

**EVALUATION**  
**of the**  
**EDUCATION OF RURAL WORKING GIRLS PROJECT**

**United Nations Children's Fund  
and  
Literacy Movement Organisation**

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Preface

The Project for the "Education of Rural Working Girls" was implemented by the Literacy Movement Organisation (LMO) with the technical and financial support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) office in Iran, in the school year 1999-2000. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Literacy Movement Organisation (LMO), decided to evaluate various aspects of the Project at the end of its one-year implementation period, on a pilot basis, in order to determine the success rate of the Project in achieving the set goals mentioned in the Project Document.

Pegah Pardazesh Novin Company was awarded the contract to take the responsibility for the evaluation of the methods selected to achieve the goals of the Project. This Company requested Dr Ali Reza Kiamanesh and Dr Bahram Mohsenpour, members of faculty of the Teachers Training College of Tehran, to shoulder the responsibility of evaluating the Project. The whole process, including the design, implementation, data analysis, and the preparation of the final evaluation report, was carried out by these two gentlemen and their colleagues.

We hereby take the opportunity to thank the various UNICEF officials, including Dr Mandana Askarinasab and Dr Azin Movahhed, who, with their wholehearted material and spiritual support, made it possible to undertake this study.

Our highest appreciation also goes to the officials of the Literacy Movement Organisation in the provinces and districts covered by the Project, and to Dr Mohammad Mehdizadeh, Director of Educational Affairs of the Literacy Movement Organisation, for their immense help and support in the evaluation of the programme.

Last, but not the least, we would like to express our thanks to our colleagues on the evaluation programme, Dr Bahman Mohsenpour, Dr Ali Reza Kiamanesh, Ms Fatemeh Qeibi, Dr Javid Sarai, Engineer Ali Kiamanesh and Mr Farajollah Farnoudian, and pray for their success at all stages of their life.

Pegah Pardazesh Novin Company

## **ABSTRACT**

The Project for the "Education of Rural Working Girls" was implemented in 6 provinces of the country during the school year 1999-2000. This was done with the technical and financial co-operation of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) office in Iran, and the active collaboration of the Literacy Movement Organisation (LMO).

The objectives of the Project are:

- ❖ Improving the Social Status of Girls,
- ❖ Encouraging the Girls to prefer Education, in spite of the existing pressures,
- ❖ Helping to improve the Quality of Life of the Working Girls,
- ❖ Providing the necessary Vocational Training,
- ❖ Decreasing the Traditional and Cultural Prejudices related to the Education of Girls, and
- ❖ Providing Educational Classes near the Working Places of Girls.

In order to achieve the above objectives, such methods have been considered as: "The Creation of Flexibility between the time of holding classes and the time of the working hours of the Girls", "Using participatory Teaching Methods", "Creating the necessary support for attracting Girls", "Combining Literacy Education with Life-skill and Vocational Training", and, "Using Female Instructors".

In order to determine the rate of success of these methods in achieving the objectives of the Project, we have gathered the opinions of almost all the Literacy Instructors involved in the Project (134 persons), as well as, the officials of the Literacy Movement Organisation in the 5 provinces and 10 districts covered by the Project, using questionnaires with open-ended and restricted answers, group discussions and unrestricted interviews.

The outputs obtained by analysing the collected data, show that the use of participatory teaching methods, supportive actions

such as the supply of free food, and the distribution of educational aids, non-cash aid, selection of experienced female instructors familiar with the village, increase in the teaching time, and use of the additional time for life-skill and vocational training, use of educational aids/kits, and collaboration between various organisations and institutions, are all influential in achieving high and satisfactory rates of success of the Project.

Various kinds of evidence help gauge the success of the Project. These evidences include changes in teaching methods, combining literacy education with life-skill and vocational training, continuous participation of the literacy students in the classes without any absence, higher percentage of pass rates, the fact that girls have become more sociable, establishment of links and transfer of information and experiences from the class to the family and the village, job creation through artistic and practical training, co-operation of the families, change in the attitude of the rural population towards the education of girls, the evidence of positive changes in the behaviour and habits of the girls --- such as the practise of personal and communal hygiene, self-expression, sharing of ideas, and a the evidence of a spirit of co-operation and helping each other.

In the light of the above evidence, it may be concluded that the Project has met with a great degree of success in achieving many of its original goals. However, it also had certain shortcomings, such as only a relative success in decreasing the working hours of the working girls by attracting the collaboration of the employers; creation of dissatisfaction and lack of enthusiasm among the students of the school and the Literacy Movement Organisation, not covered by the Project; delays in the distribution of some resources and educational aids, such educational films or the educational kits provided by UNICEF and other supportive material, like non-cash aid.

Among the activities which would, not only facilitate closer observation of the Project, but would also pave the way for more extensive programmes and activities in the future, are, the execution of a separate scientific and precise study to enable the comparison of various aspects of the Project activities of the Literacy Movement Organisation, and determining their differences on a cost/benefit basis. Other activities are the conducting of such

projects for boys and girls in workshops and labour environments, establishing such classes beside workshops and labour environments, and paying attention to the welfare status of the instructors entrusted with the job of conducting these activities.

# **CHAPTER ONE: General**

## **Foreword**

The Project involving the “Education of Rural Working Girls” was implemented by the Literacy Movement Organisation (LMO) with the technical and financial support of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) office in Tehran, during the period of September 1999-September 2000. This Project was conducted in 6 provinces, namely: Sistan & Baluchestan, Kordestan, West Azerbaijan, East Azerbaijan, Khorasan and Lorestan. The Project was conducted during the school year 1999-2000, in approximately 170 classes with an average density of 615 girls in the 10-18 year age group.

## **Project Objectives**

The objectives of the Project, as defined in the Project Document signed between the UNICEF and the LMO are as follows:

- ❖ Promotion of girls’ social status, in spite of their hidden exploitation,
- ❖ Encouragement of girls to give preference to education and learning, in spite of the existing family pressures,
- ❖ Help in the improvement of the quality of life for the working girls,
- ❖ Creation of a new educational environment, offer of vocational training based on the girls’ needs, and well as, the creation of educational facilities beside their work places,
- ❖ Decreasing of the current traditional and cultural prejudices against girls’ education,
- ❖ Provision of an effective educational method for girls who been deprived of schooling due to having to work to earn a living to help families,
- ❖ Increase in the awareness of the society to send their daughters to school, and support of the girls against the constraints and conditions restraining them from education.

Methods have been envisaged to reach the above objectives in the joint UNICEF/Literacy Movement Organization (LMO) project. The main methods are as follows:

- Creation of flexible educational programs through combining work and education.
- Increasing the number of female instructors, in order to create examples and influence parents' prejudice towards girls' education.
- Rewarding girls who attend the class regularly and give priority to education rather than work.
- Skill development training for income-generation purposes.
- Using active and participatory teaching methods.
- Attracting the collaboration of local organizations and girls' parents.
- Creating incentives for learning, and combining primary education with health and life-skill education.

Flexibility of the educational programs, teaching by female instructors, helping students who have a maximum of one-day absence in a month, free food and paying total educational costs, are among the activities foreseen to attract and keep girls in the project.

All round evaluation of an educational project activities, needs evaluation of the process or the operational methods and also the projects outputs. Due to various reasons activities of the "Education for Rural Working Girls" project have not been officially evaluated during the project implementation. More over, the program outputs should have been studied through participation in the classes and collection of the necessary data on the level of knowledge, capability, skill and attitude of the literacy student, at the end of the course (i.e., the end of the school-year). Due to delay in the evaluation program, the chance to evaluate the projects' process was lost. However, the presence of instructors from the 5 provinces<sup>1</sup> under the Project coverage gave the opportunity to collect their views, in addition to the views of the project staff of the LMO and teachers. This helped to judge the

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<sup>1</sup> Lorestan province has been deleted from the study.

operational methods, problems, constraints and positive points of the project.

## **Objectives of the Evaluation**

This evaluation was carried out to determine the success rate of the "Education of the Working Rural Girls" Project in achieving the goals set out in the Project Document signed between the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Literacy Movement Organisation (LMO). To reach a sound judgement on the success rate of the Project in achieving the set goals, the following issues were studied:

- Studying the characteristics of the instructors from various aspects, such as their age, level of education, experience in the field of teaching, place of residence, courses passed related to the Project,
- Studying the characteristics of the girls covered by the Project, such as, their age, type of job, relationship between the education and the job, skills they have been trained in, and the manner of their participation in the educational classes,
- Studying the manner of implementation of the Project from various aspects such as the weekly educational programmes, issues and skills taught in the classes, methods of implementation and possible constraints in free food distribution programmes, methods of implementation and possible constraints in the payment of educational grants in cash, and aids in kind,
- Studying the opinions of the instructors and the officials of the Literacy Movement Organisation, regarding the positive and negative aspects of the Project. The collection of their proposals to help reform and improve the quality of the Project for future execution of similar projects.

## **Statistical Society and Samples**

Instructors involved in the "Education of Working Girls" Project, form the society of the instructors responsible for the implementation of the Project. The opinions and ideas of all Project instructors in the 5 provinces covered by the Project have

been collected from questionnaires and group discussions. In such manner, the volume of the society and the volume of the statistical sample involved in the evaluation process have been almost identical. The numbers of the instructors involved in each of the provinces are as given hereunder:

1. Sistan & Baluchestan Province: 30 persons (15 from Zabol district and 15 from Khash district),
2. Kordestan Province: 29 persons (16 from Sanandaj district and 13 from Kamyaran district),
3. East Azerbaijan Province: 22 persons (9 from Tabriz township and 13 from Heris township),
4. West Azerbaijan Province: 25 persons (10 from Urumieh township and 15 from Khoy township),
5. Khorasan Province: 28 persons (15 from Bojnourd township and 13 from Sabzevar township).

The Total Number of Samples Studied: 134 persons

It is worth noting that the opinion and ideas of 6 of the principals of educational complexes of Khorasan province have been collected and analysed separately.

The opinions and ideas of the officials of the Literacy Movement Organisation, in these 5 provinces and 10 townships, have also been collected through free interviews, analysed, and added to the opinions and ideas of the instructors of the 5 provinces and the principals of the 6 educational complexes of Khorasan province.

### **Instruments of Measurement and Data Collection**

Three educational workshops were held in June 2000, in Zabol township, (for the instructors of Sistan & Baluchestan province); in Sanandaj township (for the instructors of Kordestan province); and in Tabriz township (for the instructors of East Azerbaijan and West Azerbaijan provinces). All instructors involved in the "Education of Working Rural Girls" Project participated in these workshops.

One of the programmes of the workshops was the collection of data for the evaluation project, held in 2 sessions, each session lasting for 2 hours. During the first session, the instructors were initially introduced to the goals of the evaluation, and instructed on how to complete the questionnaire. Thereafter, the questionnaires were distributed to them. The second session was allotted to the completion of the questionnaires. Each instructor responded to the questionnaires independently.

The questionnaire consisted of 170 multiple choice questions with four or more options, and 7 questions for open-ended answers. After completion and collection of the questionnaires, the evaluation staff got down to study the answers. Having studied the answers, and, based on the ideas presented in the open-ended answers, the relevant topics were selected for group discussions.

For completion of the questionnaires, and the relevant group discussions that followed, separate sessions were held for each province, with a time gap between them. In the group discussions, the instructors freely and candidly answered all questions raised, and shared their opinions on the methods to be followed for the implementation of the Project, the limitations and constraints, positive and constructive impacts, and the necessary suggestions for better implementation of the Project.

Group discussion meetings in Sistan & Baluchestan, and, in Kordestan provinces, were held a day after the completion of the questionnaire. (Data collection in the province of Sistan & Baluchestan took place prior to data collection in the province of Kordestan). The workshop for instructors from the provinces of East Azerbaijan and West Azerbaijan was held in Tabriz City. However, sessions for answering the questionnaire, as well as, the group discussions, were held separately in each of these provinces.

In the province of Khorasan, the dates of data collection through the questionnaires, and, the group discussions, were not co-ordinated with the educational workshop. This resulted in the instructors from the townships of Bojnourd and Sabzevar (the townships covered by the Project) being invited to participate in data collection meetings at the Literacy Organisation Movement of their respective districts on the same day. At these meetings, like at the meetings held in other provinces, the instructors first

answered the questionnaires. However, after only a short break, they had to participate in the group discussions.

The reason for separate collection and analysis of the ideas from 6 school principals, through group discussions, in Khorasan, was that the "Education of Rural Working Girls" Project was implemented separately in 3 villages of the Bojnourd district, and three of the Sabzevar district.

## **CHAPTER TWO: Data Analysis and Conclusions**

### **Sistan & Baluchestan Province**

The "Education of Rural Working Girls" Project was implemented in the Sistan & Baluchestan Province, with the co-operation and participation of the instructors of the Literacy Movement Organisation (LMO). To participate in the Project, the provincial LMO selected 30 instructors, who were more experienced, had greater co-operation in the educational field, and, in addition, had experience in the artistic fields also. (Most of these instructors belonged to Zabol and Khash districts).

The selected instructors participated in a 48-hour training course over a period of six days, and were then sent out to the villages. Most of the course curriculum taught during these preparatory training courses was of a complementary nature. These topics were then transferred to the students of the literacy classes at a "very high" level.

A number of these instructors were sent to the villages where they had previously taught as instructors in the regular classes of the Literacy Movement Organisation. Upon arrival at the village, the instructors talked to the village people regarding the overall Project implementation, and discussed the benefits of the Project.

A total of 30 educational classes --- 15 in the villages of Zabol district, and 15 in the villages of Khash district --- were established in the province. The villages covered by the Project, were within a range of 30-90 kilometres of the relevant city. Their population was approximately between 70-500 persons for each village covered. In this province 16 instructors did not respond to the question regarding "The distance between the village and the city". Another 14 instructors failed to respond to the question on "The population of the village". On an average, 15 literacy students in the 10-18 year age group participated in the Project, in each village.

Of the instructors questioned, 73.3% mentioned "home", 20% mentioned "home and farm", 3.3% mentioned "carpet weaving workshop" and another 3.3% mentioned "home, farm, and carpet weaving workshop" as the working place of their literacy students. The instructors reported an average daily working period of "2 hours and 40 minutes" for the girls covered by them, with a variance rate of 2 hours to 5 hours. The literacy students participated in the literacy classes till the completion of the classes. According to the report of the instructors, fall of educational level on account of leaving the educational classes was zero in this province.

Out of the 30 educational units under review, in 29 units (96.7% of the total number of units), there was no overlap between the teaching hours and the girls' working hours. As 73.3% of the students covered, worked in the "home", their working schedule was flexible. The 20% of them who worked in "home and farm", the absence of overlap between the working hours and timings of the classes, seems quite logical. 56.7% of the instructors believed that the daily hours of work of their students had decreased. Two of the instructors felt that the decline in the daily working hours was "3 to 4 hours". Another 3 instructors were of the opinion that the working hours had decreased by "6 to 8 hours" per day.

30% of the villages covered by the Project, had ordinary schools, and 66.7% them had ordinary Literacy Movement classes. Prior to the implementation of the Project, 10% of the girls who went to the ordinary classes of the Literacy Movement did not work. Another 60%, who went to the Literacy Movement classes, were working girls. While, 30% of the working girls did not participate in any Literacy Movement classes.

Girls covered by 23 educational units (76.7% of the units under review), did not have an employer. However, for the girls who were employed by others, the co-operation of the employers with the "educational unit", was reported to be "very high". On the whole, the "girls' parents" helped the instructors, in educating their daughters, "very much" and/or "much". 18 of the villages covered, had a "priest". The co-operation of the "village priest" with the Project, was reported to be "high" in 14 villages, and "very high" in the other 3 villages. The co-operation of the "members of the

village council" was reported "low" in one of the villages, "high" in another 10 villages, and "very high" in the remaining 19 villages. The co-operation of the "Literacy Movement", with the instructors, was reported "very high" in 93.3% of the villages (28 educational units).

Of the 30 villages covered, 25 (83.3%) did not have a Construction Jihad unit, 21 (70%) had no Imam Khomeini Aid Committee, and 19 (63.3%) had no Health House. In the villages that had active "Construction Jihad" units, their co-operation rate with the Project, was reported "very low". Co-operation of the "Imam Khomeini Aid Committee" was reported "low". However, the co-operation of the "Health Houses" was reported "very high".

In all the classes covered, the free feeding programme was carried out regularly throughout the duration of the course. Based on the facilities available, different types of food, including warm food, was served for the free feeding programme. In the opinion of the instructors, the administration of the free food programme has helped to attract and hold the students in the classes, at a "very high" level, in 50% of the units; at a "high" level, in 20% of the units; and, at "low" level in 20% of the other units.

In all the classes covered by the Project, the girls benefited from non-cash aid, throughout the Project period. The literacy students have received cloth pieces or clothes and bags during the implementation of the course. These items of aid have helped attract and keep the literacy students at a "very high" in 86.7% of the units, and at a "high" level in 10% of the units. All the girls covered by the Project, have received educational materials and devices free of charge. The literacy students have received various educational materials and stationery, including books, exercise books, notebooks, pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, ball pens and pens, free of charge.

According to reports made by the instructors, the distribution of these materials has helped in the attraction and retention of the literacy students in all the classes, at a "very high" level. None of the classes covered by the Project, charged any tuition fee, throughout the period of implementation of the Project.

All the classes covered by the Project, used educational aids such as video films and educational props. The above educational

aids have been used in 40% of the classes at least a Minimum of one time"; in 26.7% of the classes at least a "minimum of 2 times"; and in the rest of the classes at least a "minimum of 3 times"; and a "maximum of 5 times".

In the opinion of 60% of the instructors, the topics discussed in the educational films were related to the girls needs at a "very high" level. The other 40% of the instructors considered the topics discussed in the films to be related to the needs of the girls, at a "high level". All the classes covered by the Project, received UNICEF's educational kits, and used them in their teaching. The instructors believe that the educational kits supplied, have helped better grasp of the subjects, and created greater incentives in the girls in 86.7% of the educational units. In the rest of the units also, the kits have helped at a "high level".

The classes of 60% of the educational units were held for "4 hours" every day. The rest of the educational units had "5 hours" a day classes. The starting time of 13 educational units was reported at "7.00 a.m." Another 12 units started their classes at "7.30 a.m." All classes ended at between "11.00 a.m. and 12.30 p.m." At one of the educational units, the classes were held in the afternoon, between "12.00 noon and 4.00 p.m."

During the training courses, almost all instructors were trained in "flower stitching", "sewing", "flower making" and "flower weaving". In contrast, none of the instructors received any training in "carpet weaving" and "pottery". About 30% of the instructors mentioned receiving training in "cooking"; 16.7% mentioned training in "Appropriate Decision-making", "Communication Skills" and "Children's Rights"; and, 13.3% mentioned receiving training in "The Rights and Duties of Society", during their training courses.

The instructors trained the literacy students, not only the courses prescribed for them in their preparatory courses, but also, other subjects which they themselves had picked up during other on-the-job training courses for themselves, or, to a certain extent, educational under-graduate training courses. The students were trained by their instructors, on such issues as, "oral, tooth, skin and hair hygiene" (100% of the instructors), "first aid" (96.7%), "communication skills" (93.3%), "cooking", "making appropriate decisions" and, "children's rights" (90%), "introduction to the

problems of puberty" (93.3%), and, "children's rights and duties" (70%).

According to the views expressed by most instructors, the degree of attachment of literacy students to the educational topics being taught or discussed in the classes was at a "very high" or "high" level. This point is amply borne out by the fact that 13.3% of the instructors expressed the attitude of the girls towards "oral, tooth, skin and hair hygiene" as "good", while another 83.3% considered it to be "very good". On the subject of "Children's Rights", 30% of the instructors expressed the girls' attitude as "good", and 56.7% considered it as "very good".

The average age of the provincial instructors is about 28 years. The educational level of three of the instructors is "below high school leaving certificate" (10%). Twenty-six of the instructors possessed "high school leaving certificates (86.7%). One of the instructors did not mention her level of education.

Out of the 30 instructors, 29 persons possessed some teaching experience prior to joining the Project. 56.7% of the instructors had at least "2 years" of teaching experience, and 26.7% had at least "3 years" of teaching experience.

The transport costs of the instructors who lived outside the village, and the lodging costs of those who lived in the village, were paid by the Literacy Movement Organisation.

Based on the replies of the instructors, to the questionnaire, all of them "fully agree" with the statements that "The literacy students participate in the practical classes more eagerly", "Practical classes increase the efficiency of the learners", and "Families of the students welcome the programme". In addition, 29 instructors (96.7%) "fully agree" with the statement that "The lessons taught in the classes will be beneficial for the girls in their future life". 28 instructors (93.3%) claim to "fully agree" with the statement that "The girls are satisfied with their participation in the programme", while one instructor claims to "agree" with the statement.

On another front, 27 instructors (90%), "fully agree" with the statement that "As a result of the implementation of, the this programme, the girls have become sociable". In contrast, only one

(4.3%) of the 23 instructors "fully agreed" with the statement that "Through this educational programme, the working hours of the girls have decreased", while 4 instructors (17.39%), "agreed" with the statement. 11 instructors (47.8%), and 7 instructors (30.43%), were respectively, "totally against" and "against" the above statement. Out of the 30 instructors, 29 "fully agreed" with the statement that "It is necessary to continue the programme in future years.

All the instructors expressed the view that the educational material taught in the classes was very good and beneficial. Comparing the programmes and activities of the Project with the programmes of the ordinary literacy classes, the instructors evaluated the Project as "very" positive, mentioning a number of positive points, such as:

- Increasing the interest and eagerness of the literacy students to participate and learn in these classes,
- Attracting a greater number of literacy students for regular participation in the literacy classes, with no absentees,
- Offering more efficient learning, compared with that offered in ordinary Literacy Movement classes, through a greater variety of material taught, and decreasing the failure rates at the final course examination,
- Broadening the level of perception of the literacy students by stressing such issues as "How to Make Appropriate Decisions", "How to Establish Relationships", "The Rights and Duties of the Society", and "Children's Rights", and increasing the inter-active communication of the literacy students with each other,
- Making positive changes in the behaviour patterns and conversational skills of the literacy students, including personal and community hygiene, logical behaviour with their class-mates, family members, and other people
- The positive financial impact of the skills acquired in the classes, by making the necessary household appliances, and even earning money through the sale of these appliances,
- Transferring the knowledge and skills taught in the classes, to the families and the community,
- Creation of higher hopes, through the use of the learned skills in their personal life, especially with their increased income generation capacity,

- Blossoming of the potential talents, and increasing the self-confidence of the literacy students'
- Increasing the attention of the members of the family towards girls, through a knowledge of their capabilities, and thus decreasing the inappropriate behaviour and attitude of the family towards girls' education,
- Decline in the workload of girls, in the house and on the farm.

In contrast with the many positive points seen by the instructors, they did not see any important negative point in the programme. However, the instructors mentioned a few major general constraints limiting the usefulness of the Project, as follows:

- The age limit for the participation of girls in the classes (limiting the participation to girls in the 10-18 year age group),
- Limiting the number of students participating in one literacy class. (Making the formation of a class contingent to a minimum of 15 literacy students),
- Long teaching hours of the course. (A total of 700 hours of teaching during the course),
- Negative impact of the programme, on students of the ordinary Literacy Movement classes (caused by the higher facilities offered to the students of the literacy classes conducted under the auspices of the Project, compared with those available to the ordinary Literacy Movement class students),
- Time lapse in the provision of the incentives provided for the literacy students,
- Shortage of the basic equipment needed for practical and artistic activities.

While emphasising the importance of eliminating the shortcomings, the instructors also offered some suggestions for the continuation of the Project into the following year. Some of the most outstanding suggestions are:

- Provision of the necessary material for the literacy students, prior to the start of the teaching of practical skills in the classes,
- Filming the educational activities of the classes, and broadcasting them through the national television network,

- Making appropriate films dealing with the theme of “Life Skills”, and distributing them to the instructors,
- Making greater use of pictorial media in the educational process,
- Involving a greater number of villages (especially, the neighbouring villages) in the Project,
- Arranging visits by authorities of various organisations, to encourage the literacy students, and increase their eagerness to learn.

### **Kordestan Province**

The “Education of Rural Working Girls” Project was implemented in the Sanandaj and Kamyaran townships, with the co-operation of instructors of the Literacy Movement Organisation (LMO). To participate in the Project, the provincial LMO selected instructors who were more successful than others, in the educational fields. (The criteria for their selection were the attraction of more students to their classes, and lower rates of failure among their students). In addition, the instructors to be selected had to have sufficient experience and skills in the artistic fields as well.

The selected instructors participated in a training course lasting 100 hours. They were then sent out to the villages. Except for one of the instructors, the others used the curriculum taught at the preparatory training course, in their literacy classes, at a “very high” level. Most of these instructors were sent to the villages where they had previously taught as instructors in the regular classes of the Literacy Movement Organisation. On arrival at the village, the instructors talked to the village people regarding the conditions for participation in the Project, including the age limitation. The instructors also spoke at length to the villagers about the goals and educational and artistic activities of the Project. This advocacy helped in attracting students to the literacy classes.

A total of 29 educational classes --- 16 in the villages of Sanandaj township, and 13 in the villages of Kamyaran township,--- were established in the province. The villages were within a range

of 19-97 kilometres of the relevant city. The population of each of the villages was approximately around 150-2000 persons. On an average, 16 literacy students participated in the Project, in each village. 69% of villagers mentioned, "home and farm", and another 17.2 persons mentioned only "farm" as the working place of the under-18 working girls. 44.8% of the instructors reported an average daily working period of "more than 8 hours"; 24.1% of them mentioned "7 to 8 hours", while another 27.6% mentioned "5 to 6 hours", for the girls covered by them. They have reported an average of daily working hours of around "4 hours".

75.9% of the instructors mentioned that all their literacy students participated in the classes until the end of the programme. In other words, they reported that the drop out of their classes was zero. 17.2% reported a drop out of "one or two" literacy students; and 6.9% reported a drop out of "three or four" literacy students. 6 instructors reported that a total of 10 "15 to 16 year old" literacy students dropped out of the programme. Another 2 instructors reported that 2 "17 to 18 year old" students had left their educational classes. According to the instructors, the reasons for the dropouts varied from, "Long distance between the classes and their home or place of work", "Disagreement of the family with their participation in the classes", "The family needed the girl to work at home", and, "Marriage". 4 instructors reported overlap between the teaching hours and the working hours of the girls. The remaining 25 instructors (86.2%) did not mention any overlap between the teaching hours and the working hours of the girls.

13 instructors (51.7%) saw no decline in the working hours of the girls.

While 27 instructors reported that the villages covered by them had ordinary literacy classes, all of the villages covered by the Project also had ordinary schools. 34.5% of the instructors (10 persons) mentioned that the establishment of the Project classes had a negative impact on the number of literacy students participating in ordinary Literacy Movement classes. Prior to the implementation of the Project, 72.4% of the girls who were working, also went to the Literacy Movement or ordinary school classes, 10.35% of the working girls did not participate in any classes, before the implementation of the Project programme.

3 girls had employers, while 26 girls were, not employed by others. For those girls who were employed by others, the co-operation and collaboration of the "employers" was reported by the instructors to be "low". The co-operation of the "girls' parents" was mentioned to be "very high" and/or "high"; while the co-operation of the Literacy Movement was uniformly reported by the instructors to be "very high".

19 of the villages covered by the Project had a "priest". 14 instructors reported the co-operation and collaboration of the "village priest" with the Project, as being "low" or "non-existent". They also complained that the co-operation of the village council was at a "low" level; the co-operation of the Construction Jihad was also "very low" or "non-existent". 17 instructors reported the co-operation of the "Imam Khomeini Aid Committee" as being "low". 15 instructors also reported the co-operation of the "Health Houses" as being "low".

The average duration of the course was around 7 months in 29 classes. In all the classes covered, the free feeding programme was carried out throughout the period of the course. 2 of the instructors used bread and cookies as part of their feeding programme. In the other classes, based on the facilities available, various different types of food, including warm food, was served. In the opinion of all instructors, the administration of free food programme has helped to attract and keep the students in the classes, at a "very high" level.

The literacy students have received various education materials and stationery, including books, exercise books, note books, pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, ball pens and pens, free of charge. According to reports received, the distribution of these materials has helped in the attraction and retention of the literacy students, at a very high level.

In 96.6% of the classes covered by the Project, the girls benefited from non-cash items of aid. 89.7% of the instructors followed the criteria of continuous participation in the educational classes, through a regular programme of the distribution of non-cash without a lapse. All the girls covered by the Project, received cloth-pieces or clothes and bags. 96.6% of the instructors (in other words, all the instructors who distributed the non-cash aid items in their classes), declared that these items of aid have

helped attract and keep the literacy students in the classes, at a "very high" level. None of the classes covered by the Project, charged any tuition fee, throughout the period of the implementation of the Project.

93.1% of the instructors used educational aids, such as video films and educational props, over the period of the programme implementation. They showed films in the classes, on an average "4 times" during the course. In the opinion of 74.8% of the instructors, the films screened in the classes were related to the girls' needs at a "very high" level.

All the classes covered by the Project, received UNICEF's educational kits. 96.6% of the instructors made use of these kits in their teaching assignments. 79.3% of the instructors believe that the educational kits, supplied by UNICEF, helped a better grasp of the subjects, and created greater incentives in the girls, at a "very high" level.

Timing of the classes of 41.4% of the instructors was "4 hours" per day. Other instructors had "5 hours" per day classes. 51.7% of the instructors held morning classes; 37.9% held afternoon classes; and 10.3% held morning and afternoon classes. The starting and ending time of the morning classes varied from instructor to instructor. However, on average, the classes started at "8 o'clock" and ended at "12 o'clock". The average afternoon classes started at 13 o'clock and ended around 17 o'clock.

During the preparatory course, all instructors were briefed on "How to Make Appropriate Decisions", "Communication Skills", "Rights and Duties of the Society" and "Children's Rights". 72.4% of the instructors were also briefed on "Oral, Dental, Skin and Hair Hygiene" and "First Aid". 55.2% were familiarised with "Puberty" issues, 82.8% of them were briefed on the subject of "flower making", and 69% were familiarised with "flower weaving". Besides the regular curriculum set for the literacy classes, the instructors also taught the literacy students the things they had learnt during their on-the-job training. They also taught the students the art of "cooking". The instructors expressed the feeling that the enthusiasm of the girl students towards the subjects discussed in the educational classes, especially the topics of "How to Make Appropriate Decisions", "Communication Skills", "Rights and Duties of the Society", and, "Children's Rights" was very high.

The average age of the instructors was around 27 years, including a minimum age of 22 years, and a maximum age of 30 years. The educational qualification of 13.8% of the instructors (4 persons) was "less than high school leaving certificate", while the others (25 persons) held "high school leaving certificates". 89.7% of the instructors (26 persons) possessed previous teaching experience, before the start of the Project. The minimum teaching experience of the above instructors was "one year", and their maximum teaching experience reached "five years". The average teaching experience reached "three years".

Throughout the time span of the execution of the Project, all the instructors lived in the same villages as where they served as instructors. To put it differently, the instructors lived in the villages where they taught; and left the villages only at weekends, to visit their families. The Literacy Movement Organisation paid for the housing costs of 93.1% of the instructors.

The replies of the instructors, to the questionnaire, showed that 93% of them "fully agreed" and 6.9% of them "agreed" with the statement that, "The literacy students show more inclination to participate in the vocational training classes". 72.4% and 27.6% of the instructors "fully agreed" and "agreed" respectively, with the statement that "The vocational classes increase the efficiency of the literacy students". 69% of the instructors "fully agreed" and 31% "agreed" that the "Families welcome the programme". 89.7% and 10.3% of the instructors respectively, "fully agreed" and "agreed" with the statement that "The girls get satisfaction by participating in the programme". Meanwhile, 79.3% of the instructors "fully agreed", and 17.2% of them "agreed" that, "The issues taught in the classes are good for the future benefit of the girls". Furthermore, 37.9% of the instructors "fully agreed", and 34.5% "agreed" with the statement expressing the opinion that "The working hours of the girls have declined through the implementation of the Project". Only 6.9% of the instructors "fully agreed", and 3.4% of them "agreed" that the statement that "The employers have welcomed the implementation of the Project". 69% of the instructors did not declare their opinion on the subject.

In short, the instructors evaluated their educational activities during the Project period, as positive. Comparing the Project activities with the activities of the regular programme of the

ordinary Literacy Movement classes, enumerated a big number of positive points, including the following ones:

- The Literacy students have become more sociable, and show a boost in their self-esteem,
- The literacy students' spirit of co-operation, their mental skills, their ability to make decisions, their sense of discipline, and even their ability to communicate with others, have shown a dramatic surge,
- The literacy students have gained the courage to speak out and express their opinions,
- The literacy students have picked up the courage and ability to defend themselves,
- The literacy students have realised their position in society, and become familiar with their rights and duties'
- The participation of the literacy students in group activities and practical work, has given them a more logical and broader vision of life.
- The literacy students have gained familiarity with personal and communal health issues, and are able to use the knowledge they have acquired, in their day to day life,
- Their eagerness for learning has increased, and they participate in the classes with high spirits,
- The educational decline, and the absence of the students from their classes, has almost disappeared,
- The rate of participation in the final examinations, and the passing level of students has shown an upward trend,
- The artistic training, side by side with the educational activities, has boosted the spirits of the literacy students'
- The literacy students have transmitted the lessons by them, to other members of the family as well,
- Due to the implementation of artistic training and job-creating education, the view of the village people regarding the education and the instructors, has become positive,
- The artistic training has paved the way for income generating activities in the family,
- The teaching process is inter-active, and uses a participatory method,
- The relationship between the instructors and the literacy students is cordial.

In spite of the above positive and encouraging factors, the instructors also pointed out some of the weaknesses of the preparatory programme (especially with the start of the school year): Scarcity of educational aids during the teaching process; delay in receiving the necessary teaching materials, educational kits, video films; and, shortage of educational space. Other negative points and constraints mentioned by the instructors were as follow:

- ✓ The age limitation (Accepting only students in the 10-18 age group,
- ✓ Limitations in class formation (Minimum number of 15 students needed to set up a class),
- ✓ Delays in the distribution of free food,
- ✓ Low salary of the instructors, as well as, delays in the payment of the salaries,
- ✓ Lack of sufficient knowledge of the Project guide, regarding the specifications of the Project

Taking into account all that has been said and accomplished, as 93.1% of the instructors “fully agree”, and the remaining 6.9% “agree” with the proposition that “The continuation of the programme, for the future years, is necessary”, as also the positive scores mentioned during the group discussions, it may be concluded that the process of preparation and implementation of the Project, in Kordestan province, has been successful.

The instructors have stressed various suggestions, regarding the continuation of the Project, as follows:

- The limit on the minimum requirement for the establishment of a class be reduced to 10 students,
- Sports programmes and distribution of sports materials should be implemented,
- A small library should be established in each class,
- Scientific and art competition among the literacy students should be organised,
- Emphasis should be laid on greater attention to the need for the distribution of protein-rich foods in the free food programme,
- The duration of teaching in the literacy classes of the Project should be counted towards the calculation of the years of service of the instructors,

- Painting devices and material should be distributed among the literacy students,
- Educational tapes should be prepared and distributed among the students,
- Educational aids should be distributed promptly at the right time, without delays,
- Leisure camps should be organised for the instructors and the literacy students,
- The duration of the preparatory courses for instructors (on-the job training) should be increased,
- Use should be made of the local village arts in the training courses,
- The official flag of the country should be kept into every class-room'
- The Project should be implemented for the secondary education system as well.

### **East Azerbaijan Province**

The "Education of Rural Working Girls" Project was implemented in the Tabriz and Haris townships, with the co-operation of the instructors of the Literacy Movement Organisation (LMO). To participate in the Project, the LMO selected a number of village instructors, who had more experience in work and teaching, and were more active. The selected instructors participated in a 6-day Training Workshop. The curriculum taught at the preparatory course was then used in the literacy classes at a "very high" level.

During the preparatory course, the instructors became familiar with various teaching methods, as well as, with "flower making", "making sponge fruits", "pottery", "doll making", and "life skills".

The subjects taught at the preparatory course were new, and were welcomed by the instructors. Through participation in the course, the instructors were inspired to learn other issues. The instructors mentioned the positive impact and effectiveness of the course. However, they also alluded to the short duration of the course.

On arrival at the villages where they were to teach, the instructors talked to the people through the mosques. They also visited the houses of the people to have personal chats with them regarding the overall Project implementation, and convincing them of the difference of the Project education with the subjects taught at the ordinary Literacy Movement classes, thus attracting the literacy students.

A total of 22 educational classes --- 9 in the villages of Tabriz district, and 13 in the villages of Haris district, --- were established in East Azerbaijan Province. The villages covered by the Project were within a radius of 15-80 kilometres of the relevant city. The population of each village covered by the Project was between 160 and 5000 persons. On the average 15 to 40 students participated in each.

Of the instructors questioned, 9.1% mentioned "carpet weaving workshop", 36.4% named "home" and another 54.5% introduced "carpet weaving workshop, farm and home" as the work place of their literacy students. The instructors reported an average daily working period of "4 hours" for the girls covered by them, with a variance of 2 hours to 5 hours. Most of the instructors felt that the decline in the daily working hours of the students was about "5 to 6 hours".

72.7% of the instructors reported "no class drop out"; 13.6% of them mentioned that "one or 2" of their students had left the class; 9.1% mentioned "3 or 4" of their literacy class students having dropped out of the classes.

The students most prone to drop out were in the "11 to 16 year" age bracket. The factors mentioned most as contributing to the drop out of "12 year and younger" age group included the "long distance between the school and the home or the place of work" of the literacy student, "family opposition to participation of the girls in the literacy classes", lack of relevancy of curriculum taught in the classes with the day-to-day needs of the community", "shortage of educational aids", "the needs of the family for the girl to work at home", and "the need of the family for the girl's income to supplement the family budget". Factors influencing the drop out of girls in the "13 year and over" age bracket included "long distance between the home or the place of work", "family opposition to the participation of the girls in the

literacy classes”, “the need of the family for the girl to work at home”, “the need of the family for the girl’s income to supplement the family budget”, and “marriage of the girl”.

36.4% of the instructors announced some overlaps between the teaching hours of the literacy classes and the working hours of the girls”. Most instructors believed that the working hours of 12 students in each class had not decreased. 3 instructors mentioned “one hour” of decline in the daily working hours of the literacy students. 2 of the instructors felt that the decline in the daily working hours of their literacy students was “2 hours”. 3 of the instructors mentioned a decline of “3 to 4 hours, and 11 mentioned a decrease in the daily working hours of the literacy students to be “5 to 6 hours”.

Many of the villages covered also had ordinary schools and Literacy Movement classes. 17 of the instructors, who set up Project classes in the villages that already had ordinary Literacy Movement classes, felt that the Project classes had a negative impact on the number of literacy students participating in the ordinary literacy classes.

According to the views of 95.5% of the instructors, almost all the students covered by the Project had already been working and studying prior to the implementation of the Project.

Based on the reports of 63.6% of the instructors, girls participating in their classed did not have an employer. 6 of the instructors (27.3%) described the co-operation of the employers to be almost “Nil”, while 2 instructors (9%) reported the employers’ co-operation to be “high” and “very high”. All of the instructors reported the rate of co-operation of the girls’ parents to be “high”; and the co-operation of the Literacy Movement, to be “very high”. 10 of the villages covered (45.5%) by the Project, had a priest. The co-operation and collaboration of the “village priest”, with the Project, was reported to be “low”. In the villages served by active “Construction Jihad”, “Health House”, and “Imam Khomeini Aid Committee” units, their rate of co-operation with the Project, was reported to be “nil”. In the villages, which had “village councils”, the co-operation of the village councils was reported to be at a “low” level.

The average duration of Project educational course was approximately 8 months. In all the classes covered by the Project, on an average, the free feeding programme was carried out for 6 months. Based on the facilities available, different types of food, including warm food was served by the free food programme.

The instructors' opinion poll showed that the administration of the free food programme has helped to attract and keep the students in the literacy classes, at a "very high" level in 54.5% of the units and at a "high" level in 22.7% of the other units.

In all of the classes, the girls benefited from non-cash aid. Half of the instructors considered the distribution of non-cash aid to be an important factor in maintaining the continuous participation of the literacy students in the classes. The literacy students received bags in all classes; and cloth-pieces or clothes in almost all of the classes (86.4%). In the opinion of the instructors, these non-cash aid items have contributed to attract and keep the literacy students in the classes.

All of the literacy students have received educational material and kits free of charge. These students have received various kinds of educational material and stationery, including books, note books, erasers, pencil sharpeners, ball pens and pens.

According to reports received from the instructors, the distribution of these materials has greatly helped in the enticement and maintenance of the literacy students in the classes, at a "very high" level (72.7%, and "high" level (22.7%).

None of the classes covered by the Project charged any tuition fee, throughout the implementation of the Project.

Only 3 of the instructors used educational aids, such as video films and educational kits, throughout the period of the implementation of the Project. Also, only 4 of the instructors received UNICEF's educational kits, and used them in their teaching assignments. The instructors believe that the educational kits helped a better grasp of the subjects, and created greater incentives in the girls at a "low" level.

45.5% of the instructors held "4 hour" classes; while 54.5% of them held "5 hour" classes every day.) 3 classes were organised in the mornings, and 17 (77.3%) were organised in the

afternoons. The remaining classes were organised in mornings as well as afternoons, or, on a rotational basis. The morning classes started work at 8.00 to 8.30 and ended at 12.00 to 12.30. The afternoon classes had more flexible time schedules, beginning and ending at different hours in each village. The starting time ranged between 12.00 and 17.00, and the ending time was between 16.00 and 22.00.

The instructors taught various subjects, including "Oral, Tooth, Skin and Hair Hygiene" (81.8%), "Flower Making" (90.9%), "Cooking" (81.8%), "Pottery" (95.5%), "Communication Skills" (72.7%), "Rights and Duties of the Community" (59.1%), "Children's Rights" (50%), "Flower Stitching" (59.1%), and "Familiarisation with Puberty Issues" (45.5%). The enthusiasm of the literacy students for such subjects as "Oral, Tooth, Skin and Hair Hygiene", "Flower Making", "Pottery", "Communication Skills", "Rights and Duties of the Community", "Children's Rights", "Flower Stitching", and "Familiarisation with Puberty Issues", was "high" and "very high" in the opinion of more than 80% of the instructors.

The average age of the instructors was 31 years, ranging between a minimum age of 26 years, and a maximum age of 26, and a maximum of 38 years. The educational qualification of 31.8% of the instructors was "less than a high school completion certificate", while that of 54.5% was "high school completion certificate". 90% of the instructors had some teaching experience, before joining the Project. The teaching experience of most of the provincial instructors was "7 to 8 years". The place of residence of 81.8% of the instructors, during the course of the implementation of the Project, was the village where they taught. Their housing cost was paid by the Literacy Movement Organisation (15 instructors), or, the self-help of the villagers.

According to the answers, given by the instructors of East Azerbaijan, on the questionnaires, 90.9% of them "fully agreed", and the others "agreed" with the statement that "Literacy students participate in the vocational training classes with greater enthusiasm. 72.7% and 22.7% of the instructors "fully agreed" and "agreed" respectively, with the statement that "Vocational Training classes improve the productivity of the student". 77.3% of the instructors "fully agreed", while 22.6% of them "agreed",

with the statement that "The girls are satisfied with their participation in the programme". 86.4% and 9.1% of the instructors "fully agreed" and "agreed" respectively, with the statement that "The things learnt in the class are good for the future of the girls". 72.7% of the instructors "fully" agreed with the proposition that "The girls have become more sociable through participation in the programme". However, 77.3% and 13.6% of the instructors were respectively "totally against" and "against" the assertion that "The working hours of girls have been shortened with the implementation of the programme". Also, 72.7% of the instructors were "totally against" the proclamation that "Employers have welcomed the implementation of the Project". On the whole, in view of the positive response of 90.9% of the instructors, to the proposition that "It is necessary to continue the Project in the future years", it may be concluded that the instructors have evaluated the Project as positive and beneficial.

Based on the answers of the instructors to the questions with open-ended answers, it may be concluded that the teaching of the educational material throughout this course has been *very beneficial*. Comparing the Project activities with the activities of the regular Literacy Movement, the instructors have pointed out to a number of positive points. The instructors consider the 'life skill education' and 'the vocational and the artistic training' as the strongest elements of the Project, mentioning the 'non-cash aid material' as the second most outstanding strength of the Project. They have also noted a number of other positive points of the Project, including the following:

- Increasing the enthusiasm of the literacy students to attend the educational classes, and decreasing educational set-backs,
- Better and faster perception of the subjects taught, and the utilisation of the subjects learned, in the day-to-day life of the students,
- Significantly higher percentage of pass rates in the final examinations'
- Increase in the working spirit and team work among the students,
- Participation in the classes, with a happier and more enthusiastic mood,

- Attendance of the literacy students in the classes without any absence, and their eagerness to stay later in the classes,
- The creation of a spirit of co-operation and collaboration with each other,
- Transfer of information and skills from the classroom to the family and the community.

It is worth noting here that the instructors pointed out to the short duration of the preparatory course (On-the-job Training), the late and inappropriate distribution of the non-cash aid material and the educational kits, as the main weaknesses of the Project. The educational kits were received very late in this Province --- almost at the end of the course. Another problem pointed out was that the promises of rewards to the students, who participated regularly in the classes, were not fulfilled.

In addition to the weaknesses enumerated above, some of the others mentioned were the age bracket limit, lack of educational and leisure visits, and the negative impact of the Project classes on the ordinary Literacy Movement classes. The village school headmasters, and teachers of the ordinary Literacy Movement classes, have also complained several times --- directly and indirectly --- of the negative impact of the free food and educational aid distribution to the Project students, on other students in the villages.

The general opinion of the instructors is that the Project has failed to decrease the daily working hours of the girls. However, due to the interesting and attractive nature of the Project's educational activities, especially the teamwork of the groups in the classes, the literacy students have learnt to regulate their time in such a way that they perform their home domestic and farm activities fully concurrently with their educational activities. In other words, they have tried to participate in both the activities, that is to say, their working and educational jobs, by allocating more of their time to these activities, and less to wasteful activities.

Some of the suggestions offered by the instructors to continue the Project activities more fruitfully are:

- Scrapping the age limit for students wishing to join the literacy classes,

- Distribution of the educational instruments and kits to the instructors, at the beginning of the school year,
- Taking into account the true needs of the students (especially, clothing and shoes) when handing out non-cash aid,
- Organising sports activities for the younger literacy students, and making provision for the supply of sports goods to them,
- Educating the family members of the girls --- especially their elder brothers --- on the girls' rights, through the organisation of cultural programmes for this purpose,
- Organising the preparatory courses (On-the-job Training) with better contents and programming,
- Preventing the disappointment of students of the ordinary schools, and, especially the ordinary Literacy Movement classes, by implementing the non-cash aid and free feeding programme for them also,
- Implementing the programme for the secondary classes also,
- Continuing the programme during summer months, in order to decrease the working hours of the girls,
- Making arrangements for appropriate environment, and, chairs and desks for the educational classes.

Besides the suggestions offered by the instructors, and the positive and negative sides of the implementation of the Project, they also stressed the following interesting points:

- ❖ Students of the ordinary schools and the ordinary Literacy Movement classes were trying to quit their classes in order to be able to participate in the Project classes.
- ❖ The school headmasters were trying to learn and implement the job of the Project instructors, in their own schools.
- ❖ Boys were also eager to participate in vocational training.
- ❖ Students of the ordinary schools that had free food programmes, argued with their school officials, regarding the difference in the quality of the food.
- ❖ The fall in educational levels among the students of the ordinary classes has increased.

## **West Azerbaijan Province**

The "Education of Rural Working Girls" Project was implemented in Urumieh and Khoy townships of West Azerbaijan Province. The provincial Literacy Movement Organisation first notified the instructors regarding the Project. Later, the appropriate instructors were selected in accordance with such criteria as: The degree of familiarity of the candidates, with the artistic and educational subjects to be taught in the Project classes; teaching ability and experience of the candidates; and the similarities between the instructor's literacy class environment with the environment required by the Project. Once selected, the would-be instructors participated in a 48-hour training course spread over a period of 6 days.

During the preparatory training course, the selected instructors were briefed on the goals of the Project. The would-be instructors were then trained in such arts and crafts as "weaving", "flower stitching", "sewing", and "psychology". The instructors then transferred the topics, to their students in the literacy classes, 60% and 40%, at a "very high" and a "high" level, respectively. The instructors used mosques, and were helped by members of the village council, to attract the literacy students. In this manner, the instructors briefed the young girls on the goals of the Project. The Literacy Movement Organisation of Khoy township possess data on the illiterate persons of the villages. In this manner, the illiterate girls of Khoy villages were enrolled in the Project classes, with the co-operation of the Literacy Movement officials.

A total of 25 educational classes --- 10 in the villages of Urumieh district, and 15 in the villages of Khoy district --- were established in the West Azerbaijan province. The villages covered by the Project were within a range of 25-60 kilometres of the relevant township. The population of the various villages was approximately 200-2,500 persons for each village covered. Each village attracted a minimum of 12 literacy students, and a maximum of 29 students to the Project classes. (On an average 16 students were attracted to each literacy class).

Of the instructors questioned, 20% announced, "carpet weaving workshop", 4% declared "Farm", and 28% mentioned "carpet weaving workshop, home and farm", as the place of work of their literacy students. 7% of the instructors declared daily working period of "more than 8 hours", 12% reported "7 to 8 hours", and 4% announced "5 to 6 hours", as the daily working hours of the girls covered by them.

68% of the instructors (17 persons) reported that all of the literacy students participated in the literacy classes till the completion of the classes. In other words, fall of educational levels on account of leaving the educational classes was "zero" in the classes of 68% of the instructors. 8% of the instructors announced "one or 2 student drop-outs" and 4% of them (one instructor) declared a "3 to 4 student drop-out". One of the drop out students was "aged a maximum of 12 years". She had to leave the literacy class due to the fact that her family needed her to work for them.

Based on the reports of the instructors, the main reasons for the drop-out students of "over 12" years of age include, "Long distance between the school and the home or the place of work of the girl"; "Family's disapproval of the participation of the girl in the literacy class"; "Shortage of educational material (instruments of learning)".

In 68% of the classes there was some overlap between the teaching hours and the girls' working hours. 24% of the instructors believed that there was no decline in the daily hours of work of their students, in spite of the implementation of the Project. Other instructors mentioned a decline in the daily working hours, of a minimum of "one literacy student" and a maximum of "27 literacy students" of their classes. The rate of decline in the working daily hours varied in different classes, within a range of one hour to 7-8 hours.

96% of the villages covered by the Project, had ordinary schools. 92% of them had ordinary Literacy Movement classes also. 92% of the instructors said that the establishment of the Project classes has had a negative impact on the number of students participating in the ordinary Literacy Movement classes. Prior to the implementation of Project, 76% of the students were participating in the educational while continuing to work also.

However, 16% of the working girls did not participate in any educational classes.

80% of the instructors declared that their students had an employer. The co-operation of the employers was reported by 44% and 20% of the instructors, to be lacking to the degree of being either "absent" or "very low", respectively. 92% of the instructors considered the co-operation and collaboration of the "girls' parents" to be "very high". All instructors mentioned the co-operation and collaboration of the "Literacy Movement" to be "high".

8 of the villages covered by the Project had a "priest" (72% of the villages covered by the Project). The co-operation of the village "priest" was reported by 3 of the instructors, to be "Nil", while the other 5 instructors reported it to be "very high" or "high". 64% of the instructors declared the co-operation of the "members of the village council" to be "very high" or "high". Most of the villages covered by the Project (88%) did not have an active "Construction Jihad Unit". 72% had no "Imam Khomeini Aid Committee"; and 60% had no active "health House".

The duration of the implementation of the Project in the villages of the West Azerbaijan Province was between 6 and 9 months. In all the classes covered, the free feeding programme was carried out. The duration of the free feeding programme was reported to be "4 months" in one of the classes; "6 months" in two of them and "at least 7 months" in 22 classes. Depending on the facilities available, different types of food, including warm food, was served by the free feeding programme. The administration of the free feeding programme has helped to attract and hold the students in the classes at a "very high" level in 92% of the units. In all the classes covered by the Project, the girls benefited from non-cash aid.

The standard of continuous participation of the literacy students, in the classes, was followed by 84% of the instructors. The literacy students received cloth pieces or clothes and bags during the implementation of the Project. In the opinion of the instructors, these items of aid have helped attract and keep the literacy students on a "very high" level in 96% of the units. All the girls covered by the Project, have received educational material and stationery, including books, exercise books, note books,

pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, pens and ball pens, throughout the course of the implementation of the Project. According to reports received from 96% of the instructors, the free distribution of these materials was a boon in attracting and retaining the literacy students in the classes.

None of the classes covered by the Project charged any tuition fee throughout the period of its implementation. 92% of the classes, covered by the Project, used educational aids such as video films and educational kits. The films were screened in 70% of the classes at least "one time" and in 16% of the classes, "two times". However, in the opinion of 84% of the instructors, the topics discussed in the educational films were unrelated to the girls' needs.

92% of the classes covered by the Project, received UNICEF's educational kits, and used them in their teaching. The instructors believe that the educational packages have helped better grasp of the subjects taught to the students, and created greater incentives in the girls.

The classes of 44% of the educational units were held "7 hours" every day. The rest of the educational units (56%) had "5 hours" a day classes. 24% of the instructors held their classes exclusively in the mornings, 56% of them held the classes exclusively in the afternoons, while 16% held their classes in the mornings and afternoons. Only one of the instructors held her class on a rotational basis.

The starting time of the morning classes varied in the different units. They started between 8.00 and 9.30 and ended between 12.00 and 13.00. One of the morning classes started at 5.45 and ended at 10.45. The starting and ending times of the afternoon classes were even more flexible.

During the preparatory training courses, the instructors were trained in "Flower stitching" (100%), "Communication Skills" (48%), "Sewing" (56%) and "Children's Rights" (100%).

The instructors trained the literacy students on such issues as "Oral, Tooth, Skin and Hair Hygiene" (100% of the instructors), "First Aid" (56%), "Introduction to the Issues of Puberty" (60%), "Flower Stitching" (80%), "Sewing" (60%), "Cooking" (84%),

"Pottery" (76%), "Communication Skills" (68%), "Appropriate Decision Making" (76%), "Children's Rights" (72%), and "The Rights and Duties of the Community" (64%).

In the opinion of the instructors, the degree of enthusiasm of the girls to learn various subjects, including "Oral, Tooth, Skin and Hair Hygiene" (The opinion of 92% of the instructors), "First Aid (60%), "Introduction to Puberty Issues" (68%), "Cooking" (80%), "Flower Stitching" (80%), "Reaching Appropriate Decision" (68%), "Communication Skills" (68%), "Children's Rights" (60%), was "very high" or "high".

The average age of the provincial instructors was about 28 years. The educational level of 72% of the instructors was "high school leaving certificate". 28% of the instructors possessed "university graduation certificate". All the instructors possessed some teaching experience prior to joining the Project. 56% of the instructors had "one to two years" experience of teaching, 20% had "3 to 4 years" experience. The rest of the instructors had "more than 4 years" of teaching experience.

70% of the instructors lived in the township covered by the Project. The others lived in the villages. The transport costs of 52% of the instructors, who lived outside the villages, were borne by themselves. The lodging costs of 36% of the instructors were paid by the Literacy Movement. 40% of the instructors paid their own lodging costs.

Based on the replies the instructors had given on the questionnaire, 96% and 4% of them respectively, "fully agreed" and "agreed" with the statements that "The literacy students participate in the practical classes more enthusiastically", and "Practical classes increase the efficiency of the learners". In addition, 64% of the instructors "fully agreed" with the proposition that "The families welcome the programme". All the instructors "fully agree" with the assertion that "Lessons taught in the literacy classes will be beneficial for the girls in their future life", "The girls are satisfied with their participation in the programme", and that "As a result of the implementation of this programme, the girls have become sociable". In contrast with the above position, only 36% and 32% of the instructors, respectively, "fully agreed" or "agreed" with the hypothesis that "Through this programme, the working hours of the girls have decreased". Meanwhile, 80% of

the instructors were “totally against” and 12% of them were “against” the statement that “The employers welcome the Project”. Comparing the impact of the Project, with the programmes of the ordinary Literacy Movement classes, the instructors evaluated the Project as “positive”, mentioning a number of positive points, such as:

- The high amount of interest and enthusiasm of the literacy students to participate in these classes,
- The high degree of participation of the literacy students in the practical classes and group activities,
- The literacy students’ use of the acquired knowledge, in their daily life,
- Positive changes in the relationships of the literacy students with each other and with the community,
- Increased ability of the literacy students for decision making’
- Making the literacy students more sociable with the background of their learnt skills,
- The transfer of the learnt skills by the literacy students to their families and the community,
- The production of some items by the literacy students with the help of the skills they have acquired in the classes, and their ability to generate extra income through the sale of their products,
- The positive impact of the students’ income-generating activities on the overall family earnings,
- The literacy students’ performance of their homework with enthusiasm and diligence,
- The change of the strict and dry environment of the classroom with the introduction of artistic activities to these classes,
- The regular participation of the literacy students in their classes, without absence,
- The drastic fall in the failures at the final examinations,
- The extremely positive impact of the food programme, especially among girls of the under-15 year age group,
- The establishment of a spirit of co-operation, closeness and solidarity among the literacy students, and their ability and eagerness to learn from each other, and solve each other’s problems.

In contrast with the many positive points enumerated above, the instructors also mentioned a number of negative points and constraints. The major negative points stressed were:

- The employers were against the girls' education project (especially in the Khoy district),
- At the outset, when the Project was put into action, the decline in the girls' income, due to their participation in the Project literacy classes, their families were opposed to the implementation of the Project,
- Difficulties in regulating the class schedules with the daily working hours of literacy students, without any overlap,
- Delays in the distribution of educational instruments and stationery, as well as, non-cash aid (such as clothing). Some items were distributed at the end of the class.
- The age restraint applied to the participation of girls in the classes, would at times create opposition in the family, when one of the girls was eligible to join the class, but another one could not join the literacy class of the Project, due to the age bar.
- The video films screened were not appropriate with the cultural environment and conditions prevalent in the villages.
- The curriculum was not suited to the cultural and climatic environment of the region (Example: The Silkworm issue).
- The negative impact of the Project on the ordinary Literacy Movement classes was not welcome. The instructors mentioned that if the Project continues, the ordinary Literacy Movement classes would face difficulties in the coming year.
- Another important problem facing the implementation of the Project is the time lag in paying the instructors' salaries. The instructors also complained of their low salary scales.
- Participation of the township officials in the classes was encouraging. However, the giving of prizes and

rewards to only a few of the students has caused discontent and discomfort to the other students.

- During the preparatory training courses, the theoretical subjects received more attention than the practical methods.

Taking into account the pros and cons, ie, the above mentioned positive points, as well as the negative side in the shape of the constraints faced, a balanced view would emerge in the shape of the full-fledged approval of the provincial instructors with the proposition that “It is necessary to continue the programme in the coming years”, it may safely be concluded that the preparation and implementation of the Project has been successful in the West Azerbaijan province. However, we should not forget to take into account the minimal amount of the impact that the Project has had in decreasing the girls’ working hours; the lack of attraction of the students who worked in the workshops; and, the negative impact of the implementation of the Project on the ordinary Literacy Movement classes.

The instructors also offered some suggestions for the continuation of the Project in the years to come. Some of the main suggestions that have been offered by the instructors are as follows:

- Lifting the age limit for the participation of students in the literacy classes of the Project,
- Reducing the restriction of the minimum number of students required for the formation of a class,
- Paying a transport allowance to the instructors, or arranging for transport services for the instructors,
- Providing the educational films and the non-cash aids to the instructors in time,
- Covering all the Literacy Movement classes under the Project,
- Rewarding the outstanding and successful instructors and students
- Refraining from holding classes at night,
- Medical examination of the eyes, mouth and teeth of all the literacy students,
- Intergration of the classes of small villages into those of the larger ones,

- Providing an appropriate and permanent place for the classes to be established,
- Providing sports and leisure facilities for the literacy students, and organising sports activities within the framework of the Project,
- Providing decent desks and chairs for the classes,
- Preparing guide books for the teaching of various artistic and life skill topics,
- Providing first-aid boxes for the literacy classes,
- Providing accident insurance for all the literacy students covered by the Project.

### **Khorasan Province**

The "Education of Rural Working Girls" Project was implemented in the Khorasan Province with the co-operation and participation of provincial instructors. To participate in the Project, the provincial Literacy Movement (LMO) officials selected 36 instructors from the Bojnourd and Sabzevar townships. They were selected on the basis of their greater working experience and efficiency in teaching, plus some experience in artistic fields.

The selected instructors participated in a 48-hour training course spread over 6 days. After finishing the training course, the instructors were sent to the villages where they were to teach. 85.7% of these instructors transmitted the topics they had learnt, to their students, at a "very high" or "high" level.

The 36 selected instructors were sent to work in 3 of the Bojnourd township villages (18 persons), and 3 of the Sabzevar township villages (18 persons). The literacy classes were established in the form of complexes in the six villages. In each of these villages, one person was selected as the headmistress of the complex. In other words, a total of 30 instructors and 6 headmistresses worked under the Project in this province. A number of these instructors and headmistresses had already worked in these villages earlier.

The villages covered by the Project had a population of approximately between 1200 and 6000 persons each. The 15

instructors in the 3 Bojnourd township villages and the other 15 in the Sabzevar township villages worked in the literacy classes at one of the educational levels of the Project: The Basic Level, The Complementary Level, The Final Level, and The Fifth Grade.

Of the instructors questioned, 53.6% announced "carpet weaving workshop" as the place of work of the under-18 working girls covered by the Project. The other instructors mentioned "home" and "farm" as the work place of the girls. 35.7% of the instructors queried declared "7 to 8 hours" and 64.3% claimed "more than 8 hours" as the daily working time of the girls in their classes.

Out of the 28 instructors<sup>2</sup> who completed the questionnaire, 25 persons (82.1%) declared that all the literacy students participated in the literacy classes till the completion of the educational course. This means that 28 instructors reported no drop out in their classes. One of them reported a drop out of a maximum of "two" literacy students, and 3 reported a maximum drop out of "four" students. 3 of the literacy students who dropped out of the programme were in the "11-12 year" group.

According to the instructors, the reasons for the drop out varied from "long distance from the home or place of work of the students to the classes", "the family needed the girls to work at home", "the family needed the girls' income", and "marriage of the girl". In 57.1% of the Project classes, there was overlap between the teaching hours of the literacy classes and the working hours of the girls.

Of the instructors reporting, 12 (42.8%) mentioned no decline in the girls' working hours. The rest of them gave a "one to 6 hour" decline in the daily working hours of the girls.

Of the villages covered by the Project, 6 had ordinary literacy classes and ordinary schools. Eleven instructors spoke of the negative impact of the Project classes on the ordinary Literacy Movement classes and the ordinary schools. Prior to the implementation of the Project, 28.6% of the working girls (girls from the classes of 8 instructors) did not participate in any educational class, while 67.9% of the working girls (girls from the

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<sup>2</sup> It should be pointed out here that 2 of the instructors of Sabzevar township did not participate in the data collection meeting.

classes of 19 instructors) who were working also participated in some educational classes. In fact, the literacy students of these classes were attracted either from the classes of ordinary schools or from the ordinary Literacy Movement classes.

42.9% of the instructors reported the co-operation and collaboration of the "employers" with the educational programmes as "non-existent". The others reported it to be at a "high" level. The co-operation and collaboration of the girls' parents with the educational programmes was reported by 42.9% of the instructors to be at a "high" level. 21.9% of the instructors reported it to be at a "very high" level. However, 17.9 % of the instructors reported it to be at a "low" level. 17 of the villages covered by the Project, had a "priest". 17 instructors reported the co-operation and collaboration of the "village priest" as being "low". 3 instructors reported it to be at a "very low" level, while 2 other instructors reported it to be at an "extremely low" level.

53.6% of the instructors reported the co-operation and collaboration of the "members of the village council" with the education programme to be at a "very high" level. 32.1% of the instructors reported it to be at a "high" level. The remaining instructors claimed it to be at a "low" level. Almost all the instructors mentioned a "very high" rate of co-operation and collaboration from the officials of the Literacy Movement Organisation. 17 instructors responded to a question regarding the rate of co-operation and collaboration by the "Construction Jihad" in the education Project. Out of these 17 persons, 10 considered this co-operation to be "non-existent", 2 mentioned it to be "low", 4 thought to be "high", and one mentioned it as being "very high".

17 of the instructors responded regarding the evaluation of the rate of co-operation and collaboration of the "Imam Khomeini Aid Committee". Of these 9 instructors evaluated the co-operation and collaboration of the Committee to be at a "high" level, 3 considered it to be at a "very high" level, one thought it was at a "low", 3 other instructors deemed it to be at a "very low" level. Lastly, one of the instructors was of the opinion that the co-operation and collaboration of the "Imam Khomeini Aid Committee" was "non-existent". The co-operation and collaboration of the "Health Houses" of the townships, in the education Project, was

mentioned by 23 instructors (82% of the total number of instructors) as "high" or "very high".

The duration of the educational course varied from class to class. 2 of the instructors mentioned it to be "5 months". Another 9 instructors said it was "9 months" for their classes.

The free food programme was carried out in all the classes covered by the Project. 4 of the instructors mentioned the duration of the free feeding programme to have lasted "4 months". 3 others said it was "5 months". Another 7 instructors reported it have lasted "6 months". Yet another 13 instructors announced it to be "7 months or more". In the opinion of 53.6% of the instructors, the administration of the free food programme was instrumental in attracting and keeping the girls in the classes at a "very high" level. 42.8% of the instructors thought that this programme has helped to attract and hold the girls at a "high" level. 3.6% of the instructors (one instructor) felt that the programme has helped to attract and keep the girls in the classes at a "low" level.

During the course of the implementation of the Project, all the instructors have benefited from the non-cash aid available to them. 20 of the instructors took into account the criterion of continuous participation in the educational class as the norm for the distribution of the non-cash aid items. All instructors distributed cloth pieces or clothes and bags among their literacy students. Some of the units also divided "flour" among their students. 67.9% of the instructors declared that these items of aid were instrumental in attracting and keeping the students in the classes at a "very high" level. 25% of the instructors said that these items were a boon in helping to attract and hold the literacy students in the classes at a "high" level.

All of the literacy students have received free educational material and stationery, such as books, erasers, pencil sharpeners, pencils and notebooks. A number of instructors have also mentioned the distribution of exercise books (35.7% of the instructors), rulers (21.4% of the instructors, and ball pens (14.3% of the instructors). According to information given by 75% of the instructors, the giving out of these items has helped to attract and retain the literacy students at a "very high" level, 21% of the instructions have said that the distribution of these items

has helped in attracting and retaining the literacy students at a "high" level.

None of the classes covered by the Project charged the literacy students any kind of tuition fee.

During the educational course, 89.3% of the instructors made use of such educational aids as video films and educational kits. 19 instructors showed films in their classes "at least 3 times" during the period of the implementation of the Project course. 6 other instructors screened the films "one to 2 times".

In the opinion of 19 instructors (out of 25 instructors who screened films in their classes, the films shown in the classes were related to the girls' needs, at a "very high" and/or "high" level". Nonetheless, 5 instructors believed that the films shown in the classes were related to the needs of the girls at a "very low" level.

96.4% of the instructors had received the educational package supplied by UNICEF, and had used it in their teaching assignments. 50% of the instructors believe that the educational package helped a better grasp of the subjects, and created greater incentives in the girls at a "very high" level. 28.6% of the instructors also felt that the educational package helped a better grasp of the subjects, and created greater incentives in the girls, but at a "high" level. 21.4% of the instructors were of the opinion that the package is useful at a "low" level.

The time allotted to the classes by 42.9% of the instructors (12 persons) was "4 hours" per day. Other instructors held their classes "5 hours" per day. 10.7% of the instructors convened their classes in the mornings; 75% (21 instructors) held them in the afternoons; and 14.3% held morning and afternoon classes. The starting and ending times of the morning classes were 7.10 and 12.10 respectively. The morning/afternoon classes started and ended at "8" and "13". The starting times of the afternoon classes varied: 8 of these classes starting at "12.10", and 10 classes starting at "13". The ending time of all these classes was "4 to 5" hours after their starting time.

During the preparatory course, practically all the instructors were trained in "sewing and flower knitting"; 46.7% were also briefed on "oral, tooth, skin and hair hygiene"; 53.6% were trained

in "carpet weaving"; 46.4% on "how to make appropriate decisions"; 50% in "communication skills", 42.9% in the "rights and duties of the society". Some of the instructors have even mentioned briefing sessions on "computers", "religious edicts" and the "Quran".

At least 60% of the instructors have taught skills and issues such as "oral, tooth, skin and hair hygiene", "first aid", "an introduction to puberty issues", "flower knitting", "sewing", "cooking", "how to make appropriate decisions", "communication skills", "rights and duties of the society", and "children's rights" in their literacy classes. At least 60% of the instructors have also mentioned the attachment of the literacy students to the educational and skill development topics being taught as being at a "very high" or "high" level.

The average age of the provincial instructors was about 27 years. The age of the youngest instructor was 22 years, while the oldest instructor was 35 years of age. The educational level of 35.7% of the instructors was "high school leaving certificate". 25% of the instructors had passed their second year of university education, while 39.3% (11 persons) were university graduates.

All the instructors had some teaching experience prior to joining the Project. The teaching experience of 20 instructors (71.5%) was at least "5 years".

In view of the long distance between the villages covered by the Project and the respective cities or towns from where the instructors came, and the problems of transportation, 75% of the instructors lived in the villages where they taught, during the working days of the week. However, 6 of the instructors lived outside the village of their assignment, and commuted every day between their place of living and the village where they taught. The transport costs of those instructors who commuted every day, and also of those who commuted once every few days, were borne by themselves. However, the instructors mentioned that the lodging costs of those of them who lived in the villages, were paid by the Literacy Movement Organisation.

According to the responses of the instructors to the questionnaire, they all "fully agreed" or "agreed" with the propositions that "the literacy students participate in the practical

classes more eagerly”, “practical classes increase the efficiency of the learners”, “the girls are satisfied with their participation in the Project”, “the lessons taught in the classes will prove beneficial for their girls in their future life”, “girls have become more sociable through their participation in the programme”, and, “the continuation of the programme for the future years is necessary”.

Moreover, 85% of the instructors “fully agreed” or “agreed” with the assertion that “families welcome the programme”. In contrast, 42.8% of the instructors were “totally against” or “against” with the opinion that “the working hours of the girls have declined through the implementation of the Project”. 71.5% of the instructors were “totally against” or “against” the argument that “the employers have welcomed the implementation of the Project”.

In short, according to the above statements, and the group discussions with the instructors and the headmistresses, plus the talks with the officials of the Literacy Movement in Bojnourd and Sabzevar townships, in addition to the data derived from the responses of the instructors to the questions with open ended answers in the questionnaire, the implementation of the Project, in Khorasan province is evaluated as successful and efficient. Comparing the Project activities with the activities of the regular programmes of the Literacy Movement classes, the Project officials enumerated a big number of positive points, including the following:

- The positive effect of the programme on the spirit and behaviour of the literacy students,
- The change in the girls’ views on the surrounding issues and the environment,
- Accelerated rate of learning of the literacy students, with the help of the stories, plays, leisure camps, and longer teaching time, as compared with other classes,
- Putting into practise the subjects learnt, in their daily lives,
- Eagerness to participate in the classes, and a significant decline in the rate of absence,
- Change in health behaviour, and observance of personal hygiene (regular use of soap, etc) by the literacy students,
- The cordial relationship between the instructors and the literacy students,

- Decrease in shyness, and gathering the courage to speak up and express themselves in public,
- Positive change in their behaviour towards other people, especially the younger people,
- Regular efforts put in by the literacy students to attain their set goals,
- Creation of a sense of self-satisfaction and self-esteem in the literacy students,
- Creation of an income-generating capacity,
- Transfer of the lessons and skills learnt by the literacy students in the classes, to the outside of the classes, and to the society,
- Establishing family fondness for participation of the girls in the classes,
- Better educational outcomes, lower educational decline, and higher pass rates,
- Creation of incentives in the literacy students to participate in social and group activities, and attaching importance to the development of their villages of residence.

A group of instructors expressed their opinion in a different kind of statement, but boiling down to the same meaning, saying, "For the girls that under this blue sky, were only familiar with carpet loom and the knot, learning sewing, cooking, and flower knitting, was very sweet and attractive." The instructors spoke of artistic training as one of the most important factors in the attraction of the literacy students, and in the success of the Project. They also referred to the importance of the free feeding programme and the non-cash aid in the success of the Project.

The instructors also alluded to the establishment of all the four grades of basic, complementary, final and fifth grade, simultaneously, as one of the reasons for the success of the Project.

However, the instructors also pointed out to a number of negative aspects and constraints of the Project, such as:

- The negative impact of the poverty and financial problems of the families on the implementation of the Project,

- Delay in the provision of the educational instruments and facilities, such as the educational package, television and video sets, etc,
- Lack of fulfilment of some of the promises made by certain officials,
- Inappropriate propaganda for the attraction of the literacy students, at the time of the introduction of the Project,
- The age restraints placed on the attraction of literacy students,
- Excessive workload on the girls, and the negative impact of this through their fatigue, on their attention to learning in the classes,
- The overlap between the working hours of some of the literacy students, and the teaching hours of the classes,
- The high volume of the educational curriculum,
- Lack of attention to the welfare of the instructors, especially their transportation and housing needs,
- The low monthly salaries of the instructors,
- Lack of attention to incentives for the instructors, for example, the duration of the teaching assignment in the literacy classes not being counted as years of service of the instructors for their main job.

The provincial instructors have stressed various important suggestions regarding the continuation of the Project into the following years, as outlined hereunder:

- ❖ Provision of the necessary facilities and instruments of teaching, prior to the start of the Project,
- ❖ Appropriate and practical programming prior to the start of the Project,
- ❖ Establishment of the necessary co-ordination between the propaganda and the activities,
- ❖ Abrogation of the age and number limit for students to be accepted for the literacy classes of the Project,
- ❖ Extension of the Project to other villages,
- ❖ Increasing the flexibility of the educational programme, to avoid overlap between the teaching hours of the classes, and the working hours of the girls,
- ❖ Rewarding the instructors, and provision of appropriate bonuses and fringe benefits for them,

- ❖ Laying greater emphasis on the briefing of the employers, and encouraging them to collaborate with the Project,
- ❖ Sharing the international success recognition of the Project with the instructors, at least through appreciation in writing,
- ❖ Arranging leisure and camping programmes,
- ❖ Establishing Project classes for higher grades,
- ❖ Arranging visits by officials of various organisations, to encourage the instructors and the literacy students.

### **Collation of the Data Collected from the Provinces Covered**

During the evaluation study, the views of 137 instructors, 6 headmistresses of educational complexes, and officials of the Literacy Movement Organisation in the provinces and townships covered by the "*Education of Rural Working Girls*" Project were gathered and analysed through the questionnaires, group discussions and free interviews.

According to the views expressed by 45.5% of the instructors, the rural girls covered by the Project work for "more than 8 hours" per day. 25.4% of the instructors have reported daily working schedule of "7 to 8 hours" for the girls. Another 14.2% have declared "5 to 6 hours" of the daily workload of the girls.

80.6% of the instructors (108 persons) said that all their literacy students participated in the classes till the end of the educational course. In other words, they declared that the drop out rate of their classes was zero. Most of the drop out girls were in the "above 12-year" age group. Although the instructors have reported a very negligible drop out for girls in the "under 12-year" group, even that drop out was mentioned by the instructors, headmistresses, and Literacy Movement authorities, to be caused mainly because "the family needed the girls to work at home", or "the family needed the girls' income". For the "above 12-year" age group, "marriage" and "Opposition of the family to the participation of the girls in the classes" have been cited as additional reasons for the drop out of the girls.

In all 37.3% of the instructors were unable to regulate their teaching hours in a way as not to overlap with the working hours of the girls.

30.4% of the instructors declared that the educational programme had failed to decrease the daily working hours of the girls. About 19.4% of the instructors reported "one hour" reduction in the daily working hours of the girls; 18.7% mentioned a "2-hour" decrease in the daily work schedule of the girls covered by the Project; 20.9% said that the working hours of the girls had been reduced by "3-4 hours" per day. Only 9.7% of the instructors could say that the literacy students had been given a concession of "7 hours" per day in their work schedule.

While 112 instructors (83.6%) reported that the villages covered by them had ordinary schools, 98 of them (73.1%) said that the villages covered by them had ordinary literacy classes. Out of these 98 instructors, 56 mentioned that the Project classes had an adverse impact on the number of students participating in the ordinary Literacy Movement classes.

Around 18.7% of the instructors (25 persons) have attracted literacy students who were working, but did not participate in any educational classes before the implementation of the Project. Only one instructor attracted literacy students who were neither working nor participating in any educational classes. 73.1% of the instructors (98 persons) have attracted literacy students who were, both, working and also participating in ordinary schools or Literacy Movement classes. In fact, this last group of students has substituted the classes of the ordinary schools or Literacy Movement classes, with the Project classes.

About half of the instructors have literacy students who are not employed with anyone. The co-operation of "employers" with 26.8% of the instructors (36 persons) was either "non-existent" or at a "very low" level. In total, 78.4% of the instructors (105 persons) have evaluated the co-operation of the "girls' parents" at "very high" or "high" level. In the workplace of 39.1% of the instructors (51 persons) there was no "priest". The views of the instructors regarding the co-operation of the "village priest" varied. 31.4% of the instructors (42 persons) evaluated their co-operation as "non-existent" or at a "very low" level. 23.9% of the instructors

(32 persons) have evaluated their co-operation as being at a "very high" or "high" level. 64.9% of the instructors (87 persons) have evaluated the co-operation of the "members of the village council" with the educational programme, as being at a "very high" or "high" level. As for the "Literacy Movement", almost all the instructors (96.9% of them) have considered their co-operation with the educational activities to be at a "very high" or "high" level. The "Construction Jihad" was either not active in the villages covered by the instructors (64.9% of the instructors), or where it was active in the villages covered by the Project, had no satisfactory collaboration with the Project.

Although the co-operation of the "Imam Khomeini Aid Committee" was more satisfactory than that of the "Construction Jihad", it still stood at a "very negligible" level. Only 16.4% of the instructors (22 persons) evaluated the co-operation of the Committee as being at a "very high" or "high" level. The collaboration of the "Health Houses" (in villages with active health houses), was at a higher level than that of the Construction Jihad or the Imam Khomeini Aid Committee. 26.9% of the instructors (36 persons) evaluated the co-operation of the "Health House" as being at a "very high" or "high" level.

The time span of the girls' education varied from village to village. One of the instructors mentioned only "4 months" teaching programme. 26 instructors (19.4% of the instructors), 15 instructors (11.2%), and 37 instructors (27.6%) declared "7 months", "8 months", and "9 months", respectively.

Almost all the instructors (133 out of a total of 137), had free feeding programmes in their classes. 7 instructors (5.2%) implemented the free food programme for a period of "7 months"; 10 instructors (7.5%) implemented the free feeding programme for "5 months"; 25 instructors (18.7%) carried it out for a period of "6 months"; the rest of the instructors carried it out for periods of "7 months or more". 97.8% of the instructors, served different types of food, including even warm food, based on the facilities available to them.

70.1% of the instructors (97 persons) thought that the administration of the free food programme was instrumental in attracting and retaining the literacy students in the classes, at a "very high" level. Another 18.7% of the instructors (25 persons)

felt that this programme has helped to attract and keep the girls in the classes at a "high" level.

Almost in the classes of all of the instructors (99.3% of the instructors ie 133 of them), the literacy students benefited from non-cash items of aid during their educational course. 79.9% of the instructors followed the criterion of regular participation in the educational classes for the distribution of non-cash aid. During the course of the programme, the literacy students have received cloth pieces or clothes, towels, bags, and some other items relevant to the region where the classes were held. 81.3% and 14.8% of the instructors declared that these non-cash aid items have helped to draw the literacy students to the classes, and keep them there at a "very high" or "high" level, respectively.

Practically all the instructors (98.5% or 132 persons) have distributed books, erasers, pencil sharpeners, notebooks and pencils, among their students, absolutely free of charge. 38.1% of the instructors have distributed exercise books and ball pens; and 47% have distributed pens, among their literacy students. 88.1% and 8.2% of the instructors have evaluated the role of the distribution of educational aid material and stationery in the attraction and retention of the girls in the classes at a "very high" and "high" level, respectively.

None of the classes covered by the Project, and established in the provinces, charged the students any tuition fees. In other words, the Project was implemented for them completely free of charge.

80.6% of the instructors (108 persons) used educational aids, such as films, and educational kits, over the period of the implementation of the programme. 37.9% of the above instructors, showed films in the classes "one time". 16.6% of them showed films "2 times"; 9.2% showed films "3 times"; 8.5% showed films "4 times"; and 12.9% screened the films "five times or more" during the period of the course.

In the opinion of 68.5% of the instructors, the films screened in the classes were related to the girls' needs at a "very high" or "high" level. The others considered the films being related to the needs of the girls at a "low" or "very low" level.

84.3% of the instructors (113 persons) received UNICEF's educational package. It is worth noting that different provinces received the UNICEF packages at different times. However, all the instructors complained of delays in receiving this educational package. All of the instructors who received the educational package made use of it in their teaching assignments. 95.3% of the instructors (103 persons) believe that the educational package helped a better grasp of the subjects taught, and created greater incentive in the girls, at a "very high" or "high" level.

Timing of the classes of 47% of the instructors was "4 hours" per day. The other instructors (53%) held their classes for "5 hours" per day. 20.1% of the instructors (27 persons) held their classes in the mornings; and 9% (12 persons) held morning and afternoon classes. Only 2 instructors held their classes on a rotary basis. 22.4% (30 instructors) refrained from disclosing their daily class routine. The starting and ending times of the classes varied. The majority of the morning classes started between 7 and 8, and ended between 11 and 13. The starting and ending times of afternoon classes, morning and afternoon classes, and rotary classes, were different, based on the conditions and requirements of each. No set pattern can be mentioned for these classes.

97.8% of the instructors participated in the preparatory training courses prior to the implementation of the Project. 70.9% of the instructors spoke of a "48-hour" training course; while 21.6% of them (the instructors of Kordestan province) reported a "100-hour" training course. 66.4% and 25.4% of the instructors used the curriculum taught at the preparatory training courses, in their literacy classes, at a "very high" and a "high" level, respectively.

A variety of subjects and issues were discussed during the instructors' preparatory training course. 28.7% of the instructors have mentioned being briefed on "Oral, Tooth, Skin and Hair Hygiene"; 23.1% of them mentioned "First Aid"; 20.1% spoke of having been briefed on "An Introduction to Puberty"; 62.7% mentioned "Flower Knitting"; 57.5% mentioned "Sewing"; 56% said they were briefed in "Flower Making"; 40.3% mentioned "Flower Weaving"; 27.6% mentioned "Cooking"; 15.7% spoke of "Carpet Weaving"; 6.7 mentioned "Pottery"; 43.3% were briefed on "How to Make Appropriate Decisions"; 46.3% were briefed in

"Communication Skills"; 41% said they were told about "The Rights and Duties of the Society"; while 36.6% were briefed on "Children's Rights".

According to the officials of the Literacy Movement, one of the major reasons for this diversity of the subjects to which the instructors were exposed in their preparatory training course, was that the selected instructors had been officially employed by the Literacy Movement classes, and had been trained in various subjects during their work with the Literacy Movement. Thus, the Literacy Movement tried to use newer and more beneficial curriculum, on the preparatory course, to enhance the abilities and skills of the instructors. Whenever necessary, the curriculum of previous on-the-job training programmes was also repeated.

The instructors have focussed more on a number of educational and artistic subjects, according to their own abilities and skills, and the available facilities and conditions of the villages and the needs of the girls in those particular environments.

94.8% of the instructors have mentioned the teaching of "Oral, Tooth, Skin and Hair Hygiene"; 71.6% of them mentioned "First Aid"; 70.1% spoke of having been briefed on "An Introduction to Puberty"; 67.9% mentioned "Flower Knitting"; 57.5% mentioned "Sewing"; 67.2% said they were briefed in "Flower Making"; 50.7% mentioned "Flower Weaving"; 82.1% mentioned "Cooking"; 14.9% spoke of "Carpet Weaving"; 5.2% mentioned "Pottery"; 76.9% were briefed on "How to Make Appropriate Decisions"; 84.3% were briefed in "communication Skills"; 71.6% said they were told about the "Rights and Duties of the Society"; while 74.6% were briefed on "Children's Rights".

The instructors have evaluated the interest of the literacy students in the issues and subjects discussed, based on a 4-grade scale. Almost all the instructors reported the interest of the literacy students for the subjects being taught, at a "very high" or "high" level.

The average age of the instructors was around 27 years and 6 months, with a minimum age of 21 years, and a maximum age of 39 years, showing a variance of 18 years.

The educational qualification of 10.4% of the instructors was "below high school leaving certificate". 67.9% of the instructors held "high school leaving certificate". 6 passed their "second year of university examination", and 14 were "university graduates". 95.5% of the instructors possessed previous teaching experience, before joining the Project. The minimum teaching experience of the above instructors was "one year", and the maximum reached "9 years". The average teaching experience worked out to the figure of "three years".

61.2% of the instructors of the instructors lived in the villages to which they had been assigned for teaching. 3.7% of the instructors lived in nearby villages. Another 23.9% of the instructors commuted between the village and the city or town of their residence. The transportation costs of those instructors, who travelled every day between the village and their place of residence, were either paid by the Literacy Movement or borne by themselves. However, for most of those instructors who opted to live in the village of their teaching assignment the housing costs were defrayed by the Literacy Movement.

The instructors' responses to the questionnaire, showed that 89.9% and 10.4% of them "fully agreed" or "agreed" respectively, with the statement that "The literacy students show greater inclination to participate in the vocational training courses". 82.6% and 16.4% of the instructors "fully agreed" or "agreed", respectively, with the proposition that "The vocational classes increase the efficiency of the literacy students". 67.9% of the instructors "fully agreed", and 28.4% of them "agreed" with the statement that, "Families of the literacy students welcome the programme". 88.1% and 11.2% "fully agreed" and "agreed", respectively, with the statement that, "The girls derive satisfaction by participating in the programme". 88.1% and 9.7% "fully agreed" and "agreed", respectively, with the statement that, "The issues taught in the literacy classes are good for the future benefit of the girls"; and 82.8% and 13.4% "fully agreed" and "agreed", respectively, that, "The girls have become more sociable through their participation in the programme". Another 91% and 7.5% "fully agreed" and "agreed" with the remark that, "It is necessary to continue the programme in future years".

In contrast with the above position, only 28.4%, 29.1% and 15.7% of the instructors answering the questionnaire are, respectively, "totally against", "against", "in agreement", and "fully in agreement" with the statement that, "The working hours of the girls have decreased through the implementation of the Project". Also, 37.35, 11.95, 10.4% and 16,4% of the instructors are, respectively, "totally against", "against", "in agreement", and "fully in agreement" with the remark that, "The employers have welcomed the implementation of the Project".

## **CHAPTER THREE: Interpretation of Data**

An analysis of the views of instructors from the 5 provinces, as expressed in their answers to the questionnaire, in the limited response and the open-ended answers sections; their views expressed during the group discussions; the opinion of the headmistresses of the educational complexes (6 headmistresses in the Khorasan province); combined with the views of the Literacy Movement officials in the provinces and townships covered by the Project, show the successful implementation of the *Education of Working Rural Girls* Project, in its first year of working.

Among the most important factors leading to the success of the Project, may be mentioned the life skills and other artistic training programmes, the administration of active and participatory methods in the classes, the provision of non-cash aid items, and educational aid and stationery for the literacy students; and the increase in the daily class time, combined with the selection of enthusiastic instructors.

Based on the collected opinions, the positive and strong points of the Project, as well as its negative and weak points, compared with the programmes and activities of the ordinary Literacy Movement classes; combined with the suggestions offered by the instructors, the headmistresses of the educational complexes, and the officials of the Literacy Movement Organisation in the provinces covered by the Project, are as follows:

### **The Positive and Strong Points of the Project**

- ❖ Appropriate changes in the teaching methods, and use of the active and participatory methods in the teaching-learning process,
- ❖ Continuous participation of the students in the educational programmes, without absence,
- ❖ Timely participation of the literacy students in the classes, and their eagerness to stay late in the classes,

- ❖ The disappearance of the educational drop out problem, and the decrease in educational decline to the minimum.
- ❖ Participation of the students in the classes, with high spirits and hopes,
- ❖ Better and faster comprehension of the subjects by the students, compared with the ordinary Literacy Movement classes,
- ❖ The familiarisation of the literacy students with personal and communal health issues, and their ability to use the knowledge they have acquired,
- ❖ Positive changes in the manner of speech and behaviour of the literacy students, and their more logical inter-action with others,
- ❖ The increase in the knowledge and ability of the literacy students in the fields of decision making, communication skills, and personal and community rights,
- ❖ Becoming more sociable, and gaining the courage to speak out and express their opinions,
- ❖ Blossoming of potential talents, and boost in the self-esteem of the literacy students,
- ❖ Creation of friendship and unity among the literacy students, and the nurturing of a spirit of co-operation and collaboration among them,
- ❖ Establishment of cordial and appropriate relationships between the instructors and the literacy students,
- ❖ Use of the learnt lessons, in their daily life,
- ❖ The interesting nature and the variety of the educational programmes (including the educational curriculum, artistic and life skill training, and the use of educational aids and films),
- ❖ Arousing greater interest among the students through the artistic skills training programme,
- ❖ Transfer of the learnt knowledge and skills to the family and the society,
- ❖ The job-creation quality of the learnt skills,
- ❖ Changing the views of the village people regarding the instructors and the literacy students, to positive ones, through the implementation of the artistic training and job-creating education programmes,

- ❖ Creation of an appropriate environment for the blossoming of abilities and capacities of the instructors in their educational and artistic activities.

### **Negative and Weak Points of the Project**

- Scant and crash nature of the duration of the instructors' preparatory training courses (on-the-job training),
- Laying heavy emphasis on the theoretical aspects, rather than the artistic and life skill training aspects, in the instructors preparatory classes,
- Delay in the distribution of educational aids and instruments, UNICEF's educational packages, and non-cash aid items,
- Unrealistic and excessive propaganda regarding the Project and its activities, in order to attract the literacy students,
- Lack of co-ordination between the promises made, and the goals and facilities of the Project,
- The rigid age limit for the participation of girls in the literacy classes,
- The rigid minimum requirement for the establishment of a class,
- Insufficient knowledge of the Project guides regarding the goals and activities of the Project (noticed in Kordestan province),
- Lack of proper planning for controlling and decreasing the opposition of the employers (noticed in Khoy township),
- Lack of sufficient planning to reduce the over-lap between the class hours and the working hours of the girls,
- Limited impact of the Project in reducing the daily working hours of the literacy students,
- Lengthy duration of the teaching hours in each grade (600 hours for the "Basic Grade", and 1000 hours for the "Fifth Grade")
- Lack of a transparent and well defined programme for teaching the planned issues and activities,
- Teaching subjects and issues which are not useful for the village area, such as familiarisation with AIDS,
- Shortage of the basic equipment and materials needed for practical and artistic activities,

- The negative impact of the programme on the students of the ordinary schools and the ordinary Literacy Movement classes, concerning their education: Higher educational decline and higher rates of absence, caused by the significantly higher and better facilities and conditions enjoyed by the Project classes, as compared with those available to the ordinary school and ordinary Literacy Movement classes'
- Lack of attention to the welfare of the instructors (including low salaries and the fact that the duration of teaching in the literacy classes of the Project is not counted towards the calculation of the years of service of the instructors),
- Lack of attention to incentives for the instructors (such as material and spiritual satisfaction),
- Delays in the payment of instructors' salaries,
- Lack of sufficient attention to the implementation of sports and leisure activities in the classes,
- Shortage of the basic facilities needed for the provision of free food, especially the necessary provision for the supply of warm food.

**Suggestions offered by Instructors,  
Headmistresses of Educational Institutions,  
and Officials of the Literacy Movement Organisation**

The instructors, headmistresses of educational institutions, and officials of the Literacy Movement Organisation, offered various suggestions to improve the quality of the programmes and activities related to the *Education of Rural Working Girls* Project. Some of the outstanding suggestions are:

- Abrogation of the age limit, and the minimum numerical requirement for the establishment of a literacy class,
- Provision of the necessary teaching material and instruments for the instructors, prior to the start of the school year,
- Organisation of the instructors' preparatory course (on-the-job training) with better content and programming. Laying greater emphasis on more attention to teaching issues regarding life-skills, and vocational and job-creating arts,

- Increasing the duration of the preparatory courses (on-the-job training),
- Preparing sports activities, and organising sport and leisure camps, in order to help maintain the physical health and high spirits of the literacy students,
- Continuation of the educational course during the summer months,
- Distribution of non-cash aid materials according to the needs of the students, and carrying out the distribution these items without delays,
- Establishment of the classes in an appropriate and permanent location, and if possible establishment of all the village classes in one place,
- Including boy students also in the Project,
- Distributing protein-rich foods in the free food programme,
- Distributing painting devices and materials among the literacy students,
- Establishing a small library in each class,
- Making appropriate video films dealing with the theme of "Life Skills", and distributing them to the instructors,
- Preparing a guide book for the instructors, regarding the life skills and various artistic trainings to be taught,
- Administering physical examination of the literacy students, regarding the health of their eyes, ears, mouth and teeth, under an insurance scheme,
- Filming the activities of the instructors in the Project classes, distributing these films among the instructors of ordinary Literacy Movement classes, and, if possible, broadcasting them from the national television network,
- Increasing the number of villages to be covered by the Project,
- Establishing some sort of co-ordination between the promises made, and the capabilities of the Project,
- Making flexible educational programmes in order to decrease the overlap between teaching hours and the working hours of the girls,
- Paying attention to the welfare status of the instructors,
- Giving credit to the positive and successful attempts of the instructors, and keeping them informed of the international achievements of the Project,

- Arranging planned and goal-oriented visits by officials of various organisations, to the Project classes, to encourage the instructors and the literacy students,
- Making the necessary arrangements to further brief the employees regarding the activities of the Project, in order to gain their collaboration.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Comparing the achievements of one year's implementation of the "**Education of Rural Working Girls**" Project, with the envisaged goals, shows that the implemented methods were largely successful in allowing most of the pre-set goals to be attained.

The use of participatory and inter-active methods is the first and most positive characteristic of the Project. These methods have transformed the educational environment from a dry, monotonous, and uninspiring environment, to a happy and inspiring one. Practically all the instructors referred to the combination of the traditional educational methods (The three Rs for Reading, [W]Riting and [A]Rithmetic), with the "Life-skill" training (Training in Decision Making, Problem Solving, etc), and the training in various vocational and artistic needs of the girls. In other words, all the instructors have alluded to the combination of traditional education with daily and practical issues.

The instructors believe that the use of the inter-active and participatory method has helped to attract and retain the literacy students in the classes. They pointed out that in spite of the exhaustion from the strenuous daily work, the students participated in their educational activities with a happy and expectant spirit. According to the instructors, during the process of inter-active and participatory learning, the students have become familiar with such new horizons of learning as "Social and Public Life", "Co-operation and Teamwork", and "Transfer of Knowledge to Others". Moreover, through general discussions, conversations, and participation in discussions related to life skills and problem solving, the literacy students have attained the ability to express themselves, and talk about their personal views. Vocational and artistic training has paved the ground for the students'

employment, and income generation for the families. This has led to a relative relaxation in the anxiety of the families regarding the decline in the girls' income resulting from participation in the Project classes.

The girls' enthusiasm and positive attitude, which in itself is the result of the inter-active and participatory methods used in the Project literacy classes, by using the learnt skills in "Programming and Decision Making", has enabled them to regulate their daily home and farm working and personal time in such a way as to leave them ample time to participate in the classes.

As the educational programme has not created any serious impediment in the day-to-day activities of the girls, and the families have not been deprived of their work and income, and on the other hand, the Project training has further enabled the girls to perform their daily, income generating activities even better, the attitude of the parents and the village community, towards the girls' education and the role of the instructors, has changed into a positive one. In addition to this, the transfer of the knowledge of health, social, artistic, and especially basic life skill training, from the class room to the students' home and village environment, has broadened the scope of the education, from the limited class room space to the various sectors of the village community.

The material aid programmes, such as the free food programme, distribution of free educational aid, etc, should be regarded as the second most influential factor in the successful implementation of the Project. In the opinion of a good number of instructors, the free food programme and especially the provision of warm food has been very effective with the "under-15" literacy students. The free feeding has not only maintained the health and boosted physical growth of the literacy students who come from low income families, but has also acted as a powerful incentive for the attraction and retention of the literacy students in the Project classes.

At times, when the families faced with severe financial poverty, are unable to buy the daily requirements and the educational material needed for the education of their children, the most simple and easy decision available to them is to forget the education of their children, and especially their daughters. Financial poverty is also often accompanied by a lack of

knowledge, blind and illogical prejudices, and sexual discrimination. In such an environment, any limited opportunity left, will go to the one or more male child of the family.

The "Education of Rural Working Girls" Project, using the supportive measures, and combining traditional education with life skill training, and practical and income generating activities, has helped families overcome some of their financial problems concerning the educational needs of their daughters. Moreover, the Project has also proved successful in changing the attitude of the families towards the girls' "Roles and abilities", and "The importance of education in the blossoming of the potential abilities of the literacy students". This has helped to relatively reduce the traditional and cultural prejudice of sexual discrimination, to the benefit of the girls.

Selection of female instructors, especially instructors with experience and superior teaching abilities, and familiar with various local skills and crafts, and are at times familiar with the environment of the village, may be named as the third positive characteristic of the Project. This factor has played a considerable role in attracting and retaining the literacy students, contributing to the success of the Project. The instructors, who have had years of experience of the ordinary classes of the Literacy Movement, and have used the traditional methods of the Three Rs (Reading, [W]riting and [A]rithmetic) in the education of their students, and have thus experienced the lack of relationship between the skills taught, and the needs of their audiences, have found the method envisaged by the Project, especially the inter-active and participatory educational method, to be different but more logical than the methods they had been using in the past.

Another factor, which was influential in the success of the Project, was the increase in the education time and the allocation of the extra time to the life skills and vocational training programme (the minimum increase in this time was 200 hours, and the maximum increase was 320 hours), and the relative freedom of the instructors in the selection of the issues they wished to discuss or the arrangement of the environment for this purpose. More time, freedom of the instructors, the use of the inter-active method, and the creation of a friendly environment,

have paved the ground for the blossoming of the potential abilities and capacities of the instructors, as well as, the literacy students.

The above factors have led to the instructors to mention various points, such as: "The literacy students have become more sociable", "The students were enthusiastic to participate in the practical classes", "The literacy students gained satisfaction from the education", "There was a marked increase in the efficiency of the literacy students", "The issues taught were beneficial", "The literacy students were able to make use of the learnt issues in their daily life", "The learnt skills helped in income generation", and "The families welcomed the programme".

Yet another factor contributing to the success of the Project was the use of educational aids, video films, and especially the educational package provided by UNICEF. All the instructors who used the educational films or the package, mentioned their positive impact on a better grasp of the subjects, and the creation of greater incentive among the literacy students.

Last, but not the least, we should not overlook the effective role played by the experts from various organisations, in increasing the knowledge, abilities and skills of the instructors. We must also mention the positive results of the collaboration of various organisations, executive agencies and rural Islamic councils, with the Literacy Movement Organisation and the instructors.

The attention paid to the responsibilities of the various organisations involved in the educational programmes of the Project, and the transmission of the messages of these organisations, --- such as the health messages of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, the animal husbandry messages of the Construction Jihad, the pickle and jam making instructions of the Ministry of Agriculture, and the job creation and skill training messages of the National Technical and Vocational Training Organisation, --- to the audiences, ie the villagers, has transformed the Project implementation to a group and participatory activity.

Although each one of the above factors has contributed its independent share to the success of the Project, the cumulative role of the combination of all these factors has definitely enhanced the success of the Project.

Each one of the above factors on its own, plus the cumulative factors, have created conditions that, in contrast with the ordinary Literacy Movement classes, almost all the literacy students attending the 'basic', 'complementary' 'final' and 'fifth grade' courses, have participated in the educational programmes, with a minimum rate of absence. According to the views expressed by the instructors and the officials of the Literacy Movement, in the provinces and districts covered by the Project, and the data published by the Literacy Movement, the literacy students of the Project classes have the least lowering of standards and the highest passing rates. This low educational fall and higher passing rates compared with these two indicators in the ordinary literacy classes, has made some of the Literacy Movement officials think that in the light of the greater efficiency of the Project, the cost of implementing the Project is lower than the cost of continuing with the ordinary literacy classes, or, in other words, the extension of the Project is cost effective.

It should be noted that the positive points of the Project should not lead to the neglect of the negative side and the constraints of the Project. One of the weak points of the Project is that it had not helped in lowering the working hours of the girls covered. The instructors and the Literacy Movement officials in 10 townships covered by the Project had similar views regarding "No decline in the working hours of the girls" and "Lack of welcome of the Project by the employers of the girls". For the establishment of Project classes, and the selection of villages for this purpose, the criterion used was the number of "10 to 18 year" girls deprived of education. This norm has probably led to the selection of villages that already have ordinary schools and/or Literacy Movement classes.

The number of the instructors who have attracted working girls who had already been participating in educational classes (73.1% of the instructors) was almost 4 times the number of those instructors who had attracted girls who were "deprived of education" (18.7% of the instructors). About 30% of the instructors said that education programme of the girls did not have any effect on decreasing their working hours.

Despite the attraction and advantages of the "Education of Rural Working Girls" Project, the establishment of Project classes

side by side with the classes of ordinary schools and/or ordinary Literacy Movement classes, has created a number of problems for these educational units. The existing differences between the educational programmes, the teaching methods, and the supportive activities of the Project, have upset the students of the ordinary schools and/or Literacy Movement classes, their families, and the staff of those educational units. The instructors have pointed a finger at the impact, on the village community, of the double standards in educational facilities, in different ways. Continuation of this situation may lead to disappointment and weakening of the spirits of students of the ordinary schools and the ordinary Literacy Movement classes and their parents, and may even lead to a crisis situation for the continuation of work of the ordinary schools and the ordinary Literacy Movement classes in the villages covered by the Project, and even in some of the neighbouring villages.

The working boys and those "deprived of education" have a status similar to that of the girls. Further, compared with the girls these boys play a more powerful role in their families. Attention to the education of "10 to 18 year" working girls, in a Project with new and extraordinary facilities and conditions, and neglecting the boys, may lead to the upsetting of the boys, and make them jealous of their sisters. With the greater role played by these boys in their families, an environment may develop where they could create problems for the education of their sisters by putting up various excuses.

## **PROPOSALS:**

In view of the success of the Project and the probability that it will prove more cost effective compared with the current Literacy Movement programmes, and, in order to prevent the disappointment and weakening of spirits of the students of ordinary schools and ordinary classes, it is proposed that the Project may be implemented in one school year, on a pilot basis, for all the educationally deprived persons of a village, with all its original characteristics, regardless of the age, employment status and sex of the students. Selection of a witness township with ordinary Literacy Movement programmes will offer an opportunity to compare the outcomes of these two projects on various

aspects, and show the difference in their cost-benefit status. If such a study shows a positive result, then it would be feasible to extend the Project to Literacy Movement classes of other townships.

It is also proposed that the Project classes should be set up near factories, production centres and workshops, to attract the working and educationally deprived boys and girls in the township covered by the Project. In this manner the Project will equally affect the working hours of all the boys and the girls, removing the bone of contention of the problems caused for students of the ordinary schools and Literacy Movement classes. It may also create an opportunity for some of the education time to be spent for on-the-job training related to the work of the literacy students, and share the Project with the employers. The classes could also be established in the form of complexes, and in environments similar to educational environments. This will help the students to learn how to live and learn together, and encourage the communal life and teamwork of the students.

Propaganda and the establishment of the requisite environment for the implementation of a new Project should be co-ordinated with the existing realities. In advance of the starting of any Project, especially the "Education of Rural Working Girls" Project, in other areas, the Project executives should get acquainted with the precise goals, capacities, methods, and available facilities for the Project. Only then can they regulate and implement their preparatory propaganda activities based on the Project's capacities and characteristics. Moreover, giving unrealistic and impracticable promises would cast a negative effect on the implementation of the Project. To forestall such a situation, the Project officials should take into account the practical aspects of their promises, prior to making such promises.

The programme of the preparatory and training courses should be regulated and implemented on the basis of the regional needs and the skills and capacities of the participating instructors. Training in skills and professions that are not practicable in the villages, or trying to train the instructors in subjects with which they are already conversant, would be a waste of time, money and energies.

Knowledge of the inputs, and the creation of the facilities and conditions needed for the implementation of the Project within a set schedule, and according to the original plans, will guarantee the success of its implementation. Not providing the necessary and foreseen facilities, or provision of the facilities outside the time frame of the implementation of the Project, will create problems for the execution of the Project.

Ambitious, able and earnest human resources are the mainstay for the success of a Project. Due attention to the welfare and proper working conditions for the instructors, and the timely and appropriate praise and appreciation of those who work sincerely under the most demanding conditions, will guarantee further success of the "*Education of Working Rural Girls*" Project.

***APPENDIX:***

***INSTRUCTORS  
QUESTIONNAIRE***

***Evaluation of the  
"Education of Rural Working Girls" Project***

***Instructors' Questionnaire***

**United Nations Children's Fund**

**Literacy Movement Organisation**

***Administrator:  
Pegah Pardazesh Novin Company***

**Summer 2000**

You, as one of the instructors of the “ Education of Rural Working Girls” Project, have played a major role in the implementation of the Project, and in helping the rural working girls. In addition to our appreciation of your work, a questionnaire has been designed and distributed among you, in order to evaluate the programme implementation during the past year. This questionnaire has been designed to collect the necessary information regarding the various aspects of the project. Your accurate answers are very valuable in evaluating the implementation of the Project, and in further planning to repeat its implementation with a better quality.

Some of the questions are close answer questions. To answer these questions, you only have to mark the right answer. Some questions have a one-word/figure answers. However, you need to describe your views in other questions, which need open-ended answers.

We request you to answer all questions with patience, and taking your own time. We appreciate your co-operation in filling this questionnaire.

***United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)***  
***Literacy Movement Organisation (LMO)***

1. Work place: Province ..... Township ..... Village .....
2. Distance between the village and the city: ..... kms
3. Estimated population of the village: ..... persons
4. Where do the under-18 working girls of the village work?
  - 1) Carpet weaving workshop
  - 2) Farm
  - 3) Home
  - 4) Other placesPlease mention .....
5. How many hours a day do the under-18 working girls, work on average?
  - 1) One to two hours
  - 2) Three to four hours
  - 3) Five to six hours
  - 4) Seven to eight hours
  - 5) Over eight hours
6. How many under-18 working girls live in the village? ..... persons
7. How many of the working girls have been attracted by the educational programme? ..... persons (if the answer is no one, put zero)
8. How many of the people participating in the programme, dropped out of the educational course before the end of the course?
  - 1) No one
  - 2) One to two persons
  - 3) Three to four persons
  - 4) Five to six persons
  - 5) Seven to eight persons
  - 6) Nine to ten persons

7) Eleven to twelve persons

8) Thirteen or more persons

Mark the number of drop out persons according to age in the following table.

Age	Under-10 years	11-12 years	13-14 years	15-16 years	17 years and above
Number	A9	B9	C9	D9	E9

10. How much was the impact of any of the following factors on the drop out of girls in the "12 years or under" age group?

Factor	Impact Rate			
	Very high	High	Low	Very low
1. Long distance between the school and the working place or home				
2. Family opposition to participation in the class				
3. Irrelevance of the educational programme with the day to day needs				
4. Shortage of educational aids				
5. Family needed the girl to work in the home				
6. Family's need to girl's income				
7. Marriage				

11. How much was the impact of any of the following factors on the drop out of girls in the “13 years or over” age group?

Factor	Impact Rate			
	Very high	High	Low	Very low
1. Long distance between the school and the working place or home				
2. Family opposition to participation in the class				
3. Irrelevance of the educational programme with the day to day needs				
4. Shortage of educational aids				
5. Family needed the girl to work in the home				
6. Family's need to girl's income				
7. Marriage				

12. Was there any overlap between the class hours and the working hours of the girls?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

13. Mark the average impact of the education on decreasing the girls' working hours, according to the number of the students on the following table.

Rate of decrease	No decrease was observed	One hour	Two hours	Three to four hours	Five to six hours	Seven hours or more
Number of girls						

14. In the village where your class was conducted:

Yes No

- 1) Ordinary school exists.....
- 2) Ordinary Literacy Movement classes exist.....

If the ordinary Literacy Movement classes exist in the village you teach, answer question 15.

15. Has the establishment of working girls educational classes, had a negative impact on the number of students participating in the ordinary classes of the Literacy Movement?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

16. Prior to the establishment of this course almost all of the students participating in the "Education of Rural Working Girls" classes:

Yes No

- 1) Were enrolled in the Literacy Movement classes.....
- 2) Were enrolled in ordinary schools.....
- 3) Were working and did not study.....
- 4) Were working but were also studying in ordinary schools or Literacy Movement classes.....
- 5) Were neither studying nor working.....

17. Mark the co-operation and collaboration of each of the following persons and/or organisations in the field of education.

	Very high	High	Low	Very low	No co-operation	Not applicable
1. Employers						
2. Girl's parents						
3. Village priest						
4. Members of the City Council						
5. Literacy Movement						
6. Construction Jihad						
7. Imam Khomeini Aid Committee						
8. Health House						

18-1. How long was the duration of the classes you taught? ..... months

18-2. Did you conduct the food programme in your classes?

1) Yes

2) No

If your answer to question no. 18-2 is negative, then go to question no. 22.

19. How long was the average duration of the food programme in the education course?

1) One month

2) Two months

3) Three months

4) Four months

- 5) Five months
- 6) Six months
- 7) Seven or more months

20. What were the food groups used in the girls' food programme?

- 1) Dairy products (milk, yoghurt)
- 2) Bread and Cookies
- 3) Fruit (apples and oranges)
- 4) Warm food
- 5) A variety of the above foods, based on the facilities available

21. Was the food provision effective in attracting and retaining of the girls in the educational course?

- 1) Very high
- 2) High
- 3) Low
- 4) Very low

22. Did the girls participating in the educational course benefit from the non-cash aid?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

23. Did you take note of the criterion of continuous participation in the class (maximum one day of absence during each month) in the distribution of non-cash aid?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

24. Mark the number of times of distribution of the following non-cash aid items to the girls.

Type of aid	Shoes	Clothing or clothes	Towels	Bags	Others
Number of times of distributions					

25. Was the distribution of non-cash aid effective in attracting and retaining of girls in the educational course?

- 1) Very high
- 2) High
- 3) Low
- 4) Very low

26. Did the girls, who participated in the course, receive free educational materials and books?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

27. If your answer to question 26 is positive, then mark the type and number of distributed materials.

Type of aid	Educational books	Exercise books	Erasers	Pencil sharpeners	Rulers	Ball pens	Note books	Pencils
Number								

28. Was the distribution of educational books and materials effective in attracting and retaining of girls in the educational course?

- 1) Very high
- 2) High
- 3) Low
- 4) Very low

29. Did the girls pay any tuition fees during the course?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

If your answer to question no. 29 is negative, then go to question no. 33.

30. How much was the average tuition fee for each girl? .....  
Rials

31. How was the ability of the girl's family in paying these fees?
- 1) Family paid the tuition fees easily
  - 2) Family faced difficulties in paying the fees
  - 3) Family could not pay the tuition fees, and the continuation of the education was faced with problems

32. How was the fee spent?
- 1) Procurement of educational books, educational materials and educational aids
  - 2) Establishment of vocational classes

33. Did you use any educational aids such as video films and teaching kits, during the educational course?
- 1) Yes
  - 2) No

If your answer to question no. 33 is negative, then go to question no. 36.

34. How many times did you screen films during the entire course?
- 1) One time
  - 2) Two times
  - 3) Three times
  - 4) Four times
  - 5) Five times or more

35. How relevant was the subject of the screened movies, with the girls needs?
- 1) Very high
  - 2) High
  - 3) Low
  - 4) Very low

36. Did you receive the UNICEF educational kits?
- 1) Yes
  - 2) No

If your answer to question no. 36 is negative, then go to question no. 39.

37. Did you use the educational kit during your teaching?
- 1) Yes

2) No

38. How much did the use of the educational kit help and create incentives in the learning of the girls?

- 1) Very high
- 2) High
- 3) Low
- 4) Very low

39. How many class hours did you have in a day, on average? ..... hours

40-1. How did you adjust your class time?

- 1) Every day during the morning
- 2) Every day during the afternoon
- 3) Every day during morning and afternoon
- 4) On a rotational basis, sometimes only during the mornings and sometimes only during the afternoons

40-2. Mark your weekly class programme in the following table.

Week days	Morning		Afternoon	
	Starting time	Ending time	Starting time	Ending time
Saturday				
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				

41. During your own educational course, which issues were discussed? Which of these issues did you teach in your classes? How much do you estimate the interest of the girls in each of the issues?

Subject	Subjects you were taught		Subjects you trained your students in		Girls' interest			
	yes	no	yes	no	Very high	High	Low	Very low
1) Health of mouth, teeth, skin and hair								
2) First Aid								
3) An introduction to puberty								
4) Flower stitching								
5) Sewing								
6) Flower making								
7) Flower weaving								
8) Cooking								
9) Carpet weaving								
10) Pottery								
11) How to make appropriate decisions								
12) Communication skills								
13) The rights and duties of the society								
14) Children's rights								

42. How old are you? ..... years

43. What is your highest educational qualification?

- 1) Under high school leaving certificate
- 2) High school leaving certificate
- 3) Second year of university
- 4) University graduate
- 5) Post graduate

44. Did you have any teaching experiences prior to this course?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

If your answer to question 44 is negative, then go to question 46.

45. How many years is your teaching experience?

- 1) One to two years
- 2) Three to four years
- 3) Five to six years
- 4) Seven to eight years
- 5) Nine years and above

46. Where was your permanent place of residence during the course?

- 1) The village that you served
- 2) Neighbouring villages
- 3) Township under the Project coverage
- 4) One of the provincial cities
- 5) Provincial capital
- 6) Another province

If your answer to question no. 46 was, other than the village that you served, then answer question no.47

47. How was your transportation cost to the village paid?

- 1) Literacy Movement
- 2) I paid it myself
- 3) Village people helped

48. If you were residing in the village that you served, how was your housing cost at the village, paid?

- 1) Literacy Movement

- 2) I paid it myself
- 3) Village people helped

49. Did you have any educational courses on how to teach in these classes?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

If your answer to question no. 49 is negative, then go to question no. 52

50. How long was the duration of this course? ..... hours

51. To what extent did you use the subjects taught to you, in your teaching to the girls?

- 1) Very high
- 2) High
- 3) Low
- 4) Very low

Mark the rate that you agree or disagree with any of the following statements:

	Totally agree	Agree	Against	Totally against
52. Students are more enthusiastic to participate in the vocational classes				
53. The vocational classes increase the efficiency of the students				
54. The execution of the educational programme has decreased the girls' working hours				
55. The programme implemented has been welcomed by the employers				
56. Families welcomed the programme				
57. Girls are satisfied by participation in the classes				
58. The subjects learnt at the classes are beneficial for the girls' future				
59. With the implementation of this programme, the participating girls have become more sociable				
60. It is necessary to continue the programme in future years				

61. Briefly describe the impact of the lessons taught during the course, from various aspects.

62. Briefly describe the impact of "life skill" training, taught during the course.

63. Briefly describe the impact of artistic and vocational training, taught during the course.

64. Briefly describe the positive points of the course.

65. Briefly describe the negative points and constraints of the programme.

66. Write your suggestions regarding the continuation of the project in the next year.

67. Please mention any other opinion or suggestion that you may have.

AT THE END, WE APPRECIATE YOUR SINCERE CO-OPERATION.