work. Families learn to value education and become more interested in schools, children's achievement improves, family members become closer, read more, and exhibit more educated behavior at home.

Padak and Rasinski (1997) found that literacy programs have a positive impact on a number of social problems, such as health and nutrition problems, school dropout rates, low academic achievement, parental interaction with adolescents, unemployment, dependence on social security, and social isolation. The benefits of literacy programs in the workplace include an increase in the level of basic skills, gaining self-confidence and self-esteem, communication at work and among individuals, improved attitudes towards continuing education, improved performance at work, motivation, gaining confidence in self-directed learning, and a decreased fear of learning new skills, changed attitudes toward learning in general, increased ability to adapt to changes, trust in co-workers, and interest in the industry.

The following is a review of the experiences of the United States, Russia, China, North Korea, South Korea, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Tibet, Nepal, Nigeria, Panama, Brazil, and Mexico in eradicating illiteracy.

### (1) United States

Between 1910-1935 there was a campaign to eradicate illiteracy in the southern United States. The campaign relied mainly on volunteers who worked in night and summer schools and cotton mills, and were called Opportunity schools. There have been similar efforts at functional literacy among adults living in rural areas, such as the Alabama Literacy Campaign of 1915-1935, and more recent efforts at functional literacy in rural Jackson and Clay counties in Tennessee. Common features between the two campaigns include the enthusiasm and dedication of those who provided financial support, and the use of volunteers to teach in the program.

Among the organizations that carry out literacy campaigns in the United States are Literacy Corps, such as the Pennsylvania Literacy Corps, which is affiliated with the Office of Literacy and Adult Basic Education of the Pennsylvania Department of Education and is supported by the Pennsylvania Adult Education Act of 1986. The Pennsylvania Literacy Corps has a partnership with institutions of higher education and provides basic education and literacy to adults with the aim of getting college students involved in local efforts to overcome the problem of illiteracy, especially since there are 4 million adults in Pennsylvania who need to develop their basic skills.

The Pennsylvania Literacy Corps is made up of volunteers who serve adults on an individual level. It provides grants to its partners in literacy eradication from educational institutions to support the training and supervision of literacy volunteers from university students. These students enroll in a credit-hour course that prepares them to work with adults who need basic skills and want to continue studying for GED and English as a second language, enroll in family literacy programs, and develop job readiness skills and improve on the job. Students are distributed with adult learners. Partners from higher education and literacy supervise educational activities. To complete the Literacy Corps course requirements, students must work as volunteers for at least 40 hours in literacy work. But many students continue to volunteer even after completing the course. Many of them change their future plans and enter the field of adult education as a result of the experiences they had in the Literacy Corps. Some of them get jobs in literacy programs in which they volunteer for pay. In 1999-2000, 21% of volunteers volunteered between 41-70 hours in the first semester. Some of them have volunteered for three years since the beginning of their participation. In 1998, volunteers constituted 81% of those responsible for literacy in the state of Pennsylvania, which enabled those responsible for basic education and adult literacy to serve a larger number of adults, provide more individual-focused services, and provide a wider range of available services. They provided the learners with an individual-centered education, flexibility in scheduling services at appropriate times and comfortable places for adults, which increased the opportunities for adults to participate in the program, and the specificity of the services provided on an individual basis (for each study there is a teacher), which encouraged the learners to participate, care, and personal support, which motivated the learners. And make them continue to receive services.

In 1983, President Reagan announced the Adult Literacy Initiative. As a result, many new organizations and groups joined those who had been carrying out literacy efforts for a long time. Efforts at the beginning of the era focused on strengthening literacy programs through volunteers. The Literacy Eradication Alliance, in cooperation with the American Association of Advertising Agencies, launched an advertising campaign broadcast to the public throughout America aimed at opening registration for volunteers to teach reading to adults. The Commercial Council for Active Reading Education, formed by Harold McGraw in early 1984, encouraged companies and institutions to support adult education programs in their local communities. In the late 1980s, workplace reading instruction became a priority across the country. Companies have begun to feel the need to eradicate functional illiteracy, especially with technological advancement.

The United States pays special attention to eradicating adult illiteracy in rural areas. Many adult education programs are used in rural areas, such as: (i) Programs that rely on volunteers who work with adults. These programs serve adults whose education is less than the fourth grade of primary school (ii). Competency-based programs. She works with adults who have acquired basic reading skills and need advanced study skills in order to acquire job skills. (iii) Programs directed at individuals, focusing on teaching the reading skills that each of them needs, independent of any context. (iv) Programs directed at local groups that help adults determine their educational needs on the basis of the standards of their communities. It provides students with an education that does not have an academic focus (v) post-literacy programs and provides new learners with the opportunity to complete their education, practice new skills, and make positive changes in their lives. It aims to maintain the reading skills they have acquired. Among

adult literacy programs in rural areas of the United States, the Central Alaska Correspondence Study Guide for grades 1-12 provides a general framework for rural residents on how to complete a free correspondence course. A teleteacher system, a telephone-based system in Virginia, enables rural adults to get academic assistance around the clock. There is a program in Alabama that uses an educational television network throughout the state, in addition to learning centers and home tutors.

There is a weekend program in New Jersey that provides counseling services, supports independent study projects, and gives exams in various courses. The Communi-Link project reaches 26 rural communities in 14 states in the western United States. It is a system that links different organizations together. It works to help rural communities improve the economic and social conditions of their residents by expanding basic education opportunities for adults. In Pennsylvania, there is a project to use regional resources to teach reading in rural areas and a Grass Roots Alternative Diploma Study project. Rural literacy programs also use technology to teach reading to adults, such as films, newspapers, radio, CDs, audio tapes, various periodicals, and satellite broadcasting. In the United States, there are about 1,700 community colleges that carry out literacy operations.

Successful literacy programs are characterized by a focus on local needs, satisfying the expectations of their clients, cooperation between agencies, supporting the benefits of the program in clear language, involving members of local communities in development, and considering the evaluation of adult education programs in rural areas as the basis for the success of these programs. One of the factors that limit the success of literacy programs is insufficient funding.

## (2) Russia

In the 19th century, Peter the Great introduced Cyrillic Russian letters and opened the first public schools. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the peasant school system expanded, and distance education appeared. However, meeting the growing demand for education was not possible, because the Tsar's government placed restrictions on cultural development.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, efforts to combat real illiteracy began in Russia. The percentage of educated people in 1919 was only 22%. Between 1918-1920, the number of schools increased to 13,000 schools, with 2 million students enrolled. There was a need to eradicate professional illiteracy. Factory and workshop schools were established for four years in 1921. In 1939 (i.e. twenty years later), the percentage of educated people in the Soviet Union rose to 81.2%. Since 1939, efforts to eradicate illiteracy have been concentrated in rural areas. The numbers of people of non-Russian nationalities were very large. Women's education became a major priority after the revolution. New learners received guidance on what to read and how to take notes. In 1959 (i.e. 40 years later), the literacy rate reached 99.3% among males, and 97.3% among females between the ages of 9-49 years.

The Russian government organizes and funds all adult education programs. It was free for adult learners. The students were taught at times appropriate for them. Formal and informal education as a whole constitute the adult education system. The programs of formal adult education schools integrated adult education courses within the framework of secondary, vocational and higher education. The curricula of evening education, correspondence education and day education were the same. The number of adults enrolled in these schools reached 13 million Soviet citizens in 47,000 people's universities. These universities combined the characteristics of formal and informal education. Although there are specific curricula and study programs, they do not provide standardized, codified information. Many students enrolled in it to prepare for exams given at the workplace or at school, and the certificates for completing the study requirements that students obtained from popular universities did not grant any additional privileges or rights. Museums, libraries, and clubs also offered formal and informal programs for adults. Labor unions played a greater role in providing workplace programs that were primarily aimed at improving worker productivity.

Adult education programs in Russia had multiple goals, such as: eradicating illiteracy, raising occupational skills level, completing secondary education by 100%, raising the political and ideological level, encouraging cultural enrichment and the constructive use of leisure time.

The factors for Russia's success in eradicating illiteracy can be summarized as follows: (a) The intense desire of illiterate people to study; (b) The simultaneous eradication of illiteracy among learners and their general education; (c) Social, economic and radical changes as the campaign was at the state level; and (d) Training of teachers to teach reading Writing for all nationalities.

### (3) China

Literacy campaigns in China have been concentrated in rural areas. The problem of literacy in rural areas fell within the framework of general reform in China. The illiteracy rate decreased from 80% in 1949 to 20% in 1988. But there are still 230 million illiterate people, including 72 million illiterate people aged 15-40 years. Among the negative factors that hinder the eradication of illiteracy in China is that the vast majority of illiterate people are disadvantaged, who need education and live in remote areas, the low morale of educators in charge of the education process, and the lack of sufficient resources. So the Chinese government established a sequential system of adult education. Among the factors that helped in the process of eradicating illiteracy in China: farmers' awareness of the fact that production depends on science and technology, that education improves living conditions in the countryside, the universalization of primary education, and the existence of an integrated system of education in the countryside.

In the year 2000, China announced its efforts to universalize 9 years of compulsory education and adult literacy. Among the patterns used in adult education in youth are free-time adult education, such as night schools, reading groups, individualization of training, and a combination of full-time and part-time education (i.e. free-time study) and full-time study. The state sets the general goals of education, and local governments set their own policies and methods. Social forces that eradicate illiteracy include primary schools, youth associations, and women's organizations. There are a number of projects that supported the eradication of illiteracy, such as the Hope Project, which began in 1989 to help children who dropped out of school due to poverty, especially in remote areas. The aim of this public charitable project is to allow children to return to school to complete at least their primary education. The project supports student education, builds schools, and provides them with writing tools and books. In 2002, it received about \$242 million in donations from individuals, government institutions, and private companies in China and abroad, which contributed to the establishment of more than 8,000 primary schools throughout the country and benefited about two million students.

### (4) North Korea

Adult illiteracy was eradicated first, then efforts were focused on raising the general knowledge level of workers to the level of university graduates. The first phase of eradicating adult illiteracy ended in 1949, with the establishment of institutes for literacy campaigns. In the second phase, between 1949-1959, the number of popular primary schools in workshops, factories, and residential areas was increased. These schools aimed to prevent students from returning to illiteracy again. Between 1960 and the mid-1970s, middle schools for workers flourished. The goal of the next stage was to rationalize the entire society, that is, to raise the cultural and artistic level of workers to the level of university graduates. Colleges attached to factories were established. Workers could enroll in studies without having to interrupt productive activities. Colleges for farmers and fishermen, evening university education, and correspondence education were also established.

### (5) South Korea

South Korea has witnessed a radical change in illiteracy rates over the past 60-70 years. In the 1930s, the illiteracy rate exceeded 70%, but now it is less than 2%. How was South Korea able to get rid of illiteracy in a relatively short time? There are several factors: The first is the value system of the Korean people. Education has been at the top of the priorities of many Koreans throughout history. People strive to educate their children even if this leads to a lack of food. They believe that the return on education is higher than the return on any other investment in children. Due to the strong relationship between parents and children, parents have always been willing to sacrifice themselves for their children's education. The second factor is the ease of learning the Korean alphabet. It is a scientific phonetic language consisting of ten vowels and 14 consonants, which makes it easy to teach and learn. Third, after Korea's liberation from Japan in 1945, the great expansion of primary education led to all children being able to read. The social climate also expects everyone to read and write, and this motivates people to learn to read. An adult who did not have the opportunity to learn when he was young is usually ashamed of himself and tries hard to learn when the opportunity is available. In South Korea, there are non-profit organizations that rely on volunteers and help adults learn. There are institutes that educate illiterate and socially disadvantaged people, especially women. The differences between women and men are no longer a social problem at all. In the past, girls had to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their male brothers or for the sake of the family and be the first to be targeted for leaving education. But now there are no differences in primary and secondary education. In

addition to the above, in the fifties and sixties of the twentieth century, the Korean government launched campaigns to eradicate illiteracy throughout the country, and these campaigns were successful. In 1990, the literacy rate reached 99.1% among males and 93.5% among females. In 1995, the percentage of learners was 99.3% male and 96.7% female. That is, the percentage of male learners increased by 0.2%, and female learners by 3.2%. This reduced the gap between the percentage of male and female learners.

#### (6) Vietnam

Although literacy efforts in Vietnam were slow until 1955 due to the war, there was a strong incentive for literacy after the war. Vietnam was able to eradicate the illiteracy of the vast majority of adults in 1958 due to encouraging volunteers to teach literacy courses in the homes, markets, and other local environments. The Vietnamese government launched the "Education for All" campaign, which was essential for human development. The government and the people invested all capabilities in personnel, financial resources and mental endeavors in every component of the "Education for All" campaign. Over the past ten years, the Vietnamese government had allocated about a third of the general education and training budget to primary education. The fund allocated for primary education donated by society in general and individuals in particular is equivalent to the budget allocated by the state for primary education. The Vietnamese government plans to increase the education and training budget from 15% of the state's general budget in 2000 to 18% in 2005 and to more than 20% in 2010. Vietnam completed universal primary education for children between the ages of 6-14 in 2000. In the coming era, along with literacy campaigns, universal primary education will be supported to ensure that 99% of the children between the ages of 6-11 are enrolled in school. The Vietnamese government is committed to universalizing secondary education and raising the number of students of secondary education age from 74% in 2000 to 80% in 2005 and 90% in 2010.

#### (7) Bangladesh

There are about 34,000 one-room schools in Bangladesh run by the Bangladesh Rural Development Commission. The number of students enrolled (the vast majority of whom are girls) is about one million poor children of landless peasants. These schools were established in 1985 to educate children between the ages of 8-10 who had never attended school or dropped out of regular schools. The number of students in each school is between 30-33 students sitting on mats. These small schools were established near villages to shorten transportation time. Students study at school for between 4-5 hours because the children help their families with household chores.

#### (8) India

Establishing classrooms amid crowded train station platforms may seem strange. But this is the only means by which Indian children, who make a living by begging, polishing shoes, and carrying luggage at train stations in India, can enroll in basic education. The first person to implement this idea was a schoolteacher in the city of Bhubaneswar in the state of Orissa, where they bring the school to where the children are - on train station platforms - where they mix storytelling, singing and dancing in reading, writing and arithmetic lessons.

#### (9) Indonesia:

In a country with a population of 220 million, education is considered a means of human and national development. The system is responsible for serving 95 million people aged between birth and 22 years old. But the numbers who have been able to benefit from this service are still few. About half of them did not receive this service in 2000. Most of them range in age from birth to 6 years and 19 to 22 years. The category that reflects the state policy that made primary education a priority is the category between 7-12 years. As more than half of the service is directed to this category.

Sunrise Indonesia Children's Organization tries to meet the educational needs of street children. This organization tries to prevent children from leaving school in order to beg in the streets to help support their families who live below the poverty line by providing grants to them from kindergarten to secondary school. Since its establishment in 1999, the program has provided scholarships to 900 children. The program maintains close relationships with children's families, teachers, and schools to monitor students' progress at school.

The NFE organization is trying to achieve several goals in Indonesia related to all age groups. It provides services in human development for young and old age groups or continuing education. It offers

three programs: literacy eradication, nine-year basic education, and continuing education. Illiteracy eradication programs target the age group between 10-44 years and use several approaches called functional illiteracy. To support nine-year basic education programs, "A" and "B" educational packages are used to target hard-to-reach groups between 7-15 years. Continuing education programs use a number of approaches to form a group of craftsmen and professionals.

To develop the program, NFE provides educational services through 22.5 thousand vocational training courses and about 1,500 learning centers in local communities, and a thousand sets of educational packages A, B, and C, provided by 3,246 educational supervisors in local communities and 2,772 field employees. The program supports five regional centers, 21 centers in the provinces, and 256 development centers in the regions to develop education in local communities.

Primary education is provided both formally and informally. Non-formal primary education is provided through the Kejar Paket A, while the Group B educational package is designated for intermediate education. Bags A and B are designated for groups that do not receive adequate services, such as economically and socially disadvantaged children in cities and the countryside, children living in remote areas, and nomadic children. The category of economically disadvantaged children includes working children, street children, children in prostitution, children who smuggle drugs, and children imprisoned due to conflicts between armies.

As for adult literacy services, they are provided through functional literacy programs, where adults learn the principles of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The content fits the needs of their daily lives. For example, adult fishermen learn to count the price of the fish they catch per day. They learn to read Roman letters by reading the names of fishing vessels and writing the names of some types of fish. This way, new learners feel the practical uses of the numbers and letters they are learning. Since illiteracy rates among women in Indonesia are high in rural areas, the plan includes a number of serious attempts that focus on how long literacy programs relate to the needs of rural women.

#### **(10) Pakistan**

UNICEF has started a joint project with Boy Scouts in Pakistan's Balochistan province to help more girls attend school. The aim of the project was to reduce the illiteracy rate among females in the province, which has now reached less than 10%. The scouts would go from house to house in the villages to monitor the girls' attendance at school and talk to the heads of families to persuade them to allow their daughters to attend school. In the first year, 2,500 girls enrolled in the school.

#### **(11) Tibet**

Reports from the Tibet Autonomous Region indicate that 28 provinces have achieved the goal of universalizing six years of compulsory education, and 8 provinces have achieved the goal of eliminating illiteracy. Dangxiong County was the first county to achieve the goal of universalizing six years of primary education among 25 counties that depend on livestock herding. Chendguan District was characterized by the development of a nine-year compulsory education system.

#### **(12) Nepal**

In Nepal - which has the lowest income in the world - illiteracy rates are very high. It is about 65% among males and 82% among females. As is the case in many countries of the world, women are excluded from the formal education system. However, the benefits of education are many. Educated women become more open to new practices and change, have a greater sense of self-confidence, participate in collective decision-making – and contribute to the development of the individual and society. The literacy program reflects Pact's conviction that grassroots organizations can play a major role in creating better social and economic conditions.

Pact maintains a partnership system with more than 1,100 non-governmental organizations. She headed the largest literacy campaigns in Nepal. Over three years, it trained more than 600 trained trainers and more than 19,000 facilitators to teach reading to 550,000 women and girls, most of whom live in remote rural areas. While the women and girls were learning to read, the NGOs gained basic project implementation skills such as supervising staff and preparing reports on funding. NGO project supervisors and class facilitators participated in nine-day workshops to ensure that village-level learning reflected the literacy goals of participation, raising awareness and instilling confidence.

Informal teaching methods were used in the classroom, including small and large group activities, peer tutoring, reading and writing games, and group discussions. There were three follow-up points to ensure that classroom instruction and the methods used in it achieved the goals. Initially, a Pact consultant or trainer trained the facilitators. After that, during the literacy program, NGO supervisors made bi-monthly field visits. Pact consultants or staff observed the program twice during the six-month study cycle. Finally, in the middle of the program, the facilitators and supervisors received a two-day training to learn about the problems they faced in managing the classes and to provide additional training.

The secret behind the strong impact of the literacy program was linking women to development programs. Non-governmental organizations linked women to development programs being implemented in their areas immediately after they finished literacy courses. In response to the need of female graduates to raise their standard of living, Pact developed a curriculum for eradicating their professional illiteracy based on self-education to contribute to women's participation in the activities of small enterprises.

Pact held 27 training-of-trainers workshops, each lasting 9 days, with 30 trainers in each. It has trained more than 19,000 villagers as facilitators who use non-formal educational methods adapted to adult learning styles, thus increasing the capacity of NGOs. It also trained 1,700 employees working in non-governmental organizations to monitor and supervise 20,000 literacy classes. With Pact staff and supervisors observing each class twice. Of the 555,000 women who enrolled in the program, 75% continued studying, and 63% of them succeeded throughout the program. It trained 500 non-governmental organizations in implementing effective programs through direct experiences in managing literacy programs that draw their strength from the community, with an emphasis on responsibility, consistency, and feedback to donors and the community. It encouraged the creation of networks of non-governmental organizations that could support future literacy efforts. It encouraged a number of literacy groups to establish savings and credit organizations focused on mobilizing savings within the group and setting the ground rules for the activities that came into being. It provided the means by which women could begin to work collectively for social change in hundreds of communities.

### **(13) Nigeria**

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. The Nigerian government has established the Nomadic Education Authority to ensure that they receive education. The authority had to overcome two obstacles: the mobile nature of the population and their total dependence on child labor. It established permanent schools, mobile classes, and outdoor classes, from which about 15,000 nomadic students graduated.

### **(14) Panama**

People's education began in Panama after it gained independence in 1903. These efforts were guided by the paternalistic view of the goals of education, which became clear in the comments of the first meeting of the First Educational Association in Panama, which was held in 1913. In the 1920s, Panama's education system was designed to help ambitious and capable individuals seeking social mobility move forward. One of the most prominent priorities of all successive governments was developing a system of public primary education by the end of the 1930s, to which a quarter of the state budget was allocated. The number of students enrolled in primary education doubled between 1920-1934. In 1934, the illiteracy rate among adults reached about 70%, but it decreased within a decade to about half of the population. In the 1990s, the illiteracy rate decreased to 28%, but it did not witness a significant improvement in the 1960s, when it was only 27%. In the seventies, it decreased to 8% among adults. In the 1980s, the illiteracy rate among individuals over the age of ten reached 13%. Illiteracy rates between males and women were close. But there was a disparity between cities and villages. The percentage of educated people in cities reached 94%, while in the countryside it was less than 62%. Enrollment in primary school was compulsory for children between 6-15 years of age or until the end of primary school. It was followed by two years of secondary education programs: an academic program and a vocational program.

A large percentage of the government budget was allocated to education, amounting to about 15-20% of national government spending in the mid-eighties. About a third of what the government spends on education is allocated to primary education. 20% was allocated to both secondary and university education. The expansion in the number of students enrolled in education was accompanied by an expansion in school facilities and the number of teachers. In the seventies and eighties of the twentieth century, the number of teachers became of great importance, and the ratio of teachers to students at all levels became between 19-26 students in the mid-eighties.

### (15) Brazil

The illiteracy rate in Latin American countries decreased from 28% in 1970 to 19% in 1980 (i.e., it decreased by 9% over ten years). Where illiteracy wiped out 2 million adults. The highest rates of illiteracy were in rural areas and among females and ethnic minorities. Efforts to eradicate illiteracy were not effective enough. Latin American countries developed a plan to eradicate illiteracy between the years 1986-2000, which included eradicating the illiteracy of one million people per year and eliminating illiteracy in the year 2000. To reduce the high dropout rates from school due to poor families' dependence on the income they receive from their children's work, the Bolsa Escola program pays a cash stipend to families whose children attend school regularly. It pays the family a monthly sum of \$5 per child, with a maximum of \$15 per month. These amounts are paid to mothers in the form of bank cards. In order for a family to be entitled to this amount, it must have children between the ages of 6-15 years, its income must be less than half of the minimum wage, it must have a job, or it must be looking for work, and the child must not miss school more than two days a month.

### (16) Mexico

Although education is not the main focus of the government's Progresas program, it is one of the three main focuses of the program. Families that send their children to school regularly receive cash amounts, and also receive primary health care fees and monthly food aid. For every child under the age of 18 in the third to ninth grades, the family receives a monthly grant of 7 US dollars, which increases as the student advances in his studies to the higher grades.

### Conclusion

Education is a means of human and national development and improves the living conditions of citizens. In order to increase economic productivity, spark political change, increase social justice, and improve the quality of living, adult illiteracy in Arab societies must be eradicated. With technological progress, there is a need to eradicate functional illiteracy in addition to craft illiteracy.

To combat adult illiteracy in the Arab world, it is necessary to develop an action plan based on a clear, effective, and sustainable political will. It is necessary for the plan to be unified and comprehensive and focus on eradicating female illiteracy, eradicating illiteracy in rural and remote areas, providing basic education for farmers, factory workers, fishermen, nomadic Bedouins, street and poor children, encouraging continuing education for dropouts, and linking learners to development programs.

The literacy plan requires developing curricula and educational materials that are based on competencies and appropriate to the characteristics of learners, their environments, and the needs of their daily lives, and combine teaching reading, acquiring skills, and eradicating functional illiteracy. It is necessary to teach adults in their free time, such as night schools, setting up groups to teach reading, individualizing education, using a combination of full-time and part-time education, and informal teaching methods in education that include activities for small and large groups, peer teaching peers, and using reading and writing games, group discussions, integrating educational activities with entertainment and artistic activities, enabling the elderly to interact with each other and provide moral support to each other, and helping students who stopped studying several times and returned to school to link what they learned during periods of regularity and interruption.

It is necessary to establish literacy centers in workplaces, schools, factories, farms, workshops, residential areas, companies, community colleges, museums, libraries and clubs, establish one-room schools in rural areas, and establish colleges for farmers and fishermen, in addition to evening university education and correspondence education.

Implementing literacy campaigns requires the provision of the necessary infrastructure, including reading books for beginners and educational materials, a large number of literacy teachers and supervisors, providing good transportation at all times, and training those responsible for educating adults in how to teach adults.

To begin implementing the literacy action plan, it is necessary to coordinate government and community efforts at all levels to achieve the greatest possible effectiveness and raise the level of citizen participation. It requires increasing public awareness of the extent of the problem in the Arab world, and introducing Arab societies to literacy programs through print and visual media.



It is necessary to launch an advertising campaign broadcast to the public via satellite channels aimed at opening registration for volunteers from university students, scouts, and members of the armed forces to teach reading to adults. Encouraging volunteers to teach literacy courses in homes, markets, and other local environments. With their training before starting to teach reading and writing to adults. Making student volunteering to eradicate adult illiteracy part of the university graduation requirements.

There are a number of major international efforts to eradicate illiteracy, such as the International Task Force on Literacy, which is an alliance of 35 international non-governmental organizations that works on literacy and adult education. This coalition develops and implements strategies to help countries prepare regional workshops, national plans, structures that support the plan, technical support, and national discussion groups, conducts practical research on women's education and educational developments, uses national languages, identifies educational programs adapted to the living conditions of residents in rural areas, and trains teachers, distribute educational materials, exchange information, educate the public and arouse public opinion.

It should be noted that the decline in the level of illiteracy in various countries of the world was not the result of eradicating adult illiteracy, but rather from the expansion of children's education. As many countries have made primary education compulsory, it is necessary for Arab ministries of education to issue laws that make primary education compulsory for children between the ages of 6-15 years.

A large percentage of the state's general budget is allocated to education in general and primary education in particular, as did many countries in the world such as Korea, Panama and Vietnam. It is necessary to collect donations from citizens, governmental and non-governmental organizations to contribute to financing literacy campaigns, and to give poor families whose children's work prevents them from attending school symbolic cash amounts in exchange for sending their children to school regularly, paying primary health care fees and monthly food aid for them.

In order for adult education programs to achieve the desired purposes for both the individual and society, there must be sufficient interest from the public, political support from governments, and personal support for learners from friends, relatives, and co-workers so that they continue education. Above all, Arab governments must launch the "Education for All" campaign to achieve human development in Arab societies.

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