



Taking the floor: actions to reduce illiteracy among inmates in Uruguay

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URUGUAY

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Basic Information

Country Information

Official Name	<i>República Oriental del Uruguay (Oriental Republic of Uruguay)</i>
Capital	<i>Montevideo</i>
Language	<i>Spanish</i>
Population	<i>3.5 Million</i>
Culture/ Religion	<i>Secular State (No official Religion)</i>

Organization information

Name	<i>National Direction of Education – Ministry of Education and Culture</i>
Type	<i>Government Institution</i>
Mission/ Objectives	<p><i>The Ministry of Education and Culture of Uruguay is the responsible for coordinating national education, promoting the country's cultural development, and preserving heritage.</i></p> <p><i><u>The National Direction of Education is the responsible for promoting lifelong education for young people and adults, as a fundamental human right and a basic condition for the effectiveness of citizenship.</u></i></p>
Project Title	<i>Taking the floor: actions to reduce illiteracy among inmates in Uruguay.</i>
Project Duration	<i>July 2021 to December 2022</i>
Target Group	<i>Uruguayan adult inmates and specifically those who are illiterate.</i>

Project Overview



Taking the floor is a non-formal education program that aims to reduce illiteracy among adult inmates.

Three main components:

- 1) early detection of illiteracy (illiteracy diagnosis device)
- 2) promotion and improvement of reading and writing skills (workshops and activities multimodal libraries spaces)
- 3) teacher's and prison officers training

Two levels:

- 1) two pilot units (diagnosis device, workshops and multimodal libraries);
- 2) the whole prison system (workshops and training)

**Pictures were taken during different activities made in multimodal libraries from penitentiary units N°4 and N°20.*

The project in “big numbers”



- 600 inmates diagnosed
- 100 teachers trained
- 12 trainings
- 2 multimodal libraries installed
- 19 pairs of teachers for mediation to reading & writing in prisons

Development of an illiteracy diagnosis device



In order to develop an illiteracy diagnosis device, a set of previous actions was needed:

- Theoretical and methodological frame
- A guide for appliers
- A test with three levels of progressive difficulty of completion
- The development of a methodological guide for training applicators.
- The creation and constantly update of a database
- The statement of procedures for analytical outcomes
- A final report

**Pictures were taken during an application of the illiteracy diagnosis device in penitentiary unit # 20 in Salto.*

Strengthen of reading and writing skills through mediation workshops and multimodal libraries



This component is divided into 3 parts.

Firstly a reading and writing mediation model was designed and executed. This implied a theoretical and methodological frame, a tools box and human resources training.

Secondly, two multimodal libraries were installed and equipped in order to satisfy every educational inmate's needs and also to offer many proposals to the prison community (such as cinema forums, reading clubs, workshops for strengthening reading skills & board games sessions).

Thirdly, due to the need for sustainability and improvement of these libraries, management training was developed and offered to inmates, teachers and prison officers.

**Pictures were taken during both multimodal libraries inaugural event. The picture on top is from unit # 4, in Montevideo, while the bottom one is from unit # 20 in Salto.*

Teacher's and prison officers training



As a mainstream strategy for permanent learning and regarding project's issues.

Training was focused on two main issues:

- a) reading and writing mediation as a didactic tool to improve inmate's skills
- b) libraries management for inmates, teachers and prison guards, as a way to ensure the cooperation between all prison community.

**Pictures were taken during a writing and reading mediation workshop in 2022.*

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- *Provided innovative actions to the National Plan for Education in Prisons.*
- *Illiteracy diagnosis device and multimodal libraries being operative.*
- *Low Budget needed.*
- *UNESCO as a partner*

Opportunities

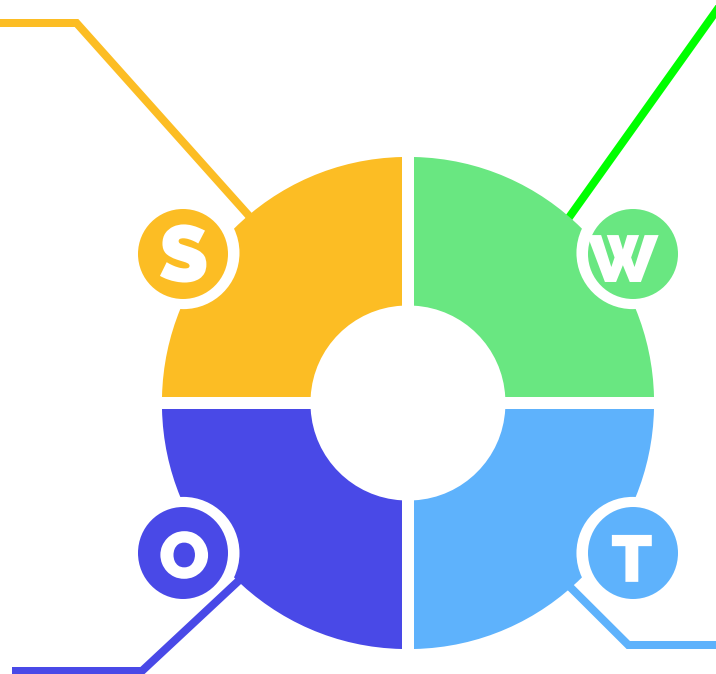
- *Project's scalability to all the prison units.*
- *National Plan for Education in Prisons as a public policy*
- *High demand of formal and non-formal education*
- *The key role of education in rehabilitation process.*

Weaknesses

- *Due to the rigidity of the prison policy links with penitentiary units were complex.*
- *Purchasing State's procedures take almost two months between the order and its approval.*
- *The National education system is under reform.*

Threats

- *Low visibility and awareness of high levels of illiteracy among inmates by Uruguayan society*
- *Heterogeneity of prison living conditions and low accessibility to education.*





Thank you

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ANNEX: Education in Uruguay

• Formal Education in Uruguay

Educational System	<i>Uruguay, single track system which operates on 2 (pre-elementary) - 6 (elementary), - 3 (middle) and 3 The plan develops a general frame: principles, goals, and links between the educational policies and human, cultural, social, technological, and economic development policies.(pre-university) basis.</i>
National Strategy, Plan, or Policy	<i>Uruguay Plan Nacional de Educación 2020 - 2025 The plan develops a general frame: principles, goals, and links between the educational policies and human, cultural, social, technological, and economic development policies.</i>
Primary education completion rate, %	<i>99.1 % total completion rate in 2020. (Source: DGIEP : http://www.anep.edu.uy/monitor/servlet/portada)</i>
Lower secondary completion rate, %	<i>74,4 % - total completion rate & 67,7 % - completion rate in the appropriate age both measured in 2019 (Source: Instituto Nacional de Evaluación Educativa: https://mirador.ineed.edu.uy/indicadores.html)</i>
Challenges	<i>Uruguay has problems increasing the secondary completion rate and reducing the repetition and dropout rate.</i>

ANNEX: Education in Uruguay

- **Non-formal Education in Uruguay**

Educational System	<p>ANEP Dirección de Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos: https://www.anep.edu.uy/codicen/dsie/deja MEC Dirección Nacional de Educación: https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-educacion-cultura/politicas-y-gestion/educacion-formal Dirección General de Educación Técnico Profesional División de Capacitación y Acreditación de Saberes: https://cv.utu.edu.uy/node/340 Instituto Nacional de Empleo y Formación Profesional : https://www.inefop.org.uy/home</p>
Non-formal Education Accreditation and Equivalency (NFE A&E)	<p><i>In Uruguay there is no way to have national credentials from non-formal education to a formal education grade or equivalency. Instead there exists different kind of tests to accredit formal education independently from non formal educational system.</i></p>
National Strategy, Plan or Policy	<p><i>National Educational Policy for 2020-2025.</i></p>
Challenges	<p><i>Uruguay has a challenge in the accreditation of non-formal education due to the lack of a National Strategy. However, first steps have been made in order to create new policies to face this issue.</i></p>