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**Effective Literacy Programs**

**Parallel Session A-5**

**From Literacy  
to Lifelong Learning**

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**Continuation and Extension of Literacy Programs: from  
Literacy to Adult Basic Education and Beyond in Uganda**

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**Working Document  
DRAFT**

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## 1. ABSTRACT

1. Uganda offers an example of a low intensity program of literacy and basic education for youth and adults carried out through a pluralistic approach with different actors freely offering what they believe is the best contribution to the effort. Literacy education for youth and adults is one branch of the two-pronged approach to promote literacy for all in Uganda; the other is Universal Primary Education, launched in 1997. Adult literacy is treated as one of the strategies in the struggle against poverty, in which Uganda has made significant progress during the last decade.

2. This paper explores the extent to which the varied literacy provisions in Uganda are offering a holistic lifelong learning perspective. It starts by looking at the context of literacy in Uganda, particularly the socio-economic and policy framework. It then examines the key features of literacy provision in Uganda before proceeding to look more specifically at: the program structure and its link to continuing education; current methodology and its contribution to empowerment for lifelong learning; skills development for work and life; and the impact of literacy.

3. The paper takes a special look at how the multifaceted provision of opportunities has enriched the literacy education environment, especially through the development of networking and the provision of forums for sharing ideas and experiences. The paper finally highlights good practices and challenges ahead and specifies implications for practice, policies and cooperation. The key findings the paper brings out are listed in paragraphs 4 and 5 below.

4. Objectives and approaches of the different adult literacy programs in Uganda are varied but are generally relevant to learners' needs and interests. All programs have the goal of linking the learning to work and life. However, in many cases weaknesses in implementation hinder the fulfillment of this goal. All the programs, with the exception of very few, are at the basic literacy level and have no explicit provision for continued and lifelong learning and for linking adult literacy to formal education. The objectives for the government functional adult literacy program include the promotion of continued learning while at work and at home but there are no arrangements or practices in place to fulfill this objective. The reason given for the absence of such provision in practice is that the government has no resources to satisfy both the demand for basic literacy for the millions of the non-literate population and at the same time provide for adult continuing education.

5. There are a few cases of efforts especially by non-governmental and commercial programs to provide adult continuing education opportunities and to link adult and formal education but these are extremely few in the face of the very high demand for continuing education among newly literate adults. There is also a very interesting experiment by one NGO, LABE, at linking adult and formal education, but that is just one experiment covering just about ten schools.

6. In conclusion, adult literacy programs in Uganda, although quite effective at the basic level, have very inadequate provision for adult continuing and lifelong education and have practically no links with the formal education. It is recommended that Government should put in place policies and mechanisms to promote a change in this situation. It should specifically hasten the ongoing formulation of an adult education policy and the ongoing development of the qualifications framework for adult literacy. It is further recommended that more providers should initiate practical measures to promote adult continuing and lifelong education and to link adult and formal education for the mutual benefit of both, following the lead given by the few efforts that have been described in this paper.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

7. This study is a review of adult literacy education in Uganda to assess the extent to which the provision offers opportunities for holistic lifelong learning that is well articulated with formal education provision. The review was based mainly on desk research, supplemented with key informant interviews with stakeholders from a few selected programs.

8. For a proper understanding and assessment of the literacy situation, the study first presents an overview of the relevant Ugandan context. It is noted that Uganda is a society in transition that raises the need for literacy while posing many challenges that tend to turn attention away from that crucial need. In spite of a steady economic growth over the last decade, Uganda remains a country with some of the poorest human conditions indicators in the world. However, the steady political stability and peace enjoyed in most of the country for the past two decades has made it possible for Uganda to make significant advances in poverty reduction and in the promotion of education for both children and adults in the face of challenges.

9. A significant social challenge to education promotion in Uganda is its multilingual setting with about 30 distinct languages, a challenge to mother tongue literacy in the face of limited resources. The traditional lifelong and life-wide learning arrangements are being rapidly replaced by the new education dispensation referred to as “modern”. This modern education is increasingly reaching the majority through Universal Primary Education and a variety of adult basic education programs, but not yet with the same degree of intensity and quality, ending up in disparities and inequalities. Moreover, for the majority, there is little hope of progressing beyond the basic level.

10. Education provision in general and adult literacy education in particular is firmly enshrined in the key documents guiding the governance and development of Uganda. The long-term perspective plan *Vision 2025* aspires for “an enlightened, well informed and prosperous society”, which the National Adult Literacy Strategic Investment Plan (2002) translated into “a literate, well informed and prosperous society”. In the country’s main guiding planning framework, the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), the two education programs that are considered very important to increasing the ability of the poor to raise their incomes and thus enhance their quality of life are Universal Primary Education and Functional Adult Literacy. Literacy education for youth and adults is therefore one of the major government priorities and this paper reviews how that policy commitment is translating into reality on the ground.

11. The paper presents an overview of literacy program provision in Uganda, commenting briefly on the key features of its coverage, providers, objectives and approach, participants, facilitators and supervisors, facilities and materials, internal efficiency, acquisition and practice of literacy. The mass literacy campaign that the government launched in the newly independent Uganda in 1964 died out during the turmoil that engulfed the country in the seventies. When the government re-launched adult literacy provision in 1992, it adopted a selective approach that covered only parts of selected districts. During the first four years the provision was limited, on a pilot basis, to parts of only eight of about 30 districts in the country. The Process Review of the project in 1995 calculated that the project had cumulatively reached only 15,700 learners and recommended it for expansion ‘in a controlled manner’, responding to demand and readiness by districts to take ownership of the program. From the 8 districts of the pilot project the program spread to 26 districts by the end of 1998, to 37 by 2001 and to all 56 districts of the country by 2002 when adult literacy was included in the country Poverty Eradication Action Plan. The provision, however, continued to cover only selected sub-counties in each district, a situation prevailing to date.

12. As a result, the current situation in 2005 is that there seems to be a lot of demand for adult literacy education, of which only a very small percentage is being met. However, the Government is firmly committed to responding to this demand, although reaching 50% of the non-literate adults by 2007 as planned in the National Adult Literacy Strategic Investment Plan (NALSIP) is no longer considered feasible. The Government has set aside a certain amount of money in the budget for the

task. However, the money is considered inadequate for the task at hand. There are also a number of other agencies and civil society organizations participating in the provision of adult literacy education either autonomously or in collaboration with the Government. However, most of the NGO programs are small-scale efforts with very limited coverage and often of short duration. In effect, their scattered sprinkle of interventions has, therefore, not been able to make much of an impact.

13. The objectives of most literacy programs for youth and adults in Uganda are to link literacy to activities geared towards poverty reduction. This is in response to needs assessment surveys for adult literacy, which have revealed that in most cases the need to find urgent solutions to the problems of poverty precedes the need to learn to read and write. The way the link between literacy and other livelihood knowledge and skills is implemented in practice differs among the different programs but the link efforts are found in all cases in one form or another. The needs assessment surveys make it possible for the programs to be designed so that they meet the needs of the learners.

14. The participants in adult literacy programs in Uganda are usually from among the very poor, a fact that gives the program the potential to play a useful role in poverty reduction. This potential *is* enhanced by the prevalence of women in the programs, about 80% according to a 1999 evaluation, which to some extent reflects the higher illiteracy rate among women. However, the ratio of women to men in the literacy classes is usually much higher than the ratio of illiterate women to illiterate men in the area. It is reported in most cases that illiterate men are not interested in attending the classes. Some of the reasons have to do with mixed classes of men and women where men feel uncomfortable. This has raised the debate about the desirability of segregated classes for men and women.

15. It is also striking that the majority of the participants, 70% according to the 1999 evaluation, are people who already had some formal education, some even up to the upper levels of primary education, which raises the question whether the adult literacy programs are missing their true targets. All the needs assessment studies for literacy in Uganda have indicated that there are large numbers of people with some primary education who demand adult literacy classes. Not taking full account of this, the providers have so far been offering only one level of programs into which they admit all learners, whether they have ever been to school or not. Many people without prior formal education have been intimidated by this situation and either dropped out or never joined in the first place.

16. Most adult literacy facilitators in Uganda do the work on a volunteer basis without any remuneration. Working within their communities many of them feel happy to help their less fortunate neighbors, sharing their educational privileges with them. However, the volunteer spirit seems to be waning and there is a high turnover among facilitators. Moreover, reliance on volunteers does not leave room for choice of the most capable. The volunteers' low educational status, coupled with the very limited training they receive for the task, leaves the programs with weak facilitators. Another constraint is that, while the majority of the learners are women, the majority of the facilitators are men.

17. The situation of weak facilitators is rendered more serious by the deficient supervision and monitoring in most programs. Monitoring data are very inadequate and as a result plenty of useful information is missing, making it difficult to assess the performance of the programs and thus see how they can be improved where necessary

18. Despite the seeming commitment in official documents, adult literacy programs are under-resourced in practice, especially in the government provision. Not only do they have to do with unpaid volunteer facilitators but also most of the learning sessions are held out in the open, under trees, with no furniture to sit or write on, and are inadequately supplied with teaching and learning materials. The effort to provide teaching and learning materials is compounded by the large number of languages to be catered for – about 30 for a population of about 25 million.

19. The average attendance (80%) and completion rates (70%) are high and are evidence of high motivation that sustains the learners even under the difficult conditions. The internal efficiency of

adult literacy programs in Uganda is thus good. Moreover, many learners continue to attend classes even after completing the basic cycle, despite the fact that there are no continuing education programs.

20. A significant feature of adult literacy education in Uganda is the pluralism in its provision. Apart from a single shot effort at a mass literacy campaign in 1964, the literacy approach by the government of Uganda has been selective, starting on a small scale and gradually expanding to cover more areas. This has continued to leave a lot of demand that is not responded to. The government has encouraged others, especially faith-based and non-governmental organizations to join as partners in the provision. There are currently about ten international NGOs directly engaged in adult literacy provision in Uganda, about ten national NGOs operating in several regions of the country and over one hundred local NGOs and community based organizations engaged in literacy education in their various locations. This has resulted in a variety of efforts. The multifaceted provision of opportunities has enriched the literacy education environment, especially through the development of networking and the provision of forums for sharing ideas and experiences.

21. The pluralism in provision allows the providers to invest in the program according to their different beliefs and approaches and so enables the beneficiaries to have choices according to their needs and desires. This freedom of choice and action is also motivating to the providers because people and agencies have a certain degree of confidence that they can undertake a literacy program of their own liking and carry it through without being interfered with. The lack of an overall guiding policy or legislation and coordinating mechanism, however, allows the efforts to get dissipated and provides for no quality assurance measures. The government is currently working with other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive adult education policy.

22. Most literacy programs on offer for youth and adults are part of adult education programs planned to end at the basic level. The adult literacy education provision in Uganda has on the whole a one-level structure leading to a dead end as far as continuing education is concerned. In the case of the government functional adult literacy program, this has been defended as a legitimate choice, justified by the fact that the number of illiterate adults is still so high that it is only fair to give them a chance to acquire some basic literacy before offering the opportunities for those who want to continue beyond the basic. This choice is reflected also in formal education where the government has focused the education budget on Primary Education while reducing support to higher education. It has been described as the choice between giving “*all to a few or a little to all*”. The second alternative has been considered more appropriate and fair. Other partners in the provision of adult literacy education have on the whole also seen it fit to follow the same approach as that used by the government.

23. There have also been very few cases of efforts to link adult and formal education, which have been tried mainly by non-governmental and commercial enterprises. They are too few in the face of the high demand for continuing education among newly literate adults and among adults with low formal education. To provide a framework for both continuing adult learning and desired link with the formal provision, government is working with various stakeholders to develop a national adult literacy qualifications framework to fit into the proposed National Qualifications Framework.

24. Learner empowerment has also been the explicit objective of many adult literacy programs in Uganda. Empowerment is seen in terms of enabling the learners to participate more effectively and have a greater say in the management of their learning and of all aspects of their life and to continue learning at home or at work. Learners have to some extent been involved in the planning and management of their learning programs through their association, the Uganda Literacy and Learners Association (ULALA), which is promoting learner participation in an increasingly effective manner. The current programs are however, as already stated, not offering much opportunity for lifelong learning.

25. This study concludes that adult literacy programs in Uganda, although quite effective at the basic level, have very inadequate provision for adult continuing and lifelong education and have

practically no links with the formal education. It is recommended that Government should put in place policies and mechanisms to promote a change in this situation. It should specifically hasten the ongoing formulation of an adult education policy and the ongoing development of the qualifications framework for adult literacy. It is further recommended that more providers should initiate practical measures to promote adult continuing and lifelong education and to link adult and formal education for the mutual benefit of both, following the lead given by the few efforts that have been described in this paper.



### 3. INTRODUCTION

26. This study is a review of adult literacy education in Uganda undertaken to assess the extent to which the provision offers opportunities for holistic lifelong learning and also the extent to which it is well articulated with the formal education provision. The review was based mainly on desk research, supplemented by primary data from the field covering a few selected aspects. The primary data was collected from a sample of programs on offer, purposively selected to represent varieties in the key program features reviewed in section 2.0. The sampling was undertaken after a significant part of the review based on documents and literature had been done. Data collection in the field used mainly key informant interviews with some stakeholders of the different categories.

27. The study is presented in this paper in five chapters of which the fifth presents a highlight of good practices, challenges and implications for the future. The first chapter presents the context of adult literacy in Uganda. It is today widely accepted that true understanding of literacy is only possible when it is placed in the context in which it is practiced. Side by side with the aspects of literacy that are constant across cultures (universals) there are also those that are culture specific (Scribner 1999:23). An examination of literacy against its context serves to illustrate the universal features and to bring out the culture-specific features. The contextual features discussed in this paper help to provide a proper understanding of literacy programs in Uganda.

28. The second chapter is an overview of literacy program provisions in Uganda. The overview is to provide an overall picture to help understand the scale of the effort to provide adult literacy education, the success and constraints it has met.

29. The third chapter looks at the multifaceted landscape of literacy provision in Uganda. The liberalized provision encouraged by the government to supplement its limited efforts has given rise to pluralistic offering that is interesting for both the providers and beneficiaries. It has, however, resulted in scattered efforts that are not well coordinated, partly because of lack of a government comprehensive policy and guidelines, which are only just being worked on.

30. The fourth chapter looks at the effectiveness of the adult education provision and its link to formal and continuing education. Most programs are limited to the basic level and there is very little opportunity for adult continuing education for those who graduate from the literacy program or leave school with very low education.

31. The last chapter, as already explained, summarizes the good practices and the main challenges and draws some implications for the future, making some recommendations in the process.

## 4. CONTEXT OF LITERACY IN UGANDA

### 4.1 Socio-Economic Situation

32. Uganda is a society in transition but with strong features of traditional closely linked social groupings still persisting, providing a rich communication network which, on the one hand limits the need for literacy and on the other provides a strong base upon which to build literacy promotion efforts. The country is one of the highly indebted poor countries (HIPC) with some of the poorest human condition indicators. In spite of a steady economic growth rate, there is still widespread poverty and resource inequality. Some sections of the society live seasonally on the verge of starvation. Concern with basic survival needs sometimes distracts from any higher-level efforts, including literacy and education in general. Resource scarcity also means there is not enough to invest in education. Another significant challenge is that Uganda is a multi-ethnic country with about 30 distinct languages, a challenge to mother tongue literacy in the face of limited resources.

33. For close to two decades Uganda has on the whole enjoyed a significant degree of political stability although there are pockets of instability and insecurity, which are restricted to some geographical areas. Practicing a no-party “movement” type of electoral democracy, the country enjoys much freedom of expression with liberalized mass media and an environment that encourages individual and group initiative. The country has now firmly embarked on the road to multi-party democracy, further opening up freedom of association, although the transition period is posing some difficult challenges.

34. In the education sphere, traditional education systems are being rapidly replaced by new systems referred to as “modern”, to the detriment of traditional lifelong and life wide learning arrangements. Many Ugandans seem to value only the learning acquired through the formal and non-formal arrangements. The “modern” education provision is increasingly reaching the majority through Universal Primary Education and through Functional Adult Literacy but not yet with the same degree of intensity and quality.

### 4.2 Policy Framework

35. Adult literacy education in Uganda takes place in the context of a policy framework that includes long-term perspective plans covering all aspects of the country’s aspirations, medium term strategic plans and specific policies or plans for adult literacy. Uganda has, like many other developing countries, adopted a long-term vision plan (*Vision 2025*) and a poverty reduction plan (*Poverty Eradication Action Plan 1997-2017*) to guide its recurrent plans and strategies. There are also policies governing education and literacy. The study looked at aspects of the various policy and plan documents that directly relate to education in general and literacy in particular in order to assess the extent to which they provide a foundation and guide for adult literacy provision.

36. Uganda’s long-term objectives are contained in its Vision 2025. Uganda’s overall vision according to that document is, “A prosperous people, a harmonious nation, a beautiful country”. Within this overall vision, there are partial visions that target specific important sectors. The vision for education is, “An enlightened, well informed and prosperous society”, which the National Adult Literacy Strategic Investment Plan (NALSIP) slightly paraphrased to, “A literate, well informed and prosperous society” (Government of Uganda 2002).

37. The guiding planning framework most used by the government of Uganda today is the twenty-year Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (PRSP), known as the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which was first formulated in 1997 and has since then been revised in 2001 and 2004. The NALSIP is a program developed within the framework of PEAP. The four core challenges targeted by PEAP are: (a) the restoration of security, dealing with the consequences of conflict and

improving regional equity; (b) restoring sustainable growth in the incomes of the poor; (c) human development; and (d) using public resources transparently and efficiently to eradicate poverty. The PEAP has been grouped into strategic areas referred to as “Pillars”. The latest revision (2004) has moved from the original four pillars to five pillars as follows:

1. Economic management,
2. Production, competitiveness and incomes,
3. Security, conflict-resolution and disaster-management,
4. Good governance, and
5. Human development

38. Education, both formal and non-formal, is handled in planning mainly under the fifth pillar but appears to some extent also under the other pillars. The two main education programs seen as very important to increasing the ability of the poor to raise their incomes and thus enhance their quality of life are Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Functional Adult Literacy (FAL). The NALSIP was developed under the consideration that it is inconceivable for poverty eradication to make much headway in the absence of major advances in literacy. Because of this recognized importance of basic education in the struggle against poverty, the government commitment is to ensure access to basic education to all. The government policy on education adopted in 1992 made the emphasis very clearly.

39. The commitment has been implemented through UPE, launched in 1997, and FAL for which the NALSIP was prepared and implemented, starting from 2002. With a target of achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2007, and achieving equitable access to basic and continuing education for women and out-of-school girl youths, the NALSIP was a very ambitious document in the face of the fact that Uganda was at the time estimated to have a non-literate population of almost 7 million. Strategies were adopted that, it was hoped, would lead to the achievement of that target. The strategic objectives are listed below.

- (a) To win national commitment to the program and incorporate district, sub-county and community level adult literacy action plans into overall development.
- (b) To provide adequate and equitable access to literacy education by all women and men.
- (c) To empower the marginalized and vulnerable groups in society through functional adult literacy to participate fully as equal partners in development programs.
- (d) To establish a sustainable management framework that will provide direction to the program towards effectiveness in performance. The management framework will provide for a strengthened institution, greater representation in decision-making and consist of in-built mechanisms to ensure sustainability.
- (e) To improve the capacity of literacy educators for the National Adult Literacy Program in the country.
- (f) To improve the quality of literacy learners through better delivery systems.
- (g) To provide the knowledge base of theory and Research for Systematic Research-Development-Diffusion process necessary for an effective NALSIP in all aspects of planning, curriculum development, implementation, teaching and evaluation.
- (h) To provide an effective framework for collection, documentation and sharing of information pertaining to strategic adult literacy policy and program review, planning and implementation of the NALSIP.
- (i) To mobilize additional resources for sustainability of the national adult literacy program and quality delivery of its activities

40. To achieve those objectives, the plan was particularly designed to venture into the following new frontiers:

- (i) Information, communication and advocacy to enhance national commitment and incorporate district, sub-county and community level adult literacy action plans into overall development planning;

- (ii) Developing a national accreditation framework;
- (iii) Enhancing access for literacy services for people with special learning needs;
- (iv) Establishment of community/village libraries to promote a literate environment for the neo-literates;
- (v) Research and Program Development;
- (vi) Monitoring and Evaluation system to create ‘a culture of information’;  
(Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), 2002 p. V).

## 5. KEY FEATURES OF LITERACY PROVISION IN UGANDA

41. This section presents an overview of literacy program provision in Uganda, commenting briefly on the key aspects: coverage, pluralism in provision, objectives and approach, participants, facilitators and supervisors, facilities and materials, internal efficiency and acquisition, retention and practice of literacy. This overview of key features is based almost exclusively on desk research.

### 5.1 Coverage

42. Literacy was first taught in Uganda by foreign missionaries, especially Catholic and Anglican Christian missionaries. The early adult literacy efforts by the missionaries produced, in those areas where they were operating, a significant number of people who could read and to some extent write. Christian missionary work spread quite fast to several parts of Uganda. Since for the Church Missionary Society literacy was a pre-condition to baptism, the growth in the number of Christians meant growth in the number of literate people, mostly adults during the first few years. As the missionaries gradually shifted their focus to children, their contribution to making adults literate lessened, but did not stop completely. The extent of their coverage was significant while it lasted.

43. Adult literacy provision by the colonial government was limited. The establishment of the Department of Public Welfare and its involvement in adult education after the Second World War was more to keep the ex-servicemen out of mischief. There was very little coverage in the provision of adult literacy through this department during the colonial period.

44. The mass literacy campaign which the government of the newly independent Uganda launched in 1964 was the most widespread adult literacy education effort in Uganda's history. There was no systematic evaluation of the effort after it came to an end during the nineteen-seventies. The confusion of the late seventies and early eighties led to the disappearance of much of the documentation from which any evaluation could be done later. The upheavals, which severely affected Uganda's social and economic life during that period, played a big role in bringing the campaign to an abortive end.

45. The needs assessment survey for the revival of adult non-formal basic education carried out in eight districts of Uganda in 1992 interviewed some people who had taken part in that mass literacy campaign as administrators, teachers and learners. The interviews revealed that a number of individuals benefited from the campaign by acquiring basic literacy, that is, a rudimentary ability to read and write their names and some simple statements, including very simple arithmetic statements. This must have contributed something to the reduction of the illiteracy rate which is estimated to have fallen by at least 10% during the sixties and seventies. There is really no way of measuring how much of the estimated 10% increase in literacy during the sixties and seventies was the result of the adult literacy campaign. All one can say is that those who participated in it felt that it had contributed something.

46. Since the government re-launched adult literacy provision in 1992, it has used a selective approach that covered only parts of selected districts. During the first four years the provision was limited, on a pilot basis, to eight districts only, with an average of only two sub-counties per district.

The Process Review of the project in 1995 calculated that the project had cumulatively reached only 15,700 learners. Even after the pilot phase was assessed as successful and was recommended for expansion, the expansion was to be ‘in a controlled manner’, responding to demand and readiness by districts to take ownership of the program. From the 8 districts of the pilot project the program spread to 26 districts by the end of 1998, to 37 by 2001 and to all 56 districts of the country by 2002 when adult literacy was included in the country Poverty Eradication Action Plan.

47. The result of the approach was that by the time the program was evaluated in 1999 the total enrolment was given as only 137,022. In 2001, the National Adult Literacy Strategic Investment Plan estimated that only about 4.3% of the 6.9 million non-literate adults were being reached. According to statistics from the Education Planning Department in the Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports, the government adult literacy program had made 1.2 million youth and adults literate by 2004. Apart from the government program there are a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), faith based organizations and community based organizations running programs in various parts of the country. However, the total coverage is still small even in 2005 because in most cases the program is operating in only small sections of the district. Table A1 in the Appendix shows the state of literacy at the time of the national census in September 2002.

48. In summary, the current situation in 2005 is that there seems to be a lot of demand for adult literacy education, of which only a very small percentage is being met. However, the Government is firmly committed to responding to this demand, although reaching 50% of the non-literate adults by 2007 as planned in the NALSIP is no longer considered feasible. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Uganda is one of 28 states that ‘could possibly improve their literacy rates by between 30 and 40 percent’ by 2015 (UNESCO Press Release No. 2002-55). The Government has set aside a certain amount of money in the budget for the task, although with funding gaps compared to the task at hand. There are also a number of other agencies and civil society organizations participating in the provision of adult literacy education either by themselves or in collaboration with the Government.

## 5.2 Objectives and Approach

49. Practically all the literacy programs in Uganda make a link between literacy and activities geared towards poverty reduction. This is in recognition of the fact that the need to learn to read and write is in most cases not as urgent as the need to find urgent solutions to the problems of poverty as has been revealed by the various needs assessment studies. Aiming beyond poverty reduction, the programs usually mention development among their objectives. The Government approach has since 1992 emphasized the functional aspects of literacy and was designed to:

Help people to be sensitized and aware of the true nature and reasons for their situation and problems, and how their conditions can be improved;

Enable people to acquire practical knowledge and skills and the proper attitudes to use these to improve their living conditions (National Plan for Functional Literacy, May 1996).

50. The differences in approach observable among the different programs arise more out of the way the link between literacy and the other developmental activities are forged in practice. While in some programs there is an effort to integrate literacy training with training for the other developmental activities, in others literacy is handled side by side with the other program areas, hoping that the literacy will contribute to the other program areas. In some cases the need for literacy had been realized because its absence had adversely affected activities that were already in place.

51. There has of late been much international debate as to which of these approaches is most effective. A study sponsored by the World Bank and the German Adult Education Association (DVV) (Oxenham 2002) seems to reinforce the conclusion by Alan Rogers: ‘Start with development projects and fit literacy learning into development projects. The main approach in Uganda that is used by the Government does not reflect Rogers’ (2001: 24) “literacy comes second” model’.

## 5.3 Participants

52. The most important of the factors that account for the success or failure of the literacy program is the human factor. Among the various categories of the human factor in the literacy program are the participants or learners. In recognition of this, all program providers set out to make their programs respond to the needs and desires of the prospective learners and to cater for their characteristics in the program design. It is accordingly almost routine procedure for all programs to start with a situation analysis and needs assessment survey for literacy before designing and implementing the program.

53. The majority of participants in all adult literacy programs in Uganda are women, which to some extent reflects the higher illiteracy rate among women. The 1999 evaluation found that women constituted over 80% of the participants. Since girls have been and are still to a great extent disadvantaged in formal education, their greater participation in adult literacy activities works to redress the imbalance. However, the ratio of women to men in the literacy classes is usually much higher than the ratio of illiterate women to illiterate men in the area. It is reported in most cases that illiterate men are not interested in attending the classes. Some of the reasons have to do with mixed classes of men and women where men feel uncomfortable. This has raised the debate about the desirability of segregated classes for men and women.

54. Another striking feature among the participants is that the majority are people who already had some formal education, some even up to the upper levels of primary education. The 1999 evaluation found that 70% of the participants had had school education. The question this raises is whether the adult literacy programs are missing their true targets. This situation seems to arise both from the way the programs are designed and the way they are implemented.

55. All the needs assessment studies for literacy in Uganda have indicated that there are large numbers of people with some primary education who demand adult literacy classes. Not taking full account of this, the programs have so far been designing only one level of programs, to which they usually admit people, whether they have ever been to school or not, and they are all put together in the same class. Many people without prior formal education have been intimidated by this situation and either dropped out or never joined in the first place.

56. A third important characteristic of the participants is that they are usually from among the very poor, although, it seems, not the very poorest of the community. The fact that the program is attracting the poor gives it the potential to play a useful role in poverty reduction. Indeed, most of the participants join the program in the hope of finding a solution to their poverty. Practically all the needs assessment surveys for adult literacy in Uganda have come out with poverty as the problem about which the people are most concerned and for which they want a solution. For some participants, the program has made a positive difference in their struggle against poverty, as many reported to the evaluators in 1999, but not for the majority. In any case the difference reported by many of the women is really minimal. The evaluation in fact concluded that the programs needed to do much more to make a really meaningful difference in alleviating the poverty of the people.

57. The completion rate in the Uganda programs, as already discussed, was amazingly high. However, several studies have found irregularity in attendance to be quite high (e.g. Okech 1994, 1999). Most of the participation problems are related to the problems faced by women, arising from their roles and workload as assigned to them by the culture of their society. This is clear from most of the difficulties listed by the learners.

58. It is clear from this that adult literacy programs in Uganda must be designed with special consideration for women's problems and for this reason women must be adequately consulted during the designing process. This calls for a special effort because most of the forums where consultations take place are dominated by men and the women's case may not be effectively articulated. However,

all programs seem to have made it a routine to decide together with the learners on the key issues about the program. This may partly explain the high completion rates.

## 5.4 Facilitators and Supervisors

59. The name facilitator is used here to refer to anyone who instructs others in literacy. However, it is only in REFLECT and a few non-governmental programs that they are called facilitators. In the government program they are known as instructors.

60. Most adult literacy facilitators in Uganda do the work on a volunteer basis without any remuneration. Both the 1994 study by Okech and the 1999 evaluation looked into what motivates such facilitators and also at the level of their motivation. The findings were that, working within their communities, many of them felt they were doing something good to help the less fortunate. They are happy to share their educational privileges with the rest of the community. Their satisfaction is to see their village mates changing for the better. That is why they are able to produce results without pay.

61. However, practically all of them stated they would be happier if they were remunerated for the work. The high turn over and inadequate commitment among facilitators is to a great extent the result of working without pay. Both studies observed that the volunteer spirit seemed to be waning and it was risky to expect the programs to continue running purely on the good will of unpaid volunteers.

62. With or without remuneration, the work of an adult literacy facilitator still requires a person with special dispositions. Functional literacy of one type or another, which is the aim of most of the programs, requires a certain degree of selflessness, a willingness to help others improve outside the adult literacy classroom. From the point of view of the community, it requires a person they can trust, one they can identify with. It is in recognition of all this that most adult literacy programs in Uganda lay emphasis on selection of facilitators according to certain guidelines and in close consultation with the community.

63. While that procedure has to a great extent ensured the selection of facilitators acceptable to the learners and the community, it would seem that the result has not been as satisfactory from the aspect of the facilitators' ability to handle the learning experience with the learners in the manner required by the functional "conscientizing" literacy approach. In some cases even the literacy level of the facilitator has been so low that they can only teach the most elementary levels of reading, writing and arithmetic.

64. Another weak point especially in the government program is the very inadequate training received by these facilitators, in most cases between three and five days duration, and only once. This inadequate training is an even greater problem because of the very low education level of most facilitators. Although most of these facilitators have been effective in helping the adult learners acquire a basic level of literacy, the quality and level of provision, as has been explained, needs to be enhanced. The studies referred to above showed that it would be difficult to improve without better quality facilitators.

65. There is, everywhere, the awkward situation of the learners being very predominantly female while the facilitators are predominantly male. Even with very special efforts which some of the programs have exerted, it has still not been possible to improve on the female to male ratio of facilitators. There are much fewer educated women around, and those who are there are hampered by the many other burdens thrown upon them by the culture of their society. Although many of the female learners indicated when they were asked that they did not have any problems with having a male facilitator, there were a number of cases where the learners would have preferred a female facilitator, partly to allay the suspicions of their husbands who sometimes prevented them from participating in classes run by a male facilitator.

66. Supervision and monitoring are very deficient in most of the programs, especially the government programs. Some centers are not visited by supervisors for many months and some in the meantime remain inactive for months without the knowledge of the supervisor. Both the 1994 study and the 1999 evaluation have some very revealing anecdotes to illustrate the deficiency. With the classes, facilitators and learners facing the so many difficulties which have been listed, their success stands a very little chance unless they are supported by constant supervision, which should play two major roles: ensuring that things are being done according to plan and providing technical support to ensure and maintain quality. In view of the very little training the facilitators have received in all cases, this technical support is really essential.

67. Monitoring data are still rather inadequate. There are cases when there were signs that even the number of learners given was more of guesswork. Visits to the field seemed to indicate something else. Monitoring of the regularity of attendance and of the dropouts and reasons for both does not seem to be given much attention. As a result there is plenty of useful information missing, making it difficult to assess the performance of the programs and thus see how they can be improved where necessary.

## 5.5 Facilities and Materials

68. In the traditional approach it was considered all right to use school class-rooms for adult literacy classes. The practical problem was that, since almost all schools use their classrooms until evening they were not usually available for adult literacy classes when required.

69. Today, the growing professionalism in adult education has brought about the realization that school classrooms are neither physically nor psychologically suitable for adult learners. And so, both for practical reasons and as a matter of principle, classrooms are rarely used as venues for adult literacy classes in Uganda. The problem is finding suitable alternatives.

70. Among the solutions tried were the Community Centers which were built by the government at every sub-county headquarters to serve various purposes, including adult literacy. Although these centers served as adult literacy centers in the 1964 Literacy Campaign, they were far from being adequate, with only one available per sub-county. Secondly, their location at the sub-county headquarters was unsuitable, being too far from many learners and too much the center of public focus. This would expose the learners too much, and many people found it safer to keep away from administrative headquarters associated with taxation and other law enforcement activities. Later, during the seventies, the Community Centers were diverted to other uses and since then many new sub-counties have been established without such centers.

71. Other alternatives used have been churches or mosques, village halls in the very few places where they exist and in a few cases even private houses. The program providers have encouraged the communities to construct simple shelters for the classes on their own, but this has been done in very few places. Some well-funded projects have assisted the learners and their communities by meeting some of the costs of the learning shelters. However, a very large number of the classes, both in the government and NGO programs, just meet under trees, exposed to wind and rain. Surprisingly, many learners, as reported in the 1999 evaluation, did not seem to be particularly dissatisfied with having to learn under trees.

72. As regards seating, the participants either bring along something to sit on or sit on whatever is available at the meeting place: logs, stones, leaves or even the bare ground. Trying to write in an exercise book placed on the ground or on one's lap is not very conducive to learning the skill of writing.

73. Practically all class centers are provided with a blackboard, but there is often a shortage of chalk, except in the well-funded NGO projects. The government program provides at least a few primers and in most cases a teachers' guide to every class center. In some languages there is also a



follow-up reader with its teachers' guide. Several studies have found weaknesses in the materials and recommended their revision. The 1999 evaluation reported that there was a demand for instructional materials in programs which did not provide them.

74. There is a big challenge in Uganda to the provision of materials for adult education: the multiplicity of languages in the face of inadequate resources. The people of Uganda speak over thirty distinct languages as their mother tongues (Ladefoged 1971). Although about 20% of Ugandans are at least bilingual in local languages, this bilingualism or multilingualism has many varied combinations and does not therefore lead to one common language (Okech et al. 1999: 55). In any case there is a strong belief today, as endorsed by UNESCO, that all people should first learn literacy in their mother tongues. The lack of materials in many languages is a great hindrance not only to mother tongue literacy but also to the development of a literate society as a whole.

## 5.6 Internal Efficiency

75. Low completion rates and wastage have often been cited as common features of all adult literacy programs. There is the paradox between the people's desire for adult literacy programs usually expressed during needs assessment studies and the actual enrolment and participation in the programs. To some extent this is true of the Ugandan situation. It was, however, surprising that in the 1999 evaluation, the calculated completion rate was over 70%. The responses by the facilitators yielded an average attendance rate of 80%. The evaluation report itself raised doubts about the figures made available by the program managers, in view of the weak monitoring system in place. However, the fact that a considerable number (over 80%) of those who had completed the first nine months and successfully taken the proficiency test were still participating in the program was an indicator that the figures may have some validity. In terms of completion and attendance, therefore, the internal efficiency of the adult literacy provision in Uganda has not been bad in recent years.

76. Internal efficiency is also measured in terms of cost-effectiveness, the value of the outputs and outcomes compared to the inputs. The 1999 evaluation undertook also a cost-effectiveness analysis of the adult literacy provision. The test that had been administered to children who were in the fourth year of primary education and adults who had completed at least nine months of literacy learning had yielded better results among the adults. It seemed that four years of primary schooling was required for acquisition of a similar level of literacy. The evaluators, therefore, compared the cost of the nine-month program and that of four years of primary education.

77. The cost of enabling adults to acquire literacy through the government nine-month program was found to be about \$5 per learner, whereas the cost of the required four years of primary education was calculated at \$80. Of-course these figures do not give the whole picture because primary schooling gives much more than just the ability to read, write and do simple mathematical operations. It should also be kept in mind that the government program was operating through unpaid volunteer facilitators. Nevertheless the figures are still a very interesting indicator of the cost-effectiveness of the adult literacy program.

## 5.7 Acquisition, Retention and Practice of Literacy

78. The 1999 evaluation of adult literacy programs in Uganda revealed that the programs were largely effective in enabling the learners to acquire the basic skills of reading and writing as well as some functional knowledge in numeric manipulation, health and sanitation, agriculture, environmental education and civic education. Although to some extent the learners were satisfied with this achievement, most felt that it was inadequate and they wanted to learn more. Some of them stayed on in the program although they kept repeating what they had already learned.

79. The evaluation went further to investigate the use of the newly acquired literacy and other functional skills and found that there was some use of all the skills and knowledge but on a limited

scale. Reading and writing skills were in many cases not used because of lack of reading materials and in some cases writing materials. A small percentage of the sample, however, reported that they did not read and write because they did not have enough reading and writing skills. There was, therefore, little evidence to show that learners were able to appreciate and enjoy the benefits and opportunities acquired through the mastery of the skills of reading, writing and numeracy, which is one of the objectives of the government program.

80. The use of the functional knowledge, although observable to some extent, was limited both by contextual factors and by the inadequate knowledge that had been acquired. The large percentage of the learners who had passed the proficiency test and were still attending classes shows that the learners felt they had not had enough and they needed more. Overall, the evaluation concluded that, although the literacy programs were achieving something, the quality and levels of achievement were still low and needed to be enhanced.

81. Measuring the retention of literacy skills is made very difficult by the high percentage of 'literacy graduates' who continue to attend the classes, in most cases merely repeating what they had already covered. The evaluation had not been designed to cater for this phenomenon and could not, therefore, meaningfully measure retention. If what is happening among school leavers is a good indicator, one could assume that the rudimentary literacy acquired in adult literacy programs may also be fading away fairly fast, in view of the limited opportunities for use.

## **6. MULTIFACETED LANDSCAPE OF LITERACY EDUCATION**

82. Apart from a single shot effort at a mass literacy campaign in 1964, the literacy approach by the government of Uganda has been on a selective basis, starting on a small scale and gradually expanding to cover more areas. This has continued to leave a lot of demand that is not responded to. The government has encouraged others, especially faith-based and non-governmental organizations to join as partners in the provision. This has resulted in a variety of efforts. The multifaceted provision of opportunities has enriched the literacy education environment, especially through the development of networking and the provision of forums for sharing ideas and experiences.

### **6.1 Growth of Pluralism in Provision**

83. The return to normalcy in the socio-political situation of Uganda in the mid-1980's after the traumatic experiences the country had gone through attracted a large number of foreign NGOs and gave rise to many local ones. A significant number have involved themselves in adult literacy work although many of them through small scale projects. This has been encouraged by government, which has made an effort to create an enabling environment for NGOs and others to invest in development activities. The NGOs and other investors, seen as partners to government in development, are given the freedom to do their activities in the way they see fit.

84. One of the chapters in a recent publication on Adult Education in Uganda (Okech 2004) looked at the role of civil society in shaping adult education practices in Uganda. Under civil society the chapter included religious institutions, faith based organizations, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, cooperative unions and workers' unions.

85. Adult literacy education was at the beginning for quite a period of time provided almost exclusively by religious missionaries and their followers. The colonial government had only limited involvement in education, leaving religious bodies to be much in charge of their various provisions. However, it gradually put in some effort in adult education through the Welfare Department as already explained.

86. After independence, the government of the newly independent state immediately took full charge of education. Religious bodies were pushed aside and gradually withdrew from secular education, limiting their efforts to religious instruction. Recently some of them have showed renewed interest in providing secular education and are again running a number of adult literacy and non-formal education projects. Considering, as Parry (2000) wrote, that religious literacy is perhaps the most deeply embedded form of literacy in Uganda, the discontinued involvement by the religious bodies was most likely a significant lost opportunity.

87. In many cases the religions are implementing such activities through affiliated organizations referred to as faith-based organizations. There are two main Christian Churches in Uganda: the Catholic and the Anglican Church of Uganda. Recently, the Seventh Day Adventist Church has also become increasingly involved through the faith-based Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). The Muslim religion is also engaged in some adult literacy and non-formal education provision, but to a less extent than the Christian Churches.

88. The chapter referred to above grouped non-governmental organizations involved in adult education into International NGOs, national NGOs, local community based NGOs often referred to simply as community based organizations (CBOs). Within each of these categories, the chapter makes three sub-classifications: NGOs clearly identifying themselves as adult education civil society organizations, those that are associated with adult education because of some aspect of their work involving literacy, and those who do not think of themselves as having anything to do with adult education, while in many cases actually undertaking some form of non-formal adult education. It is the first two categories that are relevant in the context of adult literacy.

89. The main international NGOs that are currently engaged in literacy education or have been recently include Action Aid Uganda (AAU), Adventist Relief and Development Agency (ADRA), Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), Agency for Co-operation in Research and Development (ACORD), the Icelandic International Development Agency (ICEIDA) and the various Save the Children Organizations, which have now merged into Save the Children (Uganda). A United Nations agency, the World Food Program (WFP), has also supported adult literacy in one region (Karamoja, the region with the lowest literacy rate in the country) where they are providing food relief. Action Aid Uganda has played a significant role in adult literacy especially through its promotion of the REFLECT approach. The ADRA is running functional adult literacy programs in various parts of the country.

90. There are about ten national NGOs that operate in several regions of Uganda. Among the most prominent today is one known as Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE), which in 2002 won the UNESCO Noma Literacy Prize, among others for its innovative approaches and for promoting collaboration in adult literacy provision. Some of the NGOs have been in existence for over twenty years and appear in the Directory of Adult Education in Uganda compiled with UNESCO support in 1984. Noteworthy among those are the National Adult Education Association, the Kiira Adult Education Association of Eastern Uganda, the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association. However, the majority of the NGOs in adult literacy are younger than a decade, showing the increase of interest in the field.

91. There are over one hundred local NGOs and community based organizations engaged in literacy in their various locations. Some of them cover several parts of their district but the majority operate on a small scale within their communities, reaching only a few learners. So, in spite of their great number, they do not make a significant impact on the output of literacy education in Uganda. A more recent development in the provision of adult literacy is that of individual initiatives, some of them set up as commercial enterprises referred to as 'the private sector'.

92. The freedom given to the different partners has led to the introduction of new approaches to adult literacy education. Among the new approaches is the REFLECT approach that was

experimented by Action Aid in Uganda alongside two other countries. After the experimental phase was evaluated and found to be highly successful, Action Aid Uganda embarked upon the phase of up-scaling the methodology first in Uganda and then in the rest of Africa. It set up the REFLECT Coordination Unit in Uganda, which serves as a support center for all adult literacy providers who want to adopt the REFLECT approach and adapt it to their conditions and needs. Several NGOs have thus been able to learn the approach and adopt it, adapting it to their different situations and beliefs. Uganda is, as a result of the new approaches, experiencing a diversification of efforts and the growth of a multifaceted landscape of literacy education.

93. The pluralism encouraged in the provision thus allows the providers to invest in the program according to their different beliefs and approaches. It therefore enables the beneficiaries to have choices according to their needs and beliefs. This freedom of choice and action is also motivating to the providers because people and agencies have a certain degree of confidence that they can undertake a literacy program of their own liking and carry it through without being interfered with.

94. In effect, the scattered sprinkle of interventions has not been able to make much of an impact. Not only do most of them have limited coverage, but often their planned duration is fairly short, in line with their project approach. In spite of limited coverage and short duration, practically all the interventions have gone ahead to create an autonomous structure for their program, a structure which comes and goes with the project, leaving nothing behind to continue with what they have started. Perhaps the impact would be greater if there was more involvement in efforts to strengthen a common provision structure.

95. One way in which some literacy providers have tried to ensure sustainability is by basing their provision on the people themselves. For example, the Bundibugyo Action Aid Project, where REFLECT was piloted, first encouraged the formation of a people's council to be in charge of the program. The literacy program would then be stimulated as a people-driven initiative that should be sustained by the people themselves even after the end of external intervention and the departure of outside agencies. The Bundibugyo project was interfered with by the invasion of an anti-government rebel group, which destabilized the area for some time, so the community-based initiative could not come to the desired maturation. However, Action Aid has since handed over its adult literacy activities in Mubende District to community-based management committees. Save the Children (UK) did the same in Arua Municipality, and so did the Women's Empowerment Program in several districts of North-Western Uganda. The sustainability of these initiatives is yet to be evaluated.

96. The awareness created through adult literacy and education programs may make it possible to adequately strengthen the community to effectively take charge of its programs. So, the option of establishing a people-driven adult literacy and education provision, which will rely for its sustainability on the people themselves, remains open. However, there is no doubt, as stated in the CONFITEA V Hamburg Declaration, that 'The state remains the essential vehicle for ensuring the right to education for all, particularly for the most vulnerable...' (UNESCO 1997: 3)

97. From the re-launch of adult literacy education activities in 1992 Uganda has benefited from international support in the effort. Apart from the international NGOs already discussed, partners have included UNESCO, UNICEF, German Adult Education Association (DVV), World University Service, the (former) British Overseas Development Agency (ODA), SNV and NOVIB Netherlands Development Organizations, Ireland Aid, COMIC Relief and Care International. The development in Uganda of adult education in general and adult literacy provision in particular owes very much to the DVV that has maintained a steady partnership with Ugandan adult educators for over twenty years. This partnership has seen DVV providing financial, material and technical support to adult education in Uganda. In the particular area of Adult Literacy DVV has supported program and materials development and production, training, research and evaluation. The DVV support has thus contributed significantly to capacity development for adult literacy education in Uganda.

98. The African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE) played a significant role in promoting international partnership between Ugandan adult educators and others in Africa. The AALAE also made it possible for Ugandan adult educators to participate in forums of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and this created opportunities for the development of networking and cooperation in adult education between Uganda and different parts of the world.

## 6.2 Networking, Sharing and Cooperation

99. The growing involvement of agencies and organizations serving the same population in the same area of specialization led to the realization that there was a need for coordinated action. Since the late 1960s voices calling for coordination in adult education work had been raised in the form of memoranda to the government and resolutions passed at various forums. Initially, the memoranda and the resolutions were all directed at the government to put in place a coordination mechanism. As civil society organizations in adult education increased, there was growing realization that these organizations needed to begin by cooperating among themselves. However, in spite of the frequent calls for coordination mechanisms, the different actors continued to operate in isolation, not benefiting from each other's ideas or experiences and failing to use the advantage of sharing resources where possible. There were even cases of duplicated efforts, which were not only a waste of resources but also an inconvenience to the beneficiaries. It took some time and effort, including some external prompting, for concrete coordination efforts to emerge.

100. The African Adult Education Association and the African Association for Literacy (Afrolit) formed in the Sixties to enable civil society organizations from different African countries to work together to promote adult education and literacy recruited mainly organizational membership. In the mid-eighties, the two merged into the African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE), which encouraged one national organization from each country to represent all the other civil society organizations. Ugandan organizations did not have such a national organization and continued to be represented in AALAE by more than one organization. Efforts by the AALAE secretariat played a significant role in enabling local adult education NGOs in Uganda to undertake joint projects and thus work together. This was one of the earlier steps towards networking and sharing.

101. The DVV, key external partner of Ugandan adult educators since the mid-1980s, also worked hard to negotiate a united front among Ugandan adult education organizations. The efforts produced the Uganda Joint Action for Adult Education (UJAF AE), which was the first organization put in place bringing together several partners in adult education in Uganda. Initially, it included only the partners who had been receiving support from the DVV. Efforts were later made to expand its membership to bring in other actors but the response to this drive was not good. The organization eventually proved ineffective and irrelevant, and was wound up.

102. When UJAF AE died out, partners in literacy education in Uganda felt the need to fill that vacuum. To a great extent the new organization put in place, Uganda Adult Education Network (UGAADEN) is a successor to UJAF AE and inherited some of its resources. The UGAADEN is still a developing network but is already producing tangible results. The challenge is to draw more Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to participate actively in the network

103. The Literacy and Adult Basic Education Organization (LABE) is one of the most successful national NGOs focusing on literacy and adult basic education in Uganda. The LABE saw the need for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working in literacy to act together to advocate for greater emphasis on adult literacy. It mobilized resources and worked with other organizations to put in place the Literacy Network for Uganda (LITNET), which has already had some impact on literacy education in the country. The promotion of cooperation was one of the reasons cited for awarding LABE the UNESCO Noma Prize for Literacy in 2002.

104. The networking and sharing of ideas and resources has already started producing tangible results and has contributed to strengthening the development and practice of literacy education in Uganda.

## 7. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS AND ITS LINK TO FORMAL AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

### 7.1 Program Structure and its Link to Continuing Education

105. Most literacy programs on offer for youth and adults seem to be part of adult basic education programs planned to end at that level. The adult literacy education provision in Uganda has on the whole a one-level structure leading to a dead end as far as continuing education is concerned. In the case of the government functional adult literacy program, this has been defended as a legitimate choice, justified by the fact that the number of illiterate adults is still so high that it is only fair to give them a chance to acquire some basic literacy before offering the opportunities for those who want to continue beyond the basic. This choice is reflected in formal education as well. The government has focused the education budget on Primary Education while reducing support to higher education. It has been described as the choice between giving “*all to a few or a little to all*”. The second alternative has been considered more appropriate and fair.

106. Other partners in the provision of adult literacy education have on the whole also seen it fit to follow the same approach as that used by the government. This is also explained by the fact that most of the programs see literacy (reading and writing) mainly as a means for acquiring better livelihood and greater civic participation by enabling the participants to do better those things that they are already doing. Whilst this does not exclude continuing education, there is currently no conscious arrangement for this in most programs. Any continuing education efforts have been individual initiatives. Some adults have had to subject themselves to the humiliating situation of joining formal primary schooling with little children. Not surprisingly extremely few adults have been desperate enough to do that.

107. There is, however, growing demand from adult literacy participants for opportunities to continue after the basic level. It is recognized that this would require developing some framework for assessing equivalency with what is provided in formal schooling and some sort of link between the two. That has never been done in Uganda although there have been some half-hearted efforts as will be presented in the next paragraphs. In this there has been much discrepancy between the recognition of the need and the action. In the NALSIP (2002) one of the programs to be undertaken within the timeframe of one year was developing a national accreditation framework and curriculum for continuing education, which would be carried out through the following steps:

- Assessing the nature of the continuing education needs
- Working with the appropriate national organ to design a national accreditation framework for continuing adult education
- Developing an appropriate curriculum for the accreditation framework
- Designing and preparing appropriate materials for the curriculum
- Running continuing education programs for the adult literacy graduates

108. To date, three years later, the action is still at the second step, which has been modified to focus once more not on continuing education but on the basic literacy level. At this rate it will most likely be many years before there is an accreditation framework with an appropriate curriculum for continuing adult education in Uganda.

109. One of the difficulties in developing this link is the insufficient coordination between the government ministry in charge of adult literacy and that responsible for mainstream education. A policy adopted by the national legislative assembly in 1992 made provision for the transfer of adult literacy to the Ministry of Education to be handled together with other aspects of education. This policy has never been implemented. There are valid arguments both for and against its implementation. That adult literacy is in a different ministry would not matter so much if there was adequate coordination with the Ministry of Education where required, but this is not the case.

110. A few programs have started to respond to the demand for continuing adult education in a practical manner. Very limited opportunities are now available through some CSOs and private commercial education enterprises. Most of these opportunities are, however, found only in the capital city and a few of the major towns where there are people ready to pay for them. One CSO that has for a number of years been involved in offering such continuing adult education opportunities is the Adult Literacy and Basic Education Center (ALBEC) operating on Makerere University campus and a few other centers. Faced with the problem of offering adults certificates appropriate to their needs and learning situations, ALBEC has been in the forefront of those advocating for the development of a national adult learning qualifications framework. The ALBEC is a registered NGO that was started by graduates of Makerere University's Bachelor of Adult and Community Education. It has worked with other CSOs in this advocacy work, including LABE, LitNet, ULALA and a commercial adult education enterprise in Kampala, DIFRA Language Services. Both ALBEC and DIFRA have opportunities for their participants to move from the basic to the more advanced levels. However, their continuing education participants have to be subject to the regulations governing formal education in order to attain recognized accreditation, which is not convenient for adults.

111. The Icelandic International Development Agency (ICEIDA), which has been active in Uganda since 2002 in the field of adult literacy, has sponsored a specialized continuing education program focusing on business skills development. The ICEIDA is working with the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development and the district administration to strengthen the provision of adult literacy in the island district of Kalangala. The needs assessment it commissioned in the district in 2002 showed that there was a relatively higher rate of literacy than in most other districts. The decision was therefore taken to develop a continuing education program alongside the basic literacy program. The ICEIDA has since then participated in efforts to develop an adult education policy that would, among other things, provide the framework for continuing adult education.

112. At the national level, as already hinted upon, there have been efforts to develop a qualifications framework to guide continued learning by adults. The first significant effort was when LABE worked with the Ministry of Education and Sports to develop a continuing education framework for adults. A notable amount of work was done but it reached a dead-end mainly because responsibility for adult education was not transferred to the Ministry as had been expected. Then, after the NALSIP was put in place, CSOs put pressure on the Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development, which is responsible for adult literacy, to implement the provision in NALSIP quoted above. The Ministry contracted LABE to work on the national adult learning qualifications framework. Some work has been done, but, as already stated above, the effort is for the moment focusing only on the level of basic literacy. The work presented by LABE has, moreover, not yet been adopted by the Ministry to guide the next steps. There is certainly a long way still to go.

## **7.2 Current Methodology and its Contribution to Empowerment for Lifelong Learning**

113. The pluralistic approach in literacy education for youth and adults is reflected in a variety of methodology applied. Although the field is dominated by what is referred to as the functional adult literacy approach (FAL) there are variations in which this approach is used. There is also increasing use of the REFLECT approach applied with modifications in different programs.

114. To achieve this two-fold objective of the government program (see section 2.3 above) the methodology selected was described as ‘integrated’ and it was explained that the integration covers these three dimensions:

- *Integration of subject matter:* The approach brings the knowledge from different subjects, or ‘program areas’ as referred to in this program, to bear upon a problem or an effort at hand. Such integration has been found to be necessary because, in one’s life, one problem may arise from different things and it is usually not possible to solve a problem or promote an effort by looking at one aspect only.
- *Integration among service providers:* The approach is also integrated because it makes use of different professionals or sectoral workers in the field to address the learning or development issue at hand. It is often not possible for the literacy facilitator alone to cover adequately the different subject areas needed to address the learners’ needs. They are therefore encouraged to bring in extension workers from agriculture, health, co-operatives and so on to strengthen the learning process.
- *Integration of learning and life:* The approach keeps learning and life together by tying the learning to those things that the learners are already doing and first helping them to do those better before enabling them to start on new activities. To ensure this link to life, the approach aims at immediate application of what is learnt in real life situations. Follow-up activities are therefore designed to take the facilitators and learners from the classrooms to the learners’ work, which, for the vast majority of the learners, is in their homes and surrounding fields.

115. An exciting and significant addition to adult literacy provision in Uganda is the REFLECT approach, introduced by Action Aid, a British-based international NGO. The architects of REFLECT explain that the approach seeks to build on the theoretical framework developed by the Brazilian Paulo Freire, but provides a practical methodology by drawing on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques. An important characteristic is that in REFLECT there is no textbook, no literacy ‘primer’, no pre-printed materials other than a guide for facilitators that is produced locally, preferably with the input of the facilitators themselves. The ‘REFLECT Mother Manual’ states:

‘If most literacy programs have failed then perhaps abolishing the primer may be one of the keys to success’ (Archer and Cottingham 1996).

116. In 1995 the pilot phase of REFLECT was evaluated in the three countries where it was being piloted: Uganda, Bangladesh and El Salvador. The findings were published in the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA) Education Paper, Number 17, 1996. The Paper concluded that REFLECT was more effective than the literacy approaches using primers.

117. Some NGOs in Uganda and also the government program in some districts have adopted REFLECT or some of its aspects. The 1999 evaluation of literacy programs in Uganda did not find any significant difference in effectiveness between the REFLECT and the government approach. (Carr-Hill 2001)

118. One way in which the programs empower learners is by making efforts to involve learners in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the literacy programs for adults and youth. Provision for learner involvement is contained in NALSIP, while various organizations have in practice been involving learners in some or all of those aspects. An active learners’ organization, the Uganda Literacy and Adult Learners Association (ULALA) has been providing a useful link between participants and program providers. The ULALA was formed in 1992 at a conference which brought together adult learners’ representatives from all over Uganda and was funded by the African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE). The formation of ULALA was a culmination of efforts that had begun since the international literacy year (1990), towards the empowerment of learners and the fulfillment of the goal of involving adult learners in planning and implementation of literacy programs.



119. The ULALA is now a registered NGO that brings together adult literacy learners to encourage them to participate in the promotion of literacy and post-literacy programs in Uganda. The ULALA has participated effectively in a number of advocacy initiatives to improve the provision of adult literacy programs. Its participation in many of the forums dealing with adult literacy has ensured that the voice of the learners is heard and their interests taken into account. This has resulted in significant empowerment of learners and they have been able to link with other partners and participate in relevant forums also outside the country. It is, for example, an active member of the International Reading Association and has been represented in a number of Learners' Week celebrations in many parts of the world. From that exposure, they have been able to contribute significantly in the national Adult Learning Week, which is set to become a national event in Uganda.

### 7.3 Skills Development for Work and Life

120. A study on Skills and Literacy Training for Better Livelihoods undertaken in 2002 with support from the German Adult Education and the World Bank reviewed a few cases from Uganda to see how literacy education was linked to skills development (Oxenham et al 2002). The cases studied in Uganda showed, as has already been hinted at, that all the programs linked adult literacy with efforts to improve livelihood. There were, however, different ways in which the links operated in practice.

121. The author who studied the Uganda cases concluded that the majority of documented adult education programs in Uganda have literacy as their lead element and faced the challenge of how to effectively design and implement a program with a good balance between literacy training and practical knowledge and skills that can be of immediate use to the learners in improving their living conditions. The author found that while the design of a program may emphasize the integration of learning and life, in practice much less emphasis is given to livelihood skills.

122. Another hindrance to the effectiveness of the programs in developing skills for better livelihood is the difficulty faced by the literacy facilitators in bringing the livelihood specialists to help the learners. Resources to facilitate transport and even attract the specialists are the key constraint. In a few cases such specialists are also not readily available. The lowly educated and poorly trained literacy facilitators are unable to provide by themselves the skills required. As a result the development of livelihood skills is not as effective as desirable. However, the 1999 evaluation of adult literacy programs in Uganda found that many of the learners felt that they had improved their lives through what they had learnt in the adult literacy program. A few had, on the other hand, left the program because their expectations had not been met. That evaluation concluded that it was important for the adult literacy program to be improved so as to produce more meaningful impact in the lives of the learners.

123. Projects such as the Basic Education for Urban Poverty Areas (BEUPA) that have been designed specifically to promote skills development for greater employability while providing literacy education to youth and adults have also been tried out. The BEUPA is an on-going pilot project of a non-formal three-year basic education course addressing the needs of urban out of school children and adolescents between the ages of 9 and 18 years. The project is run in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Kampala City Council. It started in September 1997 and its current phase runs from March 2003 to February 2006. The project activities have included:

- Developing and piloting a non-formal, three-year course, with adapted versions of the main subjects taught in primary schools
- Pre-vocational skills training
- Capacity building for implementers
- Promoting and strengthening community participation

124. A syllabus and short modules have been developed in different trades together with artisans from the communities. Instructors and local artisans teach basic skills in various trades to prepare the

learners for earning a living. They also try to organize apprenticeships or other training sessions for those who want to gain experience.

125. This is one example among few that have been designed by both government and CSOs to link literacy more closely with livelihoods. A closer study of such efforts may show their relative advantage over regular adult literacy programs. In Uganda they are still too few and too new for a fair assessment of their impact and advantages. It has, however, been argued that meaningful impact in livelihood is not the result of training narrowly focused on economic benefits needs. There is a need for a more holistic approach in literacy education.

126. It is interesting to note that the first result, “empowerment effect” is not one that comes out of the narrow economic training focus, but rather out of the broader functional literacy education approach as defined in Udaipur (Bhola 1983, p. 205) and adopted in many literacy programs, including most of those running in Uganda. The effects of livelihood knowledge and skills, like the effects of literacy, are to a great extent determined by prevailing ideologies and social dynamics. Just like literacy education, livelihood education must deal with those ideologies and dynamics. Functional literacy in the broader sense deals with those factors and is therefore a powerful tool for effective livelihood education.

The study concludes that combinations of livelihood skills training and adult literacy education help improve poor people's livelihood.

Firstly, there is a widely noted "empowerment effect" - that learners acquire enhanced confidence and social resources which help them take initiatives to improve their livelihoods.

Second, literacy and numeracy skills are a clear advantage in market transactions in the informal economy, and thus especially important for entrepreneurship.

Thirdly, more productive agricultural or livestock practices result from learning new vocational skills.

These effects should not be seen as isolated but as arising from complementary inputs. For example, not only are skills and market opportunity needed, but also access to credit. These conclusions also gain support from other reviews on training in livelihood skills and basic education for illiterate and semi-literate youth and adults.

## 7.4 The Impact of Literacy

127. An evaluation of adult literacy programs in Uganda done in 1999 found some significant outcomes of the programs both in literacy practice and in the other functional learning areas. Some of those outcomes are useful indicators of the impact that the literacy program is producing. Others will be discussed in the next section as challenges.

128. The evaluation concluded that quantitatively, the program continued to expand at a very low unit cost, but that, because it relied almost entirely on volunteer labor, it was in danger of losing momentum. The danger to the program was at the time increased by the fact that the financial input by the central government had decreased from 50% to 30% against donor finding over the preceding few years. Interestingly, the program continued to gain momentum in spite of the fact that it continued to rely on volunteer labor. The other danger mentioned in the evaluation, that is the

decreasing government financial input, has been removed by the government's inclusion of adult literacy programs in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan from 2002.

#### ***Literacy acquisition and development***

129. *The majority of the participants in the literacy programs evaluated had attained a level of reading, writing and numeracy higher than that of Primary Four pupils. Although it is true that 73% of the participants had undergone some formal education, the performance of even those adults who had little or no schooling was better than that of the pupils. However, the average level of attainment is at a pretty basic level.* It is today acknowledged in Uganda that adult literacy programs have contributed significantly to the recent improvement in literacy rates. At the time of the 1999 evaluation, it was estimated that only about 400,000 adults had benefited from a complete nine-month cycle of adult literacy education since 1992. During 2004 the number had gone up to 1.2 million and official statistics show that this had made a notable contribution to the adult literacy rate in the country.

#### ***Improved functional knowledge, attitudes and practices***

130. *Adults graduating from adult literacy were found to have performed considerably better than non-literates in the same communities in respect of their functional knowledge, attitudes and practices.* The mean functional attainment scores for knowledge, and attitudes were above average. However, the mean score for practice was relatively low. This was partly explained by the fact that some of the programs were quite new. There could also be other factors which may have influenced practice like peer pressure, availability of resources (in-puts) socio-cultural attitudes and practices.

#### ***Livelihood improvement***

131. *An impressive number of income generating projects had been started in the classes, and many by individuals as a result of their participation in the program.* The findings showed that the literacy programs benefited the learners with some practical knowledge especially in the areas of agriculture, that is, both for crop and animal husbandry and in handicrafts. For example, 71% of the learners, who were engaged in agricultural production, stated that the skills they had learnt from the literacy classes had helped them to boost their production and earn more money from the sale of their crops and animals.

#### ***Increased civic participation and improved living conditions***

132. *The findings showed that adult literacy graduates were participating more in the governance of their communities in terms of frequency and in the significance of roles played. They had adopted better health practices, especially through better personal and environmental sanitation.* Discussions with community leaders reinforced the views of the learners and the observations and impressions of the research team.

#### ***Redressing gender imbalance in education***

133. *The overwhelming participation by women in the literacy programs reinforces Uganda's affirmative action to redress the imbalance in opportunities between men and women. Their participation, therefore, makes a strong case for the programs' potential for bringing about socio-economic transformation.* One of the most striking outcomes of the literacy programs is the women's increased self-confidence. Moreover, many of the issues being addressed by the programs have, in practice, more relevance to women than to men, for example, health, food security, gender relations and environment.

## 8. GOOD PRACTICES, CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

### 8.1 Good Practices

#### ◦ *Relevance to participants' work and life*

134. Most adult literacy programs in Uganda have the correct approach to ensure relevance by basing their program design on a situation analysis and an assessment of the prospective learners' needs, interests and problems. Usually, the program is also designed taking into consideration the local characteristics. Where there is a national curriculum, as there is for the government program, it is used as a general reference which is modified to suit local conditions as materials are produced in local languages. Even the materials, for example the primers and follow-up readers are designed to be used flexibly to suit the needs, interests and problems of the different groups of learners.

135. The “integrated” design of the government functional adult literacy program further strengthens the program relevance to participants' work and life through integration of subject matter to focus on given needs, interests and problems, integration of provision to benefit from specialists in the different subject specialties and integration of learning and life to make the learning immediately applicable in the learners work and life.

136. The REFLECT approach is designed to make the programs even more relevant by avoiding ready-made programs or materials and letting the learners be part of the program design and materials development as the learning progresses. This should ensure that the needs and problems that the learners feel at the moment of learning are the ones that are addressed and the solutions proposed are those most acceptable to the learners.

#### ◦ *Empowering learners*

137. The REFLECT approach is a good example that takes learner empowerment seriously. The fact that the learners are the designers of their own program and materials gives them the opportunity not only to feel strong ownership of the program but also develop the capacity to design their own learning for the future. If properly implemented, REFLECT should develop the capacity to search for information and use it. It should also build the confidence that enables the learners to participate effectively in social and political life at the different levels.

138. The fact that participants in all adult literacy programs in Uganda felt that the program had enabled them to participate more effectively in the governance of their communities shows that the other approaches used in Uganda were also promoting learner empowerment. It is very significant that one of the most striking outcomes of the literacy programs evaluated is the women's increased self-confidence.

#### ◦ *Internal efficiency and program effectiveness*

139. The surprisingly high completion rate in literacy programs in Uganda is also noteworthy. It shows that most learners have found in the program what they were looking for. Their regret is that there is no provision for them to continue learning. This confirms that the program is relevant and meeting their needs. The 1999 evaluation made another very interesting finding that adult literacy graduates, after nine months of learning at an average of three hours a week, had acquired literacy and numeracy skills equivalent to those of a Primary Four pupil learning in a similar environment! This evidence of effectiveness of the program was surprising against the background of a poor resource base and poorly trained volunteer facilitators with low basic education.

#### ◦ *Link to formal education*

140. On the whole there is a very weak link between adult literacy and formal education. As has been presented, there are on-going efforts to establish some link, but they are moving very slowly. The practical efforts by some non-governmental organizations and enterprises to link the two are good

practical moves. Particularly interesting is the Family Basic Education Project by LABE, which has tested a methodology that effectively links adult learning to children's education and, in the process, strengthens the learning by both the adults and the children.

o *Contribution to building a literate society*

141. Adult literacy programs are contributing to the national effort to achieve the EFA goal of reducing the adult illiteracy rate by 50% in the country by 2015. By making adult literacy a priority in its priority planning framework, Uganda has shown a serious commitment to the development of a literate society. The contribution of adult literacy to this goal has been picking up slowly but the steady growth and the currently acknowledged contribution it has made by reaching 1.2 million youth and adults justifies the efforts that have been put in.

## 8.2 Challenges

o *Coverage*

142. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in 2002 estimated that only 4% of existing adult literacy education needs was then being met (NALSIP 2002). The coverage has since then significantly expanded, but still only about 10% and 20% of the non-literate adult population is being reached. The target set in NALSIP of reaching 50% of the non-literate population by 2007 will certainly not be achieved at this rate. The chance of the country attaining the Dakar goal by achieving a 50% reduction in the adult illiteracy rate even by 2015 also seems to be remote. The UNESCO document quoted in Section 2.1 above projected an achievement of only between 30% and 40%. This is in spite of the fact that Uganda eight years ago launched a universal primary education program that has trebled the primary school enrolment. The completion rate is, however, still poor, and that lets through a notable percentage of non-literate youth into adulthood from the primary schooling system.

o *Human and non-human resources for literacy education*

143. The main reason usually cited as holding back progress in adult literacy work in Uganda is resources. The reality observed on the ground confirms this. As stated earlier, the instructors or facilitators are very poorly trained because of inadequate finances. They are of very low educational status because the program has to depend on unpaid volunteers who are not motivated since they usually do not receive any incentive. The learning is undertaken in very poor conditions because there is no financing to afford anything better and the learning and teaching materials are in very limited supply.

o *Internal efficiency*

144. The internal efficiency has been found to be generally quite high, but with significant exceptions that pose a challenge. The 20% who drop out before completing the nine-month cycle may seem to be a small percentage but the fact that many of them drop out because they do not see their needs being met is a challenge to the providers. There is also a significant turn-over among the facilitators many of whom have been trained using the meager resources available, which is a waste the program cannot afford.

o *Acquisition and retention of literacy*

145. Evaluation of the adult literacy program in Uganda has found that the program leads to acquisition of literacy and numeracy equivalent to about the fourth year of primary school. This is impressive. However, taken in terms of attaining a satisfactory level of functionality, this basic level is not adequate, just like the literacy level attained by pupils in most Ugandan schools in the fourth year of their schooling is not adequate. More is required to ensure that the literacy acquired in adult literacy programs in Uganda is sustainable and can be put to beneficial use in the various activities the participants are engaged in at work and in their life.

o *Integration of literacy learning, literacy practice and life*

146. The “integrated” design of the functional adult literacy program in Uganda is appropriate to ensure relevance and functionality. The weakness in its implementation is, however, a big challenge. Literacy, it has been said, is no use to anyone unless applied in work and life. It should therefore be taught in such a way that it readily results in such application. There is, accordingly, an urgent need to strengthen the human resources to ensure that adult literacy education in Uganda can be implemented as designed.

○ *Promoting continued and lifelong learning for out of school youth and adults*

147. It has been shown that the planning and practice of adult literacy education in Uganda does not readily promote continued and lifelong learning for out of school youth and adults. The search for opportunities for continued and lifelong education is left to the initiative of individual youth and adults. Moreover such opportunities are hard to come by. Yet, there is an overwhelming demand by adult literacy program participants for continued learning. Government and other providers in Uganda have an urgent challenge of responding effectively to these demands.

### 8.3 Implications for Policies and Practice

Based on the challenges discussed above, the following implications for policies and practice are suggested:

○ *Policy and regulatory mechanisms*

148. Government, spurred on by and collaborating with the civil society, needs to hasten the efforts at developing policies to provide a sound framework and guidelines for adult literacy and adult education in general in Uganda. In particular the ongoing work on the development of the adult learning qualifications framework for Uganda needs to be brought to a speedy conclusion so that the next steps envisaged in NALSIP can be undertaken.

○ *Approaches to program provision*

149. The multiplicity of approaches used in literacy education in Uganda seems to have one unifying factor: the desire and effort to respond to the learners’ most urgent needs. The fact that the needs and interests are being met with diversity offers choice to the learners and a wealth of experience to the providers. Particularly important is the effort by all providers to make the program relevant and practical to the learners, although various factors have limited the success in the implementation of these efforts. The providers need to address these factors, in particular the human resource base, so that their well-conceived efforts can bear the desired fruits.

○ *Resources for literacy education and for the promotion of literacy practices*

150. The government’s inclusion of adult literacy education in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan shows its conviction that adult literacy is worth priority investment. However, the level of funding is too low for meaningful impact. There is need to mobilize more resources for literacy education. The inadequate funding is seriously limiting both the coverage and the quality in the provision of adult literacy education. More resources are required also for the promotion of literacy practices by making it possible for adult literacy graduates to access useful reading materials in their own languages, in which they are acquiring literacy.

○ *Sharing and coordination*

151. The recognition of the importance of sharing ideas and experiences among the different adult literacy providers is already producing some significant results. However, the networking is still limited in practice. There is no doubt that greater coordination of efforts and collaboration would make a big difference, especially in the context of limited resources for adult literacy work in Uganda.

○ *Developing mechanisms and practices for promoting continued and lifelong learning for out of school youth and adults*

152. Uganda needs to address the demands of the learners for continued learning in a more serious manner. This will come partly through policies and regulatory mechanisms recommended above. It,

however, also requires a change of orientation among the providers, both government and the others. It is indeed important to provide a little education for all. It may be said that this is as much as can be done in the face of limited resources. However, there is often the possibility to think more creatively and provide more than just the basic. Some organizations have already shown what can be done, as described in Section 3.0. It is important that government and other providers also consider such possibilities.

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**Table A1** Literacy Status in Uganda by Age Group and Sex for the Population Aged 10 Years and Above

Age Group	Literate			Illiterate			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>Rural</b>									
10 to 14	1,119,191	1,104,901	2,224,092	457,331	436,463	893,794	1,576,522	1,541,364	3,117,886
15 to 29	2,117,697	1,984,607	4,102,304	504,727	946,494	1,451,221	2,622,424	2,931,101	5,553,525
30 to 44	1,006,414	708,020	1,714,434	353,885	749,788	1,103,673	1,360,299	1,457,808	2,818,107
45 to 59	389,225	216,620	605,845	175,209	444,766	619,975	564,434	661,386	1,225,820
60 to 74	196,046	64,908	260,954	172,237	322,646	494,883	368,283	387,554	755,837
75 and over	46,603	17,871	64,474	87,546	122,316	209,862	134,149	140,187	274,336
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,875,176</b>	<b>4,096,927</b>	<b>8,972,103</b>	<b>1,750,935</b>	<b>3,022,473</b>	<b>4,773,408</b>	<b>6,626,111</b>	<b>7,119,400</b>	<b>13,745,511</b>
<b>Urban</b>									
10 to 14	159,856	185,633	345,489	20,674	24,986	45,660	180,530	210,619	391,149
15 to 29	475,960	524,337	1,000,297	36,275	68,075	104,350	512,235	592,412	1,104,647
30 to 44	217,608	168,052	385,660	20,106	41,979	62,085	237,714	210,031	447,745
45 to 59	57,833	41,009	98,842	7,785	21,397	29,182	65,618	62,406	128,024
60 to 74	16,888	11,621	28,509	5,959	16,485	22,444	22,847	28,106	50,953
75 and over	4,357	3,952	8,309	3,506	7,916	11,422	7,863	11,868	19,731
<b>Total</b>	<b>932,502</b>	<b>934,604</b>	<b>1,867,106</b>	<b>94,305</b>	<b>180,838</b>	<b>275,143</b>	<b>1,026,807</b>	<b>1,115,442</b>	<b>2,142,249</b>
<b>UGANDA</b>									
10 to 14	1,279,047	1,290,534	2,569,581	478,005	461,449	939,454	1,757,052	1,751,983	3,509,035
15 to 29	2,593,657	2,508,944	5,102,601	541,002	1,014,569	1,555,571	3,134,659	3,523,513	6,658,172
30 to 44	1,224,022	876,072	2,100,094	373,991	791,767	1,165,758	1,598,013	1,667,839	3,265,852
45 to 59	447,058	257,629	704,687	182,994	466,163	649,157	630,052	723,792	1,353,844
60 to 74	212,934	76,529	289,463	178,196	339,131	517,327	391,130	415,660	806,790
75 and over	50,960	21,823	72,783	91,052	130,232	221,284	142,012	152,055	294,067
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,807,678</b>	<b>5,031,531</b>	<b>10,839,209</b>	<b>1,845,240</b>	<b>3,203,311</b>	<b>5,048,551</b>	<b>7,652,918</b>	<b>8,234,842</b>	<b>15,887,760</b>

Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2004), National Population and Housing Census 2002