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SHAPERS: A Sustainable University-Community Partnership Model for Transformative Prison Education, Rehabilitation, and Social Reintegration

Ms. Precious T. Mongcal

College of Arts and Sciences Education

Email: pmongcal@umindanao.edu.ph

SDG Focus

KEY POINTS



Purpose: Empowers inmate-educators at Davao City Jail by enhancing their teaching competence, leadership, and values formation, ultimately improving the quality of Alternative Learning System (ALS) education and supporting rehabilitation through education.



Target Beneficiaries: Inmate-educators facilitating ALS classes and indirectly benefits incarcerated learners through improved instruction, UM faculty, students, and alumni.



Major Activities: Need assessments, teacher training, mentoring, instructional material development, donation drives, and continuous monitoring and evaluation to strengthen prison-based education.

Key Partners: Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Davao City Jail, faculty, students, alumni, and various government, private, and community partners.

Key Outcomes: The program has strengthened the teaching capabilities of inmate-educators, contributed to the successful completion of ALS by over 500 incarcerated learners with a 100% passing rate.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

SELF-HARNESSING ACTIVITIES TOWARD PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH AND OTHER RELEVANT SKILLS (SHAPERS) is the flagship community extension initiative of the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Program under the College of Arts and Sciences Education of the University of Mindanao. Established in 2018, SHAPERS exemplifies the University's commitment to social responsibility by transforming academic expertise into sustainable community impact through prison education. Rather than providing short-term assistance, the program empowers Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs), particularly inmate-educators facilitating the Alternative Learning System (ALS) at Davao City Jail, through capacity-building, values formation, and educational support.

The project aims to (1) strengthen the pedagogical competence and leadership of inmate-educators; (2) cultivate teacher identity, responsibility, and personal transformation; (3) improve educational opportunities for incarcerated ALS learners; and (4) foster a culture of civic engagement among faculty, students, alumni, and institutional partners.

Implemented annually in Davao City since 2018, SHAPERS adopts a sustainable university–community partnership model that mobilizes faculty expertise, student service-learning, alumni volunteerism, and collaboration with the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP). Its key activities include needs assessment, targeted teacher training, instructional material development, resource-sharing drives, mentoring, research, and program evaluation.

In 2026, the initiative trained 21 inmate-educators through workshops on teacher identity, pedagogy, classroom management, and low-cost instructional material development while mobilizing faculty, students, alumni, and BJMP personnel in a shared mission of rehabilitation through education.

By integrating instruction, extension, research, and community engagement, SHAPERS advances SDGs 4, 16, and 17 while demonstrating how higher education institutions can become

catalysts for inclusive learning, restorative justice, and sustainable social transformation.

TANGIBLE OUTCOMES

Impact to the University. SHAPERS has strengthened the University of Mindanao's identity as a socially responsive institution by integrating instruction, research, extension, alumni engagement, and service-learning into a unified community development model. Faculty members contribute disciplinary expertise beyond the classroom, students develop civic consciousness through meaningful service-learning, and alumni remain actively engaged as mentors, facilitators, donors, and advocates. The initiative has likewise strengthened long-term institutional collaboration with the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, demonstrating how universities can respond to complex social issues through sustained academic-community partnerships.

Impact to the Community/ Society. The program has empowered inmate-educators with enhanced teaching competencies, strengthened leadership, and renewed purpose as educators despite incarceration. Through continuous capability-building, instructional resource support, and values formation, SHAPERS has contributed to improving the quality of ALS instruction inside Davao City Jail. Since its implementation, the program has supported inmate-teachers whose collective efforts have enabled more than 500 incarcerated learners to complete the ALS program with a 100% passing rate. The initiative has also mobilized educational materials, personal necessities, volunteer expertise, and community support, creating a more conducive learning environment while reinforcing rehabilitation through education.

Impact to SDGs. SHAPERS advances SDG 4 (Quality Education) by expanding equitable access to quality learning opportunities within correctional facilities, particularly the DCJ – Male Dormitory. It contributes to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) by promoting rehabilitation, restorative justice, and successful social reintegration through education. The program likewise exemplifies SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by institutionalizing

collaboration among the University of Mindanao, the BJMP, faculty, students, alumni, and community stakeholders to deliver sustainable, inclusive, and socially responsive educational interventions.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The sustainability of SHAPERS lies in its institutionalization as a university–community partnership model anchored on social responsibility, academic excellence, and collaborative engagement. The University of Mindanao will continue integrating SHAPERS into the annual extension agenda of the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Program, ensuring sustained faculty leadership, student service-learning participation, alumni volunteer engagement, and evidence-based program improvement through continuous monitoring and evaluation.

Future implementation will strengthen mentoring for inmate-educators, expand instructional resource development, enhance monitoring and impact assessment, and increase opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration with other academic programs. Strategic partnerships with the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, local government units, non-governmental organizations, and private-sector partners will further support resource mobilization, technical assistance, and long-term program continuity.

More importantly, SHAPERS is designed as a replicable university–community partnership model. Its framework—beginning with community needs assessment, leveraging academic expertise, engaging students and alumni in meaningful service, establishing institutional partnerships, and sustaining interventions through effective monitoring and evaluation—can be adapted by other colleges and departments across the University. Different disciplines may contextualize the model according to their expertise while preserving its central philosophy of empowering marginalized communities through education and collaborative social action.

By embedding social responsibility into teaching, research, extension, and alumni engagement, SHAPERS ensures that community service becomes a shared institutional culture rather than

a stand-alone project. In doing so, the University of Mindanao continues to demonstrate how higher education can generate sustainable solutions that transform lives, strengthen communities, and advance the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

ABNKKBSNPLAko?: Alleviating Reading Struggling Learners Monthly Program

Dr. Genesis G. Genelza

UM Tagum College

Email: genesis.genelza@umindanao.edu.ph

SDG Focus

KEY POINTS



Purpose: To improve the literacy skills of struggling readers through structured, monthly reading interventions.



Target Beneficiaries: 40 learners identified through PHIL-IRI assessments- 32 slow readers with literal comprehension difficulties 8 learners needing basic phonics and syllabic reading support

Major Activities: Monthly reading workshops, SRA Reading Laboratory sessions, Small-group instruction, One-on-one mentoring, and Regular reading assessments and progress monitoring

Key Partners: DepEd Tagum, Quipper Southern Mindanao, Rotary Club of Tagum North, UM alumni, parents, and community stakeholders.

Key Outcomes: Improved reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and word recognition among beneficiaries, strengthened teachers' capacity to provide differentiated reading instruction, enhanced community engagement and parental participation in literacy development, and provided experiential learning for 10 student volunteers and 14 faculty members.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

“ABNKKBSNPLAko?: Alleviating Reading Struggling Learners Monthly Program” is a banner project of UM Tagum College’s Basic Education Department, designed to assist students of Liboganon Integrated School who struggle with reading. Located in a coastal barangay, Liboganon Integrated School serves learners who have had limited access to structured reading instruction, especially during the pandemic and amid the community's problematic situation. This initiative directly addresses the need for early reading intervention by offering monthly sessions to strengthen literacy skills, including comprehension, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, and fluency.

The project, which began its implementation in 2022, is jointly facilitated by both the Junior High and Senior High School departments. Its target beneficiaries are 40 students identified through PHIL-IRI assessments—32 of whom exhibit slow- paced reading with literal comprehension, and 8 of whom struggle with basic phonics and syllabic reading. Key activities include monthly reading workshops using the SRA Reading Laboratory by Don H. Parker, small-group instruction, individual mentoring, and regular learner-teacher conferences.

The program emphasizes inclusive, individualized instruction and builds on collaborative engagement, with volunteers from JHS, SHS, and department alums participating. Its innovative use of multi- level reading materials, student-volunteer interaction, and community involvement aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 17 (Partnership for the goals), making the project both timely and impactful in addressing reading gaps in the school/community partner.

TANGIBLE OUTCOMES

The implementation of the reading intervention project has generated significant, direct, and measurable outcomes that have positively influenced the University of Mindanao Tagum College (UMTC), its community school partner, Liboganon Integrated School (LIS), and the broader pursuit of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality

Education) and 17 (Partnership for the Goals). Through the systematic utilization of Don H. Parker's SRA Reading Laboratory, the project directly benefited forty (40) identified struggling readers who received structured and level-appropriate literacy instruction on a monthly basis. Regular reading assessments, progress- monitoring records, and teacher observations revealed notable improvements in learners' reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary development, and word recognition. These measurable gains demonstrate the effectiveness of targeted literacy interventions in addressing foundational learning gaps among elementary learners.

For Liboganon Integrated School, the project strengthened the school's capacity to respond to literacy challenges through evidence-based instructional support. Teachers gained access to supplementary reading resources and learner progress data that informed instructional decision-making and differentiated teaching strategies. The consistent monitoring of learner performance enabled educators to identify specific reading difficulties and provide timely interventions, thereby improving academic engagement and classroom participation. More importantly, the project established a sustainable framework for literacy enhancement that can be replicated and expanded to benefit future cohorts of learners.

The project also produced substantial institutional benefits for the University of Mindanao Tagum College. As an extension initiative anchored on community engagement and educational development, it provided meaningful experiential learning opportunities for ten (10) student volunteers and fourteen (14) faculty members. Through direct involvement in literacy instruction, assessment, and learner mentoring, participants enhanced their professional competencies in teaching, educational leadership, community service, and social responsibility. The initiative further strengthened UMTC's commitment to its mandate of instruction, research, and extension by translating academic expertise into tangible community impact. Consequently, the project elevated the university's role as a catalyst for educational transformation and community empowerment.

Equally important, the project fostered stronger partnerships among educational and community stakeholders. The collaborative

engagement of UMTC, DepEd Tagum, Liboganon Integrated School, Quipper Southern Mindanao, the Rotary Club of Tagum North, and an alum participation created a shared platform for advancing literacy and educational equity. This multi- sectoral partnership mobilized resources, expertise, and volunteerism toward a common goal, demonstrating how collective action can effectively address persistent learning challenges. The strengthened relationship between UMTC and LIS now serves as a model for university-school collaboration that promotes sustainable educational development at the local level.

Beyond the school environment, the initiative heightened parental and community awareness regarding the importance of early reading intervention. Parents became more engaged in monitoring their children's learning progress, while community stakeholders recognized literacy development as a shared responsibility. Such increased involvement contributes to a more supportive learning ecosystem that reinforces educational outcomes both within and outside the classroom.

Most significantly, the project directly advances the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 17, which seeks to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all through partnership with key stakeholders. The project's measurable improvements in reading proficiency of learners and stakeholder engagement exemplify how localized, evidence-based interventions can support national and global efforts to ensure that no learner is left behind. As such, the project stands as a compelling model of how higher education institutions can contribute to sustainable educational development while generating lasting benefits for schools, communities, and society at large.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The sustainability of the reading intervention program is anchored on strong institutional commitment, continuous stakeholder engagement, and systematic resource mobilization. To ensure its continuity, the University of Mindanao Tagum College (UMTC) integrates the initiative into its regular extension and community

engagement programs, allowing faculty members and student volunteers to conduct periodic literacy interventions as part of their service-learning and outreach activities. Annual monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will be maintained to track learner progress, assess program effectiveness, and identify areas for improvement.

To enhance the program, additional reading materials, digital literacy tools, and teacher capacity-building activities will be incorporated to address learners' evolving needs. Partnerships with local government units, private organizations, alums, and community stakeholders will likewise be strengthened to secure financial, technical, and material support for future implementation.

The project also presents strong potential for expansion and replication. The intervention framework, assessment tools, and implementation strategies may be adopted by other colleges, departments, and offices within UM, not just UMTC, as part of their extension initiatives. Likewise, neighboring schools facing similar literacy challenges may utilize the model through collaborative partnerships and knowledge-sharing activities. By institutionalizing best practices, fostering multi-sectoral collaboration, and continuously improving program delivery, the initiative can generate long-term educational benefits and contribute to sustained literacy development across diverse learning communities.