

## RSHM Sister receives award for literacy programme



AN IRISH missionary order has won one of Brazil's most prestigious awards for their work to improve literacy skills.

More than 8,000 people in the state of Paraiba have learnt to read and write since the project was set up 30 years ago.

Sister Kate Nolan, from Wexford, said it was a great honour to have won the Paulo Freire trophy. "We are more than aware that the project is not one that becomes self-sustaining in itself but it helps individuals and families to become independent by becoming employable and self sustaining," she said.

Her order, the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary (RSHM), works in the favelas (shanty towns) in the state capital Joao Pessoa. The "Sal da Terra" project was selected from hundreds of adult literacy programmes around Brazil because of its organization, teaching methods and success rates.

"Many people became more active in their communities because they say they feel more confident to express their views or to undertake responsibility in the community. Every year we have great difficulty in persuading some people that they have to move on to public schools and make room for other people," said Sr Kate.

The project receives funding from Trócaire, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) and Irish Aid.

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