

**A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO EDUCATION:
Village Institution Experience of Turkey and the United Nations
Millennium Development Goals**

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Following the acquisition of the War of Independence in the year 1922 and proclamation of the Republic, approximately 80% of Turkish population acquitted from the protection of the Ottoman Empire was dwelling in villages. Only 5% of the population was literate while most of Anatolians were without schools and teachers. There was need of an institution, which would help support society in development of its own power to bring education to children in villages and to train the teachers. This institution, which was configured to serve in rural regions in many fields was ' Village Institutes'. Village Institutes of Turkey were founded by a law enacted on April 17, 1940. Village Institutes, provided education to farmers' children who could not go to school because they had to work in fields, helped to increase literacy rates among adults, empowered women through education in these institutes and trained peasants in agriculture to win environmental awareness therefore ensured most efficient use of the farmlands. Atatrk's work with Village Institutes which he initiated towards the mid of 1930s ensured success 73 years ago of what is in today's United Nations 2015 Millennium Development goals of universal education, gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as the provisions of environmental sustainability. This study, led by Ataturk's efforts to implement Village Institutes of Turkey served between 1940-1954 can serve as the example for the realization of United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The study offers an analysis of Village Institutes within the framework of providing Universal Primary Education, achieving Gender Equality, Empowerment of Women and Sustainability of Environment, which are in the objectives of United Nations Millennium Development goals.

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