

Country Level Perception Survey based on Literacy Benchmarks

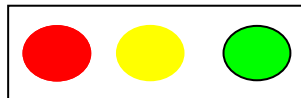
Background:

As a regional civil society organization committed to advancing the right of ALL to education and learning throughout life, ASPBAE organized Asia Pacific CSO Strategising workshop to enable a strong civil society, Asia Pacific voice and presence in the CONFINTEA 6 processes. The workshop focused on developing consensus on and commitment to an advocacy action plan for 2008-2009 with clearly articulated positions and change objectives on agreed priority policy issues especially along the areas of quality adult literacy and adult education, life skills responsive to learning needs of marginalized groups, adult education legislation, governance and financing.

As a part of the advocacy action plan, it was decided to use the literacy benchmarks developed by GCE (Global Campaign For Education) and ActionAid for advocacy purposes. One of the most effective uses of these benchmarks can be to assess country level literacy scenario, identify the gaps and then lobby nationally and internationally for bridging these gaps. With this objective in mind, a simple assessment package has been developed which can be used by country level education practitioners.

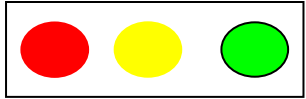
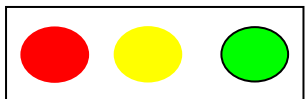
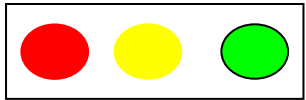
Assessment Guideline:

- A set of guiding questions have been prepared to elucidate the scope of each benchmark, seeking the answers of which will help measure how the country stands with regard to the benchmark.
- Based on the experience, insights and available statistics, the user of this survey can put forward a pithy, compact statement that encapsulates the country status with reference to the specific benchmark.
- This is not intended to be a quantitative study, rather context specific informed perception on the specific benchmarks. However, generalized statements should be backed by relevant statistics (and its source) to lend the statement credibility and authenticity. Credible Documents like the EFA GMR Reports, EFA MDA Reports and National CONFINTEA Reports can be used for this purpose.
- A simple colour coding scheme based on traffic signals has been suggested to make this exercise more provocative



- Red – Unsatisfactory compliance with the benchmark, the country is lagging far behind.
- Green – Satisfactory performance in accordance with the benchmark.
- Yellow – Either proceeding towards the benchmark or away from it.
- Once the country inputs are in, it can be synthesized to delineate a colourful landscape of literacy scenario of the participating countries. This can be used as a media friendly tool on the eve of Literacy Day and Global Action Week. It will also enhance the utility of the benchmarks and strengthen their claim to be endorsed in the CONFINTEA process.
- The countries can come up with a more elaborate study by responding to the guiding questions in further details.

Country Level Perception Survey based on the GCE – ActionAid BENCHMARKS¹

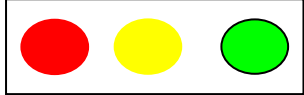
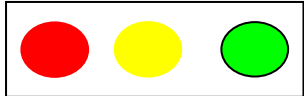
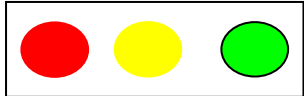
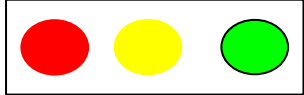
The 12 Benchmarks (Writing the Wrongs)	Guiding Questions ²	Signal ³	Rationale for the signal ⁴
1. Literacy is about the acquisition and use of reading, writing and numeracy skills, and thereby the development of active citizenship, improved health and livelihoods, and gender equality. The goals of literacy programmes should reflect this understanding.	1. How is literacy defined in your country? What are the priority goals of adult literacy? Does the concept and goals of Literacy reflect an understanding of the development of active citizenship, improved health and livelihoods, and gender equality?		
2. Literacy should be seen as a continuous process that requires sustained learning and application. There are no magic lines to cross from illiteracy into literacy. All policies and programmes should be defined to encourage sustained participation and celebrate progressive achievement rather than focusing on one-off provision with a single end point.	2. Are there clear policies and programmes on literacy that encourage sustained participation and continuity?		
3. Governments have the lead responsibility in meeting the right to adult literacy and in providing leadership, policy frameworks, an enabling environment and resources.	3. Is the government taking up the responsibility in meeting the right to adult literacy and in providing leadership, policy frameworks, an		

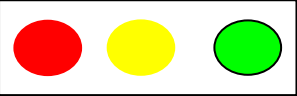
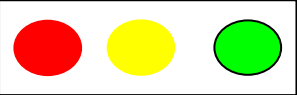
¹ For the process and methodology of development of these benchmarks, please refer to the report ‘Writing the Wrongs’, available from the GCE and ActionAid websites.

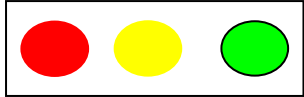
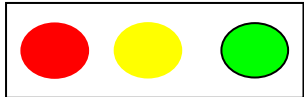
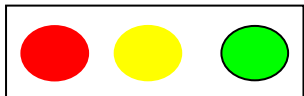
² These questions elaborate the benchmarks and the answers to these are expected to be helpful in determining the appropriate colour coding. These can also be used to frame elaborate rationale for the signal assigned.

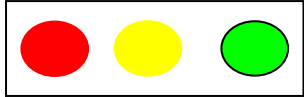
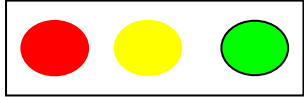
³ The inappropriate signals to be deleted.

⁴ Brief statement/paragraph justifying the colour coding assigned. It can be relevant statistics (with source) and/or analysis of the particular conclusion.

The 12 Benchmarks (Writing the Wrongs)	Guiding Questions²	Signal³	Rationale for the signal⁴
<p>They should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure cooperation across all relevant ministries and links to all relevant development programmes, - work in systematic collaboration with experienced civil society organisations, - ensure links between all these agencies, especially at the local level, and - ensure relevance to the issues in learners' lives by promoting the decentralisation of budgets and of decision-making over curriculum, methods and materials. 	<p>enabling environment and resources? Specifically, how is the government faring in terms of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring cooperation across all relevant ministries and links to all relevant development programmes on adult literacy; 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - facilitating systematic collaboration with experienced civil society organisations; - ensuring links between all these agencies, especially at the local level; 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring relevance to the issues in learners' lives by promoting the decentralisation of budgets and of decision-making over curriculum, methods and materials. 		
<p>4. It is important to invest in ongoing feedback and evaluation mechanisms, data systematization and strategic research. The focus of evaluations should be on the practical application of what has been learnt and the impact on active citizenship, improved health and livelihoods, and gender equality.</p>	<p>4. Is there sufficient investment in feedback and evaluation mechanisms, data systematization and strategic research related to adult literacy?</p> <p>Are there regular assessment of learning outcomes and mechanisms to monitor and evaluate programmes to ensure good quality?</p>		

The 12 Benchmarks (Writing the Wrongs)	Guiding Questions ²	Signal ³	Rationale for the signal ⁴
	<p>Do the evaluations focus sufficiently on the practical application of what has been learnt and the impact on active citizenship, improved health and livelihoods and gender equality?</p> <p>To what extent are the results used for legislation, policy formulation, and programme development?</p>		
<p>5. To retain facilitators it is important that they should be paid at least the equivalent of the minimum wage of a primary school teacher for all hours worked (including time for training, preparation and follow-up).</p>	<p>5. What are the terms of employment and remuneration of facilitators? How much salary do they receive? Are they being paid to prepare and attend trainings? Are the benefits and terms of pay comparable to those of primary school teachers?</p>		
<p>6. Facilitators should be local people who receive substantial initial training and regular refresher training, as well as having ongoing opportunities for exchanges with other facilitators. Governments should put in place a framework for the professional development of the adult literacy sector, including for trainers / supervisors - with full opportunities for facilitators across the country to access this (e.g. through distance education).</p>	<p>6. Is there a framework in place for the professional development of the adult literacy sector, including for trainers/supervisors - with full opportunities for facilitators across the country to access this (e.g. through distance education)?</p> <p>What educational qualifications/training are required for facilitators? What training programmes are in place?</p> <p>Is there a clear policy of engaging</p>		

The 12 Benchmarks (Writing the Wrongs)	Guiding Questions ²	Signal ³	Rationale for the signal ⁴
	local people as facilitators? What percentage of the facilitators are local people?		
7. There should be a ratio of at least one facilitator to 30 learners and at least one trainer/ supervisor to 15 learner groups (1 to 10 in remote areas), ensuring a minimum of one support visit per month. Programmes should have timetables that flexibly respond to the daily lives of learners but which provide for regular and sustained contact (e.g. twice a week for at least two years).	7. What is the usual ratio of facilitators to learners in literacy programmes implemented by the government? What is the ratio of trainer/ supervisor to learner groups in different locations? How many support visits per month do facilitators make to provide sustained contact to learners?		
8. In multi-lingual contexts it is important at all stages that learners should be given an active choice about the language in which they learn. Active efforts should be made to encourage and sustain bilingual learning.	8. Are learners given an active choice about the language in which they learn? Are active efforts made to encourage and sustain bilingual learning?		
9. A wide range of participatory methods should be used in the learning process to ensure active engagement of learners and relevance to their lives. These same participatory methods and processes should be used at all levels of training of trainers and facilitators.	9. Are participatory methods used in the learning process to ensure active engagement of learners and relevance to their lives? Are these same participatory methods and processes used at all levels of training of trainers and		

The 12 Benchmarks (Writing the Wrongs)	Guiding Questions²	Signal³	Rationale for the signal⁴
	facilitators?		
<p>10. Governments should take responsibility for stimulating the market for production and distribution of a wide variety of materials suitable for new readers, for example by working with publishers / newspaper producers. They should balance this with funding for the local production of materials, especially by learners, facilitators and trainers.</p>	<p>10. Is the government taking responsibility for stimulating the market for production and distribution of a wide variety of materials suitable for new readers, for example by working with publishers / newspaper producers?</p> <p>How much funds are provided by the government for the local production of materials, especially by learners, facilitators and trainers?</p>		
<p>11. A good quality literacy programme that respects all these benchmarks is likely to cost between US\$50 and US\$100 per learner per year for at least three years (two years initial learning + ensuring further learning opportunities are available for all)</p>	<p>11. How much is the cost per learner of literacy programmes implemented by the government?</p> <p>How many years are the programmes on adult literacy implemented for each learner?</p>		
<p>12. Governments should dedicate at least 3% of their national education sector budgets to adult literacy programmes as conceived in these benchmarks. Where governments deliver on this international donors should fill any remaining resource gaps (e.g. through including adult literacy in the Fast Track Initiative)</p>	<p>12. How much does the Government allocate to adult literacy as a percentage of its national education sector budget?</p> <p>How much international aid goes to adult literacy?</p>	