

# PROFILES AND PROSPECTS IN POLICY DIRECTIONS AND STRATEGY SETTING FOR PROMOTING E-COMMUNITIES IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION

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# Highlights of the Presentation

- Profiles of the socio-economic realities that bear upon policy formulation and strategic positioning of ICT towards the development of e-communities as learning societies .
- Growth dimensions, changes and shifts in the socio-economic realities that play major roles in the shaping of policy measures and strategies related to e-communities
- Some policy initiatives towards the promotion of e-communities



Brunei



Cambodia



Indonesia



Lao PDR



Malaysia

# Southeast Asian Countries



Myanmar



Philippines



Singapore



Thailand



Viet Nam

# The Region's Diversity Levels in Economic Development

- **High HDI rank**                      **Singapore (2)**  
**Brunei Darussalam (25)**
- **Medium HDI rank**                **Malaysia (56)**  
**Thailand (67)**  
**Philippines (77)**  
**Indonesia (105)**  
**Viet Nam (110)**  
**Myanmar (128)**  
**Cambodia (137)**
- **Low HDI rank**                      **Lao PDR (140)**

# Economic Growth Profile

- **Average GDP growth in the region over the past 30 years ranges from -1% (Brunei) to 5.7% (Singapore & Thailand)**
- **The region recorded the fastest growth rate among various regional groups prior to the 1997 financial crisis.**

# Population Profiles

	Population	Growth Rate (%)
<b>Southeast Asia</b>	<b>520.6 M</b>	
<b>Brunei Darussalam</b>	<b>.03</b>	<b>3.2</b>
<b>Cambodia</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Indonesia</b>	<b>209.4</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>Lao PDR</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>2.9</b>
<b>Malaysia</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>2.4</b>
<b>Myanmar</b>	<b>48.9</b>	<b>2.1</b>
<b>Philippines</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>2.3</b>
<b>Singapore</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>0.7</b>
<b>Thailand</b>	<b>62.6</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Viet Nam</b>	<b>80.3</b>	<b>2.3</b>

- **Population of Southeast Asia and the Pacific is expected to reach 629 Million by 2015.**
- **Southeast Asia is expected has a very young population.**

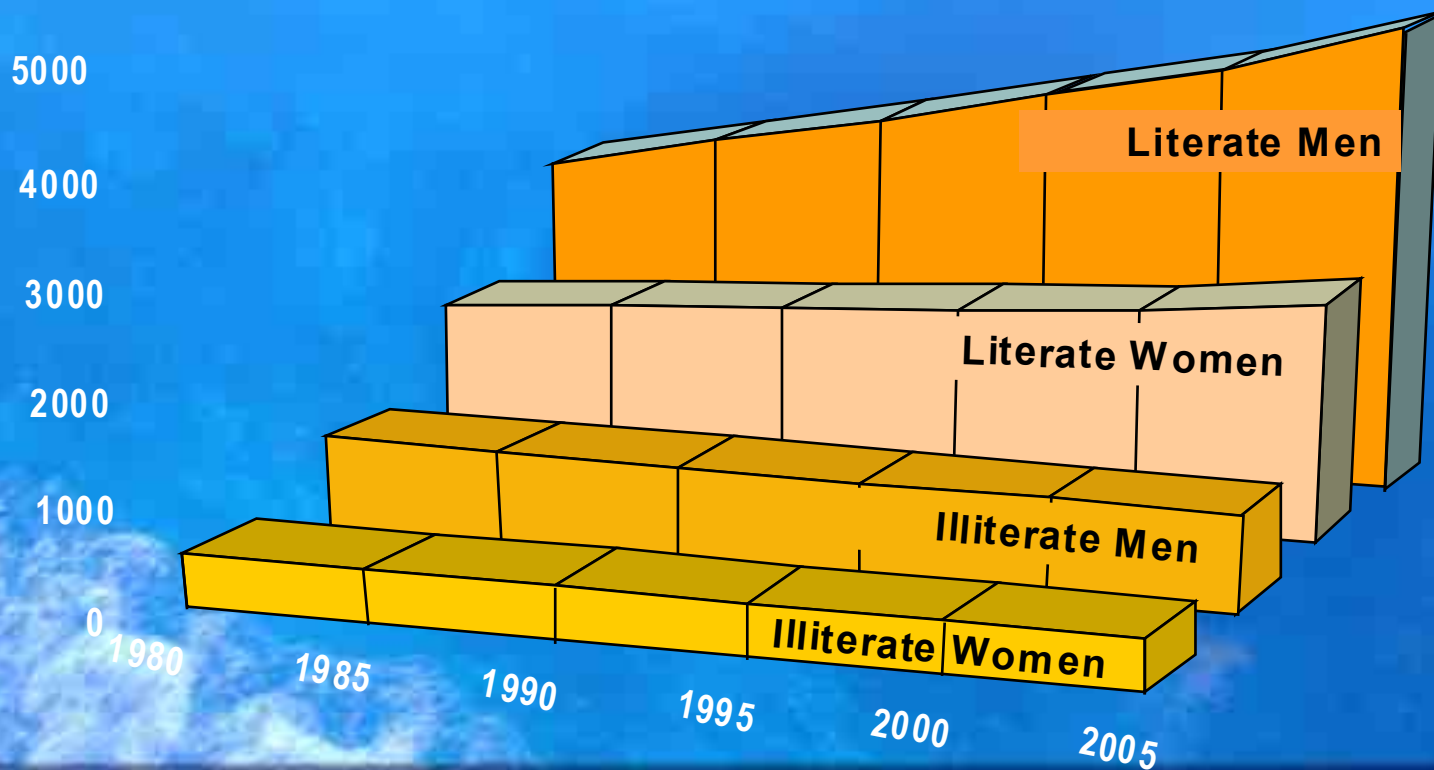
# **In sum:**

- **Southeast Asia covers a region with a landmass and population diversity almost equal to that of Europe with corresponding cultural and ethnic diversity**
- **One of the fastest growing economic groupings in the world**
- **The region's work force faces the urgent need to compete in the global arena, and needs to have world-class competencies and ability to work in a multi-cultural, multi-skilled workplace**

# Information Resources

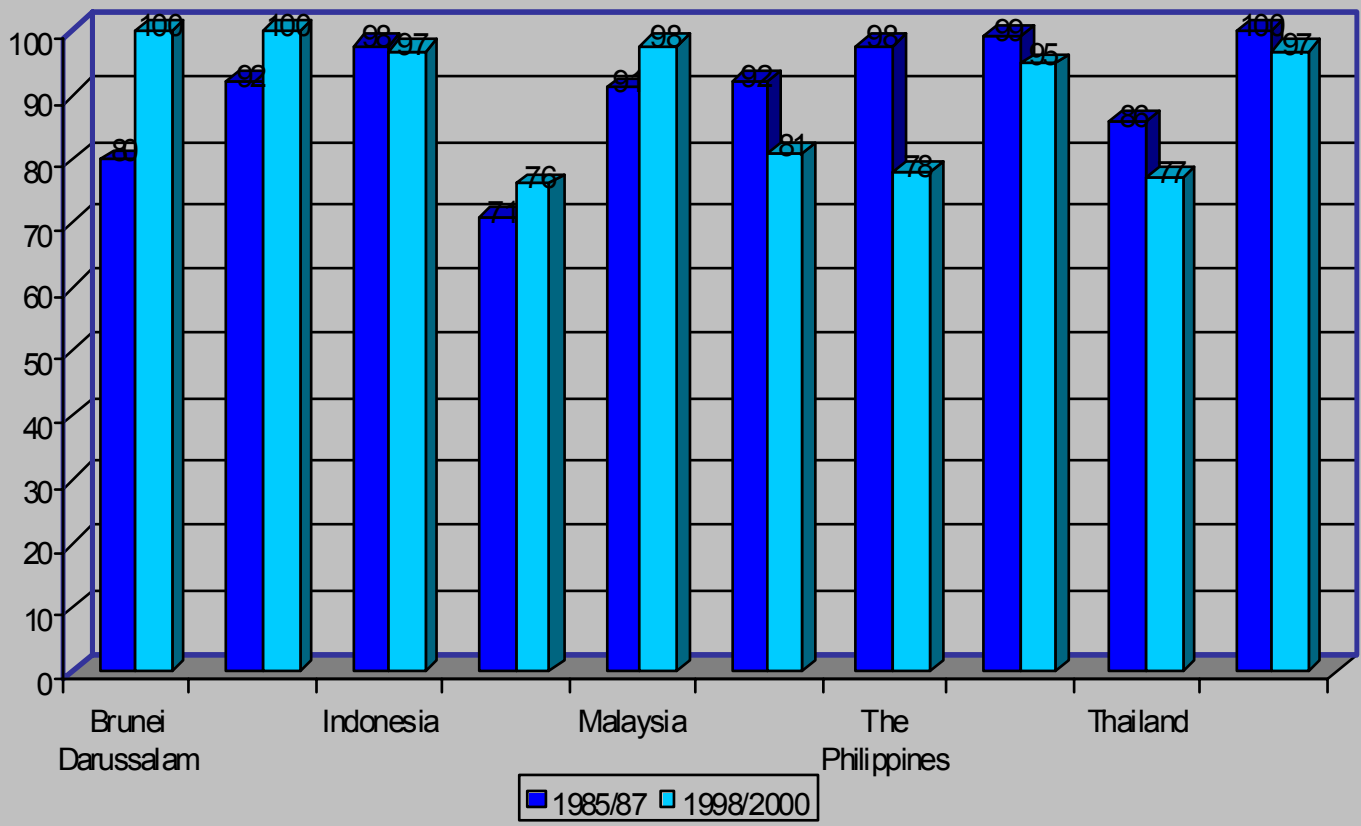
- **Internet access**
  - **15.1 *Internet hosts* per 1000 people in Singapore**
  - **0.01 *Internet hosts* per 1000 people in Cambodia**
- **Access to telephones**
  - **216.8 lines per 1000 people in Singapore**
  - **25 lines per 1000 people in the Philippines**
  - **6 lines per 1000 in Lao PDR**

# World Adult Literate and Illiterate Population, by gender (in millions)



# Education in the Region

Net Enrolment Ratio, Primary Level (1985 & 1998)



## **E-COMMUNITIES AS A STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE EFA AND DAKAR GOALS**

- *expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;*
- *ensuring that by 2015, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;*

- ***ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes;***
- ***achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;***

- ***eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality;***
- ***improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.***

- In many Asian settings, e-communities are anchored in the context of lifelong learning, non-formal education and adult learning.
- The term *adult learning* has a multitude of meanings in different countries, at the national, sub-national and local levels as well as to different institutions, groups and individuals.

*.... the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level, and method, whether formal or otherwise, or whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges, and universities, as well as an apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications, or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behavior in the two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic, and cultural development*

**PRESENT-DAY EDUCATIONAL POLICY  
PROFILES IN THE REGION AND THEIR  
IMPLICATIONS TO POLICY DIRECTIONS ON  
E-COMMUNITIES:**

**Bangladesh, Cambodia, PRC, India,  
Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia,  
Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines,  
Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam**

**Generally, the policy directions many countries of the Region indicate that the socio-cultural and educational environment and political climate are sympathetic to the promotion of e-communities.**

# **COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVES: TRANSLATING VISION TO ACTION ON ADULT LEARNING TOWARDS E- COMMUNITIES THROUGH COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS (CLCs)**

- A UNESCO initiative**
- In more than 20 Asian countries**

## ***Emerging functions of Community Learning Centers (CLCs):***

**1. collection and analysis of community information (e.g., on health and economic status, education attainment, population characteristics, etc.) both for reporting purposes, to higher levels of the system, and for community-based needs assessment and programme planning purposes;**

**2. library services (with books, newspapers, health and agriculture information, etc.), especially for neo-literates;**

- **3. organization of community activities (e.g., day-care for young children, sports and recreation, youth mobilization);**
- **4. promotion of inter- and intra-community linkages, coordination, and networking to ensure stronger, collective action by, and on behalf of community members; and**
- **5. provision of education and training as needed by all segments of the community**

## Capability-building Functions of CLCs

1. **Skills development and income generation**, including both technical knowledge in work areas and more general entrepreneurial skills (e.g., budgeting, accounting, marketing);
2. **Environmental conservation and sustainable development** (e.g., water and soil conservation techniques, pollution control)
3. **General principles and practices of human rights and of gender equality** (which can include a mandated number of women in CLC activities and management posts);

**4. Reproductive health** (especially for adolescence girls and young mothers), and early childhood care and development practices, for both mothers and fathers;

**5. Health promotion** (e.g., clean water and sanitation facilities) and HIV/AIDS prevention;

**6. Conflict resolution, citizenship, and democratic values, including information on elections and voting rights;**

**7. Cultural and natural heritage preservation** (including community-based management of tourism related to cultural and natural heritage sites); and

**8. Indigenous knowledge and technology in areas such as medicine, agriculture, irrigation, and crafts.**

# **ISSUES, AND CHALLENGES IN POLICY AND STRATEGY SETTING FOR E-COMMUNITIES**

## **1. Changes in Educational paradigms**

**The learning continuum is fast  
becoming borderless, embracing a  
lifelong dimension, with the pace  
of knowledge acquisition described  
as unprecedented**

## **2. The ever-growing population of Southeast Asia**

*Population growth is fast outpacing the region's capacity to provide learning opportunities to individuals and groups. Mass participation in education needs to be addressed by the education sector.*

### **3. Accreditation, equivalency and recognition of prior learning**

*Alternative schemes such as recognition of prior learning, accreditation and equivalency are approaches that are gaining substantial attention.*

### **4. Need to devise work-specific and off-campus learning strategies**

*Beyond-the-campus strategies deserve attention and focus*

## **5. Open learning, distance education and other flexible systems**

*Distance education, open learning and other flexible systems are now recognized as having the capacity to provide access to lifelong education opportunities*

# Considerations in Policy Formulations for the Promotion of E-Communities for Learners in the Formal and Non-Formal Sectors

- **Capacity building and retooling**
- **Creating environments for the learner who is his own teacher**
- **Stimulating research and benchmarking**
- **Partnerships and sharing of resources**

Annex 1 - The MCT Experience

# Connecting People and Organizations for Rural Development through Pilot *Multipurpose Community Telecenters (MCTs)* in Selected Philippine Barangays

Department of Science and Technology (DOST)  
*Project-in-Charge*

# General Objective

To set up a one-stop information resource center for the people in a *barangay* -- providing them access to people and organizations using simple, tested as well as state-of-the-art methods of organizing, sharing and communicating information.

... This project is also about continuing dialogue and partnership. It builds on existing infrastructure, initiatives and programs of the government, civic society organization, and the private sector.

# Why MCTs?

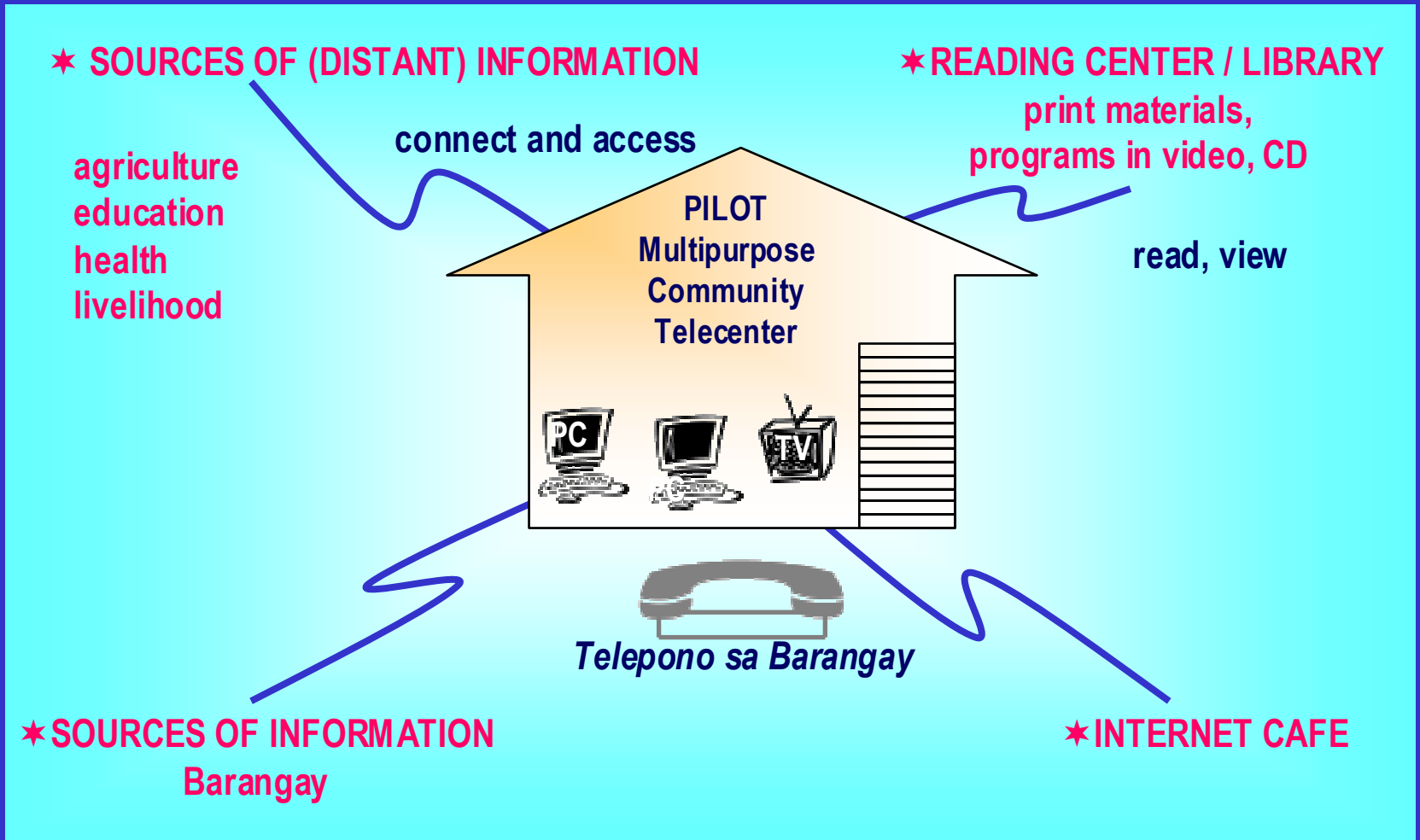
A response to the challenge...

- of capitalizing technology to give Filipinos equitable access to knowledge and resources
- of bringing the rural villages out of isolation
- of making the information society to be more about inclusion rather than exclusion

# Building on Related Initiatives

- Devolution of Power (Local Gov't. Code)
- *Telepono sa Barangay*
  - DOTC envisions to connect within the next 10 years 31,920 barangays representing 76% of the total villages nationwide
- Schools of the Future, distance learning
- e-Health initiative
- FITS (Farmers Information and Technology Services)

# Concept of a Multipurpose Community Telecenter



# The Pilot Sites

Agusan del Norte

Barangay Maguinda, Butuan City

Barangay Jaliobong, Kitcharao

Lanao del Norte

Barangay Taguitic, Kapatagan

Barangay Malingao, Tubod

# Development Strategy

- build on existing programs
- work with partners
- content/application building  
(indigenous, link-base)
- long-term viability,  
sustainability by building local  
capability

# MCT Services

...can range from that of a calling office, an internet café, a computer-processing center, a reading and training resource center, and a place for people to interact.

...a venue for creating indigenous barangay information, as well as subject-specific Philippine information, in particular those on health, education, agriculture and rural enterprise development.

# MCT Services

- internet café
- computer encoding and printing
- training on basic computer
- content-development by community members
- information and training resource center
- communication
- capability-building and livelihood training : duck-raising  
(*information thru the internet*)
- reading center

# Lessons Learned...

- *Barangays* have the capability to solve their own problem; they have resources.
- The people in the rural community are not always waiting for free services; they have the capability to pay.
- MCT is a relationship project, one works within a web of relationships.

# On Management and Operation

- Each project site is different from the others: highly dependent on leader
- Balance between public and commercial service objectives
- Bottom-up governance is a viable set-up

# On Community Mobilization

- Community involvement and ownership are essential
- Community's understanding of ICT-enabled projects enhanced by demonstrating MCT's capability

# On Content Development

- Information needs -- an evolving concern
- Internet as an information resource complements radio and face-to-face transactions

# On Content Development

- Use of local dialect hastens understanding, hence, action
- Web site owners must be responsive to queries received from users
- Applications should relate to community problems

# Monitoring and Evaluation

- Stories are important tools

# **The Project's Ultimate Vision**

**... to develop people's capability to harness information and communication technologies for rural development; to enable them to participate productively in an evolving knowledge-based society.**

## **Annex 2 – The text2teach Experience**

### **General Objective**

- **Help expand access to, and quality of basic education in Mindanao, towards the attainment of economic productivity, peace and development**

# Specific Objectives

- ✦ **Expand and enhance basic education learnings in science, mathematics and english**
- ✦ **Train teachers on newer strategies, including ICT-based approaches**
- ✦ **Provide technical assistance in the content planning and development/production/testing of learning materials for both teachers/trainors and for learners**

# Specific Objectives

- ✦ **Implement learner responsive and culturally-sensitive strategies, including ICT-based approaches, aimed at increasing access and improving quality**
- ✦ **Generate data that would serve as inputs to the scaling up and sustaining the said strategies**

# Project Sites

- **ARMM**

- **Maguindanao**
- **Jolo/Tawi-Tawi**  
(for discussion)

- **Region 12**

- **North Cotabato**
- **South Cotabato**



# Project Inputs

- **Media Technology in 120 selected schools**
  - **Television Set**
  - **MediaMaster**
  - **Satellite dish**
  - **Other AV equipment**
- ✳ **Lesson Plans/Teachers' Guides**
- ✳ **Teacher Training**
- ✳ **Community Orientation**
- ✳ **Linkages/Networks**
- ✳ **Technical Assistance during the project implementation**