



CASE STUDY

Radio Broadcasts Enhance Teaching

An innovative radio program makes learning fun and interesting



Photo: USAID/Ebony Bostic

A student studies decimals with the support of radio broadcast instruction at a school in Tuskar Town, located in the Greater Bangalore area, southern India.

“In my ten years of teaching experience, I have never found teaching the decimal concept as effective as it is now with the support of the radio broadcast,” said Anuradha, a math teacher in a primary school in Tuskar Town, a poor Bangalore area.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Challenge

Teaching of most subjects in India’s public primary schools is usually done by rote — with much repetition and memorization but without teaching aids or student interaction. Schools lack teaching materials, and many teachers lack advanced teaching skills, making it difficult for young students to grasp abstract concepts like decimals.

Initiative

USAID launched Interactive Radio Instruction — an educational communications effort that makes teaching difficult concepts easy through interactive lessons. The program gives step-by-step instructions to teachers for instruction in mathematics and other subjects through hands-on activities and ensures enthusiastic involvement of students. The radio education modules that USAID developed simplify teaching of difficult concepts in math, science, social studies, and English for primary grades. The state of Karnataka began using the math, science, and social studies modules, while the states of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are using the English modules. Lessons are broadcast on the government’s All India Radio, which has a broad reach.

Results

Students are more attentive when listening to the radio programs, while teachers keep them involved by asking more questions and engaging them in fun learning activities, such as games. Over 84,000 students in three states were reached in the project’s pilot phase. The program has expanded to bolster teaching quality and classroom experiences in one more state, Madhya Pradesh. Today, it reaches over 12 million students. The radio broadcast lessons combined with teacher support have made instruction more interesting and effective for students, increasing both the benefits children derive from their education and the number of students enrolling in school.