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Towards Shared Learning

Nonformal Adult Education
for Marine Fisherfolk



Animators' Guide

BAY OF BENGAL PROGRAMME

BOBP/MAG/2

Development of Small-Scale Fisheries

(GCP/RAS/040/SWE)

Towards Shared Learning

Discussion guide for Animators in
Participatory Teaching-Learning
Approach for Adult Nonformal
Education

Evaluated and Revised in a
workshop conducted by Bay of
Bengal Programme from Nov. 14-20,
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Preface:

This guide is intended for animators or teachers in Non-Formal Adult Education (NFAE) centres for fisherfolk in Tamil Nadu, India. It is part of a pilot project being executed in Tamil Nadu by the small-scale fisheries project of the Bay of Bengal Programme in cooperation with several government agencies.

The “animator” is a person hailing from the village where a NFAE centre is located; he helps the “learners” acquire knowledge, attitudes and skills relevant to recognising their own potential in improving their environment and occupation.

The Animator's Guide covers eight major subject areas—community, occupation, health and nutrition, social problems, leadership, income and saving, cooperation and education. In each of these areas, problems relevant to the fisherfolk, who constitute the learners, are highlighted and approaches to analysing them outlined. Background material in the form of discussion papers, statistical data, stories and case studies is also provided. The animator is expected to design suitable lessons for the learners using the materials provided in the guide as reference and the conditions and the problems of the community in which he functions.

BOBP commenced its NFAE work in Tamil Nadu under a pilot project in Adirampattinam, a fishing village in Thanjavur district. The fisherfolk of Adirampattinam accorded a high priority to education and requested that an education programme be initiated in their village. Since the fishing occupation makes regular school impractical, the idea of an NFAE programme was born.

Available materials for an NFAE programme for fisherfolk were found inadequate. BOBP, therefore, in close cooperation with the Tamil Nadu Directorate of Nonformal and Adult Education, the State Resource Centre and the Tamil Nadu Directorate of Fisheries, developed a model curriculum. This guide is one component of the package. The other components include a trainer's manual, a numeracy primer and an animator's edition of the numeracy primer, literacy primer and workbook, supplementary readers.

The Animator's Guide was evaluated and revised by experts in the fields of nonformal education and development in a workshop held in Madras, 14-20 November, 1983.

The preparation of this guide is an activity of the small-scale fisheries project of the Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP). The project is funded by SIDA (Swedish International Development Authority) and executed by the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), and covers five countries bordering the Bay of Bengal - Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The main goals of the project are to develop, demonstrate and promote appropriate technologies and methodologies to improve the conditions of small-scale fisherfolk and boost supplies of fish from the small sector in member countries.

This document is a working paper and has not been formally cleared by the Government concerned or the FAO.

Nonformal Adult Education for Tamil Nadu Marine Fisherfolk: The BOBP Experience

How did BOBP's small-scale fisheries project get involved in non-formal adult education (NFAE)? The marine fisherfolk of Adirampattinam, Tamil Nadu are responsible. They were participating in another BOBP project (described in BOBP/WP/17). They said education was one of their prime needs, and requested an education programme: BOBP sought the cooperation of two local authorities—the Directorate of Non-Formal Adult Education and the State Resource Centre. The idea was that the NFAE centres would be closely related to other activities of the Adirampattinam project. The NFAE centres were also intended as places where fisherfolk could discuss problems and plan action.

It was found that existing material for a NFAE programme for fisherfolk was inadequate considering the type of approach that was necessary. This led to a programme wider in scope than what was originally envisaged at Adirampattinam. The task was nothing less than the development of an entire NFAE curriculum for marine fisherfolk in all Tamil Nadu coastal villages.

Non-formal adult education is essentially a process of learning through reflection and through sharing of experiences by participants. Both learners and animators (teachers) need to be fully involved in cooperative learning to solve the problems of their village. This is the essence of a 'participatory approach'. Such an approach will be found valuable for any development work - in fisheries or any other field - that focuses on human resource development.

The concept of non-formal education is generally intellectually appreciated by all those in the field of adult education. However, the operationalization of this concept has always been difficult. Even one involved in the development of this curriculum tried his/her best to evolve a tool for operationalising the concept and translating it into reality. The curriculum development process was genuinely participatory. Constant interaction at all levels was the norm.

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Such interaction had a direct impact on the quality of the material developed. The result was not merely a package of educational material but also an experiment in turning the concept of non-formal adult education into reality. The entire venture was long and collaborative, and ensured both the suitability of the package and its quality.

The curriculum package developed consists of:

- * Animator's Guide
- * Literacy Primer and Workbook
- * Numeracy Primer and Animator's Edition of the Numeracy Primer
- * Trainer's Manual
- * Supplementary Readers

Here's a brief description of each component of the package and how it was developed.

Animator's Guide (for the animators)

(June 1982-February 1985)

An "animator" in a NFAE programme is a person who organises the local NFAE centre and works with the target population of "learners"-in this case the fisherfolk.

The Animator's Guide developed by the project is a handy illustrated booklet. It consists of a set of 33 lessons discussing eight areas of life in Tamil Nadu coastal villages: community, occupation, health and nutrition, social problems, leadership, income and savings, cooperation, education. The guide lays emphasis on the awareness and functionality objectives of the Government of India's National Adult Education Programme. It helps the animators to encourage learners to discuss their lifestyle, workstyle, environment and attitudes, and actively involve them in their own learning process. It is also intended that the animator, over a period, will himself be able to develop new lessons to suit local needs and situations.

Evolution of the Animator's Guide: A few animators were recruited from the local community with advice and help from the State Resource Centre for Non-Formal Education and the Directorate of Fisheries. They were trained first by personnel from the State Resource Centre. The training emphasized skills, in organizing adult education centres, motivating learners, developing curricula, and using the participatory

approach. A second training exercise was organized by BOBP specially to develop discussion skills. Emphasis was on the use of techniques such as role plays, pictures and questioning that would enhance learner participation. A third training exercise was held to review the topics identified and prepare lessons and teaching aids. Following this third exercise, several efforts were made to develop appropriate lessons.

The draft lessons and the participatory approach in using them were then tested at a few non-formal education centres opened in Adirampattinam. Animators and learners in these centres were aware that they were taking part in a test activity. The level of content and presentation, and the quality of teaching aids, formed the criteria for testing the lessons; while the performance of the animator, the comprehension and involvement of the learners and the atmosphere were the criteria for testing the approach.

Two animators were attached to each test centre, taking turns to teach and observe. Three field workers of BOBP and the Directorate of Fisheries provided support and supervision.

The result of the field-testing showed that the animators and learners took a keen part in the discussions and enjoyed them. The animators would be able to facilitate the discussions among learners with sufficient training and field support.

In all, 54 lessons in 10 areas such as "community", "occupation", etc., were prepared by several small groups at a number of sittings. These lessons were reviewed and analysed at a week-long national workshop held in November 1984. Fifteen experts from India and Bangladesh with experience in non-formal education evaluated the lessons. The comments made by the experts were about the format of the questions, the attitudes implied, the participatory nature of the approach, the relevance and the level of content in relation to the needs of the learners. The lessons were revised on the basis of these comments.

Literacy Primer and Workbook (for the learners):

(November 1983 - February 1985)

The Literacy Primer is an attractive publication titled Elelo Eilasa (a theme song of fisherfolk in Tamil Nadu coastal areas). It has 16 lessons that introduce the 147 functional letters of the Tamil alphabet; the theme of each lesson is illustrated by 12 drawings in colour on fishing village activities. The letters of the alphabet are taught through words and pictures. The learner's workbook contains exercises that enable the learners to practise reading and writing at home.

The November 1983 national workshop that reviewed the Animator's Guide also provided some guidelines for the development of a literacy primer for the fisherfolk. Workshop participants suggested that the primer being developed should concentrate on the "functional" letters of the Tamil alphabet; that each lesson should stress a single concept or issue; that the primer's vocabulary should be confined to what the fisherfolk know and to words found in the lesson plans.

A study was made of daily newspapers and magazines available in the village to arrive at a set of functional letters. A week-long workshop was held in December 1983 with eight participants drawn from BOBP, DNFE/AE, SRC and university linguistics experts with experience in teaching Tamil to adult learners. A literacy primer and a workbook were developed.

The literacy component of adult education is seen here as a book of information or knowledge to help improve the quality of the learners over a period of time.

Numeracy Primer and Animator's Edition of the Numeracy Primer

(for both learners and animators):

(March 1984 - February 1985)

Titled Andradakkanakku (day-to-day arithmetic), the Numeracy Primer has separate sections that focus on the counting of numbers and the derivation of numbers from numbers (about addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, etc.) There are chapters on how villagers tell the time; money and currency; measuring length; measuring volume; measuring weight. A special animator's edition of the Numeracy Primer was also produced, to enable animators to use the primer effectively.

Counting and arithmetical skills form an integral part of daily life. In preparing the numeracy primer, the stress was on understanding the basic concepts of numeracy and their relationships in real life context. It was believed that such an understanding would give the learners confidence to handle numbers as part of their written culture - at present they do calculations mentally.

The numeracy primer draws on the author's extensive experience from her study of the day-to-day practices on the use of numbers and arithmetical calculations in rural Tamil Nadu. Besides, a brief study was specially undertaken in coastal villages for the purpose of the primer.

Trainer's Manual (for the trainers of animators):

(March 1984 - February 1985)

The Trainer's Manual contains profiles of the animators, a description of the participatory training approach, its beliefs and assumptions, and notes for trainers, besides a 12-day training model (suggested daily exercises for the training of animators) divided into five stages. These are: "Understanding oneself and others"; "Understanding the community"; "Understanding the present education system and its relevance"; "Practising the role of the animator"; and "Designing the workplan for NFE centres."

The Trainer's Manual contains easy-to-use step-by-step explanations for trainers in their conduct of various sessions. A set of questions for each session serve as "Support papers" or essays on subjects like "Poverty" and "Health problems in India" are meant to help both trainers and animators.

As part of the preparatory work for a workshop on developing the Trainer's Manual, a field survey was undertaken. This was meant to acquire a better understanding of the social, cultural, economic, health and educational life of fisherfolk along the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu.

The week-long workshop in April 1984 was attended by 14 participants representing the Directorate of Fisheries, the Directorate of Non-Formal Education, the State Resource Centre, the NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training), voluntary agencies working in the field and BOBP. The participants reviewed the curriculum already developed; familiarised themselves with learner's and animator's profiles made available from field studies; identified the training requirements of animators; and developed an outline for the trainer's manual.

Subsequently, a training model was worked out in detail during May 1984 by a committee of four members, as a follow-up to the workshop. A draft copy of the Manual was circulated for comment to over 150 agencies and individuals engaged in education and training in India and abroad.

A system of proper evaluation is built into the whole process of training by making the participants conscious of their learning. It is ensured that learning responsibility is shared between the trainers and animators and then between the animators and learners. It is hoped that the manual can be adapted for training field workers in many other areas of development as well.

Supplementary Readers (for animators and fisherfolk):

(September 1983 - March 1985)

These are easy-to-read, well illustrated booklets. They provide the fisherfolk with reading materials to sustain their interest in reading, enhance their knowledge and self-awareness. About 40 such booklets have been prepared at three levels. Picture content is the highest in the first level and the lowest in the third level.

The supplementary readers deal with the subject areas indicated in the Animator's Guide. When topics were identified, popular authors were contacted for writing them up. Some of these booklets were also tested with the learners. Currently the printing of these materials is being undertaken by the Directorate of NFE/AE, Tamil Nadu.

In conclusion, it may be stated that in the evolution of the curriculum package a great deal of effort has gone into thinking through the basic NFAE approach, in the hope that it would enable people going through the educational process to acquire better control of situations that affect their lives. The package lays stress on human development.

The Directorate of Non-Formal and Adult Education, Tamil Nadu, agreed to publish the package and use it in adult education centres in the coastal villages of Tamil Nadu. It was thought possible that the Trainer's Manual and the Animator's Guide could be adapted for use in many other areas of development. The BOBP therefore decided to bring out English editions of these manuals.

The development phase of the NFAE curriculum package for fisherfolk has concluded. An "implementation phase" is essential before it is applied on a wide scale. The mechanism for an implementation phase is presently being finalized by the Directorate of Non-Formal/Adult Education, and it will soon begin. During this phase the package will be used in fishing villages throughout a district/area. This experience will enable everyone interested in NFAE to learn about practical difficulties before the project is expanded.

Finally, the success of development programmes based on the participatory approach depends on a firm belief in the basic ideas of the approach.

These ideas are:

- people have a deep understanding of their needs and problems;
- if they are provided with better opportunities, people are capable of solving their problems;
- education/development is an internal process;
- education/development is possible only through equal partnership, never through hierarchial imposition.

Acknowledgements

I deeply appreciate the close collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Directorate of Nonformal/Adult Education and the Directorate of Fisheries. The whole package was translated into reality and made applicable to a government set-up with their collaboration. Further, their readiness to implement the project and set up non-formal adult education centres all along the Tamil Nadu coast was crucial. The project has also been an excellent manifestation of cooperation between the education and development department.

We are thankful for the cooperation extended by the Tamil Nadu State Resource Centre for Nonformal Education (SRC) and the evaluation cell of the Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS).

We deeply appreciate the contribution made by all workshop participants. Their talent, their vast experience and their commitment considerably influenced the package. We also would like to thank those individuals who gave us their comments on the curriculum materials in response to our request. I would like to thank in particular Mrs B Williams, a former colleague, for her constant moral support and encouragement besides her valuable suggestions.

We are indebted to Mr R S Anbarasan who assisted us at an early stage of the project, in testing the NFAE approach in Adirampattinam, and continued to provide assistance later.

We especially appreciate Dr A K Jalaluddin, Joint Director, National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT), for his inspiration, encouragement, and guidance throughout the development of this curriculum.

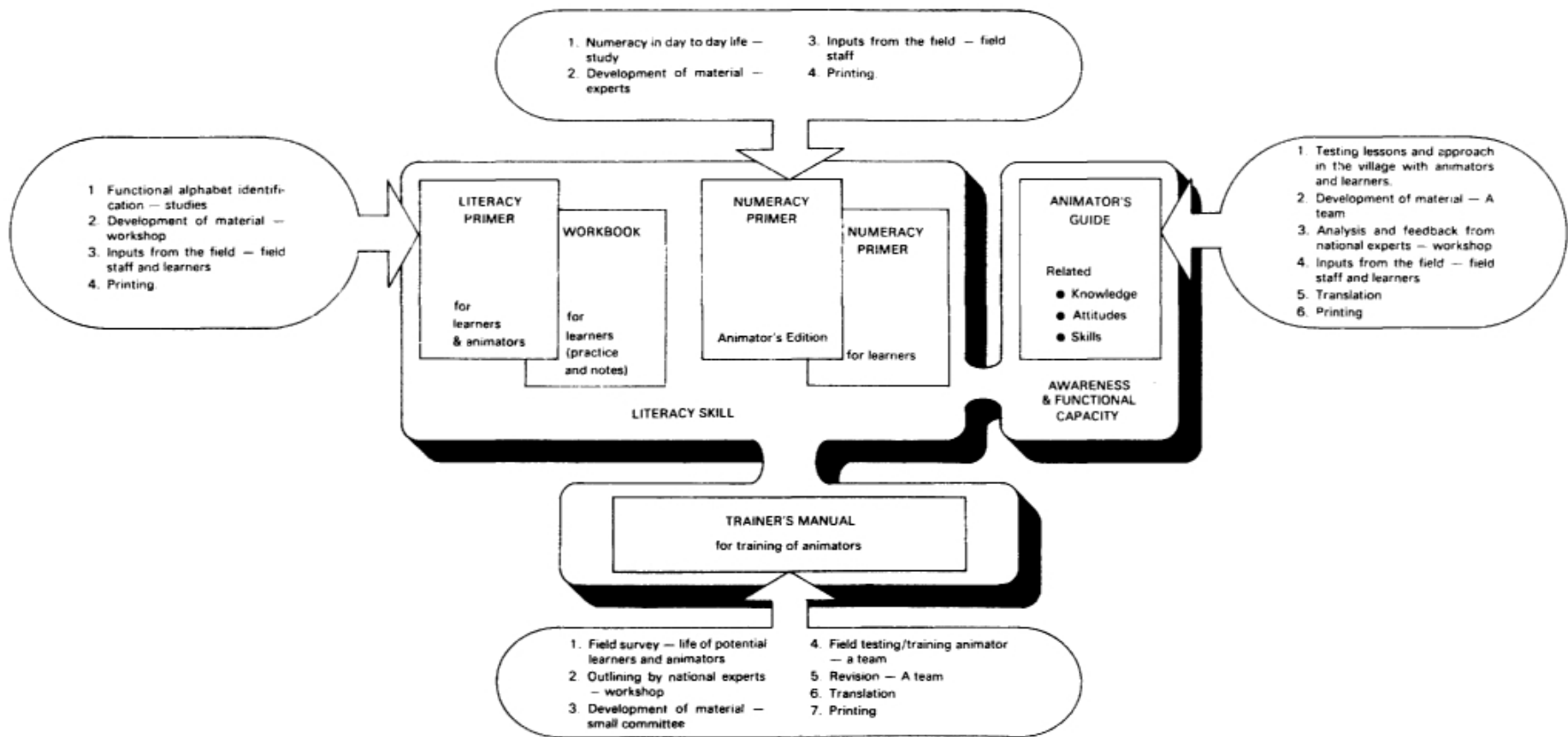
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Most of all we are deeply indebted to Dr L S Saraswathi and Ms Valli Seshan, who have been the real strength of the project, and the key to the curriculum development process. Their intellect, their practical acumen, and their deep concern and sincerity for the rural poor have been highly inspirational and educational for me in particular.

Finally, we would like to extend our warm and heartfelt thanks to the marine fisherfolk of Tamil Nadu -- especially those in Adirampattinam who gave us the initial inspiration, and those in Tiruchendur where the NFAE materials were field-tested. The knowledge gained from them played a vital part in the development of this material.

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TOWARDS SHARED LEARNING: EVOLUTION OF CURRICULUM



Workshop to Evaluate the lessons in the Animator's Guide
November 14 - 20, 1983

List of Participants

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Mr V L C Pietersz	Sr Development Advisor FAO/BOBP, Madras
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Dr Om Srivastava	General Secretary Seva Mandir, Udaipur Rajasthan
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Mr S H Talukder	Chief, Training Unit Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee Bangladesh
Dr P B Tripathy	Under Secretary University Grants Commission New Delhi
Mr R Venkatachari	Technical Officer Directorate of Non-Formal and Adult Education Tamil Nadu

Introduction

OBJECTIVES

1. To create a "learning atmosphere"
2. To get to know one another better

The learners are at the NFAE (Nonformal Adult Education) centre for their first session. They should be helped to feel comfortable so that they may participate actively. First, participants should know each other well. Though they belong to the same community, they may or may not know one another well. This activity could be arranged to help them feel at home.

Ask the participants to choose partners. Suggest that each pair then talk to each other for about 15 minutes with a view to finding out about each other; e.g., name, length of stay in the village, education, the reason for dropping out, some of the best characteristics of the individual, etc. When they assemble again after 15 minutes, each one would introduce her partner to the total group. The introduction can be in any way they like; speech, mime, etc.

The session could be lively when they are allowed freedom to introduce the partner the way they want to.

This exercise should be used at the first session of the NFAE centre. It can be followed by the lesson selected for that

