

# **Knowing More, Doing Better**

**Challenges for CONFINTEA VI from monitoring EFA  
in non-formal youth and adult education**

**Chris Duke, Heribert Hinzen (Eds.)**

**Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit des Deutschen Volkshochschul-Verbandes  
*dvv international***

## **International Perspectives in Adult Education – IPE 58**

The reports, studies and materials published in this series aim to further the development of theory and practice in the work of the Volkshochschulen (VHS) as it relates to international aspects of adult education – and vice versa. We hope that by providing access to information and a channel for communication, the series will serve to increase knowledge, deepen insights and improve cooperation in adult education at an international level.

### **Published by:**

Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit  
des Deutschen Volkshochschul-Verbandes (*dvv international*)

Editor: Prof.(H) Dr. Heribert Hinzen

Editorial Assistant: Gisela Waschek

Production: Leppelt Grafik & Druck GmbH, Bonn

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Bibliographic information published by Die Deutsche Bibliothek

Die Deutsche Bibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available on the Internet at <<http://dnb.ddb.de>>.

ISBN 978-3-88513-790-0

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Our publications are printed on 100% chlorine-free bleached recycled paper.

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# Preface

While we were finalizing the work on this volume, we received two important documents which advocate our case in a strong way, and at a very high level.

First, there is the draft of the Director General of UNESCO on the *“Implementation of the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade”*. This is something like a mid-term review, which will be submitted to the UN General Assembly in October 2008. Looking it over, we see pointers on literacy learning outside schools, and on key areas for action, which include policy and financing. We appreciate, of course, the notion that there should be *“a clear commitment to include adult literacy investments in the EFA Fast Track Initiative and other institutional mechanisms for poverty reduction”*. The draft also argues *“the fundamental value of literacy as an indispensable tool for further learning opportunities in the framework of lifelong learning”*.

Secondly, the regional pre-conference for CONFINTEA VI in Mexico for Latin America and the Caribbean in mid-September 2008 came up with a final document. In the section on strategies and recommendations, it argues that we should:

*“Promote policies and legislation which integrate youth and adult education into the public education systems and guarantee their application whilst encouraging changes in those structures which make them more flexible and at the same time adjusting norms to the creation of citizen observatories to follow policies and the use of resources”*. Lifelong learning is necessary *“... to overcome inequality and poverty in the region and for the creation of alternative forms of development. In this sense, the appreciation of popular and non-formal education is fundamental.”*

These statements and recommendations are very much in line with what we have found from analysis of the case studies provided here, as well as from broader experiences in our work over recent decades.

Working to prepare this book has been interesting, demanding, and challenging. The diversity and volume of information is rich. It shows the wealth of experiences in non-formal youth and adult education and learning around the globe. At the same time it proves how neglected in many cases this area still is, despite the fact that in respect of the number of participants it may be the largest part of the educational system, especially if what is going on as training in and for the informal sector is included.

We received very strong support in completing this work. In this respect we have to mention Prof. Aaron Benavot first and foremost. As senior policy advisor of the EFA/GMR team he appreciated our efforts, having seen how neglected this field has been in the past, even at the level of how to monitor without proper and robust indicators, and having just to imagine the potential which is hidden there in contributing to improve the edu-

cational services to young people and adults. He provided all the necessary access to the background material. A big thank you has to go to all case study authors who took up the challenge to re-write their studies with a focus on the dimensions and issues which we found important; and to those other who just agreed to the editorial suggestions we had made to the individual studies. We would like to thank all who then helped in producing, enriching with pictures, and disseminating this work further.

*dvv international* is strongly supporting the CONFINTEA VI Consultative Group and the UN Literacy Decade Expert Group as an active member. We consider their cooperation with us a valuable attempt to widen and deepen efforts with partners and projects, to give youth and adult education their space and place in contributing to the reduction of poverty.

*Heribert Hinzen*

# Orientation

Aaron Benavot

# Meeting the lifelong learning needs of youth and adults

## The global scale of the problem

There is a pressing need for governments to address the unmet learning needs of young people and adults. Significant portions of school-age children in recent decades have either been excluded from school or received a low quality education. About half of the 75 million primary school-age children who are out of school today will never gain access to school, and are thus unlikely to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills before entering adulthood. The 2009 EFA *Global Monitoring Report* (UNESCO 2008) provides evidence of millions of students who attend several years of primary school, and even graduate, but fail to acquire a minimal toolkit of reading and writing skills. All these individuals have been failed by the past and current provision of formal education.

In addition, based on conventional measurement methods, one in every five adults in the world today – about 776 million, two-thirds of whom are women – are denied the right to literacy. In practice, this refers to an inability to read and write with understanding a simple statement from everyday life. Eighty percent of these adults live in just 20 countries, and a majority of these in India, China, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nigeria. Direct tests of literacy skills in the developing world indicate that conventionally measured literacy figures significantly underestimate the scale of the problem, perhaps by as much as 25–30 percent (UNESCO 2005; Kenya National Bureau of Statistics 2007).

Beyond lacking essential skills in literacy and numeracy, many millions of adults today have had little or no exposure to new information and communication technologies (ICT), and thus are excluded from fully participating in emergent knowledge economies. Such ICT skills can be subsumed under the rubric of “*appropriate learning and life skills programmes*”, and thus become a salient issue.

In developed countries there are significant pockets of adults who possess low literacy and numeracy skills – or below minimal proficiency levels – (OECD 2000; Statistics Canada/OECD 2005). In France, for example, nine percent of the population between 18 and 65 – that is, more than 3 million people – have attended school in France but “*face illiteracy*” – meaning they lack the basic reading, writing, arithmetic and other fundamental skills required for autonomy in simple everyday situations (The National Agency to Fight Illiteracy 2007). In the Netherlands, some 1.5 million adults, of whom roughly 1 million are native Dutch speakers, are classified as functionally illiterate. In addition, one in



ten Dutch adults functions at the lowest level of literacy.<sup>1</sup>

Many individuals with low literacy skills are employed in the labour market. In France, for example, over half of the adults facing illiteracy are full-time workers (The National Agency to Fight Illiteracy 2007). Every day, to accomplish their tasks, these adults deploy various avoidance strategies to hide their difficulties. Many of these working men and women succeed in building up their skills without recourse to the written word.

Worldwide, then, there is an enormous backlog of adults – both young and old – who face serious literacy

and numeracy challenges in their everyday lives, especially in their roles as citizens, workers, and parents. The scale of the problem demands that governments prioritise these challenges in their educational strategies and expand opportunities for lifelong education and training.



Mexico

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## **Improving the monitoring of Education for All (EFA) Goals 3 and 4**

**Goal 3:** Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.

**Goal 4:** Achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

The EFA commitments made at Dakar in 2000 by over 160 governments together with multilateral and bilateral agencies and NGOs contain two goals targeting the learning needs of out-of-school youth and adults (see above). Nevertheless, the systematic monitoring of Goal 3 and the latter part of Goal 4 has been stymied by problems of definition and data. There is a lack of consensus on how to define “adult learning” and “life skills”, and which learning activities to include in these notions (see Merle 2004; Ellis 2006;

<sup>1</sup> See the website of *The Reading and Writing Foundation* in the Netherlands, which bases its data on the 1998 International Adult Literacy Survey <http://www.lezenenschrijven.nl/en/illiteracy/scope-of-problem/> (accessed September 15, 2008).

King and Palmer 2008; Hargreaves and Shaw 2006; Hoffmann and Olson 2006). In different parts of the world “*life skills*” and “*livelihood skills*” have taken on particular meanings, although by no means the same ones in different countries (Maurer 2005). At Dakar “*livelihood skills*” was thought to be a narrower concept than “*life skills*”. Both goals explicitly mention the importance of “*equitable access*” and some view Goal 3 as implying the need for universal access to learning and life-skills programmes. Discussions with drafters of the EFA goals indicate that such programmes were not considered a universal right to be met.<sup>2</sup> The fact that the language of the target goals is ambiguous and open to interpretation clearly hinders monitoring efforts.

In addition, no clear quantitative targets were established for these goals, apart from the main literacy target in the first part of Goal 4. Global measures like youth and adult literacy rates provide only partial indications of the extent to which the learning needs of young people and adults are being addressed by governments and/or non-state actors. Adult learning and life-skills training are typically offered in a myriad of formal, informal or non-formal programmes and institutions, a significant portion of which receive little or no public funding (UNESCO 2005; Hoppers 2007).<sup>3</sup> In some countries, they involve programmes aimed at youths or adults who wish to return to school – that is, equivalency education or second chance programmes. In most cases these diverse realities are neither adequately coordinated nor systematically monitored by national authorities.

To move forward therefore, the reach of adult learning programmes needs to be clarified, data flows need to be improved, and political leaders must strengthen their commitment to the provision of lifelong learning. As a first step towards more effective data collection and monitoring efforts, country-level information about the following issues should be compiled:

- 1. National conceptions and commitment:** How do Government agencies understand the learning needs of out-of-school youth and adults? To what extent do Government authorities address these needs by articulating a clear vision, setting policy priorities, providing for resource mobilization and allocation, and enabling partnerships with non-governmental organizations and international organizations? What is the duration of various adult learning programmes? To what extent are specific lifelong learning opportunities put in place?
- 2. Demand:** What is the demand for youth and adult learning programmes among different sub-populations? To what extent has this demand changed over time?

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2 This is based on exchanges with Steve Packer and Sheldon Shaeffer who helped draft the text of the EFA goals.

3 UNESCO’s working definition of non-formal education states that “*Non-formal education may cover education programmes to impart adult literacy, basic education for out-of-school children, life skills, work skills and general culture*” (UNESCO 2000).

3. **Nature of provision:** What is the character and focus of existing adult learning provision? Does it include: equivalency or second chance frameworks oriented towards re-entry into formal education; basic literacy programmes to improve reading, writing and numeracy proficiency; literacy programmes that focus on literacy acquisition together with life skills or livelihood skills; technical and vocational skill development programmes (related to labour market participation); programmes for community or rural development?
4. **Target groups prioritised:** Which groups are targeted by existing adult learning provision? In the major (biggest, most established) adult learning programmes, which specific target groups tend to participate? To what extent does the existing provision exacerbate existing disparities based on age, gender, educational attainment, wealth/poverty, residence, ethnicity or language?
5. **Flexibility and Diversification of provision:** Are adult learning programmes highly standardized? Or are they explicitly designed to flexibly address the learning needs of diverse groups of adults?
6. **Sustainability:** How long have adult learning programmes been in existence? Which agencies and stakeholders provide funding for adult learning programmes? Have sources of funding been continuous, predictable and sufficient over time? Have countries established adult educator training frameworks?

## Initial monitoring results

As noted in the article below by Angela Owusu-Boampong, the EFA *Global Monitoring Report* team developed a pilot monitoring strategy to examine non-formal adult education – a major site of adult learning activities (UNESCO 2007, pp. 59–61). This strategy consisted of: (a) a compilation of cross-national profiles on the provision of non-formal education programmes, using country experts and evidence from the documentation centre at UNESCO’s Institute for Lifelong Learning; (b) an analysis of findings from household surveys containing some, typically weak, questions on participation in non-formal education; and (c) the commissioning of a background study examining successful non-formal education policies with country examples from Brazil, Burkina Faso, Namibia, Thailand and Uganda (see GMR website; Hoppers 2007).

Evidence in several countries suggests significant disparities in the prevalence of non-standard/non-formal educational programmes by rural-urban location, age group and socio-economic status (UNESCO 2007, p. 61).

Initial analyses also found that country understandings of non-formal education often grow out of the country’s history of literacy or adult education provision. For example, Mexico, Nepal and Senegal mainly conceptualize non-formal education as adult education. Thailand stresses the importance of the flexibility of non-formal education in terms

of programme aims, modalities and duration. Bangladesh and Indonesia hold a more holistic view of non-formal education, stressing flexibility and programme diversity, which should complement learning in the formal education system. Afghanistan and Egypt underscore literacy issues in their conceptualization of non-formal education. Finally, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, the Philippines, Tanzania and Zambia largely conceive of non-formal education as all-structured learning activities taking place outside the formal education system.

## **A view to the future**

The time has come to develop a comprehensive and accurate global map of the diverse learning opportunities available to youth and adults. In the wake of quickly expanding school systems, the demand for continuing education and skills-(re)training among those exiting the formal system will only increase over time. Initial monitoring efforts illustrate that information on adult learning provision in select countries – however disparate and uneven – can be culled from a hodge-podge of existing sources. They also underscore the immense challenge that lies ahead if a valid international accounting of the provision of, demand for, and access to, adult learning programmes is to be established. International organizations (UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO, OECD, and the World Bank), working together with national and regional experts and researchers, will need to embark on a sustained, multi-year effort to develop and implement such an accounting scheme. Diverse data sources, including administrative information from multiple ministries, household surveys, and NGO reports, will need to be compiled and analysed. Given its previous work and abiding interest in the provision of adult learning, the EFA Global Monitoring Report should be a partner to such efforts.

An important and potentially rich source of information is the convening of the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) in May 2009 in Belen, Brazil. The overall aim of this meeting is *“to draw attention to the relation and contribution of adult learning and education to sustainable development, conceived comprehensively as comprising a social, economic, ecological and cultural dimension.”*

In advance of this high-level international conference, five regional preparatory conferences have been held, each of which examines policies, structures, and financing for adult learning and education; inclusion and participation; the quality of adult learning and education; literacy and other key competencies; and poverty eradication. In addition, a special questionnaire has been circulated to national governments requesting information on a range of adult education learning frameworks.<sup>4</sup> The resulting national reports and sup-

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4 Over 80 draft reports from national governments are available on the website of UNESCO’s Institute for Lifelong Learning: <http://www.unesco.org/uil/en/nesico/confintea/confinteanatrep.html>

porting documents, while often skewed to highlight certain types of adult learning provision (e.g. public programmes in literacy, equivalency education) and not others (non-formal skill training, private sector initiatives), will certainly supplement existing information sources. Systematic efforts to code and analyse these documents should be undertaken immediately.

As in other areas of the Education for All agenda, governments and the international community must be held to account for their pledge at Dakar: to meet the learning needs of all young people and adults and to ensure equitable access to basic and continuing education through diverse learning programmes. Progress in meeting the growing demand for adult learning has stalled, overshadowed by the global drive for universal primary education. Sustained attention will only take hold when robust, comparable indicators of adult learning are in place and detailed analyses of adult learning provision are available for review. The educational needs of adults – young and old – are enormous. When met, they will significantly contribute to invigorating social, economic, and political capacities among individuals, communities, and society as a whole.



Philippines

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# What can we learn for CONFINTEA?

Introducing the issues, contexts and processes

It seems appropriate to bring several strands of parallel efforts and events into contact and context, all of which have had an impact on the development of adult education in recent years. But some are better known than others. And some are seen as more critical, while others sound more familiar.

Despite many of the very positive developments within the community of adult educators, across the spectrum from Government departments, non-governmental or civil society organisations, and professional providers of support, there is still a felt need for legitimizing our sub-sector in the education system, a request for good governance and better structures, and, of course, proof that services are important and relevant actually for a majority of youth and adults in their education, learning and training.

Two keen observations, not soon to be forgotten by adult educators who have been working in the field for some time, may say more than lengthy documents. The Secretary of ASPBAE, Maria Almazan Khan, once hinted at the absence of strong support for adult literacy and adult education within EFA, which could well be interpreted as *“Except for Adults”*. And it was Rosa Maria Torres, the internationally renowned Latin American adult educator and author, who wondered whether *“Lifelong learning for the North, and basic education for the South”* was an acceptable solution. Are we today far away from these statements?

## CONFINTEA as the reference point

For adult educators, the acronym CONFINTEA signifies a milestone for orientation and learning. It stands for the International Conferences on Adult Education that are organised and convened by UNESCO around every twelve years. The first took place in 1949 in Helsingör (Denmark), the second in 1960 in Montreal (Canada), the third in 1972 in Tokyo (Japan), the fourth in 1985 in Paris (France), and the fifth in 1997 in Hamburg (Germany). Each conference had its own landmarks. The Helsingör conference was held in the wake of the Second World War. The Montreal conference provided a platform for the voices of so-called developing countries after, or still in the process of, decolonization.

CONFINTEA III in Tokyo was important for the development of adult education as a profession, and looked at questions of policy, structures, methods, and necessary materi-

als. It was followed by the Recommendations on Adult Education issued by the UNESCO General Conference in Nairobi in 1976, which are still very relevant today.

Ideas are currently floating around, however, that the time has come for revision and a new set of guiding principles. Can a new course of action be forged during the next CONFINTEA, or at least become part of a recommended follow-up agenda?

CONFINTEA V in Hamburg in 1997, with its Agenda for the Future, stood out by awarding adult education, in addition to formal education, a prominent role for shaping the globalised world of the next century. It was the first CONFINTEA that fully recognised the decisive contribution of civil society to the learning of adults, conceptualised as part of a continued process of lifelong learning.

We are now in the process of preparing for CONFINTEA VI, which will take place in 2009 in Belem, Brazil. A Consultative Group was established at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), and preparatory conferences on the regional level are being held on a monthly basis. The first pre-conference is scheduled to take place in September 2008 in Mexico, followed by others in Seoul, Nairobi, Budapest and Tunis.

As a requirement for CONFINTEA, national reports have to be provided. Many have been received and posted on the website of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning at [www.unesco.org/uil](http://www.unesco.org/uil). They are a rich source of information. A major effort by the Consultative Group is the work on the *Global Report on Adult Education and Learning* (GRALE), structured into regional chapters that will form the basis for the key background documents for the regional events. GRALE will then be available for Brazil.

The International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) is the global network of regional and national adult education organisations and networks. It has played an important role ever since the Tokyo Conference in 1972, with its own sequence of World Assemblies. The last one was held in 2007, *Adults' Right to Learn: Convergence, Solidarity, and Action* (see [www.icae.org.uy](http://www.icae.org.uy)). One of the ICAE Commissions had "*Adult Education, Organisation and Financing*" as its theme, and was documented in *dvv international's* Adult Education and Development Journal, Issue No. 68, 2008, and can be accessed at [www.dvv-international.de](http://www.dvv-international.de)

ICAE is represented on the Consultative Group, and, through its members, took an active role to work for a strong movement towards CONFINTEA VI. One effort was the production of a special issue of the ICAE journal *Convergence*, XL, 3–4, 2007, which is available at [www.icae.org.uy](http://www.icae.org.uy). The issue provides substantial input about past CONFINTEA conferences and the present discussion on adult education.

## **Orientation and passion – the ICAE consultation note**

At an early stage in the CONFINTEA VI Consultative Group process, the need for concentration on thematic issues became clear. From the broader UNESCO agenda, ICAE



chose four focuses on which to provide input:

- poverty, the world of work, and vocational training;
- the right to education in migration and integration;
- youth and adult literacy; and
- structures for policy, legislation, and financing.

Around each of these four focuses, ICAE organised a “virtual seminar”, and invited its members and other colleagues to participate.

The background note for the consultation on *“Policy, legislation and financing for adult education”* (included in *Convergence*, pp 245–252) set out from the premise that *“adult learning within lifelong learning is a key factor for economic and social development, as well as being a human right”*. It asserted that *“new policies for adult learning should result in coherent legislation, and laws which clearly spell out ways and means for financing adult learning activities, involving public, private and civil society agencies as well as the individual”*.

Why, however, it then asked, does it take *“so much time to readjust the education policy environment to this changing reality”*? A two-pronged approach to a lifelong learning policy framework would include both formal initial education, general and vocational, including preschool education; and adult learning including *“adult literacy and basic education, work-related adult learning and training, and social and cultural adult learning, both for the individual and for society”*.

Instead *“adult learning provision in most countries is insufficient either in quantity or in quality to meet the social demand”*. *“All countries face similar challenges: how to increase and sustain participation rates; how to stimulate the motivation of prospective learners; how to shape a system of adult learning and training for youth and adults; and how to create conditions which will ensure higher levels of participation and fairer opportunities for all citizens.”*

From an ICAE perspective, echoing discussion and outcomes of CONFINTEA V and a host of other meetings, *“special attention has to be paid to those who are excluded: those who did not have the conditions to be successful in school and vocational education; those who could not attend schools in the first part of their life; women who, doubling up as workers and caretakers for family and children, lack sufficient time; households where the low level of income makes it financially impossible, etc.”* *“Adult learning within a lifelong learning concept fosters active citizenship, strengthens personal growth and secures social inclusion, thus going far beyond employability skills. Our lifelong learning project includes all of these.”*

The discussion note went on to ask why adult learning does not get the support that it deserves, and what should be done about it.

*“Part of the difficulty is said to be the complexity of what is described as the adult education and training scene: there are so many players, none of which wants to be regulat-*

ed or controlled by others." "Policy and legislation, good organisation and adequate finances are needed to support a change, so that non-participants in adult education and training, who also tend to be the under- or unemployed, get special support."

"Bridges are needed between formal and non-formal education institutions and agencies. Each provider should play an appropriate role: public and private schools, colleges and universities, voluntary bodies, companies, vocational training centres. Policy debate should centre much more on investment in people and their education by governments, employers and the learners themselves. Governments need to consider the education of adults more as an investment rather than merely a cost. More innovative mechanisms for learners' accounts, loans and saving schemes should be piloted and evaluated... No one kind of institution can manage all this alone. We have and need a mix of contributions from different sources. A substantial proportion of resources may be essential from Government and public sources, only partly because most taxpayers are adults. A more diversified and inter-ministerial approach to policy and resources in the education sector is needed, making it a wider shared public responsibility to support adults' learning. Partnership and cost-sharing are essential."

Discussing the cost of NFE, "many different models for financing adult education have recently appeared in different countries. The consensus, looking at the social demand and the available responses, is that at least a basic level of public funding is essential to achieve accessibility and the necessary quality. ... Not all courses can cost the same; some should be free, or subsidised for certain groups. Privatizing adult education financing has unavoidable limits, even though individual and company contributions have always provided a significant share. A regulation of the market is needed to ensure accessibility, relevance and quality."

As to what kinds of support structures governments should provide, "there is a dearth of clear thinking about the adult learning agenda of the near future". "We need government involvement in adult learning as much as in other parts of the education system, and across all dimensions of adult learning, going beyond policy, legislation and financing to include support to informal and self learning, and the recognition of prior and experiential learning. We need much more acceptance of government's role in supporting non-governmental (NGO) providers in adult education and other community-based organisations (CBOs). These represent a world of diverse situations and needs, especially of excluded groups and neglected issues ... Many reach where neither government nor employers can reach. In total this activity amounts to much more than any government does or could do. NGOs need full recognition, respect and often support."

Finally, "often the statistical monitoring remains too limited in scope and out of date to fully observe the situation. ... In terms of trans-national analysis and benchmarking, indicators are now being developed. ... It is important to support the development of a more comprehensive system to collect relevant statistics nationally as well as globally, as a basis

for monitoring performance and developing policy and even legislation.”

The ICAE virtual seminar was followed up by a face-to-face residential event in May 2008, taking the theme policy, legislation, and financing for adult education further, just like the other three. After more consultation, ICAE came up with a policy document “CONFINTEA VI. Key issues at stake. ICAE public paper” (Convergence, pp 11–19), which is now being taken to all the regional preparatory events. It has five main chapters, entitled

- Poverty, economic inequality and adult learning and education;
- The education and learning rights of migrant women and men;
- The absolute priority of adult literacy;
- New policy and legislation, real implementation, real financial allocation; and
- The necessity of legitimate international monitoring mechanisms.



Guinea

dvv international

## The EFA monitoring reports

All those who were in Dakar in 2000 for the World Education Forum, where the policy of Education for All was framed, will remember how difficult it was to have non-formal youth and adult education, learning, and training be included as priority areas – especially since they are not part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) either. However, after all sorts of interventions, the final document does include as Goals 3 and 4:

- ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes
- achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for adults.

There is no doubt that the five *EFA Global Monitoring Reports* that have appeared since 2002 have provided a wealth of information, and a strong foundation for the critical debate that has unfolded around the reports: “*Is the world on track*” (2002), and “*EFA by 2015*”. Will we make it? (2008). In the year 2006, we saw the *Global Monitoring Report “Literacy for Life”*, which took a look at the achievements in the promotion of youth

and adult literacy. All these reports and commissioned papers can be found on the web pages of UNESCO.

In preparation for the *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2008* (EFA/GMR), some 25 papers were commissioned on non-formal education (NFE) in a variety of countries. Four lead questions were posed for each country:

- How is NFE conceptualised?
- What are the legal foundations for NFE policies?
- How are NFE programmes governed and financed?
- How is NFE supported and managed?

Another important process, the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD), is now half-way through. The UNLD Expert Group is working towards a mid-term review. Here again, the mechanism of regional conferences is being used for information and exchange. It was during the Asian Conference in Delhi that Aaron Benavot from the EFA/GMR Team and Heribert Hinzen from *dvv international* met and discussed the different, albeit close, agendas of EFA, UNLD, and CONFINTEA. One interesting point raised was how much more difficult it is to monitor goals 3 and 4 than goals 1 and 2 that focus on early childhood care and compulsory primary education. To have robust data and to construct reliable indicators poses a difficult issue.

However, just looking at the four questions above, we can clearly see the overlap in the concerns of CONFINTEA and EFA, especially around issues of policy, legislation, and financing for adult education, which ICAE views as particularly important. Our main question, therefore, is: *What can we learn for CONFINTEA VI from the Global Monitoring Report case studies?*

This special monograph presents an edited selection from the 25 commissioned studies, together with several papers discussing issues across the board. We have drawn on papers and responses from the ICAE consultation as well as some of the other analyses and discussions generated by the process of review and stock-taking, looking back to CONFINTEA V for progress in the past decade, and forward to 2009, and beyond that to 2015, the focal year for the attainment of the MDGs.

Two dimensions run through the business of supporting adult and non-formal education (ANFE) for development, including literacy: actual policies and programmes, what they have achieved, whether and how they are changing and hopefully improving; and the processes whereby the case for ANFE can be made more effectively and decisively. A third common strand weaving through both these dimensions – substance and campaigning process – is the nature and quality of the data needed to understand what is happening and what is and is not working. The ICAE Background Note concentrated mainly on the first dimension, but also refers to the third strand. As to the second, it expressed angst about the failure of rhetoric and logic to translate into policy-in-action, but did not expressly consider this break in the thread of advocacy.

## Progress and frustrations – half full or half empty?

There is a sense of frustration in many of the notes, comments, and case studies generated around EFA/GMR. The arguments for much greater investment and practical policy and resource commitment in adult learning and NFE have been repeated over and over, not just in recent years, but for decades. And yet, they need to be brought forward again. On the other hand, huge progress has been made in the attainment of literacy by tens of millions of people. Concepts and practices have been widened to support neo-literates, and it is evident that literacy and other forms of learning translate into enhanced capabilities and benefits, sometimes social as well as economic, to the advantage of the community as well as individuals and families.

Looking at this, and at the impressive economic progress of a number of Asian, Central European, and Latin American countries, which is often combined with social and political improvements, one cannot but feel delighted, in spite of all the inequalities that continue to afflict them, as they do all other countries. Adult non-formal education has both assisted this dramatic advance, in terms of GDP and per capita income, and benefited from it. Now the arguments in support of ANFE are about specific categories and pockets of disadvantage, and the agenda has come to focus on opportunities for third age citizens, new immigrants, and people who are moving toward new jobs in a fast-changing “knowledge economy”.

In some of these countries, especially in those influenced by the strong policy commitment of the European Community to lifelong learning, changes can be seen in the form of new legislation, new formal Government arrangements, and new financial measures. Some of this experience may be “exportable”, but there is always the danger of trying to take something that belongs in one tradition and culture and make it work someplace else.

Referring to demands for legislative and financial arrangements to support adult education, a Ugandan participant in the ICAE virtual seminar, Jjuuko Robert, remarks: “In many of our countries of the South, this demand sounds unserious to many public or state actors”. A different language is needed in this different context. This contributor runs through eight significant legal determinations and plans, including the National Adult Literacy Strategic Investment Plan, that show strong rhetorical policy commitment, before stating that “little puts a smile on the face of those with a keen interest in the growth and development of adult education in Uganda”; as usual, there are the perpetual “huge promises with no commensurate actions”. This is not to deny the desirability of explicit and mandatory fiscal and legislative frameworks, and above all of budgetary provisions. Also “none of the frameworks provides a mechanism for accountability, quality control, assessment and evaluation of efforts in a coordinated manner”.

This keenly argued contribution concludes with a question for adult education activists looking toward CONFINTEA VI: Should we continue to agitate for separate AE/NFE leg-

isolation and financing, or is a tactical shift now needed to embed AE “*principles and values in the public policy frameworks and programmes*”? As targets for NFE continue to grow and move with rising need in a faster changing world, and we argue whether the glass is becoming more or less full, this is a timely question.

Other comments from the ICAE virtual seminar (which is documented on the ICAE website) are worth noting here as well. Referring to constitutions in the Latin American countries, and with an eye in particular to gender inequalities in traditional and in new forms, Carmen Colazo calls attention to the need for “*political will beyond declaratory will*”, and notes the common failure to use “*the legal instruments provided by the Constitution, the laws, and other regulations*”. The “*reality of each country*” in fact contradicts what is established constitutionally; follow-up to verify compliance is essential. This contribution also talks about cultural change and the lag that prevents legal requirements changing custom and daily practice. Like Robert, Colazo thus looks beyond lobbying to create legislation, to ask what if anything happens next. And Bhola, reflecting on the policy-making process, notes how policy-makers’ own policies may be deliberately subverted by double-speak, and by starving policy of resources. On the other hand, as policy trickles down, for better or worse, it commonly gets reconstructed and re-appropriated.

Two other contributors look beyond country studies and their legal and fiscal arrangements to address larger questions that are overarching for the particular country experiences documented in this volume. Vernon Muñoz, from the perspective of the right to education, attacks the “*false idea*” that “*macroeconomic development is the main aim of education*” which is then seen not as a right but simply as a cost; a utilitarian perspective that undercuts aspects of the adult NFE agenda, and in particular the education of girls and women.

David Archer is also critical of macroeconomic policies, specifically those of the IMF “*which seek to maintain ‘stability’ through unnecessarily restrictive policies ... that prevent countries from increasing spending on education. ... In the face of IMF policies it is almost impossible for countries to make significant new investment in education*”. In these circumstances, policies, laws and regulations will remain hollow. The IMF’s “*short-termism*” is especially damaging; Archer calls on adult educators to join civil society campaigners and challenge ministries of finance to reject IMF’s “*outdated ideology*”.

Archer has another piece of timely advice in the run-up to CONFINTEA and EFA/GMR. Noting that there has been little or no investment in adult education across the South since CONFINTEA V, “*this shortage of financing creates a dangerous situation in which adult educators seek to convince politicians to invest, based on false promises of quick wins at low cost. ... Most experienced practitioners now recognise that continuity of learning over at least two or three years is required to make a real impact, but this knowledge is inconvenient in trying to bid for scarce resources ... to sustain an effective programme requires paying facilitators and ensuring that they have good quality training and access to pro-*

fessional development. It does none of us any favours if we offer cheap alternatives which do not achieve quality results that can be sustained.” Promises of quick-fix campaigns with their inevitable failure have harmed literacy morale in the past. One lesson of the mixed fortunes of recent decades is that there are no reliable short cuts. Another is that more than getting a law on the books is required to ensure that resources and results will follow.



Afghanistan

dvv international

## The country studies

We turn now to the different country case studies, reading them with an eye to these points about the limits of what policies, laws, and regulations, in themselves, can achieve, and also with an eye to asking how, realistically, adult educators can best go about moving practice and achievement forward at and beyond CONFINTEA VI.

Authors were asked to explain: how NFE is conceptualised; what are the legal foundations for NFE policies; how NFE programmes are governed and financed; and how NFE is supported and managed. Not all of them followed this schema. In many cases it is evident just how scanty firm data are, and how difficult it is to really assess what is happening, and what progress may be occurring. The short paper by Angela Owusu-Boampong explains something of the process of mapping progress towards achieving the six EFA goals, specifically Goal 3, and the difficulties encountered in terms of lack of reliable comparative data. She stresses the difficulty especially in obtaining non-literacy-related NFE from the South, and the low priority given to an NFE data base as a national priority.

This theme of absence of reliable data to monitor and compare progress recurs throughout many of the country studies. It is worth looking at Owusu-Boampong's paper in order to understand the nature, and unavoidable limitations, of these studies. Certainly, data collection emerges as a priority consideration to be pressed at CONFINTEA VI.

The volume begins with a comparative overview by Aaron Benavot, Senior Policy Analyst from the EFA/GMR Team itself.

The largest number of studies, a total of eight, come from one region – Africa, which together with southern Asia, forms a main focus of efforts to promote literacy, the MDGs and the reduction of poverty. On the other hand, the three “sub-continent” countries that are included, Bangladesh, India, and Nepal, represent a large proportion of Asia's edu-

ationally most disadvantaged population. Six Asian country studies are included in all, and towards the end there are also extracts from Amanda Seel's much longer comparative study which discusses five countries in East and South-East Asia, where much interesting work is being done. On the whole, these countries are witnessing rapid economic and, to some extent, social progress, which gives reason for optimism. Yet, deep pockets of poverty and illiteracy persist. Readers are encouraged to visit the UNESCO website to read Seel's full and very thorough comparative analysis. Finally, this volume includes two studies from Latin America, where just as in other parts of the world, notably Central and South Asia and the Arab region, literacy and/or other ANFE challenges remain significant.

If just one key statement or question were to be singled out for interest and relevance from each of the case studies included in this volume, they might read as follows:

- **Afghanistan:** In a war and poverty stricken country that has to rely on uncertain external support, will NFE be considered a priority area?
- **Bangladesh:** Can sufficient income generation training be provided by schools and literacy and post-literacy programmes – or what else can prepare people with life skills?
- **Botswana:** Policy for NFE is embedded in a lifelong learning policy, but what about implementation for all?
- **Brazil:** Literacy provision and literature production are interconnected, as are second chance education and skills training, and these are factors that are also relevant in a prison context.
- **Ethiopia:** There have been far-reaching changes in policy and legislation here, followed by decentralisation and support to community training centres.
- **Ghana:** Local languages are crucial for literacy instruction, combined with income generating activities.
- **India:** Interesting reflections are found here about the definition of life skills (self-awareness, critical thinking, decision-making...), together with interesting facts, for instance the surprising figure of 93 universities with departments of adult education for research and training.
- **Malawi:** In NFE for entrepreneurship and self-employment in the informal or agricultural sectors, technical and vocational training (TVET) plays an important role.
- **Mexico:** Second chance education is an important field which indirectly reflects on the deficiencies of formal schooling.
- **Nepal:** Advocacy is necessary to stress the importance of local community learning structures.
- **Nigeria:** Important support for nomads and pastoralists is offered by means of radio and information communication technologies (some of which are informal).
- **Philippines:** NFE is described as a full alternative system, alongside the formal system.



- **South Africa:** How relevant are all the decisions following from the qualifications framework for NFE, or is there a danger that they may lose their non-formal identity?
- **Tanzania:** Many projects and programmes have been conducted over the decades, but after termination of donor support (e.g. for folk development colleges) their continuation may be in jeopardy.
- **Vietnam:** Here we find three interesting examples that involve complementary NFE, life skills and community development, and the transformation of schools into learning centres.
- **Zambia:** Many ministries besides the Zambian Ministry of Education are involved in education, including those responsible for community development, health, labour, youth, and agriculture, and there is even a National Council for Adult Education.

Following the case studies is an excellent comparative analysis by Wim Hoppers, which, like the individual studies, is heavily weighted toward Africa. The African countries represented in this volume include strong countries, both large and small, such as South Africa and Botswana, but also the even larger country of Nigeria, as well as much smaller states, notably impoverished Burkina Faso.

What common features, if any, are suggested by these edited studies? We have given a certain amount of attention to specific programme activity where it throws light on particular circumstances or approaches that have wider comparative relevance (Part 2 in the original template mapping exercise); but, at the same time, we have concentrated on the sketches of policy priorities. This includes the meaning and use of terms such as non-formal education and concepts like lifelong learning, which is gaining steadily in importance around the world. It also includes structural and legal arrangements, and financial and other support for adult and non-formal education. While this important material is, by nature, somewhat arid, there is more life and maybe hope among the examples of NFE in action which have been included. Hopefully, they will trigger ideas for different approaches to partnership, pedagogy, etc. in other places as well.

A common theme running through many of the studies is the gulf between good language and good intentions in the policy arena, and failure, albeit for different if sometimes good reasons, to carry intentions into firm and effective action. Failings are also widespread in the capacity to monitor and evaluate outcomes, and to use resulting data to inform further policy development in a policy-into-practice-into-policy learning cycle. The cause is often the sheer absence of resources. One unfortunate consequence is that adult/non-formal educators seem to be forever holding out a begging bowl for more cash at all levels, a point which we will return to below.

There is an important issue here, both strategic and tactical, for those preparing for and assembling at CONFINTEA: how far to focus on this, and how far to turn to non-govern-

mental (NGO and community) sources for the necessary energy and resources. There is no escaping the necessity for government resources as well as whole-hearted – and applied – commitment to adult and non-formal education for social as well as for economic development. The trick is to command attention and policy priority by virtue of force of argument and examples, rather than simply to demand more subventions.

Less tangible and harder to address are the issues in some cases about the sheer will and capacity to act and to deliver – the kind of thing that has made the discourse of “*failed states*” common in development circles in recent years. Sometimes there is overt corruption. More often it is simply the inability to grasp how non-formal education, and education in a wider sense, can, indeed, contribute to development. Also, as is so often the case in the most economically advanced societies, the rhetoric of lifelong learning and knowledge societies may be near-perfect, but there is a complete inability to understand what it really means, either in principle or in practice. This imposes a continuing requirement on adult educators who will meet at CONFINTEA, as well in other contexts and places, to continue the process of informing, educating and persuading. At least this is not invidious in the sense that constant complaint about inadequate funding can be, justified as it clearly is in many of these cases.

## Confronting reality

Perhaps as a consequence of the brief sent to the authors of the country studies, most of the studies read apolitically, to a point of apparent innocence of the real, often nasty, world in which work is being conducted, and the difficulties involved in carrying out good intentions.

This may be one of the lessons that can be drawn from a closer examination of the different studies. There is still firm belief in the good that education can do, and there is still a high level of energy and commitment to the advancement of our work. Disappointment over missed opportunities, and often, once again, over missed and unattainable targets, does not deter adult educators from seeking new methods and sources of finance, or from lobbying for greater practical commitment by governments. A realistic look at the bleak points is perhaps salutary, if those working in the ANFE community are to address the realities of the world that we share. At the same time, it is essential to be realistic about the obstacles and the shortfalls that these different studies reveal – and about those that are perhaps left aside in these accounts.

Corruption and “*the failed state*” may tend to be viewed as unsavoury topics for an adult education gathering, and good governance and transparency are not often discussed. If, however, ANFE is to make the contribution that, as confirmed in most of the formal policy positions in these studies, is now almost universally acknowledged to be essential, somehow these realities will also have to be accommodated in calculating how to make

things happen beyond rhetoric.

It ill-behaves the historically weak and marginalised community of people who work in this sector to engage in direct political action. Nor is it easy to challenge and criticize a government whose goodwill and resources are seen as essential for progress. This is perhaps the toughest dilemma facing adult educators today, and it is not one that these studies, with their important review and update on the state of play – grasp of concepts, embedded legal commitment to ANFE, effectiveness of planning, resourcing, managing, supporting and monitoring – set out to address.

### **False dichotomies – and wishful thinking**

This secondary analysis of the EFA studies commissioned on NFE has been a helpful exercise for us to sharpen insights into several more important points. A major one is this: There are several interesting policies, theories, and practices, with many new initiatives, projects, and programmes. But all in all they support our assumption that without strong or even permanent structures, including policy and legislation, and without coordination and support, non-formal education (for children, youth and adults) is not an adequate solution, either for CONFINTEA or for EFA recommendations. If non-formal education is and remains under-resourced and not sufficiently governed, then it will not work, despite all the creativity, motivation, and energy of the people involved. It can be stated in simple terms that NFE

- is not a more inexpensive nor easier solution, and should not be second class
- cannot compensate for schooling with even less resources
- needs structures based on policy, legislation, and finances (just imagine schools or universities trying to do without)

It would be a case of false alternatives if governments were to provide support for schools and leave international donors to take care of NFE projects from left-over sector funds or “basket” funding.

In most of the country studies there is an element of a local structure, often under the name “*community learning centres*”. But once again, how can such structures function and be sustained without support? And, at least for the time being, in most countries it remains a question without an answer what kind of service providers are needed on the provincial or regional level to foster training, research, and development.

Smaller schemes and pilot projects should seek recognition and sustainability at an early stage. Otherwise, when funding dries up, project activities may die out.

Special attention must be paid to out-of-school youth who need orientation and qualifications. Not only must they be equipped with life skills, but also with income-generation skills to survive in an often fragile informal sector.

Taking all this into account, a four pillar approach is needed: schools, vocational training, universities, and adult education, all in a lifelong learning perspective, with formal, non-formal and informal education, and many bridges that make permeability possible, and ladders to move upwards. All four pillars are of equal relevance and need equal support structures.

## **CONFINTEA VI and beyond**

The overall impression contained in the mid-term review that issued from the Bangkok meeting in 2003 at the halfway mark between CONFINTEA V in Hamburg and its 2009 successor was that governments had, if anything, receded in their commitment to ANFE. The triumph of the NGO sector, which was successfully demonstrated at the difficult Paris CONFINTEA IV in 1985, and which came to maturity at Hamburg, was offset by a falling away on the other side, and by poor official country monitoring and reporting for the mid-term review. There is no doubt that EFA and the MDGs have provided a framework, a target, and an accountability structure that are helping many countries identify where to focus attention.

On the other hand, the *progressive learning* about what really works, about engaging communities, about achieving commitment and participation, about getting tangible results in the struggle out of poverty, may be held to more than offset disappointments in the heart of the policy arena. Similarly, one could explore what the studies in this volume have to say about the progress and effects of decentralisation in different countries in terms of ANFE approaches that are more appropriate and attuned to the real needs and circumstances of learners in different localities and circumstances.

In the short space of time that has lapsed between 2007, when these case studies were commissioned, and 2008, when they were revised in preparation for CONFINTEA VI, the world has changed dramatically, and not for the better in terms of financial budgeting and even policy priorities for ANFE. The general climate of uncertainty in the face of the troubling economic slowdown and recession triggered by the US sub-prime crisis has been exacerbated by the unprecedented energy crisis with the prospect of global warming posing a longer-term threat to sustainability and survival. As 2008 moves towards its close, international relations are growing more difficult with new forms of East-West confrontation, and nominally religious fundamentalist confrontations packaged as a “war on terror”.

In such circumstances, poverty and the poor, as well as training for literacy and life skills, tend to be marginalised. Crops for the poor become fuel substitutes for the rich. “Failed states” may become more rather than less common, with education for development being a prime casualty. Such trends suggest that the individuals in charge of reviewing and planning at CONFINTEA VI need to be tough-minded, determined, and realistic: remain-

ing purposeful and celebrating real achievements which mean that *“the glass is half full”*, while pressing on governments, once again, the need to take a long-term – and, in socio-economical terms, a comprehensive – approach to policy in our field.

This introduction stops short of making recommendations. If it were to do so, they would be addressed to the ANFE community at CONFINTEA VI rather than directly to governments. They would propose much more attention to the gap between laws, policies, and structures, and the actual allocation of resources on the ground, thereby capturing the spirit of the above-cited comments of Jjuuko Robert and Carmen Colazo – *“huge promises with no commensurate actions”*, *“political will beyond declaratory will”*. Certainly they would press cogently for the essential resources to *“give us the tools, and we will finish the job”*, as Winston Churchill once famously commanded.

But they would also heed David Archer’s advice not to sacrifice what we know about what does and does not work, about timetables and lead times for sustained development in the quest for quick government bucks. Without generally advising direct political action as distinct from lobbying at national level, they would certainly endorse the call by Vernon Muñoz and David Archer to look beyond the policy limits of ANFE and challenge the instruments and assumptions of international governance and regulation, especially of those IGOs that in determining financial and aid policies act like the enemy of the poor.

Finally, still without taking direct political action, ANFE workers would press on governments the facts of slippage in their language and behaviour of the kind that shrinks lifelong learning down to rudimentary adult basic literacy, or substitutes targets for sustainable outcomes. They would refuse to compromise on what they know about participation, motivation, and equity. The cultural lag between lofty CONFINTEA discourse and the reality of grassroots poverty and conservatism



Bolivia

dvv international



Ethiopia

*dvv international*

should haunt us all, as should the lack of good data as a basis for good governance.

With this in mind, we conclude with a recent comment by Rosa Maria Torres on the situation that we are in, and that these studies represent:

*“One might think that we are ‘over-diagnosed’ but the tricky thing is that we are not, there is a lot of copy and paste, repetition and reiterated absences and contradiction, not to mention the fact that most reports are based on other reports, and other documents ... It has become clear that there are huge gaps between policies and implementation, documents and realities, theory and practice ... Hopefully we are able to make a major shift in coming*

*weeks/years to relying more on documented practice than on data, statistics, norms about the ‘should be’ and wishful thinking. There is so much to be learned ‘down there’ and so much to be changed if we just observed more carefully and paid more attention to those who do not only need to learn from us but have also a lot to teach us about how to do things right.”*

## Case Studies

Lisa Deyo

# Non-formal education in Afghanistan: country profile

## Introduction

Skills development for poverty reduction and economic development are two education-related priorities of the Afghan Government in this phase of the country's development. Initiatives in non-formal education have been marked by two distinct trends. The first is manifested in an array of non-formal education programmes offered by nongovernmental organizations and governmental bodies. These efforts have been widespread, but loosely coordinated. Programmes in this area have concentrated on community, home-based, and accelerated learning programmes; civic education; civil society and local governance initiatives; health and hygiene education; livelihoods, technical, and vocational education; adult literacy education; and, to a lesser extent, human rights and peace building education. Target communities for vocational and livelihood training include unemployed youth and adults, the internally displaced, returnees who could not return to their traditional livelihoods, ex-combatants, widows, orphans, persons with disabilities, farmers, and women.

A recent trend is marked by the commitment of the Government of Afghanistan to pursue a more coordinated and comprehensive strategy through the Afghan National Development Strategy. This reflects a shift from emergency programmes to a longer-term strategy of rehabilitation and reconstruction. The national Government has engaged in a cross-ministerial effort to develop strategies, benchmarks, activities, and outcomes to support the Afghan National Development Strategy. This cross-ministerial initiative seeks to align budgetary allocations with national development strategies, and to build a culture of capacity-building over what the Government of Afghanistan has called "*capacity buying*" (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, April 2007:4).

## Concepts of non-formal education

In Afghanistan, *non-formal education* is used interchangeably with the term *functional literacy*. Adult functional literacy programmes integrate topics related to lifeskills and productive or livelihoods activities. Lifeskills have been associated with such areas as improved health and hygiene practices and communication and decision-making skills. Productive skills training refers to vocational, technical and livelihood training, for example, carpen-



try, plumbing, agriculture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, and tailoring (BRAC, 2007; DACAAR, 2007; IOM, 2007). Local governance, human rights, and civic education are typically treated as separate categories.

## Policies and Reforms

The Afghan National Development Strategy provides a framework for policy development and allocation of resources and programmes. According to the Ministry of Finance (2006), the Afghan National Development Strategy defines the Government's "vision and investment priorities" to meet the Afghan Compact and the country's Millennium Development Goals (p. 4). The goal of the sector strategy for Education, Culture, Media, & Sport is to:

*"... significantly improve the quality of, and promote equitable access to, education, skills development, and other social services in order to re-invigorate Afghanistan's human capital, reduce poverty, and facilitate economic growth."* (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Office, 2006:136)



Afghanistan

dvv international

The eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, universal primary education, an increase in the literacy rate among the 15- to 24-year-old population and a decreased unemployment rate of this cohort, and the elimination of gender disparity in education, are included in Afghanistan's Millennium Development Goals. Other targets and indicators relating to NFE activities in the country concern environmental and maternal health and sustainable development.

## Legal foundations of NFE

The Afghan population's right to education, and the Government's responsibility to improve the economic well-being of its population, are upheld in the national Constitution, ratified in 2004. According to Article 43 of the Constitution, education is free of charge up to the bachelor's level. Article 44 confirms the Government's responsibility to provide programmes that address educational needs of women and nomads and work towards the eradication of illiteracy (Ministry of Education, 2004:8). Articles 13 and 14 of the Consti-

tution outline the Government's responsibility to offer programmes that improve the economic conditions and generally raise the standard of living of its population, including programmes related to industry, crafts persons, farmers, herders, and settlers, and the nomadic or *kuchi* population (Office of the President, 2006).

## Resources and financial support for NFE

The upcoming budget is set to align with the priorities of the Afghan National Development Strategy. Afghan national Government funding for NFE activities comes out of the operating and national development budgets. The Afghanistan Development Forum (2007) states that the national development budget has become the mechanism through which national development and reconstruction policy is taken forward (para. 31). The operating budget covers recurrent costs of salaries, maintenance, and operations. As an example, funds for the National Skills Development and Market Linkages programme are channelled through the Ministry of Finance from the national development budget. In the fiscal year 2007/2008, the Literacy Department of the Ministry of Education (MOE) received funds from the operating budget to cover salaries and other recurrent costs (Ministry of Finance, 2006). Adult literacy education was not mentioned in the Afghan National Development Strategy, and no development funds were forthcoming (MOE, 2007:25). The Ministry of Education has attempted to remedy this situation in the upcoming fiscal year with a request to incorporate adult literacy education into the national development strategy.

The Government makes a distinction between core and external budget. Core budget funds are channelled through the Government; external budget funds are channelled directly from donor agencies to their recipients or contractors. In the 1385 (2006-2007) National Budget, the governance, rule of law and human rights sector and the health sector were budgeted to receive 6 percent each of the core budget. Agriculture and rural development was allocated 25 percent of the total core budget. Economic governance and private sector development was budgeted to receive 4 percent, and the Ministry of Education, 7 percent of the core budget (Ministry of Finance, 2006:9).

The following UN bodies and bilateral agencies are among those that support non-formal education activities:

- Functional Adult Literacy Education: UNESCO, JICA, USAID, UNICEF, World Food Programme, SIDA
- Life Skills: UNESCO, JICA, CIDA, DfID, Denmark, EC, World Bank/IDA, Norway, USAID, ADB
- Technical and Vocational Education: GTZ, India, DFID, JICA, Canada, UNESCO, EC, Korea, Ireland, UNICEF, World Food Programme, USAID
- Agriculture and Alternative Livelihoods: DfID, USAID, JICA, EU, FAO, ADB

## **Structure, organization, governance and management of NFE**

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled oversee large-scale provision of non-formal education activities. Other ministries that incorporate non-formal education initiatives into their ongoing efforts include: the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock; Ministry of Commerce; Ministry of Counter-narcotics; Ministry of Public Health; and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation & Development. Programme areas include equivalency education; functional literacy education; functional literacy and livelihoods education; technical and vocational education; agriculture; alternative livelihoods to illicit poppy production; life skills; business development services; governance; health education; and civil society building.

The Ministry of Education, in its five-year National Education Strategic Plan, commits itself to a reduction in the number of the total 11 million non-literate adults (ages 15 and above), with assistance from partners. The branch of the Ministry of Education responsible for adult literacy education is the National Literacy Centre (NLC), until recently referred to as the Literacy Department. The NLC's mandate is to enrol 1.8 million participants in adult literacy education courses by the year 2010. As part of this programme, the Ministry aims to train 17,000 literacy teachers and 3,500 mullahs to provide adult literacy education (MOE, 2007:20).

Participation in adult literacy courses since 2001 has grown tremendously. The number of participants enrolled in classes increased from 7,359 in 2001 to over 386,000 in 2005/2006 (MOE, 2003:5; MOE, 2007:42). The NLC's mandate for 2008 is the enrolment of 500,000 adults in MOE, UN, and I/NGO-supported programmes. Of this number, approximately 250,000 adults will be served through courses operated by the Ministry of Education, the army, and the police.

Most MOE-sponsored literacy classes have been offered in urban areas. The focus has now shifted to the outlying areas. The NLC has recently transferred 2,000 of its literacy teachers, the majority of whom were based in Kabul, to the formal education sector. Efforts are under way to hire and train a new cohort of literacy teachers at the district level in the provinces.

The NLC has offered a nine-month basic literacy programme, consisting of three textbooks. The NLC additionally offers classes using a primer for men and women produced by the Literacy and Non-formal Education Development in Afghanistan (LAND Afghan) programme and another primer produced by UNICEF for women. The MOE has recently adopted a policy to allow other organizations, with approval from the Ministry, to use their own materials. UN-HABITAT is currently working at the NLC on the Learning for Community Empowerment Programme-2, a programme for 312,000 adults that integrates literacy education, productive skills, business development services training, and savings and investment. The above-mentioned programmes have developed literacy and training materials in the two official national languages: Dari and Pashto. Efforts are under way

at the NLC to translate the LAND Afghan primer into Baluch, Nuristani, Turkmen, and Uzbek; the development of materials targeting the *Kuchi* population is planned.

In 2005, the Ministry of Education, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNESCO, FAO, and the World Food Programme entered into a strategic alliance to engage in a national literacy campaign, the Joint Programme on Adult Functional Literacy. In September 2007, a UNICEF representative announced that over 48,000 women have already completed literacy classes with support from UNICEF, and over 78,000 participants have completed literacy classes as part of the Joint Programme (UNAMA, 2007). At the time, the five UN agencies involved in the Joint Programme provided support for more than 120,000 participants (UNAMA, 2007).

Other ministries that offer functional and adult literacy education independently or with assistance from the NLC include the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of the Interior (MOE, 2007; KRI International Corp, 2007). The Ministry of Women's Affairs offers literacy education in its Community Development Centres. The Ministry of Justice coordinates with the NLC to offer literacy education to prisoners (KRI International Corp., 2007).

The *Ministries of Defence and Interior* have made concerted efforts to educate their personnel; their system provides educational opportunities up to the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The Ministry of Defence offers literacy education classes with materials specially designed for military personnel. The Ministry of Interior supports literacy education for its police recruits. A recent study of the efforts of the Afghan Government to train police recruits has identified the low literacy level of its recruits to be the greatest obstacle to training. Less than 30 percent of police force recruits who enter training are literate (Wilder, 2007: 65).

The NLC is also responsible for vocational education, and supports a limited number of classes which provide equivalency education for adults or complementary education. (KRI International Corp, 2007: 1-2). The Ministry of Women's Affairs offers a limited number of equivalency classes, in which women can complete a high school education.

The *Ministry of Education's Department of Technical and Vocational Education* runs 42 technical and vocational education schools. Of these, seventeen are located in Kabul. A total of 8,029 males and 982 females attend programmes in these institutions. Females attend classes in eight schools in Kabul and three schools in the provinces (MOE, 2007:40). The curriculum has not changed for approximately three decades. NSDP is assisting the Ministry of Education to pilot "*shorter, labour-market driven, craft level courses working in partnership with local workshops, small factories and construction sites so as to deliver/manage combined on-the-job and off-the-job training experiences*" (MOLSAMD, March 2007b:6). The Ministry will use the labour market study conducted by the National Skills Development and Market Linkages Programme to guide them in preparing new curricula. Priority sectors for the updated programmes are construction (plumbing, electrical); auto-

motive and large equipment mechanics; information technology and agriculture (MOE, 2007: 41). The MOE's future plans include training 13,000 people in short-term technical and vocational courses by 2010. The MOE plans to recruit an additional 1,200 new vocational education teachers by 2010 (MOE, 2007: 81).

The *National Skills Development and Market Linkages Programme* (NSDP) operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled (MOLSAMD). According to the National Education Strategic Plan (2007), while the Ministry of Education will continue to play a strong role in technical and vocational education, MOLSAMD will be the lead Ministry. Other ministries that offer technical and vocational education include: the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, the Ministry of Water and Power Supply, the Ministry of Telecommunication, and the Ministry of Culture, Information, and Tourism (MOE, March 2007: 21). Along with the technical and vocational education programmes of the Ministry of Education and those supported by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled, the National Skills Development Programme estimates that more than 200 international and national NGOs are running such programmes (MOLSAMD, 2007b: 5).

NSDP seeks to establish a national framework and system for vocational and technical education that is *"responsive to labour market needs and which provides Afghan citizens with the knowledge and skills for decent work"* (National Skills Development Programme, 2006:1). The short term aim of NSDP is to *"facilitate the delivery, through public, private and NGO sector training agencies, of essential labour market-driven training which is procured under competitive bidding ..."* (MOLSAMD, March 2007b:3). The VET system includes: *"short and longer term training, formal and non-formal, as well as training across all sectors (agriculture, commerce, services, construction and industry). It also encompasses the whole area of second chance skills development (and integrated underpinning education), for those women and men whose self-development opportunities were seriously curtailed during the years of conflict."* (p. 2)

A priority expected result for NSDP is increased wage and self-employment opportunities for 150,000 unemployed and underemployed persons by 2010 through *"the provision of market-oriented skills training, business training and linkages to micro-credit and business-development support services"* (MOLSAMD, 2007b:3). Of the 150,000, MOLSAMD anticipates that 94,000 will have gained *"worthwhile waged or self employment by 2010"*. At least 35 percent of trainees will be women; 5 percent will be persons with disabilities (MOLSAMD, March 2007b:32). Additionally, NSDP and the Ministry of Commerce have supported business skills development courses.

The National Skill Development and Market Linkages Programme is developing a *"system of quality monitoring and performance monitoring and institutional reporting management"* (NSDP, 2007:13). NSDP envisages, in the longer run, that *"institutions will be*

accountable through an accreditation system which will identify 'hallmarks' of quality, based on international good practice and standards ... and those institutions meeting the standard required on all criteria assessed, will gain and retain accreditation status" (p. 13). NSDP anticipates that some institutions will voluntarily adopt ISO quality standards as well. The goals of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MOA) are:

*"To restore Afghanistan's licit agricultural economy by assuring food security and reducing poverty throughout Afghanistan; to assist farmers to increase production and productivity and to manage and protect Afghanistan's natural resource base for sustainable growth; to improve rural physical infrastructure and irrigation systems; to expand markets and develop human resource capacity."* (MOA, March 2007: 1)

Priority programmes for the MOA are: food security, promotion of horticulture for export, expansion of livestock production and productivity, management and protection of the natural resource base, improvement of rural infrastructure and irrigation systems, increased production for expanding markets, and developed human capacity for sustainable growth (MOA, March 2007). Non-formal education programme activities are components of these priority programmes.

The organizations affiliated with the MOA have delivered training programmes with the aim to increase the staple supply and diversify household income sources (MOA, March 2007:15). Target audiences include farmers and farmers' organizations. Training has been provided in such areas as bee-keeping, poultry, food grains, and nutrition education. In the horticulture sector, various organizations are supporting farmers in nursery development, orchard, and vineyard and product export development. Other training programmes have included livestock production, veterinary care, dairy industry development, cheese manufacturing, cashmere production, conservation, marketing, and natural resources use and management.

The Ministry of Counternarcotics promotes the development of alternatives livelihoods to poppy production and works with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock and its partner organizations. Training farmers in the production of high value alternative crops is one example of this kind of NFE activity.

The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development promotes local governance through Community Development Councils established under the National Solidarity Programme. The National Solidarity Programme (NSP) is designed to promote the development of local governance and alleviate rural poverty through the establishment of

*"a national network of elected Community Development Councils (CDCs); funding priority subprojects to improve access to social and productive infrastructure, markets, and services; strengthening community capacities through participatory processes and training; and promoting accountability and wise use of public and private resources."* (MRRD, 2006: 1)

The National Solidarity Programme (NSP) operates in Afghanistan's 34 provinces in 279 districts. By April 2007, 17,349 communities were mobilized under this programme (NSP, 2007). Under NSP, Community Development Councils can fund public infrastructure and human capital development projects. Human capital development projects include: "general education such as health and hygiene education, child development training, training for traditional birth attendants, literacy, and other topics not directly related to income generation" and productive skills training (MRRD, 2006:3). Productive skills training includes "kitchen gardens, animal husbandry, bee-keeping, food processing, and vocational education" (MRRD, 2006:3).

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Zia-Ul-Sabur

# Non-formal education in Bangladesh

The Non-formal and Basic Education (NFBE) programme, which is spearheaded by the Government of Bangladesh, started with basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills. This form of NFBE remained unchanged until the year 2000. The later NFBE initiatives incorporated livelihood skills following the realization that basic education alone cannot lead to sustainable poverty reduction.

## Conceptualization of NFE

It is a widely held belief among policy-makers that NFE is a people-activated mode of education delivery that is able to address poverty reduction effectively. The National NFE Task Force, comprising members from different ministries, donor organizations, NGOs, civil society, and experts, which is headed by the Adviser of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, elaborated a policy statement entitled the Non-formal Education Policy Framework (2006). This document defines key NFE-related terms as follows:

- **NFE:** Non-formal education is purposeful and systematically organized education that generally occurs outside the formal institutions; it is designed to meet the learning needs of educationally disadvantaged persons of different ages and backgrounds, is flexible in terms of organization, time, and place, and may cover basic and continuing educational programmes to impart basic literacy skills together with life skills, work skills, and general culture. It facilitates lifelong learning and the enhancement of earning capabilities for poverty reduction. It ensures equal access and human resource development; it may or may not follow a 'ladder' system, and may be of varying duration.
- **Literacy:** Literacy is the ability to read, understand, interpret, communicate, and compute in verbal and written forms and in varying contexts; it involves a continuum of learning that enables individuals to develop their potentials and knowledge base and to participate fully in community affairs and in a wider social and developmental context.
- **Continuing education** (an alternative term for lifelong learning): Continuing education is the provision of opportunities for lifelong learning beyond basic education (literacy and primary education) in response to the needs of disadvantaged individuals and groups to enrich their socio-economic lives.

## Legal provisions, national policy reforms, and international commitments

Article 17 of the Constitution of Bangladesh, established in 1971, enjoins the state to adopt effective measures for

- a) establishing a uniform, mass-oriented, and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law;
- b) relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve those needs, and
- c) removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by the law.

The Constitution further makes it clear that access to education is not a privilege, but a right of every citizen of Bangladesh. In addition, Bangladesh is a signatory to the Jomtien and Dakar Declarations. The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) also directly and indirectly support the cause of NFBE. In addition, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) also play an important role in setting the pace for the development agenda. These papers clearly link the potential of NFE to poverty reduction. The legal provisions, policies, and international commitments have been translated into the following goal in the national policy framework:

*“To contribute to fulfilling EFA goals and alleviating poverty as spelled out in the National Plan of Action II, 2004–2015 and the PRSP by creating a community-based network of learning centres aimed at reducing illiteracy by at least 50% by 2015, extending opportunities for effective skill training and continuing education and creating lifelong learning opportunities.”*

## Governance and financing of NFBE

**Overall coordination of NFBE programmes:** The Government of Bangladesh retains the centralized structure of policy-making and its implementation. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education reviews, guides, and approves policies. In the NGO sector, the role of coordinating NGO initiatives is played by the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE). Unlike the Government, CAMPE does not exert any form of control through its monitoring activities. In addition, under the umbrella of CAMPE, a number of NGOs such as the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), and Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB), exert a considerable influence in the process of coordination in the NFBE sector due to the size of their operations, their institutional capacity, and their innovativeness.

**Key features and challenges of policy and coordination:** While a reasonable NFE policy statement has been elaborated by the NFE Task Force and approved by the Government, the structures and systems to ensure sustainable and effective implementation of

policies have yet to be mobilized. NFBE programmes in Bangladesh continue to remain highly centralized. The culture of inflexibility, predictability, and conformity which characterize government bureaucracy, combined with a hierarchical mode of operation, are often not suited to an NFE mode of approach which should be flexible, responsive, and inclusive, and promote participation and innovation. There is a widely held conviction that Government ought to take a more regulatory and standard-setting role, while people and institutions embedded in the wider civil society should mobilize their resources to implement NFBE programmes in a sustainable manner. The prevailing lack of resources will not make such a transition possible on a short-term or medium-term basis; rather, with a clearer strategic focus on local resources, perhaps this could eventually be achieved in the long run.

**Other official bodies:** The income-generation and non-formal vocational training component of NFBE is being addressed in one way or other by 18 ministries in Bangladesh. A major initiative is underway by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the European Union



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*Dhakia Ahsania Mission*

to implement market-oriented reforms in vocational training. Income-generation and non-formal vocational training, which are components of vocational training, run parallel to the mainstream formal vocational training system. The main ministries which deal with these issues in addition to the formal stream of vocational skills development include the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare, the Cooperative Ministry, and the Ministry of Women and Children's Welfare. The Islamic Foundation is another semi-governmental autonomous institution which provides NFBE programmes for youth and adults. However, these activities are yet to be considered part of NFE systems.

### **Main sources of NFE financing**

Most of the basic education programmes of NGOs are financed by external donor organizations. Sedere, M. Upali and -Us-Sabur, Zia1 (1999, 58–70) list 136 external donor agencies that finance NGO basic education programmes. This list can be divided into the following categories:

**Donors which finance NGOs under Government projects:** the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank (WB), the Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC), the Swedish International Development & Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Norway, the Department for International Development (DFID), UNICEF, the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNESCO, the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Fund for Population Agency (UNFPA).

**Donors which finance NGOs under bilateral grants:** Australian Aid (AusAid), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Norway, SIDA, SDC and USAID

**International foundations which finance NGOs:** the Aga Khan Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Japan Foundation, the Damien Foundation, the Helen Keller Foundation, the Pally Karma Shayaak Foundation (PKSF)

**International NGOs which fund NGOs:** Action Aid, Save the Children, USA, UK, Sweden, Australia, PLAN International.

### **Key features of NFBE approaches and their mode of operations**

One of the approaches to implementing NFBE was establishing contractual relationships with NGOs, which were assigned the responsibility to implement NFBE projects under a number of pre-determined guidelines and criteria. This approach, known as CBA, continues to remain the central strategy for implementing Post-Literacy and Continuing Education (PLCE) projects, but with modified project contents, considering that PLCE combines livelihood skills with literacy and life skills. The main criteria for selecting NGOs are years of experience in the implementation of education projects, and the financial capacity to bridge any delays in the receipt of project funds, which are disbursed in instalments.

### **Core NFE programme**

The Bureau of Non-formal Education (BNFE) (level-1 and 2) under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (level-1) is the central coordinator of NFE programmes for youth and adults in Bangladesh. Under BNFE, there are 54 District Coordinating Officers, located in various districts, who are responsible for coordinating and monitoring NFE activities at the district level. BNFE implements its NFBE programmes through more than 300 NGOs, local branches of national NGOs or local NGOs, which it commissions for that purpose throughout the country.

According to the recently approved national NFE policy, the objectives of NFE are to:

- provide quality and relevant NFE programmes and skill training, which meet the assessed learning needs of the identifiable and potential clientele groups;
- provide opportunities for individuals and groups of persons with learning and skills needs so that they can become self-reliant, productive, and empowered citizens by engaging in income-generating and life-skills-related activities;
- establish structures to enable the Government, NGOs, and civil society in general, including the private sector, to coordinate policies and to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate measures to reduce illiteracy and poverty, and to promote the development of human resources;
- establish an organization for management and governance of the NFE sub-sector;
- institute a decentralized operation system involving local bodies, NGOs, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and communities with the participation of learners to ensure community ownership and sustainability of the NFE programmes, structures, and facilities for lifelong learning.

While national NFE policy is much broader and more inclusive, individual NFE project objectives often do not adequately reflect the stated multi-dimensionality of NFE interventions.

The objectives have undergone change over the period of the last 15 years. The NFBE programme started with basic literacy and life skills. This form of NFBE remained unchanged until the year 2000. Based on the realization that basic education alone cannot lead to sustainable poverty reduction, the later NFBE initiatives incorporated livelihood skills. The objectives of PLCE-1, the main national NFE project, are as follows:

- to develop the country's human resources by implementing post literacy and continuing education programmes;
- to reach 1.36 million neo-literates with post-literacy programmes in order to consolidate, maintain, and upgrade their previously acquired literacy skills;
- to reach an equal number of learners who have completed national post-literacy courses;
- to involve the target population in lifelong education programmes;
- to draft a national framework for non-formal education and to define relevant concepts.

The target groups for the NFE programme between the years 1990 and 2000 were illiterate youths and adults, both male and female, who never had the chance to attend school. The target group also included dropouts who had relapsed into illiteracy. The age group for the NFE programme was between 11 and 45 years. From the year 2000 onwards, the target group has been neo-literates with at least nine months of basic liter-

acy training. As hitherto, the target group comprises men and women between the ages of 11 and 45. This target group receives training in basic literacy and numeracy and support through livelihood intervention measures.

While the Government has specified an age limit, in reality the age factor is not emphasized. Ultimately, it is the learners' interest and commitment to learn that decides their participation in the NFE programmes. Given the reality that most of the population in Bangladesh is economically poor, and also that generally the demographics are quite homogeneous, with agriculture as the main source of livelihood, the target groups are largely similar across the country. For the most part they are rural farm and non-farm workers in the case of males, and homemakers in the case of females.

Between the years 1990 and 2000, according to the information available from the Government, 13 million people took part in basic literacy and numeracy programmes. From the year 2000 onwards, under the mainstream Government-run PLCE, a total of 1,565,100 learners have participated in basic literacy, numeracy, and livelihood programmes. A total of 1,459,800 learners are at present receiving training in basic literacy and numeracy, and support through livelihood intervention measures. Fifty percent of the target population in this project are women, and fifty percent of all districts are covered by the project, which is being implemented with assistance from the World Bank. The Government is looking forward to initiating a new project with assistance from ADB, DFID, and SDC.

The terminology of PLCE is suggestive of two phases, post literacy and continuing education. The main activities carried out during each of these phases are:

- **post-literacy phase** – ensuring retention and consolidation of basic literacy and numeracy skills acquired in basic literacy, numeracy, and life-skills programmes (carried out before 2000);
- **continuing education phase** – providing livelihood skills along with the continuation of basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills, but at a lower intensity.

The content is very different from the content of primary schools in that the NFE targets youths and adults, and attempts to inform them about their real life situation from which they can readily benefit. The primary school curriculum is based on attaining 52 different child-centred competencies spelled out by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. Teachers are trained to carry out individual and group evaluations and to follow a detailed manual which guides them to monitor learner progress. They are also trained to deal with weaker and slower learners, but they are not adequately trained to assess the degree of application in everyday life of the literacy, numeracy, and life skills acquired by the learners. External resource persons from Government agencies, NGOs, and private vocational institutions provide livelihood training. The methodology is based on practical demonstration where the learners are offered opportunities for hands-on training.

However, experience suggests that technical skills alone do not suffice to allow sustainable application of income-generating skills.

A wider combination of entrepreneurial skills is also needed, e.g. skills in marketing and financial management. Participants also require seed capital in order to start a business. Learning centres remain open six days a week. Each teaching-learning session lasts two hours. During the CE phase, livelihood training is provided four days a week. During one hour of each session on the remaining two days, PL activities are offered. This suggests that the PL phase does not really end after three months; rather, it is carried out at a lower intensity during the entire CE phase. The overall duration of the mainstream NFE PLCE programme is nine months. The first three months are for post-literacy training, and the last six months for continuing education.

Project implementation is reasonably flexible in the sense that members of the community have a say in identifying the learners, deciding on the location of centres, and scheduling the teaching-learning process. During the harvest season, as well as during major cultural and religious events, the centres are closed or sessions are rescheduled in consultation with the centre management committees (CMCs). These committees, which have a say in the day-to-day running of the centres, are composed of members from the community.

The PLCE programmes are yet to have an impact on fulfilling learner needs. The PLCE projects do not have sufficient mechanisms in place to ensure sustainable income-generation through effective market links. Moreover, once the projects are discontinued, learners are likely to lose their literacy skills if they have few opportunities to use them. Community leaders at village levels may not be educated, but they are generally literate, with reasonable knowledge about their respective communities, and effective communication skills which help them become leaders. NFBE educators receive an honorarium or allowance for their services; they are not full-time employees, but part-time staff who spend a few hours a week as instructors.

## **NGO-supported NFBE programmes and overall state of youth and adult literacy**

During the past five years, youth and adult NFBE has been losing priority among policy-makers in Bangladesh. Accordingly, resource allocation has progressively dwindled. Given this reality, at present only the PLCE-1 project run by the Government is actively providing basic literacy training and other measures of intervention on a large scale. While a number of NGOs, such as BRAC, FIVDB, and the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), have larger programmes, in reality individually they do not have much national impact in terms of providing basic literacy and numeracy training. Therefore, a sectoral representation of NGOs in the domain of NFBE would be more appropriate.

NGO NFBE programmes can be categorized as training in basic literacy and numeracy skills along with life skills. The literacy programmes are designed to help illiterates acquire and retain literacy skills. According to CAMPE statistics, in the year 2004, more than 400 NGOs were engaged in adult literacy programmes. Of these, BRAC, FIVDB, and DAM are notable NGOs. Programmes focusing only on basic literacy and numeracy through non-formal education are virtually non-existent. The central objective of NGO-run NFBE programmes continues to emphasize acquisition and retention of literacy, as well as provision of life skills.

This objective has been further expanded by transforming NFBE centres into Community Learning Centres, where neo-literates have the opportunity to get together, access reading materials and interact socially, with minimal external intervention on the part of NFBE educators. At the moment, NGOs are looking to further expand their activities by providing marketable livelihood skills through Community Learning Centres.

The target group consists of poor men and women, who are either illiterate or neo-literate. The men are mainly farm workers and non-skilled labourers, while the women are largely homemakers who participate in NGO youth and adult NFBE programmes. According to CAMPE statistics (2004), the total number of people served through youth and adult literacy programmes stands at 651,502, sixty percent of whom are female.

The central activity of adult NFBE programmes run by the NGOs is to ensure provision, as well as continuation in the practice of literacy and numeracy skills in order to secure sustainable retention (i.e. the ability to read newspapers). In addition, learners prepare their own literacy materials, creating collective wallpapers or writing poems and texts around specific topics. They also read books related to the acquisition of life skills. At times they organize cultural events for recreation. The centres also provide a platform where learners can discuss and resolve social issues affecting their lives.

NGOs are flexible in their approach. Learners and communities are amply consulted. Timing of centre opening and closure depends on social and economic events in consultation with the learners and the communities. However, NGO-run NFBE programmes apparently have made little impact in the lives of the learners although learners, in general, believe very strongly that literacy should lead to poverty reduction in the form of sustainable income-generating activities.

The equivalency issue has not become important for youth and adult NFBE programmes in Bangladesh. However, a general understanding is that the basic literacy and numeracy programmes are supposed to be equivalent to a third-grade level formal primary school education. As for the livelihood skills, the Government system requires participants of its formal courses to have at least an eighth grade education. This archaic notion is now breaking down. Relevant ministries which provide vocational training are organizing and pooling resources with NGOs to work together in the design of livelihood-training programmes with effective adult NFBE literacy components. A number of NGOs –



DAM, for instance – have equivalency programmes.

### **National monitoring and implementation mechanisms**

The main monitoring effort of the NFE programme on a national scale is led by BNFE supported by its Management Information System Department, which is able to produce computer-generated monitoring reports. A number of evaluation reports suggest that such a monitoring system is mainly quantitative in nature, emphasizing enrolment, dropout, and completion figures as well as the availability of primers etc., and that they often lack the analytical sharpness that is required by an effective monitoring system. The abolition of the former Directorate of Non-formal Education has substantially affected the country's institutional capacity to provide non-formal education. The World Bank has played a lead role in monitoring and implementing PLCE programmes during this institutional vacuum.



Bangladesh

Dhakia Ahsania Mission

### **Key features of monitoring and implementation systems of second and third generation NGOs**

According to a study entitled *“Challenges to Human Resources Development (HRD) in Post Literacy and Continuing Education in Bangladesh”*, which was undertaken in the year 2002 by the SIDA Technical Assistance Team, NGOs which have been in existence for eleven to twenty years are considered second generation, and those which have been active for a decade or less are termed third-generation NGOs. The large number of existing second and third-generation NGOs are often grossly under-resourced and do not have the technical capacity to run effective NFE monitoring systems. However, their lack of monitoring capabilities is often compensated by the small scale of their operations and their close relationship with people at the grassroots level.

### **Key features of monitoring and implementation systems of first generation NGOs**

First-generation NGOs, according to the study, are those which have been around for more than twenty-one years. They are generally large and reputable organizations with

a nationwide network of operations – organizations such as BRAC, Proshika (which has recently become dysfunctional for a number of reasons), or DAM. They have elaborate monitoring systems run by adequately-trained staff, and are often well supported by their respective in-house research departments. Each of the aforementioned NGOs has their own separate monitoring mechanisms.

### **Evaluation initiatives**

As a national coordinating body, the BNFE has a separate evaluation responsibility that falls within the competence of the technical support services department. As a result of ongoing institutional reorganization, however, the technical services have not yet become fully operational. In the meantime, this function is mainly being performed by the World Bank's external technical assistance team, which consists of national and international consultants. Two kinds of evaluations are carried out: internal and external. Government-led institutions and NGOs generally lack adequate capacity to carry out effective evaluations, while external evaluations, which are conducted by a combination of national and external experts, are perceived as more credible.

### **Assessment of outcomes**

This study has revealed the absence of consistent, valid, and reliable information for youth and adult NFBE activity in Bangladesh. The information available is highly project-specific. Comparable national information is in short supply, and statistics vary according to sources; for example, Government sources estimate adult literacy rates at 47 percent and 64 percent whereas an independent source estimates a rate of 38 percent and 42 percent for the years 1995 and 2000 respectively.

Even though the recent national policy framework does give some consideration to the problem of establishing common definitions for such key terms as literacy, NFE, life skills, or livelihood skills, there is still considerable discrepancy in operational concepts.

In the absence of adequate national mechanisms for birth registration, it is difficult to determine the age of learners. The learners themselves very often do not know the year and date of their birth, and at times it is left to the discretion of NFBE personnel to establish the age of participants on the basis of appearance. This makes the determination of age groups unreliable. The government-determined age group for national NFE programmes is between 11 and 45 years, while for adolescent programmes, the target age group is generally between the age of 11 and 14. Similar variations occur in the case of NGO activities. However, based on observation and field experiences, it can be assumed that in youth and adult programmes the participation of children between 11 and 14 years is an average of ten percent.

Field tests conducted by the Swedish Technical Assistance Team to the former DNFE for the period between the years 1999 and 2002, coupled with similar tests conducted by other agencies, suggest the following overarching trends:

- If neo-literates are not able to practise their acquired literacy, they tend to relapse into illiteracy within a period of 6 months.
- The acquired literacy of the learners is not sufficient to enable learners to read and effectively decipher real-life materials (such as posters, sign boards, instructions, prescriptions, etc.).
- The ability to write and communicate simple thoughts remains a problem.
- The ability to take dictation and record instructions remains a problem.
- No connections could be established between the acquisition of literacy and the reduction of poverty.

The "Report on the First Tracer Study of PLCEHD-1 Project: An Impact Assessment" conducted in 2005 by the World Bank-supported Technical Assistance team reached the following conclusions:

- A large proportion of learners did not practise their literacy skills, or had no opportunity to practise them, particularly in writing.
- Gains achieved in empowering household members, women in particular, in decision-making, appeared to be stable.
- Gains made in hygienic and sanitary practices, and in assisting children in their studies, also appeared to be stable.
- The impact of PLCE on employment generation and in increasing income was positive but appeared to be below potential.
- The number of learners involved in community activities was on the decline.

Tonic Maruatona

## The provision of adult non-formal basic education in Botswana

Central to the development of adult learning in Botswana is the 1994 Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE), which serves as a milestone policy document on the provision of all forms of education. The policy devoted a chapter to Out of School Education, which helped to concretise the articulation of non-formal basic education provision. Botswana is making efforts to provide NFBE opportunities through the provision of out-of-school education to youth, and adult men and women. The 1992/93 National Commission on Education (NCE) identified non-formal basic education as the provision of opportunities for all adults, namely out-of-school youth, women and men, to complete basic education to the level of grade 10-Junior Certificate (JC) outside school (Ministry of Education, 1993). The RNPE was based on the National Commission on Education, 1992/93, which was established to review Botswana's education system in the period since 1977, when the first report of the National Commission on Education was published.

The first NCE was to formulate the nation's educational philosophy, set goals for educational development, and suggest strategies to achieve these goals. The 1977 Commission endorsed the philosophy of education for Kagisano, which means social harmony. The overall thrust of their report was on the provision of education for all, with an emphasis on primary education. Unfortunately, in spite of the Commission's acknowledgement of the importance of adult learning, there were no specific recommendations on adult and non-formal education. This policy vacuum was only filled by non-formal educators organising learning opportunities for adults and youth outside formal schools.

In 1992, the changing socio-economic context of Botswana necessitated another Commission to review educational policy. It was to develop relevant education, which would help to transform Botswana from an agro-based to an industrial economy for global competitiveness. Unlike its predecessor, this RNPE stipulated the aim of non-formal basic education as to ensure that basic education and further education and training are relevant and available to a larger number of people, and for lifelong education to be provided to all sections of the population. Literacy provision in Botswana targets illiterates or non-literates and provides reading, writing, and numeracy skills and also basic functional skills. The policy dictates that the programme provide learning opportunities for out-of-school children. RNPE recommended establishing an Adult Basic Education Course (ABEC) equivalent to Standard Seven in primary school, to address the needs of adults and out-of-school

children whose circumstances denied them access to and remaining in formal school for seven years. Some NGOs target ethnic and linguistic minorities in their provision. For example, the Kuru Development Project works with the Naro and Kwe indigenous people to develop their orthography and write their own languages.

### **Organisation, governance, finance and assessment of NFBE in Botswana**

In Botswana, efforts to provide high quality non-formal basic education were also significantly boosted by the publication of the Dakar Framework for Action, which emphasized meeting the learning needs of all young people and adults through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills. It also called for a 50 percent improvement in the levels of adult literacy for women by 2015. These international trends prompted Botswana to maximize its efforts to provide basic education for all, honour the commitments to the United Nations International Literacy Decade (UNILD), and expand the development of distance education. Botswana has come to recognize learning as a basic human right which should address the learning needs of children, youth, and adult citizens. Learning is a lifelong process intended to assist citizens to address their demographic, technical, economic, and political circumstances in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Youngman, 2002 a).

Non-formal basic education in Botswana is predominantly sponsored and controlled by the Government, with some NGOs complementing the State by focussing on topics relevant to certain contexts. The provision is treated as part of the national development effort intended to enable individuals to experience personal growth and take part in national development (Youngman, 2002b). The RNPE remains the major policy guide for public and private education and national training institutions. It has enabled Botswana to provide non-formal basic education opportunities intended to address issues of access, gender equity, and the general improvement of the quality of education for women and minority groups (Ministry of Education, 2003).

### **Vision 2016 and National Development Plan**

The implementation of the RNPE was also premised upon the aims and goals of a national vision called Vision 2016. Vision 2016 was developed in 1996, following an extensive national consultative process, to provide a framework and guide for national strategic planning. Critical to Vision 2016 is its call for the nation to engage in transformation across a broad spectrum of social, economic, entrepreneurial, political, spiritual, and cultural concerns of all citizens. It envisages equal access to educational opportunities regardless of socio-economic status. It advocates a flexible mode of educational provision that will allow people to learn at all points of their lives, uninhibited by age or structural limitations (Presidential Task Force, 1997).

The policy provides a widened opportunity for out-of-school youths and adults to acquire new attitudes and skills to help national development. Vision 2016 advocates comprehensive provision of adult learning. The national policy on development including education has been articulated in the National Development Plan 9, 2003–2009, which devoted a chapter to education and identified lifelong learning as a critical component of national human resource development strategy. The Plan gives an overview of the national educational policy framework and identifies learning projects to be funded and implemented within this plan period (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2003).

### **Financing adult non-formal basic education**

Botswana has made some strides in financing education, but the challenge has been to mobilize communities to increase enrolment in adult non-formal basic education. There is insufficient funding for adult non-formal basic education programmes to afford all citizens access to quality education. For example, the Ministry of Education allocates very limited funds for out-of-school education, resulting in limited provision and ineffective coordination (Ministry of Education, 2003). Adult learning faces challenges in terms of resource mobilization and has always competed unfavourably with formal education. Adult basic education attracts marginalized groups such as women and indigenous people, out-of-school youth mostly from poor households (Ministry of Education, 1993). The Government allocates a disproportionately small figure of 1.1 percent of the recurrent budget of the Ministry of Education to literacy education (Youngman, 2002a).

In spite of the financial constraints, adult non-formal basic education is expected to contribute to national goals such as self-reliance and social development. The State views education as a social service open to all, but adults receive low quality under-funded literacy education that fails to empower them and does not improve the quality of their lives (Maruatona, 2002). Unfortunately, documenting the extent to which the state and other agencies are making efforts to increase investment on adult learning is complex. We lack a comprehensive database on expenditure on different extension sectors to systematically document investment in adult learning and education. Given the available information, it is not easy to judge the amount of expenditure on adult non-formal basic education in each sector. It is therefore concluded that the Government and NGOs should continue to promote public investment in non-formal basic education in pursuit of the principle that making education accessible to all is a human right.

### **Support and management of non-formal basic education in Botswana**

Since its inception in 1980, the Department of Non-formal Education (DNFE) has produced graduates without the use of any standardised testing for Primer Five completers.

Tests were set by individual regions; each region had the responsibility to ensure that its own tests were administered and marked. The Department has a Research and Testing Unit which conducts research into the functions of various aspects, including testing. The Research and Evaluation Unit now has responsibility for setting standardised or common tests. Existing regional Primer Five tests have been reviewed, but the levels of regional tests differed so substantially that no general conclusions can be drawn from the results. Some items were extracted from the regional tests and were harmonized with the lower primary education attainment tests. Tests were developed for Setswana, English, and mathematics, and it was decided that regional officers should review the tests and submit comments before they were administered, but other commitments prevented this plan from being carried out (DNFE, 2006). Such an effort would, however, go a long way in helping the DNFE effectively monitor and assess its work. A comprehensive evaluation of the Department's activities revealed a gap between the formulation and implementation of policy. (UNESCO/UII, 2004). The Department of Adult Education (DAE) at the University of Botswana has a long history of supporting DNFE with training measures for both local and senior DNFE staff members. As the



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result of a shift in focus to include other extension staff in the DAE programme, however, training has become more general, which prevents it from addressing the specific, operational needs of DNFE. Over the past two decades, DAE has conducted baseline and impact research at DNFE, and has suggested what DNFE could do to improve delivery.

Supervision and coordination fall under the responsibility of the DNFE director and a management team composed of division heads and senior administrative staff. Six regional adult education officers have been appointed to help oversee the activities of the district adult education officers and junior staff in their respective regions. At the district level, the Department has cadres that range from literacy group leaders, who are volunteer teachers, and adult education assistants, to district adult education officers and senior district adult education officers, who supervise the districts and sub-districts. At the regional level, the administrative structure is somewhat centralised. As Mpofu and Youngman (2001) note, *"it provides a standardized national framework in which there is little discretion at district level, for example, the budget is controlled from the headquarters"* (p. 582). Recently, however, fifteen district adult education officers countrywide have been appointed to work under the six regional adult education officers. The introduction of regional adult

education officers was intended to enhance the capacity of the programme to effectively serve learners from different geographical regions. However, in spite of being decentralised, there is a consistent culture of state unilateral action in matters of policy decision-making. District staff and learners lack the active participation which would have enabled them to deter the state from making unilateral decisions (Maruatona, 2002).

### Provision of adult non-formal basic education (ANFBE)

The DNFE provides adult literacy education and basic functional skills training through the Botswana National Literacy Programme (BNLP). BNLP was established in 1980 with the main objective of enabling 250,000 illiterate men, women, and youths to acquire literacy skills in the Setswana language, as well as basic numeracy skills, over a period of six years from 1980–1985. The programme stipulated that literacy was to be understood in the context of development issues relevant to the nation and its respective districts.

Finally, it was decided that literacy was *“to be interpreted to imply that a person can comprehend those written communications and simple computations which are part of their daily life”* (Ministry of Education, 1979, p. 1).

In 1985 the State redefined the objectives of the programme to allow children in remote communities without schools into the programme. They also introduced an opportunity for adult learners to acquire practical skills required for income-generating activities (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 1985). In a recent survey, the DNFE redefined literacy as: *“the ability to read and write with understanding, in either Setswana, English or both; and the ability to carry out simple computations in everyday life”* (Chilisa et al., 2005). This suggests that over the last 23 years not much has changed in the conception of literacy in Botswana. Unfortunately, over the years, DNFE enrolment has shown a steady decline, from a figure of 17,588 in the year 1997 to only 9,267 in 2007 (see Table 1).

**Table 1. National Literacy Programme – Annual Enrolment Figures 1997–007**

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
17,588	15,917	14,474	12,004	9,399	13,329	13,045	11,791	10,694	11,039	9,267

Source: Department of Non-Formal Education, (1997-2005)

The data reveal that the programme reaches people in rural and remote areas, and is used more by women than by men. The progressive decline in enrolment that the programme has experienced since 1997 may be attributed in part to the fact that the learning material used are unrevised primers that were developed in the early 1980s (Maruatona, 2002). The increase in enrolment figures for 2002 reflects the fact that in that year



the Department expanded the programme to include work-place literacy training in various rural and urban areas. However, the literacy survey showed that there is concern over withdrawals from the programme. The major reasons given by participants – women participants in particular – for missing literacy classes, or leaving the programme, were “ill-health”, “no instructor”, and “taking care of a family member”. Seventy-one percent of the eligible population have never attended literacy classes (Chilsa et. al., 2005).

### **Adult basic education programme**

The Department continues to develop an adult basic education programme (ABEP) as recommended by the 1994 RNPE (Rec 82b). The aim of the programme is to provide non-formal educational opportunities that are equivalent to the Standard Seven level of formal schooling.

ABEP is divided into three levels, namely: Level One equivalent to Standards 1–3; Level 2 equivalent to Standards 3–4; and Level 3 equivalent to Standards 5–7 in primary schools. DNFE engaged consultants from the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning (UIL) to facilitate the development of an adult basic education programme. Several stakeholders’ workshops have been organised since 2005. Their purposes varied, starting with those intended to develop a curriculum blueprint. Several workshops were organised to train writers, with whom the consultants worked to develop study materials for ABEP. This is an expansion of the basic literacy programme that hitherto had used Standard 4-equivalency primers dating back to 1981. In addition, DNFE and the private sector provide workplace literacy.

### **Literacy at the work place**

A project entitled “*Literacy at the Workplace*” is being conducted under the auspices of the Department of Non-formal Education. Workplace literacy refers to literacy activities provided by DNFE in collaboration with the private sector and NGOs to non-literate workers in different sectors. Each participating organisation provides a meeting place, and releases the learners for one paid hour either in the morning, midday, or afternoon. The workers are obliged to be in class at the agreed time. Under the agreement, the DNFE undertakes to pay the teachers’ honoraria (Maruatona, 2002). Unfortunately, DNFE unilaterally decides on the content or curriculum. Teachers use the five sequential primers of the National Literacy Programme at workplaces without incorporating the learners’ work-based needs. Work-place literacy attracts more male than female learners, a fact which suggests that non-literate males have better employment opportunities than females. Since 1992, training has been offered in major urban centres, and later on, activities were extended to urban villages. Beyond workplace literacy there is the Adult Basic Education Programme. DNFE also provides income-generating projects.

### **Income-generating projects**

In 1983, an initial formal evaluation of DNFE was carried out. In this evaluation, learners indicated the need for practical skills over and above basic literacy. Income-generating projects were established to encourage groups to venture into small-scale businesses. Projects are developed according to the needs of the region and are geared to the needs of the community within which the group is located. The Department assists the participants in securing start-up capital and identifies funding sources. This is viewed as part of the Department's efforts to participate in poverty reduction. Funds are available from small grants such as the American Ambassador's Funds or through Government schemes such as the Citizen Entrepreneurship Development Agency (CEDA). By 2006, there was a total of 208 participants in this project, 183 women and only 25 men (DNFE, 2006). The northern region, example given, had four projects, ranging from candle making in Masingwang to food processing in Themashanga. To qualify for assistance, each group is required to have an average of 10 participants. This has proven to be a stifling factor for most groups because of group disputes, mismanagement, overcrowding in similar projects, and, worst of all, too much dependency on officers and other individuals, such as teachers who at the same time are members of the income-generating group (UNESCO, UIE, 2004). Some of the projects, especially in the Southern Region, are no longer in operation. Here there is a need for follow-up measures and closer monitoring (DNFE, 2006). According to Motiki (2005), the major causes of project failures lie in their inability to meet the personal objectives of project members, group disputes among members, and, in some cases ill-health, which affects productivity. The fact that the literacy and income generating skills which participants acquired in the programme were not adequate to enable them to effectively run their small-scale businesses certainly also contributed to project failure. A related challenge was the inability to secure funds to expand established businesses and make them sustainable. In addition, some NGOs provide literacy opportunities for remote communities and minority groups outside government control.

### **NGO provision of literacy education**

NGOs in Botswana use indigenous languages in their literacy classes. For example, Kuru Development Trust in Da'Kar NGOs teach the indigenous Basarwa people in Naro, one of their own languages. In the Northwest, literacy training was organized in Thimbukushu, the mother tongue of the Hambukushu people (Chebanne, Nyati-Ramahobo & Youngman, 2000). The Trust for Okavango Development Initiative documented the lexicon of Khwedam, a language of the Khwe people who are part of the San community. They argue that the use of Khwedam facilitates the preservation of Khwe cultural knowledge, reflects their oral history, and provides a reference for community workers in their areas. They currently use a newsletter and booklets with folktales to teach young school drop-

outs, school students, and members of the community (Le Roux, 2000). Chebanne, Nyati-Ramahobo, and Youngman (2000) hold that using the mother tongue enables learners to retain their cultural identity. They stress the importance of working with learners to codify their own languages and produce indigenous orthographies, arguing that the learners can still learn Setswana after they are able to read and write in their mother tongue. This line of thinking meets with resistance from Government officials who seek to facilitate national unity through the universal use of Setswana, the national language of Botswana (Maruatona, 2002).

Adult basic education and literacy provision outside of Government programmes has also been offered by the Debswana Mining Company since the 1970s. Since starting operations the Debswana diamond mine in Orapa operated an adult basic education programme with materials used by the South Africa Bureau of Literacy and Literature in South African mines. In 1998, the Orapa mine started using materials in their programme which were based on the South African Adult Basic Education and Training programme (ABET). The materials in both English and Setswana for different levels of learners cover topics such as basic survival and functional skills and introduction to computing. Adult basic education is offered to mine employees who have never attended school or do not hold a Standard Seven Certificate.

The programme has been adapted to the Botswana context, and meanwhile enjoys the approval of both supervisors and learners (Youngman, 2002a). The increasing demand for ABE and workplace literacy is an indication of the growing recognition of adult learning and its role in the world of work.

## Teaching and learning activities

With the focus on teaching conventional reading, writing, and numeracy skills, the first few sessions of BNLP Primer One include basic discussion of a picture in order to identify the key word of the lesson. Efforts concentrate on teaching learners to write. As progress is made, each consecutive session normally picks up where the last one left off and learners continue reading or writing from the primer. This method applies for workplace liter-



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acy where there is no recourse to work-related issues in teaching and learning. The programme uses Setswana, the national language, as the medium of instruction, to the neglect of other languages. Officials have viewed Setswana as a neutral medium of instruction that is spoken by most people. However, the use of one language tends to stifle the cultural development of other languages (Youngman, 2000b).

Minimum duration is of concern at DNFE. The 2003 survey found that the majority of participants took less than one or two years to complete primers 1 and 2, but needed more than two years to complete primers 3, 4 and 5, resulting in an average period of three to four years. Most enrollees for English as a Second Language completed their course of training in from one to two years (Chilisa, et al. 2005). In the new programme proposal it is intended for participants to complete all three levels within an average period of four years. The feasibility of this proposal will depend on the learning plans of the individual learners and the availability of facilitators to help them learn.

Educators in the BNLP are called Literacy Group Leaders (LGLs), most of whom have a minimum qualification of a Standard Seven level education. LGLs are volunteers who are paid an honorarium for each session taught. Some have completed their Junior Certificate. The training of LGLs was conducted by district staff and regional staff with support by the Department Headquarters. The district staff recruited LGLs from the community. Selection was based on qualifications (a Standard Seven or Form Three Certificate). LGLs are nominated by community leaders and evaluated by district staff. They are recruited from different ethnic and language communities. Initial training is carried out jointly by the various districts over a period of two weeks. Once they have completed their initial training, the instructors are offered follow-up refresher training each year to discuss any problems they encounter during their teaching (UIE, 2004). Teachers who work in the ABEP programme hold a university degree in adult education or other related fields. Some have been trained to teach at the primary or secondary school level. The idea is to motivate current officers in DNFE to take up teaching. It is hoped that this will improve the delivery of literacy training.

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# The provision of basic non-formal education for youths and adults in Brazil: Country profile

## Introduction

Pessimists have long argued with irony that Brazil is the country of the future – and always will be. Their pessimism has in many ways been justified, especially when one looks at educational statistics and data on investment in education, more particularly in adult non-formal and continuing education, as a percentage of the GNP. The question posed is whether it is possible to attain sustained, stable and equitable economic and social development in a country that still possesses an adult illiterate population of almost 15 millions, a functional illiteracy rate of 24.1% and over 68 million young and adult Brazilians (almost half of the total population over 15 years of age) who have not completed primary education.

Comparisons with other rapidly developing countries are perhaps inevitable. Amongst those which make up the so-called BRIC group – Brazil, Russia, India and China – literacy rates suggest that India and Brazil are in a similar position, with huge challenges to overcome if they are to sustain the current rapid growth. The Chinese example in which the lack of learning (including literacy) and vocational skills was seen and felt as an impediment to the capacity of the economy to modernise and expand, provides a clear case in which investment in non-formal education has been seen as a basis for sustained growth.

In Brazil, perhaps one of the greatest challenges is to establish education as a national priority, convincing the Brazilian population and especially politicians and economists that investment in education at all levels and modalities – formal and non-formal – is indeed an investment in the future of the country and not an unnecessary expenditure which produces little economic return. Economists in general tend to view education as expenditure and not as investment.

However, Brazil has achieved considerable advances over recent years in terms of economic growth and the reduction of poverty and disparities between rich and poor. To some extent progress in education has not accompanied this rapid change, leading many commentators to question whether the lack of investment in non-formal and formal education will not in the future create an obstacle to further growth, using examples both of

other members of BRIC and more particularly of the Asian Tigers, where fast economic development was accompanied by high investment in formal and non-formal education (Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and others). UNESCO advocates that the percentage of GNP dedicated to education should be at least 5%; some analysts consider that 7% would be more realistic at this moment when it is necessary to create an impact effect. In many cases in Latin America GNP dedicated to education does not exceed 3%.

Brazilian educational statistics give some dimension of the formidable challenges faced by those responsible for education in general in Brazil. New measures taken in recent years, and particularly since 2003, in both the formal and non-formal fields, suggest that a different approach is being constructed which understands literacy as the foundation for all effective future learning rather than a one-off short-term remedial action, and seeks to articulate formal and non-formal and school and vocational/technical education for adults and young people in a more effective and efficient manner. Although there is perhaps a lack of overall policy, the rich diversity of programmes offered by various ministries at central Government level is proof of this.

In this sense Brazil offers a fecund and stimulating case study for those interested in the contribution of NFE to national development. Its strong tradition of popular education aimed at offering a more critical and broad based learning experience whilst seeking to valorise popular knowledge and culture, provides an important pedagogical inheritance which is currently serving as inspiration for new programmes. At present, whilst there is little doubt concerning the importance of civil society's contribution to educational innovation, particularly but not only in the field of adult non-formal education, there is a consensus that the overall coordination, financing, monitoring and evaluation of educational policy is the responsibility of the central Government.

The information presented in this report refers principally to programmes, projects and actions of NFBE initiated and developed in the period 2003–2006 – the first mandate of the Lula Government. The data also refer principally to Government initiatives, and to those offered by national agencies. We do not include information on programmes offered by state and municipal governments nor by non-governmental organizations, unless delivered in partnership with governmental agencies. Data were collected both by consulting the sites of the ministries, agencies and organizations involved, as well as using relevant reports and policy statements, and on the basis of direct contact with those responsible for NFE programmes particularly in what were considered key ministries: Work and Employment (MTE), Agrarian Development (MDA) and Education (MEC), where the author of this report was at the time Director of the Department of Adult and Youth Education in the Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity – SECAD.

In order to understand the context of non-formal basic education in Brazil it is essential to situate the discussion within Brazil's current social-educational profile. According to

data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (PNAD/IBGE, 2005) the population of Brazil in 2004 was just over 182 million people, of whom 137.7 million were aged 15 years or over, and 34 million were in the 15 to 29 age bracket. Of the same total population, 14,654,000 were classified as illiterate (with less than one year of schooling) and a further 16 million, with less than 4 years of schooling, are considered functionally illiterate. This represents a functional illiteracy rate of 24.1%. If we consider those over 15 who have not concluded primary education (9 years in Brazil<sup>1</sup>) we have a further 37 million. Thus over 68 million Brazilians over 15 years of age have not concluded primary education, representing almost 50% of the total population over 15 years old. In the 15 to 24 age bracket, 12 million young people have not concluded primary education, and almost 2 million are illiterate.

These statistics are reinforced by other social indicators. The total number of illiterates is proportionally much higher in urban areas, 9.7 million against 4.7 million in rural areas, but in percentile terms rural areas have almost three times more illiterates – 26.3% against 8.7% in urban areas. Illiteracy affects the indigenous peoples and Negroes much more than whites (18.1% for indigenous people, 16% for Negroes against 7.1% for whites) and those living in the Northeast Region of the country more than any other (22.4% in the Northeast against the next highest 10.2% in the North Region). With regard to gender bias, the male illiteracy rate is higher than that for women in Brazil (11.4% against 11.1% for women). These same indicators vary little when applied to the functionally illiterate population.

In socio-economic terms there is a clear correlation between illiteracy and low levels of schooling, and levels of income and access to employment. The lower the level of formal schooling, the lower the level of income and the greater the difficulty to access jobs in the formal sector. Of the total population, 55 million Brazilians are considered to be poor; of these, 24 million live in conditions of extreme poverty. Again these indicators tend to be strongly correlated with those mentioned above: race/ethnicity, geographical location, and to a lesser degree gender.

## The educational context

The context of educational exclusion or low educational performance, which is closely associated with other forms of social, economic and cultural exclusion, defines the poten-

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1 Primary education in Brazil was, until very recently, composed of eight years of schooling divided into two segments: 1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> grade and 5<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade. For children the obligatory period of schooling is from 7 to 14 years of age. A law passed in February 2006 extended the period of obligatory schooling to nine years: state and municipal systems were given until 2010 to implement this measure, although 55% have already included this additional year in their systems by 2008.



tial universe of the demand for NFE/adult and youth education – approximately 68 million Brazilians. What this challenge represents for the Brazilian Government can be better understood if we recall that at present the total number of children and adolescents enrolled in basic primary and secondary education is around 42.5 million (School Census 2005).

As in many other countries, the call for “education for all” was, until 2003, interpreted as primary education for all school-age children. In Brazil, the educational reform carried out during the 1990s focused on primary education for children and adolescents, seen as a strategy for preventing illiteracy. Data reveal that for every 100 children who enter primary education only 51 conclude grade 8, and that almost 60% of children who conclude 4<sup>th</sup> grade are not fluent readers. Secondary education data also raise concern about the quality of the educational process – 42% of those who finish the three years of secondary education are considered to be in a critical or very critical stage of development with regard to reading skills.

In the relative absence of the Ministry of Education from the field of NFE during the nineties and up to 2003, other ministries and especially the Ministry of Work and Employment (with resources from the Workers’ Support Fund – FAT) expanded their activities and the provision of courses. The number of ministries offering programmes which can be described as NFE is now relatively large. It is only in 2003 and more importantly in 2004 that the Ministry of Education reassumed a leading role in the provision of NFE, with special emphasis on literacy and school equivalency programmes, and also initiated a process of articulation with other ministries, agencies, entities and levels of Government providing courses in this field.

### Legal foundations of NFE policies

The Federal Constitution of 1988 guaranteed the right of all citizens to education, and affirmed the obligation of the State to provide 8 years of free primary education for those who did not have access to schooling at what was described as the correct age. Eight years later, in 1996, the National Bill of Education n<sup>o</sup>. 9394/96 (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional- LDB*), abolished the old distinction between the two subsystems of regular formal education and what was known as *suppletive education* (adult education), with the result that adult and youth education was organically integrated into the formal system as a modality of basic education (primary and secondary levels). Although the Bill established that the education offered to young people and adults should take into consideration the characteristics, interests, living and working conditions of the students (Article 37), those enrolled in such classes offered by the state and municipal education systems are included in the official annual school census (*Censo Escolar*). Such courses were until the end of 2006 financed by the local state and municipal governments with

some financial and technical support from central Government by means of a programme known as Making School (*Fazendo Escola*). With the end of the Primary Education Development Fund (FUNDEF), in 2006, from which Adult and Youth Education was explicitly excluded, and its substitution by the Basic Education Development Fund (FUNDEB), in 2007, which will include permanent automatic funding for adult and youth education, this type of school equivalency will finally have a stable source of financing for the first time.

The National Plan of Education (*Plano Nacional de Educação – PNE*), Law nº 10.172, sanctioned in January 2001, established the first goal of adult and youth education as implementing literacy programmes with a view to attending to 10 million young people and adults in five years, and “eradicating” illiteracy by the end of the decade (2010). Finally the Presidential Decree of September 2003 (no. 4834) created the Literate Brazil Programme (*Programa Brasil Alfabetizado*). This programme is financed with resources established in the annual budget of the Ministry of Education.

### **Conceptualisation of NFE in Brazil**

In conceptual terms, all recent legislation since the new Federal Constitution of 1988 refers to *adult and youth education*, the term “adult and youth” referring not to all adults and young people but specifically to those who have been denied access to formal schooling or who, for multiple reasons, have not concluded the minimum of primary education. Whilst the legislation refers more specifically to the provision of equivalency schooling, it also opens the possibility of more flexible provision to the state and municipal systems and other providers. The National Plan of Education, PNE, establishes goals not only for the eradication of illiteracy but also for the conclusion of the two segments which make up primary education by young people and adults until then excluded from regular education.

Thus, in a sense the concept of adult and youth education has become very broad and potentially ambiguous. On the one hand, great emphasis has been given to the more formal dimension of schooling, which when faced by the statistics cited above is quite understandable. On the other, it is also used to refer to practices more traditionally associated with non-formal education – alternative schooling, life skills and community development, vocational training, and income and employment generation programmes. In historical terms the concept of popular education has tended to have wider currency than NFE, and to have embraced educational practices outside the system. The focus of the concept of adult and youth education is not the nature of the provision – formal or non-formal – but the subjects of the educational process.

## Formal support and management

The creation of the Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity (SECAD), and within it the Department of Adult and Youth Education, in 2004, represented an important initiative in both practical and conceptual terms. The configuration of the secretariat – as its title suggests – represented an attempt to bring under one roof interests and concerns which had until then been present in differing degrees in diverse instances within the Ministry. The key concept of continuing education was seen as addressing the core character of the agenda for young people and adults, which extrapolates the levels of formal schooling and comprehends education as a lifelong experience directed towards the millions of Brazilians who have not yet benefited from quality educational processes. Literacy expressed the political priority and the focus on citizenship. Finally, diversity expressed a strong concept, not just of educational inclusion but, above all, of respect and valorisation of the multiple nuances of the Brazilian ethnic and racial, gender, social, environmental and regional diversities. This was the first time since 1964 that the Ministry of Education had included a Department of Adult and Youth Education in its formal structure. Since that time adult and youth education had been increasingly more invisible and fragmented within the administrative structure.

Currently, SECAD organises its action strategy by giving priority to the articulation between educational inclusion and literacy. In addition to being a right, the articulation between literacy and programmes of social inclusion is seen as strategic since it contributes to the re-definition of the horizons of citizenship. Links within the federal sphere, and also with local state and municipal programmes, and links between literacy and the income

transfer programme (*Bolsa Família*) permit an important focus on those living in extreme poverty. The literacy and adult and youth education agenda forms the structural base of inclusion. The articulation with vocational courses expresses the role of literacy as a gateway to inclusion and citizenship, and to economic growth.

The special treatment given to adult and youth education, contemplating literacy and the whole process of learning, both formal or informal, formulates the outline of an agenda directed by the goal of linking the improved quality of education systems to the construction of the foundation for equity and educational inclusion, giving priority to the elements of ethnic-racial, cultural and regional diversity which characterise the Brazilian pop-



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ulation. Adult and youth education is seen both as a basic constitutional and human right and also as a crucial question for development and democracy.

### **Governance and financing of NFE programmes**

This renewed interest in NFE is reflected not only in other secretariats of MEC – the Secretariat of Technological and Vocational Education, SETEC, has been particularly active in this field – but in continued and expanded provision by other ministries. At inter-ministerial level, MEC formulates and develops actions together with the Ministries of Labour and Employment (MTE), Health (MS), Social Development (MDS), Agrarian Development (MDA) and Justice (MJ), as well as with the Secretariats of Aquaculture and Fisheries (SEAP), Youth (SNJ) and Human Rights (SEDH). However, it is important to note that there is no official coordinating body and no overall Government policy for NFE. Financial resources are a question for each ministry or Government organ. At the same time, however, it is possible to point to certain strong tendencies within the broad field of NFE.

1. continued priority for literacy understood as a process and not a brief episode, with the goal of universalising literacy among young people and adults;
2. priority for programmes which seek to integrate schooling (equivalency/ alternative) with vocational/technical training;
3. recognition of the importance of policies which guarantee access to books and reading materials suitable for neo-readers;
4. priority given to young people as the target of such programmes (15–29 years) and the need to coordinate these activities more effectively;
5. priority for programmes targeted at the populations of urban peripheries and rural areas;
6. integration between educational and other social programmes;
7. priority for segments of the population who have been historically abandoned: young people, *quilombolas*, indigenous population, young people in secure units undergoing social-educational programmes, and for adults in prison units.

I now concentrate on two particular programmes of non-formal education for young people and adults. The national Literacy Brazil Programme *Brasil Alfabetizado*, as the broad-based foundation programme without which future learning is problematic, deserves analysis for its complexity and the dimension of its intended outreach. Within this programme, reference is made to two other projects whose aim is to strengthen and facilitate the literacy process – the National Literacy Textbook Programme (PNLA), and the National Literary Prize.

The second programme was chosen for the subjects involved and the complexity of the environment in which it is developed. The goal of the *Educating for Liberty* programme is

to stimulate the expansion/promotion of adult education for those deprived of their liberty for whom the return to normal conviviality is frequently made less easy because of low levels of formal schooling and equally low levels of vocational qualification.

The Literate Brazil Programme, established in 2003, is structured around a complex series of agreements which have given increasing weight to state and municipal governments, with non-governmental organizations – NGOs, and other public and private organizations, including public and private universities – assuming a lesser role since 2007. The growing responsibility attributed to local governments is based on two interconnected arguments. First, it is a widely accepted fact that literacy is a process which requires the provision of more than short-term one-off courses in order to guarantee a true functional level of literacy. This requires that the initial literacy process, which lasts between 6 and 8 months, is articulated with programmes of continuing basic education for adults and young people. Secondly, given the decentralised nature of educational provision in Brazil, states and municipalities are constitutionally responsible for providing equivalency schooling for those who conclude the literacy programme. The public universities and some NGOs are being challenged to assume the task of offering in-service training for adult educators teaching in literacy and continuing education programmes.

Basic funds for developing the programme are provided by the Ministry of Education and are transferred directly to public institutions upon the approval of their pluri-annual plans. Since 2007, literacy workers, and coordinators responsible for the supervision and continued training of a given number of teachers, receive a monthly stipend paid directly by the Ministry of Education via its National Fund for the Development of Education, FNDE. Between 2003 and 2006, an average of approximately 1,754,000 students were enrolled annually. In 2007, a decision was taken to reduce the number of students attending, but to invest more resources to guarantee the quality of the provision offered. To this end, additional funds were made available for initial and continued in-service training, seen as one of the critical areas of literacy work.

The table below demonstrates the evolution of the programme over the four years from 2003–2007, in terms of the number of students enrolled, the number of partners involved, the number of teachers and classes, and the amount of central Government funds invested in Brazilian Reals. Although many partners invested additional resources in the programme there are no reliable figures as to the extent of this investment.

Within the decentralised structure of the programme, central Government is responsible for formulating, coordinating, supporting, monitoring and evaluating all literacy activities. The states, municipalities, universities and social organizations are responsible for mobilizing the students, and recruiting and training the teachers, with autonomy to develop the teaching method that best suits the specific community or segment with which they work, so long as they guarantee that learners will be able to read, write, understand and interpret texts, and carry out basic mathematical operations by the end of the course. The

### Evolution of coverage of the Literate Brazil Programme – 2003/2007

Year Enrolled	Literacy teachers	Projects/Partners	Classes	Municipalities	Resources (millions of Reals)
2003 1.598.430	77.474	180	83.653	2.729	162,1
2004 1.526.155	67.065	381	69.842	*	167,1
2005 1.875.705	97.250	636	102.839	*	208,3
2006 1.609.446	85.070	673	90.643	*	180,3
2007 1.286.718	87.750	1.173	88.070	*	*

\* Information not available

Source: MEC/SECAD. Mapa do Brasil Alfabetizado (<http://mecsrv04.mec.gov.br/secad/sba/inicio.asp>)

Ministry of Education establishes a minimum number of hours for initial training (30 hours) and a minimum for continued training (2 hours per week).

The programme aims to offer all those over 15 years of age who have less than a year of schooling the opportunity to learn to read and write and continue their studies thereafter. Evidence has shown, however, that in many cases those who enrol have had some school or literacy experience, and that mobilising the non-literate is more problematic. Despite the general inclusive policy, special attention has been given to certain segments which for diverse reasons have had greater difficulty in obtaining access to and guaranteeing permanence in educational programmes – fishermen and women, prisoners, young people with low educational skills, adults and young people with special learning needs (especially blind and deaf), rural and indigenous populations. At the same time, high illiteracy rates in the Northeast Region have led to a certain regional bias, as a result of which the region has received a considerably higher proportion of funds than others – approximately 65%. In 2004, the national illiteracy rate was 11.4%, whereas that in the Northeast was 22.4%, the North 12.7%, and the South 6.3%.

The programme maintains a central computerised register and data base (SBA – Literate Brazil System), which is constantly updated. All partners are obliged to fill in electronic forms for each student and literacy worker as well as work plans for initial and continued training and a political-pedagogical project. This information is available to the general public by means of the Literate Brazil Map ([www.mec.gov.br](http://www.mec.gov.br)) and functions as one of the mechanisms of social control.

Within the broad programme, two important support projects have been created. The first seeks to fill a gap in the offer of literary works for new readers whilst challenging the commercial publishers to invest in this potential segment of the reading public. The project involved establishing the *National Literature for All Competition* to award prizes for the production of different kinds of literary texts for neo-readers. In the first year of the competition, over 3,000 entries were received and eight prizes and two special mentions

awarded. The prize included the publication of the work as well as a monetary award. At the same time, a guide for literacy workers and adult educators was prepared with suggestions (not recipes) on how to use the new reading materials. The collection of ten books and the guide were then distributed to schools, programmes, projects offering literacy classes, and basic education programmes, as well as to public libraries. The second edition of the competition is under way and includes a specific prize for authors from Portuguese speaking African countries.

This same scarcity of high quality teaching materials for the literacy process provoked the Ministry of Education to create a specific programme for the selection and distribution of literacy text books – the *National Programme of Literacy Textbooks* (PNLA). Although the employment of textbooks for literacy teaching is a polemical subject, the Ministry's decision had the great merit of putting literacy and adult and youth education on a similar footing, with regular primary and secondary education which both already possess programmes (the PNLD for primary school textbooks and PNLEM for secondary school books) financed by the National Fund for the Development of Education, FNDE. Textbooks are selected, produced and distributed annually to all school children with no charge. Within the PNLA, after the selection of textbooks by a specially appointed commission, based on a series of well-defined criteria, literacy teachers and coordinators can choose the book which best suits the needs of their students from the list of selected books. The programme starts distributing textbooks at the end of 2008.

The second programme, *Educating for Liberty*, resulted from concerns within the Ministry of Justice regarding the provision of education within the prison network based on statistics revealing that around 70% of the rapidly growing prison population (it has doubled in a decade) had not concluded primary education, of whom approximately 10,5% were illiterate. At the same time, the data showed that only about 18% of this same population was involved in some kind of educational programme. This lack of formal schooling, allied with low vocational skills and qualifications, was seen as contributing largely to the difficult reinsertion of the ex-prisoner in society after completing his or her sentence. This led to discussions with the Ministry of Education in 2005, and to the decision to create a specific programme designed to stimulate the expansion of high quality basic education in the prison network, which is largely run by state governments. Within this process the Brasília UNESCO Office played an important brokerage role based on its international experience in this field, its staunch defence of education as a basic human right independent of whether a person is free or imprisoned, its commitment to the construction of a culture of peace, and the decision to apply a fund in trust grant from the Japanese Government as seed money for the project.

The three partners decided on the basis of an initial diagnosis of the situation to develop a three-pronged strategy emphasising the need for formal agreements between the two secretariats (normally education and justice/prison administration/security) respon-

sible for developing educational programmes in prisons; for investment in the training of prison staff and teachers; and, thirdly, for the need to establish pedagogical guidelines for the work in prisons.

The first stage, which included five regional seminars, resulted in the application of additional resources by the two ministries in six states, and terminated in July 2006, with the holding of the first National Seminar on Education in Prisons. This seminar proposed national guidelines for education in prisons based on the three initial themes debated during the regional seminars: management, linkage and mobilization; training and valorisation of professionals engaged in the provision of education in prisons; and pedagogical aspects. Over the following year this project was expanded to cover 12 states: further regional seminars and a second national seminar were held in 2007.

It is important to note that parallel and articulated with these developments on the national front, the two Ministries became engaged in a Latin American project supported by the EUROsociAL – Education consortium financed by the European Commission and headed by the International Centre of Pedagogical Studies (CIEP) pertaining to the French Ministry of National Education. The countries involved, Argentina, Brazil, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay, set up the Latin American Network for Education in Prisons in 2006. This network continues to develop activities and hold periodical meetings/seminars. The question of education in prisons, which had found a special mention in the Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning in 1997, was also given greater prominence by UNESCO which in 2007 announced an International Conference on the issue for 2009, to be preceded by a preparatory process of regional meetings and consultations.

The educational programmes sketched above are examples of the different demands which non-formal education in Brazil is called upon to face. On the one hand, it is required to attempt to provide answers to problems caused by deficiencies in the formal system. Good education for all, independent of age and other factors, is still a huge challenge. On the other hand, the examples demonstrate the need for programmes to provide both for the general public and also for the specific learning needs of those groups whose vulnerability places them in even more disadvantageous conditions. As Boaventura de Souza Santos affirmed, we have the right to be equal when the difference makes us inferior and to be different when equality “*mischaracterises*” us.



Katy Anís

# Non-formal and basic education: Ethiopia country profile

Non-formal and basic education programmes have mushroomed in Ethiopia in recent years. The Government has officially endorsed adult and non-formal basic education as a viable method of striving to reach the Millennium Development Goals. Government, donors, civil society, communities and other actors are highly engaged in, and financially committed to, the provision of non-formal and basic education.

## Concepts of NFE

### Non-formal education

The Education Sector Development Programme III for the years 2005 / 2006 to 2010 / 2011, Ethiopia's National Action Plan on Education, specifically discusses the adult and non-formal education programme and defines it to include a range of basic education and training components for out-of-school children and adults. The Action Plan defines the content of adult and non-formal education as including literacy, numeracy and the development of skills that enable learners to solve problems and to change their lives. The Action Plan also outlines three sub-component modes of delivery for adult and non-formal education:

1. Alternative basic education for out-of-school children between the ages of 7 and 14
2. A functional adult literacy programme for youths and adults over 15 years of age
3. Community skills training centres for youths and adults

New adult education and alternative basic education policies were to be scheduled by the Ministry of Education to take effect in 2007, and refer to the Education Sector Development III definitions and specifications of non-formal education. Alternative basic education is a type of school equivalency programme for children aged 7 to 14 in which learners cover the equivalent of the first four grades of primary school in just three years, and are then able to transfer to the formal system. Alternative basic education is characterized by low-cost construction, community contribution to construction and school management, inclusion of disadvantaged ethnic groups, gender, and special needs groups, teaching in the local vernacular, selection of local facilitators, accelerated learning, active and learner-centred teaching methodologies, and flexibility in the delivery of education.

### **Literacy**

The adult education and alternative basic education policies discuss functional adult literacy as *“the practice of reading and writing put to some use ... People have attained functional literacy when they have adequate knowledge and skills to use reading and writing for any purpose for which they need those skills”* (Ministry of Education, 2006). The policy documents also define functional literacy as *“the acquisition and use of reading and writing to learn practical knowledge and skills useful for other aspects of life, such as agriculture, health, civic education, cultural education, and so on”* (Ministry of Education, 2006).

### **Life skills**

The Education Sector Development Plan and Adult and Alternative Basic Education Strategies state that the non-formal education programme *“focuses on literacy, numeracy and the environment to enable learners to develop problem-solving abilities and change their mode of life”*. It defines some of these life skills as *“skills useful for other aspects of life, such as agriculture, health, civic education, cultural education”,* and *“primary health care, prevention of diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, etc., family planning, environment, agriculture, marketing, banking, gender, etc.”* (Ministry of Education, 2006). However, it does not define limits to the universe of life skills.

### **Lifelong learning**

The adult education and alternative basic education policies that are soon to be effective state that *“adult education must not be understood to mean only literacy, basic education and skills for youth and adults. In today’s fast changing society, adult education is part of the life-long education effort through which people keep up with changes and increasingly develop themselves”* (Ministry of Education, 2006).

### **Policies, reforms and legal foundations of NFE**

The Federal Ministry of Education and the House of Representatives are currently intending to endorse an education law which will include mention of adult and non-formal basic education.

The current Education Sector Development Programme III advocates the use of functional adult literacy, alternative basic education and multi-grade classrooms, and other alternatives as a means of expanding universal access to education. The Action Plan issues a directive that alternative basic education and functional adult literacy programmes will be expanded, and that regional states will organize adult literacy programmes and develop materials in the mother tongue. The action plan states that the learning materials will cover areas including primary health care and the prevention of such diseases as

malaria and HIV/AIDS among others, family planning, environment, agriculture, marketing, banking, and gender (Ministry of Education, 2005).

Ethiopia's National Action Plan states that functional adult literacy will be a voluntary programme taught by teachers, ABE facilitators, literate adults, secondary students and university students. It will be conducted in schools, alternative basic education centres and *kebele* facilities. The main costs of the programme will be teaching and learning materials, training manuals and the training of literacy volunteer teachers (Ministry of Education, 2005).



Ethiopia

*dvv international*

The Government set the target of reaching 5.2 million adults through functional adult literacy, and 143,500 adults through the existing 287 Community Skills Training Centres between the years 2005 and 2011. It calls on the support of multilateral and bilateral development partners, NGOs, local governments and communities to assist in funding and implementing these activities. In the Education Sector Development Plan III, the Government committed itself to developing an equivalence system between skills gained through non-formal education and those gained through formal education.

The Government has also adopted alternative basic education as a strategy to increase enrolment and ensure greater equity for *“disadvantaged children including girls, children with special needs, and children from pastoralist, semi-agriculturalist communities, and in isolated rural areas”* (Ministry of Education, 2005). Following recommendations published in the year 2000 in a Ministry of Education study entitled *“Alternative Routes to Basic Education”*, and the UNESCO/IIEP Nomadic Education in East Africa research, a resolution was passed at the National Education Conference to incorporate alternative basic education as an alternative to formal primary school. National guidelines for the implementation of the programme were developed, and by the year 2003 guidelines had been developed for procedures on how to implement alternative basic education in pastoralist and semi-pastoralist communities (Ministry of Education, 2003).

Following the release of the Education Sector Development Programme III, a series of workshops and validation gatherings resulted in the production of policies specific to adult and non-formal education. In February 2007, the strategy was approved by parliament, and by 2008 it was launched, and the Ministry was planning to formulate a National Coalition of Stakeholders for adult education and alternative basic education.

The new adult education policy delineates activities for implementing the strategy across Ethiopia, including enhancing a national commitment to adult education, establishing a sustainable management framework for adult education, building capacity in adult education, expanding adult education provision, establishing and sustaining effective networking and partnerships, mobilizing resources, and ensuring effective budgeting and financing.

The adult education policy also delineates strategies to guide programme and curriculum development, including:

- developing learner-responsive programmes;
- developing special programmes to ensure equitable access;
- improving delivery systems and techniques for more effective adult learning;
- creating and sustaining a literate environment;
- developing a sound knowledge base of research;
- implementing effective monitoring and evaluation; and
- instituting an appropriate adult learning accreditation system.

The alternative basic education strategy states that alternative basic education should be defined by principles of linkage and integration, equal access, gender and equity-inclusive education, learner-orientation and relevance to learner context, flexible delivery, the involvement of stakeholders and public-private partnerships; and cost-effectiveness.

The alternative basic education policy also delineates strategies of action for

- strengthening the management framework of alternative basic education;
- building capacity in alternative basic education;
- expanding alternative basic education provision;
- ensuring the right to education for children with special needs;
- establishing and sustaining effective collaboration and public-private partnerships;
- mobilizing and ensuring effective budgeting and financing;
- developing learner-responsive curricula and programmes;
- improving delivery systems and techniques for more effective learning;
- providing for effective monitoring and evaluation, and action research; and
- instituting an appropriate alternative basic education evaluation system.

Prior to the adoption of this national policy, regional implementation plans existed in diverse forms. The regions of Amhara, Oromia, and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) had developed strategic plans which set forth the guidelines of alternative basic education, including the type of curricula to be used, facilitator guidelines, number of hours, etc. (Amhara Regional Education Bureau, 2003 & SNNPR Regional Education Bureau, 2005). However, other “*emerging regions*”, such as Gambella and Afar, had no such regionalization of policy.

Different sources estimate that from 10 to 15 million of Ethiopia's almost 80 million people are pastoralists (Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia, 2006). In the latest published official data from the Ministry of Education, the Afar and Somali Regions, majority pastoralist areas, had gross enrolment ratios of 30% and 23.4% respectively, compared to a national ratio of 79.8% (Ministry of Education, 2005). In the year 2003, guidelines were developed on how to implement alternative basic education in pastoralist and semi-pastoralist communities (Ministry of Education, 2003). These guidelines follow the standard alternative basic model, but with specific adaptations to increase accessibility of education to the pastoralist population. Oromia, Somali, Afar and the South Omo zone of SNNPR have been particularly active in developing policy adaptations, strategies and frameworks that cater to the needs of pastoralists.

The area of vocational training has been transferred to a Ministry separate from general education, with its own state minister. Most of the vocational and technical education opportunities require trainees to have 10+1, 10+2 or 10+3 level education, i.e. advanced secondary education. However in 2006, this Ministry developed a Non-formal Technical and Vocational Training Implementation Framework that systematically integrates non-formal education as part of further skills and livelihood training.

## **Resources and financial support for NFE**

Since 2001/2, the Ethiopian Government has allocated the highest proportion of its national budget to the education sector (Oxfam & Basic Education Association, 2006). The Education Sector Development Programme III made a commitment to increase its contribution to adult and non-formal education from 164.1 million birr in the previous period to 288.2 million birr under the current educational Action Plan. The Plan advocates the use of formal schools, alternative basic education centres and community skills training centres as venues for NFE in order to be able to concentrate the adult and non-formal education budget on teaching and learning investments rather than on construction and other capital expenditures (Ministry of Education, 2005). The Education Sector Development Plan aggregates the alternative basic education budget with primary education, as opposed to adult and non-formal education.

The administration of education in Ethiopia is regionalized. The Federal Ministry of Education serves a facilitating role, but it has a limited budget, and regions are not accountable to the Federal Ministry of Education. The Federal Ministry funds regional governments. These allocate funds to Regional Education Bureaus which in turn allocate funds to Zonal Education Offices (a zone is a sub-district of a region). Regions have a great deal of discretion in allocating funding. For example, the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region allots 85% of its education budget to formal education, while 5% to 10% is allotted to non-formal education.

In a separate funding stream, the regional councils directly allocate funding to *woredas* through block grants (a *woreda* is a district administrative unit, a sub-unit of a zone). *Woredas* also have a large amount of discretion in how to allocate their block grants. The largest segment of *woreda* block grants is usually allocated to education, ranging from 33% to 66% (Ministry of Education, 1995). *Woreda* education offices at the district level also have a great deal of discretion in how they allocate their education funding, be it to formal education, alternative basic education, or other non-formal activities. Each *woreda* determines the salaries of Government-paid alternative basic education facilitators according to local budgeting criteria.

International donors have been quite active in funding non-formal education in Ethiopia. USAID has funded non-formal education with 11 million US dollars during the period between 2005 and 2009. The Italian Cooperation Agency bilaterally allocated 2 million euros to alternative basic education over a 3 year period, and the Netherlands Embassy dedicated 8.2 million euros to fund literacy education, skills training and entrepreneurship support for adult women. The German Government has also supported adult education through *dvv international* over the years. The World Bank – Government of Ethiopia Pastoralist Community Development Programme has been a major funder of non-formal education. In the SNNP Region alone, this programme has contributed 750,000 US dollars to non-formal education over the last three years.

The scope of NGO financing of non-formal education is huge. Because the landscape is so diverse, it is difficult to estimate the overall contribution of NGOs to the non-formal education sector. A 2006 study on education funding found that all the *woreda* education officials in selected sample sites affirmed that their respective *woredas* were receiving support from NGOs for education. However, none of the officials were able to state the exact amount, nor were they able to estimate of the amount of their contributions (Oxfam and Basic Education Association, 2006).

In many cases, strong NGO-Government collaboration has resulted in unique progress in alternative basic education. In the Amhara Region, NGOs such as Save the Children Norway and Save the Children Denmark contribute funds on a quarterly basis directly to the Regional Education Bureau for alternative basic education. They collaborate with the Regional Bureau in supporting implementation, but it is the Regional Bureau itself that takes main responsibility for implementation. These funds are then channelled into alternative basic education activities for 180,000 beneficiaries in the region, supporting Government-run alternative basic education as well as NGO-run implementation. The funds are used to print textbooks, support the monitoring capacity of the region, and strengthen capacity to train ABE facilitators, among other activities. In the Somali region, Save the Children UK began with direct project implementation but has gradually moved into a partnership with the Somali Regional Education Bureau in which the Bureau trains ABE facilitators, prints teaching and learning materials, and pays facilitator salaries, while

Save the Children UK implements a five-year plan to support the education activities of the regional Government, with particular focus on woredas that are remote and pastoral. In one innovation in Government-NGO, the Amhara Regional Bureau has awarded funds to a local NGO to implement alternative basic education.

Community contributions to non-formal education expenditures should not be overlooked. Across the nation, communities supply manual labour for the construction of alternative basic education centres, as well as for locally available building materials such as rocks, wood, sand, and other such items. Communities also contribute human resources to the management of learning centres. In the TEACH project alone, USAID has funded 11.7 million US dollars for non-formal education, but these funds are conditional on a matching contribution of 15%, or 1.755 million US dollars, by the communities. The Education Sector Development Programme states that while the Government contributed 12.5 million birr to education under the previous educational plan, the amount of community contributions substantially increased the volume of input to the education sector, although financial figures were difficult to document.



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### **Structures, organisation, governance, and management of NFE**

Ethiopia is a federal republic composed of nine regions: Afar, Somali, Amhara, Oromia, Gambella, Benishangul Gumuz, Tigray, Harare, and the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region (SNNPR). In 1994, the education and training policy decentralized education administration, delegating responsibility to the regional states, and advocated the use of the various Ethiopian mother tongues as the respective language of instruction. Since then training programmes are being conducted in 22 languages.

In line with the 1994 Education and Training Policy, Ethiopia has been guided by a series of Education Sector Development Programmes, ESDP I, II, and III. The Federal Ministry of Education serves a coordinating role, setting forth frameworks and policies, while regions are the main implementers and control the purse strings of education.

Currently, a Gender and Equity Department exists within the Ministry of Education with a certain amount of staff assigned to non-formal education. Yet, governance of non-formal education is largely decentralized. Many regions have further decentralized their approach

to non-formal education and, in particular, embraced alternative basic education as a strategy for meeting the Millennium Development Goals. For instance, in the SNNP region, the Regional Bureau of Education developed a separate curriculum for sedentary and pastoralist children and youth. In February 2007, it sought funding for the preparation of adult-oriented regional curricula for its literacy and numeracy classes. Regions vary greatly in their implementation capacity. Some regions like Tigray and Amhara have soared and have reached gross enrolment ratios of 111.3 and 98.7, with a large portion of this increase due to alternative basic education enrolment. In other regions, e.g. in Afar, gross enrolment remains at 30% and lower. Some members of woreda education office staff, as well as Level 3 graduates of alternative basic education programmes, are illiterate themselves.

When government does not have the capacity to reach all out-of-school children and youths through formal schools, NGOs or other civil society actors mobilize communities to build schools, secure enrolment and train facilitators. When the centres become operational and sustainable, they are usually handed over to the government. In joint endeavours of multiple actors in the provision of non-formal education, the roles and responsibilities between and among government, civil society, and communities are not always clear. Some regions, like Oromia Regional Education Bureau, have developed regionalized versions of the alternative basic education strategy that specifically clarify the roles of NGOs, woreda education offices, communities, and other actors.

Coordinating donor input is a major undertaking in most regional bureaus. While regional education bureaus have the main responsibility for implementation, in many cases, they have formed regional forums on non-formal education. These function at different levels, usually parallel to the implementation capacity of the regional government. The regional bureaus play a facilitating role, helping to establish the operating guidelines of the forums and often filling many key officer positions.

Many NGOs are now in the process of handing over non-formal education centres to Government management, by woreda education offices. The Joint Mission Report of October/November 2006 found that regional governments often press for rapid conversion of alternative basic education centres into primary schools (Joint Review Mission, 2006). However, community members across various remote areas have complained of a decrease in quality after the hand-over, citing sometimes long delays in securing teachers, frequent absence of teachers, inflexibility with the teaching schedules, the cessation of night classes, etc.

Communities also substantially contribute to the governance of non-formal education programmes. Centre Management Committees are often composed of influential people in the community, usually older men, and to a lesser extent women, although women's participation is highly encouraged and set as a goal in ESDP III. During drop-in visits in many regions, it is not uncommon to find a centre management committee member on



the learning centre site. These committees ensure that the facilitator is present and teaching, and will often report to the woreda education office or the implementing NGO when there is a problem. They are very active in mobilizing communities to participate. In some areas they call community meetings to address low attendance issues and will particularly look into cases of absenteeism.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The new National Alternative Basic Education Strategy advocates that alternative basic education be integrated into the Ministry of Education's Education Management Information System, since this programme is grouped with primary education. The Adult Education Strategy calls for the establishment of a Management Information System for adult education. Both policies also set forth principles to guide effective monitoring and evaluation. However, in the official Ministry of Education Statistical Abstract for 2004/5, the main indicators reported included neither alternative basic education nor adult non-formal education statistics. Furthermore, the Statistical Capacity-Building Programme does not predict that adult and non-formal education indicators will be ready to be included in the next edition of the Statistical Abstract.

Over the past decade, *dvv international* has made significant efforts to collect national level information on adult education when this was not being collected by any other systematic means. However, the Statistical Capacity-Building Programme is currently supporting the enhancement of education management and information systems at federal and regional levels. The project is mainly concerned with general education, but is trying to develop better adult and non-formal education data as well, and will focus on adapting existing data-collection forms.

Non-formal data-collection sheets were developed, the Annual Census Questionnaire for alternative and adult basic education programmes and the Annual Census Questionnaire for skills-training programmes. However, except in Tigray and SNNPR there was little recovery of data forms. Previously, forms were printed and distributed on the national level. Recently the printing of data collection forms has been decentralized and assigned to the respective regions; it is currently unclear whether or not these forms have actually been printed in every region.

Statistics on adult and non-formal education, according to the Statistical Capacity-Building Programme, show the capacity of most regions to be underdeveloped, with one exception – SNNPR. The programme hopes to use the case of SNNPR to disseminate good practice. SNNPR assigns one supervisor to cover ten learning centres – the ratio usually being approximately seven formal schools and three non-formal education centres. The region conducts sample monitoring of non-formal education each year. In the province of Tigray, school directors are assigned not only to their own school, but to all the non-

formal education schools in their jurisdiction, and their personnel evaluation is tied to the performance of all centres in their jurisdiction. Conditions differ in other regions. In Gambella, one educator stated, “*When we get money, we go out to monitor and evaluate. When there is no money, we don’t. There is not really any programmed monitoring and evaluation.*” However, the Statistical Capacity-Building Programme is currently seeking strategies to develop better quality and coverage of data collection. It may approach the National Coalitions of Stakeholders in adult education and alternative basic education once the new adult and alternative basic education national strategies are launched.

Woreda education offices are responsible for monitoring all formal and non-formal education activities in their jurisdiction. However, many woreda education offices are greatly constrained by their limited budgets. From north to south, woredas everywhere complain of the lack of vehicles and the lack of fuel for transportation. Problems are often compounded by the fact that the most remote and marginalized woredas are the ones with the least resources for transportation, human resources, and other monitoring inputs. It is these woredas that have the most remote non-formal education centres in terrains that are most difficult to reach.

Most NGOs have their own system of monitoring; they often share their data with woreda education offices. However, there is no standardized system of reporting for NGOs. Several manuals and training resources for non-formal education monitoring and evaluation have been developed by the Adult and Non-formal Education Association, *dvv international* and others. The Statistical Capacity-Building Programme hopes to further involve civil society in data collection as it finds that government structures alone do not have access to all the relevant data on adult and non-formal education.

The Education Sector Development Programme III calls for the national learning assessments to be conducted in the final grade of first cycle and second cycle primary education (Ministry of Education, 2005). There is no national mechanism for assessing adult and non-formal education. However, learning assessment instruments are being designed to track the performance of more than 90,000 non-formal education participants in the TEACH project.

## Research

In April 2007, Addis Ababa University inaugurated a Master level programme in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning with a capacity for 20 students. It is housed in the Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies, but is implemented in collaboration with the Department of Educational Planning and Management. But even prior to the commencement of this programme, many professional educators were already completing Master level degrees at Addis Ababa University. Many of these individuals focused their research on their professional activities and field work in the area of adult non-formal

education. Some of their studies have been published, but literature in the field remains sporadic and unsystematized.

The German Adult Education Association and its Institute for International Cooperation (IIZ/DVV, which in 2007 changed its name to *dvv international*) maintains a regional project office in Ethiopia that pursues adult education activities geared to knowledge and capacity building. It conducts research, funds pilot projects, and carries out policy and lobbying work. In addition, it produces a quarterly journal and has published many papers, reports and studies on non-formal education. It houses a library on adult and non-formal education at the Institute for Curriculum Development and Research.



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A large body of knowledge has been produced under the auspices of NGOs. The vast majority of literature in the field, however, is scattered among the NGOs in the form of “grey literature” and must be collected, report by report. Some NGOs have their own libraries on development issues, but these are not widely consulted. Internet access has progressed to a point where civil society or non-formal education professionals can easily post and retrieve information about NFE in Ethiopia.

A December 2006 assessment showed that the non-formal education departments at Regional Teacher Training Colleges are largely underdeveloped, not to mention their research units (ANFEAE, 2006). Several Regional Education Bureaus, when asked whether they conduct any non-formal education research, responded “none”.

## Training

In the Education Sector Development Plan, the Government committed itself to linking the training of non-formal education facilitators with existing regional teacher training institutes. Currently, there is no national framework for the training of NFBE educators and trainers.

Just as education provision is regionalized in Ethiopia, so is training. Teacher Training Colleges are increasingly becoming involved in the provision of training to NFBE facilitators as well as to formal teachers. Many Teacher Colleges are also becoming involved in

upgrading non-formal education facilitator skills, allowing facilitators to become certified after participating in two or three intensive training courses during their mid-year break. For instance, the Somali Region provides initial training of three months for non-formal education facilitators. Facilitators can become certified after attending summer sessions for a period of three years. In the Amhara Region, Save the Children Denmark and Norway have provided the Amhara Regional Education Bureau with funding to support the training of facilitators in the region's four teacher training colleges. Other regions have similar arrangements.

In December 2006, the Adult and Non-formal Education Association conducted an assessment of eight regional teacher training colleges to evaluate their capacity to support non-formal education. The TEACH project plans to invest resources to enable eight teacher training colleges to develop non-formal education departments, to open basic non-formal education libraries, and become more directly involved in the training of non-formal education facilitators. The current formal school teacher trainers will be given initial training in adult and non-formal teaching methods.

In terms of non-formal education managers, the Adult and Non-formal Education Association has provided training for 445 members of woreda education office staff in an intensive programme on the management of non-formal and alternative basic education. It plans to train an additional 1,600 woreda staff members over the coming three years.

The Ministry of Agriculture has 25 colleges that train grassroots development agents to become agricultural extension workers. The plan is to provide every community of 300 households with three development agents – one plant science expert, one natural resource management expert, and one animal science expert – who are to be based in over 15,000 Farmer Training Centres across the nation. There has been growing awareness of a desire for collaboration between Ministry of Agriculture extension agents and the broader adult and non-formal education sector, but linkages have yet to be established. However, concerted efforts are being conducted at a number of alternative basic education centres. Development agents often even reside at these centres where they carry out their duties, and spend time with the members of the communities they serve.

## **NFE in action**

Non-formal education initiatives are being carried out by a host of implementers in Ethiopia. There are at least 38 more noteworthy organizations which provide coverage on a larger scale or in a wider scope, but the list is not exhaustive. A wealth of further activities are conducted, especially by local community associations, local NGOs and district Government units. In addition, many of the activities run by the NGOs are umbrella projects in which a number of other actors are also involved.

For more detailed information on the 38 agencies and their programmes, please contact the author, Katy Anis, at [katyanis@yahoo.com](mailto:katyanis@yahoo.com) and request a copy of the Annex on Non-formal Education Programmes in Ethiopia.

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Francis Owusu-Mensah

# Ghana – Country profile of non-formal education

## Legal foundations of NFE policies in Ghana

There is no concrete legal framework specific to non-formal education in Ghana. However, it could be argued that the provision of non-formal basic education in Ghana has been influenced partially by the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, which gives impetus to the provision of education as basic right for all Ghanaians. Specifically, Article 38 sub-section 2 of the 1992 Constitution states that:

*“The Government shall within two years after parliaments first meets after coming into force of this Constitution draw up a programme for the implementation within the following ten years for the provision of a free, compulsory universal basic education.”*

While this provision does not specifically mention non-formal education, it does recognise the need for basic education on the part of all Ghanians, irrespective of the age.

The provision of non-formal education in Ghana has been the responsibility of the Non-Formal Education Division (NFED) of the Ministry of Education (MOE). The NFED was established in 1991 with the aim of eradicating illiteracy in Ghana by 2015:

*“Eradication of illiteracy in Ghana has been considered a strategy for sustainable development by empowering people to develop themselves, participate in the process of development and enjoy the benefits thereof.”* (Aryeetey and Kwakye, 2005:5)

This was Ghana’s response to the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of the General Conference of UNESCO, for the eradication of illiteracy in Africa (Essuman, 2004; Republic of Ghana, 2007). The main objective of NFED is to *“make the poorest Ghanaians, especially those living in the rural communities, functionally literate with emphasis on women”* (NFED 1999 cited in Blunch and Portner, 2004:37).

## Aim and objectives

According to Blunch and Portner (2004:38), the programme aims at providing participants with functional literacy with a view toward achieving the following outcomes:

- a) An investment climate will be promoted.
- b) The country's development process will be facilitated since development cannot take place in a country with a high illiteracy rate.
- c) Enrolment levels in basic schools will increase since more people will send their children to school when realizing the benefits of education.
- d) Ignorance, one of the ramifications of illiteracy and the bane of individual and societal development, will be eliminated.
- e) Poverty and disease will be reduced through learners' application of the functional, developmental and occupational lessons in the primer.
- f) The learner will be able to function more effectively in the larger socio-economic and political environment through improved communication and social interaction.
- g) The latent talents of all illiterate Ghanaians will be tapped for the country's social, economic and political advancement.
- h) The human resources of the country will be harnessed to achieve the objectives of Vision 2020.
- i) The learners' skills and self-esteem will improve and their awareness of choices in areas like family planning, personal health and hygiene will increase.

The overriding objective of the programme is to build the capacity of hitherto neglected human resources in society to participate actively in the developmental effort, and also to reduce poverty among disadvantaged groups in Ghanaian society.

In 2004, the Government of Ghana reaffirmed its commitment to the provision of non-formal education as a means of providing second chance education. The Government White Paper on the Report of the Education Reform Review Committee (2004:47) expresses this commitment as follows:

*"Government is aware of the place of non-formal education in enlarging learning opportunities for the adult population who missed formal school. Government would therefore encourage measures to promote non-formal education. Government takes cognisance of the need for additional support, other than the classroom experience, to promote learning for both children and adults. Government will therefore assist the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) to mobilise its resources to complement and promote school and adult education."*

According to the Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLSS 4), a report issued in 2000, the percentage of the school attendance rate by age drops as people move up the formal education ladder. Between the ages 6–11 and 19–25, there was a drop from 83.1 % to 13.5% respectively at the last census in 2000. The rural percentage drop was more significant than the urban (Government of Ghana-GLSS 4, 2000), indicating a demand in adult basic education for the Ministry to achieve the goal of a functionally literate and



self-reliant population. The Report, indicates a considerable overlap in literacy in the English language and the Ghanaian languages, with 50 percent of adults in Ghana being literate in English and/or a local language, in rural areas, however only 41 percent of the population is literate (GLSS 4, 2000).

### **Administration and organization**

The Non-formal Education Division (NFED) is the main implementing organization responsible for policy formulation, programme coordination, programme design and development, materials design and production, radio programme development and general supervision of programme implementation, evaluation and monitoring of the National Functional Literacy Programme (NFLP) (Aryeetey and Kwakye, 2005).

The Division is headed by an Executive Director who is supported by three divisional directors in charge of the following three main subdivisions: Logistics, Materials Development and Research and Monitoring. Each of the ten regions in Ghana has a regional head of the NFED supported by four regional coordinators. There is a replication of the regional structure in all the 138 districts in the country. At the community level, supervisors live with the participants in their various communities. Each supervisor is responsible for 1,200 zones. During the period from 1992 to 2002, each zone had an average of 15 classes. After the year 2002, the figure rose to 20 or more classes per zone (Blunch and Portner, 2004).

It was intended for the NFED to work on achieving the policy of social justice and equality of opportunities for the disadvantaged. However, considering that it came under the direct authority of the Ministry of Education, and that the most urgent need at the time was to increase literacy/numeracy levels, the Division tended to focus more on literacy and numeracy, paying less attention to the other sectors responsible for social justice and equality.

### **How NFE is conceptualised in Ghana**

The public activities of the division labelled as non-formal education gave the impression that non-formal education is meant to be solely literacy and numeracy. Nonetheless, the curriculum of its programmes covers topics from all development sectors (Essuman, 2004).

There are various aspects of non-formal education in almost every development programme in the country, for instance, programmes in agricultural extension education, health and nutrition education, family planning and reproductive health education, civic education, environmental education, literacy skill acquisition, gender and legal rights, and other community development activities. Among these, the commonest and most widely

known programme bearing the name non-formal education is the National Functional Literacy Programme (NFLP), of the Ministry of Education.

The misconception of NFE as synonymous with literacy/numeracy has been a result of the wide publicity given to literacy programmes in the mass media. For example, whenever illiterate adults in rural areas are portrayed on national television they are almost always pictured as attending literacy classes and attempting to read and write their names and work with numbers. Although this created the awareness that there was high adult illiteracy in the country, particularly in rural areas, it was widely seen as being a waste of resources on illiterate adults, when formal schooling for children lacks resources.

### **Funding for NFLP**

The largest financiers of the second phase of NFLP are the World Bank and the Government of Ghana. Of the total estimated cost of US\$46 million, 60% was to be financed by the IDA and 30% by the Government of Ghana, while the remaining 10% were to be borne by communities and NGOs (Aryeetey and Kwakye, 2005). The first phase of the programme, which ran from 1992–1997, was sponsored by several international donors. Prominent among them was the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Department for International Development (DFID) in UK sponsored both pilot projects in terms of offering training programmes and providing logistics to strengthen the institutional capacity of the programme (Blunch and Portner, 2004). Grants for the general support of the programme were provided by the Norwegian Government, while funds for the training of facilitators, training in the use of radio, management information systems (MIS) and income generation groups were provided by the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF). The Canadian Government donated large quantities of paper for the production of reading materials (Blunch and Portner, 2004).

### **Curriculum**

The functional literacy programme of the NFED has a multi-purpose curriculum. The basic goal of equipping participants with basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills is woven into a number of activities which are meant to enable youths and adults to function effectively in their communities and in society at large. These activities fall into three groups: social and health issues; income generation and occupational activities; and civic awareness.

### **Adult literacy and numeracy**

NFED carries out its role of providing literacy and numeracy training in Ghana through Ghana's National Functional Literacy Programme (NFLP). Many other non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) are also involved in adult literacy activities. Their content and focus centre on activities ranging from religion, to gender equity and to rural development. For instance, the "GILBERT" international, a religious NGO involved in translating the Bible into local languages, is widely involved in literacy. Others, such as the World Vision International, the Salvation Army, the Adventist Relief Agency, TechnoServe, and GHACOE Women's Ministry likewise provide basic skills for the poor in rural communities. They are also engaged in other developmental activities in rural communities, using NFE approaches.

A significant aspect in the implementation of the NFLP was the coming together of all providers to combine resources in a concerted effort to ensure the success of the programme (Blunch and Portner, 2004). Partners in this joint effort include the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), which transmits lessons to learners through out the country, the Ghana Book Publishing Association (GBPA), the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation (BILLBT), and the Bureau of Ghana Languages (BGL), all of which support the development and publication of local language materials. The World Vision International has developed the materials for the English language programme, which has been later expanded by NFED. Finally, the Institute of Adult Education of the University of Ghana has been instrumental in research and training of personnel. A number of other organizations have been equally supportive for the programme especially at the grassroots level. Two such organizations whose contribution to the NFED has been very significant are the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI), which has been responsible for training learners in the formation of cooperatives, simple accounting procedures and entrepreneurship, and the GRATIS Foundation, which provides training in entrepreneurship for income-generating activities (Blunch and Portner, 2004). The programme aims to:

- enable participants to better meet their personal or social needs by enhancing their abilities to deal competently with everyday life in literate communities
- equip learners with the knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable them to raise the quality of life in their communities



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- enable learners to improve upon occupational skills through functional literacy
- broaden the reading interests of learners and establish an attitude of reading for pleasure through the provision of follow-up literacy supplementary reading materials (NFED, 1999 cited in Aryeetey and Kwakye, 2005).

The National Functional Literacy Programme entered its second phase in the year 2000 after a successful first phase which ended in 1997 (Aryeetey and Kwakye, 2005). The key objective of the Programme is to address inequalities in access to literacy and life-skills training, targeting rural communities and the population living in the northern regions of Ghana in general, as well as specific groups such as women in particular, in order to integrate them into the national developmental effort as well as to improve their livelihoods chances and the living standards of the poor and excluded sectors of society (Aryeetey and Kwakye, 2005; Ministry of Education, 2000).

In summary, the NFLP was a policy framework put in place by NFED to plan, implement and coordinate literacy programmes nationwide to make all Ghanaians functional literate. The term functional literacy is defined by NFED (1999) as the ability to engage in activities in which literacy (reading, writing and numeracy skills) is required for effective functioning in one's group of community for self and community development.

The programme makes use of 15 local languages as the focus of teaching literacy. Volunteer facilitators are recruited by communities or religious groups and trained to run the literacy classes, initially for 21 days. Facilitators are supposed to attend a 12-day refresher course after a year of teaching, but there has been no consistent implementation of plans to this effect. Each class, which consists of about 25–30 village learners, arranges its own meeting schedule in agreement with facilitators. Classes meet on an average of 6 hours per week. The programme runs on a cycle of approximately 21 months. Officers from the national and regional offices make scheduled monitoring and supervision visits from time to time. It is estimated that about 200,000 learners are recruited each year. About 8,000 volunteer facilitators work in the programme (Ministry of Education, 2000).

### **Life-skills training**

One of the major NFBE activities in Ghana is training in lifeskills. A number of national and international organizations are involved in this programme, including the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG), Green Earth Organization and World Vision, Ghana.

This programme is intended to help participants maintain personal and environmental hygiene in order to have a healthy life (Blunch and Portner, 2004). The social and health issues covered include: family planning, teenage pregnancy, environmental hygiene, immunisation, AIDS, safe motherhood and child care, drug abuse, traditional medicine

and safe drinking water. The main target groups include adolescents and nursing mothers.

### **Income-generation/occupational skills**

Organizations involved in the provision of income-generation skills include World Vision, Ghana, which has included farming and food preservation in its curriculum; the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI), which is responsible for the training of learners in the formation of co-operatives, simple accounting processes and entrepreneurship; and the GRATIS Foundation, which provides entrepreneurship training for income-generating activities (Blunch and Portner, 2004).

The rationale is to equip participants with occupational skills which will in turn help them to generate income. Topics treated include cocoa farming, maize cultivation, dry season farming, basket weaving, animal husbandry, bee-keeping, oil palm cultivation, the hygienic preservation and sale of fish, farm extension services, pottery and soap making. Participants are also taught to access credit from banks or to form co-operatives to finance their economic ventures.

These activities are meant for all adults and youth, but are particularly geared to helping unemployed persons learn occupational skills to make a living.

Since different parts of Ghana have different economic activities, the occupational skills taught in a particular community reflect the economic activities dominant there. For example, whilst farmers in the cocoa-growing areas in the forest zone learn skills associated with cocoa production, those in coastal areas learn how to improve skills in fishing and fish-mongering, as fishing and fish-selling constitute the main economic activities along the coast.

The Government has adopted a poverty reduction strategy framework referred to as the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (Government of Ghana-GPRS, 2002), to address the issue of poverty and illiteracy. The purpose is to minimise vulnerability and social exclusion, especially of the poor in rural areas. Efforts to achieve this vision, include, among many others:

- increasing access to education and health facilities in rural areas;
- the generation of non-farming employment in rural areas;
- increasing the provision of potable water in rural areas;
- measures to ensure equal rights for women;
- more equitable distribution of basic services between rural and urban environments, and
- increasing provision for usable vocational training schemes (GPRS, 2002).

This shows that NFE is diverse, skill-centred and closely related to the environment of participants. Many developmental agencies, both national and international, assist with the implementation of the GPRS programme.

### **Civil awareness**

The activities of most of the key players of NFBE activities in Ghana involve the creation of civil awareness to various degrees. However, those noted mainly for such activities include Action Aid, Ghana, the 31<sup>st</sup> December Women's Movement, and the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. The overriding objective is to educate participants on their civil rights and responsibilities. To this effect, they concentrate on a wide range of issues including taxation, the control and prevention of bushfires, intestacy law, child labour, chieftaincy, community empowerment, and costly funerals. Their activities mainly target individuals who are not able to read everyday texts such as newspapers, or documents such as the Constitution. One topic which has made a great impact is the Intestate Succession Law which was enacted to solve the problem of inheritance on the death of a family member. Prior to the introduction of this law, when a person died without a will, his or her spouse and children were often denied a large percentage of the intestate's property by members of the extended family. Under the law, however, a greater proportion of intestate property now passes to the nuclear family.

### **Teaching and learning activities**

Similar teaching and learning techniques are employed in almost all the NFBE activities. Different methods and techniques are employed to facilitate participants' learning. These include the use of picture cards, picture codes, stories, proverbs, role-plays and drama to enhance their understanding of the issues being discussed. Also participants occasionally sing songs as a way of relieving boredom. Games are also used to sustain the interest of learners (Blunch and Portner, 2004).

### **Assessment of impact**

According to an impact assessment conducted at the end of 2003, a figure of 2,205,709 participants had been recruited since 1992. The first phase targeted 840,000 recruits, but in fact, the number of participants actually reached approximately 1,500,000 (Aryeetey and Kwakye, 2005: 11). Of these, 90% had received either none or only some primary education. The gender composition of participants has for a long time remained at 40% males and 60% females. Over 70% of the females live in circumstances of poverty, particularly in rural areas, which suggests that targeting has been effective.

Evaluation studies on the impact of literacy programmes on individuals and households in Ghana are very limited. However, data from Ghana-living-standard surveys, discussed by Blunch (2004) and Blunch et al. (2002), indicate that the first phase of the NFLP had only modest effects on participants' literacy skills. Lack of progress was higher among women than men. Less than 20% were able to read after graduation. Interestingly, the number of participants with no primary schooling who could read after graduation was higher than those with some form of primary education. The situation was no different

with regard to numeracy, where the number of participants who were able to perform calculations was greater among those with no primary schooling than those with some primary education (Aryeetey and Kwakye, 2005).

The effect of NFLP on development has been found to be positive. According to Aya Aoki (2004), the NFLP has greatly enhanced education awareness, particularly, education for girls in rural communities. About 98% of participants with school-aged children sent their children to school and were prepared to help them with their homework. Similarly about 97% of participants interviewed reported improvements in their livelihood situation. Some reported specific increases in their productivity and income. The overall effect of the NFLP has been summarised as follows:



Ethiopia

dvv international

*“The impact of the national literacy programme has been very positive. In poor, remote areas, in badly lit buildings or in the open air, with limited resources, learners and volunteer facilitators meet on 3–4 evenings a week. The programme has stimulated strong demand for literacy, reintroduced large numbers of people to the educational process, and developed a strong community identity.”*

(DFID, 2004: 1).

This does not mean the programme had no problems:

*“Intended to benefit the most vulnerable, especially women, the project’s voluntary nature, whilst crucial to its success, precluded an active bias in selecting participants. Most learners were probably from low income groups, but socio-economic status was not monitored. A large number of women, many with no access to education, has participated, but the project did not always meet their expectations, and their ability to benefit was limited by competing claims on their time.”*

(DFID, 2004:2)

As always, the biggest problem that learners face is how to apportion time between work, study and family commitments.

Other programmes and agencies include the Literacy and Functional Skills Project (LFSP), the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG), a non-government organization

providing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information and services, and the Green Earth Organization (GEO), another voluntary non-profit organization involved in environmental conservation and management projects.

The main aim of GEO is to ensure a sustainable environment, especially in rural areas, and to empower communities to enhance it, working through campaigns, film shows, public education and training, advocacy and the promotion of eco-tourism. A Green Academy Summer School (GASS) is held during the long vacation period for youth and local people, usually in communities where GEO operates. Like PPAG, GEO works with volunteers and part-time workers in the communities. The few full time staff, mostly qualified in the field of environmental issues, are trainers who occasionally engage the services of resource personnel. The main objectives include:

- ensuring conservation and rational use of natural resources;
- ensuring sustainable population growth;
- empowering and improving the life of disadvantaged communities;
- promoting voluntary action for environmental protection;
- serving as an environmental watchdog;
- engaging in environmental education and many others.

Operational areas include: forestry, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, climate change, desertification and dry lands, coastal wetland conservation and water bodies. GEO collaborates with many international and national bodies that sponsor their projects, including: Habitat, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Global Environment Facility.

## Conclusion

There is not much information about the legal foundations of NFE policies in Ghana. Reference has been made to the 1992 Constitution, but there is the need to identify Decrees and Acts which specifically deal with the provision of NFE activities. Another area where data was not available is monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for NFBE activities. The only information on research identified by this paper is the periodic research and training of personnel undertaken by the Institute of Adult Education, University of Ghana. Concerning core NFBE activities, information about equivalency or second chance schooling or alternative education for youth and adults was not available.



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Amit Mitra

# National provision of non-formal education in India

## Conceptualisation of NFE in India

Although lifelong learning has entered academic discourse, the NFE sector in India still tends to equate education with basic literacy and numeracy, while other skills are relegated to acquisition of technical skills as in a vocational education programme. Formal education in India refers to the hierarchically structured education system running from kindergarten through university, including institutions of technical and professional education and training. **Informal education**, also often termed “*incidental education*”, is seen as unorganized education acquired during the entire lifespan of an individual through interaction with other members of society. Hence, informal education is in fact accepted as a lifelong process through which every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills, and knowledge, to a large extent conditioned by his/her environment.

**Non-formal education** (NFE) is conceptualised as an organized educational activity, occurring in the traditional framework of the formal education system. Formal education is highly structured and rigid, characterized to a large extent by uniformity. The major characteristic feature of NFE in India is its flexibility in terms of organization, timing and duration of teaching and learning, clientele groups, age group of learners, contents, methodology of instruction, and evaluation procedure. This characteristic feature of NFE has made it a critical mode for reaching out to the hardest-to-reach children and youth, both in rural and urban India, to achieve the much desired goal of Education for All (UNESCO E 9 initiative, [www.unesco.org/education/e-9/initiative](http://www.unesco.org/education/e-9/initiative) and K. Biswal, *National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration*, New Delhi, India; in ANTRIEP (bi-annual newsletter) 6, 2; 2001).

## Literacy in the Indian context

The National Literacy Mission (NLM), the most important state mechanism for imparting NFE, defines literacy as acquiring the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic and the ability to apply them to one's day-to-day life. Thus the goal of the NLM goes beyond the simple achievement of self-reliance in literacy and numeracy of functional literacy. For literacy learners the achievement of functional literacy implies:

- Self-reliance in the 3 Rs

- Becoming aware of the causes of deprivation and moving towards amelioration of their condition by participating in the process of development
- Acquiring skills to improve their economics status and general well-being
- Imbibing values of national integration, conservation of environment, women's equality, and observance of small family norms

The acquisition of functional literacy results in empowerment and a definite improvement in the quality of life. It helps to ensure the participation of the masses in sharing the benefits of the information era ([www.nlm.nic.in](http://www.nlm.nic.in)).

Poverty and equity comprise major distinctive elements of the conceptualisation. The 3 Rs have been characterized in the NLM thus:

### **Reading**

- Reading aloud, with normal accent, and at a speed of 30 words a minute, a simple passage on a topic of interest to the learner.
- Silent reading at 35 words a minute, of small paragraphs in simple language.
- Reading with understanding the road signs, posters, simple instructions and newspapers/broadsheets designed for neo-literates.
- Ability to follow simple written passages relating to one's working and living environment

### **Writing**

- Copying, with understanding, 7 words a minute.
- Taking dictation at 5 words a minute.
- Writing with proper spacing and alignment.
- Writing independently, short letters and applications, and filling in forms of day-to-day use to the learner

### **Numeracy**

- Reading and writing numerals 1–100.
- Doing simple calculations (without fraction) involving addition and subtraction up to 3 digits, and multiplication and division by 2 digits.
- Working knowledge of metric units weights, measures currency, distance, area and unit of time.
- Broad idea of proportion and interests (not involving fractions) and their use in practical situations. (<http://www.nlm.nic.in>)

### **Life-skills Education**

The concept of life-skills education as the focus of all educational programmes and proc-

esses has been adopted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). The Government seeks to follow an integrated approach to literacy:

*"This means the Total Literacy Campaign and the Post-Literacy Programme will operate under one Literacy Project. This approach would enable the enormous illiteracy problem to be tackled in a holistic manner. By treating the imparting of functional literacy as a continuum rather than as a one-off benefit for the illiterate person, the progress of literacy efforts would be made goal-directed. Literacy campaigns would continue to run in those areas where there are large pools of residual illiteracy. At the same time, for those who have crossed the basic learning phase, programmes of consolidation, remediation, vocational skills, integration with life skills and such other aspects would be considered the basic unit."*

(www.education.nic.in).

Some NGO NFE providers ordered the life skills differently for the Indian context in a 2001 UNESCO-supported study conducted by an Indian NGO, REMEDIA Trust, on life skills education within the NFE sector, with a view to addressing issues related to drug abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention. According to the NGOs participating in the study, **self-awareness** is the first necessary life skill. By using the Socratic Method, students can be helped to debate the issue of an individual's place in a family, a social group, a community, and a country. Young people can be made aware of their rights and duties and their responsibilities to themselves and society. The need to preserve their physical and mental health has to be realized. The twin essence of self-awareness is the life skill of **empathy**. Awareness of self should be counterbalanced by awareness of others, their different thinking, feelings, desires and wishes. This requires imagination and fellow-feeling. It is part of a process of socialization and self-control. Indian culture emphasizes empathy with human beings, animals and the nature around us. This skill has to be cultivated carefully, especially among street and slum children as they often exhibit an aggressive stance in self-protection.

**Critical thinking and creative thinking** is the next pair of life skills. Training in thinking is very rare in formal as well as non-formal classrooms in India; today as the media sends out a constant stream of messages, it is important to begin critical listening and asking the right questions. Training young people to ask for cause-effect relationships and then for rational thinking is essential if they are going to withstand pressure.

**Decision-making and problem-solving skills** come somewhat easier to children who are on the streets than to children who are protected by the family. Since the group rather than the individual is given importance, these skills may be fostered by debates where individual differences can emerge and be defended by logical arguments.

**Coping with emotions and stress** first requires admitting emotions and stress. In the Indian society, emotions and stress are regarded as shameful, and stoicism is encouraged.

Therefore, the discipline of standing aloof from one's emotions, recognising them and coping with them is an exercise that has to be carefully taught so that the extreme positions of either denying emotions or totally giving in to emotions are avoided.

**Effective communication and interpersonal relations skills** are important to young people in order to maintain both their independence and their friendships. In India, friendship between young people of the same sex has been more highly regarded than elsewhere. Even in India, family bonds, though strong, need careful nurture. Drugs do not tempt those whose family bonds are strong. Families offer the young protection from drugs and stress.

Two major life skills necessary are **spatial orientation and orientation in time**. The non-verbal spatial skill is needed to practice arts and crafts, which are part of the Indian way of life. Most vocational programmes depend on spatial skills. Orientation to time helps the young to plan for their future. The disadvantaged do not have this orientation; they tend to live in the present and do not save or invest money they earn for their morrow.

If the young who come to the NFE centres begin to understand time-line and cause-and-effect relationship, they will begin to appreciate how their effort of today will bear fruit tomorrow. Many young people do not have a clear notion of how yesterday, today and tomorrow are linked. They have a vague notion of weekdays and months but if they are going to participate in the modern world of technology, they must have orientation to both space and time.

Considering the large number of out-of-school children, an important human resource in India, it is necessary to devise ways of giving them these life skills that will help them handle adult responsibilities without failure and stress, making them the strengths of their communities (*Life skills in non-formal education: A Review*, Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi and UNESCO, New Delhi; 2001. [http:// www.ibe.unesco.org/AIDS](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/AIDS)).

It is not known or reported how this is actually to be done.

## Lifelong learning

Lifelong learning is emphasised, at least in theoretical terms, in the Indian NFE context. One of the most interesting set of proposals was advocated by Gandhi as Indian independence approached. He saw that Indian education was bookish and European in outlook, totally inappropriate to the majority of people who were villagers. At the same time Gandhi was completely against the idea that there should be two types of education, urban and rural. He felt that city-dwellers needed more contact with the land. He proposed manual work for three or four hours per day and that training of the mind should stem from this, the central craft that he recommended being spinning. This formed part of Gandhi's work around combating untouchability and cultivating common reconcilia-

tion and village rehabilitation (Woodcock 1972: 79, <http://www.infed.org/lifelonglearning/south.htm>).

The Gandhian approach was more philosophical than practical. In later decades, on a more pragmatic level, the NLM was launched to impart functional literacy to non-literates in the country in the age group of 15-35 years in a time bound manner. The NLM aims at ensuring that the Total Literacy Campaigns (TLC) and their sequel, the Post-Literacy Programme (PLP), successfully move on to Continuing Education (CE), which provides lifelong learning and is responsible for creating a learning society (<http://www.pib.nic.in>).

Through the Open Universities and distance learning initiatives, mechanisms are in place to upgrade skills at regular intervals and develop new competencies. The Open University System was initiated in the country to augment opportunities for higher education as an instrument of democratising education and make it a lifelong process. The first Open University was established by the state Government of Andhra Pradesh in 1982. In 1985, the central Government established the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) (<http://www.education.nic.in/higedu>).

### **The legal foundations of NFE policies**

The Indian Constitution in its 86<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act, 2002 stipulates that *“the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine”*. However, the most important official confirmation of the need for expanding adult education services in India came in the form of the National Policy Resolution of 1968. The first important initiative in adult education – the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) – was not established until 1978. It defined education as literacy, functionality, and conscientisation. Although its structures were eventually established, they did not always function effectively.

In 1980, the programme was renamed the Adult Education Programme (AEP), and expanded from 10 months to 3 years, with emphasis on health, family planning, and functional programmes. The AEP was not very successful either. The main thrust of the new National Programme of Adult Education established in 1986, like its predecessors, is efficiency rather than equity, and its general mode is technocratic ([www.eric.ed.gov](http://www.eric.ed.gov)).

The 1986 education policy envisages a national system which will take determined action to bring about universal primary education and promote the spread of adult literacy, thereby helping to reduce inequalities. The education system will be based on a national curricular framework which contains a common core as well as components specific to each region. The core will cut across subject areas and be designed to promote such values as India’s common cultural heritage, egalitarianism, democracy and secularism, equality of the sexes, protection of the environment, observance of the small family norm, and the scientific approach. The 1986 policy also emphasizes the need to raise the level

of investment in education from about 4 per cent of the national income in 1986 to 6 per cent by 1990 and even higher thereafter (*A new policy for education – India; UNESCO Courier*, February 1989, by Anil Bordia).

Education in India is on the concurrent list, that is, it is the joint responsibility of the Centre and the States. This leads to a considerable amount of confusion and, indeed, passing the buck. While India is a signatory to the EFA processes, in terms of legislations, education processes are governed by Government Orders (GOs) from time to time. The framework does not seem to be justifiable in the sense that the state cannot be taken to court for non-implementation of the education policies.

### Governance and finance

The major implementing bodies for NFE come under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). The Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) is accountable for some modular vocational training courses. According to various officials, there are some 17 ministries and departments which claim to provide NFE vocational training through various schemes and programmes. Information on this is not readily available.

The National Policy on Education, 1986, states the need for substantial strengthening of the supervisory and administrative apparatus of NFE. Rather than depending on the urban-oriented bureaucratic model, emphasis is laid on taking up well-designed projects in approximately 100 NFE centres, in a compact and contiguous area. Supervisors should be selected from the local community. If possible, they should be experienced and committed NFE Instructors, and have intensive training. Wherever possible there should be a continuing education programme. Village Education Committees should be set up as envisaged in the National Policy on Education Programme of Action to involve the local community in the programme and make the NFE centre in-charge accountable to it. The broad aim of this scheme is to involve voluntary agencies, public trusts, non-profit making companies, social activist groups and others, in implementing the NFE programme (<http://www.edu.nic.in/policy/npe86-mod-92>).



Philippines

*dvv international*

## **Finance**

The main source of finance of NFE projects is the State. The National Literacy Mission allocates a budget for NFE in the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan which gives the schematic break-up of the outlay for adult education (National Literacy Mission website; <http://www.nlm.nic.in>).

## **Management**

### **Monitoring**

The monitoring of literacy campaigns is one of the important activities of the Directorate of Adult Education. In order to ensure reliability as well as a steady flow of information in literacy campaigns, the State Directorate of Adult Education (SDAEs) have been asked to monitor literacy campaigns. The Directorate has taken steps to strengthen the monitoring system by involving State Directorates in regular monitoring of the progress of literacy campaigns in each of the districts. Detailed guidelines were evolved and issued by the Directorate for strengthening the monitoring system under these guidelines. SDAEs are required to hold a monthly meeting in which the presence of Secretary, Zilla Saksharata Samitis, Director, SRC and other resources persons has been made mandatory. The State Directorates are now required to consolidate the district reports at the state level and forward them to the Central Directorate of Adult Education, which is to examine them critically and submit feedback to the State Directorate. Status Reports of Literacy and Post Literacy Campaigns are brought out at the end of each quarter.

### **Evaluation**

With a view to ensuring effective implementation of the literacy campaigns, the NLM has introduced a more meaningful and rigorous evaluation system. Each literacy campaign is now required to take up concurrent evaluation of the ongoing programme through an outside agency nominated by the State Directorates of Adult Education. The State Directorates have been asked to engage agencies to undertake concurrent evaluation aiming at quick mid-term appraisal of a project to assess strengths and weaknesses and to identify correctives for improvement. Guidelines on Concurrent Evaluation are evolved and circulated to all literacy campaign districts and State Directorates ([education.nic.in/cd50years](http://education.nic.in/cd50years)).

The NLM had planned for comprehensive and systematic monitoring and evaluation, anticipating data flows from base-level learner groups to district headquarters, to the states, and then on to the central Directorate. Internal monthly monitoring was expected to be complemented with formal internal evaluations when required. External spot-checks were also part of the plans. The hope was to collect policy-oriented feedback that could be collated for use at 6-month intervals. Concurrent monitoring as well as quick appraisals were to be conducted at all the various levels and locations of the overall system. Data



in the monitoring system was to be used to develop programme evaluations in all the aspects of formative evaluation, evaluation of instruction, and outcome evaluation.

In addition to in-house monitoring and evaluations, large-scale evaluations of TLCs were mandated, to be paid for by the central Government. At least three evaluations had to be conducted in each TLC: (1) quick appraisals at the beginning; (2) a mid-term evaluation; and (3) an end-term evaluation. The list of questions that evaluations should find answers to were also established. The state governments had to contract these evaluations with outside experts – in university departments, specialized institutes, or NGOs which had acquired a reputation for doing good evaluation work, and were on the approved list. Normative frames for methodology, for testing achievement, for definition of success are also provided.

In addition, an official of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Education and Literacy) of the rank of a Deputy Secretary (Teacher Education) has been assigned to oversee all matters pertaining to the scheme of Teacher Education and monitoring the TE scheme in the country as a whole ([www.edu.nic.in](http://www.edu.nic.in)). By 2002, some 14 years after its launch, the NLM, using goal-oriented, area-specific and time-bound strategies, had covered 574 of the nation's 598 districts. As many as 302 districts were already offering continuing education programmes. Total enrolment had touched 125 million adults, with some 12 million volunteers leading learners groups. As many as 71.45 million participants had become literate (<http://www.unesdoc.unesco.org>).

## Research and training

The National Institute of Education Planning and Administration (NIEPA), under the MHRD, conducts research and training in the NFE sector. The Institute comprises the Department of School and Non-formal Education. Its prime focus is on critical issues of school education, non-formal and adult literacy, providing a strong empirical base to contribute to developing and improving education. The Department maintains close linkages with governmental, non-governmental and international agencies with the objective of restructuring the educational system at the sub-national, national and international levels ([www.education.nic.in](http://www.education.nic.in)).

Apart from NIEPA, civil society organizations like ASPBAE and Nirantar are actively involved in training and research in the NFE sector. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has played a key role in shaping the character of University Adult Education in India since the launching of the National Adult Education Programme in 1978. During the last two decades, the UGC has not only formulated a number of guidelines on adult continuing education programmes, but has also provided full funding support to universities to implement programmes. Today, as many as 93 universities have set up Adult Education Departments and implemented a variety of programmes ([www.ugc.ac.in](http://www.ugc.ac.in)).

## **National framework for the training of NFBE educators and trainers**

The history of adult education in India shows that due emphasis and importance have been given to training strategies, programmes and policies. With the launching of the NLM, Project Formulation Guidelines were issued, to be implemented in operationalising the Literacy and Adult Education Programme throughout the country.

At the national level training programmes are designed by the NLM, the Directorate of AE, and management institutions. At the state level the programmes are designed and organized by the State Resource Centres (SRCs), the State Literacy Mission Authorities (SLMA) and other educational institutions. At the district level the training programmes are designed and organized by SRCs, the District Institutions for Educational Training (DIET), the Zilla Saksharata Samities (ZSS), Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) and other NGOs, while at community level the training programme is run by the ZSS, the JSS, NGOs, the Block Resource Centres (BRC) and the Literacy Resource Centres (LRC).

To conduct training programmes at different levels, a pyramidal approach is adapted, with the core group, the resource persons, master trainers and lastly the implementers.

Training of the core group and key resource persons is conducted by SRC. Resource persons train the master trainers and the master trainers train the implementers. Funds are provided to district agencies by the National Literacy Mission through the State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA).

The training programme available for NFE facilitators has facilities for pre-service training (basic role and responsibilities), in-service training (when new issues are introduced to the programme) and short courses, which are needs-based. Programmes are organized in the following manner: the SRC training group travels to the districts for training, the core group conducts district resource persons (RP) training, the RPs go to the block resource centres for master trainers (MT) training, and the MTs go to the Panchayats for volunteers (VTs) training. For occasional courses, they go up to the district or block centres or also to the state level.

The main themes of the training programmes are:

- the concept and importance of continuing education programmes;
- the establishment of continuing education centres (CEC) and nodal CECs;
- the management of the CECs and nodal CECs as well as the programmes organized at these CECs;
- the roles and duties of facilitators, and
- perspectives on strengthening the CECs, and launching innovative programmes geared to developing skills.

At the level of the districts, the block centres, and the Panchayat, participants are selected by the District Literacy Committees (ZSS). For the core groups and other special training measures, the SRC sets the criteria for selection of trainees. The SRC assesses the usefulness and impact of the training programmes through its Research and Development

Cell. Assessments are also conducted by the State through monitoring measures and external evaluation.

## NFBE activities

There are many, many providers of NFE programmes in India. Apart from the NGO initiatives, there are also Central Government and State Government initiatives. It would be no exaggeration to say that almost every ministry, except for the Defence, Home, and External Affairs Ministries, runs some kind of programme or other, apart from the TLC initiative under the NLM. The medium of instruction is the dominant language of the respective state. Thus, in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, or Jharkhand, training is conducted in Hindi. Field observations show that this creates problems for ethnic indigenous groups, and tribal communities. Also, the official language of the state is the standard colloquial language, which is often not followed by the speakers of particular dialects.

Information on the teaching-learning methods of the programmes is generally hard to come by. Innumerable NGOs provide NFE using Government as well as their own models all over the country. There exists no comprehensive mapping of these initiatives. For most programmes, (the exception being the TLCs of the 1990s) there are hardly any comprehensive evaluation reports available in the public domain on these aspects. Sometimes it is even difficult to pinpoint who runs a particular programme. The NIOS and the NCVT (National Council of Vocational Training) schemes are run by the Government approved centres (ITIs) as well as NGOs such as Don Bosco.

The picture becomes even more complicated if one tries to compile a comprehensive list of programmes intended to provide basic literacy plus life skills and/or income-augmenting skills. It is important to bear in mind the larger picture – that in India, literacy rates are relatively low (in the year 2001, the rate of overall literacy was calculated at 65.4%–75.4% among men, and 54.1 % among women), and that for the period 2003–4, the elementary school dropout rate stood at 31.4%). Also, insofar as concerns livelihood and life skills training that goes beyond basic literacy and numeracy,

*“the actual number of persons expected to enter the labour force is about 12.3 million persons per annum ... the number of those entering with some degree of formal training is about 1.5 million.” (Mitra, A p. 159, Decent Work in the Informal Sector: South India in Madhu Singh (ed) 2005, Meeting Basic Needs in the Informal Sector, Springer, the Netherlands)*

Considering how large the number of potential training candidates is, it must be concluded that even with combined forces, the Government and NGO initiatives cannot possibly meet the great latent demand.

Celia Swann

## Non-formal basic education in Malawi

The plethora of initiatives in NFBE in Malawi is set against a background of poor literacy levels. The adult literacy rate is 64.1% (male: 74.9%, female: 54.0%); literacy among youth (aged 15–24 years) is around 76%<sup>1</sup>. Formal education became free in Malawi in 1994, creating a wave of new entrants to school. As a result there were many students outside the normal age range for their Standard. Thus, there is high enrolment at primary level, but there is a high drop-out rate, with only 44% of those enrolled at Standard 1 still in school in Standard 5<sup>2</sup>. There is a big gap in drop-out rates between urban and rural areas with an average urban rate of 2.8% and rural rate of 8.9% in 2004<sup>3</sup>. Reasons for dropping out include<sup>4</sup>:

- poor conditions of schools, not encouraging a child to go to school
- poverty
- hunger
- teacher's attitudes towards students that may lead the child to shy away from school
- teacher's absenteeism, which may lead the child to stay away from school
- lack of relevant curriculum, not meeting students' needs
- orphanhood that requires older school children to take care of their younger siblings, leaving no time for them to go to school
- social and cultural pressures, i. e. children above a certain age not encouraged to go to school
- early marriages

Repetition is also a serious problem. A World Bank Country Status report summarises the consequences of high drop-out and repetition rates as follows: Given the high repetition and drop-out rates in primary school, 60% of the public resources at this level are used either on children who drop out before completing primary school or on repeaters. In other words, the Government finances 20 school years to generate a single graduate from primary school. Thus, the cost to Government is an additional 12 years of per-pupil spend-

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1 Human Development Index, 2006. Data on adults for 2004, data on youth for 2003.

2 HDI 2006. Data for 2003.

3 Government of Malawi, (2004). Education Statistics 2004, Ministry of Education, Malawi.

4 Proceedings of Stakeholder Consultative Meeting on Non-formal Basic Education for out-of-school children and youth, Ministry of Education, 15–17 February 2005, p40.

ing relative to a scenario with no drop outs or repeaters (8 years).<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that while the literacy levels are slowly improving, the number of illiterates is increasing. In the year 2004, the population above 15 years of age stood at about 6.3 million; of these, 35.9% were illiterate, i.e. at least 2.3 million people.<sup>6</sup>

The Ministry of Education and Vocational training is responsible for providing basic education to children between the ages of 6 and 17. Where provision is lacking, complementary systems and flexible schooling are required. In 2004, Malawi produced a draft plan to achieve the goals of Education for All (EFA), which refers to the provision of alternative forms of education to youths who have dropped out of school and those who never attended.<sup>7</sup> A redefinition of basic education has been called for by the Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education (CSCQBE).<sup>8</sup> It is recognized that *"the total education system is both the mainstream of the formal system as well as the multiple channels of life-long learning which form part of the integrated diversity of any learning society"*.<sup>9</sup> NGOs offering basic education within their sphere of activity include ActionAid, Save the Children-USA, CRECOM (Creative Centre for Community Mobilisation), and OXFAM.

**Complementary Basic Education (CBE)** is being provided under a new project funded by the German Association for Technical Cooperation GmbH (GTZ), with support from UNICEF. The project addresses issues of school drop outs and non-attendance at the primary school level. Experience has shown a tendency toward non-attendance among boys because of expectations that they contribute to their families' income. Project work is geared to increasing community awareness about this issue and to reducing absences by improving school programmes and curricula. The CBE team has calculated that drop outs spend an average of 3.6 years in school. As an initial step, a one-year course is being offered to out-of-school children between the ages of 10 and 17 who belong to the CBE focus group. Plans exist to expand the scope of the course to three years.<sup>10</sup> In this way, CBE seeks to address the issues underlying school non-attendance<sup>11</sup> and aims to offer school leavers ways back into the formal system.

5 World Bank, (2004), *"Cost, Financing and School Effectiveness of Education in Malawi"* (usually referred to as the WB Country Status Report), Africa Region Human Development Working Paper Series, Washington p.7.

6 Human Development Index, 2006.

7 Malawi Draft EFA Plan, July 2004.

8 *"Towards a redefinition of Basic Education in the context of EFA"* Paper by Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education, at the National Education Conference April 2005.

9 Complementary Basic Education for school-aged out-of-school children and youth. Concept Note. Ministry of Education, Dec 2005.

10 Complementary Basic Education for school-aged out-of-school children and youth. Implementation Strategy, updated Dec 2006.

11 Cf. Appendix 1 of Complementary Basic Education for school-aged out-of-school children and youth. Implementation Strategy, updated Dec 2006.

CBE lies somewhere between formal and non-formal education. Such schemes of flexible schooling are sometimes also referred to as para-formal education.

Through the Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare and Community Services, the **National Adult Literacy Programme (NALP)** conducts a programme of 10-month courses which are accredited and provide the equivalent of five years of primary schooling. In the year 2004/5, 869 new adult literacy classes were set up, and 2,665 communities were sensitised to promote the equitable participation of women and men in adult literacy classes. Some 90% of learners were women in 2003,<sup>12</sup> with regional differences in the gender ratios.

**The REFLECT Approach** was introduced in 1996, in addition to the approach being managed by NALP. It was pioneered by the INGO ActionAid in seven districts, and then became a national pilot project (1998–2000), under the supervision of the Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare and Community Services. Other NGOs using REFLECT include Concern Universal, OXFAM, and Christian Children's Fund (CCF). Reports and information clearly indicate that the REFLECT approach to adult literacy programmes tends to have effective management, monitoring and evaluation systems.<sup>13</sup>

The **Adolescent Girls Literacy Project (AGLIT)** deserves special mention as a project that is particularly aimed at imparting basic literacy and numeracy skills with an obvious gender focus. It has run for eight years in four districts, with UNICEF and other donor support.

The Ministry of Youth and Culture defines youth as those persons between the ages of 14 and 25.<sup>14</sup> Measures are therefore directed to young people who are of secondary-school age and older. Existing programmes under this Ministry tend to focus on the specific needs of youth. They deal with issues ranging from civic education to healthcare, including youth-specific HIV/AIDS education. Training and education are offered in short-term courses or on-going activities at youth centres, rather than extended and certified courses. Consciousness-raising efforts are conducted to sensitise parents and the members of the communities to the need for increased participation on the part of girls, counteract society's negative perceptions of youth, and secure appropriate facilities for youth activities. There is a perceived need to lobby for the elimination of certain harmful cultural practices.<sup>15</sup>

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12 Adult Education and Literacy in Malawi: Issues, challenges and the way forward MOGWCS, April 2005.

13 "Reinforcing national capacities to evaluate NFE and literacy programmes for young people and adults: a case study of NALP in Malawi." Paper presented by Cyrus Jeke at Cross-national Training Workshop on Evaluating NFE and Literacy programmes for Youths and Adults, Feb 2006.

14 Republic of Malawi, National Youth Policy (undated).

15 Non-formal education for out-of-school youth. Paper presented at National Conference on Education, April 2005, by FS Chatsalira, Min of Youth, Sports & Culture.

**Life skills education** is offered by many HIV/AIDS-related donor organisations and NGOs which work in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Population. One example is the *Tiyeni! Tiyeni! Initiative*, funded by the EU and implemented in seven districts by UNFPA, which addresses the issues of early marriages, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and HIV/AIDS among young people between the ages of 10 and 20 years. The reproductive health NGO *Banja la Mtsogolo* (BLM), largely funded by DFID, has for many years addressed the problems of ignorance and dangerous sexual practices



Madagascar

dvv international

among young people and adults. Its range is wide, with clinics in townships and rural centres. All reproductive health campaigns, especially those promoting counselling and testing for HIV, bear the slogan “*Knowledge is Power*”.

In the districts where they operate, NGOs and faith organisations such as World Vision and World Relief offer life-skills training that extends beyond HIV and AIDS to health and nutrition. Information, education and communication (IEC) is a crucially important element in any outreach endeavour. Accordingly, it may be difficult to distinguish where advocacy ends and NFBE begins. For example, community therapeutic care (CTC) programmes for the prevention and treatment of severe acute malnutrition in children under the age of five are operating in some 18 districts in Malawi. The INGO Concern Worldwide has been at the forefront of this community outreach strategy. When mothers and care-givers are given ready-to-use therapeutic food, they are also offered IEC in hygiene, in the nutritional needs of young children, lactating mothers and other care-givers, and, in some cases, in family planning. Referral should (but may not always) be made to food security initiatives in the area, e.g. WFP Supplementary Feeding and various agricultural extension and food security projects – all of which, in turn, have elements of IEC. Given the low literacy levels of the target communities, the point is blurred at which IEC and NFBE meet.

Malawi has over a million orphans and other vulnerable children. A host of NGOs address their particular needs, together with orphan care centres, residential nurseries, etc. The SOS Children’s Village, a worldwide organisation, runs its own schools, offering special education and occupational therapy, and vocational training to older children. Other NGOs are less well-funded, but many offer elements of NFBE within their activi-

ties, or try to ensure the continued basic education of the children they assist, either in faith groups or by encouraging them to enter the formal school system. Street children are assisted by the Ministry of Gender at the Chisomo Orphan Care Centres, and also by Tikondane, a faith-based NGO. UNICEF helps the latter with learning materials.

There are about 300,000 new entrants to the job market each year in Malawi, but only about 35,000 new jobs are created annually.<sup>16</sup> This indicates that at least 80% of new job-seekers will be searching for a livelihood in the informal sector or in rural non-farm activities; others may continue with subsistence farming. Thus entrepreneurship is the means towards a livelihood for most Malawians, which is why **training in skills for income generation** is of widespread value. Further research needs to be carried out to ascertain which of the many programmes offered include elements of basic education and can therefore be termed NFBE initiatives. Three of the major providers are:

- Malawi Entrepreneurship Development Institute (MEDI)
- Salima Rural Vocational Training College, and
- Development of Malawian Enterprise Trust (DEMAT)

The Technical Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVETA) should also be mentioned. It is an independent body that offers vocational training, both formally in technical colleges and informally in the informal sector. Initially it was supported by DANIDA, and has received support from the GTZ since its inception. The low levels of educational attainment that some trainees bring to vocational courses may lead TEVETA to offer compensatory elements of basic education. In this connection as well, further research is needed.

Meanwhile, a wide range of **community development initiatives** involving the training of volunteers and community workers entail elements of training for numeracy and literacy alongside livelihood and life skills. Various institutions offer training in community development. Magomero Community Development College is one of the most long-standing, with a record for training facilitators in adult literacy, and Community Development Assistants. It also offers short courses in basic business management, appropriate technology and community leadership, the latter targeted especially at women and youth.

The **Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation** supports community education initiatives through its extension workers, and develops IEC materials and activities. During the period 2004/5, 539 extension workers were trained to impart marketing knowledge, and 146 in effective irrigation methodologies.<sup>17</sup>

For many years there has been no schools radio in Malawi. The **media development education** NGO, Story Workshop, has run radio soaps, dramas, discussions, and quiz-

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16 Malawi SDIG Project Africa Development Fund Appraisal Report, Oct 2001.

17 IMF Malawi Annual Review Report, 2004/5.



zes on contemporary themes with funding by multiple donors. One of Story Workshop's most powerful and long-standing series, funded by the EU, is *Mwana Alirenji*, which carries agricultural messages and offers basic livelihoods knowledge to the rural community at large. NFBE through radio was better subsidised in the past when the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) ran schools programmes and other features with basic educational content. Television is not widespread in Malawi, and would not reach those most in need of NFBE, the adult rural poor.

## Programmes implemented by the Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare and Community Services

### National Adult Literacy Programme<sup>18</sup>

NALP's Functional Adult Literacy programme (FAL) is one major effort to reduce poverty nationwide. It is being carried out in collaboration with various partner agencies and NGOs. Material and financial assistance has been provided by UNICEF, UNCDF, UNDP, GTZ, the EU and the African Development Bank. The programme seeks to fulfil the following broad objectives:

- to increase the attainment and use of literacy skills and sustain the process of learning and lifelong education for rural adults;
- to enable adults to take full advantage of modern, simple, but effective farming techniques, improved health habits and practices, etc., and foster national integration through adult education;
- to improve the status, general knowledge, and technical skills of rural people, especially smallholder farmers, by making them receptive to innovations and modernization;
- to address the issues of gender and HIV/AIDS in mainstream NFE/Literacy activities.

According to the programme's policy:

- Teaching of a range of basic and technical skills to community members should be improved so as to stimulate their further involvement in the development process. The emphasis is on a **nationwide functional adult literacy programme**.
- The programme is intended for illiterate adults aged 15 years and over.
- Classes should be offered only in response to significant community demand. Prior to the initiation of a class, a committee should be set up to take responsibility for its daily operation.

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18 *Reinforcing national capacities to evaluate NFE and literacy programmes for young people and adults: a case study of NALP in Malawi*. Paper presented by Cyrus Jeke at the Cross-National Training Workshop on Evaluating NFE and Literacy Programmes for Youths and Adults, Feb 2006.

- Communities should form literacy committees to identify and select adult literacy instructors.
- All government literacy instructors should be volunteers. They should receive timely and regular government-determined honoraria for each month they have actually taught.
- Literacy instructors should be trained in adult literacy education teaching methods.
- Adult literacy services including teaching and learning materials should be provided free of charge.
- Separate classes should be organised for men whenever possible.
- Close collaboration should be fostered between the Government and partner agencies working in the literacy programmes.

**Functional Adult Literacy (FAL)** follows the conventional approach, using a well-defined curriculum. All activities are characterised by close interaction between learners and instructors. Classes also serve as a forum where other partners and extension workers from other ministries, departments and NGOs can meet with learners to discuss issues in their respective areas of specialization.

Curriculum development and implementation in FAL are designed to be participatory and consultative, involving central government officials (from the NALP Secretariat and the Ministry of Gender) as well as district, community, and village representatives, including community development assistants (CDA), village literacy committees (VLC), and instructors. The VLCs are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the National Adult Literacy Programme on the village level, and for the identification and selection of literacy instructors. After their appointment, literacy instructors undergo a two-week training course in adult education teaching methods.

The **post-literacy programme** is designed to reinforce the skills acquired in the classes, using Rural Information Centres (RICs) or libraries where learners have the opportunity to read books on various topics. The programme counts on the collaboration of the National Library Services in this connection.

On the area level, the programmes are conducted under the supervision of the CDAs, each of whom is responsible for 15 to 20 classes. CDAs are permanent employees of the Ministry of Gender. Their training includes literacy education and practical knowledge of the management of literacy work. Above the CDAs are the District Community Development Officers (DCDOs), who facilitate participation on the part of other development agencies in literacy education and other related developmental efforts at the district level (e.g. education, health, and agriculture).

**The National Centre for Literacy and Adult Education (NCLAE)** is an implementing agency (the Secretariat) for NALP. It performs the following functions: orientation and training of personnel; curriculum development; supervisory support; monitoring, evaluation, and research; promotional activities such as audio-visual programmes, and printing,

documentation, and information services. The NCLAE is also responsible for seeking collaboration with various specialised agencies, both governmental and non-governmental.

An evaluation conducted in the year 2001 identifies a number of weaknesses in the National Adult Literacy Programme:<sup>19</sup>

- Staffing levels are low, and understaffing contributes to a high staff turnover.
- Post-literacy learning materials and activities are lacking.
- The curriculum does not respond to the diverse needs of different groups and regions.
- No links exist with other socio-economic and community development activities.
- There is no reliable permanent funding for NALP and its materials.
- The various providers do not adequately monitor and follow up on FAL activities.
- Correlation between functional literacy and formal education is poor.
- The drop-out rate of participants is high (40% in 2001).
- NCLAE lacks the capacity to effectively manage the programme effectively.

### **Skills Development and Income Generation Project (SDIG)**

SDIG is an effort that grew out of the Women in Development (WID) project. Begun in 2003 with funding by the African Development Bank, it is a five-year project that aims at improving the capacity of the rural poor to actively participate in broad-based sustainable economic activities in Malawi by helping them to attain functional literacy as well as livelihood skills. The project has provided training in basic business management and production skills. It also conducts institutional strengthening measures and offers services to participants through its micro-finance and project management unit.

Community Development staff mobilize groups and take them through the literacy process on to business skills training after which they choose a production skill for which the project provides appropriate training. Clients are encouraged to go into production types of businesses as they generate other economic activities which eventually bring about a general improvement in the rural economy. Special emphasis is being placed on value-added agriculture.

The success of the Project is mainly due to the community development approach, the training content and dedicated staff at all levels. Communities are mobilized into business groups through community leaders who then assume the role of overseers providing maximum support to the project. As such, groups are self-forming. The involvement of the community leaders in the project is a key success factor especially for the adult literacy component of the project. By 2005, over 220 groups had gone into the first phase of production, and another 800 were at different stages of establishing their businesses. However,

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19 Malawi Skills Development and Income Generation (SDIG) Project Appraisal Report, Oct 2001.

extension staff are grossly overstretched, and were reported to be dwindling in number.<sup>20</sup>

### **Sustainable social and economic empowerment for poverty reduction**

This programme, funded by UNDP, is implemented under a partnership with the Ministry of Gender together with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs. It began in 2004 as a pilot project in 12 districts for a period of 3 years. The overall programme strategy is to promote integrated functional literacy using the innovative PRA interventions embodied in the REFLECT approach.

### **Programmes implemented by the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture<sup>21</sup>**

#### **Youth entrepreneurship and employment programme**

Activities include:

- Sensitization of communities and youth
- Formation of loan groups
- Training of youth in business management and entrepreneurship skills
- Linking youth with money-lending institutions
- Disbursing loans to youth groups
- Training youth in vocational skills such as carpentry, tailoring, tinsmith, etc.
- Monitoring and evaluation.

By 2005, at least ten artisans and, in turn, 35 young people had been trained at one of the three training centres. The current status of the programme is not secure due to the lack of financial support.

### **Meeting development and participation rights of adolescent girls**

As reported in 2005<sup>22</sup>, funding from UNFPA and UNICEF has been channelled into vocational skills training for 250 adolescent girls.

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20 SDIG Project Report, May 2006.

21 Non-formal education for out-of-school youth in Malawi. Paper presented at National Conference on Education, April 2005.

22 Non-formal education for out-of-school youth. Paper presented at National Conference on Education, April 2005.

## **Youth participation programme**

There are roughly 2,500 in-school and 1,500 out-of-school youth clubs, most of which are anti-HIV/AIDS clubs. In addition, there are about 81 youth NGOs registered with the National Youth Council of Malawi and 32 Youth Centres which provide a venue for non-formal education for youth.

## **Family life education and counselling programme**

This programme aims to equip youth, especially adolescents, with competency and life skills for responsible behaviour. Over 1,400 peer educators have been trained and work closely with district youth officers. Some 220 youth action committees have been set up. A training package has been developed for the matrons and patrons of youth clubs, and other youth leaders, all of whom serve on youth technical sub-committees (YTSCs). Health services geared to youth are promoted in partnership with the Ministry of Health.

## **Complementary basic education for school-aged out-of-school children and youth, introduced by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training**

In 2006, a project was initiated with funding from the GTZ to enable school drop outs to acquire basic education skills. The project began with five centres in three districts and with plans to expand the effort to 100 centres within the district over the course of a year. The pilot process will enable the development of a comprehensive concept for a non-formal basic education system as well as the creation of a policy framework. The pilot project is under national management through the Basic Education Directorate. Other ministries are represented in the management structure and have assumed responsibility for other aspects of non-formal education.

The process of decentralisation to the districts is largely incomplete in Malawi, and the capacity of education administration in the various districts is overstretched with responsibilities. The relevant directorate at the district level is the Directorate of Education, Youth and Sports. Recruitment, training, and employment of community-based teachers for CBE, however, is being carried out by civil society organisations on the local level.

Claudia Flores

## Non-formal education in Mexico

### Adult education as non-formal education

Non-formal education in Mexico was a popular term during the early 1980s, both in rural and urban settings (Aguilar, 1981; Brunner, 1983; Picón, 1985; Pieck 1995). It was only in the 1990s that Mexico issued major education guidelines for adult education. It is noticeable that the preferred term to address most NFE practices is adult education. In fact, as Schmelkes (2003: 596) states regarding the state of the art on adult education, “*the area is still fragmented*”. The recent study by the Mexican Council of Education Research (Bertely, 2002) indicated that the adult education field was composed of five sub-fields, namely

- literacy and basic education
- youth and adult education linked to labour
- education and citizenship, community organizing and gender
- youth and adult education and families
- youth and adult educators

This presentation will concentrate on the first three sub-fields identified.

### The Fox presidential period and CONEVyT

Ruiz (2007: 3) considers as the main objectives of the National Education Programme 2001–2006:

- equity in education
- quality education adequate to meet the needs of all Mexicans
- to enhanced educational federalism, institutional management, and social participation in education

Within this framework the national Government created the National Council for Life and Work (Consejo Nacional de Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo, **CONEVyT**) as an education strategy that responds to the needs of lifelong education and work. Its main objective was to support and coordinate the activities that various bodies offer in this area. CONEVyT’s main objective was the creation of *community plazas* within the whole country, where adults could certify their education, but also have access to the use of computers. The Council aimed to preserve the orientation towards the poorer sectors and be flexible with all programmes. However, in terms of work training it did not have the desired effect.

CONEVt works as an intersectorial commission, which interrelates the following national institutions:

- the National Institute for Adult Education (*Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos, INEA*)
- the National Council for Educational Enhancement (*Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo, CONAFE*)
- the national College for Technical Professional Education (*Colegio Nacional de Educación Profesional Técnica, CONALEP*)
- the Centre for Industrial Labour Training (*Centro de Capacitación para el Trabajo Industrial, CECATI*)
- the Council for Regulation and Certification of Labour Competencies (*Consejo de Normalización y Certificación de Competencia Laboral, CONOCER*)
- the Programme for Technical Modernisation and Training (*Programa de la Modernización Técnica y la Capacitación, PMETyC*)
- Adult Open Secondary Education (*Secundaria a Distancia para Adultos, SEA*)
- the Programme for Holistic Training and Modernisation (*Programa de Capacitación Integral y Modernización, CIMO*)
- Scholarship Programme for the Training of Workers (*Programa de Becas para la Capacitación de los Trabajadores, PROBECAT*)
- post 16 education (*Colegio de Bachilleres, COLBACH*)
- the national Institute for Youth (*Instituto Nacional de la Juventud, IMJUVE*)
- the Latin American Institute for Education Communication (*Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunicación Educativa, ILCE*)

### **Substantial programmes and services of INEA-CONEVt**

Ruiz (2007: 5–6) points out three main programmes within the education project of CONEVt: literacy (initial stage), primary (intermediate level), secondary (advanced level). These programmes are integrated in the Education Model for Life and Work (*Modelo de Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo, MEVt*), which is oriented towards the acquisition and strengthening of knowledge, capabilities, useful learning, labour training and the development of productive skills.

Each of its modules has a specific objective; however, they are addressed to the development of general communicative competencies, reasoning, problem solving and responsible participation, basic reading skills, writing, attitudes and values, especially self-esteem, gender equity, human rights, respect, identity and cultural diversity. Advisors guide a group of adults; they are not exactly teachers, but promoters and motivators in the learning process. Advisory sessions consist of the clarification of doubts derived from reading materials.

## Main programme areas

### Literacy and numeracy programmes from the age of 15

According to Kalman (2003, 638), most programmes which have been coordinated by the State through INEA have been the object of a number of reflections and critiques, with various authors suggesting alternatives. As Kalman (2003, 638) explains, some authors have sought to understand how educational practices within night schools and INEA circles of studies are structured within the educational services that the State offers. Special attention has been paid to the design of programmes that meet the requirements of flexibility and diversification. Both criteria have been crucial to the transformation of adult and youth education. Kalman (2003: 640–41) identifies four different programmes that meet this criterion:

**Distance high school education for adults** is a curriculum design created specifically for youths and adults who completed 6 years of primary schooling. It reduces the number of study years from three to two, and groups disciplines into four curriculum areas – language, social sciences, natural sciences and maths. Topics covered in each of those, the selection of materials, and the elaboration of activities aim to make use of the previous knowledge of the students and their previous school experience. The innovation in this case consists of a didactic strategy in which the activities invite the user to dialogue with the materials presented, and to reflect upon how they can be located in their own context and how the contents could be useful for their own lives.

**Life education model** (*Modelo de educación para la vida*) is a curriculum innovation for primary schooling that seeks to offer an educational programme according to the needs and interests of youths and adults, in tune with their life conditions. This approach develops contents in a meaningful way, taking into account the situation and living conditions of the students. Maths, language, social and natural sciences contents are organized by modules which allow flexibility to the courses and lets the students choose their own education paths. There is innovation in some cases – in the teaching of science, for instance, where, following the underlying concept of education, topics are grouped and contents are approached holistically. In other cases, however, traditional study methods and contents are still followed, as in the case of the literacy approach to reading where instruction is based on the learning of syllables and grammatical concepts.

**The post-primary programme developed by CONAFE** (National Council for Education Enhancement, *Consejo Nacional de Fomento a la Educación*) was initiated in 1996 and designed for rural areas. It is an alternative to carrying on studying after primary school. The approach is based on an educational concept of action which acknowledges the capacity of learning as complementary to previous knowledge. Pedagogical work is based upon the dominium of basic learning skills through the development of the self-learning method. Two core issues to the project are community work (hence the commitment of the institution with community education) and the participation of instructors,



which is key to their development.

**Material addressed for parents, designed by CREFAL** (Regional Cooperation Centre for Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, *Centro de Cooperación Regional para la educación de adultos en América Latina y el Caribe*) in collaboration with SEP (Ministry of Public Education, *Secretaría de Educación Pública*). This is a collection of seven books called *Books of Mum and Dad*, which were distributed in various basic education schools. The aim of this collection is to assist parents with the enhancement of habits, attitudes and values within the families. The series provides information regarding addictions, sexuality, violence, health, nutrition, and mass media.



Mexico

dvv international

Remarkably, there has been an unprecedented emphasis on programmes regarding adult education for indigenous peoples.

### **Equivalency, “second chance” or alternative schooling (from about the age of 10)**

**Post secondary open education:** Hernández (2006: 1) describes the demand and offer of post-16 education for adults who never attended school or who remained outside the system of post-secondary school education. In Mexico three subsystems offer open post-secondary education for adults who are not registered in schooling, and who are incorporated in economic activities and with responsibilities to sustain their households. They depend upon the General Secondary School Department (*Dirección General de Bachillerato*, DGB) within the Ministry of Education. The Open Secondary School for adults in general started in 1979 and has over a million registered students, whereas the semi-schooled Secondary School for the same award (from 1990) and distance post-secondary education for the Technological Secondary School (1997) have only very small numbers of enrolled students.

**Open Secondary School:** This covers grades 10–12 of the national system. Its curriculum implies that it is designed for self-learners. Its main characteristics are:

- no entrance examination
- no age limit

- no requirement of previous marks to have access
- registration is allowed throughout the whole year, in monthly periods
- no sequential arrangement of subjects, so that students may decide in which order they wish to obtain their credits
- no time limit to complete the studies, so that students rely on themselves to set their own pace
- no requirement to attend school centres, nor fixed schedules, but students have to acquire materials (textbooks and anthologies) for independent study
- the service is offered throughout the whole country, and the payment includes textbooks, exam applications and the issuing of student cards or certificates

The current curriculum, as of 2004, includes 33 subjects, 17 of which are core subjects that are compulsory for all students, and 16 of which are electives. Elective subjects are grouped into 3 different areas: the humanities, administrative and social sciences, and the natural sciences (physics and mathematics). Although there is flexibility, the average period for completion is between 3 and 5 years. Standard multiple choice exams are administered to evaluate whether the learners have successfully mastered the overall learning objectives set forth in the didactic materials.

As in any open education model, students are expected to take charge of their own learning based upon their study of printed learning materials and the taking of corresponding tests. Although there is no proper infrastructure to provide this service, the system does have a few advisory offices. There are four offices in Mexico City, for example. In the capitals of most of the other Mexican states, however, there is only one office. Advisory services are provided free of charge under the responsibility of qualified advisors for each subject area. The advisors, who are paid by the hour, do not teach. Their function is rather to provide guidance in the self-learning processes and administrative tasks of the learners. The service is publicly run, but allows registration for private centres.

**Youths for change:** The community development secondary school scheme constitutes an alternative for people with a low income who have hardly any access to tertiary education (Pieck, 2003: 674). An interesting proposal is that of the Centre for Studies of Rural Development (Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Rural, CESDER), which has extended its range of services to include a programme in Valle de Bravo called *“Youths for Change”*. This programme strives to improve family and community conditions in rural areas based on a self-subsistence strategy. It was developed over a period of twelve years in the mountains of Puebla, and has served as a model for replication in other areas. The aim of the project is to maximise the benefits of education for the individual and at the same time provide emancipatory educational practice that addresses social transformation. It seeks to:

- promote consciousnesses of group and community cultural identity;
- work within the context of the learners so as to enable them to transform the living conditions of their families and to improve their means of subsistence and modes of production; and
- help learners acquire effective competencies that allow them to go beyond the fishing and farming sector and compete more successfully in a market economy.

This involves helping learners acquire knowledge, values, attitudes and skills in an educational process that is tightly linked with productive activities and community work.

### **Life skills and community development:**

Salinas (2003: 684) sees the area of life skills and community development as social learning. This means that social learning is not restricted to courses or functions about democracy, self-promotion, gender equity or citizen rights. Social learning is an educational dimension implicit in a wide range of practices. The best promoters of such practices have been non-governmental organisations that work in popular education. Salinas points out that during the 1990s, the democratisation of the Mexican political system was important in promoting learning in the foregoing sense.



Mexico

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### **Income generation programmes, non-formal vocational training and rural and community development programmes for youth and adults (15+)**

Pieck (2003: 657) reports that studies on training in the farming and fishing sectors proliferated at the end of the 1990s. Many organisations addressed the appropriation of technologies in different areas of farming and fishing production, and reported the need to base programmes on local knowledge, to promote equalitarian communication among producers as a mechanism for diversification, and to address some of the weaknesses of collective management in experimental farming. Pilot experiences to train work-related competencies in rural micro-enterprises were promoted in the fishing and farming sector using both technicians and trainers (Pieck, 2003, 658).

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Roshan Chitraka

# Non-formal education in Nepal

## How is NFE conceptualised?

In 1971, the National Education System Plan stated that adult education would be launched in two forms; (a) literacy extension programme and (b) functional adult education programme. The adult education programme would have an annual target of 100,000 for literacy. The separate and independent endeavors and programmes of all technical ministries aimed at educating or informing adults would therefore be amalgamated into a joint programme to be named functional adult education, under the auspices of a committee representing various ministries concerned (NESP, 1971, 57).

Most adult education and functional adult literacy programmes in the past have focused on *"rural development"*. A pilot project known as Education for Rural Development in the Seti Zone had included a major component on functional literacy (1981). One of the major objectives of the Seti project was to introduce a campaign approach to tackle the problem of illiteracy through functional literacy and the provision of reading materials to make adults aware of new ideas, skills, and knowledge enabling them to take direct action to improve the quality of their life. The Seti project was supported by UNESCO, UNDP and UNICEF. Quite a number of current programmes such as the out-of-school programme, flexible schooling programme, women's literacy programme, and community learning centre, were successfully piloted under the Seti project.

It is about two decades since the Ministry of Education began operating a variety of programmes related to literacy and non-formal education. Most go beyond the teaching the three R's. Some are called functional because they attempt to include skills and knowledge immediately useful for the neo-literates. Although a large variety of literacy/NFE programmes have been developed and implemented for decades, Nepal's achievement in terms of quantity has not been satisfactory. The 2001 census indicated that almost 46 percent of the population was still illiterate.

Education is considered a powerful means to address poverty through human development by enhancing the capacity of people in terms of appropriate knowledge and skills to acquire economic and social prosperity. In this regard, literacy is viewed as a continuum of knowledge and skills. It has proved to be the foundation of economic and social development of the individual as well as the country. It is considered a first step towards the promotion of education as well as improving the status of the poor, women, and marginalized groups.

Among the six objectives of the Dakar Convention, the fourth was to achieve a 50 per-

cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults. The Convention has positively influenced Nepal to accept the literacy and NFE programme as a main vehicle of poverty reduction and social empowerment. Nepal has also developed and implemented a National Plan of Action with a time-frame to achieve the 15+ age group literacy rate of 90 percent by 2015.

The Ministry of Education has always been regarded as the agency responsible to raise the literacy level of the country. Other line ministries have been involved in providing literacy skill as tools to improve the performance in their respective sectors. The Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Forestry, and Ministry of Local Development have had extensive programmes to help the participants of their programmes to be literate, but the Ministry of Education has not been able to capitalize on the contribution of the other Ministries.

Numerous NGOs and I-NGOs are involved in running non-formal education programmes. Their focus is on human development, with emphasis on fostering human skills in areas such as health, education, social living, awareness building, income-generation, civic awareness, human rights, etc. These organizations have used their own modus operandi to conduct NFE activities.

INGO's operating in Nepal are involved in literacy programmes. Out of about a hundred INGO's registered with the Social Service Coordination Council, (SSCC) about 50 percent operate programmes with a literacy component. These INGO-sponsored literacy components are generally used as tools to achieve such specific objectives as awareness-raising, empowerment, income-generation, information-sharing. Bringing these INGO-sponsored literacy programmes within the NFEC national network would have significantly helped towards qualitative and quantitative improvement in the national literacy programme. So far, this has not happened.

The Government replaced the term "*adult education*" with "*non-formal education*" in the Education Regulation (2002) and expanded the scope of the programmes by including the following activities:

- a) basic adult education programme
- b) post-literacy education
- c) continuous education, and
- d) alternative primary education

Some of the programmes are called functional because they seek to include skills and knowledge immediately useful for neo-literates. Most still use the formal education setting with formal methods of instruction. The principal difference is that non-formal classes do not operate like formal schools with 6/7 hours of teaching a day during the day or morning time (*A 10-Year Literacy/NFE Policy and Programme Framework, 2006, UNESCO Kathmandu*).



## Literacy

The 1971 census defined a literate person as one who can read, write and comprehend in one's own language. This definition continues to serve as the accepted norm (A 10-Year Literacy/NFE Policy and Programme Framework, 2006, UNESCO Kathmandu).

## Life skills

Following the emphasis in the Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000), Nepal's Core Document on EFA (2004–2009) specified that learning generic skills such as information-gathering, problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork, negotiation, interpersonal skills, self-awareness, assertiveness, handling emotions, conflict resolution, and living in harmony and peace with neighbours as key aspects be considered, to meet the learning needs of all children, especially those belonging to indigenous and linguistic minority groups (MOES, *EFA Core Document 2003*).

The thematic group Appropriate Learning and Life-Skills Education formed under the EFA National Plan of Action (2000–2015) discusses three groups of life skills: survival skills; generic skills or key competencies; and transferable skills. Other aspects identified include home management, personal management, decision-making, interpersonal skills, use of information and ability to transfer skills.

## Lifelong learning

The Government's policy strategies which took into account the EFA goal 4 are:

- literacy campaign for eradicating illiteracy
- expanding access to schooling so that the up-coming generation of adults receives a better education – alternative school as a flexible extension of educational access to out-of-school youth
- operating non-formal and alternative education to make it easier for out-of-school children and youth to enter or reenter school
- providing various forms of non-formal education programmes, particularly focused on female adults, for example, literacy for women's empowerment and functional literacy for women



Indonesia

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- providing facilities for continuing education to keep learning current and relevant to changing contexts – literacy education as an educational and skill training support for local income-generation needs
- developing Community Learning Centres (CLCs) as community-based facilities for learning resources and activities and to provide a venue and support system for literacy activities, continuous/lifelong learning, community-based educational forums and income-generating activities

Basic literacy programmes have been conducted by the Government of Nepal with priority for disadvantaged social groups based on the following criteria:

- **Remoteness:** areas a long way from the road network or the airport and the development region
- **Dalit:** the disadvantaged group of people from among the Dalits who fall under the priority groups in the National Dalit Commission document, e.g., Musahar, Dushad, Badi
- **Minority Ethnic Groups:** such as Raute, Rajbansi, Dhimal, Chepang, or the groups that are in the priority list of the National Ethnic Upliftment Academy
- **Women:** women activists, elected representatives and groups that are prioritised by the National Women's Commission
- **Age-Groups:** adolescents and children
- **Economic:** landless, jobless, Dalits, women, people from ethnic groups, groups involved in production promotion, farmers, laborers, housewives, etc.

From among these, groups or areas are prioritised by Village Development Committees and District Development Committees.

According to the UNESCO Kathmandu's publication *A 10-Year Literacy/NFE Policy and Programme Framework, 2006*, the status of policy development in Nepal is as follows: The MOES/NFEC has not published such a policy document on non-formal education so far. However, one can find some statements relating to non-formal education which give some indication of Government policy. The following policy statements have been extracted from Government publications which throw some light on NFE policy:

- Ensure strong support for Education for All by the year 2015 by providing NFE services to the 6–45 years' age group population.
- Expand the NFE programmes to reach unserved and underserved groups including women, the disadvantaged, deprived and marginalized so as to reduce the existing disparities in the basic and primary education sector.
- Conduct mass literacy campaign (intensive programme) for children, youth, and adults who have not been able to have access to formal education.
- Link adult education programmes with national development efforts geared towards improving quality of life.

- Provide post literacy and continuing education for neo-literates in primary and adult education.
- Mobilize participation of other agencies including GO's, NGO's and INGO's in a coordinated manner for the promotion of non-formal education programmes.
- Implement non-formal education programmes on a national campaign basis with the active participation of national and international NGO's and community organizations for adults and out-of-school children of 6–14 years.
- Adopt the Community Learning Centres approach gradually as a permanent organizational structure for NFE programmes.
- Provide income generating programmes for poverty stricken, deprived, disadvantaged and Dalit women. (MOES, 2005).

The Tenth Plan (2002–2007) specified the following:

- NFE programmes would prioritize women, disadvantaged ethnic groups, and Dalits for inclusion.
- Literacy rate will be increased by effectively implementing the adult and children's literacy programmes.
- Literacy, post literacy and continuing education programmes will be implemented in an integrated way in order to achieve the objectives of relevant education.

Other Government documents state policies related to literacy/NFE, for example the EFA National Action Plan on literacy:

- The Non-formal Education Council (NFEC) is to be developed as an organization with representation of stakeholders rather than an administrative unit.
- The target for 2015 is to achieve a 90% literacy rate and to provide neo-literates with opportunities for continuing education neo-literates by 2015.
- Strategies are to be developed to promote critical literacy awareness.
- Life-related topics and materials should be the basis for training in literacy programmes.

Policy statements published in different Government documents help identify the major policies currently adopted by the Government. However, some policies have not been implemented at all, and some have been adopted in a half-hearted manner. The annual programmes of the Government show the lack of consistency between plans and policies.

**Targets:** Literacy targets are set to be met in five phases: (i) by 2005 (ii) by 2007, (end of 10th Development Plan), (iv) by 2012, (end of 11th Development Plan), and (v) by 2015.

## Legislation

The Education Act 1971, 8<sup>th</sup> amendment, stated that NFE will be implemented in the country according to the stipulated regulations. According to the Education Regulations 2002:

1. Persons who have not acquired a basic education and have no access to formal schooling are entitiled to the following forms of non-formal education:
  - a) basic adult literacy education
  - b) post literacy education
  - c) continuing education
  - d) alternative Primary Education
2. Curriculum and text books of non-formal education pursuant to sub-rule (1) shall be approved by National Curriculum Development and Evaluation Council.

### Basic Adult Literacy Education:

1. Basic adult literacy education shall be given to illiterate people from fifteen to forty five years of age.
2. The time duration for conducting Basic Adult Literacy Education classes shall be of six months.

### Post Literacy Education:

1. Post literacy education shall be provided for persons who have completed basic adult literacy education.
2. The time duration for conducting classes of post literacy education shall be from three to six months.

### Continuing Education:

1. Persons who have completed post literacy education shall be given continuing education.
2. The time duration for conducting extended education classes shall be as prescribed by the Ministry.

### Alternative Primary Education:

1. Alternative primary education may be given to children from six to fourteen years of age.
2. The time duration for alternative primary education classes shall be of nine months.
3. Provisions may be made for children completing alternative primary education to be involved in other programmes related to non-formal education.
4. Schools may admit children who have completed alternative primary education to suitable classes by observing their educational standard.

**Non-formal education may be conducted:**

1. If an organization desires to conduct non-formal education, an application along with recommendation by the Village Development Committee or Municipality concerned shall be filed for approval with the District Non-formal Education Committee.
2. If an application is filed per sub-rule (1), the District Non-formal Education Committee shall make necessary inquiries and, where appropriate, permit the applicant to provide non-formal education. Upon granting approval, the District Non-formal Education Committee shall set the terms and conditions for provision.
3. Approval for the provision of non-formal education may be revoked by the District Non-formal Education Committee at any time if a provider organization does not abide by the prescribed terms and conditions pursuant to sub-rule (2).

The Regulations refer also specify the creation of the following official bodies (Education Regulations, 2002):

- A Non-formal Education Council composed of 17 members specified by role, with arrangements for its functioning; and
- District Non-formal Education Committees composed of 11 members each, likewise specified by role, and with procedures delineating committee responsibilities for monitoring, management, coordination and supervision of non-formal education provision in the district level.

**Finances and support for NFE**

The state makes public funds available for the administration, management and implementation of NFE and literacy programmes. For the 10<sup>th</sup> plan period (2002–2007), a total of Rs. 247.9 million (\$3.4 million), 1.3% of the total education budget was allocated to literacy and the NFE programme (Planned Development in Nepal and 10<sup>th</sup> Plan 2059–64BS by Bhabuk “Parajibi”, p. 319).

The MOES follows a traditional system of financing the Literacy and NFE programme. The MOES receives an annual Government allotment on the basis of approved programmes. In general, the Ministry proposes programmes on the basis of plans prepared to achieve certain targets; funds allocated for Literacy/NFE fall far short of what is required to achieve the tenth plan target and the target set by the EFA Action Plan. The share of the Literacy/NFE budget in the national budget also indicates the lack of commitment on the part of the Government towards the Literacy/NFE programme. The Non-formal Education Centre (NFEC) operates many programmes of numerous kinds with the little funds it has available. The EFA programme also allocates some funds for Literacy/NFE. Nevertheless, the amount is too small to achieve the objectives and targets (*A 10-Year Literacy/NFE Policy and Programme Framework*, 2006, UNESCO Kathmandu).

NFE programmes are formally supported and managed nationally through the Non-Formal Education Centre which receives an annual budget from the Ministry of Finance, after plans have been approved by the National Planning Commission.

The commitments made by the Government at national and international levels to raise the national literacy rate are associated with a long list of tasks that would overwhelm any organization assigned to perform these tasks. The MOES has the responsibility to perform these with the NFEC as its executing agency. Planning, management and evaluation need to be effective to accomplish the goals and objectives of national literacy policy. The NFEC has been conducting programmes every year within the limited approved annual budget which is too small to achieve the quantitative targets and NFE goals. The NFEC has prepared a Five Year Plan (2004–2009) which can be regarded as a good planning exercise to prepare a holistic approach to a national Literacy/NFE programme.

Managing literacy/NFE programmes is a formidable task. By its very nature an NFE programme makes use of multiple modalities and involves multiple agencies. Though the NEFC has to manage the Literacy/NFE programme with different modes of delivery, the style and process of management is similar to that of the large formal education system. In fact, the NEFC is like a regular department under the MOES, like the Department of Education at the central level. The NFEC executes its programmes through the management structure of the MOES, and uses Regional Directorates and District Education Offices. It involves the NGOs and CBOs at the village level to implement its programmes. Large numbers of CBOs and INGOs implement literacy/NFE programmes, mostly at the village level.

The District Education Office (DEO) has been given a critical role in the management of NFE programmes, but does not have the capacity to discharge the tasks related to NFE. Therefore the management of NFE is very weak at the district level (*A 10-Year Literacy/NFE Policy and Programme Framework*, 2006, UNESCO Kathmandu).

## Monitoring and evaluation

There are no national/formal arrangements to monitor and evaluate NFBE programmes. The roles of councils include management and supervision but not monitoring and evaluation. The Non-formal Education Centre of the Ministry of Education and Sports sends out quotas of basic literacy and post-literacy (including women's literacy and income generation) programmes to all districts through the District Education Offices. The NFEC seeks the number of beneficiaries in those programmes from the DEOs.

The NFEC database of the number of beneficiaries is not broken down by gender, caste and ethnicity, nor does it classify according to the specific age group of adults. Adult literacy figures are available for the 15 to 45 age group but not for 15–24 and 25–45

age groups, as required by the EFA indicator. Proper national level monitoring and evaluation of NFBE is lacking in the NFEC.

## Research and training

The Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development of Tribhuvan University has been entrusted to carry out regular formative research pertaining to the implementation of EFA programmes, but research studies carried out since 2002 do not involve any research focused on NFBE. Research activity is not included in NFEC's regular programme, nor is there specific training organized at the national level that is focused on macro-level planning and management of NFE programmes. There is no separate department of NFBE in the universities.

The NFEC, with support from UNESCO Kathmandu, is in the process of expanding and institutionalizing the Community Learning Centres (CLCs) that are expected to organize necessary training for NFE workers, facilitators and trainers. The NFEC, however, lacks a clear national framework for training NFBE educators and trainers. No such training programme is systematically and regularly organized. The NFEC's own annual publication in 2003 (Saksharta Visheshanka, in Nepali) documents an article by Ananda Poudel that has raised the issue that the training programmes offered by the state are inadequate; as a result, the literacy and NFE programmes are run by incompetent facilitators, with no provision for regular updating of skills. He has raised the issue of how necessary it is to develop human resources, enhance the capacity of the currently available trainers and facilitators, and develop a conducive environment for them to become competent.

A local NGO, World Education Nepal, in the course of concluding the DFID-supported Community Literacy Project (1998–2004), prepared and submitted an overarching business plan on promoting livelihoods and social-justice-oriented literacy to NFEC, which included the documentation of a clear strategy of developing national and local level human resources. The NFEC management did not present the business plan to the MOES for consideration and approval, nor has it demonstrated any initiative to adapt the rich experiences and good practices of local, national and international NGOs for the purpose of developing human resources in the field.



Indonesia

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## Types of NFBE activities

Individual INGOs and UNICEF have supported programmes according to categories of their own. For example, the activities categorized by World Education Nepal are:

- Non-formal education for out-of-school youths and women
- Vocational education for NFE graduate youths
- Literacy and health education
- Literacy and micro-finance
- Education for child workers including schools for about 10,000 children

The providers can be listed as:

- Government/state, NFEC, Ministry of Education and Sports
- District Education Offices
- Bilateral agencies (DFID, SDC, GTZ, SNV, JICA, USAID, DANIDA)
- INGOs (World Education Inc., Plan International, United Mission to Nepal, Save the Children-US, Action Aid, United Service Cooperative, Room to Read Nepal)
- UN agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF)
- Public enterprises (Community Learning Centres with the support of NFEC at the election constituency level, at least one in each constituency, a total of 205)

Through the district education offices, the NFEC is involved in the implementation of the above 6 categories, except for the last one. Those programmes are also offered with the support of INGOs such as World Education Inc., Plan International, United Mission to Nepal, Save the Children-US, Action Aid Nepal, or United Service Cooperative (USC Nepal).

The sixth category programmes are implemented with the involvement of INGOs and bilateral agencies (DFID, SDC, GTZ, SNV, JICA, USAID and DANIDA) through local CBOs and NGOs. The literacy and non-formal education programmes related to forest users groups, health, agriculture, micro finance, human rights and social justice are supported by the bilateral agencies as well as INGOs such as Action Aid, CEDPA, United Service Cooperative (USC Nepal), World Education Inc., PLAN Nepal, UNICEF, and United Mission to Nepal. Normally, the bilateral agencies work through the relevant line ministries. UNESCO Kathmandu supports the NFEC in its planning of NFE programmes, along with the establishment of CLCs in order to promote lifelong learning opportunities at the local level.

In addition to the Government programme on Literacy/NFE many national and international NGOs run their own programmes, mostly on the basis of the identified needs of the learners. Some innovative programmes have been implemented as time-bound projects. Action Aid Nepal initiated REFLECT, which is still continuing in the literacy and NFE programmes of local and national NGOs.



The DFID-funded Community Literacy Project was managed and implemented by a local apex NGO, World Education Nepal, from 1998 to 2004. The basic approaches, tools, and techniques developed in the project have been documented in the form of resource materials. The project, despite its efforts and the preparation of a comprehensive business plan, did not succeed to influence the NFEC to mainstream the project learning and its modus-operandi in the national programme. DFID's other community-based programmes have adapted the project outcome in a fragmented and possibly distorted manner. Unfortunately, with the national apex NGO WEN "*going on hibernation*", the location of the knowledge base produced during the project period is now uncertain and without an institutional memory. The human and institutional resources developed during both REFLECT and the CLP periods have come together in the form of an organized network, the Forum for Popular Education, Education Network Nepal. There are many other innovative NFE programmes being implemented, but the Government does not have a proper mechanism for monitoring, consolidating and cross-fertilizing the valuable learning and innovations taking place in the country. Because of the lack of a systematic database and coordination, assessing the progress made by Nepal in the field of NFBE is very fragmented and fuzzy.

Rashid Aderinoye

## Nigerian adult and non-formal education

### An overview

Nigeria, located in the eastern portion of West Africa, shares an extensive land border with the Republic of Niger in the north, the Republic of Benin to the west, Cameroon to the east, and Chad to the north-east. To the south, it borders on the Atlantic Ocean. It is the largest and the most populous country in Africa, with a population of 140 million (NPC, 2006) and diverse ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. The major ethnic groups in the country, among others, are the Hausa/Fulani in the north; the Yoruba in the south-west; the Ibos in the south-east, and the Ijaw in the south.

The Nigerian education system includes formal, non-formal, and informal learning. For Nigerians, education is synonymous with schooling, and education outside the classroom is considered to be inferior or inadequate. This misconception is what adult and non-formal education practitioners are working hard to correct. Nigeria currently operates a 6-3-3-4 formal educational system, which means six years of primary school, three years of junior secondary school, three years of senior secondary school and four years of university education. ([http://www.itdl.org/Journal/Jun\\_06/article04.htm](http://www.itdl.org/Journal/Jun_06/article04.htm)).

There are thousands of primary and secondary schools enrolling millions of children across the country. There are also some 200 universities and monotechnic and polytechnic institutes. These schools, universities and institutes are run by a variety of proprietors including the federal, state and local governments, as well as corporate bodies, NGOs, and individuals.

The limited capacity of the formal education system to cope with the various demands on education in Nigeria has necessitated the present appeal for non-formal education to address the imbalances in the nation's formal educational sector. It helps the vast population of youth and adults who are stigmatized as school failures by providing basic and functional literacy.

Adult education as an academic discipline and a field of practice is largely a 20th century development. In Nigeria, the historical development of adult and non-formal education has been interwoven with the history of formal schooling. From the early decades of the colonial period, the British colonial government paid little or no attention to the provision of adult education (Department of Education, 1944, cited in Omolewa 1981).

## Policy on education

The 1977 National Policy on Education, which was revised in 1981, 1998, and 2004, has always devoted a chapter to the provision of adult and non-formal education in Nigeria. Although a wide range of activities and practices fall within the rubric of adult education, the National Policy on Education identified mass literacy, remedial, continuing, vocational, aesthetic, cultural and civic education as the key components of adult and non-formal learning. The literacy rate in Nigeria, as estimated by the Executive Secretary of the National Ministry of Education and Culture (NMEC), is 57.6%, which means that not less than 40 million Nigerians are non literate. Because of this high level of illiteracy, priority has been given to mass literacy training. Section 6 of the current edition of the National Policy (2004), Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education, was based on the need to provide adult basic education to millions of Nigerian adults and youths in line with Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS).

## National and state agencies for adult education

Although policies and programmes for adult and non-formal education already existed in Nigeria during the years of colonial rule and after independence, autonomous adult education outside the ministerial structure is a recent development. The Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (NNCAE) was founded in 1971. Its primary concern was to promote adult and non-formal educational policies and practices in Nigeria. It advocated the establishment of a national adult education agency, which led to the creation of the Adult Education Unit at the Federal Ministry of Education in 1974. The National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult, and Non-formal Education was established in 1991. State and local government agencies and authorities were also set up.

In addition, in the interest of meeting the educational needs of nomadic communities, both for children and adults, the Federal Government formed a National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) in 1989 in the State of Kaduna.

## Universities

Universities as part of the education sector reach out to the adult population through various educational programmes. In Nigeria there are about 99 public and private universities ([www.nuc.edu.ng](http://www.nuc.edu.ng)). Some of these universities have adult education related departments. Academic staff are members of the Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (NNCAE), an affiliate of the Pan-African Association of Literacy and Adult Education (PAALAE), which in turn is a member of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE). Other quasi-governmental organisations involved in the promotion of adult education include Michael Imodu Labour College, Ilorin, the Centre for Management Devel-

opment (CMD), the women development centres, polytechnic institutes, and colleges of education.

### **International agencies engaged in NFE**

National efforts are supported by international agencies including: UNESCO, UNICEF, ACTION AID, USAID, Pro-Literacy and the British Council. UNESCO, apart from developing the capacity of adult and non-formal education personnel and strengthening institutions, also assists with logistics and funds for programmes. It is presently supporting a radio literacy programme in Nigeria. UNICEF cooperates with NMEC in the integration of Quranic schools into the basic education system, and supports education programmes for girls and boys in the northern and eastern parts of the country.

### **Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)**

Non-governmental organisations are also involved in the promotion and provision of NFE programmes, among them the NNCAE, the Baptist Convention, the YMCA, the YWCA, the Asalatu Group, the Federation of Muslim Women in Nigeria (FOMWAN), the University Village Association (UNIVA) and Family Re-orientation Education and Empowerment (FREE). There is also a coalition of NGOs, the Non-Governmental Association for Literacy Support Services (NOGALSS) and the Civil Society Coalition for Education For All (CSACEFA).

### **Literacy centres and learners**

A study conducted by the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) Unit of the Federal Ministry of Education concerning the delivery structures of literacy and non-formal education in Nigeria showed that the target beneficiaries of the adult education centres sampled were: women (34.65%), literate men (26.8%), traders (21.2%), apprentices (10.1%), and motor-part workers (7.5%). It was reported that people cover a wide variety of distances to attend classes; 51.7% cover less than one kilometre, 26.45% cover between 1 and 2 kilometres, and 12.6% cover 2 kilometres. 58.4% of literacy centres offered basic literacy programmes. However, very few life-skills components are built into the literacy programme.

Three mechanisms have been identified for measuring quality and efficiency in non-formal education. These are the number and ratio of instructors to learners, curriculum and supervision modalities, and type/state of facilities at the literacy centres. For each of these mechanisms, the findings of the ESA studies provided useful and relevant information.

The quality of learning that takes place in a literacy centre in particular, and in non-formal education in general, is, to a large extent, determined by the total number of instructors involved in teaching in these centres. From 1999 to 2003, the numbers of instructors were given as 18,067 in 1999; 17,649 in 2000; 18,504 in 2001; 18,929 in 2002; and 17,332 in 2003. The ESA studies showed a high awareness level (86.7%) of the existence of curriculum of non-formal education among instructors, with only 6.7% not being aware. Slightly over 40% of these instructors regarded the curriculum as adequate for the learners while 26% and 22.1% agreed that the objectives of the curriculum were adequate and easy to follow. While 7.8% of the supervisors regarded the curriculum as relevant, 2.6% considered it vague and irrelevant.

Facilities provided in literacy centres have something to do with the ownership of these centres. State ownership outweighs that of the local governments. Most are located in primary school buildings. In the ESA study conducted in 2005 it was found that 30.1% of the literacy centres visited had classrooms; 19.2% had toilets; 16.4% had tables and chairs; 12.3% had electricity; 9.6% had fans; 6.8% had typewriters; 2.3% had a library; 1.8% had a staff room; 0.5% had a video recorder; and none had a television set.

Regarding supervision of the literacy centres, it was found that a variety of officials were involved. 45% of the centres were supervised by officials from the adult education units of local governments, 37.7% by officials of state agencies for mass education, NGOs, development partners, and others. With respect to supervision visits, 48.6% of instructors claimed that their centres had only been supervised once a year, while 20.8% indicated twice a year. 30.6% indicated that their centres were never supervised at all.

Delivery strategies engaged at the various centres include: PRA-REFLECT, Real Literacy Materials (RLM), Learner Generated Materials (LGM), Literacy Shop, Distance Learning and a host of others.



Ethiopia

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## Sources of funds

Government bodies such as ministries, parastatals and units at all levels rely mainly on the government for funds. But donor agencies, such as UNICEF, UNDP, DFID among others, do also provide grants. In the case of universities, fees and charges form part of the revenue base. However, while each government agency prepares annual recurrent and

capital budgets, which are subject to approval by the relevant legislative bodies, these budgets are not always implemented to the letter. Most of the funds go toward recurrent personnel costs in general, but not always, accompanied by meagre amounts for overheads. In most cases, capital grants are not released.

Thus, the problem of inadequacy of funds and the irregular release of approved budgetary allocations seriously undermines policy implementation for adult and non-formal education in Nigeria. The situation appears to be more difficult at state government level, where many of the state agencies for mass education can no longer obtain funds to render any services including the purchase of literacy instructional materials. These agencies often rely heavily or solely on donor agencies to enable them to function. For some national agencies, the situation is not very different. To cope with financial difficulties, adult and non-formal organizations are increasingly seeking support from development partners such as UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, DFID, or the EU.

### **Challenges and ways out**

In the face of this situation the great challenge is to secure political will and commitment, adequate funding for the implementation of policy provision, and inclusion of budgetary allocation for adult basic literacy in the Universal Basic Education budget. There is a need for a sufficient number of adequately-trained adult and non-formal education personnel as well as for mass mobilization of the entire citizenry for effective participation in literacy programmes. If there is to be a change in the fortune of adult and non formal education in Nigeria, the country will have to develop

- the type of political will and commitment that was demonstrated in the United Kingdom in 1969 when the Open University was established under Harold Wilson, or in Cuba in 1960 when the national literacy campaign was launched by Fidel Castro, or in 1955 in Nigeria when free primary education was introduced in the Western Region under Obafemi Awolowo;
- a reliable national literacy account, into which federal, state and local governments, as well as the private sector, will be required to pay a percentage of their annual budgets to implement the policies required to meet the basic and adult literacy goals of Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals adopted at the UN Millennium Summit in the year 2000;
- statutory provisions through a revision of the Universal Basic Education Law (UBE) to secure the allocation of a specific portion of the UBE budget at all levels of government for adult basic literacy and non-formal education;
- strategies such as those employed in Cuba and Nicaragua to engage radio and other mass media as tools of literacy instruction and to secure their participation in a mass mobilization effort to eradicate illiteracy.

## Experiences in NFE

### Literacy by Radio

The Literacy by Radio project was launched in the year 2000 at the initiative of the National Mass Education Commission (NMEC), and in collaboration with UNESCO, to ensure the adoption of radio as a medium of instruction for literacy training in Nigeria. Specific objectives toward the achievement of this aim include:

- conducting advocacy with critical stakeholders,
- engaging experts from Cuba to develop the capacity of Nigerian actors, and
- mobilising resources from governments and people as well as development partners

A solid foundation has meanwhile been laid for the effective implementation of literacy by radio in Nigeria. The capacity of the programme has been developed, and a sufficient amount of primers have been produced in the major languages of instruction. Advocacy efforts have led to the following results:

1. Government functionaries, policy-makers, and general managers of radio houses have been made aware, for the first time, of the enormity of problems associated with illiteracy.
2. Recognition has grown among stakeholders that illiterates can be easily induced to perpetrate violence with little or no financial motivation.
3. It has become clearer in the relevant circles that media, and particularly radio, are an under-used resource for promoting literacy.
4. Media Executives have come to recognize the potential of radio for reaching the population with literacy training and other related educational programmes.
5. Through the lessons of Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, Mali, Togo, Uganda, Kenya, Namibia, and Italy, Government officials and policy makers have a better idea of the many possibilities that exist to integrate radio literacy and programmes to enhance societal transformation and national development.

As a result of the advocacy efforts, participants:

- have gained a better understanding of distance education;
- have recognized the difference between education broadcasts and literacy lessons by radio;
- have been exposed to script writing and production; and
- have become better producers, presenters, and announcers.

Learners participating in interactive radio instruction assemble to form learning groups under the guidance of facilitators. They are provided with specially prepared literacy primers and other learning materials. The first group of 2,400 learners completed their courses of instruction within the stipulated period of 9 months, setting a good tone for the national mass literacy campaign. The degree of success recorded so far has convinced

the government that literacy by radio, if effectively implemented, will accelerate the process of increasing the literacy rate by more than 50% by the year 2015. At the launching of the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment LIFE in the state of Niger in 2006, Literacy by Radio was therefore adopted as the means to implement the national literacy programme.

### **Radio and the Nomadic Education Programme of the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE)**

The Nomadic Education Programme (NEP) is aimed at providing and widening access to quality basic education for nomads in Nigeria, boosting literacy and equipping them with skills and competences to enhance their well-being and participation in the nation-building process. To make literacy and basic education more accessible to nomadic children and adults, the NCNE has been experimenting with an innovative approach that uses the medium of radio, known as Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI). The objectives of using radio for nomadic education are to:

1. mobilize and sensitize nomadic pastoralists to appreciate the value of education
2. sensitize and mobilize nomads to contribute meaningfully towards the education of their children
3. increase the level of support and enthusiasm of nomads with a view to improving enrolment and attendance
4. sensitize and encourage both men and women to enroll in adult literacy programmes
5. inform nomads of modern animal husbandry practices as well as acquaint them with their civic responsibilities, including the formation of cooperative societies and radio listening groups; and
6. improve quality of teaching and learning particularly where the performance is low and teachers are poorly trained

The Interactive Radio Instruction experiment started in 1992 with a regular radio programme and other related services for nomadic groups. The success of adult IRI led to the launching of a similar school-based programme that is currently being tested in a pilot project that uses the Open Learning Education Trust Model from South Africa. To date, the Commission has established 239 radio listening groups which participate in IRI.

The programme receives funds from the Federal Government, the World Bank, the British Council, DFID, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), the Education Trust Fund (ETF), the Japanese international cooperation agency (JICP), UNICEF and UNESCO. The Commission uses radio to mobilise nomadic pastoralists to appreciate the value of modern education. It also uses the Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) Methodology to train teachers (Dahiru Muhammad 2007).



### NGO intervention in the application of ICTs to adult literacy (UNIVA 2006)

The use of distance education and ICT in the delivery of literacy is being promoted not only by all levels of government, but also by NGOs such as the University Village Association (UNIVA) and Family Re-orientation Education and Empowerment (FREE). In addition to regular face-to-face literacy instruction at adult literacy centres, UNIVA uses audio cassettes and trains adult literacy learners in the effective use of cell phones in sending text messages. The first programme to promote the application of information technology for literacy learning was the University Rural Literacy Programme supported by the British Council. A pre-recorded audio-tape with instruction guides was made available by the NGO to learners and their facilitators.

Three face-to-face instruction sessions of two hours per week were supplemented by pre-recorded audio tape lessons. When assessing the quality of the impact of the programme in a doctoral study, Laoye (2000) revealed that health and sanitation practices of the people improved, women traders kept better records, living conditions improved, and primary school enrolments increased as the parents gained a better understanding of the importance of education. It was also revealed that more people participated in political processes. This developmental “ripple effect” has helped sustain the project. The study also found that two graduates of the programme were serving as community association secretaries and another two as customary court judges, while five graduates served as local government councillors.

The emergence of Global System Mobile Communication into Nigeria in 2000 brought an innovation into the UNIVA literacy programme. Most adult learners at UNIVA literacy centres are proud users of cellular phones. This created opportunities to ask for a lesson in the use of cell phones in sending text messages, a request welcomed as it was at the initiative of learners. The 2006/2007 adult literacy session was then tagged “Reduce Call, Send Text.” This strategy created more interest in ICT and language lessons among literacy learners. At the end of the seventh week of instruction the majority of learners had mastered the technique and recognized the cost benefits and importance of SMS. In fact, most preferred writing messages to making calls.



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## Lessons learned

This experiment has demonstrated that with the right resources and little training, NGOs can drastically reduce illiteracy by using ICTs. It also proved that regardless of the level of their literacy, adults can learn fast if they are interested and have appropriate methodology, and that skills training is an incentive that brings more people into the learning process and helps to sustain interest. Further, it confirmed the advantages of basing literacy instruction on the needs of learners rather than the commonly used top-to-bottom approach.

## National Mass Education Commission (NMEC) REFLECT project

In order to make literacy more relevant and responsive to community needs, the NMEC has adopted the REFLECT approach to adult literacy and has successfully completed programmes with the Tomaro Island community in Lagos State, Tako in Egon of Nasarawa State, and Kpaduma, Abuja. The REFLECT approach (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques) is a core area of ActionAid Nigeria's contribution to literacy and community development. (UNESCO-Abuja 2005). REFLECT methodology uses participatory techniques to help generate discussion and analysis of critical issues and community concerns (Pwol 2006). REFLECT aims to:

1. empower communities and individuals by improving their communication and mobilization skills;
2. enable people to demand and assert their basic rights;
3. build the institutional and programmatic capacity of civil society organizations and government agencies, and enable them to improve the quality, accessibility and appropriateness of education for poor and marginalized groups. (Newman 2004)

ActionAid's strategy, which is outlined in the NGOs *"Fighting Poverty Together"* strategy paper (FPT), recognizes the four following considerations:

- Poor people have a right to the basic essentials of life, including food, water, health-care, livelihoods, and education.
- Working in partnerships with others maximizes impact.
- It is crucial to promote change on an international scale for the benefit of the poor;
- Efforts must be made to counteract discrimination against women and girls.

The REFLECT project was conceived in line with these wider goals, and is supported by a rights-based approach to development (ActionAid 2005). REFLECT relates education to development. It involves community participation. The facilitators are opinion leaders in the community. REFLECT is flexible, adaptable to any situation, and clearly different from traditional methods. It involves the community and makes them conscious of their rights

and responsibilities (Addul Kadir, Director, AANFE in Bauchi).

In a measure conducted by the State Agency for Adult Non-formal Education in Bauchi with the REFLECT approach, four staff members spent two days in the communities in which AANFE-Bauchi planned to work. On the first day they spoke to the chief and showed him the relevance of the REFLECT method. The second day was aimed at mobilizing the community using a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) map with community members and the chiefs. Criteria for selecting facilitators included physical fitness, the ability to read and write, trustworthiness, humility, membership in the community, patience, tolerance, and acceptance within the community. Many communities call the REFLECT group meetings 'community meetings'; they tend to take place on a biweekly or monthly basis, although in some places groups meet weekly. The meetings are conceived to continue on an indefinite basis, and it is interesting to note that over time, participation tends to grow rather than decrease. This contrasts with traditional literacy projects, which frequently are not sustainable. Both AANFE-Bauchi and the Community-Based Development NGO Forum suggest that this is because more people become interested as the development project begins. This implies that the action planned by the REFLECT circle is relevant and interesting to the wider community who realize the benefits in participation at REFLECT meetings.

In most communities, groups begin by examining issues of concern in the community and drawing up a prioritization matrix. Once a key issue is decided on, an action plan is designed in order to tackle the issue. Participatory tools and techniques are an integral part of the REFLECT approach, and many REFLECT circles use maps, matrices, trees and Venn diagrams, also known as stakeholder diagrams, to structure their discussions. Maps and trees are popular. Participants have commented that they are easy to use and helpful in analyzing community problems. In the Damke community, for instance, a map was used in action planning to agree on a location for the primary school and to identify the families who would benefit from and contribute to the school. Venn diagrams, however, were seen as difficult to use and understand.

The following are comments reported by participants in the Gurusu Community Experience, a project supported by ANFEA-Niger:

*"Through discussion we came up with so many problems facing us. We prioritized them and came out with our immediate need (access to health provision). We used a problem tree to analyse our problem, and a Venn diagram to decide where we could go for assistance. We then went to an action point – the construction of a dispensary. The circle members were involved from the start, but we then transmitted our idea to the whole of Gurusu community, who joined hands together to see that the project was executed. However, we as the community could not do this alone, so we went to see the local government to seek their assistance. We also got moral support from the Agency for Mass Education, Niger State. We faced*

*enormous challenges in the project, as there was a lot of opposition from unprogressive people who are always against any developmental programme that is initiated. What these people want to do is create confusion in the community. But we were bent to see the end of the project. Today the clinic is there for the community to use, with health workers posted by the local government. We learned many lessons from this – it gave us encouragement to continue with REFLECT. The coming together as a team is of great importance. REFLECT is participatory, and this was demonstrated in the project. The project today is owned by everybody and not for an individual.”*

In the Gaskiya Cooperative Experience, the following comments were made by a facilitator:

*“It all began when I was asked to attend facilitators’ training. When I came back from the course, I met the District Head to brief him all about the benefits of REFLECT. In turn, the District Head called some of his village heads to brief them on REFLECT also. They all welcomed REFLECT, and today the circle members, the wider community, the village head and other villages are involved in the programme. I was a member of the Gaskiya cooperative, and I worked with the rest of the group. We used a prioritization matrix and looked at what we needed in the community. We agreed to set up a committee to come up with an economic project that would reduce the poverty and to start adult literacy classes. We decided to set up a poultry farm. To make our dream come to reality, we requested financial assistance from an NGO. The NGO gave us some assistance, but not enough to sustain our project. But we continue to try. In the meantime, we have learned the lesson that ‘together we stand, divided we fall.’ We need to have more support from NGOs and other agencies, and this would motivate us more. We also need to develop proper monitoring and evaluation systems for the project. I myself have gained a lot from my involvement in REFLECT. I have benefited from experience-sharing and social interactions, and communication within the community has improved. I feel I have good relations with the rest of the community since we started working with REFLECT (Newman 2004).”*

These as presented above are some of the documented experiences from the world of non-formal education in Nigeria.

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Carolina S. Guerrero

# The other side of formal basic education – The alternative learning system in the Philippines

## Introduction

If one were to ask the man on the street what he understands by the word education, almost always his answer would be *“going to school in order to learn”*. To the common man, education is predictably associated with learning that takes place in schools. This is a general perception, historically based on tradition.

In the Philippines, a new educational system known as the Alternative Learning System (ALS) is in place, promoting a paradigm shift from school-oriented education to community-based learning. The Bureau of Alternative Learning System of the Department of Education provides this to help those who *“cannot go to school to learn”* or who *“do not want to go to school to learn”*, those who have never gone to school, and those who have dropped out of school. The ALS has effectively become the other side of basic education where one side is formal basic education. ALS is a legally recognized system that addresses the basic and functional learning needs of marginalized learners who, children, youth and adults, are estimated to be about 20% of the total Philippine population. ALS is the lifeblood of the Philippine EFA Plan for 2015 in the context of lifelong learning for sustainable development.

## Contextualizing ALS

Towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a major reform in the Philippine educational system took place, and a new perspective in learning evolved. Where there used to be a formal and non-formal education divide, with one learning track for the school-age population and another for the adult population, as well as a different approach to literacy and livelihood skills development, significant changes were introduced. In 2004, the Bureau of Non-formal Education was renamed the Bureau of Alternative Learning System with a mandate to *“transform all non-formal and informal education interventions into an alternative learning system to yield more EFA benefits”*. Earlier, in 2001, a law was enacted that recognized the ALS as a complement of formal education and a major component of basic education, with a clearly defined role within the overall educational goals. Fur-

ther, the various legal and legislative issuances defined terms and concepts in the new paradigm. These include the following:

- Alternative Learning System – a parallel learning system that provides a viable alternative to existing formal education instruction. It encompasses both the non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.
- Non-formal education – any organized, systematic educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal school system to provide selected types of learning to a segment of the population.
- Informal education – a lifelong process of learning by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences at home, at work, at play, and from life itself.
- Basic education – the education intended to meet basic learning needs which lays the foundation on which subsequent learning can be based. It encompasses early childhood education, elementary and secondary education, as well as the alternative learning systems for children, out-of-school youth and adult learners, and for those with special needs.
- Functional literacy – a range of skills and competencies, cognitive, affective and behavioural, which enables individuals to live and work as human persons, develop their potential, make critical and informed decisions, and function effectively in society within the context of the wider community in order to improve the quality of their life and that of society. Operationally defined, this means that a functionally literate person is one who can:
  - communicate effectively
  - solve problems scientifically, creatively, and think critically
  - use resources sustainably and be productive
  - develop oneself and a sense of community and expand one’s world view

## Policy and programme environment of ALS

As an organic learning system, ALS has its own curriculum, with learning competencies that are parallel and comparable to the formal education curriculum. It has learning strands which are lifeskills-based rather than subject-based. These strands are Communication Skills, Development of Self and a Sense of Community, Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving, Expanding One’s World Vision, and Sustainable Use of Resources/Productivity. Consequently, the principal methodology used is a life-skills approach where active and cooperative learning strategies are applied. Mother tongue is the language for the basic literacy training, and beyond this, English and Filipino are used as second languages. Learning materials consist of print and non-print/multi-media materials.

The beneficiaries of the ALS programmes are children, youth and adults who lack the



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ten years of basic education mandated by the Philippine Constitution. Generally, these are the poorest of the poor in society, such as indigenous people, illiterates, slum dwellers, street children and the differently-abled. With functional literacy as the end goal, acquisition of basic literacy skills is a requirement before livelihood skills are introduced in the programmes of ALS. School-age children are encouraged to stay in the formal school system to better enjoy the benefits of an institution-based education.

ALS implementers are called learning facilitators or instructional managers instead of schoolteachers. Learning groups are organized in community learning centres with the assistance of local governments and members of the community. A capability-building programme scheme is in place to ensure that appropriate training and other human resource development activities address the skills requirements of implementers, partners and stakeholders alike. Techniques to assess learning make use of authentic and portfolio evaluation.

At the grassroots level, the support network for ALS consists of NGOs, local government units, and private groups such as donors, civic and religious organizations. Support to ALS may be technical and/or financial. The Government budget for the Department of Education is the highest given to any Government entity but still has a share of less than 1% for ALS implementation. Finally, ALS as a system of learning has its own performance indicators that serve to determine success or failure of the learning system. These indicators are:

- the percentage of illiterates by age and sex
- the percentage of illiterates enrolled in literacy programmes by age, sex and service providers
- the percentage of learners who attained certain level of competencies as against the total number of illiterates, by age and sex
- the number and percentage of ALS passers by level, sex and age
- the number of ALS programmes and service providers by geographical location and type of programme.



## Banner programmes of ALS

To address the learning needs of different ALS learners, the following major programmes are provided:

- Basic Literacy Programme – for illiterates
- Accreditation and Equivalency Programme – for school dropouts who desire to earn an elementary or secondary education certificate
- Informal Education Programme – for all types of learners who desire to learn about special interest topics
- Indigenous People’s Education – a programme with a specific curriculum for indigenous people
- ALIVE IN ALS – a programme introducing the Arabic language and Islamic Values Education to Muslim migrants in non-Muslim communities
- Adolescent Friendly Literacy Programme – a programme for young adults
- Parent Education Programme – a programme for adults with children
- ALS for Street Children and Other Working Children
- ALS for the Differently-Abled Persons – a programme using sign language for the hearing-impaired

These programmes are delivered face-to-face, through radio broadcasts, or through the use of electronic media also known as the eskwela programme. Participation in all programmes can be through learning groups or independent study.

## Accreditation and Equivalency Programme

In 2000, the Philippines received the Noma Literacy Award from UNESCO Headquarters for its non-formal education programme known as the Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) Programme. This programme continues to attract the attention of a number of countries that face similar experiences related to school dropouts and adult education.

Three key features of the NFE A&E System reflect its mission:

1. It is learner-centred.
2. It is flexible in the time and place learners choose to learn, and how they learn.
3. It is based on adult learning principles.

These features influence the terminology used in the A&E System. People learning through the A&E System are called learners, not pupils or students. The places where they learn are called learning centres, not schools. The people who assist learners to learn are called Instructional Managers, not teachers. Learning through the A&E System is very different from learning through schools and other formal learning institutions.

## **Flexibility of the A&E approach**

A&E uses a flexible approach to learning by giving learners as much control and choice as possible over what, when, where and how they learn, within the constraints of limited resources. Multiple entry and exit points, multiple delivery models, and flexible curriculum options are essential features. This level of flexibility is required so that the A&E System can respond appropriately to the different learning needs and goals of its learners.

The following features of the A&E approach are essential for its flexibility:

- pre-testing learners to determine at what level or where they should begin
- providing pre-entry and on-going counselling and the development of an individual learning agreement to extend learners' options and identify clearly learners' priority learning needs and interests
- flexible entry, programme requirements, programme components, modes of learning, and points of exit
- the curriculum framework is divided into short self-contained learning modules with learners selecting modules to meet their personal needs and goals
- increasing learner control and choice by learners over the content, sequence, time, place, and method of learning
- the use of appropriate learner support strategies and systems, such as learning groups, tutorials, and the use of non-print instructional materials
- access to appropriate interactive learning resources and learning technologies
- self-paced study options, using feedback strategies such as self-assessment activities, learning guides, and pre-test and post-test assessments to support learning processes.

## **The Curriculum Framework**

The Non-formal Education Accreditation and Equivalency (NFE A&E) System is built around a non-formal curriculum. Known as the NFE A&E Curriculum Framework, this caters to learners at elementary and secondary levels. The Curriculum Framework is based on the national definition of functional literacy (see above) in order to improve the quality of their lives and that of society.

## **The learning strands**

Within the NFE A&E Curriculum Framework, the major indicators of functional literacy have been grouped into five interrelated learning strands.

Learning Strand	Major focus
<b>Communications skills</b>	Listening, speaking, reading and writing, from print and electronic media
<b>Problem solving and critical thinking</b> <b>Sustainable use of resources/ productivity</b>	Numeracy, and scientific thinking Ability to earn a living as an employed or self-employed person, sustainable use of resources, and productivity
<b>Development of self and sense of community</b>	Self development, a sense of personal and national history and identity, cultural pride, and recognition and understanding of civil and political rights
<b>Expanding one's world vision</b>	Knowledge and understanding of other communities, respect and appreciation for diversity, peace, and non-violent resolution of conflict, and global awareness and solidarity

## Functional focus

Unlike the traditional focus of the formal school system, this Curriculum Framework emphasizes functionality. It aims to develop the basic skills adult learners need to function successfully in their roles as parents, workers, and community members.

The learning materials developed for the NFE A&E Curriculum Framework reflect this functional focus. They draw upon the life experiences of typical NFE learners in order to equip them with skills and knowledge useful for solving the problems of daily life. They have two main emphases. The first is the development of essential literacy and numeracy skills. The second is the provision of opportunities for learners to apply the knowledge and skills they gain to real-life situations in order to bring an immediate improvement in the quality of their lives. There is a shift in the balance of these two emphases as learners progress through the A&E System. Once learners have mastered essential reading, writing, listening, speaking, and numeracy skills, their learning becomes increasingly functional and applied in content and orientation.

## Learning modules

Learning modules at the Elementary and Secondary Level have been prepared to support all five learning strands of the NFE A&E Curriculum Framework. There are specific learning modules to help learners develop both their communication skills in English and Filipino, and their problem-solving skills. Many learning modules, however, use an integrated approach where these skills are applied to the functional content in the other three strands.

The learning modules have a number of standardized features which help to identify them and make them distinctive.

- They have a standardized cover page capturing the vision of the NFE A&E System as a non-formal alternative pathway of learning. This includes the NFE A&E logo and a collection of pictures depicting:
  - learners engaged in different learning situations, from facilitator-aided instruction, to self-directed study sessions, to individualized instruction
  - the themes underlying the five learning strands of the Curriculum Framework
  - the practical/functional focus of the Curriculum
  - the flexibility and openness of the A&E System
  - the truly non-formal context of learning in the System
- The top left-hand corner of each learning module has been coded with a series of thick diagonal stripes to indicate the learning level of the module – One stripe: Basic Literacy Level; Two stripes: Elementary Level (NFE A&E System); Three stripes: Secondary Level (NFE A&E System).
- The cover pages of the master copies of the learning modules have also been colour-coded by learning level – Red: Basic Literacy Level; Blue: Elementary Level (NFE A&E System); Green: Secondary Level (NFE A&E System).
- The page layout also has meaning. Lower Elementary learning modules, which have been designed for facilitator-aided instruction, have an accompanying facilitator's guide, and are landscape or horizontal in page orientation. The page orientation in self-directed learning modules (Advanced Elementary and Secondary levels) is portrait or vertical.
- A small number of learning modules are supplemented with audio-tapes. All learning modules, however, have been designed so that the print-based materials are complete in themselves. No learner should be disadvantaged due to lack of access to a tape recorder.

A general learner's guide accompanies the learning module and explains the meaning of the instructional icons (or symbols) used in learning modules. It also explains how learners use the learning modules. A photocopy of this general learner's guide should be given to every learner upon enrolment in the NFE A&E System.

## Language Policy

As a general rule, the NFE A&E Assessment and Certification Process seeks to adhere to the bilingual policy of the Department of Education. NFE A&E learning modules are available in both Filipino and English, except for Filipino and English communication skills. NFE A&E learners have a choice of language to be used for their learning, in keeping with the current bilingual policy.

To date, the NFE tests have been mainly conducted in Filipino except for English language communication skills. All test items have been translated into English, and in future all tests will be available in Filipino and English.

John Aitchison

# Non-formal education in South Africa

## Introduction

This report draws upon existing documentation about non-formal education in South Africa, supplemented by recent information provided by local academics and educators. The information selected relates in some way to provision that meets the needs of youth and adults for access to appropriate literacy, basic and continuing education and life-skills programmes (as in *Education For All* goals 3 and 4). The report attempts to document the availability of and the rates of participation in such programmes and to make an assessment of their effectiveness and outcomes.

The investigation starts from a working definition of what non-formal education is, and qualifies the focus of the investigation onto educational activities aimed at imparting adult literacy, basic education and equivalency schooling, life skills, non-formal vocational and work skills, income-generation skills, rural development and general culture – all of which take place outside the formal education system.

The standard UNESCO definition of non-formal education (NFE) (UNESCO, 2000) is remarkably vague. Apart from stating that it must be *“organised and sustained educational activity”* catering for people of all ages, it could cover virtually anything, though it gives as examples *“education programmes to impart adult literacy, basic education for out-of-school children, life skills, work skills, and general culture”*.

The brief for this study narrowed the focus by stressing:

- Non-formal Basic Education (NFBE) programmes and structured learning activities targeting the least formally educated youth and adult populations.
- NFE that can be easily compared across cases and countries.
- Programmes whose participants are not counted as enrolled in the formal education system.<sup>1</sup>

This report has therefore concentrated on:

- **Literacy and numeracy programmes** defined as being organised primarily to impart

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<sup>1</sup> This in itself is not always an easy to use criterion. A recent controversial decision by some provincial education departments was not to re-register 12<sup>th</sup> grade school failures who wished to return for another year but to enrol them as “private candidates” so that they no longer appeared in the schooling system grade 12 examination statistics and would effectively disappear from the system, even though they would still be full-time school pupils.

reading, writing and numeracy skills in a home language or the dominant language of the workplace (the latter also require conversational skills instruction), though they may include other learning areas such as health and income generation. Language courses form a sub-section of this category.

- **Equivalency, “second chance” or alternative schooling** distinguished from literacy and numeracy programmes in providing an equivalence of the general education provided for primary school children, primarily organised for youth and adults who did not have access to or who withdrew from formal primary/basic education. In South Africa this includes formal adult basic education and training as well as so-called finishing schools at a secondary school level, both of which allow for continuing with formal education.
- **Life skills and community development** including health, particularly HIV/AIDS prevention and care, family planning, environmental, community development, participation in Government programmes and local Government, citizenship, and other forms of education and training.
- **Income generation programmes, non-formal vocational training and rural and community development**, all related in livelihoods.
- **Continuing and professional development education and training**, usually related to work.
- **Early childhood education and care.**
- **Religious and cultural education.**

## Country level information on NFE

This part looks at the national conceptual, legal and governance frameworks for NFE as well how it is organized, financed, assessed, and evaluated at a country level.

### How NFE is conceptualised in South Africa

Studying non-formal education in South Africa is complicated by the term having fallen into disuse since the 1990s (though it is now enjoying a very minor renaissance), largely because of the overwhelming dominance of a discourse of standards and certification that has, quite literally, rendered formal most structured education and training provision.

At the start of the last decade of the apartheid era, the Human Sciences Research Council Commission report of 1981, *The Provision of education in the RSA*, the De Lange Report, popularised the term non-formal education. This Commission, wanting to modernise South African education, saw that the existing crisis-ridden system could not be expanded sufficiently fast to educate everybody well, and saw non-formal education, particularly in the work place as a flexible, quick, cost-effective way of doing so. That the corporate sec-

tor might be encouraged to pay for it made it even more attractive. It defined non-formal education as:

*“educational activities planned for adults that took place outside of the formal system of schools and tertiary education institutions and which did not lead to formal certification.”*

The De Lange Report saw non-formal education as part of a continuum between formal education and informal education, the latter defined as learning that the individual gained from daily experience. NFE was seen as complementary to the formal system and there was even talk of a non-formal education *system*. Although by definition non-formal education did not have formal certification, some attention was given to non-formal qualifications enabling people to move across and back into the formal system at the appropriate levels.

De Lange’s NFE was totally without the critical and oppositional anti-apartheid stance of *“adult education”*, and critics complained about the report’s technicism, in supposing that technical solutions should be found for the political and ethical problems of an apartheid society. The reform process that de Lange represented was soon aborted, but a number of ideas on non-formal education remained important, namely:

- the need for non-formal education to complement and link up with the formal education system;
- the need for a system of educational equivalency, including perhaps certification, to allow people to move from formal to non-formal systems and vice versa;
- the need to address job-related educational needs;
- the need to share educational costs with the corporate sector, and with non-governmental or people’s organizations.

The *Education Renewal Strategy (ERS): discussion document* (1991) used a similar definition of non-formal education, namely *“planned, structured education provided at or by any institution to obtain a qualification other than a degree, certificate or diploma instituted by or under any law for formal education”*. Other passages in the ERS document identified non-formal education with vocational training.

The democratic movement’s National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) report on *Adult Education* rejected NFE terminology because of its technicist *“modernising apartheid”* associations, but did see an important place for NFE in education and training provision.

The post apartheid Government elected in 2004 rapidly introduced a number of education and training policies and governance structures that introduced, inter alia:

- a national qualification framework and national standards for education and training, with an implementing agency, the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA),

- and various subsidiary quality assurance bodies
- a competency-based/outcomes-based education and training system
- blurring the distinction between education and training
- recognition of prior learning (though often hard to implement in practice)
- portability of qualifications
- a commitment to lifelong learning (unfortunately largely rhetorical [see Aitchison, 2003])

### **Distinctive South African definitions**

#### **a) Non-formal education**

Since the effective demise of NFE as a working concept in South African policy discourse in the early 1990s its use in various contexts is largely a matter of clarification as to whether it is denoting:

- any education carried on outside the formal school and higher education system, except vocational training
- any education that is not certificated
- education that is delivered in a non-formal or informal style, but which may be quite formal in the system or certification sense.

Until recently NFE was used as an expenditure category in financial statements of the national and provincial Departments of Education and referred to formal adult education, early childhood development (ECD) and some limited skills training.

#### **b) Adult basic education**

The Department of Education's national definition of ABET in its 1997 Adult Basic Education policy document states (1997: 8–9):

*“Adult basic education and training is the general conceptual foundation towards lifelong learning and development, comprising of knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation and transformation applicable to a range of contexts. ABET is flexible, developmental and targeted at the specific needs of particular audiences and, ideally, provides access to nationally recognized certificates.”*

Until recently, it appeared that the steady formalization of adult literacy and basic education was an irresistible process with complicated and heavily structured programmes and qualifications that looked remarkably like, if not being identical to, those already entrenched in schooling. The ABET Act of 2000 stated that:

*“adult basic education means all learning and training programmes for adults from level 1 to 4 where level 4 is equivalent to grade 9 in public schools or NQF level 1.”*



However, in April 2005 the Minister of Education at a Roundtable on ABET declared that ABET needed to be more responsive and that it had become “*utilitarian and narrow*”, and had “*sought to make adults like children*”: ABET would need to be re-conceptualised and revamped. Similar statements have been made at conferences and official state education gatherings since then.

### c) Literacy

Literacy conceived of in functional or Freirian senses in the 1980s was totally overshadowed by the adult basic education and training (ABET) discourse of the 1990s. In late 1999 an attempt by the then Minister of Education to reinstate the idea of a mass literacy programme to reach those not being served by the increasingly formal ABET system (itself lacklustre) came to little because of funding and organizational problems. This initiative at least recognised that the very formal certificated ABET system was not substantially addressing the problem of illiteracy, and that a more campaign-orientated literacy mobilisation was necessary.

In 2006 a Ministerial Committee of Literacy was set up to plan for a mass literacy campaign. Its report has a chapter on its view on literacy and defines it thus:

*“Though most definitions of literacy stress the ability to read and understand printed text and to communicate through writing, many recent definitions note that literacy is always relative to varying contexts and to skill and knowledge requirements.*

*Some academics now conceive of ‘literacy’ rather as ‘literacies’ which differ widely in their purpose, relationships to scripts and texts, and to institutional frameworks. Kell (2004, p. 28) argues, for example, that people are made literate not so much that they can deal with texts as that they can be enabled to take part in social practices within which specific texts are embedded. Literacy is therefore not even to be seen **in** a context – it **is** a context. However a criticism of the more extreme forms of this New Literacy Studies conception of literacies is that the term ‘literacy’ ceases to have much meaning as an ordinary word.*

*This is far from the more commonsense conception of **alphabetisation** which is about instruction in a fairly universal script-based technology that can be used for reading and writing in a huge variety of contexts (to which contexts it must bear some relation if it is to be meaningful).*

*The view of the Ministerial Committee on Literacy is that for practical purposes, this more **commonsense view of literacy** should be accepted with the obvious caveats that of course contextual relevance and meaningfulness is necessary and that any literacy that is **only** functional and meaningful within a schooling environment is inadequate. They also found the definition in the Global Campaign for Education’s International benchmarks on adult literacy (2005) helpful and comprehensive:*

*Literacy is about the acquisition and use of reading, writing and numeracy skills, and thereby the development of active citizenship, improved health and livelihoods, and gender equality. The goals of literacy programmes should reflect this understanding.*

*This definition combines both the simplicity of UNESCO's 1958 definition:*

*a person is literate who can with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his or her everyday life*

*with more recent ones, such as that of the World Declaration on Education for All in 1990 which sees literacy as an essential learning tool to enable people to survive, participate and develop in the world."*

#### **d) Lifelong learning**

A detailed and critical account of the South African discourse on lifelong learning is found in Aitchison's 2004 article on *Lifelong learning in South Africa: dreams and delusions*. Aitchison quotes the official definitions, but concludes that from the early 1990s the term lifelong learning was largely used to broaden and place an emancipatory gloss on the competency discourse that had been imported from the world of training into the discourse of the post-apartheid education system.

In a number of Education White Papers and policy documents produced during the 1990s, the term lifelong education appears several times (Department of Education, 1995, 1996b, 1997a, 1997b, 1998, 2001a, 2001b, Ministry of Education, 1997, 1998, Human Sciences Research Council, 1996). Though it is used in a number of the more inspirational passages which speak about learners and their right to lifelong education and training of good quality, an "open learning" approach, redress for apartheid, responsible citizenship, and participation in the "knowledge society" or the "learning society", it is more frequently associated with the new National Qualifications Framework and the Government's human resource development strategy. Generally the references to lifelong learning in these White Papers suggest that, where it is not simply used to add a rhetorical flourish to the expressed desire for a better education system, it describes the competency or outcomes-based new National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that will serve the labour market. At worst the use of the language of lifelong learning becomes self-delusional, a pretending that a radical agenda is still being pursued when it is not. Lifelong learning, though present as a key founding concept in the White Papers on South Africa's new education system, lacks much prominence or substance.

Even when the passages on lifelong learning note that learning will no longer be the sole property of formal education, but can take place anywhere, at any time and through any means, it has to meet nationally required standards (Department of Education, 1996b, p. 26).

The following lifelong learning definition appears in the September 1998 *White Paper, No 4, A Programme for the transformation of Further Education and Training. Preparing for the twenty-first century through education, training and work* (Department of Education, 1998, Glossary):

**“lifelong learning:** *ongoing learning through a continuously supportive process that stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire and apply the knowledge, values, skills and critical understanding required to confidently and creatively respond and rise to the challenges of a changing social, political and economic environment.”*

This White Paper also makes reference to the use of multiple sites of learning and the growth of “virtual” institutions. Learning will take place in the workplace, at community facilities and in learners’ private homes. Some learners will use the Internet and other technologies to access learning via a “web” or network of providers who might be located very far apart and who need have no formal, centralized organization or structure. Open learning systems and an integrated approach to education and training will thus allow people to learn what they want, when they want and in the form they want, to satisfy their cultural, spiritual, career, personal development and other needs.

Another interesting tendency is for the term lifelong learning to be used as a synonym for adult education, or even more narrowly as literacy and adult basic education. This trend is the result of taking what is the obvious base for a sustainable lifelong learning, namely literacy and numeracy, as being the whole.



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#### e) The legal foundations of NFE policies

The fundamental legal foundation for non-formal education is the new Constitution of South Africa, which in Clause 29 Section 1 (a) enshrines the right of all citizens to adult basic education and also to further education which latter the State, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

*“Adult basic education [and training] refers to all forms of organised education and training that meet the basic learning needs of adults, including literacy and*

*numeracy, as well as the general knowledge, skills and values and attitudes that they require to survive, develop their capacities, live and work in dignity, improve the quality of their lives, make informed decisions, and continue learning."*

As a right, adult basic education is therefore not simply a tool for economic growth or for instrumentalist purposes, but rather a claim for dignity, self-respect, and cultural rights.

The National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) supports the protection of rights such as the right to basic education. The Act (Department of Education, 1996 a) supports *"the advancement and protection of the fundamental rights of every person and in particular the right (1) of every person to be protected against unfair discrimination within or by an education department or education institution on any ground whatsoever; (2) of every person to basic education and equal access to education institutions."*

The South African Constitution provides that education up to the end of high school (Grade 12) is the responsibility of provincial governments, though central Government retains the right to set *"norms and standards"* for all education. Financial allocations are made from central Government to provinces on an equitable basis.

The new democratic Government elected in 1994 through its new national Department of Education developed a *Policy Document on Adult Basic Education and Training and A National Multi-year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation in 1997*, as well as a series of more technical policy documents. The Department of Education also succeeded in placing draft legislation before parliament that resulted in the Adult Basic Education and Training Act of 2000 (Department of Education, 2000). The Act itself was largely devoted to the regulation of public adult learning centres (PALCs) in schools controlled by the nine provincial education departments. The memorandum accompanying the Act included this bizarre statement: *"The best way to break the back of illiteracy amongst adults is to regulate it by legislation"*. It included a most unfortunate Clause 38 that, taken literally, made providing any adult basic education in other than a state registered centre a criminal offence.

#### **f) How are NFE programmes governed and financed?**

This is a difficult question to answer, because of the term falling into disuse in policy and administrative discourse. However, the category of non-formal education remained embedded as a budget category in national and provincial departments of education budgets and accounts, a hangover from the late 1970s and 1980s when non-formal education covered formal literacy, primary school equivalence, and high school equivalence classes run after hours in state schools, as well as some early childhood development cen-

tres (*kindergartens*), and finally a few genuinely non-formal classes in crafts and skills. This financial category came under criticism because Government tended to claim that the full “*non-formal education*” budget was being spent on literacy and ABET, when in fact usually less than half was, most going to high school equivalency classes for school pupils who had failed their grade 12 examinations. The actual financial outlay remains at less than one percent of the education budget, though the recent 2007/2008 budget included a large additional amount for ABET and literacy of over R800 million.

Apart from the Departments of Education, another major source of funding for NFE is the Department of Labour. Through its Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) Labour governs training in the main industrial and business sectors, using a compulsory skills levy equal to one percent of all salaries and wages paid, some of which is devoted to the training of unemployed people in various skills and ABET.

A vast range of formal education and training is now bureaucratically regulated by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), which registers qualifications, all outcomes-based, and standards, which form the building blocks of most qualifications; the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi), which controls certification of qualifications and the registration of providers of those qualifications; and the previously mentioned SETAs.

Some literacy provision is still provided by NGOs financed by donor funding, but there has been a drastic decline in this sector since the early 1990s, and only a few NGOs remain in the field, financed mainly by contracts from the Departments of Education or SETAs for providing formal certificated ABET.

The business sector also funds some ABET, mainly via outsourcing to commercial ABET providers and NGOs, of which there are currently 123 providers formally registered with the Umalusi.

#### **g) To what extent is NFE formally supported and managed?**

The national body responsible for setting “*norms and standards*” for state-run ABET and AFET is the national Department of Education which had a Directorate for Adult Education. The provincial departments have analogous directorates or sub-directorates. There have been various attempts to have a national board for adult education, and the ABET Act of 2000 made provision for such, but it has never been implemented.

There is very little evidence of much systematic national monitoring or evaluation mechanisms for NFBE. In the case of state-run ABET there have been the occasional evaluations of particular foreign donor-funded projects and developments, but they are not publicly accessible, and there is scant evidence that such evaluations have ever been taken seriously. A couple of exceptions were a 1999 commissioned audit of Public Adult Learning Centres (Human Sciences Research Council, 2000) and more recently tenders have been issued for similar audits in some provinces (e.g. KwaZulu-Natal).

Research studies by universities have depended on personal interest and the ability of researchers to generate their own funding. Generally speaking, the departments or centres for adult and continuing education at universities or for non-formal university extension have all been seriously depleted since 1994. The only major ones left are the Centre for Adult Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the ABET Institute of the University of South Africa (UNISA), and the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education at the University of the Western Cape. Three important examples of NFBE studies are those conducted by the Centre for Adult Education of the University of Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal), namely

**Harley, A., Aitchison, J. J. W., Lyster, E. and Land, S. et al.** (1996). *A survey of adult basic education in South Africa in the 90s*. Johannesburg: SACHED Books.

**Aitchison, J. J. W., Houghton, T. and Baatjes, I. et al.** (2000). *University of Natal survey of adult basic education and training: South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: Centre for Adult Education, University of Natal.

**Aitchison, J. J. W., Keyser, S., Land, S. and Lyster, E.** *Linking literacy to development in South Africa. Key lessons from projects funded by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund 1998–2004*. Durban: Centre for Adult Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

There are various policies and regulations about the qualifications required for adult educators at the formal state-run Public Adult Learning Centres, but these do not specifically demand training as an adult educator. The trainer of ABET educators is the ABET Institute at UNISA, which has trained over 80,000 people to certificate level. This whole qualification is registered with the South African Qualifications Authority.

### Major NFE providers and types of provision

	Types of Providers	Details
1	National government	The national government through the national Department of Education oversees norms and standards for ABET and adult secondary schooling equivalency programmes and the national South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) registers qualifications and promulgates standards. The Department of Labour is involved in various forms of skills training and other national departments are also involved in various forms of non-formal education (e.g. health, etc.) The Adult Education Directorate in the national Department of Education which is supposed to be a key player here is small and ineffective.
2	Provincial government	Provincial education departments deliver ABET in Public Adult Learning Centres but currently do little to assert the responsibility for curriculum, etc. They tend to slavishly follow national policy.

3	<b>Local government</b>	Currently has no educational powers though its human resource divisions may occasionally provide ABET to not only their own staff but to the public.
4	<b>Co-operative</b>	There are a variety of mainly agricultural cooperatives but educational services are not strong.
5	<b>Public enterprise</b>	Public enterprises in the areas of industry, agriculture or services are mainly already covered by national, provincial or local government. There are a number of utilities and previously nationalised industries (electricity, railways, telecommunications, etc.) that have been more committed than other government departments to ABET provision to their own staff.
6	<b>Private enterprise</b>	Private enterprise obviously does an enormous amount of training. ABET has been supported by industry (which, in fact, was the largest provider of ABET though with South Africa's high unemployment few illiterate or undereducated people are now being employed).
7	<b>Educational training institutions</b>	State schools (run by the provinces) allow their facilities to be used for public adult learning centres. A number of Further Education and Training Colleges (the old technical colleges) provide various forms of NFE including a growing number who offer ABET.
8	<b>Professional association / trade union</b>	There is a significant amount of professional and trade union NFE. There are current moves to have qualifications in trade union education.
9	<b>Religious bodies / missions</b>	Religious education is undertaken by a variety of religious organisations, many of who are major players in HIV/AIDS education and basic home care training. A number of faith based NGOs are involved in gender and social movement mobilisation.
10	<b>International organisation / development agency</b>	Many development and donor agencies have been active in South Africa though they tend to now work mainly through government and their support is declining in the post apartheid era. UNESCO has supported EFA work and there is a small ISCE project.
11	<b>National branch of International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO)</b>	INGO are present in South Africa but not to the extent that they are in other developing countries. Notable examples here in relation to adult education are ActionAid and the South African REFLECT network. DVV is also an interesting and committed resource that has particularly supported the building of associations and networks of adult educators.

	Types of Providers	Details
12	<b>National NGO</b>	There are a large variety of national NGOs most of whom are engaged in varying forms of NFE. Project Literacy (ProLit) is the most significant ABET NGO that has survived the catastrophic demise of ABET NGOs in the 1990s as donor funding disappeared. It, however, increasingly relies on government contracts which means it has less power to direct its services to the most disadvantaged groups.
13	<b>Local branch of national NGO</b>	The branch or area office administered by a national NGO office headquarters at sub-national level.
14	<b>Local NGO</b>	An NGO with only one office at sub-national level. Many of these are declining due to funding shortages.
15	<b>Community based organization (CBO)</b>	An organization or association formed at community level, i. e. within or between villages. Also many of these are ephemeral because of funding lacks.
16	<b>Private bodies / individuals</b>	Single individuals or groups of individuals undertaking NFE activities. Many, often as consultants or private providers.

## Types of provision, providers, and outcomes

**Adult basic education and training – ABET** in the fundamentals of literacy and numeracy, and ABET programmes linked to school equivalency

### Main providers

- Department of Education (at Public Adult Learning Centres)
- Department of Labour (through various programmes funded via SETAs via the skills levy with actual delivery outsourced to private providers and aimed at the unemployed and funded via the skills levy)
- Other governmental departments (with provision sometimes outsourced to commercial or NGO providers)
- Business sector (through various programmes funded via SETAs via the skills levy with actual delivery often outsourced to commercial or private providers)
- NGOs

**Outcome statistics** are poor and often inaccurate (see Aitchison and Harley, 2006, for a savage analysis of dubious statistics recording ABET outcomes in South Africa). Statistics from Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi) certifications results for ABET examinations and from the Independent Examinations Board show that the entire ABET system run in PALCs resulted in the very meagre output in the years 2001 to 2003 in the final (level 4) examinations: in 2001 some 18,438



candidates enrolled and by 2003 this had risen to 26,067. In 2001 a mere 78 qualified for a General Education and Training Certificate (GETC), in 2003 it had risen to 1,252 (Umalusi, 2004, p. 12). More broadly, Umalusi had by the end of 2003 only issued 440 ABET GETC certificates (it is unclear why the other successful candidates had not received theirs) and 19,028 learning area certificates (for individual learning area courses passed). It is clear that there is an enormous dropout rate of people registering for courses and examinations with only about 50% of enrollees actually writing examinations and a minuscule proportion passing them.

The Independent Examinations Board ABET examinations at various levels, generally used by industry and NGO providers, had for the period from 2004 to 2006 averaged about 28,000 a year. Given that it was estimated in 2001 that there are some 14.6 million adults (aged 15 and over) with less than Grade 9 level of education, this level of output is quite pathetic.

The National Skills Development Strategy set an impressive target for 904,993 workers to gain a National Qualifications Framework level 1 qualification (more or less at a Grade 9 level) by 2005. Almost magical growth was shown in the throughput: 5,079 (2001/2); 111,367 (2002/3); 316,991 (2003/4); 419,660 (2004/5) to a total of 899,686. However, this gain was less impressive than it seems as most of these qualifications were in things like factory safety and suchlike with no assurance that the people concerned had anything approaching functional literacy or the equivalent of a general education.



Angola

*dvv international*

## **ABET linked to livelihood skills**

### **Main providers**

- Department of Education
- Department of Labour
- Business sector
- NGOs

**Outcome statistics** are poor to non existent.

### **ABET linked to public education**

#### **Main providers**

- Various government departments and institutes
- NGOs also produce such material

**Outcome statistics** are poor to non-existent (but see Aitchison et al, 2006 on some small scale successes and failures).

### **High school equivalency or “second chance” schooling**

#### **Main providers**

- Departments of Education (at Public Adult Learning Centres) have neglected this field for some time because of their over concentration on the ABET system.
- Private for profit finishing school as well as a number of correspondence colleges serve this market.
- The Adult Secondary Education Curriculum for Adults (ASECA)
- The Adult Secondary Education Curriculum for Adults (ASECA), an NGO-developed high school equivalency programme. The Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi) is interested in a major redevelopment of this programme.

**Outcome statistics** not accessible.

### **Life skills and community development**

#### **Main providers**

- Various government departments and institutes and NGOs

**Outcome statistics** are poor to non-existent. There are some evaluations and readership surveys (e.g. of Soul City, a television soap on mainly health issues) and a large number of research studies on various AIDS education interventions.

### **Work-related skills training**

#### **Main providers**

- Mainly the Department of Labour through the SETAs, some courses run at Further Education and Training Colleges and some NGOs

**Outcomes** very difficult to judge. South Africa is alleged to have severe skills shortages and productivity problems.

### **Continuing and professional development education and training**

#### **Main providers**

- In house company in the business sector, through the South African Management Development Institute (of the public service, through government departments, and through a multiplicity of commercial training organisations and professional bodies)

**Outcomes** impossible to judge. No statistics.

### **Early Childhood Education and Care (also known as Early Childhood Development)**

#### **Main providers**

- The Departments of Education
- NGOs

**Outcomes** hard to estimate but clearly positive.

### **Religious and Cultural Education**

#### **Main providers**

- Religious bodies and faith based NGOs and CBOs

**Outcomes** varied.

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Ian Macpherson

# Non-formal education in Tanzania: Background paper for the 2008 UNESCO Global Monitoring Report

This overview of non-formal education (NFE) in Tanzania in February 2007 argues three core points. The first is that NFE provision in Tanzania is conducted by a range of international, national and local organizations in an uncoordinated manner, with little or no guidance or control from the Government either in terms of policy or practice. Second, it asserts that, in reflection of the disorganized and fragmented practice of NFE, concise information on NFE is hard to come by. Third, bearing in mind UNESCO's broad conceptualisation of NFE, it contends that provision of adult literacy programmes is undertaken almost exclusively by the Government, that equivalency schooling is also dominated by the Government but with some involvement of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), that life-skills training (so called "*social development programmes*") is led by international and national civil society organizations (CSO), and that income-generation training ("*economic development programmes*") is directed largely by international and national CSOs. Lack of available information prevents clarifying the following:

1. A definition (definitive or stipulative) of Life Skills.
2. The exact role of TIE (Tanzania Institute of Education) and the IAE (Institute of Adult Education) in NFE, both of which fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC). The websites of both organizations were not operating and no reference was made to them in documents other than to cite their involvement in developing Tanzania's AE/NFE Strategy. No comment can be made on their role in the governance or organization of NFE.
3. The national framework of training Compulsory Basic Education and Training (COBET) and Integrated Community Based Adult Education (ICBAE) facilitators other than numbers trained.
4. The involvement of non-state actors in the financing of NFE.
5. What forms of Life-Skills Training (NFE activity type 3) and Income Generation / Non-Formal Vocational Training (NFE activity type 4) are provided for by non-state actors.<sup>1</sup>

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1 These types of NFE activity are according to UNESCO's taxonomy.

6. The number of non-state actors providing NFE (equally, the number of programmes, the scale of the programmes or number of individuals involved).
7. The types of NFE providers outside Government.
8. Detailed information on different non-state programmes.

Three principal methods were used to compile evidence and gather data for this paper. One was a detailed literature search on the internet. In total, fifty three websites and documents were found. A second method was to mobilise personal contacts in Tanzania. These included individuals working with national and international NGOs, and at the Ministry of Education. Some of these contacts were able to provide information on other potential sources of data. The third method was born out of the dearth of available data on NFE in Tanzania, itself a noteworthy point. Given the shortage of data available online, a short questionnaire was developed and sent to forty organizations known to be working in NFE in Tanzania. Only six were able to return the questionnaire within the time frame for this paper.

### **Organization, governance, finance and assessment of NFE in Tanzania**

There are a number of policies relating to NFE, and ambitious targets have been set for enrolments in Government-run NFE programmes. The governance of NFE, ostensibly in the hands of two collaborating Government departments, is difficult to discern because of lack of information. Yet, available data indicates a significant shortfall of enrolments in Government programmes and very poor monitoring, seemingly because of considerable under funding. Further, while non-state NFE provision is positively encouraged by the Government, its provision by such a broad range of organizations means that it is uncoordinated, small scale and localised. Moreover, it is impossible to determine the number of civil society organizations engaged in NFE from available information. The reliance on Government data and research in this section is a reflection of the lack of CSO information.

### **Definitions of key concepts**

Understandings of NFE by different stakeholders congregate around its juxtaposition against formal education. It is therefore noteworthy that understandings amongst organizations in Tanzania are not as broad as the UNESCO classification that encapsulates social and economic development programmes. NFE, as stated in the Primary Education Development Plan (GoT 2001), is *“education for out-of-school children and youth”* while according to the AE/NFE Strategy (GoT 2002a), it is *“out-of-school education”*. Care International similarly views it as an *“alternative system outside the formal system”* (Care 2007).

Literacy is disaggregated by the Government into functional literacy and post-literacy. Functional literacy is designed to eradicate illiteracy in the adult population (IBE, 2003) and is understood as *“the ability to read, write and count as well as the acquisition of functional skills and knowledge about socio-economic conditions and one’s daily life”* (Bhalalusesa, 2002, p. 175). Post-literacy focuses on preventing neo-literates from relapsing into illiteracy and enabling neo-literates to use their literacy skills for economic development. Post-literacy subjects include Kiswahili, mathematics, political education and agriculture (Mushi et al., 2002 a). A literate person is therefore one with basic literacy skills who can apply such skills in daily life (Bhalalusesa, 2002). Yet TEN/MET, the national education coalition, conceive literacy more broadly as *“a continuum of skills, including reading, writing, speaking, listening, thinking, counting and coping with social life”* (2006, p. 6).

A working definition for lifelong learning (LLL) is drawn from Mushi et al. (2002 a). LLL encompasses formal education (which includes primary and secondary education), informal education (that occurs outside formal and non-formal programmes) and non-formal education (which encompasses feeder schools, life-skills education, literacy and post-literacy education, alternative approaches to education and continuing education). LLL is therefore the intersection of these three forms of learning. No conception of Life-Skills could be found for the Government or civil society organizations.

## National NFE policies or reforms

A range of policies relate to NFE in Tanzania that can be classed by those relating to the Ujamaa era (1964–1990) and those post-Ujamaa (1990 onwards). Ujamaa era policies include the Arusha Declaration (1967) that asserted basic education provision would be available to all members of society. In 1974 this assertion was incorporated into the Universal Primary Education Movement that aimed to make primary education universally available, compulsory and free. However, the economic crises during the 1980s led to a decline in Government social service provision, falling gross primary enrolment rates and increased illiteracy rates (UNESCO 2002).

Since the 1990s, a range of consecutive policies shaped current Government practice and provision of NFE. These are the Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995; Vision 2025 of 1997; the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) of 2001; the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) of 2001; and the Adult and Non-Formal Education Strategy (AE/NFES) of 2002. The first three of these policies encouraged the involvement of non-state actors in the provision of NFE oriented at two principal goals: cost sharing and cost recovery of and in education, and addressing access and quality issues in the education sector as a whole (GoT 2001; 2002 b). The PEDP aims primarily at universal primary enrolment and expresses the target to *“ensure that all girls and boys from dis-*

advantaged groups, including AIDS orphans, are enrolled" (GoT 2001, p. 5), including through NFE (sic<sup>2</sup>). The underlying principle for NFE under PEDP is therefore that initiatives are short to medium term in order to (re)integrate participants into the formal system.

The AE/NFES aims to ensure:

*"In partnership with the civil society, that out-of-school children, youth and adults have access to quality basic learning opportunities, especially girls, women, disadvantaged groups and nomads, with a view to improve the literacy level by 20%, and reducing the backlog of out-of-school children by mainstreaming at least the 11–13 year olds of the targeted groups; thus contributing to the creation of a lifelong learning society, improvement in people's livelihood, and to an increased awareness and prevention of HIV/AIDS."* (GoT 2002b, p. 16)

The AE/NFES conceives of three target groups: 11–13 year old children and disadvantaged children aged 7–13 from Nomadic Communities, street children, disabled orphans and out of reach; 14–18 year old youth; and 19+ year old adults. Accordingly, specialised NFE programmes – Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET) – aim to mainstream the first group into formal education and allow the second group to take the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) and stimulate skills development for the workplace. Literacy and communication skills tied to livelihood and community development target the third group through Integrated Community Based Adult Education (ICBAE) and literacy classes.

In addition, the 1998 Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP) and the Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) of the same year both aim to improve the management of education services by devolving power from central to local Government authorities. It is these structures at the district and local levels that implement the AE/NFES and monitor its performance. The PSRP and LGRP seek to reform these institutions and make them more autonomous by, inter alia, giving Local Councils powers over all local affairs (political devolution) and creating good governance based on political and financial accountability, democratic procedures and public participation (GoT, 2007).

Further, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) is anchored on the premise that sustainable development will only occur with improved levels of education; lack of basic education undermines all efforts to improve health and nutrition and impedes efforts to address the cause of diseases such as HIV/AIDS (2002b). Given that 29% of adults are illiterate (2002b, p. 15), one of the aims of the PRSP is to expand Adult Education (AE) programmes. In this light the AE/NFE Strategy is seen as a "development priority for reduction of people's vulnerability to poverty" (ibid., p. 15).

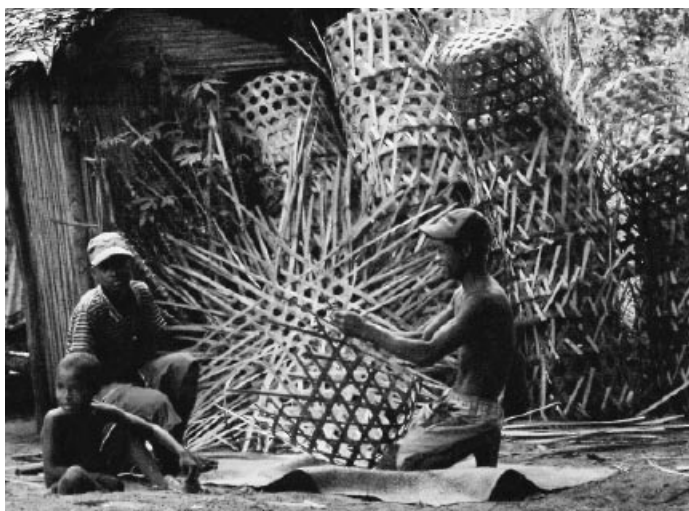
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2 See definition in paragraph two of this section.



## Governance and finance of NFE

In concert with the PSRP and LGRP, district authorities under the AE/NFES are tasked with the “*facilitation, administration, monitoring and evaluation and data collection and information dissemination*” of NFE initiatives (GoT 2002b, p. 10). And while the overall responsibility lies with the MOEC, the President’s Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) is responsible for overseeing the decentralisation of Government functions to local levels, including the delivery of education by district authorities. PO-RALG therefore ostensibly coordinates, evaluates and monitors regional educational development in collaboration with the MOEC (UNESCO, 2004). In addition, the AE/NFES stresses “*linkages and partnerships with CSOs, education institutions and international organizations*” (GoT 2002a, p. 25) to facilitate these tasks. Yet it is impossible to ascertain either the extent to which such collaborations exist – between MOEC and PO-RALG or between the Government and non-state providers – or the role of non-state actors in NFE governance, because the information is simply not available.



Madagascar

dvv international

There is a significant shortfall in enrolments for both COBET and adult education classes run by the Government. One reason for this may be because “*the NFE sub-sector is grossly underfinanced*” (Mushi et al. 2002a, p. 82). However, determining exactly by how much is not possible because while Government budget figures for NFE are available for the years 2001/02 and 2002/03, from this point on they are conflated with Primary Education; it is therefore impossible to tell what the allocation for NFE is compared to formal education (see GoT 2006e<sup>3</sup>). Yet as the AE/NFES gave year-on-year budget estimates, it is possible to calculate the intended percentage for NFE, set out in Table One.

3 The only document that was found that delineated NFE as compared to the formal education was the Joint Review of PEDP (GoT 2004). Figures were only available in this document for 2001/02 and 2002/03.

**Table One: NFE budget as part of PEDP budget (Sources: GoT 2002; GoT 2006 e).**

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Projected AE/NFE sum in Tshs	3.9 billion	13.94 billion	18.17 billion	11.03 billion
Actual Budget for AE/NFE and Primary Education in Tshs	289,718 million (~289 billion)	361,425 million (~369 billion)	322,196 million (~322 billion)	418,455 million (~418 billion)
Calculated Percentage of overall budget for AE/NFE	1.35%	3.9%	5.6%	2.6%

Given that the proportion for AE/NFE between 2001/02 to 2002/03 was 0.19% (GoT 2004), it seems incredibly unlikely that the percentages presented in Table One were allocated, especially given that the Mid-Term Review of the AE/NFE Strategy, planned for 2004, did not take place because of insufficient funds (Mnjagila, 2007). Evidence therefore suggests that the NFE sub-sector is indeed grossly underfunded.

While PEDP is financed predominantly by the Government of Tanzania, bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors contribute annually through pooled funding, direct budget support or direct contributions (Yamada 2005; GoT 2004)<sup>4</sup>. Available data (for years 2001/02 and 2002/03) suggests that donor contributions can make up between 28% and 40% of annual PEDP budgets (GoT 2004; Wedgwood, 2005). And as far as it is possible to tell, while direct budget support is by its nature not earmarked for specific sectors, pooled funds for PEDP are not earmarked by donors for specific sectors such as NFE (EFC, 2006). This donor funding climate is in contrast to the project support of the 1980s and 1990s, at which time Folk Development Colleges (FDC) were the “*main institutions of rural adult education*” in Tanzania, funded largely by the Swedes and Danes (UIE, 2005). The withdrawal of project funding by the Danish for FDCs in the late 1990s resulted in the “*closure or neglect of most Folk Development Colleges*” (Tembo 2004, p. 2). At the present time it is therefore the Government of Tanzania that exercises control over budget allocations, independently of overt donor influences (Ronsholt et al. 2003).

## Assessment of NFE

The AE/NFES declares that the AE/NFE component was intended to be incorporated into the MOEC’s Education Management Information System (EMIS) by 2003. Yet Basic Education Statistics from the MOEC do not account for Government-run NFE initiatives until 2006<sup>5</sup>. Some figures were available for the number of Adult Education Centres

4 Countries that contribute through pooled funding are Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Ireland, Belgium, France and the EU. Britain contributes through direct budget support to the Ministry of Finance – thereby only indirectly contributing to PEDP (Yamada, 2005) – while Japan, the ADB, the World Bank and UNICEF contribute directly to PEDP (GoT 2004).

5 See <http://www.moe.go.tz/statistics.html>

inspected, however, represented in Table Two.

Table Two shows that Government inspections of AE Centres have been consistently below 50% since 2004. Further, it is not clear what constitutes an Adult Education Centre because while enrolment figures between 1997 and 2001 delineated between Functional Literacy and Post-Literacy (see GoT 2002c), monitoring of enrolments stopped between 2001 and 2006. Further, figures on numbers of Adult Centres inspected do not specify whether AE Centres are functional or post literacy, or whether they are ICBAE. Only in 2006 are enrolments resumed, wherein the delineation of enrolments is resumed (Functional Literacy, Post Literacy and New Curriculum) but without any demarcation of AE Centre.

Consequently, Government monitoring of AE has arguably underperformed and been both inconsistent and incoherent. Indeed, the contention of Mushi et al. that the government “system [of reporting] has done very little in providing reliable information regarding internal processes of the NFE policy implementation” (2002a, p. 70) seems even more pertinent today.

**Table Two: Number of Government AE Centres inspected**

(Sources: GOT 2002b, 2003, 2004b, 2005, 2006f).

Year	Adult Education Centres	Number Inspected	Percent Inspected
2002	*	6726	*
2003	12815	7043	55.0%
2004	12755	5557	43.6%
2005	13683	6319	46.2%
2006	13636	5018	36.8%

\* Data not available.

## Non-state provision and research into NFE

In addition to Government-run NFE programmes, there is a broad range of non-state providers. However, it is impossible to state precisely how many engage in NFE. Not only is such information hard to find but also the UNESCO conceptualisation of NFE is so broad, encompassing social and economic development programmes over and above literacy and equivalency schooling.

Forty-one civil society members of TEN/MET engage in NF. Yet this figure does not include international organizations such as Plan International, Oxfam Tanzania or Save the Children.<sup>6</sup> Further, the Directory of Development Organizations lists 84 civil society

<sup>6</sup> All of whom are claimed to be involved in NFE yet for which no information could be found (see Oxfam GB & ANCEFA 2005 and Ngowi 2007).

organizations that run micro-credit schemes in Tanzania. Further still, information on those organizations listed by TEN/MET and the Development Directory is either hard to source or, where a website does exist, provides general information only.

To compile an accurate and precise picture of the number of engaged organizations, number of programmes and number of individuals involved in different types of NFE programmes is impossible, other than as a concerted research project; no coordinated information on non-state NFE activities exists. In addition, there seems to be no systematic Government involvement in civil society provision of NFE and therefore no formal support of such programmes. What information could be accessed indicated that civil society NFE programmes tend to be localised, small-scale and focus primarily on alternative education for youths, life-skills training and income generation / non-formal vocational training (core types 2, 3 and 4 of the GMR typology).

Research into NFE as a sector, encompassing both state and non-state run programmes, has tended to be dominated domestically by two individuals based at the Department of Educational Studies at the University of Dar Es Salaam; one is the Dean of the Faculty and the other heads the adult education sub-department. Research reports produced by these individuals have been commissioned by the Ministry of Education and a number of NGOs.

### **Four types of non-formal education programmes in Tanzania**

Examining a selection of NFE programmes run by Government and civil society organizations furthers the argument that government programmes dominate literacy and numeracy programmes (through functional and post literacy programmes) and equivalency schooling (through COBET) in Tanzania. (Government programmes are therefore principally core types 1 and 2 of the GMR typology.) Conversely, while ICBAE programmes accord with Life-skills training, this type of NFE programme is led by civil society organizations, as are income generation/non-formal vocational training programmes. Civil society organizations therefore tend to provide mostly GMR NFE types 3 and 4. Four examples are selected here.

### **Complementary basic education in Tanzania (COBET)**

COBET was initiated in 1999 by the MOEC with support from UNICEF Tanzania. It initially operated in 20 centres in 2 districts with the highest drop out rates. Currently the Government is committed to implementing COBET in all its districts. This non-formal education second-chance option fulfills the right for children, including married adolescent girls, who never had the chance to start primary school or who dropped out, to receive an education. It aims to mainstream school-age children back into the formal system.

Key characteristics are:

- **Child-centredness:** The programme stresses the importance of child-centred learning using participatory approaches.
- **Community participation and capacity building:** Communities are trained and empowered to initiate, plan, implement, monitor, evaluate and report on COBET.
- **Integrated development:** The programme focuses on improvement in all socio-economic and political fields – health, education, nutrition, water, environment and sanitation, family life education, and HIV/AIDS education – thus encouraging partnership and collaborative planning, management, monitoring and evaluation of the programme among communities, NGOs, religious groups and the private sector, as well as local and political leaders.
- **Flexibility and relevance:** The curriculum is flexible and relevant to educational needs and interests of children out of school, linking classroom and home functions and including economic and income-generating activities (Mushi et al., 2002b, p. 10).

The main objectives of COBET are:

- To develop a complementary basic education curriculum by strengthening basic competencies and life-survival skills, and to introduce flexible timetabling.
- To establish a system for regular, periodic collection of information on out-of-school children, disaggregated by gender, for planning and implementation of COBET.
- To identify and improve capacities of key partners such as NGOs, religious groups, community-based organizations and employers involved in providing basic education, to plan and implement education for out-of-school children.
- To improve capacity at the community level to initiate plan, monitor, evaluate and report on COBET.
- To raise awareness of communities and parents towards the importance of education and other basic rights of unschooled and schooled children in order to increase their support for and participation in complementary basic education (GOT and UNICEF, 1997 cited in Mushi et al., 2002b).

In terms of enrolments, actual figures are considerably lower than initially intended and articulated in the AE/NFE Strategy of 2002. No information was available for completion rates, withdrawal figures or learning outcomes.

## **Functional literacy and post literacy programmes**

Functional and post literacy programmes are assumed to be functioning in dogged continuation of the adult literacy programmes run from the 1960s. A brief history associates the focus of adult education with the then current development model.

Following independence in 1967, the development model of Socialism and Self-Reliance was adopted that relied heavily on the Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) policy of the same year. A focus on rural areas, equality and participation of the masses in the development of a socialist society characterised the period from independence to the early 1980s. Propounded by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and conceptualised under the philosophy of Ujamaa (meaning “familyhood”), the moral obligation of every Tanzanian to work for the common good replaced the economic growth and development model. Adult Education during this period “was seen as a tool for developing the country” (Bwatwa, 1979: 132) and was officially articulated in three main policies: the First Five Year Plan (1964–1969), the Arusha Declaration (1967) and the Second Five Year Plan (1969–1974).

In the Second Five Year Plan (1969–1974), arrangements were made for implementing adult education in rural areas, where 80% of the population lived (Stites and Semali, 1991). At this time the Directorate of Adult Education was created, which had four sections: Design and Coordination, Functional Literacy, Worker’s Education and Inspection and Evaluation (Bwatwa, 1979).

Initiated by UNESCO and the UNDP in 1968, and funded also by the one party State of TANU (Tanganika African National Union), Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) programmes aimed to link Education for Self Reliance, Ujamaa and literacy by focusing on health, food production and politics. Specifically, FAL programmes aimed to combine the teaching of literacy skills with different vocational skills, and to increase political participation through explicit political education (Buchert, 1994, Bwatwa, 1979). Coordinated by a nominated AE Coordinator placed at each stratum of the decentralised Government structure<sup>7</sup>, 12 different literacy primers were used and national exams existed between 1975–1989, for which students gained either functional literacy or literacy graduate certificates.

However, evidence of developmental gains from FAL was “very shaky and one may conclude that the evaluations results do not indicate a definite and substantial improvement in the socio-economic life of participants involved” (Kassam, 1979: 153). In particular, it was found that the attainment of literacy skills was very poor, especially in regard to arithmetic (Kassam, 1979), attendance waned as participants felt it would take a long time to become literate (von Freyhold, 1979) and because literacy skills did not seem to result in any economic benefit for the individual (Stites and Semali, 1991). In addition, economic recovery programmes devolved the centralised adult education mechanism to the local level which resulted in massive delays of payments leading in turn to declining quality and demand. Donor budget cuts, from the Swedes in particular, led to further decline in provision. No data could be found for retention or completion rates.

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7 The decentralised scheme of administrative levels went from the region, district, division, and ward levels, down to the hundred-cell and ten-cell units.

## Integrated Community Based Adult Education (ICBAE)

Integrated Community Based Adult Education (ICBAE) was developed by the MOEC in 1993 and aimed at increasing access to sustainable basic education for adults and out-of-school youths through the development of learner-centred and community based approaches. After various pilots, plans were developed in 2003 by MOEC to spread ICBAE nationwide, to include income generation and to build on the participatory and dialogue discussion literacy acquisition method of REFLECT<sup>8</sup> (Macpherson 2006).

Key characteristics of ICBAE are:

- Learner-centredness: The programme stresses the importance of learner-centred learning.
- Community building: The programme is community based, with the responsibility of the community being to improve the living conditions of the community.
- Integrated development: The programme focuses on the improvement in all socio-economic and political fields.
- Community capacity building: Community members are trained in planning, problem solving, resource management, bookkeeping, monitoring and evaluation (Mushi et al. 2002a)

The overall objectives of the ICBAE programme are:

- To empower communities to take full responsibility for the development of their programmes and projects.
- To improve the quality and efficiency of literacy programmes.
- To sustain literacy programmes by restructuring them with strong features of “bottom-up” planning that allows beneficiaries to make decisions on the nature of programmes and projects, curricula, management, and evaluation (Mushi et al., 2002).

ICBAE is therefore a core group Government Level 1 initiative that blends literacy, life-skills and income-generation NFBE activities (types 1, 3 and 4) and is targeted at illiterates, marginalised adolescents and youth, women, the rural poor and farmers. Indeed, all classifications of NFE target groups given the country study guidelines are applicable to ICBAE as long as participants are over the age of 19 years.

Adult education registrations in 2006 were significantly short of the 2005 targets at only 43.4% (1,649,801 with a target of 3,800,000). The number of facilitators trained by 2006, however, exceeded the 2005 target by 3.9% (32,896 with a target of 31,667).

As Mushi et al. stated in 2002, *“there is enough evidence to demonstrate that for a couple of years now literacy and post literacy programmes have not been operating well ... [and] enrolment figures in literacy classes have been declining since the mid 1980s’* (2002a, p. 23). Similarly, Bhalalusesa argued in 2002 that *“with the exception of the pilot*

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8 Regenerated Education through Freirean Learning and Empowering Community Techniques.

*ed wards, adult education is not functioning in other parts of the project districts, let alone other areas of the country. With the current trend in programme expansion ... combined with financial constraints, the population of adults and children out-of-school is likely to remain on the decline in the coming years"* (p. 182). While the shortfall 19+ enrolment is significant, anecdotal evidence from regional Government and INGO sources suggests that figures may be inflated (Macpherson, 2006) while Mushi et al. (2002b) warn that governmental figures on adult education and literacy are *"not unquestionable"* and *"have to be treated with caution"* (p. 7). It is therefore probable that actual figures are even lower than official statistics imply. Thus the available evidence suggests that there are considerable shortfalls in both access and quality of adult education classes.

Data on completion rates, withdrawal figures and learning outcomes could not be found. It is worth noting that ICBAE is credited with having *"spill-over effects"* such as the establishment of self-help income generating groups such as fish ponds, poultry keeping, pig-gery, home economics, agricultural gardening projects, improved environments, conservation, construction of modern houses and rehabilitation (Bhalalusesa, 2002, p. 182). It is also worth noting that Government statistics for ICBAE merge with statistics on functional literacy and post literacy classes. Anecdotal evidence challenges the existence of such literacy classes and, in Tandahimba district at least, no evidence could be found for their existence, even in the face of district education officials claiming that over 60 such classes were running (Macpherson 2006).

## **Regenerated Education through Freirean Learning and Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT)**

REFLECT is run by ActionAid Tanzania. The REFLECT approach to adult literacy was born out of a combination of the processes of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and the educational philosophy of Paulo Freire, and is claimed to be

*"a structured participatory learning process, which facilitates people's critical awareness of their environment, placing empowerment at the heart of sustainable and equitable development ... Based on ongoing processes of reflection and action, people empower themselves to work for a more just and equitable society."*

(Phnuyal, Archer and Cottingham, 1998)

REFLECT takes the approach that

*"literacy gives people practical skills which will help in the empowerment process (e.g. they will assume positions of responsibility in community organizations) and the empowerment process in turn creates uses for literacy in people's everyday lives. To successfully interweave the two processes requires a well-structured participatory methodology."*

(ibid. p.iii).



It thus focuses on the effects of literacy, rather than on how the learners engage with their own literacy practices. REFLECT identifies the literacy and knowledge acquisition processes as political, and, by drawing on local resources, REFLECT aims to allow communities not only to learn how to apply the new technology of literacy to their lives, and provide a space for communities to negotiate their own power relations. Through this examination it is intended that communities will find new ways to address their needs and development problems. Programmes ideally run for at least two years.

ActionAid Tanzania began its REFLECT work in the Kigoma and Lindi regions in 1998. Initially the programme was embraced and led to a steady increase in enrolment and attendance of REFLECT participants. By 2001 it was learnt that high attendance was the result of high expectations of loans and direct material support from ActionAid. Since the realization that such support was not immediate, participants dropped out although attendance later stabilized. In 2003, REFLECT was expanded to other development areas in Tandahimba and Newala, and in 2005 to Bagamoyo and Zanzibar.

REFLECT is provided by a core category 11 organization, the national branch of an INGO, and targeted at all adults over the age of 19 years, including advanced literates. Similar to ICBAE, it blends literacy, life-skills training and income generation (types 1, 3 and 4).

ActionAid report that the *"time frame, duration and venue have all been decided by the participants"* (2007, p. 1) yet research by Macpherson (2006) into REFLECT in Tandahimba revealed that not only are these issues determined by the facilitator, but so is the learning agenda. Additionally, whilst REFLECT facilitators are ostensibly sought from the local community, facilitators in Tandahimba were local Government Community Development Officers. Indeed, ActionAid state that facilitators *"have been largely volunteers however primary school teachers have been used on payment basis"* (2007, p. 1). It is unclear who is being paid to facilitate and how much they are paid.

Topics covered include HIV/AIDS, family planning, agriculture, disease prevention, nutrition, conservation, income and expenditure, and household budgeting. Learning methods include participatory tools such as agricultural calendars, health calendars, transect walks, chappati diagrams, Income and Expenditure trees, songs, dance, role play and theatre. Income generating projects that have stemmed from REFLECT circles include wells, poultry projects, goat rearing projects, small scale agricultural projects and restaurants (Macpherson 2006). It is worth noting that in several programme areas, the focus of REFLECT circles was on income-generation projects rather than literacy acquisition. It is certainly true that REFLECT has morphed over time, but there are indications that key individuals involved in REFLECT aim to reassert it as an effective literacy acquisition method.

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Chau Lam

## Non-formal education (NFE) in Vietnam

To fulfil the commitment to goals set at the Education for All (EFA) International Forum in Dakar in 2000, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) of Vietnam developed the National Education for All Action Plan for Vietnam 2003–2015 (Government of Vietnam, 2003), approved by the Government in July 2003. The plan succeeded in rallying the Government, international organizations, bilateral donors, NGOs and civil society to accelerate and ensure the quality of EFA activities. Non-formal education (NFE) was identified as one among the four priority components of the educational system. (The other three included early childhood care and pre-school education, primary education and lower-secondary education.) This report focuses only on NFE activities and achievements since the plan was approved and implemented at national and provincial levels all over the country.

### Conceptualisation of NFE

**Non-formal education**, as defined in Section 5, Article 40 in the 1998 Education Law of Vietnam, is *“the mode of education to help everyone to work and learn at the same time and to learn continually all the life aimed at perfecting their personality, broadening their knowledge, elevating their cultural, specialization and professional standard in order to improve the quality of life, find a job and adapt to social life”*. (Government of Vietnam, 1998)

Specifically, in the National EFA Action Plan 2003–2015, NFE

*“comprises organized learning activities that cater to persons not enrolled in formal education. In Vietnam, NFE spans complementary education programmes, continuing education and life-skills development activities aimed at the different learning needs of different categories of youth and adults. NFE does not necessarily follow the structure of the formal system. It may be of varying duration, and may or may not confer certification of the learning achieved. In the EFA Plan, NFE comprises complementary primary and lower secondary programmes, life-skills programmes, and literacy training.”* (p.xxi) (Government of Vietnam, 2003)

The definition of **literacy** can also be found in the action plan as

*“the ability to read and write in the Vietnamese language. It also includes basic numeracy skills. Basic literacy in Vietnam represents the equivalent level of the*

*five-year primary cycle. The literacy rate is the percentage of the adult population that has achieved basic literacy. In Vietnam the literacy rate refers to the population of the age group 15–40.”* (Government of Vietnam, 2003, p. xx)

The concept of **life skills** is recognised and understood from the international concept of life skills. In a broad sense, life skills, as defined by UNESCO, refer to the individual’s ability to fully perform his or her functions and participate in daily life (UNESCO Hanoi, 2003). Applying this to Vietnam, life skills include essential skills, generic skills, and skills to be applied in specific situations and contexts of social life (Brouwer, 2006). Essential life skills refer to skills for daily life, literacy, numeracy, and functional literacy, or the ability to use these skills in daily activities. Generic life skills include cognitive skills, skills to cope with emotions, and social or interactive skills. These skills deal with critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, motivation, stress resistance, emotion control, self-management, self-adaptation, teamwork, negotiation, cooperative skills and communication. Besides these essential and generic skills, there are life skills to be applied in specific aspects of social life, such as health (sanitation, food hygiene, nutrition, alcohol, tobacco and drug use), gender, natural and environmental protection, culture, language, technology and income-creation (ibid).

The concepts of non-formal education and life skills help demonstrate the concept of **life-long learning**, which is to serve the diverse learning needs of every individual throughout life. Individuals at any phase in life can study in search of new knowledge and skills that help improve their professions, working lives and quality of life. Lifelong learning therefore can be carried out under any type of education: formal or non-formal, and within or beyond the boundaries of schools.

## Target learners of NFE

Non-formal education in Vietnam serves a variety of participants, ranging from illiterate people and those just out of illiteracy, to those who dropped out of the formal education system before having acquired the basic knowledge in reading, writing and arithmetic necessary to have a productive life. With the objectives of creating a second opportunity to learn for disadvantaged population groups and providing practical knowledge for adults to satisfy production requirements, NFE targets groups with limited educational background. Priority is given to out-of-school youth and adults, especially women and disadvantaged groups such as farmers, ethnic minorities, the poor and unemployed young people (Brouwer, 2006; Government of Vietnam 2003). In addition, as NFE aims to develop a comprehensive national strategy for affordable and relevant continuing education, lifelong learning opportunities, and to build a learning society (Government of Vietnam 2003), the target group for literacy and post-literacy education is adults from 15–35



Indonesia

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years who are illiterate or have not yet completed the third grade of primary education (Government of Vietnam, 2000). Non-formal education also targets labourers who need to learn, update or improve their vocational knowledge in order to increase income, to look for a new career, or to enhance their quality of life.

### Legal foundations of NFE policies

Major legal documents of the Vietnamese Party and State that serve as foundations for EFA policies in general and for NFE policies in particular include the following:

The Resolutions of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Con-

ference of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam in December 1996 pointed out the objectives for EFA, with an emphasis on

*“eradication of illiteracy for people in the age group 15–35, reducing the number of illiterates at different ages with special attention given to mountainous, remote, disadvantaged areas to ensure that all provinces achieve national standards on literacy and Universal Primary Education before the 21<sup>st</sup> century; and on the expansion of continuing education forms, particularly distance education.”*

(Government of Vietnam, 2000, p. 4)

The Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 1992 in Chapter three, Article 35 stated that education and training are top priority policies. The State develops educational work and ensures that

*“the aim of education is to form and nurture the personality, moral qualities, and abilities of the citizen; to train working people and equip them with skills, to imbue them with dynamism and creativeness, national pride, good morality, and the will to strive for national prosperity, so as to meet the need to build and defend the country.”*

(Government of Vietnam, 1992)

Article 36 stipulates the overall management of the national system of education undertaken by the State.

*“The State shall ensure the harmonious development of the educational system: pre-school education, general education, vocational training, college and post-graduate education; it shall enforce the generalisation of primary education, eliminate illiteracy.”*  
(Government of Vietnam, 1992)

The State’s priority investment to education is reserved for educational work in the highlands, in regions inhabited by national minorities and in regions encountering special difficulties.

#### The Education Law 1998

Article 40 of the Law on Education of Vietnam stipulates NFE as a method to help people to learn while working to develop their personality, knowledge, professional skills and living standards.

Article 41 of the Law on Education stipulates the requirements for the content and method of non-formal education. As stated in the article, the content of non-formal education includes

*“educational programmes of the eradication of illiteracy and further education after literacy. Educational programmes of non-formal educational must also meet the needs of the learners and must ensure the practicality to help learners raise their labour capacity, production and working capacity and quality of life. The method of non-formal education, therefore, must develop the initiative role and exploit the experience of the learner and give importance to fostering his/her self-teaching capacity.”*  
(Government of Vietnam, 1998)

The National Education for All Action Plan 2003–2015, approved by the National Assembly and Government on 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2003 (Government of Vietnam, 2003).

The action plan identified five strategic EFA goals for Vietnam, with the third goal focusing on providing lifelong learning opportunities. The objectives for the target group 4 of the action plan, the NFE, are

1. to ensure that all out-of-school youth have education opportunities to achieve primary and lower secondary levels;
2. to ensure that all adults, especially women and disadvantaged groups, have access to free and quality literacy and post-literacy programmes and to affordable and quality life skills programmes and lifelong learning opportunities;
3. to improve the quality, relevance and results of all continuing education programmes (complementary primary and lower secondary programmes, literacy, post-literacy and life skills programmes) for youth and adults up to age 40;
4. to develop a comprehensive national strategy for affordable and relevant continuing education, lifelong learning opportunities and to build a learning society; and

*5. to strengthen management capacity of non-formal education and continuing education at the local level.”* (Government of Vietnam, 2003)

### **Guidelines for implementing non-formal education for the school year 2004–2005 (MOET, 2004).**

In the decree dated 25/2004/CT-BGD&DT, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) of Vietnam set up guidelines for implementing non-formal education for the school year 2004–2005 (MOET, 2004). In the guidelines, the common mission of non-formal education focused on the development of the achievement obtained in the school year 2003–2004, consolidating the results of eradication of illiteracy obtained in the previous school year, universalising primary education, increasing the number of literate people aged 15 to 35, and reducing illiteracy in the other age groups. The guidelines also emphasised the development of continuing education at lower secondary level, aiming at universalising lower secondary education by 2010.

### **Finances for NFE**

Within the National EFA Action Plan 2003–2015, NFE has been and continues to be mainly funded by the State budget. State budget expenditure on education provides a strong financial basis for the development and modernisation of education envisaged for all four EFA Target Groups, which include NFE. However, as the Government budget for education does not cover all EFA funding needs, funding gaps need to be covered by complementary sources. Financial contributions come from social organizations, individuals, international organizations, foreign and non-governmental organizations and credit loans from international organizations (Government of Vietnam, 2000). Vietnam is in the first groups of countries eligible to receive EFA Fast Tract Funding from the international donor community. Among the international organizations which co-ordinated and provided support to implementing the EFA programmes in Vietnam in recent years are UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, JICA, WORLD BANK, and NGOs such as Oxfarm UK, Save the Children UK, Radda Barnen and the Catholic Relief Service.

Donor funding has been recognised as the key to effective plan implementation. Community contributions are also viewed as necessary to improve education in schools, and are actively encouraged. Direct parental contributions, for example, can help reduce funding shortfalls. However, although community contributions may serve to improve the teaching and learning conditions of the school, Government financing remains the major source for all basic inputs needed to ensure good quality education (Government of Vietnam, 2003).



## Support and management of NFE

NFE is under the unified management of the Vietnamese Government. Ministries and committees take concrete responsibilities and tasks in implementing NFE in particular, and EFA in general. Specifically, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) will implement literacy, post-literacy and continuing education.

At national level, management of NFE implementation, or management of EFA in general, will be taken over by the National EFA Committee (NEFAC). This committee is responsible for overseeing the entire implementation process (Government of Vietnam, 2003). NEFAC will coordinate the MOET, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and Information, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Bank of Vietnam, and other related Ministries, Provincial Departments of Education and People's Committees. In order to support the NEFAC to undertake its function, a number of technical groups, namely National EFA Observation, EFA Technical Support Group, EFA Progress Review Group and the EFA Evaluation Group, provide monitoring, technical assistance, evaluation, and progress assessment for the National EFA action plan (ibid).

At the provincial level, Provincial EFA Task Forces were created by mid-2003, comprising representatives of Provincial People's Committees, selected District People's Committees, Provincial Department of Education, selected Bureaus of Education, and other stakeholders at the provincial, district and commune level (Government of Vietnam, 2003). Provincial EFA Planning Units will also be created, reporting to both the Department of Education and the People's Committees. NEFAC will provide policy guidance, planning directions as well as direct support in technical and methodological matters to these provincial EFA planning units.

Besides these entities of the Government, social organizations also co-ordinate and take part in the implementation of NFE from the central to grassroots levels. These organizations include the *"Vietnam Fatherland Front"*, the *"Vietnam Confederation of Labour"*, the *"Vietnam Farmers Association"*, the *"Vietnam Women's Association"* and the *"Ho Chi Minh Youth Union"* (Government of Vietnam, 2000).

## Targets for NFE

The National EFA Action Plan set specific targets for NFE to be reached during the EFA period 2003–2015, categorised in the access, quality and relevance, and management areas.

Specific access targets for NFE include:

- Achievements of literacy campaigns are to be consolidated with emphasis on young illiterate adults (aged 15–34) and women.

- 50% of all communes are to have a Community Learning Centre (CLC) by 2005; 90% by 2010; and all communes by 2015.
- Out-of-school children aged 6–14 (30% by 2005 and 75% by 2015) will attend complementary primary programmes.
- Out-of-school youth aged 11–14 (30% by 2005 and 75% by 2015) will attend complementary lower secondary programmes.

Quality and relevance targets for NFE include

- Curriculum and textbooks of complementary primary and lower secondary programmes are to be improved.
- Post-literacy and life-skills programmes are to be diversified to meet the needs of local population by providing sufficient funds to develop and implement lifelong learning programmes (\$5,000/CLC by 2015).
- Continuing Education Centres (CEC) are to be set up in all districts, and local materials and training programmes are to be developed.

Management targets for NFE include

- Management of Continuing education (CE) and NFE are to be reformed and modernised at every level. (Government of Vietnam, 2003)

### **Action programmes for NFE**

For these NFE targets to be reached, relevant action programmes have been designed and carried out. The major NFE programmes implemented in Vietnam include

1. literacy and post-literacy programmes for adults under 40
2. complementary primary and lower secondary programmes for poor and disadvantaged groups
3. continuing learning programmes for all communes and districts
4. improvement of the quality, relevance and delivery of literacy and post-literacy programmes
5. improvement of the curricula and delivery of complementary primary and secondary programmes
6. improvement of the quality and relevance of community learning programmes delivered through CLCs and CECs
7. national policy for continuing education (CE), non-formal education and lifelong learning, and
8. capacity building of local managers to provide NFE/ CE programmes relevant to adult learners and the labour market. (Government of Vietnam, 2003)

## Expected results of EFA plan implementation for the target group of NFE

The results of EFA plan implementation for the target group of NFE (out-of-school youth and continuing education) expected to be achieved by 2005, 2010, 2015 are presented in the National EFA Action Plan 2003–2015.

### Three examples of NFBE activities

**Complementary education programmes** are in line with the eradication of illiteracy programmes and the universalisation of primary and lower secondary education programmes, and were consolidated and developed in quantity and quality in the school year 2003–2004. These programmes aim at universalising elementary and secondary education, providing a basis of literacy skills for basic literates (equivalent to elementary level) and an advanced level of literacy for advanced literates (equivalent to lower secondary level). The age group that these programmes target is from 11–18. However, there are different target groups in different regions of the country. In mountainous and coastal areas, such as Tuyen Quang, Quang Tri and Tay Nguyen, and in delta areas in the South, drop-out students aged 15–18 and students who are currently not in the



*Madagascar*

*dvv international*

right grade for their age are encouraged to take complementary education programmes. These programmes provide the students with equivalency to formal basic education and assure their ability to mainstream into the formal upper secondary education system upon successful completion of the programmes (Vietnam Edu.net, 2004).

With the relatively small budget from the Government that is reserved for universalisation of elementary and secondary education, many provinces and districts face financial problems in encouraging youths to pursue these complementary programmes. However, to support the provinces and districts in the implementation of universal education, the Government has issued Decree No. 62/2005/QĐ-TTg, which exempts poor children, children with difficult living conditions, and ethnic minority children from school fees or any other contributions to the school. In addition, such children are provided with basic learning resources such as books, note-books and stationery.

The language used in the complementary programmes is Vietnamese, which is not the home language for some ethnic students. Not many teachers in ethnic communities can speak the language of their students, which makes communication and teaching difficult

for them. Instructors in these programmes are mainly teachers who work in the formal school system. In general, there is a shortage of teaching staff for these programmes, and many of the teachers are not highly qualified, especially in disadvantaged areas (MOET, 2005).

Almost all of these programmes are carried out in the evenings at continuing education centres at the district level, community learning centres at the commune level, some cultural youth houses at the ward level, communal houses in the villages, or at some primary and secondary schools in the region.

**Life skills and community development programmes** aiming to increase productivity, improve income-generation capabilities, and/or enable career change are carried out in community learning centres (CLCs), continuing education centres (CECs), foreign language centres, and information communication technology (ICT) centres. ECs and CLCs are very important to the implementation of NFE in Vietnam. As CECs at the district level cannot provide learning opportunities for all, especially for people living in remote, mountainous, and rural areas, CLCs have proved to be an appropriate model for education provision at the grassroots level. Since 1998, CLCs have been gradually established and put into operation in mountainous and rural areas of Vietnam (MOET, 1999). By June 2006, there were 7,384 CLCs providing instruction in nearly 70% of the communes throughout the country.

A report prepared by the Ho Chi Minh City Department of Education and Training (HCMC DOET) on the city's Community Learning Centres indicates that since February 2002, 23 CLCs have been established in remote districts and suburbs of the city. These CLCs use village meeting halls, ward cultural houses, temples, and primary schools as places in which their educational programmes are conducted. With support from the Education Service (at the district level), CECs (at the district level), and People's Committees (at the ward level), these CLCs aim to provide more educational opportunities to a wider variety of people in the community, almost all of whom are adults between the ages of 15 and 35 (HCMC DOET, 2005).

Based on the educational needs of the population, which have been surveyed through questionnaires, community meetings and suggestions made by local people, different educational programmes have been carried out at these CLCs in Ho Chi Minh City. The programmes include literacy training, complementary education, instruction in foreign languages and information communication technology, non-formal vocational training in areas such as animal husbandry, vegetable gardening and fish farming, and life-skills training and community development around themes such as health and hygiene, food nutrition, community health services, environmental sustainability, water supply, garbage waste disposal, legal and political consultation, cultural and physical activities and entertainment activities (HCMC DOET, 2005).

As these CLCs in Ho Chi Minh City do not receive any financial assistance from the Government, they have to seek support from local welfare funds, local businesses and other donors. Funds from these sources are often very limited and not constant. As a result of budget shortages, CLCs often face difficulties in maintaining their activities. The staff serving at the CLCs includes specialists and lecturers from many city services and departments, retired engineers, as well as office staff and teachers from local schools. Many CLCs receive support from universities and companies (such as the University of Agriculture and Forestry of Ho Chi Minh City and Vinamilk Company).

Recently, a pilot project entitled **Transforming Schools into Learning Centres** was carried out by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Regional Training Centre in Vietnam (SEAMEO RETRAC), in cooperation with the Department of Education and Training (DOET) of Ho Chi Minh City, in Can Gio District, a poor and remote area of Ho Chi Minh City. With the aim of facilitating access to education for all and promoting lifelong learning in Vietnam, the project succeeded in establishing a model for transforming schools into learning centres. The project targets community residents in the areas surrounding the two selected schools in Can Gio District: Binh Khanh and Can Thanh high schools. The expected outcomes of the project include improving socio-economic livelihoods for members of the community, developing in-place human resources, and enhance the country's process of industrialisation and modernisation (SEAM-EO RETRAC & DOET, 2006).

The project consists of three phases. The first phase of the project focused on teacher training, educational management training, computer training, and the assessment of needs and resources for the two selected schools in the Can Gio district. This phase, which was mainly funded by the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City, was carried out from 2005 to 2006. The second phase of the project is to implement the model by conducting various educational programmes based on community needs, to organise CLC management systems, and to establish structures and activities. The last phase will focus on the development of the project and the evaluation of its impact.

The results of the study of the first phase show that Can Gio is a poor district with widely scattered dwellings. The residents have very high learning needs that have not yet been adequately met. The schools in the districts have resources and high potential to serve the community, but are not properly and fully utilised. In this first phase, the major activities focused on training in computer, management, library, and teaching skills. In addition, a survey was conducted to determine the learning needs of the people living in the vicinity of the two selected schools. Based on the survey results, the second phase will concentrate on the improvement of income generation through the provision of training to capacitate local residents in areas such as aquaculture, fishery, tailoring, cooking, and electrical maintenance and repairs.

The target group for the first phase includes school management boards, teachers and staff (librarians, technicians) at the two selected schools, and local residents of the district. Human resources involved in this phase include specialists from SEAMEO RETRAC, specialists and lecturers from the University of Agriculture and Forestry of Ho Chi Minh City, and specialists from the Women Culture House of Ho Chi Minh City. Human resources for the second phase will include teachers and staff at the two schools who attended training courses during the first phase.

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# The provision of non-formal basic education (NFBE) in Zambia

## Introduction

This paper presents the provision of non-Formal basic education (NFBE) to youth (15–24) and adults (25 and older) in Zambia. NFBE refers to programmes and structured learning activities targeting the least formally educated youth and adult populations in Zambia. The first part gives a brief overview of policy and management and the trends in the provision of NFBE. Emphasis will be on the supply side of NFBE. The second part describes the major NFBE activities implemented by various Government ministries and departments as well as non-governmental organizations, cooperative partners, the church and communities themselves.

In line with the focus of goals 3 and 4 of the Education for All (EFA) (equitable access to learning programmes and competencies that meet the needs of youth and adults) the focus of NFBE is the equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes for youth and equitable access to basic and continuing education for adults.

## How NFBE is defined

Zambia has had a long history of non-formal education (NFE), which has existed parallel to the formal system. Missionary education placed emphasis on non-formal education centres for elementary industrial training. The colonial Government also created community-training centres for NFE. Training in these centres focused on mass literacy, leadership, vocational training in local skills, health education and traditional skills (Mumba 2003). NFBE denotes all forms of education that are offered outside the formal school system. Kelly (1999), who has followed the development of education in Zambia, describes non-formal education (NFE) as:

*“Any organized activity outside the established formal system – whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity – that is intended to serve identifiable learning clientele and learning objectives. Examples of non-formal education applicable to children and to youth would be: pre-school day-care centres and nurseries; school equivalency programmes to provide a ‘second chance’ for those who are missing schooling or dropped out early; adolescent and adult literacy classes; school-based extracurricular activities, such as boy and girl*



*scouts, young farmers' clubs, occupational training for adolescents in agriculture and construction, carried on outside the formal school structure.*" (Kelly, 1999, 9)

The education system currently in practice in Zambia is 7–5–4. This means that the system has seven years of primary school education, five years of secondary school education and four years of university education.<sup>1</sup> This is soon to give way to a 9–3–4 system (MOE, 1996; 2003; 2006), which will have nine years of basic education, three years of high school education and four years of university education. These three stages of education have promotion examinations. Those who do not pass grade 7, 9, and 12 examinations do not proceed further to other stages of their education (MOE, 1996). This system has created a pyramidal structure of education that is not compatible with efforts to achieve EFA goals as it "throws" many pupils out of the education system. The majority of those who are thrown out of the formal system do not fail as such but are "pushed" or "squeezed" out (Serpell, 1993).

It is the Zambian pyramidal structure of formal education that "pushes" or "squeezes" pupils out of the formal education system, thereby creating the need for an alternative system of non-formal basic education. Children who are "pushed" or "squeezed" out of the formal system, especially at the primary school level, lack the necessary survival skills to manage in the community (Serpell, 1993). In order to give second chance opportunities to such children, the Zambian Government, through its various ministries and departments, as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the church, have taken steps to expand the provision of NFBE (Kelly, 1999; MOE, 1996; 2003; 2006).

Pupils who are thrown out of the formal school system, especially at the primary level, are the illiterate adults of the future (Serpell, 1993; Kelly, 1999). Most pupils who leave school after the 7<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grades are over age 15 or 17 respectively, considering how many start school late for various reasons.<sup>2</sup> This may also explain the findings in the Zambia Human Development Report 2003 that literacy among 15–24-year-olds dropped from 74.8% in 1990 to 70% in 2000 (UNESCO, 2003: xiv).

Although the projection is that Zambia will achieve 100% literacy by the year 2015, literacy rates for 15 to 24-year-olds, at least in the short term, are falling. Out of the 268,097 pupils who recently sat for examinations, for example, only 141,161 passed and were

1 Some professional courses like medicine and engineering vary from this pattern as they require 5 to 8 years.

2 In rural and community schools, most pupils complete their primary school education when they are over 16 years of age. While the official age for enrolling children in first grade is 7, most children are older than 10 when they start school. Reasons for this include poverty, distance to schools, stunted growth, being an orphan, or local beliefs. In some places, for example, where owning cattle is a symbol of wealth, it is considered necessary for children to earn that status before they start school through years of work tending cattle in order to receive a cow of their own as payment (Kelly, 1999).

admitted to grade 8. This means that 126,936 pupils were pushed out of the formal education system. If we add the number of pupils who dropped out for other reasons to those who were pushed out, we have a total of 152,422 young people, the majority age 15 and over, who were thrown into the community with no practical skills for survival.

It is now clear that Zambia, like many other developing countries, cannot achieve EFA goals through the formal education system alone (Preece, 2007; UNESCO, 2005, Mumba, 2002). There is need to develop alternative educational systems, like NFBE. Mumba, (2003:3) holds that *"non-formal education derives its importance in Zambia from limited capacity of the formal school system"*. The Zambian Government seems to be taking appropriate measures to address the plight of the out-of-school youths (15+years) and the adults (24+years) through various NFBE programmes.

### **National NFBE policies, reforms**

Several government ministries and organizations (Table 2) offer NFBE programmes and activities. These ministries and organizations are covered by the policy document on partnership in Education Provision, Inter-Ministry Collaboration, which states that:

*"In order to promote the effective coordination of education and training provided by various Government ministries, the Government will develop a coordinated policy that covers the entire education sector."* (MOE, 1996:142)

As to community involvement:

*"Guided by the principle that communities have a basic right to provide education at all levels, the Ministry will encourage and facilitate full participation of communities in educational provision."*

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services are the main providers of NFBE programmes. In Zambia's 1996 National Policy *Educating Our Future* which forms the legal foundation for education programmes and activities, there is no clear policy on non-formal education, whereas policy on formal education is very clear:

*"The goal of the Ministry of Education [on behalf of the country] is that every child should have access to nine years of good quality education. In cooperation with relevant partner ministries and with communities, NGOs and religious groups, the ministry will explore ways of establishing out-reach learning programmes that will bring the benefits of school education to children who for no valid reasons are not able to attend school in the conventional way."* (MOE, 1996:22)

However, the National Policy states that:

*"The Ministry of Education recognizes the central importance of continuing and*

*distance education for personal development, for updating knowledge and skills, and for overcoming disadvantage suffered during initial education. The Ministry will promote open learning, lifelong education, and a wide variety of mechanisms for continuing and distance education.”* (MOE, 1996:80)

It can be assumed that this covers NFBE programmes. The strategies put in place in the document state that:

1. The Ministry will integrate the provision of continuing education programmes into its mainstream planning processes.
2. The Ministry will increase access to quality continuing education programmes as another avenue of educational provision for out-of-school youths and adults.
3. Recognizing its inability to respond to all the needs, the Ministry will encourage partnership with other stake-holders, communities, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector in the provision of continuing and distance education.
4. The Ministry will promote continuing education programmes which combine the formal acquisition of knowledge with the development of skills and competencies relevant to employment, economic growth and development.

The Government intends to make the Ministry of Education, through the Directorate of Open and Distance Education (DODE), take full responsibility for adult literacy programmes and activities, but still in conjunction with the Community Development and Social Service. The policy issue on NFBE needs redressing urgently.

## Reforms

Ministry of Education reforms in 2002–2004 have divided the Ministry into various directorates. DODE, formally called the Department of Continuing Education, runs the NFBE programmes and activities. The main aim of DODE is to expand education provisions and offer alternative opportunities or “*second chances*” to the out-of school youths and adults. The Directorate has four wings that perform various functions in the running of the programmes:

- a) the Educational Broadcasting Services (EBS)
- b) the College for Open and Distance Education (CODE)  
(The two form the Programmes, Development and Production (PDP) wing of the Directorate)
- c) learner Support and Administration (LSA) (looks into the interest of the learners, how materials will reach the learners, and the day to day running of the Centres)
- d) quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) (Which looks at quality of materials used in all the programmes)

NFBE programmes and activities cut across several ministries, non-governmental organizations and associations, in line with the policy of partnership in educational provision followed by the Government (MOE, 1996). The Ministry of Education, as the principal provider of education in general, is responsible for broad policy directions and supervisory guidelines to some organizations involved in the provision of NFBE (MOE, 1996).

The other organizations and ministries involved with NFBE programmes and activities are the Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training, the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, the Ministry of Sports, Youths and Child Development, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Works and Supply.

**Table 1** shows the NFBE activities and programmes that are conducted by various ministries and organizations in various parts of the country. These are not exhaustive. Many other ministries and organizations support NFBE programmes and activities. They each have specific policies that guide them in their implementation of the various NFBE programmes. TEVETA for example has well-stipulated guidelines for who should head their Non-formal and Formal Institutions. However, the qualifications for Director/Principal for Formal and Non-formal institutions are not the same, conveying the message that non-formal programmes are of less importance than the formal ones.

## How NFBE programmes are governed

There is no official body coordinating NFBE programmes and activities by various ministries and organizations as acknowledged in the National Policy Document MOE (1996:80):

*"Each Government ministry involved in education provision currently works almost in isolation, there being very little coordination among ministries. Consequently, the Government approach to educational provision tends to be fragmented. This may lead to wasteful duplication of some services while in other areas there is inadequate provision."*

However, the Government has adopted an initiative known as the Education Sector Integrated Programme (ESIP). The Ministry of Education spearheads ESIP in conjunction with the other line Ministries mentioned above (MOE, 1996). Despite such initiatives, the problem remains:

*"Unfortunately, no national body co-ordinates non-formal education programmes conducted by different Government departments and other non-governmental organizations, as is the case in some countries like Lesotho and Botswana."*

(Mumba, 2003, 4)

**Table 1: The provision of Non-formal Basic Education (NFBE) to out of school youths and adults in Zambia by various ministries and organizations.**

Ministries	Programme implementers	Target Group	NFBE Programmes and activities	Main Objectives
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directorate of Open and Distance Education (DODE)</li> <li>• Curriculum Development Centres (CDC)</li> <li>• Community schools</li> <li>• Learning at Taonga</li> <li>• Markets (Interactive Radio Instruction)</li> <li>• Open secondary schools</li> <li>• Zambia College of Open and Distance Education (ZCODE)</li> <li>• Evening classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of school</li> <li>• Drop outs</li> <li>• School levers</li> <li>• Adults</li> <li>• Women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open basic and high school classes</li> <li>• Evening classes</li> <li>• Functional literacy activities</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship training</li> <li>• Life long Education</li> <li>• Vocational and Technical skills.</li> <li>• APU classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of illiteracy</li> <li>• Second chances</li> </ul>
Community Development and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial community officers</li> <li>• District community officers</li> <li>• Teachers from Ministry of Education (in collaboration)</li> <li>• Evening classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adults</li> <li>• Women</li> <li>• Orphans</li> <li>• Out-of-school youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult functional literacy and numeracy</li> <li>• Human rights</li> <li>• Practical skills</li> <li>• AIDS/HIV</li> <li>• Hygiene</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-reliance on women</li> <li>• Given women rights</li> <li>• Life skills</li> </ul>
Works and Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District and feeder Road Development Agencies</li> <li>• Local councils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of school youths</li> <li>• Retrenched workers</li> <li>• Retirees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeder roads construction skills</li> <li>• Road construction management skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offered employment</li> <li>• Improved life in rural</li> <li>• Good roads</li> <li>• Offer practical skills</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Education Unit</li> <li>• AIDS Counselling Centres</li> <li>• Family Health Trust</li> <li>• Family planning</li> <li>• First Aid</li> <li>• Primary health care</li> <li>• Rural health centres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youths</li> <li>• Orphans</li> <li>• Infected and affected adults</li> <li>• Life skills</li> <li>• Nutrition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainings</li> <li>• Counselling</li> <li>• Disseminating messages about AIDS</li> <li>• Nutrition and hygiene</li> <li>• Abstinence and safe-sex education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Counselling</li> <li>• Nutrition</li> </ul>
Youths, Child Development and Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills Training Centres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of school youths</li> <li>• School levers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical skills</li> <li>• Survival and occupational skills</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• offered jobs</li> <li>• Survival &amp; occupational skills</li> </ul>
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural Extension officers</li> <li>• Farm Training Centres</li> <li>• National Agric. information. Services</li> <li>• Seed Companies</li> <li>• Young Farmers clubs</li> <li>• Agricultural centres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural farmers</li> <li>• Women</li> <li>• Retirees</li> <li>• School levers</li> <li>• Out of school youths</li> <li>• Subsistence farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New farming methods</li> <li>• Crop management</li> <li>• Crop rotation and organic manure</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Women rights in land ownership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide better farming methods</li> <li>• Offered women rights</li> <li>• Nutrition</li> <li>• Self reliance</li> </ul>
Science, Technical and Vocational Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical, Vocational Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA)</li> <li>• Continuing Education Centres offering technical programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of school youths</li> <li>• School levers</li> <li>• Retrenched adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical skills</li> <li>• Crafts and building skills</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Home crafts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New skills</li> <li>• Employment opportunities</li> <li>• Self sustenance</li> </ul>
Community-based organizations, e.g. the church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community centres</li> <li>• Community Radio Stations</li> <li>• Community learning centres</li> <li>• Literacy clubs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School levers</li> <li>• Out of school youths</li> <li>• Women</li> <li>• Orphans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literacy and numeracy</li> <li>• Life skills</li> <li>• Crafts</li> <li>• Hygiene</li> <li>• Nutrition</li> <li>• Functional literacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New opportunity</li> <li>• Self esteem</li> <li>• Women's rights</li> </ul>
International Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In collaboration with</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Government</li> <li>• Community Organisations</li> <li>• Community radios</li> <li>• Church Organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of school youths</li> <li>• School levers</li> <li>• Adults</li> <li>• Orphans</li> <li>• Women rights/Girls education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative 'schools without walls'</li> <li>• Seminars</li> <li>• Sensitization meetings</li> <li>• Interactive Radio Programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More children in schools</li> <li>• Literacy rates raised</li> </ul>

There is a proposal to set up a National Council for Non-formal Education to coordinate all NFBE programmes and also ensure that NFBE programmes complement formal education (Mumba, 2003). It is possible that working groups to coordinate NFBE programmes may have been formed in the past but have not worked as expected (Mumba, 2002).

### **The financing of NFBE programmes**

The Zambian Government enjoys a very good relationship with local and international funded non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international agencies, the Church and Community organizations in the provision of NFBE to out-of-school youth and adults. Many community-based organizations, NGOs, the church and civil societies, get most of their financial, technical and material support from such international agencies as USAID, NORAD, SIDA, DANIDA, FINIDA, DfID, JICA (Japan), BREDA (Holland), UNICEF, CARE International; PAM, UNPD, UNFPA, ADB, UNESCO and the World Bank.

In addition, the various ministries involved with the NFBE programmes use the same allocation by the central Government for all their activities. In the case of other ministries and organizations (Table 1), no budgetary allocations for NFBE programmes and activities are available. Similarly, the Five Year Education Planned Capital allocation by Sub-Sector (2003–2007) (UN, Zambia Status Report, 2005: 12), does not indicate a specific budgetary allocation or Unit Cost for NFBE programmes and activities. We can just guess that NFBE under “others” at 2%, must be insignificant indeed.

### **Major NFBE programmes and activities are:**

- Alternative schooling (second chance)
- Literacy and numeracy
- Life and occupational skills and community development
- Income generation programmes, non-formal vocational training and rural community development

### **Alternative schooling (second chance)**

The Ministry of Education, through the Directorate of Open and Distance Education (DODE), is responsible for four major types of NFBE-oriented programmes:

- Organizing and managing open upper basic and high school courses
- Organizing and teaching evening classes at primary and secondary level
- Training specific skills for recent school leavers, out-of-school youths and adults in schools for continuing education found across the country

### **The main objectives are to:**

- offer alternative or “second chance” opportunities to out-of-school youth and adults
- provide equivalent school qualifications for those did not have the opportunity to attend

school or complete a formal education

- offer school dropouts a route to re-enter the formal education system.

As noted by Alexander (1983) in Carmody, (2004: 68), the Ministry of Education has treated non-formal education as a kind of “*step-child in the shadow of the formal education system*”.

**Open upper basic education programmes and high schools** cater for out-of-school youth (age 15 and over) who did not have the advantage of a formal education. The open school programmes found in regular schools in rural areas also cater for a small number of adults (in the over-24 age group) who did not complete their formal schooling and want to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Classes are conducted in the afternoon so that participants have time in the morning to pursue livelihood activities. DODE is developing a special Upper Basic Curriculum for these groups as an alternative to the Upper Basic Curriculum in the formal education system. (19,000 out-of-school youths were enrolled in 1995, and 25,303 in 2001; no current figures are available.)

**Evening class programmes** are conducted in basic schools and high schools in both rural and urban areas. The target group is adults (24 years of age and older). The main aim is to give alternative opportunities or second chances to those adults who did not have a chance to acquire formal schooling. Again, a small number of out-of-school-youths (age 15 and older) attend these classes to acquire initial literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Skills in schools for continuing education**

Schools for continuing education, sometimes called Adult Centres, are found in every province of the country. These centres offer a wide range of skills training in such crafts as metal- and woodworking, bricklaying, carpentry and many more. Commercial subjects are also offered. The target groups are out-of-school youths who want to learn a skill and develop a career. All technical and vocational training programmes are supervised, monitored and evaluated by TEVETA.

**Academic production unit classes** target early school leavers. They are conducted in basic schools and high schools. Lessons are conducted in the afternoons.

### **Community schools**

Community schools are community based, owned and managed (MOE, 2001). They offer opportunities to less privileged children, many of whom are girls, and to children who have been orphaned through the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Mumba (2002: 8) identifies three types of community schools:

1. those wholly outside the government system with varying degrees of community participation;
2. those which began as community initiatives but which now receive assistance from the Ministry of Education (The Ministry of Education has already taken over many such initiatives and has plans to incorporate others.)
3. Government schools with effective community participation. (This category is considered part of the formal school system.)

Community schools in urban areas are seen as agency interventions. Their target groups (age 15 and over) include the poor, orphans, girls, and children whose families are affected by HIV/AIDS. They are normally run by volunteer teachers who are chosen by the agencies themselves (Mumba, 2002). The situation in rural areas is different. As already mentioned, community schools in rural areas are initiated by the community itself. In some cases, older existing buildings serve as premises for the programmes, and in others multipurpose buildings are constructed by the members of the community. More often than not, the Ministry of Education provides teachers for such schools, but not in every case. As the community schools often have more pupils than the formal schools, many of them have been taken over by the Ministry which has even appointed qualified teachers as headmasters or deputy headmasters.

While this may appear to be a positive move in terms of short-term benefits, there are issues that need long-term attention. Community schools are normally staffed by untrained personnel, called mentors, who, in most cases, are local people that do not need accommodations and have no conditions of service. Being local, they know the community very well. Sending teachers to some of these schools will transfer the current problems facing many formal schools. Although the teachers are trained, they lack experience in dealing with adults who attend some of the classes along with children. They may not appreciate the difficulties of teaching older children alongside younger pupils.

Community schools serve as centres for functional literacy activities for adults. Rather than just focusing on the provision of literacy and numeracy skills, some centres also offer training in areas such as agriculture and forestry, gardening, clean water and sanitation, HIV/AIDS prevention, and many others. Numeracy skills are sometimes taught in functional literacy activities. For example, when participants learn how to plant seeds, they also learn to count the number of seeds that need to be planted in each hole for the seeds to germinate and grow well.

### **Adult literacy and numeracy programmes**

The main objectives of the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services in conjunction with the Ministry of Education are to:



- reduce illiteracy levels especially among rural women
- promote the integration of literacy instruction in government programmes related to agriculture, health and education for better living (functional literacy)
- set up rural libraries alongside literacy centres aimed at promoting a reading culture
- provide post-literacy materials and activities through literacy centres
- maintain and upgrade a data bank on literacy (EFA, 2000)
- increase training for literacy cadres

Although these programmes target adult learners, a small number of out-of-school youths also benefit from literacy classes (Mumba, 2002; Carmody, 2004).

Communities are fully involved in running these community based programmes. One notable community based organization that provides NFBE for women is the PANUKA Trust founded in 1997. PANUKA means, "wake up" in the Tonga language of the Southern Province of Zambia. PANUKA was established in an area where polygamous marriages are the order of the day and wives are not allowed to own assets or have access to land. Against this background, PANUKA's main objectives are to:



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- initiate village-based women's literacy centres in order to give women and girls a chance to recover their lost educational opportunities
- help rural women establish entrepreneurship ventures
- offer second chances to out-of-school youth
- improve living conditions
- reduce illiteracy.

Such programmes have shown that although literacy alone does not produce development, it can act as an eye opener for many women. With support from the Government and also from various donor and international agencies (USAID) many community-based literacy programmes and activities have achieved more than just literacy skills (Milambo, 2006).

## **Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI)**

Literacy and numeracy programmes have also been conducted using community radio stations. They are run in conjunction with the Ministry of Education. One such programme, Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI), uses active teaching methodology which is designed to make learning fun. Learners sing, play games, answer questions, read and solve maths problems in ways that ensure active participation and learning (MOE, 2004). While learning materials replace the teacher in correspondence programmes, it is the radio that fulfils this role in IRI.

**Learning at Taonga Market** is the name of the IRI programme in Zambia that covers the Ministry of Education's basic curriculum in the following subjects:

- Literacy and the English language
- Mathematics
- Science and Social Studies
- Life Skills and HIV/AIDS
- Functional literacy for adults, and especially women
- Literacy and numeracy training for adults who are willing to learn with their children.<sup>3</sup>

## **Life skills and community development**

Various ministries and organizations offer life skills and community development programmes and activities. The target population is out-of-school youths between the ages of 15 and 24, and adults age 24 and older. Programmes focus, among other things, on agriculture, literacy, leadership skills, health education, family planning, hygiene, carpentry, prevention of AIDS/HIV, tailoring and design, stress management, and traditional skills. (EFA, 2000; Mumba, 2003; Carmody, 2004). Most non-formal activities are conducted by extension workers at the various ministries and organizations.

## **Income generation programmes, non-formal vocational training and rural community development**

Under the "Road Sector Programme Support" RSPS, which is funded by DANIDA, the Road Development Agency conducts various training programmes for labour-based contractors on the routine maintenance of feeder roads throughout the country. The programme targets school-leavers, out-of-school youths (age 18 and older), and adults (age 24 and older) who have lost their jobs as a result of retrenchment. The objective is to pro-

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3 Adults find it easy and convenient to join these programmes because they take place within their communities or villages

vide training in communication skills, leadership, management, road maintenance and construction, and other skills. The project to improve feeder roads throughout the country not only serves to create employment opportunities for people without jobs, but also helps to improve the participants' communication skills while facilitating the effective delivery of agricultural inputs to farmers and the transportation of produce to the market places.

The Ministry of Science, Technology, and Vocational Training offers technical and vocational training as well as training in life skills and entrepreneurship through the Technical, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA). Adults find it easy and convenient to participate in these programmes because they take place within their communities or villages.

TEVETA programmes in NFBE are geared to out-of-school youths with the aim of helping them establish patterns of lifelong learning so as to improve and maintain their employability. TEVETA offers training in skills that are:

- related to labour market needs;
- broad, transferable, and industry-based;
- designed to enable people to adapt to rapidly changing workplaces and the introduction of new technology (TEVETA, 2006).

## Conclusion

An umbrella body is needed to coordinate all NFBE programmes in the country. Even within a given ministry or organization offering NBFE, coordination is cardinal to the success of those programmes. The problem of policy implementation was also highlighted by UNESCO, (2001:11) when commenting on Community Schools in Zambia:

*Most importantly the assessment (by UNESCO) concluded that the problems arose mainly from lack of co-ordination among those involved in the administration of community schools and recommended that a desk for community schools be established within the Ministry of Education. This episode illustrates some of the difficulties of co-ordinating conflicts and disagreements in non-formal settings through a body structured outside the line ministries.*

We can conclude that NFBE is one aspect of education that should be fully supported by all stakeholders in the provision of universal education. It is becoming increasingly clear that formal education alone may not suffice to achieve the Education for All (EFA) goals.

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## Comparison

Wim Hoppers

# Comparative review of current policies and strategies in non-formal education for young people

## Introduction

Current interest in non-formal education (NFE) is higher than it has been for a long time. In the worldwide effort to move towards Education for All, NFE, for all its problems and weaknesses, has also come to be regarded as a reservoir of ideas, approaches, and modalities that could help in providing all people with relevant education. This reservoir supports both innovations in the reform of formal education and the development of new initiatives responding to specific needs and circumstances of learners.

The current interest appears to be exceeding the conventional notion of NFE as a sub-sector containing a wide variety of initiatives for children, youth and adults outside the formal education system. There is an emerging trend towards thinking more holistically about a totality of learning opportunities for different age groups and categories of learners that offer knowledge and skills for life and work in one way or another. In a context of life-wide and lifelong education provision emphasis has shifted towards equitable access and achievement of outcomes in basic education, and a range of further education and training opportunities responding to socio-economic needs. Thus NFE more and more becomes part of an integrated policy and planning process.

This paper offers a comparative review of country situations across the South, where efforts have been made towards linking formal and non-formal education, with particular emphasis on assisting young people in the 10–18 year age group whose needs are not adequately covered either by conventional primary education or by functional literacy programmes. Particular emphasis is given to policy developments, approaches to systems integration and strategies for implementation.

## Non-formal education for young people

Although NFE generally covers a wide variety of learning opportunities outside the formal education system, there are specific forms that over the years have come to play a significant role in providing alternative options for accessing basic education, both as primary or post-primary education and as skills development provisions.



Particular attention is being given to the forms of NFE that provide a flexible and relevant equivalent of formal education to young people who either cannot access formal schools or have prematurely left school for reasons associated with poverty, home conditions, cultural practices, geographical distance, the impact of HIV and AIDS, and/or situations of conflict. This group of unreached people includes young persons beyond the regular school age who are forced to look for alternative ways of getting a basic education. Above all, this group includes girls who for a host of reasons have fewer chances to go to school and are more likely to drop out.



*Ethiopia*

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Many non-formal education programmes have sought to redress disadvantages by tailoring programmes to the needs and circumstances of the communities.

It is also becoming apparent that different kinds of disadvantage have different implications for designing NFE education and training programmes (Rogers, 2004; WGNFE, 2005; Hoppers, 2005; UNESCO, 2005; Hoppers, 2008). NFE, with its ability to adapt to client demand is thus particularly important from an equity perspective, as unschooled and under-educated children are overwhelmingly poor, young, rural and female (UIS with UNICEF, 2005).

A distinction can be made between two types of “NFE-as-alternative” provisions that play a role in EFA. The first concerns NFE as flexible provision of primary education that offers complementary and equivalent pathways in basic education, leading to the same essential learning outcomes and opportunities but by different modalities. The second focuses on NFE as parallel programmes that are not directly related to the formal system and offer different approaches to learning with goals and opportunities that are more directly related to the local socio-economic environment.

Complementary programmes include those targeting unreached children as well as “remedial programmes” for dropouts and/or over-age youngsters who are enabled to complete their primary education either by resuming regular schooling or by taking the official primary leaving examination.<sup>1</sup> It is currently good practice that in both types of

<sup>1</sup> Terminology tends to be a problem in NFE. Agencies and governments often use “complementary” when the provision is seen as an addition to what the mainstream provides. Complementary programmes also include what are often in English referred to as “supplementary” activities (i. e. as enrichment, such as remedial programmes to enable dropouts to re-enter formal schools). In French “complémentaire” refers mainly to the latter option.

“NFE as alternative” the curriculum and pedagogy are adapted to the needs of the learners, for example by adding a significant component of life- or even livelihood skills. Both NFE options can and in some countries do play a significant role when circumstances and the poor quality produce the situation that only a small percentage of children complete primary education successfully (Klees et al. 2002; Hoppers, 2008).

Combinations of the two options are increasingly found in vocational skills development programmes for young people. The growing concern with finding ways to link basic education with the labour market has led to many initiatives across the South to link vocational skills training components of cognitive and life-skills development in NFE – through curriculum integration within the same programme or through co-operative arrangements between NFE and local enterprises. Other initiatives focus largely on vocational skills development by establishing polytechnic-types training centres or by enhancing the quality and effectiveness of informal sector apprenticeships (Walther, 2007).

The emphasis is clearly on linking various strands of learning across formal and non-formal provisions, leading to acquisition of a range of basic competences in different learning areas and often to recognition through transferable credits. In this process the boundaries between formal and non-formal seem to blur, as various equivalent learning pathways are seen to exist side by side, some of which prepare for the same formal qualifications through “non-formal” means.

## **Evolution of thinking about visions, policies and strategies in NFE**

Looking at international policy debates on NFE in relation to developing countries, in the years since Dakar there have been significant developments that facilitated a more integrative and diversified approach to basic education development. Together these have produced a more articulated body of knowledge around NFE, enabling countries in principle to develop their own visions and approaches while drawing on international experiences.

### **Increased interest in NFE**

There is a general recognition among governments and international technical and funding agencies that EFA through conventional formal primary schooling can only be realised in many countries if extraordinary efforts are made to combine educational reform with the mobilisation of large amounts of additional resources (Bruns et al. 2003). There is also a strong recognition that national development will be severely impeded without bringing out-of-school youth and adults into the process by way of meaningful non-formal programmes that either build on previous years of schooling or provide basic learning as a substitute.

Both together appear to have heightened the awareness that a more visible and robust

complementarity between types of formal and non-formal education needs to be pursued as a major additional strategy to reach all young people. Over time the case for NFE as part of a broader national human resources strategy has been made very forcefully (Manzoor, 1989; Oxenham et al. 2002; Easton et al. 2003).

### **Greater recognition of diversity in NFE forms**

Renewed interest in NFE has also led to fresh attempts to investigate the myriad appearances of NFE. Hence, a major gain is a greater awareness among stakeholders about distinct types and forms of NFE and their different potential in relation to the needs and circumstances of identifiable beneficiary groups.

A major effort has been made to examine different perspectives and expectations among adolescents and youth with various degrees of schooling behind them. Increased interest has also prompted closer examination of different conditions of disadvantage – such as household income poverty, broken families, the impact of HIV and AIDS, gender discrimination, rural marginalisation, unemployment, displacement resulting from conflict, etc. Equally there is increased attention to what these conditions mean for the designing of NFE initiatives in both education and training domains (Pironrue & Keoyote, 2001; Klees et al. 2002; Rogers, 2004; WGNFE, 2005; Hoppers, 2005; UNESCO, 2005).

Often new NFE programmes are now tailor-made for specific groups among young people or adults, even if core competencies remain the same. Hybrid programmes, combining school-based learning with support from specialised organizations, civil society or communities, are constructed to cater for supplementary needs for care. In addition, in exceptional situations small-scale innovatory programmes are developed to respond to new emergencies, such as displacement and post-conflict (MiET, 2007; Hoppers, 2006). Amidst these flexibilities, new questions are being asked about what quality means, what outcomes can be expected, and how these may be measured (Pieck, 2006).

To a varying extent this work enters policy formulation in terms of public recognition and support for selected programmes, such as through public support for community schools, mobile schools, and skills training programmes for out-of-school youth (Hoppers, 2006). Increasingly these arrangements are formalised into various types of public-private partnerships. It is also apparent, however, that the motivation for public support is more frequently associated with expected impact on economic productivity than on equity and social emancipation (Jones, 1997; Morales-Gómez, 1999; Abadzi, 2004).

Donor preferences also play a major role in determining what types of NFE receives funding. It is very helpful that a greater orientation towards social demand also leads to judicious combinations of different learning programmes – for example combining literacy with livelihood training, or vocational training with life skills development (Oxenham et al. 2002 and 2004; Duke and Hinzen, 2006) – even if it is not always clear what purposes such programmes are designed to serve.

### **Increase of information about programmes**

The quality and effectiveness of NFE is increasingly related to the information that can be made available concerning processes and outcomes of individual programmes. Progress has been made in capturing learning outcomes of major NFE programmes. However, this has focussed mostly on literacy programmes in which young people of school-going age only participate as an opportunity of last resort. Much of this work was carried out in the late 1990s by World Bank staff, in a bid to provide the ground for the Bank's entry into adult and literacy education (Carr-Hill, 2001; Oxenham et al. 2002; Lauglo, 2002; Lind, 2002; Easton et al. 2003).

Little systematic assessment has been carried out of NFE alternatives for out-of-school young people, as regards outcomes and impact as well as in terms of relative value of tailor-made pedagogical processes. The fact that much monitoring and evaluative work is controlled by the sponsoring agencies is not always helpful in securing feedback that is relevant enough for policy and planning (Hoppers, 2005; Pieck, 2006). Often there is little regard for unintended but valuable outcomes.

In this context renewed collective efforts of countries and agencies in the area of research, dialogue and development are significant, such as those by UNESCO APPEAL in South-East Asia, ADEA/WGNFE in Africa, and ILO/Cinterfor in Latin America. In this way major contributions have been made to the knowledge base of many small-scale NFE initiatives by non-governmental or community organizations. This in turn has helped to improve awareness among national governments and often ensure some degree of public recognition and support.

### **More attention to socio-economic and cultural context**

Though it does appear that international sensitivity to the needs, circumstances, and the life world of beneficiary groups in NFE has much increased, this has also come with its problems. The nature of such sensitivity and the responses to which it leads seem closely associated with the background and ideological orientation of authors and organizations, and the interests to which the results are meant to speak. Here one can set the pragmatic starting points for writing about "*Adult Basic Education*" (ABE) by persons associated with the World Bank against the more transformative expectations of writers associated with progressive civil society groups (Lauglo, 2002; Chelimo, 2006; Abadzi, 2004; Easton et al. 2003; Graciani, 1992; Puntasen, 1992; UNESCO/APPEAL, 2000; Lind, 2002; Torres, 2003).

Bank-related authors have taken a more minimalist and re-active approach to the nature and purpose of ABE, focussing on practical skills relevant for coping with changing environments, with an emphasis on livelihood, health, nutrition, civic education and the like. By contrast, those associated with a more progressive agenda prefer to take a maximalist and pro-active stand – focussing on learning to interact critically with society and to

be ready for collective action aimed at changing learners' life situation and move their communities out of poverty. Both parties talk about "empowerment", but with different connotations. Whereas one side acknowledges that basic learning is essentially about improving the lives that people are already living, the other aims directly at social and economic transformation (Lauglo, 2002; Torres, 2003).

Such contrasting perspectives on NFE raise questions about what are the ultimate purposes of non-formal (and other forms of) education, what conception of human development they represent, what values they promote, and whose interests they reflect. The nature and extent of "functionality" of NFE can clearly not be taken for granted, but needs to be defined within the context of a national vision regarding education and development. Clearly, the relevance and legitimacy of NFE as an alternative pathway in basic education, and thus its purpose and design, require careful argumentation.



Guatemala

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### **More attention to systemic issues**

Greater awareness has emerged regarding systemic dimensions of NFE, i. e. how its many forms relate to formal provisions, what roles it plays within the wider totality of education and training opportunities, what roles of public and/or private governance are desirable, and what types of support it can or should expect from the state and other stakeholders. Thus far, much attention has gone particularly to issues regarding equivalency, the idea of public-private partnerships, the mobilisation of supplementary financial resources, and the development of approaches to validate NFE learning as a basis for transferable credits in areas of general education and vocational skills development. The latter has often become part of a wider effort to construct national qualifications frameworks in order to enable effective integration of different forms of education and training. In turn, such frameworks have stimulated new learning opportunities provided by civil society and private sector operators, with or without public support.

Equivalence of learning outcomes is regarded as important for younger learners who have missed out on formal education opportunities, and may still wish to utilise NFE (and forms of open and distance learning) as alternative pathways to continued formal education and training, either in- or out-of-school. It has found strong support on grounds of

ethics (right to education for all children and adolescents), equity, and social justice (Tomasovski, 2003; Rogers, 2004; Hoppers, 2006).

### **Greater recognition of lifelong learning framework**

In many ways the awareness of the systemic dimensions has reached further when seen within a wider context of lifelong (and life-wide) learning. This has particular relevance in the South where in quite a few countries the concept has come to cover all types and forms of education, including non-formal basic education and training (Aitchison, 2003; WGNFE, 2005; Thailand-ONFEC, 2006). The coherence and integration provided by such framework is now seen as vital for the achievement of Goals 3 and 4 of EFA.

The flexibility of non-formal learning, together with an overarching frame for crediting learning outcomes would enable learning gradually to move away from a rigid schooling model to a more open approach which helps *“freeing the participants to learn what they want, when they want, where they want and for as long as they want”* (Rogers, 2004:11). In fact, the lifelong learning frame provides the formal context within which both formal and non-formal education can address their particular clienteles with content and pedagogical styles that are appropriate to those learners (Duke and Hinzen, 2006; Hoppers, 2006).

### **Country case studies**

This section addresses how NFE is reflected in the visions and policies for education and development of selected countries, and what strategies along with core partnerships have been devised to realise these goals. The countries selected are Brazil, Namibia, Burkina Faso, Uganda and Thailand. They were identified on criteria of representing different regions in the South, levels of development, and knowledge available about major new developments post-Dakar.

#### **Brazil**

##### **Visions and policy frames**

In 2000 Brazil faced the situation that well over one half of the population over 15 years old, or one third of the total population, had not completed primary education. This included a total of 22 million young people between 15 and 24, of which 3 million had not attended school at all. The figures hide major disparities between regions, as well as between ethnic and racial groups (Henriques and Ireland, 2006: 2–3).

Under President Lula since 2003, visions and policies in education underwent a major shift. Whereas primary education for children and adolescents had been seen as the major strategy for preventing illiteracy, with youth and adult education relegated to a sec-

ondary position, the new education vision of 2003, reflecting a broad national drive towards social inclusion – regards adult literacy as a political priority for the state. Recognising education as a human right for all, literacy has become an essential step towards guaranteeing the right of citizenship and towards mobilising young people as well as adults for participation in basic and continuing education. Special efforts are to be made to make education respond to the diversity of population groups and their socio-cultural realities (Henriques and Ireland, 2006).

Against this vision Brazil developed integrated education for youth and adults, Youth and Adult Education (YAE/EJA), as a form of specific (“non-formal”) schooling geared to the population 14 years and over, all implemented through decentralised structures. This allowed greater flexibility as to work-load, curriculum, forms of evaluation, and use of distance learning methodologies (Ribeiro and Batista, 2005). It has an agenda for basic and continuing education for youth and adults that extrapolated from formal schooling and constructed pathways for youth and adults within a frame of “*continuing, lifelong education*” (Henriques and Ireland, 2006).

### **Strategies for implementation**

As regards youth, the agenda of the YAE/EJA includes a major national initiative, the *Making School* programme. In the context of the decentralisation policy, the Government has made agreements with states and municipal bodies, NGOs and other public and private organizations for the implementation of this programme. The programme is subsidised, and all participants are registered nationally.

*Making School (Fazendo Escola)* as a school equivalency programme provides opportunities for continuing education up to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. It concerns school-based primary courses for both young people and adults, which are supporting through hiring extra teachers, in-service training and ingredients for school meals. Under a recent (2005) policy of Universalised Differentiated Support the state now guarantees financial support to all youth and adult learners (3.3 million) enrolled at the primary level of YAE/EJA in municipal and state schools. Actual level of support is related to a new “*educational fragility index*” of states and municipalities (Henriques and Ireland, 2006: 15). The federal ministry has set guidelines for the programme, such as curriculum, with adaptations for local conditions and special needs, and the monitoring of outcomes. A national assessment system is being developed.

In 2006 the primary school equivalent enrolments in the YAE stood at 3.3 million learners, mostly in state and municipal schools. By this time total coverage has reached over 10 million learners, implying that coverage of the out-of-school population is well underway. Many youth of over 15 are also enrolled in regular schools.

Sustainability is to be enhanced through collaboration at local level (guided by Youth and Adult Education Forums at state level), the use of existing facilities, and the (forthcom-

ing) establishment of an integrated Basic Education Development Fund (FUNDEB) for all basic education, which is to replace the Primary Education Fund from which YAE/EJA was previously excluded (Henriques and Ireland, 2006). The fund is the main national channel for state funding for fundamental educational development, as well as for the improvement of the teaching profession. For the latter purpose a special Teacher Education Institute (ISE) has been established (World Bank, *Education Notes*, 2003).

From an equity perspective the current debate regarding criteria to fix funding norms per student across different forms of education is significant. A core issue in the stakeholder consultations is whether costed norms can be set for learners in an equitable manner, i.e. corresponding to the real funding needs of each type in each level of education (Ribeiro and Batista, 2005: 19).

Brazil has also developed a set of wide-ranging youth learning and development programmes that cut across formal, non-formal and informal education, offered through a variety of federal ministries. These include both social and economic development initiatives. They reflect a new National Policy on Youth, coordinated by a National Secretariat in the President's Office (Brasil, 2006). It is not clear to what extent the curriculum for primary education under YAE/EJA has been adapted.

### **Roles of stakeholders and challenges**

The approach followed in Brazil is a "*collaborative*" model. As implementation of the programmes is decentralised, effective interaction with states, municipalities and civil society and private sector bodies is essential. This concerns ongoing dialogue as regards policies, frameworks for implementation, and funding norms. Links with other ministries at federal and state level, and with public bodies, are now accepted as essential to secure an inter-sectoral approach to poverty reduction, linking education strategies to, for example, those related to transfer grants for vulnerable parts of the population and to ensure relations with the world of work.

Major challenges remain the mobilisation of sufficient funding to extend youth and adult education programmes to all those eligible, and linking education with other social programmes and those seeking to generate income and employment. In addition there remains the question how a national support infrastructure can promote the "*plurality of methodology*" in education and protect the rich diversity of NFE and of the civil society organizations that are involved in this work.

## **Namibia**

### **Policies and practices**

In Namibia, a national vision of an integrated approach to basic education has been evolving since independence in 1990. This has benefited from considerable reflection,



stimulated through international interactions, in particular CONFITEA 1997 and Dakar 2000. It resulted in a National Plan of Action for Adult Learning in 1998, the recognition of Namibia as a "Learning Nation" by the 1999 Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training, and the endorsement of the contribution of adult learning to national development in the Second Plan (2001–05) (Namibia, 2002).

NFE equivalent education is part of the formal system, defined as "all learning leading to certification". Parallel tracks exist between the regular school system and the national literacy programme, followed by the Adult Upper Primary Education Programme, leading to further academic distance education or non-formal skills training and employment preparation programmes (Namibia, DABE, 2003). Much NFE for youth and adults consists of formal education through non-formal (i. e. non-conventional) channels, such as literacy and distance learning.

The national literacy programme has a basic and a functional literacy stage slanted towards agriculture, health, small business development, etc. and a literacy-in-English stage considered to be equivalent to 4 years of primary schooling (Indabawa, 2000). About 25,000 learners per year, of which 70% were women, take this course. The adult upper primary education (AUPE) programme provides a Grade 7 equivalent qualification and trains about 6,000 adults per year (Namibia, DABE, 2003).

Through NAMCOL, distance learning courses exist at both junior and senior secondary level and serve 25–30,000 learners per year (Namibia, 2006). In recent years, the literacy programme has begun to include Adult Skills Development for Self-Employment, in addition to Community Learning and Development Centres, and Family Literacy. Community-Based Skills and Development Centres for youth and adults focus on training and employment (Namibia, DABE, 2003). The National Qualifications Scheme makes it possible to create equivalences for NFE so that learners can move between the systems.

Current bottlenecks reportedly concern the low transition rates of young people between the literacy programmes and the AUPE option for continuing education, and between the latter and the NAMCOL programme at JSE level. This means that for many young people NFE provisions may still function as an involuntary exit route out of education. This apparent problem of vertical articulation in NFE could be an obstacle in a context where



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skills development is a key strategy for national development. Presently, new routes to skills development at PPE level are being pursued in the context of the national investment programme for education and training, ETSIP (Namibia, 2006).

### **Stakeholders and challenges**

NFE resources come from the Ministry of Education, other Government ministries, parastatal and private sectors, NGOs and CBOs, and international agencies. The role of the state in both execution of programmes and the facilitation of civil society and private sector involvement is significant (Oxenham, 2004). The expansion of Community Learning and Development Centres across most regions to inform and offer the wide variety of non-formal or informal learning activities involving different ministries has been an important strategy. The centres are regarded as models for local learning centres that are now established in Government buildings, company and church facilities, and education institutions around the country.

The political commitment of the Government to enhance NFE for youth and adults within a clear national vision for socio-economic development has strengthened the literacy programme and built opportunities for continued education and training within a frame for lifelong learning. The greater challenge is to improve the throughput in the non-formal channels so that many more young people can move through the system into PPE, benefiting from both further general education and skills training. Effective coordination across Government and all civil society and private sector partners still has to be established.

## **Burkina Faso**

### **Policies and practices**

The Burkinabe Constitution (1991) recognizes education as a fundamental right for each citizen. At the same time Burkina is one of the world's least developed countries. Within this context education, with an emphasis on basic education for all, is regarded as a key to poverty alleviation and the country's development.

The formal education system absorbs about one-third of the primary school-age population, which has spawned great expectations for NFE. A single ministry (MEBA) was created for all basic education and literacy in 1988 and has maintained an integrated vision of basic education in which the formal and non-formal sub-systems were brought together as complementary sub-systems to give each citizen a minimum level of education in accordance with the needs and potentialities of the country. It has been acknowledged that the two systems should interact with one another and eventually coalesce in a common framework for applying what has been learned from education and literacy (Bali-ma, 2006).

The Education Outline Act of 1996 (Burkina Faso, 1996) defined NFE as involving all activities of education and training, structured and organized within a non-academic framework. It concerns every person who desires to receive special training in a non-academic context.

This framework has protected and promoted NFE development, so that innovative approaches to curriculum and pedagogy could be adopted. At the same time this approach, unlike the Namibia one, may have made a more equitable treatment of non-formal alternatives by Government more difficult.

In practice, formal and non-formal education and training have evolved as different sub-systems with different philosophies and support mechanisms. There have been only minor efforts to build bridges. Given the resource constraints, the emphasis has remained firmly on basic education up to a grade 4 equivalent. In terms of continuing education, technical and vocational skills development of the non-formal variety still appears to be regarded as the most suitable form.<sup>3</sup>

NFE for young people includes (i) non-formal basic education for non- or partially-schooled adolescents (9–15 years) through programmes like the Centres for Basic Non-formal Education (CEBNF) and community schools; and (ii) skills training programmes through various public or private centres for primary graduates, which are connected to the Ministry of Employment, Labour and Youth.

NFE accelerated primary programmes last for 4 years with two years of instruction in national languages followed by 2 years of French instruction. Other innovations like the TIN-TUAs Banmanuara Centres (CBNs) and the Bilingual Schools start with a bilingual approach and prepare learners for the Primary Leaving Examination. These are actually part of the formal system and receive full funding from the state – CBNs are being recognized as formal.

NFE total enrolment capacity has remained very small in relation to demand and highly fragmented, without effective bridges between the programmes. In 2004, NFE provisions enrolled approximately 5,000 learners in about 100 schools. By comparison formal sector innovations (bilingual and satellite schools) enrolled about 30,000 learners from the 1.5 million out-of-school 9–15 year olds (enrolment in the formal system was about 1.1 million) (MAE/Danida, 2005). Thus there is considerable scope for further enrolment into both formal and non-formal programmes.

NFE programmes for adolescents, youth and adults focus on knowledge and skills considered relevant for daily life, on environmental concerns, awareness of rights and responsibilities, participation in community development, and livelihood skills, but these have not been introduced into the formal education curriculum. MEBA has reportedly adopted bilingual teaching to further improve the formal school system (Balima, 2006).

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3 Based on personal information from MEBA and APENF staff in Ouagadougou, Feb. 2007.

### **Stakeholders and challenges**

The state, the donor community and civil society have become the main stakeholders in NFE. However, the partners have not yet been able to address the extreme fragmentation of NFE or to improve linkages with formal education. The problem of coordination among different ministries dealing with education and training still has to be tackled successfully (Burkina Faso, MEBA, 2000). By contrast, NGOs and civil society organizations involved in NFE are better organized, and have their own association, which has established a positive working relation with MEBA and become a model for the sub-region.

Public-private partnerships (*faire-faire*) have been adopted in NFE governance and management, and a common Fund (FONAENF) was created to mobilize more and diverse NFE resources (Tiendrebeogo and Batabe, 2006; Diagne and Sall, 2006). Programmes other than literacy (i.e. those for non-formal basic education) are only now beginning to benefit from support. Insufficient resources have seriously affected NFE expansion and quality improvement, jeopardized several programmes and reduced monitoring and evaluation (Balima, 2006). It remains unclear whether “successful” graduation from NFE has an effect on people’s lives.

## **Uganda**

### **Policies and practices**

The beginnings of the current policy regime in Uganda lie with the Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC) of 1987. Its findings and recommendations were later reflected in a Government White Paper of 1992, which has served as a basis for promulgating policy ever since. Subsequent policies and plans for basic education have included the Primary Education Reform Programme (PERP, 1993), the Uganda Children’s Statute (1996), the launch of UPE in 1997, the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP, 1998–2003), the Education Sector Support Programme (ESSP, 2004–2015), and the launch of Universal Secondary Education in 2006.

UPE was specifically to benefit all children of 6–13. In the context of equitable access to good basic education special interventions were considered necessary for the benefit of children who were socially excluded by disability, geographical location, culture, ethnicity, language, and conflict (Eilor, 2005). NFE initiatives were considered to have special relevance where UPE could not yet be achieved for social, economic and environmental reasons, such as in the case of over-age children, children in pastoral areas and in fishing villages. NFE is presented as providing alternative forms of primary education delivery complementary to the regular school system, but leading to equivalent results.

Here NGOs were to make a special contribution by piloting NFE initiatives such as COPE, ABEK, CHANCE, responding to the circumstances of these young people (Hoppers, 2008). Thus, programmes were initiated in different parts of the country such as

Adult Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK), Complementary Opportunities for Primary Education (COPE), and CHANCE schools. A major role has been played by international NGOs, such as ActionAid and Save the Children Fund, working closely with local authorities and community-based organizations.

NFE programmes tend to be focused on the needs and circumstances of disadvantaged learners in the area. They provide a condensed and adapted curriculum in selected core subjects, using locally recruited teachers in facilities that reflect local conditions. Life skills, health-related and livelihood skills complement the core curriculum, in varying degrees of collaboration with the community. Each programme follows its own philosophy and is responsible for providing management and pedagogical support, with some or more involvement of the local education office (Chelimo, 2006).

Government has responded by initiating (as from 2001) a process to develop an appropriate policy framework for *“basic education for disadvantaged children”*, through which the complementary forms of NFE could be mainstreamed. This means that the programmes have been going through procedures for formal recognition, for obtaining equitable access to Government funding, and for receiving appropriate administrative and professional support at local level (Hoppers, 2008).

Although the Ministry of Education has been keen to maintain the integrity of the overall education system, ongoing consultations among all stakeholders concerned have produced a Government committed to maintain the special non-formal features of the programmes and to ensure equivalence. Government is still working towards the adoption of the new policy and of the adjusted Education Act by Parliament.

At present most complementary NFE programmes take their learners up to the equivalent of Primary 5, where they either transfer to a nearby primary school to prepare for the Primary Leaving Examination or proceed to informal skills training or to the labour market. Some initial attention has been given to the possibility of having NFE graduates transition into community polytechnics at secondary level (Hoppers, 2008). In the draft policy for Post-Primary Education and Training (Uganda, MoES, 2001; 2002a and 2002b) it was envisaged that the polytechnics would be established in all sub-counties for non-selected primary leavers. However, the proposals had to be drastically curtailed for financial reasons. The launching of universal secondary education (USE) has recently superseded other policy priorities. Presently, 16 Government-aided community polytechnics are functioning compared to the 850 that were foreseen (Uganda, MoES, 2003:10).

### **Stakeholders and challenges**

A major strength in Uganda has been the emerging practice of ongoing consultations among all stakeholders in education, in particular between Government, donors and NGOs at policy level, and between Ministry of Education, district authorities and NGOs (with donors) also at implementation level. This has facilitated extensive reviews of UPE

implementation, and joint reflections on policies and practices regarding basic (primary) education for disadvantaged children.

NGOs have made a major contribution to the national policy formation process regarding usage of NFE as alternative delivery of UPE. Moreover, it appears that many district authorities, in spite of major resource and capacity constraints, are able to display valuable initiatives in coordinating policy implementation efforts and in looking for ways and means to enhance the responsiveness of learning provisions to the needs and circumstances of diverse local populations.

Yet, within the current effort at mainstreaming, programmes risk remaining *ad hoc*, without any clear common identity, common governance structure, or common regulatory and support framework. The Government still faces a major challenge in integrating NFE (and other) alternative education programmes into the wider UPE and USE system development efforts, in such a way that the identity of NFE programmes can be enhanced while being facilitated to take a specific place within the broader Government-supported public education system.

## Thailand

### Policies and practices

Thailand has long valued NFE as an essential part of its education and training system. NFE plays a major role in increasing access and in extending the minimum required years of schooling for all, lasting for 6 to 9 years, reflecting the Buddhist concept of *Khit-pen*: “the ideal of a person who is a critical, rational and a problem solver”. In the 1980s and 90s, NFE came to replace adult education and applied to “any learning activity outside formal school classrooms that assists the out-of-school populations to acquire knowledge, skills and information essential for the improvement of the quality of everyday life” (Thailand-ONFEC, 2006a).

The concept moved from “compensatory education” to exploring NFE and informal education as “complements to formal education” within the overall holistic, integrated framework of lifelong learning. Specific distinctions are now made between different out-of-school population groups, including those who never attended school, those who completed primary but wish to continue, those in disadvantaged conditions preventing access to any form of education or training, and special groups of people such as ex-pat Thais and street children (Thailand-ONFEC, 2006a: 14). By the mid-1990s the country still had about 26% of the 3–17 age group out of school, of which a majority was working or enrolled in some form of NFE (Thailand-MOE, n.d.).

The 1997 National Education Act integrates different forms of learning within a context of lifelong learning: 9 years of formal or non-formal basic education (including secondary and vocational) and higher education. It provides for the flexibility and appropriate-

ness of NFE organization and curriculum and the transferability of credits across different types of education (Thailand-ONEC, 1999). Different population groups can thus opt for different learning routes from primary education to university, depending on their needs and circumstances.

NFE applies to everyone who cannot attend formal schooling, including, for example, prison inmates, street children, and Thais living abroad. It has now expanded from literacy and primary education to an extensive network of provision reaching to secondary education, vocational training, life skills through distance learning, workplace and community learning centres, and sharing resources with the formal system. Since 2003, five main NFE programmes exist: i) literacy promotion (i.e. the national literacy campaign); ii) continuing education (equivalency programmes of general and vocational education for further studies or work); iii) education for life-skills development (including livelihood skills); iv) vocational development (for those in the same occupation), v) and vocational skills training (short-courses for individuals) (Suwantipak, 2005).

The current strategic plan for NFE, the *Non-formal Education Roadmap*, aims to assist the national system so that by 2008 at least 50% of the working-age population enters secondary education, and to ensure an average of 9.5 years of education for all (Thailand-ONFEC, 2006b).

NFE activities are implemented through District NFE Centres and Community Learning Centres that have public libraries and exist in most sub-districts around the country, especially in remote rural areas. The communities are largely responsible for managing and coordinating centre activities, identifying the learning demand, facilitating access to courses or other learning activities. This enhances local control and sustainability. Regional centres provide specialized support in curriculum development within a common national guiding framework, and materials design (Thailand-ONFEC, 2006a).

### **Stakeholders and challenges**

Until 2003 the main driving force behind NFE development was the Department of NFE in the Ministry of Education, which became the Office of the Non-formal Education Commission under the Office of the Permanent Secretary (Suwantipak, 2005). The move dem-



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onstrated the momentum that NFE had acquired within a context of lifelong learning. The ONFEC works through regional NFE centres, provincial centres and community learning centres and special institutions; it works with many other ministries, civil society and private sector organizations and with some international agencies. Quality assurance work is done internally and externally through the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment. NFE only receives 1.3% of the education budget, so supplementary funding from other sources, including community contributions, has remained essential (Thailand-ONFEC, 2006a).

The coordination between NFE and formal education (FE) tends to depend on the degree to which NFE resembles FE: where NFE resembles FE, as in the case of the community schools, the same national school-leaving examinations validate NFE and FE primary students and gives them access to secondary school. Should NFE students drop out or not pass the end-cycle examination, however, they have few possibilities for accessing a post-primary education that also validates their NFE training. The absence of such a mechanism leaves many children, even those in formalized non-formal schools, with few options for moving into post-primary education. The main challenges are to maintain the momentum, increase resources to NFE, reach all disadvantaged groups, and further improve professional support services (Piromruean and Keoyote, 2001).

## Comparative analysis of country cases

This section offers a set of findings and tentative conclusions regarding actual policy and practices in the South, in particular the five case study countries, in relation to NFE for young people and adults.

- There is evidence of growing interest in all countries in pursuing a more holistic and integrated perspectives on basic education addressing the needs of the entire population. Often, policy actions are still limited to achieving integration within NFE as a “sub-system”, addressing the needs of all those who are not in school (Burkina). However, there are now significant examples of countries pursuing full integration between formal and selected forms of non-formal education (Namibia, Uganda, Thailand).
- Where countries have adopted a “lifelong learning” approach (Brazil, Namibia, Thailand), this appears to assist greatly in constructing equivalencies and bridges across the two “sub-systems” as part of the general effort to improve life-wide access to learning opportunities and lifelong continuation of learning – i.e. enhance both horizontal and vertical articulation. This tendency appears to be stronger in more developed countries of the South (Namibia) than in less developed countries (Burkina), possibly because of resource constraints in building up such a parallel system.
- The recognition, systemic embedding, and active collaborative support to forms of NFE also appears to benefit much from broad political acceptance of diversity in



education as part of a national policy of social inclusion. In addition, such developments seem strongly connected with the degree of public endorsement of long-standing cultural traditions in popular education and their legitimate place in the modern world (Brazil, Thailand). The difficulties in overcoming systemic fragmentation and moving towards innovation in many African countries seem less related to traditions than to socio-political histories, in which out-dated colonial models have continued to play a dominant role.

- It is difficult to ascertain to what extent NFE, in its current policy and practices, has found a basis in legal terms. While, in general, countries base their policy effort as regards NFE on the right to education as enshrined in the constitution, the references in national education acts do not seem to go much further than the recognition of NFE, with a specific definition attached. This may separate NFE from formal education (Burkina), make some of it part of formal education (Namibia), make it a form of “private” education (Uganda), or integrate it fully into a wider interpretation of “basic education” (Thailand). The very diverse nature of NFE provisions may pre-empt elaborating precise stipulations regarding governance, access, assessment or funding, though this has been attempted in Thailand and Uganda – in the latter by making distinctions between NFE for young people and for adults.
- Valuable innovations in NFE are found particularly with regard to:
  - policy coordination, in particular the establishment of multi-stakeholder councils or platforms for consultation (Brazil, Namibia, Burkina)
  - inter-sectoral coordination, in terms of direct linkages between education initiatives and those in other sectors like health and social development, or macro-economic policies in general (Brazil, Namibia, Uganda, Thailand). Such development is still to become more marked in the coordination of NFE with ministry of labour, youth, and economic development.
  - new governance arrangements, such as collaborative governance with decentralised authorities and/or other partners, like civil society and private sector providers (Brazil, Namibia, Burkina, Uganda, Thailand)
  - instructor development and professional support services (Brazil, Uganda, Thailand)
  - mobilisation of funding and programme sustainability, including criteria for funding norms for different types of education, and roles of communities in taking co-ownership of programmes (Brazil, Namibia, Burkina, Thailand).
- Statements on policies and strategies regarding NFE generally focus on its contribution to basic education, as different from contributions to basic (skills) training. To the extent that technical or vocational skills play a part, they are considered as “livelihood” skills enabling learners to develop some elementary competencies helpful towards their own sustenance, and not so much as a basis for further specialised

training (Namibia, Burkina, Uganda – though not so in Thailand). More praxis is needed in NFE relating to the merger of different types of skills (cognitive, personal, social, work-related), as a basis for an integrated curriculum, whose implementation can be shared with other partners, such as health organizations and the informal sector.

- There is a strong trend for the state to play a major role in NFE development: in terms of policy-making, coordination and monitoring, programme implementation, promoting partnerships, and catalysing experiment and innovation. It appears that where this role has been more pronounced and recognised as a central component of national policy, the education ministry is more successful in moving towards an integrated yet diversified system serving the needs of all young people. Of crucial importance appears to be its role in setting and promoting principles, norms and standards across the system (Brazil, Namibia, Thailand).
- There appear to be diverging practices in the provision of professional support services and financing of NFE for young people. Where NFE provisions are recognised as equivalency programmes, there is a tendency to adhere to a national curriculum frame for basic education, with national supervision and quality control, and to give programmes equitable access to the national education budget (as in Brazil and Uganda). But it is also common for NFE alternatives to be given access to special NFE funds (Burkina, Thailand), a practice that tends to set severe financial constraints, along with heavy donor dependence. Thus public-private partnerships are common; but these do not always promote social inclusion.
- As regards further NFE development, countries are still struggling with the issue of how best to accommodate the needs and interests of young people where these differ from those of adults. Out-of-school youth tend to make use of any education option that keeps them learning, even those that have not been designed for them, such as adult literacy programmes. Governments are keen to “streamline” education participation in NFE programmes that have equivalency value, but face difficulties in guiding learner flows. As a result there are often problems with the effectiveness of ladders and bridges between formal and non-formal streams, undermining the principle of lifelong learning (Namibia, Burkina, Uganda).
- A major problem is the very small volume of NFE opportunities designed to cater for the needs of adolescent young men and women. In the countries reviewed, complementary basic education programmes for the 10–18 years old tend to be very limited, and in several cases cover only a fraction of the total age group out of school. Thus, opportunities for appropriate remedial or continuing education serving as second-chance opportunities or as pathways from basic education to further education or training are not available to significant numbers of this age-group. Here still lies a major challenge for governments.

- Monitoring and assessment of NFE processes and outcomes is still highly problematic. Even where systems are in place scarcity of resources and institutional capacity, both in Government and civil society, often hinder effective usage as a basis for policy and planning. The absence of national strategic frameworks for addressing policy issues in NFE within the context of basic education as a totality pre-empts meaningful formative evaluation of policy goals, as criteria and indicators have not been sufficiently developed.

## **Main lessons for policies and strategies, and ways forward**

From the discussion in this paper and the nature of its findings and conclusions about the selected countries, several key issues regarding policies and strategies for NFE can be identified. They are subdivided into those relating to policies themselves and those relating to strategies for implementation.

### **Issues of policies**

A major issue is to what extent policies articulate the diversity of learning and of acceptable forms of education and training. This is particularly relevant for those in the 10–18 age group who are out of school and are still considered to be entitled to a full cycle of basic education. The emerging trend of considering the needs and circumstances of this highly significant age group in their entirety deserves to be stimulated, so that a diversified but equitable set of basic education opportunities is promoted that are responsive to widely diverging socio-economic conditions. There is evidence that different pathways can be designed that offer equitable and cost-effective learning experiences, using flexible forms of organization, technologies and locations, but within a common curriculum frame and a common set of professional and material support arrangements.

Such an integrated approach to basic education for young people requires very focussed attention to the circumstances under which they grow up and become adults. This combines a concern with the importance of a broad range of initial competencies required in preparation for life and work with a concern with the adult roles that young people, especially those in the developing world, have already taken up. Thus policies have to draw on experiences from child education together with those from adult education.



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As regards this age category, the range of organised learning outside the “formal” school system is too wide to be identified by a single term. Policy-making could be greatly enhanced by moving beyond the formal-non-formal divide to recognise a plurality of education forms that can serve different clienteles in different manners under a common integrated education framework (Brazil, Thailand). In this context, the “formal” part for all basic education lies in the formal framework within which the provisions operate, while the “non-formal” lies in the approaches to teaching and learning, and the interactions with the socio-economic environment, that all basic education (not just NFE) should display.

### Issues of strategies

Recognition and support, coupled with effective quality control and monitoring, allow selected forms of education to be extended and upgraded in accordance with demands, within the bounds of affordability and sustainability (Brazil, Thailand). Common frameworks for basic and continuing education also allow for guidelines to be agreed regarding essential skills for young people, which can inform curriculum development at local level serving specific clienteles. This would have to include a policy regarding languages, skills relevant for the labour market and exposure to the nation’s cultures (Thailand).

Further strategic frames can be articulated to assist progress in implementation, for example: in regard to expected synergies or interactions between formal and non-formal education and training (Namibia, Thailand); in regard of shared governance, i.e. a division of roles and responsibilities among stakeholders, and the extent of decentralisation (Brazil); in regard of a differentiated, but unified, teaching service and strategies for educator development and support (Uganda); and in regard to out-sourcing educational services and conditions under which supplementary funds are obtained, managed and accounted for (Burkina, Thailand).

The key challenge is to arrive at an integrated systems approach to policy, planning and implementation regarding the basic education needs of all learners in relevant age categories, developing appropriate and cost-effective models of provision, and ensuring equity both as regards access and as regards outcomes and benefits. A final challenge is for countries to recognise that the state, while carrying the ultimate responsibility for education provision, will need to collaborate with other partners to ensure its realisation. Thus, it is imperative to define the nature and extent of the state’s involvement in different forms of education, what criteria are appropriate for public-private partnerships, and how available resources can be shared equitably across the system.

*This paper draws heavily from: Wim Hoppers, Meeting the Learning Needs of all Young People and Adults: an Exploration of Successful Policies and Strategies in Non-formal Education; Paper prepared for the 2008 Global Monitoring Report. UNESCO, 2007.*

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Amanda Seel

## Reaching the unreached

Progress and challenges in EFA in East Asia

*This section contains the Executive Summary and two chapters, chapter 5 and 6, from Amanda Seel's long and thorough study of EFA in five nations of East Asia, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Philippines and Indonesia. The full paper commissioned for EFA GMR can be accessed on the UNESCO website.*

### Executive summary

This report summarises progress towards EFA in five countries of the East Asia Region: China, Vietnam, Philippines, Cambodia and Indonesia.

All five countries have shown some progress since 2000, particularly on overall enrolments and youth literacy rates. However, there appears to have been a slight reversal in enrolment trends in the Philippines, and no further progress on gender parity in Vietnam over the past five years. Cambodia has made notable progress from a lower baseline than the others and has continuing challenges of expanding access whilst improving quality in order to achieve, and then consolidate, universal public education (UPE). For the other four countries, which all have large populations; good overall indicators mask significant disparities and high absolute numbers of ethnic minority children (especially girls), poor rural children (especially in more remote areas), migrants, disabled children and hard-to-reach groups of working children who are not yet accessing a full cycle of basic education. At the same time, poor quality (especially in the schools serving poorest communities) remains a concern and is reflected in high levels of drop out and poor achievement.

There are many factors in the wider environment that positively impact on EFA. In each country there is considerable commitment to education, generally reflected in levels of financing as well as in legal provision and overarching policies. There are also far-reaching administrative reforms underway, which in Vietnam, Cambodia, Philippines and Indonesia are linked to decentralisation, providing the opportunity to bring services nearer to the users and potential users. Cambodia and Indonesia are also experiencing a rapid growth in civil society participation in decision-making. In Cambodia, the most donor-dependent of the countries, as well as Vietnam, Philippines and Indonesia to a lesser extent, there have been positive changes in donor support modalities, towards coordinated and sector-wide approaches enabling longer term planning and stronger partnerships.



All countries have put into place a wide range of strategies for achieving the EFA goals, generally as part of their wider goals for education, in turn linked to national poverty reduction and socio-economic development strategies. For achieving equitable access, key among these have been making primary education fully free of direct costs, targeted strategies to mitigate lost-opportunity costs of education to the poorest, facilities development, making education more flexible and tailored NFPE programmes. For improving quality, key strategies are using various incentives to ensure that all children have trained teachers (including women and minority teachers), curriculum and methodological reform backed with teacher training and resources, improving school-based management (with increased community participation), carefully targeted kindergarten classes, and community-based strategies to support children's all round early development.

Major challenges to implementation are ones of human and institutional capacity at different levels; for situational analysis, for identification of hard-to-reach children and communities, for collecting, using and analysing information so that it can inform policy decisions, for school-based management and for bringing about deep changes in attitudes, understanding and practice.

## **Policies and strategies to promote good quality schooling**

### **Key quality challenges**

This section focuses on EFA Goal 6, on **Educational Quality**, touching also on all the other goals to some extent. The focus is mainly on primary schooling, but many of the points are also relevant to other planned education programmes.

The box below summarises some of the key quality challenges facing the focus countries. Most of the problems identified are common to all five countries, though the relative importance of each might vary. One common pattern of great importance is that **quality challenges tend to be most acute for schools that serve the most disadvantaged communities and children**. In other words, those that have to struggle most to get access are also most at risk of accessing an education of inferior quality. In all the countries, particularly Philippines and Indonesia, attention is now turning to quality, in recognition that poor quality (in the widest sense) is probably now the key cause of non-completion and (of course) of unsatisfactory learning outcomes.

## **Quality challenges in the five countries**

### **Infrastructure and facilities**

- Insufficient number of classrooms leading to overcrowding or need to double-shift.
- Poor physical infrastructure/environment for learning (e.g. traffic noise in Vietnam, poor boarding facilities in Vietnam and China).
- Inadequate water and sanitation facilities in many schools.

### **Teacher availability, attendance and contact time**

- Lack of qualified teachers in remote and ethnic minority areas.
- Lack of women teachers in rural areas (e.g. to act as role models and support for girls).
- Lack of minority teachers in minority areas (e.g. to support bilingual education and communication with community).
- Poor teacher attendance (linked to low teacher salaries, e.g. Cambodia).
- Inadequate contact time (i.e. time spent in class with teachers teaching and pupils learning, e.g. Indonesia Grades 1 and 2, Cambodia).

### **Teacher quality**

- Poor quality of teaching, especially in poor, rural and ethnic minority areas (linking to teachers' skills and qualifications) .
- Overly academic teacher education/ineffective training methods.
- Inadequate support and supervision for teachers.

### **Methodology, curriculum and assessment**

- New curriculum and methodology introduced in all five countries, but not yet fully effective/internalised. Persistence of rote learning.
- Weak and narrow pupil assessment systems.

### **Language learning**

- Limited provision to support bilingual development and teaching national language as a second language, in minority communities.
- Limited skills in literacy teaching (in any language).

### **School ethos**

- Harsh discipline and physical punishment in some schools can deter students, especially the less able.

- Lack of care systems for boarding students (especially poor ethnic minority areas of China and Vietnam).
- Discriminatory attitudes in society reproduced in the classroom, for example low expectations of girls in China and Vietnam.
- Stereotyping of girls or ethnic groups in text books and materials (e.g. gender stereotypes noted in textbooks in Indonesia and Vietnam).

#### **Resources and materials for learning**

- Current funding mechanisms tend to favour central schools over village schools and teaching points. Lack of basic resources in poor, rural schools.
- Lack of learning materials to support the new curriculum.

#### **School management and community participation**

- Traditionally, a lack of community participation in schools.
- Top-down management systems and poor school management; lack of support and training for headteachers.

## **Policies and programmes to promote good quality primary education**

### **Strategies**

**Table 1** (see page 244) summarises the main strategies that are being used in each of the five countries, to promote good quality primary education.

### **Impacts**

#### **Decentralising funds and decision-making to school-community level and improving school management and community participation**

In all five countries there are strong drives towards improved management and decision-making at the school level, accompanied by greater channelling of funds to this level. School Development Planning (under different names) has been seen as a useful concept for helping to move from an input-based “package” approach towards holistic strategies for school improvement. Innovative projects for such approaches in China, Indonesia Philippines are demonstrating good impacts on a small scale.

#### **Teachers for learners**

Policies implemented in China have increased the overall number of teachers and their qualifications, to the direct benefit of children. In Vietnam and China, policies to attract teachers from urban to rural areas have proved successful, at least in the short term, but

**Table 1: Strategies for Quality Schooling in the Five Countries (1)**

	China	Vietnam	Cambodia	Philippines	Indonesia
<b>School Management and Community Participation</b>	A number of projects are piloting school-based management and School Development Planning. Headteacher in-service training for improved management and leadership.	Decentralisation to Provincial and District level, with introduction of school improvement planning.	Provision of operational budgets to all schools from 2001. Training for headteachers. Strengthening community participation in schools.	Move to School-Based Management is seen as the major strategy for quality improvement. This includes participatory School Improvement Planning, Headteacher training and School Report Cards.	Overall strategy of "community-based" management of schools.
<b>Teacher deployment and incentives</b>	Teacher education networks to increase teacher professionalism/status. Incentives for university graduates to teach in rural areas for 3 years. Attempts to pay teachers on time. Subsidies for teachers working in remote or minority areas. Upgrading of substitute (unqualified) teachers (or dismissal).	Significant salary increases for teachers since mid-90s (to prevent teachers taking on other work). Incentives for teachers to work in remote and ethnic minority regions. Banning private tuition so that teachers focus on regular classes.	Salary increases for teachers. Incentives to recruit teachers locally and attract teachers to rural areas, with special focus on women teachers.		
<b>Curriculum, Assessment and Methodology</b>	New learner-centred curriculum. Introduction of learner centred and participatory approaches, though pilot projects.	New curriculum, with potential to be taught through learner-centred methods.	Development of new curriculum with intention of "gender sensitivity". National policy on "child friendly" schools. New curriculum achievement standards for grades 3,6 and 9. Abolition of traditional exams in grades 1/5. Locally-relevant lifeskills and HIV/AIDS programmes in schools.	Competency-Based Teaching Standards. New Teacher Education curriculum, featuring more relevant and experiential based courses. Curriculum allows for flexibility in some subjects, to allow for responsiveness to local cultures and contexts.	AJEL – Active, Joyful Learning and outcome-based curriculum.

	China	Vietnam	Cambodia	Philippines	Indonesia
<b>Language, literacy and bilingualism.</b>	Some pilots of a range of “mother tongue first” and “bilingual” approaches. Full bilingual curriculum in some areas and languages (e.g. in Tibetan, Korean and Mongolian).	Pilots of bilingual approaches in ethnic minority areas.	Pilots of bilingual approaches in ethnic minority areas.	Every child a reader programme-focusing on literacy skills in Grades 1–3.	Mother tongue teaching in early grades where Bahasa Indonesia not the first language.
<b>Teacher Qualification, Training and Supervision</b>	Pre-service, and opportunities for upgrading. Establishment of teacher qualification system. Incentives to improve county-level teacher training.	Teacher upgrading.	School clusters. In-service training of 5000 teachers per year. Introduction of performance appraisal.		School clusters “Master teachers” at district level. Raising general qualification level of teachers.
<b>Increasing and Equalising Resources for teaching and learning</b>	Modern information technology to rural schools: computer labs and satellite receivers in secondary schools and VCD/DVD players in all primary schools, for distance education.	Funding to school level for teaching and learning resources other than text books	Improved text book provision, linked to support to development of private publishing companies. Funding to school level for teaching and learning resources other than text books.	Text book provision with aim of one book per pupil for core subjects.	
<b>Organization of Pupil Learning</b>			Drive for “right age” entry, linked to expansion of kindergartens. New policy of automatic grade promotion.		
<b>Language, literacy and bilingualism.</b>	Some pilots of a range of “mother tongue first” and “bilingual” approaches. Full bilingual curriculum in some areas and languages (e.g. in Tibetan, Korean and Mongolian).	Pilots of bilingual approaches in ethnic minority areas.	Pilots of bilingual approaches in ethnic minority areas.	Every child a reader programme-focusing on literacy skills in Grades 1–3.	Mother tongue teaching in early grades where Bahasa Indonesia not the first language.

there are concerns about their longer term sustainability. In Cambodia, incentives for women teachers are beginning to raise their numbers in rural areas. Raising teachers' salaries in Vietnam has provided very successful results in improving teacher motivation and attendance, and it can be hoped that a similar policy in Cambodia will reap similar benefits in due course.

### **Curriculum, assessment and methodological change, linked to improving teacher competencies**

New curricula and methodological approaches in all five countries in the region have the potential to greatly improve teaching and learning. However, whilst there have been promising impacts of specific quality-improvement projects in all five countries, there is as yet less evidence of wider, systemic changes in classroom level practice.

### **Strategies to improve language and literacy learning, especially in bilingual contexts**

Likewise, the impact of innovations in bilingual education and mother tongue teaching are patchy, largely because they depend in turn on the availability of teachers from each language group and also on teachers having good general teaching skills, before they are able to implement bilingual approaches effectively. In China and Vietnam, a number of projects have had good results, and the greater availability of mother-tongue education has been seen as a key cause of recent enrolment improvements in the Central Highlands of Vietnam.

### **Improving facilities and availability of resources at school level**

There have been clear impacts in terms of the successful building of new facilities (including through the SDP approaches mentioned above), the greater availability of funds at school level and reduction in pupil: text book ratios. Whilst these are inputs, in themselves, they appear to have the important effect of improving school morale and children's motivation and interest. While it is less easy to demonstrate improved teaching and learning, qualitative evidence from projects consistently notes the **perception** that improved resources and basic facilities help teachers to teach and pupils to learn. However, there still appear to be efficiency problems, for example, Philippines still struggles to achieve an effective system for timely procurement and delivery of school text books.

### **Challenges for implementation, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of strategies**

All of the countries face significant challenges in implementing strategies to address quality improvement. For China, Vietnam and Cambodia, the challenge is to improve quality

in the poorest schools, in tandem with continuing to expand access, especially at the Lower Secondary level. In Philippines and Indonesia, the challenge is – rather belatedly – to improve quality in systems where ineffective practices have become institutionalised for some time. Some of the key issues are summarised below.

### **Building school and community capacity for whole school development**

In all five countries, until recently the tendency has been for a diverse range of quality projects related to different aspects of quality (e.g. text books, teacher development, school management) which,

although successful on their own terms, have not been linked in with overall strategies for whole school improvement. With the introduction, now, of more coherent approaches linked to decentralisation, schools have the responsibility to bring together a whole range of inputs and translate these into improved learning outcomes. However, as yet, schools are constrained both by lack of capacity and lack of knowledge of what might work better. Furthermore, the very schools with fewer and less qualified staff (e.g. small multi-grades) often also serve the most disadvantaged communities, perhaps with few literate members.



Indonesia

*dvv international*

### **Implementing in-depth methodological change**

All of the focus countries have traditionally had teacher-centred approaches, with extensive use of rote-learning. It is proving a major challenge to support teachers (especially those in the older age group) in taking on new ideas and practices. Teachers risk losing face if they try out new methods and the children respond by become over-excited and unruly. Sometimes, also, new approaches are perceived to be culturally alien. They thus require more than one-off mechanistic training in a few techniques. Long-term support to whole school staff teams is required, for a whole new way of thinking to take root, adapted to the culture and context and at a realistic pace.

### **Funding the software side of quality: training, supervision and monitoring**

There is still a tendency to think of quality in terms of discrete packages of tangible inputs such as teachers, facilities, furniture and text books. However, as explored in the above two paragraphs, while these are important, in-depth, sustainable quality change depends

on the understanding, skills and attitudes of teachers and headteachers, which in turn also links to effective school supervision and monitoring. There continues to be a reluctance to commit recurrent budget funding for these vital elements, which is likely to severely restrain impact.

### **Roles of Government, the non-state sector and donor agencies**

Generally, governments have taken the lead on quality development within the formal education system, and NGOs have been less involved than with supporting access strategies. There is, however, a potential important role for NGOs in supporting communities and schools in disadvantaged areas to take advantage of decentralisation and initiatives such as school-based management or SDP, to become more involved in local educational decision-making, monitoring and in demanding accountability for performance.

Development agencies have brought a range of new ideas and perspectives through former quality-related projects. Except in China (where this technical assistance role is likely to continue), donors are now pulling back from involvement in individual strategies, to attempt to support more holistic approaches to planning for systemic quality development as a whole.

### **Strategies to meet the basic education needs of poor and disadvantaged young people and adults**

#### **The challenge of youth and adult basic education**

This section explores strategies to meet the unmet basic education needs of poor and disadvantaged young people and adults, particularly those who have not benefited even from a full cycle of primary education of acceptable quality. It thus relates mainly to EFA Goals 3 and 4, but is also pertinent to Goals 5 and 6.

The existence of illiterate youth and adults who do not have the basic skills that they need even for basic survival, let alone raising themselves out of poverty and being able to take a full part in the lives of their community and society, is indicative of previous and continuing lack of access to schooling of good quality. Illiteracy is very strongly correlated with poverty, and in the five countries is also closely related to ethnicity and language group, with indigenous and minority peoples having lower educational levels than the mainstream. While part of the problem of illiteracy will be addressed by improvements in equitable access to quality basic education for children, there is also an urgent need to ensure that youth and adults who have missed out can secure their basic education rights.

The challenge in the five countries is formidable. For the larger population countries, there are significant overall numbers of illiterate people, concentrated in particular disad-



vantaged geographic regions. For example, China has around 120 million illiterate adults, most of whom are from ethnic minority communities. Meanwhile, Cambodia faces higher overall levels of illiteracy (36% of Cambodia's adult women cannot read or write), which need addressing in the context of high levels of poverty and high work burdens of poor rural people, especially women.

## **Programmes and strategies for youth and adult basic education**

The list below summarises key Adult Literacy and Basic Education in the focus countries.

### **China**

- Extensive coverage of a range of adult literacy programmes, linked to practical community development needs, implemented at provincial and local levels. Some innovations include:
  - Combination of oral learning in mother tongue in ethnic minority areas, with teaching of Mandarin characters considered most useful for daily living.
  - Piloting the development of schools as multi-purpose community centres in poor, rural areas (where teachers might be only literate people).

### **Vietnam**

- Attempts to expand existing coverage to focus on remote and ethnic minority communities, which have previously been under-served.

### **Philippines**

- Youth and Adult literacy is integrated into the Alternative Learning System – a diverse range of NGO and community-run programmes and approaches.

### **Cambodia**

- GO-NGO collaboration for developing village life schools of youth and young adults.
- Adult and women's literacy initiatives, mainly through NGOs/CSOs, using concept of "expanded literacy". Aims for intake of at least 60% women and 60% very poor families.
- "Cross-cutting" of literacy development into practical skills trainings, e.g. for health workers, agricultural extension etc.

### **Indonesia**

- An ambitious target of achieving 95% literacy (for men and women) by 2009.
- Targeting of nine provinces with low literacy rates.
- Use of school teachers for literacy programmes.

- Improved Government – NGO partnerships to deliver literacy programmes.
- Setting literacy in context of drop-out prevention and quality improvement to prevent creation of new groups of illiterate young adults.
- Focus on functional literacy, linking to productivity, life skills and relevant knowledge.
- Consultations to identify learners' interests and perceived needs.
- Use of mother tongue initially, with later introduction of Bahasa Indonesia.
- Establishment of 10,000 additional village libraries in regions with high illiteracy rates, each to include 400–600 books and magazines, with trained library managers and mechanisms for updating and changing materials.
- Strategies to be supported by communication strategies, mapping, capacity development, community participation and monitoring and evaluation.

## Impacts

As is the case of NFPE and ECCE, because of the range of providers and approaches it has proved difficult to reach decisive conclusions about the overall impact of adult literacy strategies and programmes. National level evaluations do not exist, and even data on coverage is incomplete, or difficult to interpret. As with ECCE, clear measures of impact distinct from mere participation in an organised programme seem to remain elusive.

What can be said, however, is that all five countries appear to be taking the literacy issue seriously, and seeking to expand coverage and effectiveness. Indonesia's new and ambitious national strategy seems particularly promising in that regard, but it is of course too soon to judge effectiveness.

## Challenges for implementation, cost-effectiveness and sustainability, and the roles of different actors

### Languages for literacy and education

While impacts are difficult to ascertain, the challenges are clearer. A major one for the East Asia region is that most of the remaining illiterate are from ethnic minority language groups. Indeed, lack of access to basic education in the mother tongue has been a major cause of their educational disadvantage. In Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam and Cambodia, there has been a major shift towards literacy education through the mother tongue for initial literacy classes (using the script of the national language where there is no written form of the mother tongue), whilst later introducing the national language. In China, there is also such a move, but the challenges are greater, given the complex and non-phonetic nature of written Mandarin, meaning that only a very basic level can be introduced within the timescale of an adult literacy programme. This has raised the question as to whether the focus should be on literacy *per se*, or on supporting "*thinking, commu-*

nication and problem-solving strategies” that enable individual and community development.

### **Contextualisation and relevance**

In all cases, as elsewhere, the need to start with the identified needs of the learners is being recognised, as well as to link literacy and numeracy directly to opportunities for improving lives and livelihoods and the learning of relevant practical skills. In Indonesia, the rapid growth of a lively civil society and local level democracy is providing new incentives for literacy.

### **Reaching the poorest**

As in other regions of the world, a major problem is that the very poorest have the least time to attend a class or programme. For example, in the Philippines, the lowest level of literacy is in the Autonomous Muslim Region of Mindanao, which also has the lowest enrolment in NFE programmes.

### **Utilising old and new technology for promoting and sustaining literacy**

Sustaining literacy has proved a continuing challenge. The spread of modern technology, for example televisions in China (where all programmes have Mandarin subtitles) means that this will inevitably become easier over time. Indonesia aims to have community libraries that will also have internet access and also lays stress on creating an environment for literacy.

### **Funding for literacy programmes**

Despite high levels of stated commitment, funding for literacy programmes is perceived as inadequate. As a result, there is corner-cutting in implementation, programmes are ineffective and therefore funding continues not to be forthcoming.

### **Government and non-government roles**

In all five countries, adult literacy sits within the remit of the ministries of education. However, it is recognised that there are opportunities to mainstream literacy and numeracy learning across a vast range of other learning activities for adults, such as health education or agricultural extension, which presents challenges of good cross-sectoral collaboration. NGOs and mass organizations have been important as implementers of adult literacy programmes in the five countries, and can sometimes play an important role in supporting and facilitating good coordination at local levels and ensuring that literacy is well linked to life-skills and livelihoods needs.

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Angela Owusu-Boampong

## EFA Goal 3 GMR Pilot Mapping – need for and paucity of reliable and comparable data

### Preamble

The annual Education for All Global Monitoring Report (GMR) assesses progress towards achieving the six EFA goals agreed at the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar. The monitoring of EFA Goal 3, however, has been a significant challenge for the EFA Global Monitoring Report Team, mainly due to the different ways in which the goal has been interpreted, and the relative lack of comparative data available to monitor it. In early 2008, the GMR team launched a monitoring strategy for the GMR 2008 report and as a pilot exercise phase, with the objective of addressing and overcoming this challenge from a number of different angles.

### Introduction – The GMR monitoring strategy for EFA Goal 3

For the pilot phase the strategy put forward to monitor Goal 3 used both the findings from *household surveys* containing questions on participation in non-formal education (NFE) and the *compilation of cross-national information* on the provision of non-formal education programmes. As regards the former, around 40 household surveys containing data on participants in non-formal education activities and, in particular, literacy activities, were identified. As pertains to the latter, the mapping exercise involving cross-national information encompassed three further sub-strategies as follows:

1. Desk study on successful NFE policies and strategies based on country examples from Brazil, Burkina Faso, Namibia, Thailand and Uganda.
2. Commissioning of country profiles from experts in the field.
3. Review of most up-to-date (post 2000) publications pertaining to non-formal education, using the UIL and IIEP libraries as the main publications resources.

This paper addresses the assignment and the challenges of the second and third sub-strategy of the mapping exercise, which was aimed at producing a compilation of cross-national country information.

## Conceptualising NFE

An operational working definition of NFE was considered to be a prerequisite for producing the desired outcome: information on NFE that could be used to compare a number of countries. The research was based on UNESCO's definition of NFE:

Non-formal education refers to any organised and sustained education activity taking place both within and outside education institutions, catering to persons of all ages. Depending on country contexts, it may cover education programmes to impart adult literacy, basic education for out-of-school children, life-skills, work-skills, and general culture. Non-formal education programmes do not necessarily follow the "ladder" system, may have varying durations, and may or may not confer certification of the learning achieved (UNESCO 2000).



Madagascar

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## Guidelines for data collection

The compilation of information on NFE in each country was organized into two parts. The first part considered the country as a whole; this included an overview of the organization, governance, finance and assessment of NFE. The second part consisted of descriptions of some of the "major" NFE programmes. Templates were developed to guide the data collection process. These templates assisted in framing and conceptualizing NFE, and thus defining the parameters of the study.

The monitoring of NFE provisions and practice aimed to cover all basic NFE programmes. Given the limited time available for the pilot research, priority was given to NFE programmes that were both wide-reaching and well-established (e.g. had existed for more than one year). It was especially important to classify the type of NFE programme, its main goals and objectives, and its target group(s). As regards the categorisation of NFE programmes, the GMR team first and foremost asked for information on those NFE programmes that fell outside the ISCED classification scheme - programmes whose participants were not counted as being currently enrolled in the formal education system.

## Data collection

Due to the limited time available for the preparation of country information sheets, it was essential to use sources and publications that would provide data on NFE policies and provisions while also enabling a cross-country perspective. The lack of immediately available data, however, posed a challenge which itself put a limit on the research. Data gaps were filled by a review of data available on the Web, particularly those provided by the ILO. Supplementary data sources were also used in order to cross-check the data drawn from libraries.

## Outcomes of the pilot mapping exercise

Due to the fact that the profiles of many of the countries drawing on IIEP and UIL resources overlapped with the country profiles developed by experts from the field, cross-validation was possible, which ensured the reliability of data.

**Table 1: Overview of the 25 commissioned studies from experts in the field**

Afghanistan	Cambodia	Indonesia	Pakistan	Thailand
Argentina	China	Kenya	Philippines	Uganda
Botswana	Ethiopia	Mali	Senegal	Viet Nam
Brazil	Ghana	Mexico	South Africa	Yemen
Burkina Faso	India	Nigeria	Tanzania	Zimbabwe

The countries drawing on data from the UIL and IIEP libraries were selected more randomly and were therefore not globally representative. In total, 25 country profiles of varying length were presented.

**Table 2: Overview of the 25 country papers mainly drawing on the UIL and IIEP library**

Afghanistan	China	Indonesia	Namibia	South Africa
Bangladesh	Ethiopia	Kenya	Nigeria	Sudan (South)
Botswana	Ghana	Lao PDR	Pakistan	Thailand
Brazil	Honduras	Mali	Philippines	Uganda
Cambodia	India	Mexico	Senegal	Viet Nam

## Assessment of the pilot mapping exercise

Both the initial assessment of the country profiles compiled by experts from the field and the assessment carried out in early March to draw information from the participating libraries revealed a strong focus on literacy. As an entire GMR report had already been



dedicated to literacy back in 2006, it was requested that greater emphasis be placed on other NFE programmes.

It was found that the guidelines had been misunderstood in a number of cases, due mainly to the division between Part 1 and Part 2. Part 2 had been intended to include separate descriptions of different categories of individual programme, rather than a discussion of the overall balance between these NFE programme categories.

Most of the profiles identified NFE with some form of schooling, and thus contained information related mainly to adult literacy and equivalencies. Furthermore, many kinds of NFE such as apprenticeships, population education and family planning, citizenship and legal rights were almost absent from the profiles.

Due to the focus on large-scale programmes requested in view of the time constraints involved, profiles from the pilot phase did not address the flexible, tailor-made and participatory characteristics of NFE.

## Conclusion, challenges and outlook

Efforts to collect data to evaluate non-formal education programmes and settings were faced with a number of challenges, the greatest of which proved to be finding information on “the South”. It was particularly difficult to obtain non-literacy-related NFE data from “the South”. Even though non-formal education plays a significant role in adult learning, very little structured information was available. Furthermore, efforts to document and follow up on status of adult education policies and provisions appears to be lacking. The collection, analysis and dissemination of information on non-formal education and learning need to be improved considerably. Some publications revealed a gap between NFE programmes and Government departments of statistics.

It would appear that the absence of a *reliable* data base on NFE is due to the fact that many countries failed to make the establishment of such a data base a national priority. Some countries’ national statistics did not provide sufficient information on NFE. This frequently resulted in a paucity of the kind of reliable information and data most needed to capture the full range of a country’s NFE situation. Due to the fact that reliable data is a prerequisite for high-quality planning and decision making, it could be useful to advocate and build capacities for more efficient and accurate NFE data collection, as well as for reporting and *analysis* at national, sub-regional and local levels.

EFA/GMR Team

# Guidelines for compiling information on the national provision of non-formal education

## PART I: Background and introduction

The monitoring of EFA Goal 3<sup>1</sup> and the latter part of Goal 4<sup>2</sup> remains a formidable challenge for the EFA Global Monitoring Report. The goals call for *equitable access* to learning programmes and competencies that meet the needs for youth and adults. Yet, there is no *common* understanding of the types of structured learning *activities* that come under the umbrella of *“learning and life skills programmes.”*<sup>3</sup>

With the 2015 target year fast approaching, there is an acute need to compile and present systematic information about the types of learning and life-skills programmes available in different countries, the extent to which different groups of young people and adults participate in such programmes, as well as their effectiveness and possible outcomes. Given the diverse and fragmented nature of NFE programmes and opportunities in different settings, it is quite clear that an array of monitoring tools will need to be employed to reflect this diversity.

The 2007 GMR put forward a useful conceptual framework and monitor strategy of Goal 3 in terms of the provision, participation, access and outcomes of non-formal education (NFE) among youth and adults. The 2007 GMR also stated that the 2008 Report should provide a more systematic assessment of national progress in meeting the learning needs of young people and adults.

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1 EFA Goal 3 states: *“Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes”*.

2 The latter part of Goal 4 reads: *“... (achieving) equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults”*.

3 Under Goal 3 the expanded commentary of the Dakar Framework for Action states: *“All young people should be given the opportunity for ongoing education. For those who drop out of school or complete school without acquiring the literacy, numeracy and life skills they need, there must be a range of options for continuing their learning. Such opportunities should be both meaningful and relevant to their environment and needs, help them become active agents in shaping their future and develop useful work-related skills”*. (Paragraph 36) (UNESCO, 2000)

Under Goal 4 the commentary states: *“Adult and continuing education must be greatly expanded and diversified, and integrated into the mainstream of national education and poverty reduction strategies. The vital role literacy plays in lifelong learning, sustainable livelihoods, good health, active citizenship and the improved quality of life for individuals, communities and societies must be more widely recognized...”*. (Paragraph 38) (UNESCO, 2000)

To meet these objectives, the GMR team has decided to undertake the following work activities in relation to Goal 3:

1. A review of youth (15–24) and adult (25 and older) participation in NFE programmes based on information found in household surveys;
2. A mapping exercise aimed at producing up-to-date, comparative information (to the greatest extent possible) about the provision of non-formal education targeting young people and adults;
3. A desk study that highlights more and less successful country policies and strategies for expanding quality NFE among youth and adults.



Mexico

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The present document addresses the second work activity. It is intended to provide concrete instructions to those individuals who are involved in the development of country profiles describing the main provision of non-formal education for young people and adults, key aspects of which will be compared across cases. The work activities described herein are part of a pilot phase, the outcomes of which will be evaluated by the GMR team and invited experts in March 2007.

### 1.1 What is non-formal education? Which types of NFE programmes are to be mapped?

A standard definition of NFE has never been reached and is arguably undesirable. UNESCO presently uses the following working definition:

*“Non-formal education refers to any organised and sustained education activity taking place both within and outside education institutions, catering to persons of all ages. Depending on country contexts, it may cover education programmes to impart adult literacy, basic education for out-of-school children, life-skills, work-skills, and general culture. Non-formal education programmes do not necessarily follow the ‘ladder’ system, may have varying durations, and may or may not confer certification of the learning achieved.” (UNESCO 2000)*

For the purposes of this mapping exercise, we shall employ the following parameters to construct an **operational definition of NFE**:

1. The GMR is first and foremost interested in **basic non-formal education** – “namely, programmes and structured learning activities targeting the least formally educated youth and adult populations in a country.” We shall therefore use at times the abbreviation in what follows of NFBE (Non-Formal Basic Education) to ensure that this focus is maintained throughout.
2. For the 2008 report, the GMR will focus on those NFE activities that are potentially most easily compared across cases and countries. This implies that not all NFE activities in a country will be covered.
3. The GMR is only interested in NFE programmes that fall outside of the ISCED classification scheme,<sup>4</sup> i.e., those programmes whose participants are not counted as enrolled in the formal education system.

In practice, then, and by drawing on the NFE/MIS categorization scheme, the present mapping exercise will compile information on Non-formal Basic Education programmes in five categories:

1. **Literacy and numeracy programmes** from the age of 15
2. **Equivalency, “second chance” or alternative schooling** (from about the age of 10)
3. **Life skills and community development**: Training in skills to improve daily life for youth and adults (15+) such as health and hygiene, HIV/AIDS prevention, legal rights, family planning, environmental sustainability<sup>5</sup> and to develop communities in both rural and urban contexts through, for example, training programmes in relation to social development, citizenship, participation in democracy at local and national levels, and/or digging and maintaining wells, constructing small roads etc. It will help if you can indicate both rural and urban programmes.
4. **Income generation programmes, non-formal vocational training and rural and community development programmes** for youth and adults (15+). This category may also be described as livelihood skills programmes which seek to increase the adult’s productivity and income. Rural and urban programmes with a major focus on economic outcomes can be indicated here.

The distinction between category 3 and 4 is that category 3 relates primarily to social development and category 4 relates to economic development.

In many countries there are also NFE programmes oriented to early childhood care and

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4 UNESCO, *International Standard Classification of Education* (ISCED 1997), Paris: UNESCO.

5 UNICEF’s notion of life skills-based education (LSBE) is relevant here insofar as such non-formal education occurs *outside* the formal education system.

education, religious or cultural education,<sup>6</sup> lifelong learning and further or continuing education. These programmes may be noted, but are *not* the main focus for this mapping exercise. Many programmes will of course combine elements of more than one category – for example, adult literacy learning programmes often contain elements of health learning or income generation. Programmes are best identified within a category of their main objective but where there is a major component of another category, we would hope you could create a joint category – e.g. literacy/life-skills, or economic/literacy or more specifically literacy/computer.

The following descriptions of the core types of NFE programmes which we are seeking, as provided in **Table 1**, are drawn from UNESCO’s recent statement and are provided as a help here but they have been adapted to meet our current needs.

**Table 1: Core categories for types of NFE activities**

<b>Core Types of NFE Activities</b>
<p><b>1. Literacy and numeracy</b></p> <p>Organized primarily to impart the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute using printed and written materials associated with varying context. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, develop their knowledge and potential, and participate fully in the community and the wider society. These learning programmes for adults and youths often include other subjects such as health and income generation but their primary focus will be on the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills in a particular language. Language courses will form a subsection of this category.</p>
<p><b>2. Equivalency schooling/“Second chance” or alternative education for youth and adults (not for primary school children)</b></p> <p>Primarily organised for youth who did not have access to or who withdrew from formal primary/basic education. Typically, these programmes aim at providing the equivalency to formal primary/basic education or an alternative form of basic education as well as mainstreaming these target groups into the formal system, upon successful completion of the programme. This category will also include access programmes enabling youth and adults to enter formal education.</p>
<p><b>3. Life-skills training</b></p> <p>Specific programmes and activities organized to develop the capability to function more</p>

<sup>6</sup> The GMR acknowledges that education situated outside the formal remit is highly contextualized. Traditional and informal learning opportunities for adults and youth might be work, community or even family-based and will often comprise cultural elements that may not relate explicitly to national education criteria. Recognition of this is crucial, but simply too contextualized to monitor at the global level.

effectively in daily life and improve society: e.g. health and hygiene, HIV/AIDS prevention and care, family planning, environmental sustainability, cognitive skills, interpersonal skills; citizenship, gender and other forms of social learning. Community development programmes aimed at improving the quality of life of the local community in both rural and urban contexts (such as wells and water pumps training, roads, housing, public services, participation in local Government etc) will be included here.

#### **4. Income generation/non-formal vocational training**

Training in income-generating productive and service skills and trades, also referred to as livelihood training, with the aim to increase productivity and income, and to provide skills and knowledge for self-employment and employment. This type of training may be linked to access to micro-credit schemes and to the corresponding training. It will include basic industrial training in both rural and urban settings such as carpentry, tailoring, car mechanics, iron smithy etc. Rural economic development refers here to agricultural extension services carried out primarily to improve agricultural practices, animal husbandry, vegetable gardening, natural resource management (e.g. water, soil, forestry, etc.), and to promote new activities such as fish farming and forestry.

#### **NFE activities not examined in detail**

##### **1. Early childhood care and education**

The care and education services for young children from birth to the age of entry into primary education, which is defined by the country. Care and education services for parents with young children of the concerned age cohort are also included. Given the multifaceted nature of early childhood, a child's holistic development requires appropriate practice which attends to health, nutrition, security, and physical, emotional, social as well as cognitive development and learning. The specific programmes provided depend on the country context.

##### **2. Further or continuing education/further professional development**

Further advanced educational and training opportunities for learners who already have acquired a certain level of education. This can include for example specialized courses such as advanced computer training and language training; university of the third age; training to update or improve skills for a given profession.

##### **3. Religious education**

Organized learning about religion in churches, mosques, temples, synagogues, and other places of worship. But literacy programmes in madrassa etc. are to be included above.

##### **4. Cultural/traditional education**

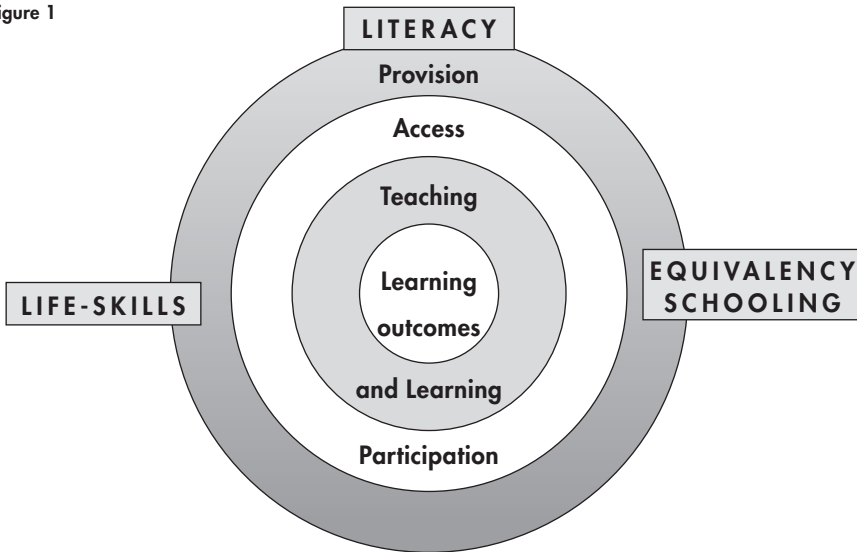
Activities in cultural and subjects – arts, music, history etc.

Source: Adapted from UNESCO (2005) Non-Formal Education Management Information System Handbook. Paris: UNESCO. Guidelines for an NFE Conceptual Framework Module 1.

## 1.2 A working framework for compiling national data on NFE

Overall, the present data collection exercise focuses on the above four major NFBE sub-sectors – namely, literacy, equivalency/alternative schooling, life-skills and community development, livelihood/income generation/non-formal vocational education and training – to be examined along four key dimensions: provision, access and participation, teaching and learning, and outcomes (see Figure 1). The NFBE programmes to be assessed should be aimed at youth (15–24) and/or adults (25+), although the equivalency programmes will sometimes include youth aged 10 or over.

Figure 1



The mapping exercise seeks to cover all basic NFE programmes, but priority will be given to the “major” ones in each country (see below for further details).

## 1.3 The process of compilation of the profiles

The exercise is not intended to be a major new research project. It will draw upon existing documentation of national conceptual, legal and governance frameworks for NFE as well as information provided by local key informants.

The paper should fall into two parts:

- a) a brief country profile of policy and management and trends in provision; this will concentrate on the supply side of NFBE
- b) information about the major types of NFBE activities

We are aware of the limited time available for the preparation of these profiles, so that it will be essential to use what data is available; the lack of immediately available data will itself be a matter of note. This main goal is to succinctly summarize existing information. The paper should be supported by an explanatory note on the process and sources followed.

We envisage a two-stage process of completion of the profile:

- a) a first draft should be submitted by 15<sup>th</sup> February; this will be commented upon and returned to you quickly;
- b) a final draft should be submitted preferably before and certainly no later than 1st March to be considered at a meeting in Paris on 8<sup>th</sup> March.

Information relating to NFBE in your country may be available from UIL; we shall give you a contact there to obtain what information may be available.

In order to assist with the compilation of these country profiles of NFBE, the next section presents a more detailed template for data collection. This is intended as both a checklist and a way to organize the contents of the profile.

## PART II: A template for data collection

The compilation of information on NFE in each country will be organized at two levels: 1) for the country as a whole; and 2) for as many of the major types of NFBE programmes as possible. At the first level, information should provide (to the greatest extent possible) an **overview of the organization, governance, finance, and assessment of NFE**. The second level will consist of descriptions of some of the major areas of NFBE. Succinct, descriptive and current (post 2000) information should as far as possible be organized according to the following headings and address the following points:

### A. Country level information on NFE

1. How is NFE conceptualised in the country?

Please report any distinctive *national* definitions of the following concepts:

- Non-formal education
- Literacy
- Life-skills
- Lifelong learning

2. What are the legal foundations of NFE policies?

Please compile information on:

- National NFE policies or reforms, special targeting policies
- Important legislation related to NFE



3. How are NFE programmes governed and financed?
  - Official body(ies) supervising or coordinating NFE programmes
  - Other official bodies involved in governance of NFE
  - Main sources of NFE financing: e.g., state, NGOs, international agencies. Is there a national (public) budget allocation to NFE? How does this compare with the allocation to the formal education sector?
  
4. To what extent is NFE formally supported and managed?
  - Please describe any national *monitoring* or *evaluation* mechanisms for NFBE
  - Please describe any organized research activities into NFBE programmes or NFBE training at the national level (e.g., is there a department for NFBE at the national university?)
  - Is there a national framework for the training of NFBE educators and trainers? (does this involve recruitment, initial training, refresher training, support and supervision)

#### **B. Information about major types of NFBE activities** (see Table 1 above)

This section compiles information at the level of some of the major NFBE programmes and should be short, succinct and, as much as possible, be organized around the specific questions noted below. It is especially important to classify **the type of NFBE programme**, its main **goals and objectives** and the **target group(s)** it seeks to serve.

If multiple NFBE programmes exist in each of the four main types, several programmes in each type can be documented. Priority should be given to programmes or activities which are: a) *“basic”* (targeting the least schooled populations; b) large in coverage (enrolling a relatively large number of participants) and c) well-established (existing for more than one year).

For each NFE programme analysed, information on the following topics should be compiled:

1. In which **core category or categories** is the NFE programme or activity to be placed?

Some NFE programmes typically involve a single core activity (e.g. equivalency education). Many others combine multiple core activities such as literacy and



Ethiopia

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livelihood skills. If the NFE programme embodies more than one core activity, please construct a combination category (see Table 1). If the NFE activity incorporates a core activity and an activity which is not the focus of the present mapping exercise (e.g. ECCE, further education etc), please create a separate combination category.

2. Who are the main **providers** of the NFE programme?

What kind of provider(s) is(are) involved in the programme's implementation? More than one category of providers can be listed. In order to help you with this, we have provided a list of suggested categories in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Core categories for types of NFE activities**

**1. Government Level 1**

An agency or department directly administered by Government at central level. Please indicate whether NFE comes under the Ministry of Education or any other Ministry.

**2. Government Level 2**

An agency or department directly administered by Government at sub-national level, e.g. Province-level (Cambodia), State-level (India), Regional-level (Tanzania).

**3. Government Level 3**

An agency or department directly administered by Government at the sub-national level below the above, e.g. District-level.

**4. Co-operative**

An agency or society set up for the production or distribution of goods, in which profits are shared by contributing members.

**5. Public enterprise**

A public enterprise in the areas of industry, agriculture or services.

**6. Private enterprise**

A private enterprise in the areas of industry, agriculture or services.

**7. Educational/training institutions**

A public or private training institution, e.g. schools, vocational training institutions, Folk Development Colleges, agricultural colleges, etc.

**8. Professional association/trade union**

An autonomous or semi-government association or union set up for certain professional groups.

**9. Religious bodies/missions**

A religious organization or an agency administered by a religious organization; the religious organization may be Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, etc.

**10. International organization/development agency**

A multilateral agency, e.g. UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, etc.; or a bilateral agency, e.g. DFID, USAID, CIDA, SIDA, DANIDA, GTZ, etc., or an official international Donor agency, e.g. World Bank, African Development Bank, etc.

**11. National branch of International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO)**

The branch or area office administered by an international NGO office headquarters at national level.

**12. National NGO**

The national office of a national NGO.

**13. Local branch of national NGO**

The branch or area office administered by a national NGO office headquarters at sub-national level.

**14. Local NGO**

An NGO with only one office at sub-national level.

**15. Community based organization (CBO)**

An organization or association formed at community level, i.e. within or between villages.

**16. Private bodies/individuals**

Single individuals or groups of individuals undertaking NFE activities.

3. What are the **main objectives/aims** of the NFE programme?  
And, if the information is readily available, to what extent have the programme's aims changed over time?
4. Based on Table 3, which **groups** does the NFBE programme **target**?  
What age groups do they target? Is there a ceiling for participation? Are different groups targeted in different regions of the country? (Please note: Multiple target groups can be noted in answering this question. In the case of equivalency schooling, these target groups may refer to older children as well as youth and adult populations.)

**Table 3: Core categories for types of NFE target groups**

*Note: most programmes will be aimed at more than one of the categories below; use multiple numbers*

**1. “Illiterates”**

Individuals who do not fulfil the national criteria used to define the term “literate”.

**2. Basic “Literates” (basic level)**

Individuals who have acquired a basic level of literacy skills, according to national criteria.

**3. Advanced “Literates” (advanced level)**

Individuals who have acquired an advanced level of literacy, according to national criteria.

**4. Out-of-school children or those who withdrew from school**

Children of formal school age who do not have access to or have withdrawn from formal schooling.

**5. Marginalised adolescents and youth**

Youth, including adolescents, who did not have access to or have withdrawn from formal schooling, and/or who are living in conditions of difficulty which would include social exclusion, physical disabilities, marginalization and discrimination as well as economic circumstances that make them more vulnerable.

**6. Women and girls**

This target group may overlap with one or several of the other categories; but it is listed here in recognition of educational development initiatives that specifically target the female gender, in order to address gender inequalities, or interventions that are specifically relevant to women and girls, such as maternal health education.

**7. Rural poor**

This refers to individuals living below the national poverty line in rural areas. This will often overlap with other categories.

**8. Farmers**

Sometimes overlaps with other categories (rural poor); can include fisherman, livestock breeders and the like.

### 9. Urban poor

This refers to individuals living below the national poverty line in all statutory towns and all other places which satisfy the national criteria for defining “urban”.

### 10. Ethnic/linguistic minority groups

This target group may overlap with one or several of the other categories; but it is listed here in recognition of educational development initiatives that specifically target such groups. It includes tribal groups, indigenous groups, linguistic minorities, nomads, etc.

### 11. Groups living in special circumstances and People with disabilities

This target group may overlap with one or several of the other categories, but it is listed here in recognition of educational development initiatives that specifically target such groups. It includes migrant workers, refugees, demobilized soldiers, etc.

#### 5. How **many people** does the programme reach?

Please report any data (if available) on the number of enrolments in the NFE programme and, if possible, broken down by gender, age and region.

#### 6. **What kind of teaching and learning activities** exist in the NFBE programme?

If possible, a note should be made of any distinctive features of the provision, especially innovative teaching-learning materials or methodologies/approaches.

As many rightly recognize, learning content and pedagogic/ andragogic methods lie at the essence of any learning experience. The extent that these are appropriate and relevant to learners and conducive to equitable participation in learning is clearly important. However, while we would wish to obtain information on as many of the following issues as possible, we recognize the complexity of such learning situations and processes. Please provide information about:

- The main activities of the NFBE programme where possible.
- What types of teaching-learning methodology are employed and how do these differ from those conventionally used at primary school?
- Which language(s) is/are used in the NFBE programme? Is this the home language of the participants?
- With what frequency is the programme offered? How many hours, days, weeks or years are learners supposed to participate in the programme?
- What is the intended (overall) minimum duration of the NFBE programme?

- How flexible are participation rules of the programme? Does the intended timetable meet the needs of the targeted groups?
- What is the background of educators/trainers – e.g., are they school teachers, “experts”, students, local volunteers, Government officials and/or community leaders?
- What is the remuneration for NFBE educators, especially as compared to school teachers?

7. Information about the outcomes of the NFBE programme

If at all possible, please provide any data on **completion rates, withdrawal figures and/or learning outcomes** (definition of these may vary by programme) for each NFBE programme. While data in these areas is likely to be scarce, please report existing information and reference the source of the evidence. If not available, please note.



