

Impact Evaluation of the Adult Literacy Centre (ALC) Programme

Terms of Reference

Introduction to Friendship

Friendship is an international Social Purpose Organisation guided by its vision of a world where people-especially the hard to reach and unaddressed-have equal opportunities to live with dignity and hope. From Bangladesh, a country facing the most pressing of humanity's challenges, we develop scalable solutions to strengthen marginalized communities, and empower people to transform their lives and reach their full potential. Founded 20 years ago, Friendship reaches 7 million people in remote and climate-impacted communities with innovative solutions fulfilling four commitments: Saving Lives, Poverty Alleviation, Climate Adaptation and Empowerment. As challenges faced by communities are multi-faceted and interlinked, Friendship's integrated development model combines services in health, education, climate action, inclusive citizenship, sustainable economic development and cultural preservation.

Friendship Adult Literacy Programme (ALP)

Friendship's Adult Literacy Programme, implemented by Friendship Bangladesh, operates with the primary aim of creating equal opportunities for the adults of marginalized communities in Bangladesh to live with dignity and hope. The program, funded by Friendship Luxembourg, ERIKS Development Partner, Nurture Dignity Foundation and Secours Islamique France, uses Bangla as the language of instruction and costs approximately 2.3 Cores annually. Initiated in 2007, the program specifically targets adults aged 16 to 45, with a particular focus on women aged 20 to 35 who have had little to no schooling.

In 2000, Bangladesh committed to the Education for All (EFA) goals¹, yet by 2023, 76% of adults aged 15 and older were literate, leaving around 30 million adults with low literacy skills. This situation is especially dire in the Chars, remote midstream islands where natural disasters and poverty exacerbate educational challenges. Recognizing the urgent need, Friendship initiated the Adult Literacy Programme (ALP) to address these educational gaps. Between 2007 and 2024, Friendship expanded its educational outreach from 15 to 78 learning centers across 79 Char areas. Currently, 49 Adult Literacy Centers are actively providing education to 980 learners annually.

The program's curriculum, developed by Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB), is structured across three stages, equivalent to Grades 1 to 3 of formal education. Learners engage in a total of 384 hours of instruction over eight months, with classes running six days a week for two hours per day. Each class averages 20 learners. The curriculum covers essential literacy and numeracy skills, with an additional focus on entrepreneurship to equip learners with practical skills for everyday tasks. Specific textbooks are used for each grade level, and supplementary

¹ unesdoc.unesco.org/in/rest/annotationSVC/DownloadWatermarkedAttachment/attach_import_71175fa6-679e-4d37-ae5a-782c3fc4b478?_=121539eng.pdf&to=78&from=1

activities like “Clean Home Clean Environment” are integrated to promote community hygiene practices.

Upon completing the program, learners are encouraged to pursue vocational training in fields such as tailoring, weaving, and embroidery through the Sustainable Economic Development Programme, enabling them to achieve economic self-sufficiency. From 2007 to 2023 around 12,000 adult learners completed this course and received training.

Teachers for the program are locally recruited, ensuring a strong rapport with learners and consistent attendance. They undergo an initial six-day training session and participate in two capacity-building workshops annually.

The Adult Literacy Programme is closely monitored by field-level supervisors and managers from both district and head office levels. Regular assessments are conducted to ensure the quality of education and to provide feedback for continuous improvement. Through this comprehensive approach, Friendship’s Adult Literacy Programme addresses the critical educational needs of marginalized communities in Bangladesh’s remote Char areas, striving to uplift them through education and economic empowerment.

Further details on Friendship’s Adult Literacy Programme has provided in Annexes A.

After running Adult Literacy programme for more than a decade, Friendship intends to carry out an impact evaluation of The Adult Literacy Program.

Purpose of the envisaged Evaluation

The mission statement of Adult Literacy Programme, is *“To empower the adults of marginalized communities in isolated char areas through enhancing their literacy and numeracy skills, raising awareness of social and legal rights, and equipping them with vocational skills to achieve economic self-sufficiency.”*

The specific subjects to be addressed by the envisaged evaluation, each of which is expected to be addressed separately by the evaluator, are:

- a) **Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy Skills:** Measure the increase in basic literacy (reading and writing) and numeracy skills among adult learners. This could include assessing their ability to read simple documents, perform basic arithmetic, and write paragraphs.²
- b) **Economic Empowerment:** Evaluate the impact of the programme on economic self-sufficiency of the learners. This could involve tracking the number of participants who secure employment or start small businesses after completing vocational training offered by the programme.

² *Independent Evaluation of the Friendship Education Program by IER (OCT. 2020) - Full Report.pdf*

- c) **Social Awareness and engagement:** Assess the programme's effectiveness in raising awareness among participants about their social rights, citizenship, and the legal system. This might include surveying participants on their knowledge of legal rights and their engagement in social activities.
- d) **Sustainability of Knowledge Gains:** Examine how well the literacy and life skills acquired during the programme are retained over time. This could involve follow-up assessments months or years after program completion.
- e) **Impact on Gender Equality:** Given the programme's focus on women, particularly those aged 20-35, evaluate the changes in gender dynamics within the community. This might include measuring shifts in attitudes towards women's education, employment, and their roles in society.
- f) **Community Engagement and Support:** Analyze the level of community involvement in the programme, including the effectiveness of community-driven recruitment and the role of local teachers. Evaluate how community engagement contributes to the success and sustainability of the programme.
- g) **Economic Empowerment:** Measure the programme's long-term impact on poverty reduction within the targeted communities. This could involve tracking income levels and economic stability of the participants before and after the programme.
- h) **Impact of Additional Programmes:** Evaluate the effectiveness of additional initiatives integrated into the literacy programme, such as the 'Clean Home Clean Environment' initiative and the Sustainable Economic Development Programme, in enhancing the overall well-being of participants.

Evaluation bidders are expressly encouraged to, when submitting a proposal may suggest reformulations of and amendments to the definition of the specific subjects of the envisaged evaluation if they feel that these are not adequately formulated and/or that, as formulated, they cannot be assessed in a relevant manner at a reasonable cost.

Applicants are also requested to, in their offer, provide an insight into the methodology according to which they intend to address each of the subjects of the intended evaluation.

The evaluation team shall include a qualified educationist with significant experiences in assessing learning outcomes (in the context of Bangladesh's Non-formal education system). The evaluation team will also have to show expertise in respect of the Non-formal Adult literacy programme in Bangladesh – including the legal/regulatory framework and practical aspects.

The evaluation, which will have to include both quantitative and qualitative elements, to be carried out on the basis of a review of Friendship's process documentation, data and observations gathered in the course of field visits and interviews with Char dwellers (both direct and indirect beneficiaries of Friendship's Adult Literacy programme and inhabitants/learners who have not had access to the program), Friendship staff and relevant personnel from

Timeline

The impact evaluation is expected to be completed within 3 months, starting in September 2024. The following timeline is proposed:

- a) September 2024: Provide a clear and concise methodology and project design, including any revisions requested by Friendship before or after the project was awarded. Include key performance indicators (KPIs) and an outline for the final report in a soft copy.
- b) October 2024: Data collection and draft the Finding Section of the report, including a comparative analysis, in a concise and share through soft copy.
- c) November 2024: Draft evaluation report (soft copy) with conclusions and recommendations for discussion.
- d) December 2024: Feedback session, final report submission (soft copy), and presentation.

Confidentiality Agreement – Copyright

The evaluation team shall maintain strict confidentiality of all Friendship information which they will become aware of in the context of his assignment.

Friendship shall solely possess the copyright of all the works produced by the Consultant within this consultancy task and the consultant must not share any information, data, or analysis related to or borne from this task with anyone other than Friendship, without Friendship's prior written consent.

Annexes:

- A. [Friendship Adult Literacy Programme overview](#)
- B. [Independent Evaluation of the Friendship Education Program by IER \(OCT 2020\)](#)