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Parallel Session A-4

**Mobilizing Resources and
Capacity Building: Improving
Program Cost-Efficiency**

**Capacity Building for Educators of Adults
in Three Southern African Countries:
South Africa, Botswana and Namibia**

*by Veronica McKay and Norma Romm
with Herman Kotze*

**Working Document
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Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)

International Institute for Educational Planning

7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix

75116 Paris, France

Tel.: +33(0)1 45 03 77 57

Fax: +33(0)1 45 03 39 65

adea@iiep.unesco.org

web site: www.ADEAnet.org

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABEC:	Adult Basic Education Course
ABEP:	Adult Basic Education Programme
ABET:	Adult Basic Education and Training
ALC:	Adult Learning Center
AUPE:	Adult Upper Primary Education
BOCODOL:	Botswanan College of Open Learning
BNLP:	Botswanan National Literacy Programme
CLDC:	Community Learning Development Coordinator
DABE:	Directorate of Adult Basic Education
DoE:	Department of Education
DoL:	Department of Labor
DLO:	District Literacy Organizer
DFID:	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DNFE:	Department for Non-Formal Education
EFA:	Education for All
ETDP:	Education and Training and Development Practitioners
ETQA:	Education and Training Quality Assurance
FET:	Further Education and Training
GET:	General Education and Training
HET:	Higher Education and Training
HSRC:	Human Sciences Research Council
INSET:	In-service Education and Training
LAMP:	Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme
LGL:	Literacy Group Leader
LLL:	Lifelong Learning
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAMCO:	Namibian College of Open Learning
NAPTOSA:	National Teachers' Organization of South Africa
NLPN:	National Literacy Programme in Namibia
NLRD:	National Learners' Records Database
NQF:	National Qualifications Framework
OBE:	Outcomes-Based Education
PALC:	Public Adult learning centers
PED:	Provincial Education Department
PRSP:	Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans
RECC:	Rural Extension Coordinating Committee
RLO:	Regional Literacy Organizer
SACE:	South African Council for Educators
SADTU:	South African Democratic Teachers' Association
SAQA:	South African Qualifications Authority
SETA:	Sector Education and Training Authority
SGB:	Standards Generating Body
UIE:	UNESCO Institute for Education
UNAM:	University of Namibia
UNISA:	University of South Africa
VLC:	Village Literacy Committee

1. ABSTRACT

1. This ADEA research report focuses on a theme which has tended to be neglected in deliberations of literacy and basic education programmes – namely, the importance of training of a cadre of personnel who are competent to teach and organize basic non-formal learning/literacy/skills for adults and out-of-school youth. The report highlights the need for ensuring quality educators against the backdrop of globalization and the new emerging economic and social order which demand new, wider and more complex competencies to be able to understand, anticipate and deal with new and changing social realities.

2. The study discusses different modes of building capacity for literacy/non-formal education and focuses specifically on the roles and functions of the educators in the countries under examination (South Africa, Botswana and Namibia). The investigation for each country begins by describing different modes of training and the policies guiding educator capacity building. The study examines the involvement of untrained personnel within the sectors in the three countries under consideration, and the extent to which the countries offer career-pathing and paid (and un-paid) work opportunities for literacy educators are also explored.

3. It is in the light of these thematic areas that the report examines adult educator development – both in terms of *initial training* and *in-service training*, and educators' *conditions of service* and *workplace conditions*. These case studies form the backdrop of each of the themes under study. The paper concludes with suggestions and lessons learned, including the urgent need to go to scale with educator training, suggesting that distance education could enable this up-scaling. It stresses the need for professionalizing and improving the conditions of service and workplace conditions of adult educators. Adult educators are crucial to the success and quality of literacy and non-formal education for adults as they can provide both the intellectual and operational capacity needed for implementing its vision. For this reason, the development of the capacity of adult educators needs to be high on our countries' education and social development agendas.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

4. This ADEA research report focuses on a theme which has tended to be neglected in deliberations of literacy and basic education programmes – namely, the importance of training of a cadre of personnel who are competent to teach and organize basic non-formal learning/literacy/skills for adults and out-of-school youth. The report highlights the need for ensuring quality educators against the backdrop of globalization and the new emerging economic and social order which demand new, wider and more complex competencies to be able to understand, anticipate and deal with new and changing social realities.
5. Knowledge and learning are the critical factors in this changing reality, since it requires social citizens to have new skills and competencies which are made more complex by the fundamental changes in the context of the global knowledge economy. One important source of change is the accelerating speed of scientific and technological advancement – a phenomenon that has resulted in massive changes across all societies and economies (or labor markets) at any given time. The realities of the poor are not excluded from these changes – they have to address acute knowledge needs to cope with the impact of globalization.
6. It is the poor who are mostly excluded from information and knowledge. Given the growth of poverty worldwide, adult basic education has come to be viewed as a key strategy within the overarching goal of poverty alleviation. The *knowledge-* or *information-*based economy puts a premium on learning in all societies throughout the world and for everyone, rich or poor. In this sense lifelong learning (LLL) needs to be recognized as an important organizing principle for learning in the 21st century.
7. The perspective of lifelong learning requires that the machinery of the national qualifications framework (NQF) and ultimately a regional qualifications framework be put in place. It requires articulation between the different levels and different kinds of learning (formal, non-formal and informal) and that national qualification frameworks (NQFs) define points of articulation or “bridges and ladders” to connect learning in different modalities, levels and places and to recognize various combinations of qualifications.
8. The study therefore undertakes to examine approaches for building capacity of educators so that adult literacy and basic education can operate within the structures of the NQF and within the paradigm of lifelong learning. It argues that notions of qualification equivalence and accreditation within the system of non-formal education brings to the fore the need for educators to be sufficiently capacitated to work within these dimensions, and to have their own teacher development qualifications located within the country’s NQF. The study recognizes that the definition of who might be regarded as an educator in literacy and basic education is a (contested) definition which would embrace *all* those whose job function includes helping adults to learn.
9. However, this also implies ensuring that the poor have opportunities for meeting their basic learning needs and going beyond basic learning, as is premised by *Education for All*, and that learners have their learning and knowledge validated to enable the latter to happen. In fact, unless adult learning embraces the philosophy of lifelong learning, it runs the risk of failing the poor and further marginalizing and excluding them.
10. The knowledge-based economy which characterizes the 21st century creates new and powerful inequalities, and it is those with the lowest levels of skill and the weakest capacity for constant updating that are less and less likely to find paid employment. The need for an enabling education is contingent upon the development of a cadre of educators who are sufficiently qualified and competent to deliver quality education.

2.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

11. This study thus takes into consideration the following issues:
- Who can be defined as doing educator work in literacy, how are they trained and according to what curriculum?
 - What career opportunities are there for literacy educators?
 - What conditions of employment are in place for literacy/non-formal educators?
 - Is there a gap between policies and practices (in terms of programme implementation)?
 - Are there examples of reforms of the education system facilitating new pedagogies and creating incentives for literacy/non-formal educators?
 - To what extent are educators able to address issues of HIV/AIDS?
 - How do they manage mixed age groups? and
 - How do educators deal with the lack of teaching infrastructure?

2.3 METHODOLOGY

12. In answering the above, the following methods and instruments were utilized:
- a. **Documentary review and analysis** of official documents, project documents, studies and other related materials. These official documents include documents such as national policies, strategies and planning documents, curricula, learning material and complementary reading material other print material including grey (or unpublished) materials.
 - b. **A semi-structured interview schedule** which was developed and used in each of the countries for interviewing government officials from the Departments of Education, policy-makers, educators and learners. The questions focused on the need for capacity building and the extent to which (other) government sectors are engaged in adult education work. Lists of interviewees are appended.
 - c. **The training of educators** for literacy programmes was examined by perusing curricula and course materials, interviewing government officials, educator training institutions and educators themselves.
 - d. **Interviews and focus group discussions** were conducted with literacy educators with a view to determining their training needs and the extent to which their training prepared them for the work they are engaged in.
13. The study discusses different modes of building capacity for literacy/non-formal education and focuses specifically on the roles and functions of the educators in the countries under examination (South Africa, Botswana and Namibia). The investigation for each country begins by describing different modes of training and the policies guiding educator capacity building. The study examines the involvement of untrained personnel within the sectors in the three countries, and explores the extent to which they offer career-pathing and paid (and un-paid) work opportunities for literacy educators. It is in the light of these thematic areas that the report examines adult educator development – both in terms of *initial training* and also *in-service training* and educators' *conditions of work* in order to highlight, compare and contrast existing modes for building the capacity of adult educators in the three countries. Case studies form the backdrop to each of the themes under study. The study concludes with suggestions and lessons learned as they emanate from the various country case studies.
14. On the basis of the three case studies it is argued that the provision of competent educators to teach, motivate, support and assess adult learning is an indispensable condition for the successful implementation of adult education programmes. The paper sends a strong signal from each of the countries: those conventional systems of training and employing adult educators won't do any longer. We will no longer be able to simply pick up our teachers off the street! All three countries investigated in this study highlight the urgency of addressing the mass need for adult educators who can act as intermediaries and development agents in education, training and the development sector. The global trajectory for lifelong learning places significant pressure on the various

countries' ability to supply educators to meet the demands. Both the NQF (in its various stages of development) and the global shift towards a lifelong learning paradigm make it imperative for countries to develop a mass cadre of competent educators.

2.4 LESSONS LEARNED

15. The following “lessons learned” emanate from the three country case studies on the development of systems for non-formal education and the urgent need for capacity development.

2.4.1 THE TRAINING OF EDUCATORS: THE NEED FOR “MASS” TRAINING WHERE QUALITY IS NOT COMPROMISED

16. The paper elucidates the complexity of roles that training of educators need to address – from facilitating a learner-centered training event to taking on a development function for facilitating social development. It is essential that educator development programs enable educators to acquire these varying sets of competences. Literacy is not the acquisition of a set of decontextualised skills – it aims rather to educate individuals to exercise citizenship. It is the development of a critical and contextual understanding of reality necessary to enable people to participate fully.

2.4.2 EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT AS AN IMPERATIVE OF LLL

17. Moreover, the perspective of LLL offers a theoretical and epistemological framework for addressing the challenges posed by the low levels of basic education and for ensuring the validation, accreditation and certification of non-formal learning. The challenges of LLL and of the NQFs (existing South Africa and Namibia, and emerging in Botswana) reside in how, in implementing non-formal education, the educators themselves will be able to engage in the assessment of learners. In this paper, it is argued that this has been found to be a serious obstacle in the South African system, where teachers were neither able to interpret and apply nor indeed devise mechanisms for assessing learners. The point at which capacity is critical to the implementation, is the point at which systems tend to fall apart.

18. The imperatives of LLL and the NQF are rendered more complex by the developmental roles that adult educators need to perform. It is this complexity which makes the role of the adult educator so critically important and makes the training of adult and non-formal educators imperative. In order to make an impact, educator training must be delivered on a large scale to enable learners to access learning and other opportunities. However, from a lifelong learning perspective this requires a long-term commitment.

2.4.3 PROFESSIONALIZING ADULT EDUCATORS

19. The development of competent educators is contingent upon adequate teacher training, the recognition of qualifications and their being located within the national qualifications framework. Professionalization means “conditions of service” and a shift from expecting adult educators to continuously volunteer their services. Salaries commensurate with qualifications were raised in the three country case studies as being of prime importance, as was the creation of career paths for adult educators.

2.4.4 OTHER PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS CAN HELP

20. In South Africa, UNISA has performed the task (since 1994) of training more than 50 000 adult educators, making it possible for them, in turn, to be deployed in “mass” literacy and other campaigns (such as voter education). University of South Africa (UNISA) operates by ensuring that its cadre of personnel are rooted in the communities in which they teach and develop

nurturing relationships with their learners. Meanwhile, systems have been put in place for supporting while at the same time monitoring the educators¹.

21. In Namibia, it can be argued that while the quality of training of educators within the Ministry still needs to be reviewed (DABE personnel whom we interviewed suggested that it is not sufficiently geared to aiding teachers to become learner-centered and they tend to “revert” to traditional methods in their practice), one of the strengths of the national literacy program is its rootedness in communities through the committee structures that have been set up. From various “fact-finding” missions that have been undertaken it was seen that learners in the main experienced their teachers (the promoters) as having been supportive. The Namibian concept of “promoters” emphasizes that the individual is not expected to function like a “traditional teacher”, but that his/her role should rather be that of a leader in the community – an adviser, confidant, supporter, learning organizer, literacy teacher, etc. The regular INSET training (when the *District Literacy Organizer* visits the class – at least once a month) also helps develop this role. Further education opportunities are provided for the promoters and the DLOs via the UNISA-NAMCOL partnership, which is discussed in the main body of the paper.
22. Apart from the issue of how the training of educators is addressed, it is clear that community involvement is part of the package for successful mass education campaigns.

2.4.5 DISTANCE EDUCATION CAN BE USED FOR GOING TO SCALE

23. Distance education can assist in going to scale to develop capacity cheaply (in South Africa, mass-based grassroots educator training was done at US\$100 per educator for a year-long course) and provides an effective option for going to scale. This mode of training can assist in ensuring that rural areas are served, as trainees can remain in the areas in which they live and work. There is a need for educator support during both pre- and in-service training and it is suggested that trainee teachers be allocated to tutors/supervisors for ongoing monitoring, motivation and support.
24. In short, we suggest that it is possible to develop the required cadre of personnel for undertaking mass literacy programs – but this requires making use of “distance education” options (such as the one provided by UNISA) combined with grassroots involvement in the community – such as is evidenced in the South African cadre of UNISA-trained educators (including their roles in communities) and in the Committee-based structures supporting the NLPN in Namibia. Distance education is becoming a major component of the educational system. The increasing demand for education and training coupled with dwindling resources has made it imperative to adopt distance education as a central facet of going-to-scale in adult education and a central component of the lifelong learning equation.

2.4.6 ISSUES OF QUALITY ASSURANCE: BALANCE BETWEEN BUREAUCRATIC BURDEN AND ACCOUNTABILITY

25. Our research has shown that “quality assurance” can all too easily slip into a bureaucratic process of simply filling in checklists. With reference to a detailed examination of quality assurance issues in South Africa we have suggested that the Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) system in South Africa is not the panacea for problems in the sector. It has been found that if it depends on the assessor’s own knowledge, such QA runs the risk of becoming a bureaucratic, quantitative, checklist-driven activity without any deep understanding of the issues of quality.
26. While systems do need to be in place for checking the quality of the learning experience (to generate/facilitate the accountability of providers), care must be taken to ensure that quality assurance does not become a quantitative exercise. To appreciate end-users’ perceptions, as well as to monitor whether the outcomes-based philosophy is being operationalised in practice, mechanisms for assessing these issues qualitatively (while also taking into account results that can

¹ Money is not always the issue: When economies of scale are reached, the per capita cost of training adult educators by the method of distance education are minimal. UNISA ABET has, for example, trained educators and provided all tuition materials and contact tutoring for student teachers at a cost of US\$100 per annum.

be quantitatively measured) need to be put in place. And the issue of which bodies are to be involved in quality assurance needs to be considered, recognizing that tensions over turf (as experienced in the South African situation) should be circumvented as far as possible.

27. Indeed, the Botswana Blueprint for non-formal education identifies the various stakeholders to be engaged in assessing educators' performance. While it is laudable that the Blueprint makes provision for a multifaceted evaluation of educators, it is stressed that the process of educator development needs to be set in process urgently so that there are, indeed, educators to support the program at the start of delivery. In addition, specific criteria and strategies need to be devised for assessing educators' performance in a multifaceted and non-threatening manner.

2.4.7 MATERIALS AND OTHER LEARNER SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS AND LEARNERS – CROSS COUNTRY SHARING

28. Supporting teachers by developing materials that fit in with the outcomes-based and learner-centered approach was an issue in all the countries under consideration. Materials development requires high level skills and as we have seen from the study, teachers on the whole *can't/won't* and *should not* need to undertake such tasks.
29. Aside from support needed for teachers in their attempts to create a learner-centered experience for adults, our research has shown that the provision of materials for learners is an issue that cannot be neglected. In Namibia, there is a dedicated materials development section as part of DABE – tasked with developing materials for the learners.
30. Materials are not always available in all the indigenous languages, and the suitability of some of the materials has been questioned. For example, especially in Stage 4 (equivalent to Grade 7 of the formal schooling system) it has been shown that the materials are often experienced as very difficult. (Sometimes the material is not experienced as relevant because the authors merely tried to adapt corresponding school-based materials.) Nevertheless, at least the Ministry does have a section on materials development, tasked with the responsibility of creating suitable materials.
31. One way of addressing the issue of not have material ready for immediate use is to organize mechanisms for cross-country sharing – with provision made for customizing the material to suit local contexts. This recommendation is elaborated on in the main body of the paper, given the problem encountered in Botswana where adult learners had to struggle without any material. Even customized materials are better than no materials when educators do not have the capacity or means to develop their own.

2.4.8 THE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR EDUCATORS INCLUDING “WORKPLACE” CONDITIONS

32. It goes without saying that conditions of service of educators cannot be neglected. This report elaborates on the need for a professional and recognized cadre. Adult educators need to have legislative recognition which is evidenced by their conditions of service. This will require a shift in the way the delivery of (adult) basic education is undertaken, from voluntary to formal. The new global order makes it imperative that adult educators are trained, remunerated and enjoy the same conditions of employment as their peers in the formal system. Within the framework of the NQF and the philosophy of LLL, the adult educator has a critical role to play. This underscores the case for professional support to adult educators.
33. In the South African context, efforts to address this problem are being made via the recently formulated norms and standards for funding adult education centers. (This will not necessarily, however, address all the issues that we isolate in Section 4.6.4.) A culture of supporting adult education (with attendant financial commitments) needs to be generated so that adult education is not seen as an “add on” to other national commitments. Interestingly, such a culture seems to have been generated in Namibia via the committee structures that have been set up, as well as the attendant processes and the commitment of those involved in the program (see Section 6.8.1). National commitment has been expressed in the number of promoters who are functioning to

support the NLPN. This gives a ratio of 1:13 – an optimal ratio for any education program – and the fact that the DABE has permitted classes to continue with such low teacher:learner ratios can be seen as a measure of the commitment of government. It is also one of the reasons why these programs have succeeded. The salaries of promoters can also be said to be reasonable (see Section 6.4) as are the career and further learning options open to them (see Section 6.2.4.).

34. But the issue of the sites of learning needs to be taken up – in Namibia as elsewhere. As we have seen, questions about the sites of learning are often linked with a sense that adult education is not receiving government attention and to the (experienced) low profile accorded to this kind of education. This is a perennial problem in all the studies under study in this report.
35. We have suggested that as far as sites of learning are concerned, instead of investing in expensive buildings, arrangements should be made to make more cost-effective use of available and existing educational and other government facilities (see Sections 4.11, 5.11 and 6.11.).

2.4.9 POLICY AND PRACTICE: DEVELOPING A CULTURE SUPPORTIVE OF ADULT LEARNING

36. The discussions in sections 4.6, 5.6 and 6.6 indicate that even when policies are in place to cater for the provision of adult education as a national commitment, gaps can be located between the policies and practices on the ground. This is often linked to financing issues and is expressed as problematic in all countries.
37. Resources are cited in all countries as being problematic. In South Africa, less than 1% of the education budget is allocated to adult education, and as is mentioned in this paper, Rolls Royce policies do not mean delivery. The gap between policy and practice is clearly an issue requiring attention. Partnerships involving a range of concerned parties may help to address the operationalisation of policy.
38. Clearly, however, no policies are workable without the commitment of those activating the attendant projects. The Namibian experience shows that the development of active committees is an important vehicle in understanding the culture of delivery in ABE. The National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN) was based on developing commitment by creating a decentralized committee structure, with involvement down to the village committee. The program works with a rural development focus, involving people in seeing adult education as part of community development. Meanwhile, the definition of “promoter” that has been institutionalized in Namibia helps both the promoters and others (including the learners) to recognize their (broad range of) roles in the community. All these features of the Namibian situation can indeed be argued to go beyond what has been accounted for in policy documents. The Namibian experience is in some ways ahead of policy. What this points to, in any case, is the importance of not relying on “policy” alone to create the culture and commitment required for the success of adult education programmes.
39. Adult educators are crucial to the success and quality of literacy and non-formal education for adults as they can provide both the intellectual and operational capacity needed for implementing its vision. For this reason, the development of the capacity of adult educators needs to be high on our countries’ education and social development agendas.

3. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

3.1 BACKGROUND

40. Ever since the 1990 World Conference on Education for All mobilized the international community, the focus has been on basic education for children, youth and adults. **Literacy** is an integral part of this international movement, and the World Forum on Education that took place in Dakar in April 2000 identified it as one of its six principal goals. The specific targets set by the Forum are a) ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills; and b) achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy and numeracy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic education and continuing education for all adults. It is in these arenas where the politics of life have a crucial role to play in enabling adults to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence. Indeed, we have demonstrative evidence that literacy is the precursor to:
- the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger ;
 - achieving universal primary education;
 - promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women;
 - reducing child mortality;
 - improving maternal health;
 - combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; and
 - ensuring environmental sustainability.
41. Literacy is therefore closely tied with other sectors' work (health, social development, labor, agriculture, livelihoods, education etc.). Literacy, at the core of education and development, is indeed a key factor in reducing poverty and accelerating the pace of community, cultural and socio-economic development, as well as in contributing to nation building.
42. However, sub-Saharan Africa is the only region in the world where the number of children that do not have access to school is increasing rather than decreasing. This is one reason that illiteracy continues to grow, aggravated by the fact that the majority of children who get to school either never complete the primary cycle or fail to acquire the minimum skills and therefore revert again to illiteracy.
43. This ADEA research study focuses on a theme which has tended to be neglected in deliberations of literacy and basic education programs – namely, the training of this cadre of personnel who are competent to teach and organize basic non-formal learning/literacy/skills² for adults and out of school youth, as well as groups in difficult circumstances.
44. It is important to note that this paper on educator capacity building and the paper on Lifelong Learning which form part of the ADEA document have a logical coherence. As an organizing principle, Lifelong Learning emphasizes the need for basic education to be integrated within a national or even regional qualifications framework. It presupposes that non-formal learning is accredited as being equivalent to a corresponding (formal) qualification. This does not, however, suggest that formal education is to be emulated. It implies rather that non-formal learning acquires recognition as having the same value (albeit not being equal to), and the same “street credibility” as formal learning in order that learners might access the same benefits and opportunities as those who have acquired their learning through the formal mode of education. Indeed it is recognized that there are many practices within the non-formal system of education which could be emulated by the formal system. For example, the relative freedom and the space for experimentation within the mode of non-formal education has given rise to many methods and processes which can (and have) contributed to and enriched the formal systems of education.

² While we recognize the definitional problems, we deal with definitions later in the document.

45. The changing social and economic order and the emergence of the global knowledge economy put a premium on learning throughout the world. Ideas and know-how as sources of economic growth and development have important implications for how people learn and apply knowledge throughout their lives. It is more than just education and training beyond formal schooling. A lifelong learning framework encompasses learning throughout life – from early childhood to retirement.
46. The perspective of lifelong learning also requires a degree of articulation between the different levels and different kinds of learning (formal, non-formal and informal). Thus it is necessary that qualification frameworks define points of articulation or “bridges and ladders” to connect learning in different modalities, levels and places and to recognize various combinations of qualifications. It is essential to integrate learning programs more effectively and to align different elements of the system. Learners should be able to enter and leave the system at different points and credits of competences should be portable across the NQF. Torres (2005) suggests that trends of the new social and learning order show the need and the possibility of a better understanding of partnership between education within and outside the school.
47. According to the lifelong learning framework, formal education structures – primary, secondary, higher, vocational, and so on – are less important than learning and meeting learners’ needs. The learning system needs to include a multitude of players and it requires the skills of competent educators to enable people to navigate their way through lifelong learning processes and opportunities. Clearly, the notion of qualification equivalence and accreditation within the system of non-formal education brings to the fore the need for educators to be sufficiently capacitated to work within the framework of lifelong learning. Simply put, “gone are the days when educators are drawn from the streets to facilitate learning for non-formal education”.
48. The study therefore undertakes to examine approaches for building capacity of educators for adult literacy and basic education. It recognises that the definition of who might be regarded as an educator in literacy and basic education is a definition which would embrace all those whose job function includes helping adults to learn. Given the growth of poverty worldwide, adult basic education has come to be viewed as a key strategy within the overarching goal of poverty alleviation. Since the poor are faced with especially disadvantaged economic and social conditions that have a negative impact on learning, democratizing learning among the poor implies ensuring essential living conditions that provide them with free time and energies to learn (Torres 2005:20) However, this also implies ensuring that the poor have opportunities for meeting their basic learning needs and going beyond basic learning, and that also that they have their learning and knowledge validated to enable the latter to happen.

3.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

49. This study takes into consideration the following questions:
 - Who can be defined as doing educator work in literacy and how are they trained and according to what curriculum?
 - What roles and functions do these educators have?
 - What policies guide literacy educator training?
 - Is there a gap between policies and practices (in terms of program implementation)?
 - What conditions of employment do the literacy cadre have?
 - Are there examples of reforms of the education system facilitating new pedagogies and creating incentives for literacy educators?
 - What career opportunities are there for literacy educators? To what extent is training formal/non-formal?
 - To what extent are men and women involved as educators of adults?
 - To what extent are educators able to address issues of HIV/AIDS? To what extent are

educators currently engaged in teaching HIV/AIDS across the curriculum?

To what extent can programs be seen as intersectoral?

Are the educators trained to teach different age groups? How do they manage mixed aged groups? And how are sites of teaching and learning dealt with?

50. The study provides an outline of modes of building capacity for literacy education in the countries under examination (South Africa, Botswana and Namibia) and offers some suggestions and lessons learned as they emanate from the studies. The investigation for each country begins by describing different modes of training and the policies guiding educator capacity building. The roles and functions of literacy educators are compared with the curricular for training. The study also examines the involvement of untrained personnel within the sectors in the three countries under consideration. The extent to which the countries offer career-pathing and paid (and un-paid) work opportunities for literacy educators is also explored.

3.3 METHODOLOGY

51. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. The following research strategy, methods and instruments were utilized:
- e. **Documentary review and analysis** of official documents, project documents, studies and other related materials. These official documents include documents such as national policies, strategies and planning documents, curricula, learning material, complementary reading material and other print material including grey (or unpublished) materials.
 - f. **A semi-structured interview schedule** which was developed and used in each of the countries for interviewing government officials from the Departments of Education, policy-makers, educators and learners. The questions focused on the need for capacity building across sectors and the extent to which (other) government sectors are engaged in adult education work. Lists of interviewees are appended.
 - g. **The training of educators** for literacy programs was examined by perusing curricula and course materials, interviewing government officials, educator training institutions and educators themselves.
 - h. **Interviews and focus group discussions** were conducted with literacy educators with a view to determining their training needs and the extent to which their training prepared them for the work they are engaged in.

3.4 POST-CONFINTEA³ DEFINITIONS OF THE ADULT EDUCATOR

52. The provision of competent educators to teach, motivate, support and assess adult learning is an indispensable condition for the successful implementation of adult education programs (Youngman 2003:1). However, Youngman states that this theme fails to receive adequate recognition in our deliberations on the potential role of adult education in addressing major problems such as poverty, unemployment, HIV/AIDS, social conflict and environmental degradation, and ensuring human rights, civic awareness, democracy, participation, social inclusion, human rights and peace.
53. Moreover, Youngman (2003) argues that it is important to: (1) (re)conceptualize adult education so as to focus on (2) adult learning as a lifelong process (3) across different contexts (4) predicated on supportive national policies and (5) with partnerships across a range of sectors and ministries. As well, he emphasizes the importance of (6) improved mechanisms for financing adult education.

³ This refers to the fifth international conference on adult education organised by the UNESCO Specialist Centre for Adult Education and its Institute for Education and held in Hamburg in 1997.

54. It is in the light of these kinds of criteria, that this report examines adult educator development – both in terms of initial and in-service training and educators’ conditions of work – in order to highlight, compare and contrast existing modes for building the capacity of adult educators in the three countries. The criteria taken from Youngman (2003) form the scaffold for the organization of the study.
55. The research explores a wide range of issues relevant to the thematic areas identified by Youngman (2003), and draws attention to the areas of difficulties encountered with regard to educator development.

3.5 NOTE ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE DOCUMENT

56. As noted above (under the discussion on methodology), this document is based on qualitative research as well as a documentary study on capacity building of educators in each of the aforementioned countries. The data which we have gathered is systematically incorporated, as far as possible, under the same headings for each country. We have used the same system of numbering for ease of comparison across the countries – with the “main headings” referring to our way of answering the similar questions across each country – see Questions 1-10 below. Question 6 had to be modified somewhat because in South Africa it was already possible to consider the impact on educators of the NQF and vice versa, whereas in Botswana the framework is only now emerging, and in Namibia it is also still nascent.

- Q.1: How long are teachers trained, where, and what is involved?
Q.2: What is involved in “quality assuring” the quality of educator training and delivery?
Q.3: In terms of what conditions of service do educators work?
Q.4: Have roles and functions of educators become (re)defined?
Q.5: What policies support adult education, and what is the relationship between policy and practice?
Q.6: What is the impact on educators of the NQF (in the case of South Africa) ? For Botswana, we concentrated on the difficulties of teaching in sparsely populated areas; and in Namibia we offered only some pointers to emerging issues around the establishment of the NQF.)
Q.7: What examples are there of reforms to the education system which may facilitate change in practice – including across “multisector” issues?
Q.8: Who participates?
Q.9: What curriculum issues are there? How are questions relating to teaching mixed abilities/mixed age/mixed languages catered for, and to what extent do educators address social issues in the curriculum?
Q.10: How are sites of teaching and learning dealt with?

57. The report is structured around exploring these ten questions in relation to each country in turn. As we proceed, we also draw comparative “boxes” to identify certain specific (comparative) insights that can be created.

4. ADULT EDUCATOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

58. Prior to 1994 there was no formal training for adult educators in South Africa and educators could be trained for anything from a few days to months. With democracy came the recognition that the delivery of quality adult education depends on well-trained adult practitioners who play a pivotal role in addressing critical economic, political and social problems specific to learners across a variety of contexts (such as health and HIV/AIDS, the environment, labor, etc.), as well as across a variety of societal contexts – urban, rural, informal, etc.
59. Over the past four to five years, South Africa has established practitioner qualifications. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) established the Standards Generating Body (SGB) in 1999. The SGB produced unit standards for four ABET qualifications in 2000, necessary for ensuring competence and quality of ABET practitioners. This signaled a breakthrough in establishing a qualification framework and creating a career path for ABET practitioners. The adult educator fraternity regards the development of a qualification framework for Adult Practitioners by the SGB (Adult Learning National Standards Body 05) as one of the most significant areas of development in the training of practitioners for the ABET field. This led the Department of Education to give recognition to adult educators for salary purposes, these being commensurate with their qualifications, and to their being included in the Educators' Act as a specific category of educator personnel, which was previously not done.

4.2 (Q.1) HOW LONG ARE TEACHERS TRAINED, WHERE, AND WHAT IS INVOLVED?

60. Adult educators in South Africa are required to be trained for a minimum of one year (or 120 notional hours) to gain an entry qualification into the field or to add to/supplement their existing qualification in order that they might become educators of adults.
61. While the task of training these educators has seemed to fall on the tertiary institutions⁴, the ABET Institute of the University of South Africa (UNISA) has taken on most of this responsibility.
62. The adult educator is required to assume a variety of complex roles and functions pertaining to education, training and development. The following tasks and responsibilities give some indication of the skills educators needed and the outcomes of the various practitioner courses:

- plan a learning event;
- facilitate an adult learning event;
- assess learners within a learning situation;
- fulfill administrative requirements of a learning group;
- evaluate own facilitation performance;
- help learners with language and literacy across the curriculum;
- identify and respond to learners who have special needs;
- facilitate mother tongue literacy;
- facilitate an additional language;
- facilitate numeracy;
- design, organize and facilitate a program of learning;
- evaluate, select and adapt published learning materials;

⁴ The universities of Cape Town, KwaZulu Natal and the Western Cape as well as the University of South Africa are engaged in presenting some adult educator programs.

develop, use and evaluate own supplementary learning aids;
design, implement and follow-up on internal assessment;
conduct research relevant to the learning situation;
mediate language, literacy and math across the curriculum;
identify and respond to learners with special needs and barriers to learning;
promote lifelong learning;
facilitate communication and mathematics;
undertake a leadership role in an ABET division of an organization;
supervise the work of other ABET practitioners;
apply extended skills around research, evaluation, quality assurance, and community development;
facilitate the content of a specific subject; and
offer specialist input on particular aspects of ABET provision.

63. In addition to these tasks, practitioners may specialize in a range of electives (depending on their teaching contexts) ranging from facilitating craftwork to workplace and occupational programs and small- and micro-enterprises. For a practitioner to assume the above functions, training has to be well conceptualized so as to enable teachers to operate across different social contexts (such as health, environment, the workplace, and water management) and in different types of settlements (urban, rural, formal, and informal). This approach promotes key socioeconomic benefits, especially for the most marginalized and disadvantaged communities, which are the primary target group of all ABET programs. Training ABET practitioners in basic and generic skills allows them to work in a variety of specialized areas, including literacy, numeracy, primary health care and HIV/AIDS, English as a second language, small business development, and environmental education.

4.2.1 DEFINING THE “ADULT EDUCATOR”

64. In South Africa the trend has been to offer ABET programs across various ministries and sectors. To this extent the Department of Education (DoE) is not seen as the sole domain of ABET.

Educators are trained to focus on <i>development needs</i> making them suitable for work in literacy/basic education across various sectors such as agriculture, water, food sustainability, Health and HIV, nutrition – a trend that is common in the other countries discussed in this report.
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65. Since the introduction of the Unit Standards for adult education, adult basic educators are employed across a variety fields and sectors such as:
- literacy;
 - agriculture extension workers;
 - trainers for water and sanitation;
 - trainers in health, nutrition, HIV/ AIDS, and family planning;
 - environmental educators;
 - job skills trainers;
 - trade unionists;
 - worker educators;
 - adult educators who teach in state programs;
 - agricultural extension workers;
 - youth workers;
 - community organizers; and
 - material developers.

66. In addition, adult educators have found career advancement into policy positions in government. The introduction of unit standards and the fact that learners may accumulate unit standards has contributed to improvements in the field of adult education by ensuring that sufficient numbers of grassroots teachers are adequately trained – it is now up to the field to ensure that only trained teachers are used.

4.2.2 TEACHER ACCREDITATION

67. Presently South Africa has the following qualifications in adult basic education:

TABLE 4.1 SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS FOR ABET EDUCATORS

National Certificate in Adult basic education and training which enables educators to register with SACE ⁵ and to teach. This certificate is also subscribed to by adult educators who wish to add to their existing qualification in order to become a teacher of adults.	1 year
National Higher Diploma in adult basic education and training	2 years but includes the previous certificate
A first degree in adult education	3 years
A postgraduate (B.Ed.) degree in Adult Basic Education	1 year but requires a previous 3 year teaching qualification
Masters and doctoral degrees in Adult Basic Education	

4.2.3 A NOTE ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL LITERACY INITIATIVE (SANLI): THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PROJECT AND THE CADRE OF PERSONNEL

68. In 1999 the Minister of Education announced the launch of this campaign, to be located within the DoE (ABET Reference Guide, 2004: 202). The idea was that learners on the program (who could be pre-ABET or ABET level 1 learners) should achieve specific outcomes such as writing with meaning, reading notes from teachers about their children, reading other “daily life” texts, developing basic numeracy skills, and filling in forms. (This latter requirement was meant to assist learners in accessing civic services and other official situations.) The envisaged curriculum was to give learners access to both primary and additional languages in communication. It also included AIDS Education, Entrepreneurship, Human Rights Education and Voter Education.

69. However, by 2001 there was a concern that SANLI might miss the opportunities to forward its aims. In order to activate the campaign, UNISA’s ABET Institute committed itself, with the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID), to establishing a partnership with SANLI to bring the mission to fruition.

70. In February 2002 with a £2 million grant from DFID (UK), UNISA ABET entered into partnership with SANLI and began literacy classes at sites across SA. UNISA brought to the partnership its then database of 25 000⁶ adult educator graduates who had been trained by the ABET Institute over the last 6 years. Volunteer educators were recruited from among those graduates who were either unemployed or underemployed (and they were paid an honorarium). In addition, UNISA had a national team of 250 tutors and provincial coordinators who were equipped to assist with the recruiting, orienting, monitoring and support of the volunteer campaigns.

⁵ The South African Council for Educators. Registration with this body is mandatory if educators wish to practice.

⁶ The University records reflect that by the end of 2005 more than 50 000 adult educators had been trained on the various ABET courses.

71. UNISA ABET developed a database for recording, as well as a system for remunerating, its volunteer educators, monitors, tutors and provincial coordinators. Furthermore, a system for assessing learner competencies on a national scale was developed.

Delivery beyond expectations

72. Over a two-year period, 342 000 learners participated in the program – a number which was more than double the original target.
73. The statistical data (on learner attendance and learner assessment) indicated a successful program. This was confirmed by information obtained from site visits and from monitoring records, which show that the program was extremely well received by learners and communities.
74. Because of the emphasis on community development in the program, a large majority of the classes, especially in rural areas and informal settlements, went beyond literacy into income-generating projects.
75. While the UNISA SANLI project aimed to teach learners for six months, most classes continued for nine months – with learners reluctant to stop attending and with new learners joining as the program proceeded.
76. Some reasons for the success of the program (as cited by the ABET Reference Guide, 2004) are the following:

Classes were held where it was convenient to attend.

The (volunteer) educators had been trained for at least a year. Many had three years of training and some were postgraduates.

Educators live in the communities in which they taught.

The bottom-up approach gave ownership of the program to the communities.

Learners were encouraged to go beyond literacy and to initiate income generating or self-help projects.

Learners were asked to commit themselves to attending for the duration of the program (and developed relationships with both the educators and others in the community).

This example is given here as it suggests that mechanisms for creating a “mass” cadre of trained personnel for mass adult education programs (to address backlogs in adult education) is indeed feasible and can be considered as an option for other countries too. UNISA ABET is currently also involved in training educators in Namibia, using the same methods of distance education combined with tutorial classes held monthly – with tutors being local and encouraged to adapt the curriculum to local circumstances. A similar process was agreed to with the Institute for Education in Rwanda, which has taken on the UNISA ABET courses and translated it into French while simultaneously customizing the context.

4.2.4 CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR LITERACY EDUCATORS

77. Apart from what is traditionally defined as the work of the literacy facilitator, in South Africa, as mentioned above, ABET practitioners are recruited by a range of Ministries (other than the DoE) for their skills. They are recruited as

extension workers by the Department of Agriculture;

trainers in water, sanitation and environmental education by the Department of Water and Sanitation;

trainers in health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, and family planning by the Ministry of Health;

skills development facilitators and trade unionists trainers by the Department of Labor;

youth development and community development workers by the Department of Social Services;

78. In addition, adult educators have found career advancement into policy positions in government, with many of the current ministers and directors being the holders of an ABET practitioner's certificate or diploma.

4.2.5 THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE TRAINING OF EDUCATORS IS FORMAL/NON-FORMAL

79. The notion of accredited providers for educator training means that educators are no longer trained on an informal basis. Any institution offering training for adult educators would need to comply with various logistical requirements as well as with academic and unit standard requirements with the ETDP's (Education and Training and Development Practitioner) SETA. This shifts the training away from non-formal and non-recognized to becoming highly regularized (to the point that the ETDP SETA even expects universities to acquire its accreditation). There has been a prolonged, heated discussion emanating from the universities' general rejection of the ETDPs as determining "their" accreditation as opposed to the Council for Higher Education doing so. While universities are willing to comply with all the SAQA requirements for registering qualifications, since this has implications for portability of qualifications, the notion of being accredited as a provider by a SETA is an unlikely possibility.

4.3 (Q.2) WHAT IS INVOLVED IN "QUALITY ASSURING" THE QUALITY OF EDUCATOR TRAINING AND DELIVERY?

80. While the quality assurance of educators lies with the ETDP SETA, training of educators by tertiary institutions is also regulated by the Higher Education Council which regulates the quality of all higher education degrees, diplomas and certificates in South Africa. However since the training of educators is not now, by virtue of the NQF, a prerogative of universities and colleges, it is possible for smaller private providers to enter this field. In such instances, their accreditation is regulated by the ETDP SETA which will require them to comply with the unit standards for teacher development and also with a number of other quality related issues. The unit standards for practitioner development and their subsequent career-pathing are determined by the SGB for ETDP.
81. However at the level of delivery, the measures for a robust monitoring and evaluation system have not as yet been put in place and the DoE⁷ is now charged with setting up a system for this (DoE, 2005). It is proposed that the monitoring component should incorporate the criteria for M & E suggested, for example, by UNESCO's Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Program (LAMP). LAMP is seeking to develop international mechanisms and tools for measuring literacy progress.
82. At the level of implementation in adult learning centers, the DoE draft document on monitoring and evaluation has the aim of systematically monitoring the instructional processes in adult learning centers as well as guiding practitioners to achieve higher standards of teaching, while making judgments about (evaluating) the worth/merit of the teaching-learning processes (in terms of specified objectives). The overarching goal of adult education is to enable people to have access to, and succeed in, lifelong education and training of good quality.
83. Through the M & E system, it is hoped to measure outcomes such as:
- newly literate adults who have acquired the competencies as outlined by the unit standards;
 - better trained practitioners;
 - better learning and support materials;
 - better management systems;
 - the achievement of the adult center's goals and targets;

⁷ With the director for ABET – David Diale – at its helm leading the intervention.

learner academic achievement (daily learning, etc).

84. Aside from utilizing indicators that rely on quantitative methodology and information, it is proposed also to consider how “inputs and processes” are perceived. So along with an emphasis on outputs of the education system, there is also to be an emphasis on perceptions of inputs. Inputs proposed to be considered are: the availability and quality of facilities and resources; the availability and quality of learning programs and learning materials; and the attainability of specific outcomes, e.g. appropriateness of assessment criteria and appropriateness of performance indicators.
85. In addition, perceptions of processes are also to be highlighted, such as:
 - the quality of teaching and learning (time on task, teaching methods/strategies, programs for learners with educational special needs, etc);
 - the training and support to practitioners and facilitators; and
 - participation of other community members and the governing body.
86. Thus far, as mentioned, there is no system in place for M & E. It is recognized that whatever model is introduced (and it is hoped to introduce one which integrates quantitative and qualitative techniques and tools) will be an evolving one (in line with the evolving nature of the ABET sector). The model should provide for a broad range of information to be collected, including qualitative discussion/focus groups with those involved.
87. Blom and Keevy (2005) note that the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) study on the impact of the NQF on education and training suggests that the NQF has led to improved understandings of quality that transcend traditional notions. They note that there is still much to do in terms of improving the quality of the education and training system – but there have already been steps in the right direction.
88. Blom and Keevy (2005) follow David Diale (of the DOE) in suggesting that there should not be an over-emphasis on quantifying findings in terms of discrete “levels of impact”. This, they remark, can lead to a conflation of issues such as “extent of impact” (measured in numbers) and beneficial impact (assessed more qualitatively by looking at issues such as quality of education and training, access and redress, and also obviously the quality of the educators).

4.3.1 SOME EFFORTS AT MEASURING QUALITY

89. The UNISA ABET Institute has undergone a number of impact evaluations conducted mainly by the British Department for International Development. Although these impact evaluations do not form part of the government’s strategy for assessing the impact of educators, the evaluations are cited given that the ABET Institute is the largest training provider of adult educators in South Africa. Other providers include a range of small non-government initiatives and other universities, including the Universities of the Western Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Cape Town. Each of these providers conducts assessments of their training provision for ABET educators.
90. With regard to the impact of SAQA (as mentioned above) studies have been done by SAQA to consider the impact of the NQF (there have thus far been two reports on this).
91. The second cycle report has just been released (2005). One of the points made in the document is that there is still some kind of “divide” between institution-based learning and other forms of learning. SAQA notes that from very early on the debates on the NQF were characterized by opposing views: discipline-based or institution-based learning and workplace learning. The debates are ongoing. But at the moment a space is opening where “education and training are not considered to be opposite but a ‘continuum of learning’” (SAQA 2005: 27).
92. The report notes that the point of the NQF is/was to integrate education and training (for adult learners). But so far there appears to be no shared language or understanding between the two sponsoring departments – DoE (Department of Education) and DoL (Department of Labor). The NQF has to start from the reality of the power of different types of learning (and different views on the nature and purpose of learning). Nevertheless, there seems to be some agreement regarding

“learning” in the context of application. This may be where the promise for the development of an integrated approach to education and training lies (SAQA 2005: 25). James Keevy of SAQA has indicated that from focus group discussions with learners it seems that they do not question the outcomes-based model, as this is taken as “obvious”. Nevertheless, teachers can have difficulty in making it applicable – in terms of the support and materials they are given.

93. According to the SAQA report (2005), at the moment in quality assurance processes there is a very open-ended conception of the NQF. The overall purpose is to try to “address employment opportunities as well as economic development as well as career paths as well as redress past unfair discrimination”. Jansen (2004) comments that there seems to be no policy in the world that is able to address all these things in the ways envisaged, let alone at the same time.
94. In South Africa, the NQF originated in the aim to be a “radical credit accumulation and transfer system, promising to accredit learners for accumulated proficiency and undertaking to open up access to education and training routes that had previously been closed to them”. SAQA notes (2005:27) that it is important to obtain financial commitment from the sponsor government to fulfill these ambitions.
95. The SAQA study indicates that the tensions between DoE and DoL create a real danger of sectoral interests being protected at the cost of integration and training and across formal non-formal education and training opportunities. One needs a political will to drive the process of developing an integrated approach. But the SAQA survey (including qualitative information) showed that “most respondents believed that the providers of education and training support lifelong learning and that the NQF has contributed to an awareness of lifelong learning”. And indeed, a substantial number of respondents believe that providers are more responsive to the needs to learners as a result of the NQF. As one respondent put it:

The NQF processes is a guideline ... it guides us to provide quality in training and then to ensure that the training programs we produce ... are in lines with norms and standards set ... if we are following the NQF processes we ... [produce] quality not quantity” (SAQA, 2005: 77).

It is necessary that the countries in this study build in mechanisms to avoid such tensions over “turf”. This can seriously hamper NQF developments, especially given the range of sectors which adult education serves. Since ABET cuts across all sectors, educators – especially those with only minimal training – are often out of their depth with the debates and become extremely confused.

4.3.2 CONSIDERING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TRAINING OF EDUCATORS

96. It must be pointed out that the training of large numbers of adult educators who work across a variety of Ministries (each with its own SETA) has not lent itself to a holistic or integrated evaluation of teachers across all sectors. However, individual ministerial or provider impact assessments have shown that trained teachers are (1) an improvement on the untrained teachers of the past and (2) that continuous teacher development assists in keeping the educator motivated and updated with regard to curriculum development⁸.
97. David Diale, ABET Director (DoE), states in this regard that since there is not yet a robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism in place in adult education it is very difficult to pass judgment on effectiveness thus far. According to a recent document that is still being drafted (by the DoE) as a discussion document around ABET monitoring and evaluation, the few gains and innovations in ABET have gone undocumented and unnoticed.

⁸ There are a number of studies by private providers of ABET aimed at evaluating the delivery in municipalities, business and other government sectors such as the police. Within the DoE, impact assessments have focused on smaller niche programmes such as the Rivoningo EU-funded ABET program which showed that trained teachers were effective under optimal conditions.

98. It appears that teachers (especially those with an “ordinary” teaching qualification that is not geared to adult education) are finding that they can do with more support⁹. This is mainly because teachers can experience difficulty balancing the curriculum and outcomes-based education. In this regard, teachers should get more support and materials to help them cope with finding a way of organizing outcomes-based learning. More training and more materials seem to be needed as a rule.¹⁰
99. As the unit standards for learners are all in a process of development, it is essential that trained teachers receive in-service development to ensure that they are aware not only of the unit standards but also of how to apply them in their teaching situation. While the provincial departments conduct such training workshops they are often too short and, as one of the National Teachers’ Organization of South Africa (NAPTOSA) representative¹¹ states, the training when undertaken does not last long enough (it is usually about a week). There is also no consistency across the Provinces. The support given to practicing adult educators is thus not sufficiently organized, according to this representative.
100. Blom and Keevy (2005) indicate that the introduction of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was seen as having a “moderate” impact in terms of the needs of learners and the responsiveness of the teaching practices to such needs. Blom and Keevy cite the second cycle impact assessment on SAQA and the NQF (2005:62), the respondents of which were a sample of 122 stakeholders from across nine provinces comprising: providers (from GET, including ABET, FET, HET), businesses, organized labor, quality assurance bodies, standard setting bodies and government departments. Under the provider category, individuals interviewed included administrators/managers and academics/lecturers/teachers and key individuals.
101. In addition to conducting interviews with the above categories of people, 77 of the interviewees were also required to complete a questionnaire. A subsequent survey was administered to 501 respondents using the same instrument (by another researcher). A quantitative analysis of all qualifications on the National Learners’ Records Database (NLRD) was also undertaken, and a qualitative analysis of certain qualifications was carried out.
102. The respondents on both surveys as a whole saw the NQF as having (only) a moderate impact on responsiveness to learners’ needs and responsiveness of teaching practices to such needs. While reasons for this may be sought in the lack of follow-up training for educators it may also be contended that it is too soon to derive the long-term impact of the NQF, given the dearth of base line data.
103. With regard to the effectiveness of trainers, it must be pointed out that a number of evaluations have been conducted on the effectiveness and impact of educators trained by the UNISA ABET Institute. The ABET practitioner training program has been evaluated continuously over the past ten years by DFID teams including experts such as Professor Lalage Bown, Dr. Anil Bordia, Professors Robert Flood and Norma Romm, and Prof Tony Lamont. All evaluations agreed on the effective use of distance education as a method of training and supporting educators and on the impact of the educator in the teaching, learning and development context. In addition, evaluators commented on the personal development and empowerment of the educators. It is noteworthy that the materials used for training educators received the Commonwealth of Learning award for the best distance materials in 2002.

⁹ Discussion with National Teachers’ Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) representative Rodney Veldtman. NAPTOSA membership is drawn from all types of educational institutions, including Public Adult Learning Centres (PALCs). It is here recognized that NAPTOSA is one of the relatively smaller unions and that the biggest teachers’ union is the South African Democratic Teachers’ Association (SADTU) which is aligned to the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

¹⁰ Discussion with James Keevy from the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA),

¹¹ Discussion with NAPTOSA representative Rodney Veldtman.

4.3.3 THE USE OF UNTRAINED EDUCATORS

104. South Africa has, since 1995, provided a one-year entry level training program for grassroots facilitators who work “on the ground”. The training of more than 50 000 of these ETD practitioners has made it possible to ensure capacity where it is needed. It is necessary that Botswana considers the development of a mass training program for ensuring the development of capacity for the new Botswanan Adult Basic Education Programme (ABEP). In Namibia, it is the exception that untrained promoters are used (even on the National Literacy Programme). However, this training is normally a three-week course, followed by in-service training (via District Learning Officer support).
105. Although in South Africa the use of “untrained” teachers still exists, especially in remote sites, many adult learning centers are still using “unqualified” teachers in the sense that they employ “school teachers” who have not obtained the basic certificate required to enable them to teach in an adult centre. This notion is dubbed as “double parking” since they draw a “day” and a “night” salary from government. The problem, however, lies more in the ability and commitment of teachers and not in the fact that they draw a double salary. While many of these teachers are inherently good and have the necessary subject knowledge, many do not have the rudiments of working with adults as opposed to children, and treat them as if they were children.

4.4 (Q.3) IN TERMS OF WHAT CONDITIONS OF SERVICE DO EDUCATORS WORK?

106. Since the inception of the unit standards for adult educators the state has undertaken to recognize practitioner qualification and to introduce a system of payment for teachers. Presently teachers are paid R60 (\$8) per hour if they have a one-year certificate and about R90 (\$11) if they have a three-year qualification. However, unlike school teachers, they are not given comparable contracts and benefits and they are often disposable labor when there is a shortage of funds.
107. This kind of under-resourcing is an issue. Blom and Keevy (2005) note that most social constructs (including the NQF as a social construct) fail if they are not adequately resourced.
108. Unlike school teachers, the managers/principals of Adult Education centers are at a disadvantage because they do not have the benefits of compulsory education. As indicated by Veldtman – one of the NAPTOSA representatives – they have to go out to try and find learners for their centers (to keep them running). This is unlike managers from other education institutions. Also, teachers at the centers according to Veldtman often have to do a lot of extra work over and above the six hours to which they are paid. They work full-time, but because of budgetary problems they do not get paid for this. According to him, they are thus “doing a lot of extra work in the center for nothing”.
109. Veldtman points out that adult educators do not have proper conditions of service and nor are they given (sufficient) support materials (for their teaching). So they are under a lot of strain.
110. The extent to which adult educators are organized has had a negative impact on the profession. In South Africa, adult educators may belong to any union such as SADTU or NAPTOSA, but they are not organized as a specific group; hence their “sectoral substantive needs” are not catered for in South Africa. Various attempts by small organizations have been made to provide some sectoral support for adult educators, but in the absence of legislative recognition, these do not constitute more than small noises in the corridors of power. In order for adult educators to attain some voice, they would need to be more visible and vocal in the statutory trade unions.

4.5 (Q.4) HAVE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF EDUCATORS BECOME (RE)DEFINED?

111. In line with the unit standards, educators in South Africa should (after successfully completing an ABET practitioner course) demonstrate for instance that they can: undertake policy analysis; engage in policy debates; utilize a range of teaching/facilitation methods; utilize a range of assessment methods; identify and remediate learning difficulties; develop teaching material; evaluate teaching material; profile learners; profile communities; identify target groupings; adapt teaching and learning situations to target group's needs; improve knowledge in selected area of learning; demonstrate communicative skills; demonstrate assessment skills; relate teaching to social context; identify area of research; design research approach; compile research reports; utilize a variety of qualitative, quantitative, and participatory research methods; contribute to the development of a common, shared vision for ABET across sectors; understand the situation within each district and its importance in terms of ABET; understand the usefulness of community profiles; know how to assess and prioritize needs and do a community profile; know how to collect information on relevant structures, organizations, institutions and other possible partners in an area; identify key roles that managerial staff may need to play, such as collaborative management, teamwork facilitation, counseling, monitoring and strategizing (Singh & McKay, 2004)
112. Given the interdisciplinary and inter-Ministerial nature of their work, educators need to be well equipped to deal with issues such as how to network and build partnerships with other stakeholders and institutions, how to form linkages between ABET and other developmental objectives and needs and how to ensure stakeholder participation and people-centered development.

4.5.1 PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

113. Teacher education within the ABET sector has always been characterized by its use of participatory and learner-centered methodologies. These approaches underlie the practice of outcomes-based education (OBE) and by implication it should be easier for adult educators who have been specifically trained to teach in a learner-centered way to use more OBE-type methods. The problem cited by many teachers is that the unit standards themselves are written in a language that is incomprehensible to most “English-as-another-language” readers. As one ABET practitioner put it, “If we do not understand what they mean we don't know what to do.”¹² So, while teachers are trained in the methodologies most aspired to across all education sectors, they are hampered by not being able to put their skills into practice as they are unable to demystify the unit standards!
114. In this regard, Veldtman¹³ commented that provincial departments of education do hold workshops from time to time – but more guidance is needed for teachers (and more possibility of sharing experiences). In Botswana, too, our research shows that teachers thus far are not sufficiently exposed to alternative teaching methods and strategies. And in Namibia, personnel from DABE (the Directorate of Adult Basic Education) pointed out that the tendency for adult educators is to “revert” to traditional modes of teaching – and therefore more support for teachers in developing alternative methodologies is needed. (See Sections 5.5.1 and 6.5.1 below.)

¹² Discussion with ABET teachers in KwaZulu Natal.

¹³ Discussion with Veldtman from NAPOSOSA.

4.6 (Q.5) WHAT POLICIES SUPPORT ADULT EDUCATION AND WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLICY AND PRACTICE?

115. Since 1994, the Department of Education has developed a number of policy documents for guiding the implementation of ABET. The following are the most significant:

4.6.1 THE INTERIM GUIDELINES FOR ABET

116. Interim guidelines for the implementation of ABET (Department of Education, 1995) state that, as a result of the high attrition rates in schools and the high numbers of adults who never attended school, millions of adult South Africans are functionally illiterate, making clear the need for accelerating the development of an ABET system. The Interim Guidelines emphasized that the provision of ABET is linked to the development of human resources within the broader strategy for national development, and that ABET is aimed at restructuring the economy, addressing past inequalities and contributing to the creation of a democratic society. ABET has to provide people with the basic foundation for lifelong learning and equip them with the skills and critical capacity to participate fully in society. Clearly the well-trained ABET practitioner is at the heart of these guidelines.
117. While these guidelines refer to all adults who “would like to participate” in ABET programs, women (and in particular, rural inhabitants), out-of-school youth, the unemployed, prisoners and ex-prisoners, and adults with disabilities were singled out as needing special attention and special motivation. The recent SAQA study (2005:54) suggests that there was a strong consensus that equity of access had improved – including people with disabilities, women, learners of all ages and population groups (see also Blom & Keevy, 2005:9).

4.6.2 SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS ACT (NO. 58 OF 1995)

118. In 1995, the government established the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). One of SAQA’s key functions was to develop and implement the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which:
- created a national framework for learning achievements;
 - facilitated access to – and mobility and progression within – education, training, and career paths;
 - enhanced the quality of education and training;
 - accelerated the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training, and employment opportunities; and
 - contributed to the full personal development of each learner and the social development of the nation at large.
119. The central function of the NQF was to accredit unit standards which culminate in qualifications for even basic level learners. It permits portability, accessibility and transferability of skills, knowledge and abilities across qualification levels and across the education and training divide.
120. The South African Qualifications Act (No. 58 of 1995) indicates that one of the functions of the South African Qualifications Authority is to ensure that standards and qualifications registered on the NQF are internationally comparable. Since the global trend is moving towards describing qualifications in terms of achieved learning outcomes and their associated assessment criteria, articulation of South African qualifications with their international counterparts is facilitated if South African qualifications are described in terms of required standards of achievement.
121. The NQF with its commitment to outcomes-based education and training is the means that South Africa has chosen to bring about systemic change in the nature of the education and training system.

122. The purpose of the systemic change is also to transform past practice and associated injustices, as described below.

Problem of allocation of resources based on race

123. One of the criticisms of the past system of education in South Africa was that certain institutions were privileged above others because of the policy of unequal allocation of resources to learning institutions, based on race (SAQA position paper, 2005).

Problem of status of institutions

124. In addition, as a result of this financial discrimination, the perception grew that the standard of provision at these institutions was superior to that of other institutions. Consequently, students from these institutions were granted preferential treatment in access to further education opportunities and in the labor market. In other words, *where* the qualification was obtained was more important than what qualifying students actually knew and could do (SAQA position paper, 2005).

Problem of portability

125. In addition to problems of access, there was the problem of portability in that institutions arbitrarily chose to recognize or not to recognize qualifications achieved at other institutions; employers actively sought graduates from certain institutions and ignored graduates from other institutions. The impact of such practices on the economic and social fabric of South African society is self-evident (SAQA position paper, 2005).

126. It was imperative to correct injustice by now focusing on what learners know and trying to be less exclusionary:

There is hence an historical imperative in the fragmentation of our [SA] society, to focus on what it is that a learner knows and can do as described in standards, rather than where the learner did his or her studying. It is necessary to address this problematic aspect of our [SA] history [that was associated with exclusionary practices] (SAQA: 2005).

4.6.3 THE NATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACT (1998)

127. The National Skills Development Act underscored the government's commitment to overall human resource development, which included education reform. The Act stipulated that in order for South Africans to participate meaningfully in the country's economic and social development, as well as in their own advancement, they must have basic competencies including the ability to read, write, communicate effectively, and solve problems in their homes, communities, and workplaces. The Skills Development Act 1998 and Skills Development Levy Act 1999, introduced by the Department of Labor, reflected the government's commitment to promoting active labor market policies. These Acts provided new institutions, programs and funding policies for skills development. Under the auspices of the Acts, the Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) were charged with the responsibility of transforming the skills base in their respective sectors through the implementation of targeted training at all levels of the workforce.

4.6.4 THE GAP BETWEEN POLICIES AND PRACTICES

128. Sadly, in the midst of all this legislation and teacher development, the delivery of ABET in South Africa is dismal in that only a small proportion of adults requiring a basic education are reached. There is clearly a gap between policy and practice. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) (1999) states that this gap is evident in the fact that between 1995 and 1996, only about 334 000 people (of a potential 4 million adults in need of basic literacy) participated in ABET programs throughout the country. Seven of South Africa's nine provinces spent less than 1% of their education budget on ABET in 1998 (HSRC, 1999). South Africa is now faced with the imperative of reducing the gap between policy and practice through the implementation of programs and initiatives that will bring about the desired changes in the lives of many more South Africans. The HSRC audit indicates that participation in the state sector is "disturbingly low when

compared with the goal of universal access to ABET programmes” referred to in the multi-year plan (DoE, 1998: 7).

129. The Multi-Year Plan (1998) outlined the proposed model for delivery of all ABET services and spelled out the criteria and norms for quality ABET delivery with the challenge of serving 2.5 million learners by the year 2001. However, the plan was not translated into deliverable outcomes and the state did not reach even one-third of this number by that time (Aitchison, Houghton & Baatjes, 2000).
130. Some studies, such as those done by Aitchison et al. (2000) and French (2002), even suggest that there has been a decline in ABET provision and delivery while the sector is becoming increasingly marginalized. Funding allocated to ABET is only 0.83% of the national education budget. In addition the lack of recognition of adult educators and their status with regard to their conditions of service as adult educators employed in the sector is poor.
131. The reasons for such limited delivery include:
- bureaucratic bottlenecks that tend to hamper policy at the level of implementation;
 - the lack of capacity to translate policy into practice; and
 - the lack of political will to financially resource implementation adequately.
132. While school and early childhood education will always receive the bulk of the national education budget, the funding of education for the parents of these children is also crucial. This education itself has many positive effects on the education of the nation’s children.

4.7 (Q.6) WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON EDUCATORS OF THE NQF?

133. Educators are required to follow the principles of outcomes-based education. A SAQA position paper (2005) paper entitled “What is the relationship between the National Qualifications Framework, Outcomes-based Education and Curriculum 2005?” follows Spady (2004) in defining the notion of outcomes-based education:
- Outcomes-based education means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens (Spady, 1994:1).
134. On a cautionary note, it is imperative to ensure in this regard that teachers do not fall into what is termed the “backwash effect”, which results in the teacher requiring learners to rote learn the specific outcomes – thus defeating the purpose of OBE.
135. The SAQA position paper suggests that the implementation of the NQF in South Africa has striven to emphasize, along with “foundational competence”, the notion of applied and reflexive competences – the abilities to put into practice in the relevant context the learning outcomes, and to reflect on them during the process of acquiring a qualification. In regard to the training of ABET practitioners, nurturing these competencies of necessity underlies practitioner training. The combination of competences implies that people (educators and learners) develop different views of knowledge from traditional notions:

Table 4.2 Competences emphasized by SAQA

Applied competence	Foundational competence	Reflexive competence
The demonstrated ability to perform a set of tasks in an authentic context. A range of	The demonstrated understanding of what the learner is doing and why. This	The demonstrated ability to adapt to changed circumstances appropriately

actions or possibilities is considered, and decisions are made about which actions to follow. underpins the practical competence and therefore the actions taken. and responsibly, and understand the consequences of action or inaction.

136. The traditional definitions of knowledge have implicitly designated formal institutions of learning as the primary site of learning. This perception has been reinforced by the fact that in most instances, a qualification is awarded by an institution before any further learning in a practical environment is obtained by the learner. In other words, the sub-text is that once the qualification has been awarded, learning is over – and unless a learner registers for a new, formal qualification, learning for life is over! This bias towards qualification-as-destination is at odds with reality (SAQA 2005:2). In this way educators are supposed to help learners to see learning as part of daily practice, by themselves embracing a new “philosophy” of meaningful learning (which is also learner-centered). By the same token, educators are required to see themselves in terms of “lifelong” and “life-wide¹⁴” education so that they take charge of their own learning and career-pathing. This ability for **autonomous learning is indeed a critical cross-field outcome which permeates all learning on the NQF.**

4.7.1 THE IMPACT OF THE NQF ON ABET PRACTITIONER TRAINING

137. Prior to 1994 educator training was extremely small scale, although important seminal work provided the foundation for post-apartheid training in the ABET sector. Currently various universities offer training from certificate courses lasting about one year to up to three years, and some offer postgraduate studies in adult basic education. The unit standards for educator training have been defined by the Education and Training Standards Generating Body (SGB) and the outcomes are listed in detail above.

138. The SAQA impact study (2005:60) showed that there was some contradictory evidence in regard to whether the implementation of the NQF had led to a major redesign of courses. Some HE providers stated that they had undergone major redesign processes of their curriculum. One public HE institution said this was of one of their highest priorities. Another GET/ABET institution explained that they had gone through a major redesign process due to government department requirements.

139. Other respondents reported difficulties with the redesign process. Some said that while they had to try to redesign courses in line with NQF requirements, the process was very slow. One employer stated that they had redesigned the process to comply with NQF requirements, but still taught the course using the same materials.

140. Most respondents did feel that the quality of the learning programs had improved since the implementation of the NQF. An ETQA respondent (from an Education and Training Quality Assurance body) stated: “I can tell you there is a difference. A difference of attitude, there is a difference of quality of ethical issues, there is a difference of curriculum”. The respondent suggested: “you couldn’t think back that we ever had the old system. You know the way people were taught. What you call lackadaisical. This is a fantastic system”.

141. Some Education and Labor departments felt that learners benefited from the new learning programs: “on the side of learners, I think there’s a lot of support there’s a lot of room being given

¹⁴ While the term “lifelong” is clear, the term “life-wide” refers to the crossing of traditional fields of learning and to the multisectoral nature of adult learning.

to them to be more creative and take charge of their own learning”. And: “I think learners enjoy the outcomes-based system more, because it is more practical”.

142. One respondent had mixed feelings about the outcomes-based education system, mainly because she felt that teachers had not been given enough training to deal with the implementation of the system.
143. Notwithstanding the views on the introduction of the NQF and all the SAQA-related machinery, the tensions between the sectors of HE and SAQA’s ETQAs are visible, as HE deems itself to be an ETQA in its own right. Blom and Keevy (2005) make the same point when they suggest that through quality assurance mechanisms, the quality of education and training has improved (2005: 19). But there are still problems:

Most of the problems [with QA] are associated with lack of capacity [of QA bodies and also of providers], contestation, overlapping responsibilities, lack of meaningful [memoranda of understanding] legislative anomalies and power struggles. QA seems to have become embattled in bureaucratic processes. They conclude that there is still much to do to improve the quality of the education and training system (2005:20) not the least being the need to simplify quality assurance processes.

4.8 (Q.7) WHAT EXAMPLES ARE THERE OF REFORMS TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM WHICH MAY FACILITATE CHANGE IN PRACTICE – INCLUDING ACROSS “MULTISECTOR” ISSUES?

4.8.1 THE NORMS & CONDITIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION CENTERS

144. While all legislation since 1994 was intended to improve practice and delivery, the change has been slow. However, it is clear from recent developments in the field that the DoE¹⁵ recognizes the importance of not only funding adult education centers but also ensuring better conditions of service for adult educators. It appears that none of the recognized unions have made any impact on improving the conditions of adult educators. It is important to also ensure the commitment of the Ministry and that policies are accompanied by funding commitments at national level. Meanwhile, it is at the level of provinces that priorities for funding take place. Although the DoE has national leadership authority, it is the Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) that are the primary fundholders of the minimal ABET funding allocations. (Provincial priorities determine the sectoral distribution of funds.) Efforts are being made via the draft policy to set targets for certification and funding of adult learning centers. At the moment, PED resourcing of ALCs is unpredictable and budget allocations made to ALCs can fluctuate from one year to the next, making planning difficult.
145. The new draft document setting norms and standards for funding adult learning centers is now being re-discussed at ministry level (having undergone various rounds of stakeholder consultation). It has the purpose of supporting the national prioritization of ABET by establishing a funding framework for Adult Learning Centers (public and private). This is in order to facilitate and guide the provincial distribution of funds allocated to ABET in the national budget programs.
146. The ABET Act (2000) obliges the Member of the Executive Council to provide sufficient information to ALCs regarding funding. The implementation of the section within the framework of the norms and standards for funding ALCs should enable predictability and stability in the funding of centers. This would ensure that ALCs are able to plan properly within the funding framework. The document includes a commitment to funding program-based ABET – including personnel and non-personnel costs. This is specified as follows:

Personnel: Public adult learning centers will be allocated posts according to a post distribution

¹⁵ Discussion with Vernon Jacobs, acting ABET director.

model. The model will take into account various factors such as number of learners, programs offered at the centre, time-frames for the duration of programs and skills programs to be offered. Personnel costs will be reflected in the budget allocation of public adult learning centers, but the centers will not receive the funds.

Non-Personnel: “Funding of programme-based ABET” involves the actual transfer of funds or spending rights to public centers on a predictable, uniform, enrolment-driven formula basis, in exchange for the accomplishment of certain curriculum programs for educating adults. The funding is to consist of non-personnel costs such as:

- curriculum offerings in line with credits;
- costs for accessing physical facilities;
- learning Support Materials; and
- learning and teaching aids including equipment for skills programs.

147. Priority programs to be funded are proposed to be the following:

- basic literacy programs;
- skills programs;
- fundamentals (communication and numeracy); and
- other priority programs as determined by the Department of Education.

148. The proposed funding framework is to incorporate a phased approach: The phasing will proceed via a process of certification¹⁶ of centers who will receive funding on a program basis – a process intended to increase the number of centers funded by government. Public centers will thus undergo a process of certification as to readiness to receive funding for programs and those that are certified will move onto the program-based approach. Those not certified will receive capacity-building so as to enable them to be certified as soon as possible. It is recommended that district and provincial officials should be trained to assist non-certified centers. (Private centers will not undergo certification but will be funded in accordance with the same formula-based approach as public ones.)

149. The phasing-in period will thus be driven by the speed at which public centers can be certified. However, for planning purposes, PEDs must schedule a process whereby all public centers can expect to be certified by 1 January 2010 or three years after the gazetting of these norms (whichever comes first). At the end of the phasing-in period, the funding norms and the systems needed to implement them will cover all public centers. Each PED must develop a plan to ensure that all PALCs are certified by 1 January 2010. The plan must be filed with the Department of Education.

150. PEDs are required in terms of this policy to provide an account of the costing and human resource implications of ensuring that:

- the provision of ABET services to all adults who wish to enroll in ABET centers to pursue studies up to ABET level 4;
- all PALCs are certified through the provision of capacity-building;
- all PALCs are funded as per these norms; and
- ABET staff at PED level and district level have sufficient capacity and have been trained to implement these norms.

¹⁶ By certification of centres it is meant that a centre is deemed capable of managing and accounting for public funds in line with the ABET Act and the Public Finance Management Act. Certification will be granted by provinces – a tall order given that many of the schools have not been able to implement this. Thus, while the notion of certification of centers presupposes better quality teaching and learning, many of the more rural centers presently do not have the infrastructural means to qualify for certification nor indeed to apply, and this will indirectly disadvantage the learners that the system is intended to help. Systems will need to be put in place to ensure that especially government centers are assisted and supported to obtain this certification.

4.8.2 THE CONTRIBUTION TO ABET BY THE SETAS, THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMS

151. The SETAs (which are established by the Department of Labor) all regard ABET as a cross-cutting issue for which all SETAs allocate a budget. This makes lifelong education a real possibility, as the various programs need to target specific sectoral groups, such as health workers; construction, service industry, or manufacturing workers; workers in local government, water, or environment; and so on. The SETAs open windows of possibility for ABET to reach a wide spectrum of stakeholders, such as traditional healers, taxi drivers and informal sector workers (those workers who are not employed within the mainstream economy and who sell their services and products on the streets).
152. While the SETA programs disburse funding for the education and training of workers who are employed in respective sectors, workers who are unemployed and who fall outside of the net of the SETAs are catered for by a National Skills Fund or via the proposed extended public works programs. In this way it is hoped that large numbers of adults may receive training where they are employed. In addition, the National Skills fund makes funding available for those adults who are in need of basic education and training but who are not employed.
153. The recently launched Extended Public Works Programmes (EPWPs) form part of the South African government's strategy to address poverty and unemployment. These public work programs also aim to make provision for skills transfer and to give learners access to education and work. The EPWP makes it possible for adult basic education to reach those learners who have been missed by the schooling system and by other literacy interventions. However, the real challenge is now for the program to achieve tangible results.
154. The DoE has itself attempted to collaborate with the various Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). The following project reveals a successful model for integrating education and highlights the successful collaboration between various SETAs: CETA (construction); ESETA (energy); PAETA (primary agriculture); and THERA (tourism and hospitality). The program was instituted in 2004. Service providers were recommended by the respective bodies and the DoE organised the training of people in certain trades (e.g. carpentry, painting, plumbing, glazing, electrical work, agricultural activities broiler making, hospitality and tourism). The service providers were required to train unemployed learners who had enlisted for ABET training. About 60 adult learning centers were reached in the various Provinces – mainly in rural and peri-urban areas. The learning centers were chosen by the Provinces. They continued to receive ABET training in literacy while they received one of the elected skills training. There were 64 construction learners, 40 from primary agriculture and the rest from the other training associations – a total of 104 learners¹⁷.
155. The training was conducted at host schools and learning was done “in practice” at the schools – e.g. the schools became painted, the toilets fixed, dilapidated buildings repaired, etc. Some of the teachers at the schools were also part of the training program.
156. The integration and the immediate focus on livelihoods motivated learners to complete their training. The learners (65% male and 37% women) received a stipend of R20 (\$3) per week and there were no drop-outs or absenteeism.

The strategy employed for this pilot projects suggest a number of options for taking the project to scale by collaborating with the Department of Public Works, as well as with the DoL (through the SETAs) and developing the model for skilling people in general trades while also teaching core subjects (language/communication/numeracy) in a meaningful way to learners.

¹⁷ While the programme is minute considering it was a government programme, it nevertheless serves as a successful model for more widespread implementation.

4.9 (Q.8) WHO PARTICIPATES ?

4.9.1 THE EXTENT TO WHICH MEN AND WOMEN ARE INVOLVED AS EDUCATORS OF ADULTS

157. Based on the UNISA statistics for enrolments to its ABET practitioner courses¹⁸, 80% of students registered for the ABET educator qualification in 1995 were men. This figure was reversed by 2000 with approximately 70% to 80% female students enrolling each year. It is noteworthy that while female educators are in the majority, the higher level ABET posts in government and in the human resource departments in industry are somehow male domains.

4.9.2 MEN AND WOMEN LEARNING

158. It is noteworthy that the learner profile by gender in the state ABET programs reflect the gender breakdown of the teachers being trained, with 80% of learners being female. This is, however, in keeping with global literacy trends, with most learners worldwide being female. Some of the reasons cited in our interviews with teachers suggest that (1) men are reluctant to admit their illiterate status, which would be revealed if they attended classes (2) they don't want to be taught by female teachers (3) they would prefer gender segregated classes (4) they would prefer learning job skills (5) and they are, as migrant workers, away from home.

4.10 (Q.9) WHAT CURRICULUM ISSUES ARE THERE? HOW ARE QUESTIONS RELATING TO TEACHING MIXED ABILITIES/MIXED AGE/MIXED LANGUAGES CATERED FOR, AND TO WHAT EXTENT DO EDUCATORS ADDRESS SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE CURRICULUM?

4.10.1 TEACHING MIXED ABILITY AND MIXED LANGUAGE GROUPS

159. In all areas where the learner population is dispersed it is necessary (and economical) for teachers to deal with mixed age and mixed ability groups. While teacher training attempts to prepare teachers for this, the reality is that it is difficult to do under any circumstances and teachers are forced into this mode purely for reasons of cost. One problem is that young learners do not have the same interests as old learners. The impact of HIV/AIDS has meant that many classes have to cater for two generations as young orphans have been forced out of the school system and are now too old to return to it. They are therefore compelled to join an ABET class with their grandmother who now needs new skills to bring up her orphaned grandchildren. Catering for learners' needs across the age spectrum is as challenging as teaching learners in multiple languages – a phenomenon which is increasing with rapid urbanization of learners into the main metropolitan areas.

¹⁸ Since UNISA ABET has trained in excess of 50 000 adult educators, these statistics seem to be a reliable indicator of the male/female educators in the country.

4.10.2 THE EXTENT TO WHICH EDUCATORS ADDRESS SOCIAL ISSUES – IN PARTICULAR HIV/AIDS

160. By and large, most South African programs have addressed HIV/AIDS in some way. Learners (who are largely affected by HIV) show a deep interest in HIV, and teachers need to receive more training and training in line with more recent developments regarding treatment and care issues.

161. The following are responses from a sample of 150 learners on the SANLI program¹⁹ (South African National Literacy Initiative) who were asked simply to record any benefits of being on the SANLI initial literacy program. Although the results were unsolicited and learners could refer to any benefits, a substantial number of the sample mentioned that the program had helped them to be aware of and address HIV/AIDS issues. Below are some examples of HIV/AIDS being referred to, along with mentioning skills learned:

“I am able to read the newspaper & road signs and understand HIV/AIDS issues.”

“Can fill forms, read road signs & know how someone gets infected by HIV.”

“I know about HIV/AIDS & can pass the message to the children.”

“I have learned road signs & street names, and how you get infected with HIV.”

“Know how HIV is transmitted & how to prevent it.”

“Can fill forms & have learned about HIV/AIDS.”

“I have learnt about HIV/AIDS and condom use, and to communicate using the telephone.”

“I can write my name and have learned about the cruelty of HIV/AIDS.”

“Happy to learn about HIV/AIDS & how to vote.”

“I learnt about the HIV/AIDS & know my date of birth.”

4.10.3 DEALING WITH LANGUAGE ISSUES

162. In theory, South Africa has opted for a multilingual policy with all 11 languages receiving equal status and English (or the language of the economy) as an additive language. In reality, learners need to be cajoled to learn in their mother tongue as they recognize the economic benefits that come with learning English. Institutionalizing mother tongue education is therefore difficult in the main metropolitan areas where learners (new migrants) from all over the country need to be taught in one class. In the latter situation, teachers struggle to teach the variety of languages for learners in ABET level 1 who need to be taught through the medium of mother tongue. In the higher ABET levels, there is a dearth of materials in the mother tongue in learning areas such as social studies, math and life orientation.

Both Botswana and Namibia have the problems similar to those that are experienced with language in South Africa. The teacher's language abilities appear to be the final determinant regarding language use in the classroom in spite of all the policy guiding language usage.

4.11 (Q. 10) HOW ARE SITES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING DEALT WITH?

163. The NQF makes provision for learning to take place in any place since it transcends and is independent of venue. However, while the learners on the SANLI program appeared to be prepared to learn in any venue, if a school was available (usually the adult learners were prevented from using schools), this was considered to be the “Rolls Royce” of training venues. Schools are (grudgingly) being made available for ABET classes to be held at night but the problems associated with this have not been sorted out. There is, for example, unclarity as to

¹⁹ These were randomly selected from about 340 000 learner responses (2003/4). The responses that were not in English were translated by George Moima and Mpho Hleza.

who is to pay for the use of electricity when the buildings are used, who will care for the buildings, and so on. Other logistical problems are encountered as the school teachers tend to be proprietary about over furniture and equipment, and do not allow the ABET teacher to put the desks in groups or to put a poster on the wall. Teachers complain as follows:

Sometimes you get into a classroom and the teacher has left all her notes on the board so you can't even use the board. ... we can't put anything on the walls ... sometimes they give us a classroom but they lock up the toilets ... we don't have a cupboard to put our things in and so have to carry our things to and from class ... thieves come in and steal our watches and cell phones ... and they mug the learners when they go home at night.

Using school buildings comes with another set of problems which need to be addressed by government. Not the least is caused by the crime that tends to consolidate where people tend to group.

164. In general, ABET programs can make more cost-effective use of available educational facilities. They do not require major investments in new buildings.

In Botswana, the 2004 UIE report also noted that this sentiment was expressed, and that people felt government was not making sufficient effort to cater for them. Likewise in Namibia, our research showed that a large number of literacy learners are still taught under trees (sometimes with no chairs) and where they use the primary schools, the desks are too small for them.

5. ADULT EDUCATOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN BOTSWANA

5.1 INTRODUCTION²⁰

165. The Botswana National Literacy Programme (BNLP) was launched in 1981 following a recommendation of the 1977 National Policy on Education. Its target population was “adults and youth” defined as persons of age 10 years and above, and its aims were to enable:

an estimated 250,000 illiterate youth and adults (40% of the population aged 15-45 years) to read, write and calculate in Setswana in the period 1980-1985;

participants to apply knowledge in developing their cultural, social and economic life; and
participants to perform community duties as well as to enjoy the rights and obligations of citizenship.

166. However, the BNLP has been running in Botswana for over 20 years and at the time of writing is under review with the intention of developing a curriculum which might offer learners a systematic program that will enable them to reach the equivalent of the exit of Primary Education (UIE/DNFE Blueprint for Botswana, 2005).

167. A team from the UIE is facilitating the redevelopment process and the new national curriculum, which has been (lovingly) termed *thuto – ga - e – golelwe* or *never too late*.

168. Throughout the re-curricularisation process, cognizance is taken of the proposed educators. It is necessary in this process to ensure that the new curriculum is suitable for the intended educators, is educator-friendly, makes sense, and can be understood, appropriated and managed by them (Torres in UIE, 2005). For that reason, it has been critical to define the profile and quality of the educators to be available as this plays a determining role with regard to the curriculum insofar as it shows its possibilities and limits. In many ways, the South African curriculum for adult learners has not been conceived with the teacher or end user in mind. This results in many implementation difficulties at the learning interface. Clearly, the view of the educator and the training that the educator receives is central to such a process.

Note on this section of the report: The report was written during this interim phase and straddles the present and the proposed. For simplification of reading the proposed program is referred to as the new program, the new national curriculum or the ABEP. Note also that the new curriculum is being developed in tandem with and is indeed contingent on the development of a new language policy and the National Qualifications Framework which are in process. These “movements” will obviously impact on the results.

5.2 (Q.1) HOW LONG ARE TEACHERS TRAINED, WHERE, AND WHAT IS INVOLVED?

169. In considering adult educator capacity building programs in Botswana, it must be emphasized (as mentioned above) that this report is written at time during which that non-formal education in Botswana is undergoing a systemic process of reform. This report on educator capacity thus sits somewhat uneasily between current practice and what the Department of Non-formal Education is in the process of reconstructing.

²⁰ The study draws heavily on the Evaluation of Botswana National Literacy Programme (BNLP), which started in June 2003 and was conducted by a team of the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE). The evaluation exercise did a comprehensive review of the curriculum and operations of BNLP as per the Revised National Policy on Education (1994).

5.2.1 DEFINING THE “ADULT EDUCATOR”

170. Just as the definition of adult education is broad and contested, so too is the definition of who in fact might be considered to be an *adult educator* in Botswana. In terms of this, there are various categories of educators active in the field of adult education and a wide range of definitions as to what “an adult educator” is.
171. Youngman (2002:3) points out that any discussion of adult education personnel has to take into account the fact that “many people who can be said *objectively* to be adult educators do not *subjectively* regard themselves as such”. He points out as an example the agricultural demonstrators who might identify themselves as agricultural extension workers rather than as adult educators. Similarly, the Literacy Group Leaders (LGLs) interviewed for this study spoke of working with “people” from other government departments when they solicit the help of community development workers or resource persons from institutions such as the Departments of Transport, Health or Agriculture (all of which present a range of appropriate courses for adults).
172. It is for this reason that Botswana’s Adult Education Policy can be seen to embrace all those whose “job function includes helping adults to learn”. This function, explains Youngman (2002), may be a primary one, as with a Ministry of Education District Adult Education Officer, or a secondary one, as with a pastor who organizes non-formal education for young adults in the community. The specific functions, he indicates, may comprise different roles, such as teacher, community organizer, administrator, material developer and so on while the technical content of the job may be very varied, ranging from health to business management to construction skills. The scope of training in Botswana is therefore, according to Youngman, inclusive in its conception of the adult educator.
173. However, Youngman (2002) points out that a very important component of adult education in Botswana is provided by the government’s extension services. These services are coordinated at national, district and village levels. At the national level, the Rural Development Coordination Division of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning chairs the Rural Extension Coordinating Committee (RECC) which brings together the directors of all the extension departments (ranging from the Ministry of Education’s Department of Non-Formal Education to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry’s Department of Wildlife and National Parks). The national inter-ministerial committee is paralleled at the lower levels by District Extension Teams and Village Extension Teams, all of which have the goal of integrating the operations of the different departments.
174. These services (from a wide range of adult educators), Youngman (2002) states, provide a concrete example of the existence in Botswana of what he coins post-CONFINTEA training in terms of organizational context and curriculum content.
175. However, the converse of this is also worthy of mention: literacy and the techniques associated with it can and should be integrated into the training of all extension services providers across the sectors as they will need such understandings to know how to make literacies accessible to adults in this target group. Access to services could be expanded by the dissemination of user-friendly materials such as forms for accessing old age pensions, national identity cards, passport applications, clinic cards, posters, pamphlets and HIV/AIDS publications. These could in turn be translated into other languages and could be used in non-formal education classes.

5.2.2 PERSONNEL FOR THE BOTSWANA NATIONAL LITERACY PROGRAMME

176. The majority of the educators deployed to teach on the National Literacy Programme are recruited as Literacy Group Leaders (LGLs) who receive initial training for two weeks and subsequent refresher training which is presented annually by the DNFE.

177. Youngman (2002) states that the Department of Adult Education of the University of Botswana has a key place in the provision of training for adult educators and was designated in *The Revised National Policy on Education April 1994* as “the lead agency for the training of out-of-school education personnel and for research and evaluation in this sector”. This University department undertakes a variety of short-term, in-service training courses for adult educators but, he indicates, its main focus is the provision of qualification programs at five levels with the M.Phil./Ph.D (Adult Education) program – a research based qualification. Youngman (2002) points out that the majority of those who study for these qualifications are working adult educators sponsored by their employers. Since its inception in 1979, the department has always enrolled students from a wide variety of backgrounds and has had students from 20 different central and local government departments as well as from a number of non-governmental organizations.
178. In keeping with the broad definition of adult educator, Youngman (2002) states that a number of other Botswanan institutions also provide training for adult education personnel, but not in the position of lead provider. These institutions train on a sectoral basis and seldom identify themselves as part of the field of adult education. Such institutions include the Botswana College of Agriculture, which provides qualification programs and short in-service courses for agricultural extension workers, and the Department of Social Work at the University of Botswana, whose students include those who will have a role as community development workers. In addition, some government departments provide training for specific cadres, such as the village health educators who receive their initial training from the Ministry of Health. Other institutions provide programs on an occasional basis, such as the Institute of Development Management’s Training of Trainers course for workplace trainers (Youngman, 2002).
179. In addition to training for adult educators presented within Botswana, a significant amount of training is undertaken outside of the country. Such training is usually taken in North America or the UK and seldom in Africa. Youngman (2002) states that “this training can be problematical in terms of relevance and it can undermine national capacity-building, for example when students are sent outside the country for courses locally available”.

Supervisory training

180. At the supervisory level, educators are trained at the University of Botswana in Adult Education, but not all of them. Many District Supervisors have enrolled for the University of South Africa’s ABET practitioner certificate, diploma or postgraduate qualification. The DNFE also provides short supervisor training courses, in order to make sure that supervisors encourage a participatory approach. In one case, a supervisor reported that she had not received any orientation since she started working more than ten years ago. She had to learn on the job, by reading files and participating in meetings (UNESCO/UIE, 2004).

The training of LGLs

181. Although all LGLs are required to undergo two weeks’ initial training (followed by annual refresher training) their training is decentralized and there is no uniform curriculum across the districts. Although this means that training is uneven and not uniform, new recruits have tended to be trained in understanding the organizational structure of the DNFE, how to complete an attendance register, how to mobilize/recruit learners and how to keep them motivated. In addition, newly recruited LGLs are taught how to teach and interact with adult learners, what different teaching methods to use, how to teach mixed-ability groups and how to find and use appropriate learning materials. Usually LGLs are also taught to optimize the learning environment (which is often a site under a tree) and sometimes the skills needed for development or income generating projects.
182. While the above list of topics is regarded as the complete two week LGL training, the short time devoted to the initial training (two weeks) and the usually low level of education²¹ of LGLs

²¹ The UIE evaluation reported that with regard to education level, 25% of the interviewed LGLs had passed the JC certificate, 42% were at Secondary School Form 3 level, 25% Form 2 level and 8% had reached the 10th grade of Secondary School.

often means that it is not possible to deal with all the above-mentioned topics. While the DNFE presents opportunities for refresher training courses the refresher courses often tend to concentrate more on the teaching problems identified²² by the LGLs and do not allow for a deeper training in the foundations of adult education and development.

The short orientation model is also used in Namibia, where the Department of Basic Education has a clearly defined training curriculum for the field trainers. The clear definition and outcomes guides the training and prevents sporadic and ad hoc interventions.

183. After initial training the instructors are given a follow-up training opportunity intended to provide further skills to the instructors and update their knowledge and information after each year of practice. This is often called *refresher training*. In Botswana it is carried out annually and focuses on problems which literacy teachers encountered during their teaching. The teachers help each other to resolve them in order to enhance their performance. Before a refresher training course takes place, the training team usually meet with LGLs and the Cluster Officer (who supervises them) to establish problems that arose in the course of their work (UNESCO/UIE, 2004). While the follow-up training could be used as the basis for teachers to do action research on their problems, the ability of the trainer has not seemed to permit this kind of facilitation, and teachers who themselves have a low education need to address their own learning in order to teach. The LGLs do, however, have considerable community organizing experience and because they live and work in their communities they have the advantages of access.
184. Maruatona (2004:3) states that in Botswana, (like in Namibia, Tanzania and Zambia) instructors are trained to teach literacy through being exposed to principles of teaching adult learners. “After graduating, these volunteers are posted to provinces and districts where they are paid very small monthly honoraria. In Botswana, each session could have about 20 trainees per annum depending on the number of recruits. These depend on the need to replace those who left the program. Others are those who formed their own groups and therefore need initial training as literacy instructors.”
185. A recent evaluation of LGLs by UNESCO/UIE (2004) states that while LGLs are taught skills on how to infuse information on HIV/AIDS, income generating skills and health preventative skills in their current primer-based teaching, the follow-up during supervision is weak on helping to ensure that the skills are practiced. The report recommends that LGLs should get the opportunity during their initial and refresher training to exchange ideas and experiences on different teaching strategies and methods, and that their monitoring and supervision should focus more on pedagogical aspects as opposed to only concentrating on administrative issues (UNESCO/UIE, 2004). This will, however, be contingent on the trainer being trained to facilitate this and to draw out certain didactic lessons.
186. It is essential that the process of re-curricularisation ensures that a new vision of educators is conceived to ensure that the curriculum is indeed implementable. The training of these “grassroots” level workers is important as this is the cadre who interface with the learners and who interpret curricula outcomes in relation to learners’ needs. Clearly, as is shown here as well as in the UIE (2004) report, the *ad hoc* and sporadic, piecemeal training of grassroots educators is entirely inadequate.

5.2.3 PRACTITIONER ACCREDITATION

187. Given that the University of Botswana has been appointed by government as the lead training provider for the capacitation of adult education personnel, the University’s Department of adult education undertakes a variety of short-term, in-service training courses for adult educators but

Most LGLs have not managed to go beyond Grade 7.

²² It is recognised that the problems of teachers could be incorporated as action research points to improve teaching. However this cannot occur unless the trainers themselves are trained in this technique.

focuses on the provision of professional programs for educator development at five levels. According to Youngman (2002), these are as follows. The M.Phil./Ph.D (Adult Education) program is research based and has just been established. The M.Ed. (Adult Education) course has recently been revised. It takes into account the imminent changes to the University's overall academic structure, which will introduce semester-based modular courses and flexible programs with credit banking. It seeks to provide a relevant contemporary curriculum influenced by the CONFINTEA perspective. The B.Ed. (Adult Education) and Diploma in Adult Education are currently being revised and will undoubtedly take cognizance of the implications of CONFINTEA. The Certificate in Adult Education is offered by distance education (Youngman 2002:5).

188. The LGLs receive initial training which is recognized by the DNFE. Other professional and supervisory personnel may obtain one of the range of certificates, diplomas, degrees or post raduate offerings presented by the University of Botswana or a qualification obtained by open and distance education, as presented by the ABET Institute of UNISA.
189. A more professionally oriented curriculum is offered for adult educators who are trained in one of the local or regional university courses to become competent in the following learning areas:

- principles of adult education;
- psychology of adult education;
- introduction to planning programs for adult learners;
- adult learners and society;
- adult learning in practice; and
- introduction to educational research.

5.2.4 CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR LITERACY EDUCATORS

190. In line with the broad definition, career opportunities lie in any of the fields and Ministries which provide learning opportunities for adults. Although the LGLs receive training with only a specific and limited focus, they could, with adequate training and support, be developed to advance their careers and take on the roles of supervisors and professional adult educators. Adult educators with better developed skills could enter the domain of adult education materials developers, adult education researchers and the range of adult educators needed for working across the ministerial departments.

5.2.5 THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE TRAINING OF EDUCATORS IS FORMAL/NON-FORMAL

191. Training may be regarded as formal to the extent that it complies with criteria such as adequate quality, recognition for accreditation purposes by a recognized body and whether the training leads to a qualification which it is recognized for salary purposes (in particular by government). It is clear, however, that training for supervisors and professional adult educators is formal insofar as the universities are involved and insofar as educators are remunerated according to a recognized salary scale. However, the training of LGLs is non-formal and LGLs are only recognized for the purpose for which they are trained.
192. It is, however, crucial that the new cadre of LGLs are formally trained and accredited and that the system makes provision for their development through the opening up of career paths for those who aspire to them.

5.3 (Q.2) WHAT IS INVOLVED IN “QUALITY ASSURING” THE QUALITY OF EDUCATOR TRAINING AND DELIVERY ?

While South Africa, by virtue of the SAQA Act, has introduced a system for education training quality assurance (ETQAs), an equivalent body does not exist as yet in Botswana. Presently it is up to the end-users and the providers of training to assess the quality of training provided to adult educators.

193. The ETQA system in South Africa is not the panacea for problems in the sector. It has been found that QU that depends on the assessor’s own knowledge runs the risk of becoming a quantitative, checklist-driven activity without any deep understanding of the issues of quality.

5.3.1 CONSIDERING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TRAINING OF EDUCATORS

194. In interviews with the NLP staff a common response was that that the two-week initial training for LGLs was too short to enable them to become *au fait* with the rudiments of teaching adults. Moreover, LGLs stated that the follow-up refresher programs were “inadequate, were always the same or that they tended to focus on problems they experienced” and did not take them beyond these predicaments. However, the UIE (2004) reports that in Orapa, where a process of change is being promoted, LGLs reported on the refresher training as being “an innovative experience” since the workshops were outcome-oriented and were very motivating for LGLs.

195. Asked about the topics that were dealt with in the training courses, the LGLs mentioned the following: how to prepare lessons and compile a lesson-plan, banking, how to write a last will and testament, how to register to vote, HIV/AIDS, recruitment strategies, group dynamics, how to use the class time properly, and how to methodologically introduce the key words in the primers (used for initial basic learning).

196. All of the respondents indicated that the training was useful for their practice and some suggested that the incorporation of peer learning and peer observation should be included as training methods. In most cases, LGLs requested more training in the refresher courses. Asked in which aspects they would like more training, the respondents listed the following: improving their general education, new methods and new strategies for using the primers, instruction in use of Primary School books, how to teach ESL, social and civic studies, improved knowledge of lesson plans, assessment instruments, home economics and life skills (UIE 2004).

197. Clearly, the LGLs express the need (which no doubt arises from their life experiences) for a more professional training which generally equips them with the generic skills all teachers require to survive and that these be structured into a sensible program.

Who is responsible for examining the quality of the educator training?

198. Before a refresher training course takes place, the training team usually meets with LGLs and the Cluster Officer who supervise them to establish problems that arose in the course of their work. Since there is no formal pre- or post-test evaluation of the training courses, evaluation is limited to observation (supervision) of the LGLs after the training courses.

199. The coordination of the training in the regions and districts is one of the responsibilities of the Chief Adult Education Officer at Head Office level. Together with the Regional Officers he or she goes around to supervise the training courses. The Cluster Officers are trained at national level by the National Training Team.

200. While observing classes, the supervisors obtain suggestions from LGLs that are considered for inclusion in the training courses. Regular supervisory visits to LGLs can also be seen as a follow-up to initial training. The refresher courses are based on problems identified during supervision as noted in the supervisors’ reports. All the respondents (UIE 2004) were very clear about the dynamic interrelationship between supervision and training. Supervisors also participate in the training courses with their LGLs; some are even part of the training teams. Before a training

course takes place, the training team meets with LGLs and their supervisors to determine the kinds of problems that have arisen. In this way, the system attempts to ensure a feedback loop with a view to improvement.

201. However, supervisors are themselves supervised by the District Officers and, for those posted in the villages, visits from their district supervisors are rare. The District Officer meets from time to time with her/his (subordinate) supervisors, reads their reports and intervenes if there are any problems recorded.
202. During the UIE impact evaluation (2004) the NLP staff interviewed stated that supervision of the LGLs ought to be done on a regular basis by Cluster Supervisors or Adult Education Assistants. However, the frequency of supervisory visits and the number of LGLs to supervise per officer varies. Some respondents indicate that each LGL should be visited at least once or twice per month. Others said that it is done once a week, or even several times (2–3) per week. But these guidelines are sometimes difficult to achieve, particularly in those cases where LGLs work in remote areas and transport constraints are a problem. In this regard, some LGLs stated that they only received visits every two, three or four months, from time to time, once a year or never!

5.3.2 WHAT IMPACT HAS THE EDUCATOR TRAINING MADE?

203. The 2003 National Literacy Survey²³ indicates an increase in the national literacy rate of 81% (in 2003) as compared to 68.9% in 1993²⁴. However, the recent UIE/UNESCO study of 2004 shows that training efforts intended to enskill the LGLs has been inadequate. The various factors involved in ensuring good practice cut across a broad spectrum of indicators from policy to learning outcomes with improvements required across all areas: materials, curricula, and conditions of employment for educators, educator development and in resourcing.
204. It is necessary that the countries discussed in this report are able to train a cadre of grassroots educators who can take on the challenge of adult education. They are the “foot soldiers” who need to be trained in large numbers to do the work.

Accessing training

205. However, educator improvement implies that educators have the opportunity for training aimed at developing educator capacity. So, while the University of Botswana currently offers a diploma, degree and postgraduate courses in Adult Basic Education for people interested in a career in Adult Education, it is lamentable that DNFE staff, *if selected*, can attend one of these courses and as reported in the UIE report, the “DNFE has *never* been allotted more than four slots per year for educators to enroll for the certificate or diploma courses”. Access is further limited by the fact that the courses presented at the University, especially the diploma course in Adult Education, are considered too expensive for the Ministry of Education to afford, and the DNFE gets no more than eight places on the diploma course per annum. The interviewed NLP staff state that

... not more than three senior staff nationwide go for training every year ... and that nobody has been sent for master studies in the past three years.

²³ The National Literacy Survey, a 10-year exercise meant to assess the progress of Botswana's literacy rate. The first survey, conducted in 1993, established a national literacy rate of 68.9% (70.3% females, 66.9% males); the second survey, conducted in 2003, established a national literacy rate of 81.2% (81.8% females; 80.4% males).

²⁴ The performance in literacy tests increased the national literacy rate by only 1.6 %. Since the survey states that only 3% of the eligible population took the literacy tests it is difficult to attribute the increase in literacy to educator training rather than to an increase in school enrolment rates. This assumption may be supported by the disparities of literacy attainment by age given the findings of the survey suggesting that literacy rates decreased with an increase in age and that older people were less likely to be literate.

206. The lack of access to professional development for DNFE personnel (especially at the grassroots level) seriously hampers impact.
207. For district officers and cluster supervisors opportunities for further training are rare, so personnel are normally not upgraded for many years. As one cluster supervisor points out: “after seventeen years of service we are [JC] certificate holders, yet we are expected to perform other duties which are at a higher level”, (UIE 2004).
208. According to UIE/UNESCO (2004), other training opportunities building the capacity of DNFE are restricted by the low qualification level of the employees. As permanent staff at the DNFE are usually employed with only a Junior Certificate, they are usually excluded from such training on the basis of their low qualification.
209. A further aspect related to lack of access to training within the country (according to the UIE 2004 report) is the fact that most of the courses presented by the University of Botswana are fulltime courses which are studied over a period of one or two years. The fulltime nature of these programs makes it difficult for DNFE staff to attend. South Africa and Namibia have introduced distance education training programs for grassroots trainers and this has helped to develop this level of capacity in the two countries.

5.3.3 THE USE OF UNTRAINED EDUCATORS

210. Although all LGLs are required to have undergone an initial two-week block of training or a class demonstration before they can teach on their own, it is suggested that (in this sense) the LGLs are essentially untrained. In a period of two weeks one can hope at best to show a trainer how to implement a training package. In the absence of a well-developed learning package and given what is observed in the field, this form of pre-service training is not sufficient. The UIE (2004) report states that many LGLs have been deployed without having received the initial orientation. Moreover, although educators have the opportunity to attend some follow-up training opportunity to acquire further skills and update their knowledge and information after each year of practice, this intervention usually ends up focusing almost exclusively on problems which educators encountered during their teaching. This valuable time is then spent trying to resolve problems rather than presenting directed training to enhance LGLs’ performance. If the meetings were organized as action research gatherings, they could contribute to the capacitation of the LGLs but this cannot be a substitute for a good quality training program for all grassroots facilitators.

5.4 (Q.3) IN TERMS OF WHAT CONDITIONS OF SERVICE DO EDUCATORS WORK?

211. The LGLs are not considered DNFE staff. They are volunteers, who should (in terms of government regulations) have been offered permanent appointment after six months of service. Many have been employed under the “informal” conditions of service for ten years or more. This present arrangement is convenient for government because of the low budgetary allocation for basic and literacy education. However, these “conditions of service” cut both ways: because LGLs are volunteers and not civil servants they are free to leave the program at any time. They regularly do so if they find a better job, and this has a profound effect on the delivery of literacy education: “each time a teacher deserts the program the group either disbands or it takes a long time before a substitute is found” (Maruatona 2004:6).
212. The unsatisfactory employment conditions of LGLs, the low level of professional development of NLP staff in the field and a weak human resource development policy in the DNFE are problems which seriously impact on the DNFE.
213. In view of the need to develop and implement the proposed ABEP program, training and human resource development should be a priority of the DNFE. But before any further investment is made into that, the UIE (2004) report states, the employment conditions of the LGLs will have to be improved.

As in other countries, a concerted effort to improve the conditions of service of the cadre of personnel has to be made. In South Africa, with the new norms and standards for funding of adult learning centers (now in the hands of the Ministry to finalize and implement), provision for funding of personnel costs has been made; and this should go some way towards addressing this problem in South Africa. (See Section 4.8.1 above.)

5.5 (Q.4) HAVE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF EDUCATORS BECOME (RE)DEFINED?

214. As already indicated, the Botswanan Adult Education Policy can be said to embrace all those whose “job function includes helping adults to learn”. Concurrently, roles and functions have extended to embrace this broad definition of “aiding learning”. In the framework of the Adult Basic Education Course (ABEC) pilot project, a manual was developed for the training of participating LGLs. On the basis of this experience, a 10-week pre-service training curriculum for LGLs was developed by the DNFE and is currently being piloted. It addresses four major areas: conditions of the adult learner and group dynamics, classroom process, community contexts, and the teaching process. The curriculum includes tasks/contents, knowledge, attitudes, skills and learning experiences.
215. As part of the course, theoretical components are paired with practical exercises. This seems to be an important initiative that is helping to improve the quality of the pre-service training. These resources could be usefully drawn upon and developed into training material for the enskilling of the new cadre of grassroots trainers who will be needed for the ABEP program. However, it is recommended that the program be modularized and professionally delivered so that each staff member can receive the training necessary to “qualify” to teach.
216. The new National Training Centre in Kang, which was also visited by the UIE evaluation team, has recently opened the facilities which are shared with BOCODOL which is in itself a resource for the DNFE and who could be commissioned to provide the necessary educator development program by way of distance education to the new cadre of grassroots facilitators.

5.5.1 PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

From the discussion above it can be seen that the question of organizing for the enskilling of a sufficient cadre of educators with appropriate methods and strategies for participatory adult education to bring it in line with the positive findings of the ABEC pilot project still needs to be addressed in Botswana.

5.5.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY-BASED PARTNERSHIPS

217. The fact that Botswana regards adult education as multisectoral and as a multi-disciplined profession is a vital element in the literacy programs that has been neglected in recent years. The active involvement of local bodies could rectify this. The most important of these, according to the National literacy report (2003) for the purposes of the NLP, are the Village Literacy Committees (VLCs) which encourage potential and actual learners to participate in the literacy program.
218. The DNFE should revitalize the Village Literacy Committees by ensuring that their members receive a sitting allowance. It should also encourage CBOs, NGOs and churches to support the literacy program and ensure that extension teams are involved in the post-literacy phase.

5.6 (Q.5) WHAT POLICIES SUPPORT ADULT EDUCATION AND WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLICY AND PRACTICE?

219. Throughout the Botswanan documentation, it is clear that there is (at least at the level of policy) a commitment towards the capacitation of adult education personnel. With respect to professional

development in the field of non-formal education, the National Commission on Education (1993) recommends as follows:

The Department of Adult Education of the University of Botswana should be the lead agency for the training of out-of-school education personnel and for research and evaluation in this sector (REC. 76, Revised National Policy on Education, 1994).

220. Evidently there is political support for educator development. It is, however, lamentable that the state is unable to enroll more than a handful of educators on University training programs each year and that the cadre of LGLs are left without the benefit of training.
221. Commitment at the level of policy is also evidenced in the findings in the *Report of the National Commission on Education 1993* in which adult learning, “Vocational and Technical Training” and “Out-of School-Education” are highlighted with proposals on enabling such learning opportunities to adults, both those who lack basic education or and those who wish to further their initial education. Youngman (2002) elucidates the report as containing proposals grouped according to four main areas: work-related skills training, adult basic education, extension programs and continuing education. Each of the separate proposals requires the training of a specific cadre of educator.

5.6.1 THE GAP BETWEEN POLICIES AND PRACTICE

222. When the *Revised National Policy on Education April 1994* is read in conjunction with the Commission’s *Report*, referred to above, it provides a comprehensive policy for adult education. This framework for the development of adult learning which was developed in 1994. Youngman (2002) describes the framework as being a forward-looking and progressive national education policy which provides a conducive policy environment for initiatives in adult education within the CONFINTEA conception. The challenge now lies in ensuring that the social policy environment sets targets for delivery.
223. It is necessary for the process of recurricularisation to simultaneously provide a strategy for the large scale training and for the sustained and organized training of adult educators who will be required to “deliver” the curriculum.

5.7 (Q6) THE DIFFICULTIES OF TEACHING IN SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS

224. Problems regarding space in Botswana are not unlike the problems experienced in some parts of South Africa and in most of Namibia, where the most vulnerable are located in some of the most remote parts of the country. The National Literacy Survey (2003) indicated disparities of literacy attainment between the districts. As expected, the town districts had high literacy rates than the more remote areas. Some districts like Ngamiland West and Kgalagadi South recorded rates below the 1993 national rate of 68.9%.
225. The vastness of the region and the necessity to decentralize both by definition mean an uneven distribution of resources and skills. This can be seen in, for example, the training of LGLs which is decentralized and for whom the training curriculum is not uniform across the districts. The unevenness of quality of training across the districts can be seen to be a reason for the disparities in literacy attainment in some of the districts. The further from the centre, the worse learners will perform as resources are generally more easy to access at the “centre”.
226. Limits of resources also impact on the quality of teaching. The uneven distribution of resources between districts, such as personnel constraints and lack of transport, are cited as the main reasons for a relatively low frequency of supervision visits in remote areas, mainly affecting those classes that are in the rural areas and distant²⁵ from the District or Cluster Offices. The effectiveness and frequency of supervision of LGLs seem to depend very much on the

²⁵ It is also recognized that supervision is more often than not limited to controlling administrative tasks.

availability of transport and the distance of the location where classes take place from the Cluster or District Office. Moreover, although supervisors are expected to monitor an average of 10 to 15 LGLs, a number of respondents work with up to 20 LGLs and are not able to supervise all those allocated to them especially if the notion of distance/time enters the equation.

227. Even if the policy of resource sharing²⁶ were effectively implemented, it would only partially resolve the problem of facilities. A major obstacle is the sparse dispersal of learners in rural areas – a problem which impacts not only on delivery but also on the distances that learners have to travel in order to attend classes. These kinds of problems could be usefully revisited by using a sliding scale for the provision of resources which would compensate for criteria such as sparseness, lack of infrastructure such as transport and also with regard to the personnel funding formula.
228. The new ABEP curriculum places special emphasis on rural areas, given that almost half of Botswana's population lives in rural areas and that these areas show a much higher concentration of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy (34.3% illiteracy rate, compared to 14.6% in urban areas) and, in general, scarce educational opportunities. Explicit linkages between the education policy and the Revised National Policy for Rural Development (2002) are essential.

5.8 (Q.7) WHAT EXAMPLES ARE THERE OF REFORMS TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM WHICH MAY FACILITATE CHANGE IN PRACTICE – INCLUDING ACROSS “MULTISECTOR” ISSUES?

229. The DNFE's new ABEP Blueprint (UIE, 2005) opens the way for the selection of adequate personnel in both administrative and teaching roles for the DNFE. According to the Blueprint: educational level and professional profile are not enough if they are not accompanied by the right attitude and empathy to be able to handle difficult social and human contexts, and to experience satisfaction with the job.
230. In order to recruit personnel with the values, attitudes and skills required for the implementation of ABEP, the Blueprint recommends continuous education and training, both pre- and in-service, support to facilitators on the ground to ensure that facilitators become familiar and confident with the program components, particularly the curriculum. This will require that the DNFE elaborates on a program that can address this critical shortage of capacity in the country. In addition, the Blueprint recommends that educators are adequately remunerated.
231. The Blueprint outlines the need for the following:
- development of appropriate *instructional materials and availability of such materials* in sufficient numbers in every learning centre;
 - continuous evaluation* to inform curriculum development and implementation; and
 - diversifying program implementation and modalities to respond to the *various contexts and needs*, instead of trying to create a single homogeneous model for all.
232. The Blueprint points to the difference between the *prescribed* curriculum (i.e. curriculum proposal and the instructional materials are part of the prescribed curriculum) and the *implemented* curriculum (which refers to what happens in the teaching learning situation) and the gap between them. This is attributed to a great extent to the teacher who is required to define and give shape to the *real* curriculum. One example of this may be gleaned from our visit to a classroom in South Africa where a lesson on human rights or democracy was being taught by a totally autocratic teacher. The process and the content are presented in a contradictory way.

²⁶ See discussion on the use of venues below.

5.9 (Q.8) WHO PARTICIPATES?

5.9.1 THE EXTENT TO WHICH MEN AND WOMEN ARE INVOLVED AS EDUCATORS OF ADULTS

233. The extent to which men and women involved as educators of adults can be said to reflect gender-status imbalances in the country overall. At the regional level, local supervisors as well as local facilitators are usually female, while their male colleagues assume higher-ranking administrative positions.

5.9.2 MEN AND WOMEN LEARNING

234. As is shown in the National literacy Survey (2003), in Botswana, (as in South Africa and in Namibia) the gender distribution is significantly imbalanced among literacy learners, with women (62.4%) outnumbering the men by almost two to one. And, like South Africa, the gender gap would be even greater were it not for the large the number of men attending literacy classes in prison! The urgency of motivating men to enroll for adult education in these countries requires more than a passing comment.

235. However, given that women are more motivated to attend adult education training, the the National Survey recommends that adult classes could make a more meaningful impact on the economic lives of learners if they were taught work-related skills, and if their general literacy was more directed to strengthening the participants' economic situations. This focus on work-related learning and livelihoods would presumably also attract more male learners who, it appears from discussions with the DNFE, readily attend classes in which skills training such as bee keeping and agriculture are taught.

5.10 WHAT CURRICULUM ISSUES ARE THERE? HOW ARE QUESTIONS RELATING TO TEACHING MIXED ABILITIES/MIXED AGE/MIXED LANGUAGES CATERED FOR, AND TO WHAT EXTENT DO EDUCATORS ADDRESS SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE CURRICULUM?

As indicated above, Botswana is currently involved in overhauling its non-formal education curriculum. The following underlying philosophy will bring Botswana in line with trends emerging in education in other countries and with South Africa and Namibia as discussed in this report.

5.10.1 THE BOTSWANAN BLUEPRINT

236. The Blueprint (UIE 2005) states explicitly that ABEP will be:

Competencies-based: Competencies refer to *knowledge* plus *know-how*. A competencies-based curriculum ensures deep understanding of phenomena, connecting theory and practice, translating ideas into actions, using scientific knowledge in everyday life.

Outcomes based: Outcome-based education and outcome-based curriculum focus on competencies, that is, on what students can actually do with what they are taught, on the short-term and medium-term impact of learning on their daily lives. Therefore, assessment is not focused on the capacity to retrieve or repeat information but rather on the capacity to translate learning into better thinking, better doing, changing attitudes, anticipating and solving problems, etc..

Recognizes prior learning: Children, youth and adults, even those who are illiterate and have never attended school, have a wealth of competencies, knowledge and experience that must be acknowledged (a) as the starting point for the teaching process in every level, area, and lesson; (b) as valid knowledge and know-how to be accredited when deciding about the level at which learners must be placed when joining a program; and (c) for accreditation purposes, as regulated by the National

Qualification Framework (UIE:2005).

5.10.2 TEACHING MIXED ABILITY AND MIXED AGE GROUPS

Across all the countries in this survey teachers have emphasized the difficulties of teaching mixed-level groups; however, this problem is more acute in Botswana where low population density does not always make it possible to separate the groups into ability levels and still retain some semblance of a “class”.

237. Although most supervisors propose that learners be separated by primer level, the new policy would need to address in particular how low population density in some areas will impact on teachers and how the new curriculum and the proposed new teacher training could address these perennial teaching difficulties, which are common to all countries and which we tend to ignore as being an anomaly. Mixed ability groups are the norm in adult educator and the problem is not simply going to disappear. Educator training providers need to give serious attention to training educators to use methods and approaches which can minimize the difficulties they have.
238. While mixed ability groups pose a challenge for teachers (and the issue was raised by 27 teachers), the notion of mixed age groups was not cited as a major issue in Botswana, with only four respondents suggesting this as a problem. However, the National Survey reveals that the population of adult learners is ageing and that “older adults” come to class with eyesight problems. Learners’ eyesight should be tested and they should be provided with reading glasses, if necessary. It is important to note here, however, that the text/font of the primers presently being used by the DNFE makes the materials totally inaccessible to even the best sighted. The texts are handwritten since they were developed before the use of PCs were introduced, and while the material could have been considered adequate for that genre of materials of that generation, it is surprising (in the absence of any other kind of improvements) that no one – neither the DNFE nor the University – has made the effort to get the text of the primers typeset and that learners have had to struggle with this for more than 20 years.
239. While rightfully pointing to the need for reading spectacles, the almost obvious typesetting of the primer text (10 years ago) would have addressed the problem of poor reading sight of learners by at least 75%. The National Survey revealed that the demand for literacy remains high among dropouts and that 78% would like to resume literacy courses. Of those who stated that they did not want to return to classes, 66% stated that they were prevented by health problems, particularly failing eyesight. This is not surprising as a large proportion of dropouts are of advanced age²⁷, and they would obviously have problems reading the letters in the primers.
240. It seems to be a gross violation of learners’ rights that they have had to contend with such poor quality text for so long. Moreover, since all the initial text is in Setswana, the DNFE could have utilized (in the absence of better material in the country) text from across its borders where Setswana is also an official language. Denying learners their right to read because “someone” feels that they might possibly become “contaminated” or that they might compromise their national pride if they were exposed to (high quality) texts from an area some 100km away (i.e. South Africa) is very unfortunate.
241. It is necessary also that the new policy makes provision for learners or potential learners who are differently abled. Certain disabilities have specific requirements and teaching learners with learning difficulties would mean that the LGLs (or whatever the new cadre will be called) will need to have specific training to teach these learners.
242. When designing the new learning materials for the ABEP, attention will have to be given to the age specific differences in literacy rates since they have implications for curriculum planning, especially the types of materials that are developed in order that the materials address and meet the needs of different age groups.

²⁷ The problem of older learners needing reading glasses is universal. The extent of the problem could have been minimised by “typing” the primers.

5.10.3 THE EXTENT TO WHICH EDUCATORS ADDRESS SOCIAL ISSUES – IN PARTICULAR HIV/AIDS

243. While ten booklets on HIV/AIDS are currently being written by the DNFE, the new ABEP curriculum proposes to integrate the teaching of HIV/AIDS across the curriculum. It is, however, necessary that educators (especially the LGLs) receive training on HIV/AIDS since they are inevitably the people to whom the community will turn for advice and information. They will need to be equipped with a range of information pertaining to the causes, methods of prevention, treatment regimes available, points of referral, information on testing and so on. While it is recognized that Botswana is resourced in terms of clinics it is important to mainstream the training of HIV/AIDS and the training of LGLs is essential.

5.10.4 DEALING WITH LANGUAGE ISSUES

244. Setswana (spoken by about 70% of the population) is the national language, while English is the official language. The general trend in educational terms over the past few years has been to use Setswana as a language of instruction in the initial years and to introduce English into the school curriculum as early as possible, first as a second language and then as a language of instruction. However, besides Setswana, there are 26 other local languages spoken by the remaining 30% of the population. As in South Africa and Namibia, the question of mother tongue education and multilingualism is clearly an issue in Botswana.

245. At the level of delivery, it is noted in the National Survey (2003) that almost 50% of drop-outs have a mother tongue *other* than Setswana. The degree of language and ethnic diversity indicates a demand for literacy among all ethnic groups. However, teachers will need to be trained to work within the concept of bilingualism (or multilingualism). Intercultural learning must be advocated and incorporated into the NLP and the future ABEP. Bilingualism and multilingualism should be recognized and developed as a national cultural asset through education. The DNFE should facilitate the acquisition of literacy in mother tongue languages whenever possible. The vitality of the minority languages and cultures will depend on the promotion of literate environments in the different local languages. According to the National Survey (2003):

the most common (non-Setswana) languages were Ikalanga and Zezuru/Shona; and
none of the respondents could read languages such as Sebirwa, Setswapong and Sesubiya.

246. While the National Literacy Survey (2003) found that people read and wrote in other languages, the new ABEP curriculum recognizes the need to develop materials in other mother tongue languages for use during the initial stages of learning even though provision for this is not made at the level of policy. Once literate in their mother tongue, learners could be introduced to Setswana as a second language in order to improve their economic situations and to help preserve the rich and diverse cultures in Botswana.

247. In terms of these understandings the DNFE's Blueprint suggests:

using mother tongue as a language of instruction in the initial stages to acquire basic literacy and to further understand and develop the language;
using Setswana as a language of instruction and as a subject area;
introducing English as a second language in Level 1 once basic literacy in the mother tongue is ensured; and
using English as a language of instruction in a few selected modules, starting in Level 2 UIE 2005)

248. This implies among others that:

all program facilitators are at least bilingual, proficient in mother tongue and in English, and able to teach them;
appropriate and sufficient instructional and reading materials are made available in

these languages, including languages other than Setswana;

all available technologies and media are used to support ESL education (UIE, 2005);

249. The possibility of including all minority languages as languages of instruction for basic literacy purposes will depend on these three factors, as well as on the effective demand from the interested groups. The extent to which English can be offered in this program, and the competencies to be expected in this language, will also depend on these factors, especially in rural areas.

5.11 (Q.10) HOW ARE SITES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING DEALT WITH?

As in all the countries of this survey, venues for adult learners leave much to be desired and a classroom is very likely to be nothing more than the shade of a tree in the middle of the village.

250. The UIE report (2004) reports that learners feel exposed to public scrutiny, and sometimes open to humiliation:

People don't like very much to learn under trees. It means: Government is taking us as not important, because they spend a lot of money building classrooms, building big, big, big offices, then, when it comes to us, because we are not important, we have to learn under trees, and are not interested in that (Headman interviewed by UIE team).

251. The same sentiment was revealed by the NLP staff who stress the need for sheltered classrooms: "Adults don't like to be taught outside, because other people laugh at them sitting outside on the ground" (UIE, 2004).

252. Moreover, according to the UIE (2004) report, "half the 'classrooms' visited were without shelter and roof (under trees). But even in cases where there were shelters, the zinc roofs caused the rooms to heat to over 40° requiring the that LGLs to supply learners with plenty of water during classes, or compelling classes to find a shady place (under a tree!)."

As in South Africa, the sharing of school classrooms comes with problems. Local primary schools do not want to share space and government needs to intervene in this by way of policy. However, even if the policy of resource sharing were effectively implemented, it would only partially resolve the problem of facilities. A major obstacle is the wide dispersal of learners in rural areas which means that many learners have to travel very long distances in order to reach the nearest school.

6. ADULT EDUCATOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN NAMIBIA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

253. In many ways, Namibia represents a country which has demonstrated that it was ready, willing and able to deal with literacy as part of the broader development context. Namibia, after its independence, is a country where political will and an enlightened leadership have made a contribution to the development of its non-formal programs whilst simultaneously focusing on the development of people and communities.
254. According to the Second Phase Policy Guidelines for the period from 1996 to 2000²⁸, “the National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN) is part of the Government’s commitment to national development and education for all.” Article 20 of the Namibian constitution states: “All persons shall have the right to education.” It is the responsibility of the government to provide basic education to all residents, including adults. The Namibian education policy for adult literacy (like the South African policy) highlights redress as its point of departure.
255. The Department of Adult Education, Libraries, Arts and Culture was established within the Ministry of Education soon after Namibia’s independence. In September 1992, the National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN) was launched. The NLPN was able to build upon a long tradition of literacy and adult education in Namibia, dating back to the early activities of missionaries and the continuing education programs of the churches, NGOs and SWAPO during the liberation struggle.

As in Botswana and South Africa, Namibia needed a cadre of educators who would provide adult literacy “on the ground”. For this reason, the NLPN has identified a multi-pronged approach to develop the capacity of its educators who would teach the three stages of the NLPN.

256. The NLPN covers three stages of literacy learners, with each lasting about a year. Since the launch of the NLPN in 1992 to 2004, about 443 500 adult learners have enrolled in the three stages of the program. Out of this total 70% of the learners enrolled were women. Of the 443 500 learners, 74% or 327 636 were tested and 76% achieved basic competence in reading and writing. According to the last literacy assessment, the literacy rate in Namibia of Namibians aged 15 and older is 83%. To what extent does the provision of a three stage (about three years) adult basic education and training program equip people to function in a modern economy? (See the Appendix for more details.)
257. It is not within the terms of reference of this survey to fully interrogate the claimed literacy rates. Suffice it to say that the reported and claimed 83% literacy rate is very high if measured against international standards. With all literacy statistics questions such as “What definition of literacy is used?”, “What is regarded as functional literacy in the country?”, “How were learners assessed? need to be asked.
258. It should be noted that since countries have different social and cultural contexts, different definitions and standards of literacy and different methodologies for collecting and compiling literacy data, comparisons between countries must be made with caution.
259. For some countries, literacy is measured by asking a simple question like “Are you literate or not?” or “Can you read and write with understanding?” while elsewhere a more comprehensive question is asked or a literacy assessment test is administered.

²⁸ The current policy is still in operation pending the policy review process.

260. However, the stated goal of the NLPN in 1997 was that by the year 2000, Namibia should achieve a literacy rate of 80%. This seems to indicate that the NLPN has by 2005 succeeded in reaching the goals it has set for itself. The current enrolment for 2005 is 17 124 students (excluding students from Erongo, Kunene and the Kavango regions). It should be noted that all the above statistics have been supplied by DABE.

6.2 (Q.1) HOW LONG ARE TEACHERS TRAINED, WHERE, AND WHAT IS INVOLVED?

261. Various levels of personnel are utilized on the NLPN for a variety of organizational, supervisory and conceptual roles, as explained below.

6.2.1 DEFINING THE “ADULT EDUCATOR”

262. Promoters, extension workers, health workers, NGOs, private sector consultants, agriculture extension officers can all be found working in the field of non-formal education. They can be regarded as adult educators since they all contribute towards helping the nation reach the set targets for achieving adult literacy and roll out a variety of life skills programs. However, the NLPN is mainly capacitated by promoters and District Literacy Organizers (DLOs).

263. In the NLPN the teachers are called “promoters” and their initial training is conducted over three weeks by the DABE. They also receive regular in-service training (INSET) when the District Literacy Organizer visits the class at least one a month. The notion of “promoter” is used to designate that the individual is not expected to function like a “traditional teacher”, but rather his/her role should be that of a leader in the community – adviser, confidant, supporter, learning organizer, literacy teacher, etc. The promoters have the option to continue their studies through the Namibian College of Open Learning, where they can do a two-year Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development. This course is offered in collaboration with the ABET Institute of the University of South Africa (UNISA) and to date all the district literacy organizers have followed this route. (This is discussed in Section 6.2.3 below.)

6.2.2 TRAINING PROMOTERS AND DLOS

264. The training of promoters is consistently supported and promoted by the District Literacy Organizers (DLOs). The DLO is part of a determined initiative to make Namibia a literate nation. The DLOs are in charge of the literacy program in a district. Intrinsic to the role of the DLO is to monitor and evaluate the NLPN. This means that the promoter is directly supported in the classroom by the DLO in providing INSET.

The training curriculum for promoter training

Week 1

Determination of learning needs and expectations
Literacy and development, to include what is literacy; the role of literacy in personal, community and national development
Policies and plans of the NLPN, in the context of Namibia’s history and today’s developmental needs
The role of the promoter, to include mobilization of the community, communication and human relations skills, and the recruitment of learners
How adults learn, to include factors affecting learning; motivating adults to learn; and methods of teaching adults
Assessing community needs

Week 2

Teaching literacy and numeracy
Practice in use of literacy and numeracy primers in the classroom situation

Lesson plan and actual preparation of lessons
Teaching a class of learners of mixed abilities
Use of supplementary materials especially at post-literacy stage

Week 3

Class administration
Organization of the learning environment
Organization of special events
Evaluation and monitoring of learners' and class progress (DABE, 1995:25)

6.2.3 THE TRAINING OF ADULT EDUCATORS AND DISTRICT LITERACY ORGANISERS IN NAMIBIA – A PARTNERSHIP WITH UNISA ABET

265. In 1996 Namibian College for Open Learning (NAMCOL) joined forces with UNISA ABET in order to jointly train adult educators for the Namibian National Literacy Campaign (NLC). As part of the initial arrangement, UNISA ABET provided training material to NAMCOL, which undertook to present the tutoring component. During the contact sessions, NAMCOL adapted and supplemented the program to suit its own unique circumstances. As a result of the adaptation, NAMCOL developed supplementary material, which required that the course be extended for an additional year. In addition, NAMCOL modified the tutorial system to suit the Namibian context.

The educator training program

266. In the first year, students register jointly with NAMCOL and UNISA and they study the UNISA modules for all first-year certificate students. Their assignments are submitted to UNISA for assessment and students write the usual ABET examinations at the UNISA examination centers in Namibia. Students are required to submit a field project based on their own experiences of adult education and the projects submitted are uniquely Namibian.

267. Because of the unique circumstances, NAMCOL undertook to extend the South African course so that it would be more specific to its own context. This meant that NAMCOL developed and presented modules on research methods and development studies to students in their second year as part of their certificate qualification. It is important to note that the UNISA NAMCOL partnership has been one of mutual learning and sharing²⁹. At the end of the second year, students receive a NAMCOL-UNISA Certificate in Education for Development (CED) which allows them to be employed in development/literacy posts in various government departments, particularly in the Department of Adult and Basic Education (DABE). After the second year, students re-enter the UNISA system where they complete the third year of the UNISA ABET Diploma. This system has worked well for both countries. NAMCOL's students have had the benefit of cost-effective African courses which have been subsidized by the South African government. They have had the opportunity to put their own stamp on the course through running their own tutorial system and setting their own additional assignments. UNISA has benefited in two main ways. Firstly the partnership has enabled UNISA to base its further development of courseware on the developments which were already taking place in NAMCOL. Secondly – perhaps embarrassingly and ironically – the UNISA ABET educator qualifications were recognized for accreditation and salary purposes in Namibian government long before the South African Department of Education considered this imperative. This additional push from Namibia led to the course being recognized in South Africa.

The Namcol tutorial system

²⁹ NAMCOL'S second year of the CED influenced the programs of the ABET Institute, which undertook to develop its diploma with modules for UNISA second-year students on research methods and development studies.

268. UNISA did not provide tutors for Namibia. As part of the partnership agreement, NAMCOL undertook to provide students with its own learner support.

269. Namibia spans 825 118 km² and has a population of less than 1 million. The student population on the CED course was sparsely spread and due to the long distances to be traveled, it was not possible for NAMCOL to use the system of tutoring used in South Africa. NAMCOL presented training to its year intakes of students (usually around 30 students per annum) at 2 two-week long residential workshops presented in Windhoek, the capital of Namibia. Students were accommodated by NAMCOL and they received tuition and worked with their peers during this period. After the block release programs, students were expected to submit their assignments to UNISA and, ultimately, to take the final UNISA examinations.

6.2.4 CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR LITERACY EDUCATORS

270. Some of the promoters have been appointed as DLOs after further study, thus getting fulltime employment in DABE. Promoters are also encouraged to study further through NAMCOL, and once they qualify and get the Higher Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development, many other possibilities become available. It is also possible to work at the CLDC as a Community Learning Development Coordinator.

6.2.5 TEACHER ACCREDITATION

271. The promoters only receive an attendance certificate. A credit-based system is not yet operational in Namibia. If promoters want a qualification, they can enroll at NAMCOL to do the two-year Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development.

272. Most of the DLOs and government officials in the DABE have undergone training via the UNISA NAMCOL partnership and many of them are engaged in the B.Ed. (Hons) in adult basic education.

6.3 (Q.2) WHAT IS INVOLVED IN “QUALITY ASSURING” THE QUALITY OF EDUCATOR TRAINING AND DELIVERY?

273. The numbers of adult educators who are active in Namibia require constant monitoring and evaluation. Quality control of promoter training is the responsibility of the Monitoring and Evaluation Division. The DLOs regularly consult with the promoters to *inter alia* assess quality of training. Also, regular fact-finding missions are undertaken in each of the thirteen educational regions in Namibia. Reports are written and sent back to the regions at regular intervals. In addition, regular meetings are held with the Regional Coordinators on a quarterly, monthly and weekly basis. The notion that feedback must become a culture and that information must be filtered down to all levels is strongly emphasized. In addition Literacy Committees operate in every situation where a literacy program is run. A function of these committees is to monitor the work done by the promoters and to work in unison with the promoter, the Regional Coordinator and the DLO.

In spite of the sparse distribution of its population, Namibia has dealt with the problems of training its DLOs by using the methods of distance education and it has ensured a consistent quality of training and ongoing support for its promoters. There are many lessons in their model for Botswana, who will need to propose how educators can be capacitated for teaching on the new literacy program. Indeed there are also many lessons in the Namibian model for South Africa. Namibia has gone way beyond political rhetoric. In fact it is significant that programs are continuing without too much attention being given to reviewing the curriculum. The literacy committees are visible and active and play an important role in monitoring that government is indeed doing what the policies say. In practice in Namibia, policy does not seem to be necessary as the momentum seems to be carrying the delivery. There are many lessons here for other countries.

6.3.1 CONSIDERING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING OF EDUCATORS

274. According to the trainers of trainers, the impact of the educator training is that promoters are generally highly regarded by the learners and the communities in which they work mostly give them the support they need to function effectively. They also report that many of the promoters and DLOs who have been in the system for quite a while have studied further. Some have moved on to become community workers and councilors. It seems as if the experience of being a promoter enables some to grow into other careers.
275. According to the DABE Director, the training as received by the promoters is efficient, and relevant. The training accommodates regional variations with an emphasis on decentralization. The training program strongly promotes the establishment of a culture of reading and writing with a firm understanding of numeracy.
276. In the interview with the trainer of trainers, the point was made that the training is adequate for the objectives the NLPN has set for itself, viz. that learners should reach Stage 3 after about three years and this is equivalent to Grade 4 of the formal education system. The claimed literacy rates seem to support the notion that the teacher training is generally effective.
277. It must be noted that the guidelines for the recruitment of promoters recommend that the promoter must have reached at least Grade 8. The guidelines further recommend that individuals with much higher education should not generally be recruited, because these promoters “would be looking for work all the time, and would leave the community as full time employment is ensured” (1995:15).

6.3.2 IS THERE ANY WAY OF ASSESSING THE IMPACT?

278. The impact of promoter training must be viewed within the context of the overall NLPN. The success of the NLPN is indivisible from the contribution of the promoters and all the other agents involved in delivering the NLPN on a daily basis. The NLPN has been evaluated twice by external evaluators. The first of these was done in 1996 by Agneta Lind as the Coordinator of the Overall Evaluation, and she was assisted by a number of internal evaluators, literacy learners and other external evaluators. The evaluation was sponsored by SIDA and UNICEF and it was, in fact, on the basis of this evaluation that the NAMCOL UNISA partnership was forged.
279. In July 1999 a second evaluation, commissioned by the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, and sponsored by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Royal Netherlands Government, was done by Prof A N Kweka of the University of Dares Salaam and Ms J. Jeremiah-Namene of DABE. A third evaluation is currently in process and the report is due in 2006.
280. Both the 1996 and the 1999 evaluations are extensive and detailed. The 1996 evaluation was aimed at “determining the effectiveness of the NLPN during its first phase of implementation and provided some measures (both quantitative and qualitative) against the base line data. This enabled DABE to help explore the NLPN’s future potential, reinforce what is being done right and what might be improved upon things that are in obvious need of repair” (1996:7). The subsequent evaluation in 1999 highlighted the need for more advanced training for the DLOs – which led to NAMCOL extending its contract with UNISA and taking on the UNISA ABET diploma course.

6.4 (Q.3) IN TERMS OF WHAT CONDITIONS OF SERVICE DO EDUCATORS WORK?

281. The NLPN does not use volunteers. All promoters are employed on a part-time basis and in rural areas they earn \$800 Namibian dollars and in urban areas \$1500 per month. The national minimum wage is about \$450, and it would seem, therefore, that the promoters are comparatively well paid. As far as career pathing is concerned, promoters are able to enroll at NAMCOL to do

the two-year Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development – which opens up further opportunities for them. (See Section 6.2.3 above for more detail on the UNISA partnership with NAMCOL.)

6.5 (Q.4) HAVE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF EDUCATORS BECOME (RE)DEFINED?

282. The teachers in Namibia are called promoters to cater for their (re)defined roles within the community. As noted in Section 6.2.1, they are expected to assume leadership roles in the community – as advisers, confidants, supporters, learning organizers, literacy teachers, etc. Fact-finding missions undertaken in the 13 regions indicate that learners generally feel that they have been supported in this way by their promoters (see Sections 6.3 and 6.9.2). The strong committee basis orienting and supporting adult learning has also operated to redefine the roles and functions of educators. (See Section 6.8.1.)

6.5.1 PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

283. In literacy a combination of phonics and whole word is used. In essence the approach is based principally on the Language Experience Approach (LEA) with a strong focus on learner-centeredness. The LEA can be regarded as innovative, although it has been in use now for many years. The strong learner-centered approach promoted by DABE requires that the learner and the promoter participate fully in unique and specific ways. But DABE personnel did comment (in interview) that educators tend to revert to “traditional” methods of teaching – despite efforts made to acclimatize them to alternative methods and strategies. (See Section 6.6.)

6.5.2 SHARING/COORDINATING EXPERIENCES

284. The DLO and the Community Learning and Development Centers (CLDC) have as one of their functions to broaden the experiences of promoters and other educators involved in adult education. A deliverable of both entities is to expose the learners they are interacting with to other ways of doing and being.

285. The current use of the LEA, incorporating phonics and the whole word approach for establishing mother tongue literacy, is workable. In the teaching of other learning areas an approach that approximates the outcomes focused approach is also finding favor with the promoters and they are in theory fully supportive of learner centeredness.

6.6 (Q.5) WHAT POLICIES SUPPORT ADULT EDUCATION, AND WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLICY AND PRACTICE?

286. It appears as if Namibian practice is *ahead* of its policy. However, one of the existing gaps is to be found in the principle of learner-centeredness. DABE still experiences problems in getting many promoters to adopt learner-centeredness as their basic approach to teaching. Many of them relapse easily into teacher-centeredness and acting and performing more like “traditional teachers”. The policy also confirms that learners have a right to mother tongue education. This is not always possible because of the relatively large numbers of indigenous languages and that all materials are not always readily available in all the indigenous languages. The policy also asks for networking at all levels. Networking does not always take place. Namibia is still a long way off from becoming a nation of readers. This remains an attainable, albeit a seemingly impossible, goal to attain.

287. With regard to teachers’ organizations, it is worth noting that no specific union or organization exists for literacy promoters, DLOs, etc., but they are free to belong to the Workers’ Union or to join the Teachers’ Union.

288. With all the training possibilities open to teachers, what is the practice around utilizing untrained teachers? According to the trainer of trainers, some promoters are offered full-time jobs and at times they leave before a replacement can be found. The appointment of a promoter happens in collaboration with the regional Literacy Committee and promoters are invariably drawn from the local community and it does happen that a suitable candidate is not always available. A key requirement is that the promoter must be fluent in the local language and the situation is made complex in that there are about 26 indigenous languages in Namibia. However, it must be stressed that it is the *exception* that untrained promoters are used. Where it is possible, DABE does take the new promoter through a one-week induction course.

6.7 (Q.6) SOME EMERGING ISSUES ATTENDANT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NQF

289. As noted in Section 6.10.2, the National Literacy Programme caters for adults to become functionally literate (with the attendant development of life skills) over a three-year period. However at the end of the three-year program, they receive only a certificate of attendance. And mechanisms for establishing equivalences between AUPE (Adult Upper Primary Education – Stage 4) courses and examinations with the Grade 7 examination in Formal Education are yet to be put in place (although the exit point of Stage 4 is considered equivalent to Grade 7). Learners do not as yet receive equivalent accreditation.

290. Interviewees confirmed that the entry into Stage 4 (AUPE) is very difficult and that learners battle as there is a big gap between the two levels. Some suggested that the way the materials are written does not make them easily accessible for most learners. This means that teachers also struggle to help the learners through the learning process.

291. Meanwhile, establishing a learner-centered environment underpinned by an OBE method in keeping with the philosophy of the NQF is something that is yet to be institutionalized (according to DABE personnel interviewed) – see also Section 6.6.

292. As far as the Vocational Educational and Training system is concerned, Ndjode-Siririka (2003) (of the Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science and Technology) notes that the levels on the VET system were incongruent with the NQF. To correct for this incongruity, the VET system in Namibia now offers three-level vocational certificates in an effort to “lend credibility to the pronouncement of an outcome-based flexible system” (2003:13). Ndjode-Siririka notes that much work still needs to be done on generating a flexible system that is outcomes-based. He considers it important that the VET system operates to meet industry’s skills.

293. This, suggests Ndjode-Siririka, implies that the learning environment is geared to nurturing “skills-competent workers” (who can do their job well). According to him, this also implies “learning the skills to adapt to new situations and to relate to other workers”. He points out (in keeping with the underlying philosophy of outcomes-based education) that such skills transcend a narrow, “mechanistic view of the world”. He furthermore suggests that there must be input from industry in terms of appropriate skills and techniques that analyse workers skills and reconceptualize their jobs (while providing for non-mechanistic ways of handling these). One can add in this regard that the foregrounding of the critical cross-field outcomes as conceived in South Africa is imperative in averting a mechanistic approach.

294. These are emerging issues that will evidently impact on how educators are expected to address these needs.

The difficulties for educators of translating the philosophy of outcomes-based education into workable methods of teaching in practice, is an issue of concern in Namibia no less than in the other countries with established or emergent NQF systems.

6.8 (Q.7) WHAT EXAMPLES ARE THERE OF REFORMS TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM WHICH MAY FACILITATE CHANGE IN PRACTICE – INCLUDING ACROSS “MULTISECTOR” ISSUES?

295. The NLCN emphasizes stakeholder participation in literacy as a means of managing literacy and of developing communities. The Namibian committee structure for ensuring literacy is important to recognize when thinking of the success of the Namibian program.

6.8.1 COMMITTEE STRUCTURES

296. The following structures exist from grassroots up to the national level each with roles and functions and a strategy for communication across the various levels (McKay, 2002):

- class literacy committee;
- community literacy committee;
- District literacy committee;
- regional literacy committee; and
- national literacy committee.

In the section which follows, we look at some of the different roles of the class and community committees since these are the two that have arguably made the most impact – and which appear to be the two levels of committees that do not exist in South Africa and Botswana.

Class literacy committees

- Help the promoter to secure a suitable meeting place which is conducive to learning.
- Assist the promoter in controlling members whose behavior might be disruptive to the class. This would include those who may arrive drunk, are always late or are disruptive in any other way such as being unnecessarily argumentative.
- Assist the promoter in arranging other events which the class might decide to be involved in, such as fund raising for a special event, e.g. the National Literacy Week.
- Assist the promoter in following up on those who might have dropped out of the class and encourage them to return.
- Assist the promoter in attracting others to join the program, through campaigns and advertising in the community.

Community literacy committee

- Initiate support and supervise the literacy program in its area.
- Mobilize the community to participate actively in the program.
- Support the District Literacy Organizers in their work, through giving advice, acquiring facilities (such as classes) and generating funds for the numerous activities the learners will be involved in.
- Taking responsible for the arrangement of special events such as National Literacy Week and International Literacy Day celebrations.
- See to the good conduct of the promoter for necessary disciplinary measures.
- Assist the DLO in the selection of promoters.
- Report regularly to the Regional Literacy Committee, through the Regional Literacy Organizer on the progress of literacy programs in the community.

Roles of committees in general

- They tend to involve many people in activities thus there are more people sharing the responsibility, which improves the chances of a project succeeding.

A program or a project will be better able to address people's needs if more people are involved in the planning.

Committees are useful in dividing up or delegating the work among more people. (It may not always go faster, but more people will learn from such activities.)

The more people are involved, the more knowledge and experience are brought to the situation (McKay, 2002).

297. In addition to the important use of committees in Namibia, the success of the literacy program can be attributed to the post-independence momentum and the political will manifested by leadership in education. This provides evidence that political will and enlightened leadership can make a difference. The support for literacy therefore lies in grassroots committees up to the presidency.
298. Planning for literacy in Namibia has been cautious but prudent – with careful steps and where necessary Namibia has sought partnerships with its neighbors.
299. Literacy is not a dead end. It is located within education (not yet a framework) but opportunities exist for movement upwards and across learning as learners can and do move into Namcol FET learning areas.
300. In summary, the establishment of the NLPN in 1992 signaled a major reform of the adult basic education system in Namibia. This heralded the attempt to introduce learner centeredness in the system by encouraging extensive participation of local communities. Intrinsic to the NLPN is the introduction of promoters, DLOs, CLDCs (one in every of the thirteen regions has been established), Regional Literacy Committees, Regional Literacy Organizers (RLO and the Regional Coordinator for Adult Education, Libraries and Culture. The notion of active committees can be seen as an important vehicle in understanding the culture of delivery in ABE in Namibia.

6.8.2 MATERIALS PRODUCTION

There are many lessons with regard to the development of materials for Namibian learners for South Africa and Botswana (and other countries). DABE employs fulltime Education Officers as materials developers. They function in a separate unit within DABE. (Besides producing materials for learners, they have also published the District Literacy Organizer's handbook and other publications relating to the NPLN.)

301. The primary aim of the materials development office in Namibia is to ensure the relevance, appropriateness and accessibility of their materials for learners. This means that the department produces some of the materials for learners, especially in the indigenous languages. This has been necessitated because not many publishers will easily venture into publishing materials if the print runs are too small.

Of course, this is not to say that the system of materials production always functions optimally. Some of our interviewees reported that the level of some of the materials at the AUPE level is too difficult and not relevant. It seems that in their original development the authors merely adapted corresponding school-based materials. But at least the issue of appropriate materials development has been recognized as one to be addressed at national level.

6.8.3 ADULT SKILLS PROJECT: COLLABORATION BETWEEN PRIVATE SECTOR AND DABE

302. DABE has endeavored to link livelihoods with literacy. One of the initiatives has been Development for Self-Employment. This project is a collaboration between the private sector, most notably a commercial bank, and DABE. Loans are made available to prospective entrepreneurs that are repayable over certain periods. DABE screens and trains prospective beneficiaries and provides them with support for their enterprises. This model of livelihood education could be meaningfully copied by other countries where learners with skills are enabled

to translate these into income generating opportunities which are coupled with training and support and ongoing lifelong education.

6.9 (Q.8) WHO PARTICIPATES?

6.9.1 THE EXTENT TO WHICH MEN AND WOMEN ARE INVOLVED AS EDUCATORS OF ADULTS

303. The NLPN “employs” 1 373 promoters from Stage 1 to 3; 949 of these are female. Females make up 69% of the promoters. This figure is almost mirror of the number of female and male learners in the system. Currently from Stage 1 to Stage 3, 18 270 learners are participating in the NLPN program and of these 64% are female.

6.9.2 THE LEARNER’S PERSPECTIVE

304. The promoters are evaluated by the learners during the “fact-finding missions”. During this time the learners are given an opportunity to express their feelings, attitudes and opinions about the promoters. The regional literacy committees are also an avenue used by the learners to “evaluate” the promoter.

305. The missions visit each of the 13 regions on a rotational basis. These missions take place in collaboration with the DLO, the RLO and Literacy Committees. Reports are written and the region should react to them and the DLO should give individual feedback to the promoters as part of the INSET.

6.10 WHAT CURRICULUM ISSUES ARE THERE? HOW ARE QUESTIONS RELATING TO TEACHING MIXED ABILITIES/MIXED AGE/MIXED LANGUAGES CATERED FOR, AND TO WHAT EXTENT DO EDUCATORS ADDRESS SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE CURRICULUM?

6.10.1 CURRICULA AND POLICY GUIDING LITERACY EDUCATOR TRAINING

306. The NLPN has as its core guide the *District Literacy Organizer’s Handbook, National Literacy Programme in Namibia*. This is a DABE publication, authored by David Macharia and Agneta Lind. Policy guidelines are contained in “Policy Guidelines for the Second Phase, 1996–2000 of the NLPN, Literacy: Your Key to A Better Future”. In adult learning in general the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture has published its “National Policy on Adult Learning – Adult Learning – a joy, a tool, a right and a shared responsibility – July 2003”.

6.10.2 LEARNERS’ CURRICULUM FOR THE NLPN

307. The NLPN is organized into three stages and each stage lasts about a year.

Stage 1:

1. Basic numeracy
2. Initial mother tongue literacy

Stage 2:

1. Reinforcing and consolidating mother tongue literacy
2. Reinforcing and consolidating numeracy

Stage 3 (which is equivalent to grade 4 of the formal system of education):

1. Introducing basic English (official language in Namibia)

2. Extending numeracy
3. Life skills
4. Basic agriculture
5. Some business skills and entrepreneurship

308. On completion of the third level the learners are considered equivalent to Grade 4 of the formal education system.

309. The adult education system provides for learners to continue their studies into Stage 4, viz., Adult Upper Primary Education (AUPE). In this stage English is exclusively used as the language of teaching and learning. The exit point is equivalent to Grade 7 and in this course learners are expected to do:

1. English in every day use
2. Know your land and people
3. Mathematics in our daily lives
4. Making a living
5. Science in our daily lives
6. Living off the land and water
7. Livelihood for all
8. Literacy, Gender and HIV/AIDS
9. Understanding yourself, body, mind and soul

310. However, the general consensus from all the interviewees is that the jump from Stage 3 to Stage 4 is too big and that the materials in Stage 4 are very difficult. In the main the learners find Stage 4 too difficult. It is possible that the use of English as the language of teaching and learning contributes greatly to the difficulties experienced by the learners. The problem could also be exacerbated by the way the materials are written and that they are in general not easily accessible to most learners.

This may be similar to the problem experienced in South Africa where the exit point of non-formal education is constructed in such a way that it is impossible for adults to achieve. This is one of the reasons why UMALUSI in South Africa is aiming to renovate the exit point by *inter alia*, reducing the number of credits required for the GETC/ABET level 4.

6.10.3 NOTIONAL HOURS OF TEACHING

311. In the NLPN policy learners attend classes for eight hours per week for forty weeks 320 hours per level. Class sizes may range from 15 to 30, but in reality many classes tend to be closer to about 15 learners per class. According to the official statistics, the current learner enrolment in the three stages is 18 270 and currently 1 373 Promoters are functioning. This gives a ratio of 1:13 optimal sizes for any education program, and the fact that the DABE has permitted classes to continue with such low teacher:learner ratios can be seen as a measure of the commitment of government and also one of the reasons why these programs have succeeded.

6.10.4 TEACHING MIXED ABILITY AND MIXED LANGUAGE GROUPS

312. In literacy programs the learners are integrated in a unified group. It is not possible to have cohort age groups as the numbers cannot justify running classes for very small groups. In the NLPN youth under the age of 16 are never taught with older people. The experience has been that once younger people are introduced into a group many of the older learners leave.

313. Promoters are trained to deal with mixed age groups in their three-week course, where they are taught about the psychology of learning and learn how to deal with different age groups.

6.10.5 DEALING WITH LANGUAGE ISSUES

314. The policy in Namibia confirms that learners have a right to mother tongue education at the basic level. This is not always possible because of the relatively large numbers of indigenous languages and the fact that not all materials are readily available in all the indigenous languages. (See Section 6.8.2). As far as promoters' language fluency is concerned, appointment of promoters occurs in collaboration with the RLO and promoters are drawn from the local community. A key requirement is that promoters should be fluent in the local language. But the situation is (of course) made complex in that there are about 26 indigenous languages in Namibia.

6.10.6 THE EXTENT TO WHICH EDUCATORS ADDRESS SOCIAL ISSUES – IN PARTICULAR HIV/AIDS

315. Promoters are not specifically trained to deal within a coherent structured program with HIV/AIDS. Where promoters deal with HIV/AIDS, they are able to do so because they have attained this knowledge elsewhere. Promoters are not expected to address the problem of HIV/AIDS specifically. The promoters should network with health trainers to promote HIV/AIDS awareness. However, in some of the primers, the context for learning is based on aspects of HIV/AIDS.

6.11 (Q. 10) SITES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

In Namibia, no less than in Botswana where the UIE report noted that sites of adult education leave much to be desired (see Section 5.11), a large number of literacy learners are still taught under trees, exposed to the vagaries of the weather, with no chairs. It was also pointed out that where learners use the primary schools as venues, they have to use desks that are too small for them. The suggestion offered in Section 4.11 regarding the appropriate use of facilities, thus clearly applies also in Namibia.

7. GENERAL CONCLUSION

316. The discussion above has been structured (with reference to ten core questions) so as to allow the reader to consider comparatively the various issues that we have concentrated upon. We created “boxes” at various points in the text where we wished to highlight some comparative issues which we considered relevant across the various countries. A strong signal is sent from each of the countries which formed part of this research – that **conventional systems of training and employing adult educators won’t do any longer. No longer will we be able to pick up our teachers off the street!**
317. All countries investigated in this study highlight the **urgency to address the mass need for adult educators who can act as intermediaries and development agents in education, training and the development sector.** Moreover, as was mentioned at the start of this paper, the global trajectory for lifelong education places significant pressure on the countries’ ability to supply educators to meet the demand. Both the NQF (in its various stages of development) and the global shift towards a lifelong learning paradigm make it imperative for countries to develop a mass cadre of competent educators.
318. **Well-trained, well-supported adult educators are critical to the success and quality of literacy and non-formal education** as they can provide both the intellectual and operational leadership for implementing the vision of a quality and sustainable non-formal system. This will go some way towards more intimate and amicable interactions between the two sectors.
319. From the discussion in Sections 4 to 6 above (with reference to the countries researched in this study), we now wish to isolate for attention a number of general points.

7.1 THE TRAINING OF EDUCATORS: NEED FOR “MASS” TRAINING WHERE QUALITY IS NOT COMPROMISED

320. We have seen from the discussion in Sections 4.2, 5.2 and 6.2 that the training of educators to address the complexity of roles involved in being an “adult educator” (including facilitating a learner-centered environment and taking on a development function for facilitating social development) needs to be addressed with care. Literacy is not the acquisition of decontextualised skills – it aims rather to educate individuals to exercise citizenship. It is the development of a critical and contextual understanding of reality necessary to enable people to participate fully. The perspective of LLL as an organizing principle for non-formal education offers a theoretical and epistemological framework for addressing the challenges posed by the low levels of basic education and for ensuring the validation, accreditation and certification of non-formal learning. The challenges of LLL and of the NQFs, however, reside in how in the implementation teachers themselves will be able to engage in the assessment of learners. This has been found to be a serious obstacle in the South Africa system, where teachers were unable to interpret and apply or indeed to devise mechanisms for assessing learners. The point at which capacity is critical to the implementation is the point at which systems tend to fall apart.
321. All of this makes the role of the adult educator critically important. Educator training needs to be delivered on a large scale so that learners can access learning and other opportunities. Countries should engage in adult learning from a lifelong learning perspective and this requires a long-term commitment. Conventional training methods will not do any longer. Universities need to find ways of promoting and including adult basic learning and literacy into their research agendas.

7.1.1 PROFESSIONALIZING ADULT EDUCATORS

322. The development of competent educators is contingent upon adequate teacher training, accreditation and the recognition of adult educator qualifications by the Ministries as well as upon the location of the qualifications within the respective NQF. However, training must be organised outside of government through the formation of partnerships with universities or other teacher

training institutions. This will enable the countries to go some way toward professionalizing educator training. Professionalization means conditions of service and a shift from expecting adult educators to continuously volunteer their services. Salaries commensurate with qualifications are important, and conditions of employment must be in place. Professionalization will be enhanced if career paths are created for educators. Adult educators require new and flexible provision for learning and career-pathing. Only then will it be possible to meet the undiminished demand for basic education for adults, to take basic education to the rural and marginalized parts of our countries and to reach the millions of out-of-school-youth.

323. In South Africa, UNISA has performed the task (since 1994) of training more than 50 000 adult educators, who have in turn been able to be deployed in “mass” literacy and other campaigns (such as voter education). UNISA also operates by ensuring that its cadre of personnel are rooted in the communities in which they teach and develop nurturing relationships with their learners. Meanwhile, systems have been put in place for supporting while at the same time monitoring the educators³⁰.

324. In Namibia, it can be argued that while the quality of training of educators within the Ministry still needs to be reviewed (DABE personnel whom we interviewed suggested that it is not sufficiently geared to aiding teachers to become learner-centred and that they tend to “revert” to traditional methods in their practice), one of the strengths of the national literacy program is its rootedness in communities through the committee structures that have been set up. (See Section 6.8.1.) From various fact-finding missions that have been undertaken it appears that learners in the main experienced their teachers (the promoters) as having been supportive. (As noted in Section 6.2.1 above, the teachers are called “promoters” in order to emphasize that the individual is not expected to function like a “traditional teacher”. His/her role should rather be that of a leader in the community – adviser, confidant, supporter, learning organizer, literacy teacher, etc.) The regular INSET training (when the District Literacy Organizer visits the class – at least one a month) also helps develop this role. The DLOs in turn are guided by the handbook published by DABE as part of the commitment to making the National Literacy Programme work. (Further education opportunities are provided for the promoters and the DLOs via the UNISA-NAMCOL partnership which has been developed – see Section 6.2.3.).

325. Apart from the issue of how the training of educators is addressed, it is clear that “community involvement” is part of the “package” for successful mass education campaigns.

7.1.2 USING DISTANCE EDUCATION AS A VEHICLE FOR MASS BASED EDUCATOR TRAINING

326. The modes of training will need to be considered. Distance education can assist in going to scale to develop capacity cheaply (in South Africa mass-based grassroots educator training was done at US\$100 per educator for a year-long course) and provides an effective option for going to scale. This mode of training can assist in ensuring that rural areas are served as trainees can remain in the areas in which they live and work. There is a need for educator support during both pre- and post-service training and it is suggested that trainee teachers be allocated to tutors/supervisors for ongoing monitoring, motivation and support.

327. In short, we suggest that it *is* possible to organize the required cadre of personnel for undertaking mass literacy programs – but this requires making use of “distance education” options (such as that provided by UNISA) combined with grassroots involvements in the community – such as is evidenced in the South African cadre of UNISA-trained educators (including their roles in communities) and in the Committee-based structures supporting the NLPN in Namibia. Distance education is becoming a major component of the educational system. The increasing demand for education and training coupled with dwindling resources has made it imperative to

³⁰ Money is not always the issue: When economies of scale are reached, the per capita cost of training adult educators by the method of distance education are minimal. UNISA ABET has, for example, trained educators and provided all tuition materials and contact tutoring for student teachers at a cost of \$100 per annum.

adopt distance education as a central facet of adult education and as a central component of the lifelong learning equation.

328. It should also be noted that our argument is that the experimentation undertaken thus far in the various countries with participatory methodologies (see, for example, Sections 4.5.1, 5.5.1 and 6.5.1) is a contribution that adult educators can offer to the educational arena more generally. This experimentation highlights ways of “educating” that proffer options (for other educators too to consider) for organizing education processes. Although they have been developed in a context to account for the experiences and inputs of adults as part of the learning process, other educators can also gain from seeing how such methods have been developed and used in the adult education field. In other words, the approaches that have been utilized for non-formal (adult) education provide exemplars of practices that should be foregrounded so that others can benefit from the trialing of (innovative) styles of learning which should be granted the necessary status – in all types of educational arenas.

7.2 ISSUES OF QUALITY ASSURANCE: BALANCE BETWEEN BUREAUCRATIC BURDEN AND ACCOUNTABILITY

329. Our research has shown that “quality” assurance can all too easily slip into a bureaucratic process of simply filling in checklists. With reference to a detailed examination of quality assurance issues in South Africa (see Section 4.3) we have suggested that the ETQA system in South Africa is not the panacea for problems in the sector. It has been found that if QA depends on the assessor’s own knowledge, it runs the risk of becoming a quantitative, checklist-driven activity without any deep understanding of the issues of quality.
330. While systems do need to be in place for checking the quality of the learning experience (to generate/facilitate the accountability of providers), care must be taken to ensure that quality assurance does not become a quantitative exercise. To appreciate end-users’ perceptions, as well as to monitor whether the outcomes-based philosophy is being operationalised in practice, mechanisms for assessing these issues qualitatively (while also taking into account results that can be quantitatively measured) need to be put in place. And the issue of which bodies are to be involved in quality assurance needs to be considered in terms of a recognition that tensions over turf (as experienced in the South African situation) should be circumvented as far as possible. (See Section 4.3.1.)
331. Indeed the Botswana Blueprint addresses the various stakeholders to be engaged in assessing educators’ performance, stating that they will be assessed by students and by supervisors. Specific criteria and strategies need to be devised for assessing such performance in a multifaceted and non-threatening manner. While it is laudable that the Blueprint makes provision for a multifaceted evaluation of educators, it is stressed that the process of educator development needs to be set in process urgently so that there are indeed educators to support the program at the start of delivery.

7.3 MATERIALS SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS AND LEARNERS

332. Supporting teachers by developing materials that fit in with the outcomes-based and learner-centered approach, was an issue in all the countries under consideration. Materials development requires high level skills and, as we have seen from the study, teachers on the whole *can’t/won’t* and *should not* need to undertake such tasks.
333. One way of addressing this issue is to organize mechanisms for cross-country sharing – with provision made for customizing the material to suit local contexts. (See Section 6.2.3.)
334. Aside from support needed for teachers in their attempts to create a learner-centered experience for adults, our research has shown that the provision of materials for learners is an issue that cannot be neglected.

335. In Namibia, there is a dedicated materials development office as part of DABE – tasked with developing materials for the learners. Materials are not always available in all the indigenous languages and the suitability of some of the materials has been questioned – for example, especially in Stage 4 (equivalent to Grade 7 of the formal schooling system) it has been shown that the materials are often experienced as very difficult. (Sometimes the material is not experienced as relevant because the authors have merely tried to adapt corresponding school-based materials.) Nevertheless, at least the Ministry does have a section on materials development, tasked with the responsibility of creating suitable materials.
336. In Botswana it is clear that adult learners have often had to struggle with material. As noted in Section 5.10.1, problems with the development of suitable material could be addressed by considering sharing some of the material produced “across borders” – while permitting time for the development of suitable local material.

7.4 THE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR EDUCATORS (INCLUDING SITES OF LEARNING)

337. It goes without saying that conditions of service of educators cannot be neglected. (See Sections 4.4, 5.4 and 6.4.) There is a need for educators to have legislative recognition which is evidenced by their conditions of service. This will require a shift from regarding the delivery of (adult) basic education as voluntary to treating it as formal. The new global order makes it imperative that adult educators are trained and remunerated and receive the same conditions of employment as their peers in the formal system. Within the framework of the NQF and the philosophy of LLL, the adult educator has a critical role to play. This underscores the case for professional support for adult educators.
338. In the South African context, efforts to address this problem are being made via the recently-formulated norms and standards for funding adult education centers – although this will not necessarily address all the issues that we isolated in the discussion in Section 4.6.4. A culture of supporting adult education (with attendant financial commitments) needs to be generated so that adult education is not seen as an “add on” to other national commitments. Interestingly, such a culture seems to have been generated in Namibia via the committee structures that have been set up (as well as the attendant processes and the commitment of those involved in the program) – see Section 6.8.1. National commitment has been expressed in the number of promoters who are functioning to support the NLPN: this gives a ratio of 1:13 optimal sizes for any education program, and the fact that the DABE has permitted classes to continue with such low teacher:learner ratios can be seen as a measure of the commitment of government and also one of the reasons why these programs have succeeded. The salaries of promoters can also be said to be reasonable (see Section 6.4) as are the career and further learning options open to them (see Section 6.2.4.)
339. But the issue of the sites of learning needs to be taken up in all three countries. As we have seen, questions about the sites of learning are often linked with a sense that adult education is not receiving government attention. The issue is also linked to the (experienced) low profile accorded to this kind of education. The UIE (2004) report on Botswana highlighted this as an issue (see Section 5.11) and it is a perennial issue in South Africa.
340. We have suggested that as far as sites of learning are concerned, instead of investing in expensive buildings, arrangements should be made to make more cost-effective use of available and existing educational and other government facilities. (See Sections 4.11, 5.11 and 6.11.)

7.5 POLICY AND PRACTICE: DEVELOPING A CULTURE SUPPORTIVE OF ADULT LEARNING

341. The discussions in 4.6, 5.6 and 6.6 indicate that even when policies are in place to cater for the provision of adult education as a national commitment, gaps can be located between the policies and practices on the ground. This is often linked to financing issues.
342. In South Africa, less than 1% of the education budget is allocated to adult education, and as is mentioned in this paper, Rolls Royce policies do not mean delivery. The gap between policy and practice is clearly an issue requiring attention. The discussions under 4.8, 5.8 and 6.8, suggest that partnerships involving a range of concerned parties help to address the operationalisation of policy – see the examples provided in these sections of partnerships developed to forward particular projects.
343. Clearly, however, no policies are workable without the commitment of those activating the attendant projects. The Namibian experience shows that the development of active committees can be seen as an important vehicle in understanding the culture of delivery in ABE. The NLPN was based on developing commitment by creating a decentralized committee structure, with involvements down to the village committee. The program works with a rural development focus, involving people in seeing adult education as part of community development. Meanwhile, the definition of “promoter” that has been institutionalized in Namibia (see Section 6.2.1) helps both the promoters and others (including the learners) to recognize their (broad range of) roles in the community. All these features of the Namibian situation can indeed be argued as going beyond what has been accounted for in policy documents. (See Section 6.6, where we argue that the Namibian experience is in some ways ahead of policy. See also Section 6.3.) What this points to, in any case, is the importance of not relying on policy alone to create the culture and commitment required for the success of adult education programs.

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9. LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

SOUTH AFRICA (PEOPLE SPOKEN TO BY THE AUTHORS: DISCUSSIONS/CONVERSATIONS)

David Diale: CES (Director) Adult Basic Education and Training (DoE)
Vernon Jacobs. (Acting director) Adult Basic Education and Training DoE
Fezile May Adult Basic Education and Training DoE
Johannes Geldenhuis Adult Basic Education and Training DoE
Rodney Veldtman: Assistant Director NAPTOSA. (National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa).
James Keevy Assistant Director: Research. SAQA
Eardley Twigg. Assessments UMALUSI
Teachers from the Department of Education KwaZulu Natal Province. South Africa.

BOTSWANA (PEOPLE INTERVIEWED/CONVERSATIONS HELD)

Mr Patrick Maphorisa, Director DNFE
Members of the DNFE steering committee for the proposed ABEP
Dr Tonic Maruatona, University of Botswana and consultant to DNFE ABEP

NAMIBIA (LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED)

Mr Justin Ellis, DABE Secretary Lifelong Education
Mr Beans Ngatjizeko, DABE Director
Mr Bornface Mukono, DABE Deputy Director
Mr Cletious Mushaukw, DABE Education Officer: Materials Developer
Ms Mary Matengu, DABE Education Officer
Ms Himeesora Kaimu, NQA: Chief Higher Education Officer
Ms Ndesih Afunde, NAMCOL Distance Education Coordinator
Mr Ephraim Dawids, NAMCOL Manager Marketing Learner Support Services

TRAINING OF TRAINERS:

Ms Ann Nujoma-Angula, DABE (Education Officer)
Mr Joel Kavetuna, DABE (District Literacy Organizer and Community Learning Development Coordinator)
Mr Steve Kaangundue, DABE (Education Officer)

ADULT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Ms Mavis Simasiku	UNAM	Student
Ms Juliet Buiswalelo	UNAM	Student
Ms Helena Ndeutapo	UNAM	Student
Ms Elvisa Tjituka	UNAM	Student
Mr. Ben Munyandi	UNAM	Student
Ms Lydia Shaketange	UNAM	Lecturer
Mr Gilbert. Likando	UNAM	Lecturer