

**Asia-Pacific Mid-term evaluation of LIFE
Questionnaire for LIFE focal points**

Background

The Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) was launched in October 2005 during the 33rd General Conference of UNESCO. It is a collaborative framework for action in which national governments, NGOs, civil society, the private sector, UN agencies and bilateral and multilateral agencies work together to combat illiteracy and empower disadvantaged groups, especially rural women and girls. The initiative targets 35 countries with the greatest literacy needs. In the Asia-Pacific Region, 9 countries were selected (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea).

Four years after the launch of the LIFE initiative, it is important to review and assess progress made in the situation of in LIFE countries in the region. A systematic assessment can provide useful information on the status and progress made in literacy especially disadvantaged and girls and women and help strengthening policies and strategies including effective programmes and activities development, resource mobilization and allocation for literacy, strengthening networking and coordination between various agencies and stakeholders. UNESCO Bangkok, as a UNESCO Regional Bureau for Asia-Pacific on Education, plans to undertake a mid-term review of LIFE. The major objectives of the evaluation are:

1. To contribute to assess progress in literacy situation in LIFE countries in the region towards achieving the EFA literacy goal of 50 per cent improvement in adult literacy, elimination of gender gaps in education and equal opportunities in access to education for, contributing to EFA and MDGs.
2. To analyze the impact of policies and strategies adopted by the countries in the region to achieve the goals of literacy
3. To formulate recommendations on how LIFE can make a difference in the 9 LIFE countries during the implementation of the 2nd half of the initiative and how UNESCO can best support with this.
4. To identify innovative approaches, lessons learned and shortcomings/gaps in the implementation of LIFE that will inform that way forward.

Substantial information will be collected from existing country reports (e.g., UNLD reports, CONFINTEA VI reports, and LIFE reports). In order to obtain comprehensive perspective, , we would like to collect additional information from 9 LIFE countries in the region through a questionnaire. Your reply will be a crucial input to the regional mid-term evaluation report as well as planning for the remaining years of LIFE.

Consultation with partners

In order to collect information from as diverse partners as possible, it is recommended that the LIFE focal point to fully consult all stakeholders to fill out the questionnaire. We encourage the country focal point to conduct interviews or a small group discussion with senior officials of Ministry of Education, EFA focal point, senior officials of department of non formal education, ARTC member organization and other NGOs to fill the questionnaire. To support the activity, UNESCO Bangkok will provide a small remuneration of US\$ 500 to the focal point.

Timeframe

Please return your reply by 31 August 2010.

QUESTIONNAIRE

(Please add extra pages for responses when necessary)

1. Awareness and visibility of LIFE in your country

How was LIFE launched and publicized?

- Workshop Information during meetings
 Other Please specify -----

Did the workshop/meeting allow you and the key stakeholders to understand and to use LIFE as an operational mechanism or strategy of implementation of the Literacy Decade? Please also provide reasons.

China's Ministry of Education held joint meetings with the State Ethnic Affairs Commission and the All-China Women's Federation to enhance stakeholders' understanding on LIFE, and formulated ethnic minorities and women literacy programs as well as literacy consolidation plans in the framework of LIFE. We organized EFA forums each year to introduce LIFE to all stakeholders. In 2007, UNESCO Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy in Beijing was organized, further disseminated the implementation of LIFE in China.

Please explain how LIFE has been used to bring the literacy issue more prominent in the national policy agenda in your country. Please list the reference documents, if any.

After the initiation of LIFE in the 33rd General Conference of UNESCO in 2005, Chinese participant, then deputy director of Basic Education Department of China Ministry of Education at the time, reported the spirit of the meeting to leaders of MOE in detail, put forward concrete suggestions on LIFE in China. Afterwards, the Ministry of Education, jointly with twelve sectors, issued "the Proposal on Further Strengthening Literacy Implementation" and laid stress on parts of LIFE, like literacy for ethnic minorities and women. In 2010, targets of literacy are clarified in China's National Plan Outline for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020).

Did you create a coordination structure for LIFE? Who is participating in this and how is this structure working?

Yes, China established a coordination structure for LIFE, which consists of Ministry of Education, the Publicity Department of CPC Central Committee, the National Development and Reform Commission, the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Culture, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, the State Statistics Bureau, the All-China Women's Federation and Youth League of China. We also established an inter-sector joint coordination group for national literacy work among the twelve

departments. In MOE, an inner network, composed by Department of Basic Education, Department of Vocational and Adult Education, Department of Finance, Department of Development and Planning, Secretariat of Chinese National Commission for UNESCO and Office of National Education Inspectorate, was built for activities related to LIFE implementation in China.

What difference has the creation of the coordination structure made to literacy work in your country?

The creation of the coordination structure made literacy more concerned and supported by more sectors, which will contribute to a literacy prospects with efforts from multi-sectors. For instance, the central special fund for literacy was 8 million yuan before 2007, while the number has increased to 50 million yuan each year since 2007.

2. Advocacy and communication

Did you develop an advocacy and communication strategy around LIFE to reinforce national commitment to literacy?

If yes, how does it work?

If not, how to create one?

Yes. The inter-sector joint coordination group is the operational platform for advocacy and communication.

What are the strategies and activities that you utilized to develop partnerships or an alliances around LIFE at the country level to mobilize political and financial support for literacy?

By frequent and effective communication with the twelve sectors above, the objective of literacy have been formulated in China's National Plan Outline for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020) which was issued this year.

3. Policy for sustainable and empowering literacy

What are the concrete actions for strengthening capacities for the development of policies for sustainable literacy begun by different stakeholders (e.g. government, civil society, private sector, bilateral and multilateral donors, etc.)?

By formulating ethnic minorities and women literacy programs as well as literacy consolidation program, relevant sectors get involved in the implementation of LIFE. Meanwhile, Chinese government has set the goal of building a learning society together with a system of lifelong education for all in documents of the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China as well as in the National Plan Outline for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development(2010-2020).

4. Delivery of empowering literacy programmes/extent of national ownership

In your country, has there been an assessment of needs, technical support requirements, and identification of capacity gaps to design, manage and implement LIFE-related programmes?

Yes

No

If yes, provide the list of relevant documents

China has relevant assessment framework on literacy but not yet specially for LIFE.

Does your country have a human resource development plan for LIFE-related programmes ?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide the list of document

Did the financial allocation to LIFE-related activities increase since 2005?

Yes

No

If yes, how significant is it?

A little significance

Significance

Very significance

Did your country increase staff for LIFE-related activities since 2005?

Yes

No

If yes, where and what kind of staff have been increased?

	Kind of staffs (professional, administrators/managers, technical/implementers)
Ministry/departments	
Provincial/districts	
Local/grassroots level	
Others	

What is the impact of LIFE in the implementation of literacy policy? State some examples of some aspects (e.g. with regard to political impact, resource mobilization, gender equality, etc.) ?

With the promotion of LIFE, Chinese government issued the Directives on Further Strengthening Literacy Education. LIFE also made women literacy more concerned.

5. Innovation

How has LIFE been used to identify, document, and share knowledge and inspire innovations?

The United Nations should encourage senior leaderships of member states, by high-level conferences, to strengthen their leadership and support to literacy programs .

6. How do you evaluate the contribution and results of LIFE as a catalyst for action and partnerships around the literacy and non-formal education strategies? (At the political level, at the level of literacy and non-formal education strategies?)

What are the achievements?

Have no assessment yet.

What are the difficulties/challenges in the implementation of LIFE related works?

First, fund shortage. Second, relative weakness of social environment.

Have any programmes from your country been shared as example of effective practice? If yes, which ones and on what occasions?

China initiated literacy programs for the disabled and floating population in some regions, and got significant achievements. China submitted these excellent practices to UNESCO for the selection of UNESCO International Literacy Prize; unfortunately, these practice cases did not get enough support and encouragement from International Jury.

6. What evaluation do you make of the support of the UNESCO for LIFE? What would you propose for its improvement?

There's no follow-up support action after UNESCO meetings. For example, UNESCO failed to meet its commitment on financial aid. We hope UNESCO will, first, provide financial and technical assistance to its member states within the framework of LIFE, which will contribute not only to the promotion of literacy work in these countries but also allow literacy more concerned & funded by different sectors in these countries; second, it is necessary to avoid redundancy and duplication of literacy programs. Existed programs relate to literacy includes Education for All, UN Millennium Development Goals, UN International Literacy Decade(2003-2012) and LIFE(2005-2015), which overlap with each other.

7. Are there upcoming opportunities in your country in which LIFE can be further promoted?

Please provide details.

China will conduct a census this year, we will formulate more concrete literacy plans according to the results of the census, and to further promote the implement of LIFE in China.

8. How can LIFE position itself better to play its role in your country, as a platform for strengthening partnerships, as a catalyst to further promote literacy in your country?

More international cooperation and communications should be encouraged to share experience and best practices among LIFE countries.

THANK YOU!