



Literacy and maternal health in rural Pakistan

Please come and join us for BALID's 32nd Informal Literacy Discussion on
Tuesday, 26th March 2019, from 11am – 12.20pm
in Room 805, UCL Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL
led by
Mirza Moqem Baig, of Rural Aid Pakistan.

Integrated Health Literacy is a powerful way of improving – transforming – maternal and child health, enabling rural communities to access health information and adopt safer health-care practices. In collaboration with Feed the Minds, the National Rural Development Programme (NRDP) implemented the HELP for Women project, a three-year Health Education Literacy programme in 150 rural villages in Pakistan. This aimed to improve health practices and prevent life-threatening conditions such as anaemia, dehydration, sepsis and malaria.

Through this project, a network of 150 trained local community midwives linked up with the District Department of Health using smartphone referrals and an advisory system. As a result, 4,800 young girls and women increased their access to health services and adopted safer practices in terms of sanitation, nutrition, vaccinations and clean water. Moreover, greater numbers of women accessed antenatal and post-natal care, there was an increase in medical referrals and a reduction in maternal and infant deaths.

Mirza Moqem Baig, CEO of Rural Aid Pakistan (formerly NRDP), has been helping to empower the disadvantaged and non-literate rural communities of Pakistan since 1992. Through an integrated community development approach, he believes that mobilizing and building the capacity of grassroots communities helps them to become part of the solution to the problem of poverty. Through his work with national and international NGOs Moqem has promoted literacy, women's rights and empowerment, girls' education, health, livelihoods and human and Institutional development.