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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *Introduction*

The 1997 CONFINTEA V international conference on adult learning occasioned an opportunity for UNESCO member states to report on their efforts to provide adult learning to their population and more importantly, identified some critical themes to be addressed in future. Botswana ratified both of them and convened two stakeholder workshops to discuss and develop national plans of action in response to both CONFINTEA V conference on adult learning and Dakar World Education Forum on education for all (EFA). This CONFINTEA V Mid-term Review is part of an international exercise to assess national performance towards the attainment of the themes and goals set at both Hamburg, 1997 and Dakar, 2000. It analyses Botswana's efforts over the past six years to promote the goals of these two international conferences.

Available evidence suggests policy and structural frameworks have been developed in the form of Vision 2016, National Development plan, and the development of strategic plans in different departments and NGO. The nation has addressed most of the key goals albeit having some challenges at all levels of educational delivery. Some gains have been made in terms of increasing participation, addressing gender disparities, conducting research studies in different areas of adult learning in order to inform practice and some promising future project, which if implemented as planned, would enable the country to make some positive strides in the provision of adult learning. Adult learning is facilitated through literacy/adult basic education and continuing education.

The most significant gain so far has been the increased enrolment and completion of basic ten years of school. However, this is being threatened by an ongoing proposal by Government to cut down on the provision of free education. The future introduction of cost-recovery and cost-sharing measures are likely to create a situation where the people are likely to be denied the right to education. The twin problems of the unprecedented spread of HIV/AIDS and poverty dictates against introducing cost-sharing measures, given that 47% of the population live below poverty datum line. Therefore resources permitting, the free and even *compulsory education* as advocated for by the international conventions are essential now than it did in the late 1980s and 1990. Other problems include failure of the curricula in adult basic education, extension programmes and to

some extent continuing education respond to the needs and contexts of the learners. The growing research volume lacks rigour and applicability to the contexts of the learners. However, in spite of these challenges the achievements are clearly commendable.

#### *Adult Literacy/Basic education*

The most significant achievement in basic education is the even gender distribution in terms of access to basic schooling, which enabled Botswana to have met the Dakar goal of attaining gender equality in enrolment by 2005. BOCODOL makes a considerable input in the enrolment of individuals who could not do junior certificate through the formal route. The challenge in this regard, is to ensure that the curriculum addresses the needs of adult learners. The other is the declining enrolment for literacy education since 1997.

#### *Extension programmes*

Extension made some impressive progress since 1997. The highlights of their achievements included increasing programmes for different categories and focussing on the training of staff on participatory approaches. Women's Affairs Department introduced gender issues in other Government departments. Some NGOs are involved in gender training and women economic and political empowerment. The consumer Protection Division organised consumer education and protection seminars. The problems however, is that the impacts of all these efforts have not been established. There is no evidence that the participatory methods are being used to enable communities to take charge and own their development agenda. The significant challenge is to work with other stakeholders to coordinate extension efforts without compromising the political agenda of NGOs, such as *Emang Basadi*.

#### *Continuing Education*

The two institutions if the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) and the Botswana College of Distance and Open and Learning (BOCODOL) are the lead agencies in the promotion of Continuing education. BOCODOL conducted extensive need assessments to make their courses culturally and contextually appropriate for the learners. It also offers opportunities to person who for various reasons could not access CE through formal secondary school. The burgeoning enrolments suggest that there is a demand CE and they are addressing it. CCE does a good job in terms of enrolments

because by 1999/2000 its various units attracted a lot of people in both credit and non – credit courses. The challenge for CE is to continue maintaining the confidence of learners, their employees and attract more enrolees. They should also be working had to take advantage of new educational technologies such as *e-learning* and tele-conferencing in order to reach and satisfy more learners in future.

### *Conclusion*

Tackling adult learning will need a concerted effort between all levels of education in Botswana. However, the most critical challenge for the 3 levels of education is to develop strategies to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS and poverty because they pose the gravest threat to our very existence as a nation. Now that the Government correctly declared it as a national disaster. The planning for HIV/AIDS should be multi-sectoral if we are make any headway against the scourge. It has eroded all the educational gains of the 1980s and 90s, which necessitates that the nation should continue to provide educational opportunities in all its forms in order to use education to combat its spread and hopefully reduce poverty. Achieving the themes of Hamburg and the addressing the Dakar goals are contingent on the nation's performance in addressing infections rates and spread of both HIV/AIDS and alleviating widespread rural and peri-urban poverty.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS

ABE	Adult Basic Education
ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
BAEA	Botswana Adult Education Association
BCA	Botswana College of Agriculture
BOCODOL	Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning
BOCONGO	Botswana Coalition of Non-Governmental Organisations
BGCSE	Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education
BEST	Basic Extension Skills Training
BIAC	Botswana Institute of Administration and Commerce
BOTA	Botswana Training Authority
BNLP	Botswana National Literacy Programme
CBRDS	Community Based Rural Development Strategy
CE	Continuing Education
CCE	Centre or Continuing Education
CICE	Centre for Inservice and Continuing Education
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DET	District Extension Team
DAE	Department of Adult Education
DNFE	Department of Non-Formal Education
EDDI	Development and Democracy Initiative
EFA	Education For All
GNP	Gross National Product
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HIV	Human Immuno-Dificiency Virus
IDM	Institute of Development and Management
JC	Junior Certificate
NACA	National Aids Coordinating Agency
NDP	National Development Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NQF	National Qualification Framework
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RADP	Remote Area Development Programme
RDCD	Rural Development Coordination Division
RECC	Rural Extension Coordinating Committee
RNPE	Revised National Policy on Education
UB	University of Botswana
UNDP	United National Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Fund For Population
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET	Village Extension Team
WAD	Women's Affairs Department



# CONFINTEA MID-TERM REVIEW 2003: STATUS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF ADULT LEARNING

Prepared by: Tonic Maruatona PhD

Department of Adult Education, University of Botswana

## **Introduction**

The CONFINTEA V conference in 1997, charged UNESCO with the responsibility of monitoring and evaluating international efforts at implementing adult learning policies based on the recommendations of the *Hamburg Declaration and Agenda For the Future* and later the *Dakar Framework For Action*. UNESCO was mandated to set up a forum and consultation mechanism to facilitate periodic discussions on the progress and problems in furthering these recommendations and the six goals set out at the World Education Forum. The aim of the Mid-term Review is to assess national efforts designed to implement the policies and programmes based on themes identified at both CONFINTEA V and the World Education Forum. The Advisory Group on the mid-term review outlined the specific objectives of the monitoring process as to:

- Take stock of the implementation of the CONFINTEA V recommendations;
- Evaluate progress achieved and the difficulties faced in implementing CONFINTEA goals and;
- Provide an assessment of policies and practices of adult learning at country level.

This country report describes and analyses the conception and delivery mechanisms of adult learning in Botswana since 1997, and considers future directions in the next six years from 2003 to 2009. First, it briefly discusses the CONFINTEA V process in the context of Botswana. Second, the report reviews national attempts to implement the resolutions of CONFINTEA V in the context of the national educational policies to demonstrate its central role in charting the way forwards for adult learning experiences in Botswana. Third, it provides eight chapters organised along the UNESCO prescribed template based on the ten themes identified at Hamburg.

### **The Botswana Context**

Prior to the CONFINTEA V the Botswana National Commission for UNESCO organised a committee to put together the report about the status of adult learning for presentation to the conference. Upon their return from Hamburg, the committee members organised a national stakeholder workshop to report back on the conference and to make a country plan of action for the attainment of the *Agenda for the Future*. Its aims were to assess the ten themes endorsed at Hamburg and determine which of them could be implemented in the Botswana context, based on which it produced a *National Action Plan for Adult Learning*. The workshop selected some items and assigned them to organisations and set a time frame within which the task should have been initiated or carried out. The plan helped to establish how the nation would move forwards in the provision of adult learning activities related to the *Hamburg Declaration* and the *Agenda For the Future*. The plan identified 23 action items to address the ten thematic areas of Hamburg as its priorities. These activities were to be carried out by NGOs, private sector organizations, the Botswana Adult Education Association (BAEA) and other local and central government departments (Botswana National Commission for UNESCO, 1999).

The nation organised a working group to develop a country report on the national efforts towards the attainment of the 1990 Education For All Goals. Botswana recently organised a national stakeholder workshop on *Education for All* to harmonise national education goals with the Dakar Framework For Action. In its efforts to address the six *Dakar Framework For Action* goals, identified at the World Education Forum, they developed a *National Plan of Action* with clear targets assigned to different organisations was developed to assist the nation to achieve its nationally defined goals for Education For All (EFA). The national EFA forum looked at aspects of the six goals identified in Dakar to guide national efforts to provide adult learning and hopefully attain education for all. The plan focussed on the expansion and improvement of early childhood education for vulnerable groups, improving the quality and relevance of education and training. It explored ways to expand early childcare and education programmes and improve response mechanisms to HIV/AIDS pandemic. It sought to explore ways to improve partnership in education, improve the provision of adult, basic and continuing education for out-of-school learners and to develop strategies to address gender

disparities in education (Ministry of Education, 2003). These items were based on an analysis of the Botswana educational and development policy framework and they were endorsed by the Botswana National Commission for UNESCO, which stressed the significant role played by adult learning in meeting national development goals.

These two national plans of action are crucial indicators of Botswana's commitment to the *Agenda for the Future* and the *Dakar Framework of Action*. However, the major limitation is that these national plans lack indicators of success. The other thing is that the new plans are built into the current development plan, which does not necessarily make them priority activities.

The Mid -Term Review of the *Agenda For the Future* finds Botswana in the middle of her efforts to implement the Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) introduced in 1994, and also at the beginning of implementing the National Development Plan 9 (NDP 9), which covers the period 2003-2009. These policy frameworks gave Botswana an impetus to engage in activities already planned for but at the same time, address some of the themes and goals set both at Hamburg and Dakar. Central to the development of adult learning is the Revised National Policy on Education, which serves as a milestone policy document on the provision of all forms of education in Botswana.

#### *The Revised National Policy on Education*

The adoption of the principles and recommendations of CONFINTEA V found Botswana already making considerable efforts to provide adult learning through the provision of out-of-school education to youth, adult men and women. Out-of-school education is intended to provide learning opportunities outside the mainstream schooling, which would benefit those who lacked basic education and those who wish to further their initial education (National Commission on Education, 1993). The RNPE was based on the report of the National Commission on Education, 1992/93, which had been established to review Botswana's education system in the Period since 1977 when the first national commission on education was first published. The first National Commission on Education was charged with formulating the nation's educational philosophy, setting goals for educational development and suggesting strategies to achieve these goals. The commissioners endorsed the philosophy of education for *Kagisano*, which means education for social harmony. The overall thrust of their report

was on the provision of education for all, with an emphasis on primary education. Unfortunately, in spite of the commission's acknowledgement of the importance of adult learning for national development, it did not have any specific recommendations on adult education.

In 1992, it was realised that the changing socio-economic context of Botswana needed another Commission to review the successes and challenges of the policies developed based on the previous one and suggest the way forwards. Its main task was to develop relevant education to help transform Botswana from a predominantly agro-based economy to an industrial economy that could compete in the global market. The RNPE was derived from the report of the NCE. It had the following adult learning objectives: to ensure basic education and further education and training are relevant and available to a larger number of people and for lifelong education to be provided to all sections of the population. The policy has sections on Out- of -School Education, Vocational Education and Training, and Special Education, which are relevant to the development of opportunities for adult learning. The policy clearly supports formal education, non-formal education, extension, continuing and distance education for adult learners.

The succeeding chapters describe and analyse Botswana's performance vis-à-vis the recommendations of the CONFINTEA V and the World Education Forum in the context of national policies. They cover the following: structures, policy and legal frameworks, investment in education, participation in adult learning, the status of facilitators, assessment of incidences of learner empowerment, exemplary and innovative practice, and future actions and targets for adult learning from 2003- 2009.<sup>1</sup>

## Chapter 1: **Building up Structures and Institutional Frameworks: Policies, Legal Provisions, Delivery Systems and Innovations**

This chapter documents policy initiatives taken in Botswana following the publication of the *Hamburg Declaration* and the *Agenda For the Future*, the *Dakar Framework of Action*. It demonstrates Botswana's efforts to build a comprehensive framework for the policy and provision of adult learning. It looks at the relationships between education and other development policies in Botswana to demonstrate the

potential and challenges of education in Botswana's efforts to meet the adult learning needs of individuals, groups and community members.

Botswana has been influenced by important United Nations international conferences such as the Social Summit (Copenhagen, 1995), Women's conference (Beijing, 1994), The Environment and Sustainable Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002), which set the tempo for various national sectors of development to ensure the achievement of their recommendations. National efforts to provide quality education were also significantly boosted by the publication of the *Dakar Framework For Action*. It emphasized the need to ensure that learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes. It also called for a 50% improvement in the levels of adult literacy, especially for women by 2015. These international trends prompted Botswana to maximize its efforts to provide basic education for all, honour the commitments to the International Literacy Decade, and expanded the development of distance education. This report argues that Botswana recognizes learning as a basic human right, which should address the learning needs of children, youth and adult citizens. Learning is viewed as a lifelong process, which should assist citizens to address their demographic, technical, economic and political circumstances in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Youngman, 2002b).

Adult learning is predominantly sponsored and controlled by Government and is treated as part of the national development effort intended to enable individuals to experience personal growth and to take part in national development (Youngman, 2000). In spite of the influence of more recent international conferences, the foundation of educational policy in Botswana is the Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) passed by parliament in 1994. The RNPE remains the major policy guide for public and private education and national training institutions. It has enabled Botswana to provide adult learning opportunities intended to address issues of access, gender equity, and the general improvement of the quality of education for women and minority groups (Ministry of Education, 2003).

The implementation of the RNPE also helped the nation to realise the aims and goals of *Vision 2016*. Vision 2016 was developed in 1996, following an extensive national consultative process to provide a framework and guide for a national strategic

planning and policy development process. Critical to Vision 2016 is its call for the nation to engage in transformation across a broad spectrum of social, economic, entrepreneurial, political, spiritual and cultural concerns of all citizens. It envisions a situation where there will be equal access to educational opportunities regardless of a person's socio-economic status. Vision 2016 has become a milestone policy development document since it advocates for the creation of an educated and informed nation, which challenges providers of adult education and all other forms of education. It advocates for a flexible mode of educational provision, which will allow people to enter and learn at all points of their lives without being inhibited by age or any structural limitations across all social categories (Presidential Task Force, 1997). The policy provides for a widened opportunity to acquire new attitudes and skills if the nation is to achieve its economic and social development imperatives. Hence, the Vision provides a widened mechanism towards the development of a comprehensive advocacy for the provision of adult learning.

The national policy on development and the role of education in it have been articulated in the *National Development Plan 9, 2003-2009*, which incorporates aspects of *Vision 2016* and envisages that the development process should lead to the creation of an educated, informed and prosperous nation, productive, innovative, compassionate and caring (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2003). A whole chapter of the *National Development Plan 9, 2003-2009* is devoted to education and it identifies lifelong learning as a critical component of a national human resource development strategy. It gives an overview of the national educational policy framework and promulgates and identifies projects to be implemented within this plan period to improve the quality of education in Botswana (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2003). Consequently, the Ministry of Education, in conjunction with other partners in education, has developed policies, programmes and short-term projects in order to enhance adult learning opportunities. The policies for adult learning are based on the definition of adult education in the National Commission on Education 1993, which categorised adult education as follows:

- a) *Adult basic education*: the provision of opportunities for all adults, namely out-of-school youth, women and men to complete basic education (i.e. to the level of grade 10-Junior Certificate (JC)).
- b) *Extension Programmes*: the provision of programmes for young people and adults to develop new knowledge, attitudes and techniques that would help to improve the quality of life in their homes and communities.
- c) *Continuing education*: the provision of opportunities to young people and adults who have successfully completed junior school to continue their education (and training) through part-time studies (Ministry of Education, 1993).

The conception of adult learning has been concretised by specific recommendations for the implementation of activities what would enable Government and other stakeholders to effectively promote lifelong learning in Botswana. In addition, Government set a legal framework through the establishment of the Botswana Training Authority, whose mandate is to reorganise vocational education and training and to regulate private training institutions. Below, is a brief discussion of the achievement and challenges of various institutions and Government departments providing adult learning opportunities.

Adult Basic Education (ABE): Enrolment data on schools from Grades 1 to 10 signifies a progressive increase in annual enrolments from 398,313 students in 1997 to 448,601 in 2002 (Central Statistics Office, 1997, 2002). Data revealed an enrolment increase of 35% in junior school during 1997 /1998 when Government made a transition from a nine year to a ten year basic education cycle. The enrolment figures increased steady from 0.34% in 1998/99, to 1.92% in 2002 (Educational Statistics Bulletin, 2003). Unfortunately, there are no data on adult enrolment in primary, junior secondary, private and evening classes, but some evidence suggests a steady increase in adult enrolments for private secondary schools. The number of schools has increased from 32 in 2001 to 48 registered private schools in 2002 (CSO, 2002).

Another significant provider of adult basic education is the Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL), which provides education by distance mode. Historically, it used to be a unit under the Department of Non Formal Education of the Ministry of Education. It was created as a semi-autonomous institution by an Act of

Parliament passed in December, 1998. Its establishment marked a turning point in the development of education in Botswana. It furthers equity in provision of education in line with the aspirations of Vision 2016, which stresses the need for every citizen to be accorded educational equality and that no one should be left out of education because of the circumstances of their birth. BOCODOL provides learning opportunities for individuals who for various reasons, cannot or do not wish to attend formal school to attain Junior Certificate qualification. Its current enrolments are impressive, for example, by 2001, 2000 learners had enrolled for Junior Certificate (BOCODOL, 2002). These represent efforts to provide adult basic education at Grade 10 level for all through formal and distance education modes. However, the major challenge is that adult learning occurs in different contexts such as Ministries, districts, non-governmental organisations, and private organisations. This is compounded by the fact that in Botswana, there is a chronic lack of systematic statistical documentation on adult learning experiences.

#### *Adult Literacy Education*

The Department of Non-Formal Education of the Ministry of Education is responsible for providing adult literacy education through the Botswana National Literacy Programme. It is the largest Government sponsored programme of out-of school education. Unfortunately, over the years, it has shown a steady decline in enrolment from 1997 to date as indicated in the table below.

Table 1. *National literacy Programme – Annual Enrolment Figures 1997-2002*

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
17,588	15,917	14,474	12,004	9399	13329

Source: Department of Non-Formal Education, 1997-2002

The problem is that this data does not distinguish between newly enrolled learners and those who enrolled in the previous year, which makes it difficult to determine the accurate figure for each year. However, since 1997, the programme experienced a progressive decline in enrolments suggesting that it no longer could attract new learners. The decline can also be attributed to the fact that the programme uses primers that were developed in the early 1980s without adapting them to the contexts of the learners (Maruatona, 2002). The apparent increase in enrolments numbers during 2002 reflected the Department's focus on workplace literacy activities in all parts of the country. There

is no data on the literacy activities organised by NGOs in Botswana. Overall, It is extremely complex to determine the statistics for adult literacy programmes outside the Government operated literacy programme. The only significant adult basic education and literacy provision outside Government is the one operated by the Debswana Mining Company. It has been offered since the 1970s. Since it started operations in 1971, the Debswana diamond mine in Orapa, operated an adult basic education and literacy programme based on materials used by the South Africa Bureau of Literacy and Literature, used in their mines. In 1998, Orapa mine introduced materials based on the South African Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) to their program. The materials are in both English and Setswana for different levels of learners. They cover such topics as basic survival and functional skills and introduction to computing. Adult Basic Education is offered to mine employees who have not been to school or have a level of literacy below Grade 7 in primary schools. The programme has been adapted to the Botswana context and supervisors and learners are understood to be content with it (Youngman, 2002a).

The above discussion highlighted the successes and challenges in the provision of adult literacy education in Botswana and represents national and private sector efforts to meet the themes of the *Hamburg Declaration* and the goals of education for all. The increase in the demand for ABE and workplace literacy signifies a growth in the recognition of the role of adult learning in different employment sites, it also demonstrates an increased recognition of the role of education for personal, community and national development. The state remains the primary provider of Adult Basic Education with a steady increase in enrolment rates both in formal school and the distance education mode since 1998. The major challenge for this level of education is the need to increase enrolments for the consistently declining enrolment rates for adult literacy education and the failure for the literacy curricula to effectively respond to the needs of the learners.

Extension Programmes: The character of extension programmes defies clear operational categorization and makes the articulation of the extension services complex because by their nature, they are offered by multiple stakeholders. Partly because of their amorphous nature, they lack effective coordination. However, extension services have

been an important element of the provision of adult education since Independence because they have always been perceived to be essential for other rural development initiatives (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2003). The Rural Extension Coordinating Committee (RECC) under the Rural Development Co-ordination Division (RDCCD) in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning responsible for monitoring and co-ordinating extension programmes. RECC links with the Districts and Villages through District Extension Teams (DETs) and Village Extension Teams (VETs). It is currently estimated that there was one agricultural demonstrator to 500 farming households, which is an acceptable distribution by any measure for a developing country. Extension work is also carried out by the Ministry of Health, which coordinates national health services countrywide. Its main strategy is health promotion and ill-health prevention. They have a joint Primary Health Care Conduction Committee, which is responsible for coordinating the provision of adult learning activities on health matters. The committee provides information, trains members of the village health committees, produce and distribute health education materials and teach expectant mothers at anti-natal and post-natal clinics. The Botswana College of Agriculture (BCA) also provides farmers with targeted courses based on needs identified by the farmers through the Denman Rural Training Centre and its satellites centres in Mahalapye, Francistown and Maun.

During the 1980s Botswana had made impressive stride in health mobilization and immunization, which then enabled it to attain universal child- immunization. However, these achievements in the enhancement of health for the population through extension education have been considerably eroded by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. HIV/AIDS is a major source of current health education extension programmes such as the District Health teams.

In other areas of extension, since 1997, the Women's Affairs Department has organised several gender sensitisation workshops for different Ministries and held several refresher courses for the officers. The Consumer Protection and Education Unit of the Department of Consumer Affairs' aims to protect consumers from unfair business practices and to educate the community about consumer rights and privileges, after all, an educated consumer is a protected consumer. It disseminates information to enable

consumers to acquire knowledge of basics consumer rights and obligations and implements several consumer education programmes. The unit organised numerous workshops and seminars in schools, tertiary institutions, *Kgotla* (community meetings), business fora, and professional associations in Gaborone, Francistown and Selibe-pikwe involving about 2000 participants between January 2002 and June, 2003 (Personal communication with the Director, July, 2003). The Ministry of Local Government also carries out adult learning activities through the Department of Social & Community Development, which is responsible for social welfare. The Ministry also has the Remote Areas Development Programme (RADP), which focuses on people living in the remote and arid areas of Botswana by providing them with extension services.

However, these programmes represents a limited effort considering the large number of people to be sensitised on gender issues in the civil service, the consumer population and the health needs of the whole population, but the efforts symbolize the desire to educate and empower adults citizens, which is one of the themes of *Hamburg Declaration* on citizen empowerment.

Extension services are not only confined to government. Some non-governmental organisations, provide adult learning opportunities. They address issues of rural development affecting disadvantaged groups such as minority communities, women, children, youth and persons with disabilities. *Emang Basadi*, is a women's association, which organises training on democracy, voter education, gender and sensitisation of the population on HIV/AIDS issues and provides small scale businesses skills for women. Other NGOs such as the Kuru Development Trust, provides multiple practical skills such as sewing, basketry and craft making to ethnic minorities. Lately, Botswana Coalition of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO) organised training on the use of participatory methods for extension workers as part of the *National Plan of Action for Adult Learning*. The Botswana Adult Education Association (BAEA) also held numerous adult learning activities such as the Adult Learners' Week and the Week of the Elderly celebrations in 2001/2002. These are part of the activities suggested by the *Hamburg Declaration* and represent international efforts to increase access to learning opportunities for adults in places where they normally would not gain admission to because of stringent requirements. Unfortunately, the association is currently loosing its

momentum and needs to be revitalised. NGOs are largely focussed on organising sensitisation workshops on HIV/AIDS, provide leadership training, and training of communities on the management of natural resources (Adekanmbi & Modise, 2000).

Extension programmes have played a major role in the provision of adult learning in Botswana since 1997. These activities furthered the Hamburg goals because they related what was learnt to the empowerment of women, and minority communities. They also exposed extension staff to skills that improved their productivity. Some helped learners to acquire skills to fight poverty and thereby achieve one of the major *UN Millennium Goal*, namely, poverty reduction. Government remains the major sponsor of extension programmes but NGOs also play a pivotal role in instances where government services are limited. Extension services provide opportunities for the empowerment of women, and opportunities to learn in order to adjust to the world of work. They provide for groups with special needs and those in remote areas of Botswana. However, a major challenge is the quality of these programmes and their relevance to the needs of the learners. There is no conclusive evidence that extension adult learning activities respond to the needs of individuals, minorities and their communities, the programmes are generic and not targeted. According to Lekoko (2002) a major challenge for extension is that in spite of the existence of RECC and the district and village extension teams, programmes in Government departments and NGOs lack coordination.

Continuing education (CE): The third aspect of adult education provision is continuing education. CE in this context refers to planned formal and non-formal educational programmes for adults who intend to continue their education beyond the basic level of grade 10 (Junior Certificate). It is viewed as an aspect of lifelong learning. Continuing education provides another opportunity for the realisation of Vision 2016, which calls for Botswana (citizens of Botswana)<sup>2</sup> to be an informed, educated and prosperous nation. CE is offered for example, by BOCODOL and the Centre for Continuing Education at the University of Botswana. The National Commission on Education of 1993, identified the two as the lead institutions in the provision of continuing and distance education. Since its inception in 1998, BOCODOL has provided distance education courses for senior secondary education and has five centres around the country, which enabled it to enrol 2500 learners in 2002. This represents a significant

increase in learner enrolment outside formal school education. In addition, there has been a massive expansion of private educational training institutions from the mid-1990s to the present. This suggests an increase in the demand for the Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE) qualification, awarded after Grade 12.

The demand for CE has also been expanding in the areas of tertiary and professional training. The Extra Mural Unit of the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) at the University of Botswana grew from an enrolment of 1779 participants who enrolled for the Certificate and Diploma in Accounting and Business Studies in 1998/99 to 2202 students during 1999/2000. This represented a 15% increase in enrolments, which is one fifth of the total University student population. It also offered a number of Improve Your Business & Start Your Business non-credit courses in conjunction with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. At the same time, the unit organised a regional non-credit short course on Gender and Development to 15 participants from Africa and USA (CCE, 2002). The Distance Education Unit has provided a Certificate in Adult Education for several years, which has now being replaced by a Diploma in Adult Education by distance mode. The unit also administers a Diploma in Primary Education programme targeted at 6000 teachers countrywide. In addition, the unit has organised public awareness courses, provided public lectures on a number of issues such as crime prevention, HIV/AIDS and an awareness course on the patient's bill of rights in Botswana hospital services (Adekanmbi & Modise, 2000). In spite of the phenomenal increase in enrolments, there is clearly an unmet demand for tertiary and professional training in Botswana. For example, the Botswana College of Agriculture established a Centre for in Service and Continuing Education (CICE) aimed at providing short courses and continuing education course on agriculture and it also develops and publicises materials on agricultural extension activities in Botswana. Continuing education, therefore remains the most significant way to help learners adjust to the changing world of work, it clearly shows that learners view adult learning as a significant investment on their future career prospects.

The above analysis of adult learning activities demonstrates policy, institutional structures, and deliveries of adult learning opportunities in Botswana. It argues that adult basic education, extension and continuing education programmes had some achievements

but still face major challenges that needs to be resolved before Botswana could attain its educational goals. It also sets the framework for other chapters.

## Chapter Two: **Increasing Investment in Adult Learning**

Investment on formal education has been considerable because the state has provided ten years of free schooling thereby exceeding the *UN Millennium Goals* of achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE). This could be because of the very significant gains made by Government in providing schooling for the youth. It is estimated that 90% of school going boys and girls are at school and 85% of them complete at least Junior Certificate (i.e. Grade 10) (Commeyras & Chilisa, 2001). The state continues to give a considerable share of the national income to education, but it has fallen short of the 6% of the GNP as advocated by UNESCO and other international agencies. The greatest threat to this record achievement is the on going discussions between Government and parents to share in the costs of education of their children. The argument is that in spite of the rhetoric about strengthening social welfare services to care for the very poor, cost-sharing measures are likely to adversely affect the provision of basic education opportunities for disadvantaged individuals. However, as indicated in the preceding chapter, Botswana has made some strides and has had challenges in its mobilization efforts for increased enrolment in adult learning in Adult Basic Education, Extension Programmes and Continuing Education. A significant feature of the situation has been the lack of sufficient funding for adult learning programmes in order for all citizens to gain access to quality education. For example, the Ministry of Education allocates very limited funds for out-of-school education resulting in limited provision and ineffective coordination of such educational services (Ministry of Education, 2003). There is also an apparent lack of enthusiasm to fund public community-based vocational training centres, such as Brigades.

The provision of adult learning is confronted with massive challenges when it comes to resource mobilization because it has always competed unfavourably with formal education. Adult basic education attracts marginalized groups such as women and the indigenous people, out-of-school youth and individuals from very poor households (Ministry of Education, 1993). Government allocates a disproportionately small figure of

1.1% of the recurrent budget of the Ministry of Education on literacy education (Youngman, 2002a). In spite of the financial challenges, the state expects adult learning to contribute to national goals such as self-reliance and social development. The state views education as a social service open to all, but poor adults receive low quality literacy education, which fails to empower them and does not improve their quality of life (Maruatona, 2002). It could be argued that the demand for adult education is steadily expanding as indicated in Chapter One, but there is an envisaged Government reduction in funding for adult literacy and basic education as a result of cost-recovery and cost-sharing discussed above. Government's move towards reducing expenditure on basic education in the face of growing HIV/AIDS infections represents a questionable commitment to the provision of education for all.

It has not been easy to determine the extent of the public sector investment on extension programmes for adult learners because learning opportunities in extension are provided by different Government Ministries such as Agriculture, Health and the Local Government. An analysis of their expenditure on education would probably reveal results contrary to what appears to be a very low recurrent budget for the Department of Non-Formal Education. Nevertheless, it could be argued that the providers of out-of-school education remain financially marginalized in spite the fact that the state perceives their role as crucial in national human resources development. Extension programmes still systemically exclude most groups who are supposed to be served through state programmes in rural areas. In some cases NGOs fill the gap. For example, an Non-Government Organisation called *Emang Basadi*, provides adult learning opportunities and training for disadvantaged rural and urban women (Emang Basadi, 2003). This signifies an effort by an NGO to empower women through education as suggested by Hamburg. Over all, state organised learning opportunities provided by extension programmes fail to stimulate minority learners to meet their educational needs and achieve their full potential.

However, there is a considerable will to spend money on CE on the part of the learners and their employers. For example, some private sector institutions such as banks have internal training for their employees. They are also willing to refund their employees money spent on their studies, such as the Certificate or Diploma in

Accounting and Business Studies by distance education. This signifies employer contribution to employee adult learning opportunities. Government continues to invest sizeable resources on those who already had a chance, such as short-term senior staff computer training courses, which are expected to improve their productivity and working conditions.

Documenting the extent to which the state and other agencies are making any efforts to increase investment on adult learning is complex. It is therefore essential for the CONFINTEA V Mid-Term Review process to recommend the development of a national system that will assist Botswana to develop a comprehensive database on the expenditure on different sectors in order to systematically document its investments on adult learning. It is however note worthy that in spite of the inadequate financing of adult learning, there is a growing recognition of the contribution of education to the world of work, hence, private sector employees are willing to invest their personal savings in adult learning. However, given the available information, it is not easy to judge whether the expenditure on adult learning in all the sectors discussed above was sufficient or not. It is therefore concluded that the anticipated decision to implement cost- sharing and cost-recovery measures in all sectors of education by Government would not promote public investment in adult learning and it also somewhat defies the principle of access to education for all as a human right.

### Chapter 3: **Increasing Participation**

This chapter explores the issue of increased participation in the various levels of adult learning from basic literacy to tertiary education to analyse the achievements and challenges of increasing participation. It examines participation in view of the themes of the *Agenda for the Future* and the *Dakar Framework for Action*. A major goal of adult education is to ensure that there is an increase in the actual numbers of people who are served through adult education programmes. Chapter One indicated the policy framework for adult learning in Botswana but did not clearly indicate strategies to increase the numbers of participants. It has been indicated that though basic education is not compulsory, it is free and available to learners for the first 10 years of schooling.

Access to education is a human right and it is an entitlement for all citizens as indicated in Chapter One above. Central to the determination of participation is the gender distribution of participants. Botswana remains unique in that participation rates/patterns for women and men are comparable for the first ten years of schooling. For example, in 2001, there were 165,932 boys and 163,519 girls in primary schools (CSO, 2001). This gender equality was also demonstrated by the outcomes of the National Household Literacy Survey conducted in 1993, which indicated that there has been a significant increase in literacy rates from 46.4 % in 1981 to a record 68.9% in 1993, with 66.9% for males and 70.3% for females (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 1998). The increase in the literacy rates suggests a significant increase in the actual numbers of people who participated in adult learning, though it has been very difficult to disaggregate the data to show the actual participation rate, especially for literacy learners. According to the *National Plan of Action on Adult Learning*, the country made some progress in taking international trends into account in developing the national adult learning programme. Based on that, the country among other things, endorsed and planned for such activities as the International Literacy Decade, and has since expanded the provision of distance education by the establishment of BOCODOL as part of the effort to increase participation from adult basic to continuing education levels.

Another indicator of increased participation for different groups has been the growth and development of extension programmes. As illustrated in Chapter One, extension education addresses groups in special need such as women and members of the ethnic minority groups, and it plays a crucial role in rural development. The Rural Development Division of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning through Rural Extension Coordinating Committee (RECC) has undertaken a series of workshops to consolidate Government efforts to coordinate rural development. Government adopted such strategies as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and in 1997 adopted the Community Based Rural Development Strategy (CBRDS), both of which focus on empowering communities to take control of the management of their resources and facilitate development initiatives. These efforts enabled rural communities to engage in learning as a form of social and economic investment to improve their socio-economic situation at personal and community levels.

There is also the expanded training of extension officer all over the country to help them learn skills that would enable them to enhance their skills to improve their performance at work. The Department of Adult Education at the University of Botswana works jointly with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to provide the Basic Extension Skills Training (BEST) course in order to have a skilled work force as Government continues to expand the “economic empowerment” of men and women in the rural areas. The problem lies with the fact that the target population for such services are so huge that the trained people do not represent a significant step towards reaching all those who need these services. For example, BEST trained only 200 people out of 8000 extension workers from 1997-2003, which is a very small number compared to the actual number of extension workers. The only hope is that in the current development plan Government intends to relieve extension officers of non-extension duties (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2003).

At another level, Government and its development partners provide adult education opportunities to rural communities through extension programmes such as the forestry environmental conservation, a new agricultural policy, consolidation of the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic and an intensified fight for women rights and their participation in political, legal and social structures of power (Youngman, 2002b). The small business schemes under the Integrated Field Services of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry were refined and expanded to provide skills for its beneficiaries. In 2002, the Rural Training Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture trained 1254 farmers and youth groups on arable and animal husbandry. The training is also intended to enhance the interest of the youth on agriculture. While the numbers are small, in future, Government intends to improve the centres to increase the knowledge base of the farmers by introducing appropriate technology. The Consumer Affairs Division trained 2000 participants through seminars and workshops held between January 2002 and June, 2003. The problem with these services is that their curricula do not necessarily include aspects of critical citizenship and empowerment. Extension education expands adult learning in quantitative terms, but it lacks a critical edge to empower learners.

Continuing education on the other hand has an increased impetus from the expansion of the economy and the growing interest in professional training and education

in the formal sector. The growth led to a proportional increase in the participation of learners in long and short-term courses offered by the Centre for Continuing Education at the University of Botswana, and the private sector institutions offering in house training in accounting and vocational education. Recently, private sector employers and their employers increased provision of organisational continuing education opportunities. In recognition of their limited capacity to provide continuing education, employers have endorsed the University of Botswana Centre for Continuing Education part-time qualifications of Certificate and Diploma in Accounting and Business Studies as indicated in Chapter One. These led to increased enrolment for the courses. They became essential for promotions and other possibilities at their work places. CCE as a tertiary institution therefore represents a major expansion in the provision of continuing education by distance mode. CCE efforts are also complimented by the Institute of Development Management (IDM). The institute is jointly operated by Botswana Lesotho and Swaziland to offer internationally, and locally tailored management, training and consultancy services in the three countries. IDM trained between 1,500 and 2,000 participants in 200 different courses in the year 1999/2000 (IDM, Annual Report, 2000).

On the other hand, in 1999, BOCODOL expanded its continuing education opportunities for citizens who for various reasons did not have access to senior secondary education to attain the Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE) by distance mode. An increased demand for social and human resource development placed a tremendous pressure on this sector of education in order to increase access and participation in education for all citizens. In spite of this phenomenal expansion, private sector organisations continued to offer continuing education courses throughout the year, which testifies to the fact that the need is not met. For example, one private training school has been offering courses such as Accounting, Business studies, Computing and Marketing at Certificates, Diploma and Advanced Diplomas to an average of 100 participants per annum since 1998. The individuals pay for themselves each year without a promise of a refund from their employers.

It could be argued that though there has been an increase, the formal sector fails to meet the growing demand for adult learning. The other concern is that we cannot determine the quality and the perceived impact of these programmes on the participants,

their organisations and their communities. Consequently, it is not easy to explain the reasons for the relative increase in adult learner participation in all these programmes/sectors other than for the basic facts of availability and access. A systematic process of data collection, monitoring process is essential to determine if there is any increase in adult learning participation.

#### **CHAPTER 4: Research Studies in the Field of Adult Learning**

As indicated in Chapter One, adult learning in the Botswana context can be divided into three major categories of adult basic education, extension and continuing education. This chapter reports on research activities that have been carried out in these three major areas of adult learning. It will focus on the purpose, method and findings of the research projects in order to illustrate the extent of research activities on adult learning and their effects on the possible realisation of the ten themes guiding the *Agenda for the Future*. This chapter represents a summary of key studies undertaken on adult learning since 1997.

##### *Research on Adult Basic Education (ABE)*

Most of the available research data on adult basic education is based on Government reports, policy statements, and planning documents. However, a substantial portion of empirical research and publications are on the National Literacy Programme. Literacy education has attracted attention because it remains the largest state sponsored literacy education programme in the country since it was launched in 1981. Hence, in ABE the primary research focus has been the activities on the Botswana National Literacy Programme (BNLP). The first major research activity on its operations since its inception in 1981, was the 1986/7 summative evaluation of the programme carried out by researchers at the Department of Adult Education, University of Botswana. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the programme's coverage and effectiveness, and also discuss aspects of its operations and administration. Researches conducted document analysis, field observations, interviews, self-administered questionnaires on staff, and administered a literacy and numeracy test to a randomly selected sample of 845 learners. It determined that the programme had achieved a good level of success because learners attained an 81% pass rate, equated to Grade Four in primary school (Gaborone,

Mutanyatta & Youngman, 1987). They also noted the need to reinvigorate the literacy materials and recommended studies to determine the impact of the program on participants. This study was carried out before 1997, but it is very essential in understanding research activities on the National Literacy Programme. Consequently, a number of studies were conducted to assess various aspects of the program, especially its impact on the learners.

A qualitative study on participation by Dambe (1997) looked at factors hindering the efforts to eradicate illiteracy in Botswana. A Masters Degree dissertation by Sekhobo (2001) assessed the instructional methods in the Botswana National Literacy Programme. It found that the methods used were predominantly teacher-centred in spite of the official rhetoric that the programme used the less radical aspects of the Freirean approach. These studies looked at the quality of adult learning activities and their impact on the learners. Small-scale studies have been undertaken by University staff members. For example, a qualitative case study by Maruatona (1998) considered the gender perceptions of the effects of the national literacy programme on ethnic minorities. The study found that literacy education failed to address the needs of women and the minorities in different contexts and concluded that literacy failed to empower ethnic minorities and women. Its content also did not relate to their life work.

Recently, two PhD dissertations based on the activities and impact of the National Literacy Programme were completed. Maruatona (2001) analyses the planning of the Botswana National Literacy Programme. He proceeded from critical theory, political economy and the political planning perspectives. This qualitative study is based on in-depth qualitative interviews with 16 district level and central management personnel involved in planning literacy education. The study concludes that the BNLP is a conventional literacy programme whose planning is tightly controlled by the state. He concludes that the planning mode, which was based almost exclusively on government officials, excluded learners, and its outcomes reproduce the unequal social relations. He also found limited resistance to state hegemony where planners openly challenged the use of a single language policy. Some supervisors quietly accepted activities that challenged the policy without openly authorising them, especially with respect to the policy on using Setswana as the only language of literacy instruction.

The other PhD dissertation is entitled *Women, poverty and literacy in Botswana: A case study* (Raditloaneng, 2002). It explores women's understanding and perceptions of poverty, and whether these are affected by participation in literacy and adult basic education classes. It is based on document review, in-depth interviews with 16 women in the city of Gaborone, and observation of both classes and household circumstances. The women were divided on the basis of whether they were semi-literate or non-literate. The study concluded that the women who participated in literacy classes and were semi-literate were more confident on strategies to address poverty than the non-literate. These dissertations point to critical needs for literacy to sufficiently empower the learners to address female poverty to enable Botswana to meet the goals of the *UN Millennium Goal* on poverty reduction. They also provide useful information on ways to empower learners.

The majority of the empirical research that has been undertaken has been within the qualitative paradigm. A significantly different ethnographic study on the impact of the BNLDP was carried out by an external researcher and made a substantial input on demonstrating the impact of the programme on participants. Since 1996 to the present, Reimer has produced a series of research based paper presentations, which help to illuminate learner perspectives on the experience of literacy learning. Her research is based on participant observation, ethnographic interviews and life histories, as well as document analysis. She sought to understand the motivation for literacy learning and the nature of the learning experience. In one recent paper, (Reimer, 2002) analyses the personal benefits of literacy as both a tool for negotiating the modern cash economy and the public domain of government bureaucracy, and as a source of self-improvement and a modified social identity. In another paper (Reimer, 2001) illuminates the sense of community generated in some literacy classes. Her main focus is on the everyday practices of the literacy learners and their teachers. She situates this within the context of the state-sponsored programme that is premised on the project of modernity. These studies suggest ways that learners can be empowered to become active citizens.

Hesselbring (1999) provides an analysis of the literacy situation of speakers of minority languages. She conducted an inductive analysis of published and unpublished data from the 1993 First National Survey on Literacy, data from the 1991 Population Census, and 1300 interviews undertaken in the Botswana Language Use Project co-

ordinated by the Bible Society of Botswana. Her main findings are that speakers of minority languages have the lowest rates of literacy, and many want to learn to read their own language. She therefore recommends that literacy classes should be offered in people's mother tongue. Another paper by Chebanne, Nyathi-Ramahobo and Youngman (2000) analyse a pilot project on adult illiteracy in minority languages and generates a series of research questions that could be addressed through the project in order to inform policy-makers and practitioners. According to Youngman (2002a) these questions have not yet been followed up. The studies points to the importance of the use of indigenous languages in the provision of literacy in order to preserve the culture of the ethnic minorities. They point to the need to address issues of minority groups, which is one of the themes of the *Hamburg Declaration*.

A small-scale action research project using the REFLECT approach is being carried out in the Ngamiland District, which explores the potential for alternative pedagogies, curricula, and organisational forms outside the state (Maruatona, 2002). This study will hopefully address issues of improving the current state operated literacy programme in addition to exploring ways to empower the learners. currently, An evaluation of the Botswana National Literacy Programme just commenced aimed at helping to reformulate its focus and enhance its delivery.

#### *Research on Extension Programmes*

Studies on extension programmes are relatively few, for example, one study analysed the Participatory Rural Appraisal exercise carried out by the Botswana Orientation Centre and being monitored by the staff members of the Departments of Adult Education and Social Work at the University of Botswana on behalf of the Rural Development Division of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (Prinsen *et.al.* 1996). Youngman and Maruatona (1998) explore whether extension staff can change their attitude and practice with respect to participatory rural development. Their paper used data based on participant observation, self-administered questionnaires and document analysis. Its major finding was that extension workers could be trained to change their attitude to adopt a more participatory approach to planning. It also noted institutional and contextual constraints to the implementation of a participatory approach. This paper suggests how extension can engage participatory methods that would enable

the learners to take control of the learning process in order to use the information to improve their social conditions. In a way, learning becomes a form of investment for the learners who need to apply the acquired skills. These studies therefore make a contributions to the development of new ways to facilitate adult learning within extension programmes.

However, research in this area remains rather scanty. Recently, though two PhD studies have been completed. The study *An Appraisal of Botswana Extension Agents' Work and Training Experiences* (Lekoko, 2002) explores the previous work and training experiences of extension agents and how that contributes to their present working relationships as partners in community development. It is based on document analysis, and in depth hermeneutic–phenomenological interviews with 29 community based extension workers. The study found that Government policy expresses the desire for coordination but the practice at village level is at variance with such a policy position. Members of the Village or District Extension Team staff focus on their departmental tasks. There is lack of centrally organised training that could stress the importance of working in a coordinated fashion. It also concludes that participants felt the need for basic communication skills, leadership, management and a positive attitudinal orientation towards extension coordination.

Another PhD study by Ntseane (1999) entitled *Botswana Rural Women's Transition to Urban Business Success* documents women's transitional experiences from being rural women to successful entrepreneurs in urban centres. She demonstrated that in spite of male domination, women were resilient enough to transform themselves from being rural women to successful small businesswomen in various towns in Botswana. They managed to negotiate patriarchy by either collaborating or confronting it and establishing themselves through competitive networks to sustain small business enterprises. These two dissertations demonstrate the need for extension programme to be coordinated to empower the participants in such programmes. The study by Ntseane provides helpful tips on the value of networks in promoting women empowerment and ways to improve the participants' quality of life and fight poverty through adult learning.

### *Research on Continuing Education*

Continuing education is very crucial for Botswana to reach its goals of adult learning but to date it is the least researched dimension of adult education. Adekanmbi (1998) notes that the fact that the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) offers learning outside the formal structures enables it to be flexible and relevant to the needs of the learners. It promotes a flexible learning opportunity for learners through various modes of delivery. He demonstrates how the different units of the CCE namely, distance education, extra mural, public education and technical support services enable the Centre to defy the barriers of geography and narrow the division between school and the workplace. He concludes that the flexible approach enables the Centre to overcome the restrictions that bar many citizens from access to education. However, he regrets that the Centre has not yet taken full advantage of technologies such as tele-conferencing and computer-assisted instructions to maximise opportunities for interactions with the learners.

As indicated above, research work of varying degrees has been done on adult education ranging from adult basic education to continuing education. However, the current adult learning research in Botswana has been criticized for being limited both in scope and methodology. In spite of that, the empirical evidence generated over the last six years depicts a consistent picture of the problems and possibilities for adult learning programmes. Unfortunately, in each of the areas, research findings have had little impact on both policy and practice (Youngman, 2002b). Overall, the research profile shows a lot of potential to address the Hamburg themes such as improving practice and empowering learners, responding to the world of work and addressing issues of health and the population. What remains to be done is for researchers to synthesize their findings and distribute them in forms that adult educators can easily use to improve their practice.

### **CHAPTER 5: Adult Educators/ Facilitators Status and Training**

Central to the provision of adult learning is the welfare and status of facilitators. This section provides an analysis of the status of adult educators in adult basic education, extension and continuing education. The 1994 RNPE identified the Department of Adult Education at the University of Botswana as the lead agency in the professional

development of out-of-school education personnel and for research and evaluation in this sector. Botswana experiences a critical problem of poorly trained facilitators in literacy education, which operates on volunteers who are painfully underpaid and work under deplorable conditions (Maruatona, 2001). In spite of these problems, an enhanced delivery of adult learning is contingent upon improving the initial and refresher training opportunities for facilitators. There is need to increase attention to the improvement of conditions and professional status of facilitators, especially women who are the majority in the teaching of adult basic education in Botswana. The 1994 the Revised National Policy on Education recommended a review of the conditions of service for literacy educators. In 2000 Government responded by increasing their “salaries” from P8-00 to P10.60, in 2001 it was increased to P11.85 and it now stands at 12.60 per teaching session, which lasts for one hour thirty minutes. However, their conditions of service were not substantially improved. They continue to teach under trees and some of them walk very long distances to teach groups in different communities. In cases where the group fails to meet for whatever reason, the teachers are not compensated for their efforts to convene the class (Maruatona, 2001). As a result, the Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) fails to attract teachers with higher qualifications into the programme.

The other problem related to the status of teachers is that private secondary schools employ unqualified teachers but Government can not do much to control the operations and hiring personnel for such institutions resulting in adult learners being victimized by some untrustworthy institutions. This clearly points to the need for Government to work with Botswana Association of Private Schools (BAPS) and the Botswana Association of Private Vocational Schools (BAPVS) leadership to monitor the activities and hiring guidelines for private institutions. The establishment of the Botswana Training Authority will help to resolve this problem and in the process, add value to vocational education.

In so far as extension education is concerned, the Department of Adult Education in 2002/03 reorganised its curricula at Diploma, Degree, Masters and PhD to prioritise the themes of CONFITEA V. The Department added new courses such as Participatory Development Methods at undergraduate level to address issues of gender and strives to train extension officers who would improve the conditions of traditionally excluded rural

communities. Participatory Approaches to Rural Extension, Youth and Development, and Theory and Practice of Community Development at graduate level. It is hoped these courses would provide extension workers with new approaches to adult learning. These developments in the training of adult educators were profoundly influenced by the CONFITEA V recommendations. Extension educators are also being trained by other departments at the University such as the Department of Social Work. Other extension worker training institutes included the Government sponsored Botswana Institute of Administration and Commerce (BIAC) and the Botswana Accountancy College. The Department of Adult Education working in conjunction with RECC operates regular short-term course for extension officers called Basic Extension Skills Training (BEST). Since its inception in 1997, BEST trained only 200 participants. The most troubling thing is that there are about 8000 extension workers, clearly it will take many years before they are all trained. Hence, a distance education approach has been adopted, through the Diploma in Adult Education by distance mode. The Distance Education Unit of CCE offers a Diploma in Commonwealth Youth Programmes, in which participants have to complete 18 modules to be awarded a Diploma in Youth Development Work (CCE, Annual Report, 2000). Overall, Government effected quantitative increases in the training of extension staff in order to ensure that their service responds effectively to the needs of different social groups.

## Chapter 6: **Empowering Adult Learners**

Behind the *Hamburg Declaration* and the realization of the *Agenda for the Future* is the expectation that adult learners will be empowered in order to help nations to achieve the planning of culturally and contextually relevant programmes. In Botswana, the state remains the largest single provider of adult basic education, extension and continuing education. As indicated in Chapter One, available adult learning programs do not have a clear record of providing relevant materials and do not have built in effective evaluation mechanisms. It is therefore very difficult to determine to what extent they could offer contextually relevant educational materials. The lack of indicators of performance is more so in adult literacy education where the state has not made any effort to involve learners in curriculum planning. The curriculum development for both

formal and non-formal sectors of adult basic education has always been left exclusively to government officials who develop curricula without conducting needs assessment (Maruatona, 2001). The failure to involve learners runs contrary to the themes of the *Hamburg Declaration*, which emphasizes the need for literacy education process and content to facilitate critical citizenship. It is only recently that UNESCO sponsored a small-scale minority language project for the development of materials in the languages of some ethnic minorities in Botswana. The project involved community members in various aspects of its planning (Youngman, 2002a). The project enabled select communities for the first time to decide on the content and language for literacy materials. The project in a sense, is a signpost for exploring ways to address the needs of cultural minorities through literacy education. Currently, there is an ongoing literacy project based on the Regenerated Freirean Literacy and Community Training (REFLECT), which intends to work with the community in Ngamiland District to generate curriculum materials, which would be more responsive to the needs of participants in order to hopefully empower the learners (Maruatona, 2002).

Extension programmes in Government and NGOs continue to be organised without an effective learner participation, which gives those in power the opportunity to infuse their perspectives and marginalize the realities of the affected majority served by these extension services. Ultimately, programmes are not responsive to the real needs of the learners. The planning of extension programmes do not inculcate the culture of democracy and citizen empowerment. Their contents are not relevant to the immediate needs of the learners. However, there are some exceptions, especially in the NGO sector for instance political education programme of *Emang Basadi* address the empowerment of women voters. Also, the initiative to endorse Participatory Rural Appraisal approach in the Government extension programme since 1997 could indicate their commitment to change or acceptance of the failure of the current programme to address the needs of rural communities.

Continuing education on the other hand, is a lot more responsive, for example, in distance education the programme of BOCODOL is based on the needs assessment that its staff carried out during its initial stages. It has since expanded considerably through introducing a distance learning based Professional English course constituting of 6

modules targeted at about 5000 police officers and other people in the civil service. It is intended to improve their English proficiency as professionals (BOCODOL, Annual Report, 2002). The course content is based on extensive need assessments conducted on the civil servants to determine their needs and make the content reflective of their professional context. The relevance of the content suggests that distance education programmes have been a lot more focussed since the inception of BOCODOL. It could be argued that the content would help to generate outcomes that would have a positive impact on the learners' socio-economic situation. Such an approach helps to further the theme on adjusting the learning process to the changing world of work, the participants would also see adult learning as a form of investment in their future. For example, as prosecutors police officers, they need the Professional English skills course to perform satisfactorily in court. The English course creates a crucial link between what they learn and their daily work experience as officers.

Another crucial issue is that whilst the private sector offer adult learning opportunities but some of their institutions are not accredited and therefore learners are disadvantaged because they receive certificates that are not recognized by national employing agencies. Adult education programmes generally lack guidelines and standards, which makes it extremely complex to assess the performance of adult learners from different institutions or even to determine their needs in order to provide relevant programmes. Government established the National Council on Education responsible for overseeing the implementation of the RNPE and to advise the state on the development of education and training. It established the Tertiary Education Council, Botswana Examination Council and the Botswana Training Authority (BOTA) in order to undertake the task (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2003). Government has just commissioned a feasibility study for establishment of a National Qualification framework. These are indications of state commitment to the delivery of quality education across all sectors of education and to developing a coherent system of qualifications and accreditation that will empower lifelong learners.

However, in spite of the promising prospects, as currently organised, most adult learning opportunities are still highly centralized and therefore programmes are seldom responsive to the needs of the learners. It is anticipated that once better standards are

established and adhered to, the rights of learners to choose what they need to learn will be archived and this would justify the development of quality performance indicators that would empower learners from different sectors of the education system.

## Chapter 7: **Examples of Best Practices and Innovations**

As outlined above, Botswana has had some successes and challenges in the planning and implementation of adult education programmes. For example, efforts have been made to expand education opportunities at adult basic education level for both men and women. In Botswana, several cases of exemplary practice have emerged that demonstrate efforts to provide adult learning opportunities in pursuance of the some of the ten themes endorsed at Hamburg. This section, discussed some exemplary practices and innovations among the three key areas of Adult Basic Education, Extension Programmes and Continuing Education and points to some practical challenges in relation to some of the ten Hamburg themes.

The Strategic Plan of the Department of Non Formal Education (DNFE) indicates that within the next three years, 2003–2006 they intend to provide equitable access to and opportunity for lifelong education and training to out-of-school population and to equip adult learners with life and productive skills through basic education and post-literacy programmes (DNFE, 2003, p, 2). The goals are to organise responsive programmes relevant to the needs of out-of –school learners in Botswana. It intends to increase access and equity in the delivery of quality lifelong education and training, and establish effective partnerships with other stakeholders. These goals are followed by specific strategic objectives that are indented to show what will be done to achieve these goals. This strategic plan is innovative because of the systematic way that it spells out goals, objectives, critical activities, outputs, accountable persons, stakeholders, period for activity to be done, resources needed and status of implementation to be assessed. If this were to be implemented as planned, it would help enhance Botswana’s capacity to provide responsive literacy education. It would also provide some useful skills, which learners need to survive both at home and work. The problem however, is that the Department of Non Formal Education is severely under resourced as indicated in Chapter

One. Without increased resources, the strategic plan would remain an illusion and the intended goals to plan responsive programmes would not be achieved. The challenge then is for funding agencies to assist this adult basic education programmes to fulfil its dream of empowering citizens.

Another important planning innovation is in the area of extension programmes with the establishment of the inter-sectoral committee in 2003 on combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This is in line with the *UN Millennium Goal* of combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases. It comprises of the National Aids Coordinating Agency (NACA) and a network of national and international NGOs working on AIDS. NACA and its partners articulate, disseminate and educate the general public through providing guidelines to Ministries, districts, NGOs, and the private sector to enable them to collectively work on the national response to HIV/AIDS. This gives communities an opportunity to design programmes that could empower the citizenry in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The key goals of this framework include eliminating incidences of HIV infection and reducing the impact of AIDS in Botswana. They developed a strategic framework after extensive consultations with stakeholders. Stakeholders appreciate that HIV/AIDS poses an economic threat and educating the public about it is an investment in the future of the nation. The framework articulates what institutions envisage to do to combat HIV/AIDS and introduced a basic minimum package or unit level in recognition of the varied implementation capacities of stakeholders. This represents the most innovative aspect of the national HIV/AIDS response strategy (Republic of Botswana, 2003).

At a micro level, some innovations have been made with respect to HIV/AIDS. in 2002, staff members at the Department of Adult Education, University of Botswana, submitted a report documenting the effectiveness of AIDS education in the workplace, and also launched a training manual on the nutritional needs of individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Staff members at DNFE also have been trained to incorporate HIV/AIDS issues in their revised materials for the National Literacy Programme. A National Reference Committee on Family Life Education has been established and it has trained a number of facilitators from different sectors involved with adult learning programmes (Botswana National Commission for UNESCO, 1999).

Other efforts to engage in exemplary practice has been focussed on empowering women through adult learning since they are ones who are mostly affected by HIV/AIDS as both patients and caretakers. Another committee has been established to focus on promoting gender equity and the empowerment of women and expose them to different strategies on addressing issues of HIV/AIDS and family violence. These activities were jointly carried out by the Women's Affairs Department, the Botswana Adult Education Association and the Women's NGO Coalition. The Women's Affairs Department works tirelessly to mainstream gender issues at the work place in Government ministries, and focuses on educating women to be assertive enough to challenge gender inequities at the workplace. It focuses on increasing support for women's economic empowerment, legal aid services, and the gender mainstreaming in the private sector. The Department has been working with employer organisations and trade unions to organise gender sensitivity training workshops for employees since 1999 (Personal communication with the Director of Women's Affairs, June, 2003). These efforts directly address the theme on promoting the empowerment of women and it has changed the attitudes and dynamic at the workplaces in Government and NGOs and the private sector.

In so far as NGOs are concerned, a women's organisation known as *Emang Basadi* carries out exemplary educational projects for women on a number of issues such as voting and sensitise them on the need to vote each other into local and national political office also it provides them with opportunities for economic advancement. The Economic Empowerment for Women project organised 24 courses, workshops and capacity training seminars between 2000-2001. The Political Education project on the other hand, offers women opportunities to participate in policy formulation as law-makers, since 1999, 6 women got cabinet positions while 8 got parliamentary seats. These efforts accord women the full opportunity to make choices in their lives, which could empower them as citizens. The challenge remains that addressing poverty among women and the gap between rural and urban women (*Emang Basadi*, 2003).

Another innovative step was that the state endorsed the use of the Participatory Rural Appraisal approach and the Community Based Rural Development Strategy in 1997, both of which aim at maximizing the involvement of communities in the planning

and organisation of development projects in their contexts. The intended outcome is to facilitate community empowerment through extension education.

However, in spite of all these efforts to improve adult learning practice, the state and NGOs have not demonstrated any fresh commitments to finance adult learning despite their appreciation of its long-term benefits for hitherto disadvantaged groups such as women and members of the minority communities. These are indications of exemplary practices, which in spite of their limitations, address some of the key themes of CONFINTEAV.

### Chapter 8: **Future Action and Concrete Targets for 2009**

Botswana strives to improve its delivery of adult learning opportunities in line with the principles of the *Agenda For the Future*, and the *Dakar Framework for Action*. Its national strategic plans and have been synchronized with these international frameworks for action. For example, the Botswana National Commission for UNESCO established a national follow up committee for the implementation of the CONFINTEAV recommendations, which related the recommendations within the context of the already existent policies such as the RNPE or new ones being developed, for example, the National Development Plan 9. The RNPE is the touchstone for educational policy and action in the country. Also, educational planning in Botswana is informed by the aspirations of the 1996, *Vision 2016*, which embodies national sentiment such as transforming Botswana into an educated and secure nation. It informs national strategic development initiatives. Government departments and districts development plans have strategic plans, which include some of the *Hamburg Declaration* targets. As a more extended feature, future actions on the implementation of the *Hamburg Declaration* and aspects of the *Dakar Framework of Action* and the Education For All Goals are part of the educational chapter in the *National Development Plan 9*, (2003 –2009). Chapter 15 is on *Education and Training* and it emphasizes the need to equip learners with skills to enable them to engage in self-employment as well as create an opportunity for lifelong learning.

The state undertakes to continue providing relevant and high quality education as part of the core of the long-term implementation of Vision 2016. In its strategic plan

2001-2006, the Ministry of Education pledges to “offer equitable lifelong education and training that is relevant and responsive to the rapid technological development and the changing socio-economic development” (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, p. 268).

In future, the formulation of the National Development Plan 10, (2010-2015) will be propelled primarily by the country’s analysis of its achievements and challenges in the fulfilment of the requirements for the attainment of the *National Plan of Action for Education For All*, which is being implemented during the current National Development Plan. The Dakar framework is not a prescription for member nations. However, it does provide critical indicators of the magnitude of the problems the nations face. It is expected that each nation would gauge its performance towards attaining the goal of providing education for all. As a result, the Ministry of Education recently organised a National Stakeholder Forum on Education For All, which brought together individuals from Government, parastatals, institutions of higher learning, NGOs, private sector educators, donor community representatives, such as World Bank, international agencies such as UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP and UNFPA and national media institutions. It was noted that Botswana has already made considerable progress in terms of some of the six Dakar Framework goals. For example, the country has nearly achieved gender equity in terms of access ahead of the 2005 target. The challenge remains the improvement of the quality of education.

The effort to achieve the Dakar goals is not a deviation from the current National Development Plan, instead it is at tandem with the current plan of action. EFA is part of the national effort to transform the economy of Botswana from being an agrarian to an industrial economy. The other purpose of the national EFA forum was to formulate a strategy to address complex issues of access, equity, and the general improvement of the quality of education (Ministry of Education, 2003). It is hoped that through the implementation of this plan Botswana would go a long way to achieve some goals of *Vision 2016*. More importantly, it would attain aspects of the EFA vision, which is that every person, in every community should be afforded a chance to engage in learning, which is the key to unfolding their full potential as human beings (World Education Forum, 2000). This chapter provides an analysis of national action plans on national adult

learning programmes. It also focuses on some cross cutting issues identified by both the *Agenda for the Future* and the *Dakar Framework For Action* as targets issues up to the year 2009.

#### *Adult Basic Education*

Adult basic education in Botswana is viewed as a major component of the effort to enable every citizen to gain access to lifelong learning. The process of educational delivery is deliberately flexible to enable individuals to enter and leave the system at different times without being disadvantaged. This degree of flexibility makes education a democratic right to every citizen. Government has under taken to infuse information on HIV/AIDS in the curricula of both literacy and the guidance and counselling services of formal basic education during the current national development plan. This reflects the educational response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The plan includes Government efforts to build more primary schools and convert one of the junior secondary schools in the North into a special education facility to cater for the needs of the disabled. The government plans to introduce computers and other technical skills that are essential in all junior secondary schools to adapt learners to the future world of work. BOCODOL also projects to enrol more learners and strengthen its support services for junior certificate learners (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2003). This is in line with the themes of the *Hamburg Declaration* with respect to the extension of adult basic education to all adults.

However, the state finds the cost of free school education unsustainable and is planning to introducing cost-sharing and cost-recovery measures. The problem with such measures is the assurance that no one will be excluded based on the economic circumstances of their parents. It is assumed that with a strengthened social welfare system, children of the poor will not be excluded. However, even with free education, poor children were frequently returned from school on the grounds that their parents failed to pay development fee in secondary school and /or uniforms in primary schools. It is concluded that the nation is likely to lose most of the free education gains of the 1980s and 1990s.

The Government remains the single largest provider of literacy education and is carrying out an extensive evaluation of the Botswana National Literacy Programme (BNLP) in line with the RNPE policy during this plan period. The Revised National

Policy on Education recommended that the current literacy programme should be comprehensively evaluated in order to bring it in line with the demands of the country's Vision to provide quality education for all by the year 2016. DNFE intends to reorganise its current literacy curricula, which has been ossified by lack of revision. The Department intends to update the curriculum, through diversified radio broadcasts and use of the television as an educational media and market the programmes more aggressively to counteract the negative effects of declining enrolments indicated above. The policy recommended that DNFE should create a non-formal structure (Adult Basic Education Course) equivalent to Grade Seven in formal school. The structure is intended to offer learning opportunities to all, even those who cannot access formal school. The strategic plan of the DNFE anticipates that the provision of new topics such as providing business and management skills, environmental conservation, reproductive health and civic education will address aspects of the *Hamburg Declaration* and the goals of the *Dakar Framework for Action*.

The evaluation of the National Literacy Programme and the development of Adult Basic Education Course and the other projected activities are crucial steps for the country to attain the goals of Education for All. The Department of DNFE plans to establish and equip six resource centres to train learners to a qualification equivalent to seven years of formal schooling. This report concludes that if the plan is effectively implemented, it would make adult basic education more responsive to the contexts of the learners. It would provide more useful skills for out-of-school youth, which makes it easier for them to either find employment or be self-employed. They should be helped to view learning as an investment. This is notwithstanding the fact that adult basic education, especially in Botswana is severely under resourced and unfortunately, there are no plans to increase funding for the programme during the current plan period.

#### *Extension programmes*

Extension programmes educate rural communities to attain the goal of sustainable rural livelihoods, land and natural resources management. They seek to enhance the capacity of communities to utilise available resources and market them to improve their economic conditions. The Rural Development Coordination Division developed a training of trainers programme for Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) practitioners as a

mechanism for assisting extension officers to reach the communities. The most pressing feature is to make agriculture more attractive to the youth, who are the most unemployed population group in the nation. The improvement in the delivery of extension services will only be achieved through strengthening and unifying the extension system. One of the future foci of the Rural Development Coordination Division is to alleviate poverty, which is a key area for the *UN Millennium Goals*. This suggests that since the World Summit, Botswana has made poverty alleviation a priority undertaking. The next Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) intended to assist Government to understand the magnitude of poverty has been conducted and its results are being analysed. The Division realized that poverty reduction cannot succeed without a deliberate effort. In this regard, the Division has been developing a National Poverty Reduction Strategy for Botswana. The challenge for extension is to increase the capacity of the rural communities to maximise their control and use of the natural resources. It is also envisaged that adult learning will have a key role to play in poverty reduction.

#### *Continuing Education*

The Centre for Continuing Education of the University of Botswana remains a central piece in ensuring that non-traditional students and professionals gain access to university education and qualifications through its off campus services. As indicated above, BOCODOL continuing education programme also stands out as an exemplary practice for the attainment of the Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE) by distance mode. In its strategic plan 2003-2006, BOCODOL plans to focus on self-study materials and technologies that would enable learners to work and progress at differentiated pace depending on one's performance. It also plans to collaborate with other distance learning institutions in developing appropriate programmes and also put in place assessment procedures that would make their qualifications acceptable nationally and internationally. They will target the provision of applied skills and competencies that would enhance the productivity of the participants and affect their work performance. This would make learning an investment and bring it closer to the changing world of work thereby, furthering the goals of the *Hamburg Declaration*. It is therefore concluded that continuing education seems to be poised to provide some of the most promising

efforts to empower citizens through providing them with alternative educational experiences.

Other than for the key features of adult education in Botswana discussed above, there are some cross cutting issues identified in the *Agenda for the Future*, which are being addressed as future innovations because they have a profound effects on the future of adult learning in Botswana. These include establishing a national qualification framework, improving the shared use and coordination of the educational resources, coordinating vocational education, and enhancing the future prospects for tertiary education.

#### *Establishment of the National Qualification Framework*

Government in collaboration with other stakeholders is working on establishing a unifying umbrella assessment body in the form of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Teams comprising of different stakeholders have been dispatched to different countries in Africa and abroad to study qualification frameworks worldwide. The end result would be the development of nationally approved qualifications, which would validate prior learning and authenticate experiential learning within the overall framework of a national accreditation system in order to serve various learning centres for youth and adult learners all over the country (Youngman, 2002b). The framework would facilitate learner mobility within different sectors of education and training. This is a significant move towards the attainment of the principles of lifelong learning, which informs educational planning in Botswana. It would also give credence and recognition to the experiential learning based outcomes. While these efforts are at a preliminary stage, they point to the need and efforts by Government, NGOs and the private sector to provide high quality education. It is anticipated that the outcomes of implementing the NQF would enhance the economic development of the learners because it might lead to the passing of legislation requiring employers to recognise certified experiences of their employees. It would also help to relate course content/ curriculum to the real life situation of their adult learners.

The National Qualification Framework would redress inconsistencies and fragmentation, which create lack of compatibility in achievement levels between qualifications from different institutions. The establishment of a national qualification

standard addresses one of the Hamburg recommendations that call for establishing qualifications framework that would enable nations to value comparable qualifications.

#### *Sharing of Educational Resources*

One of the concrete steps taken by the country to ensure the realisation of the *Dakar framework for Action* goals and the national Vision 2016 is the commitment to shared use of resources. The Revised National Policy on Education stipulates that there should be a shared use of resources by different institutions. For examples, it recommended an extended use of schools by adults attending evening classes. It was suggested that local resources should be shared beyond the Ministry of Education to include other public sector institutions such as libraries, private sector (i.e. company training institutions), community based organizations, civil society institutions (e.g. churches). The underlying concept is to enable citizens of Botswana to access face to face learning across their life span (Youngman, 2002b). The shared use of resources can work for as long as Government, NGOs, and the private sector have a common understanding of standards. Closely related to the need for the sharing of limited resources, the country plans to enhance its capacity to coordinate policy initiatives across different sectors. The RNPE recommended the establishment of a specialist sub-committee of the National Council on Education for Out -of-School Education. Established in 1999, it has since been playing a lead role in monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the Revised National Policy on Education. The sharing of resources and strengthening the coordination of the RNPE activities is a critical addition to national efforts to attain Vision 2016 and the *National Plan of Action for Education For All (EFA)*. The efforts have also been complimented by the strengthening the coordination of vocational education and training.

#### *Coordination of Vocational Education and Training*

The Botswana Training Authority (BOTA) was established in recognition of the lack of a unified policy on vocational education, lack of uniformity on the curriculum formulation and vocational qualifications awarded and low quality standard for the training of trainers, lack of provider coordination, and under-funding of vocational education. Based on these problems, the RNPE recommended the establishment of BOTA whose functions would be to: promote access to training opportunities in

vocational education; Accredite, register and monitor public education and private vocational training institutions; Develop and review national training standards for the various qualifications levels within its framework and to coordinate the production of training materials (BOTA, 2003). BOTA is currently working on generating standards and registration mechanisms to be adhered to by public and private sector institutions offering all forms of vocational training in Botswana. It is hoped that BOTA will generate assessment standards to measure various levels of performance in all aspects of vocational education. An implementation of these planned activities would enhance the capacity of training institutions to respond to the needs of their learners. In this context, both the employers and employees would view adult learning as an investment. The only shortcoming is that BOTA articulates the role of industry in determining standards but omits the crucial roles of unions and their members in reshaping vocational education. It should also work closely with NGOs and the private sector providers. Finally, it is observed that this form of educational provision adheres to one theme of the *Hamburg Declaration* namely, improving the quality and standards of vocational education.

#### *Future Prospects For Tertiary Education*

As the only national University in Botswana, the University of Botswana plays a lead role in improving the opportunities for the nation to achieve its education for all strategy. In 2000, the University adopted its Vision and Mission Statements to the National Vision 2016. It pledged to use information and communication technologies, within the framework of life-long and open learning (University of Botswana, 2001). The RNPE identifies the Centre for Continuing Education as the lead agency in the provision of part-time and distance education at tertiary level. The centre was also given more impetus by the Development Plan 1997-98 2002/03 and *The UB beyond 10, 000: A Strategy for Growth*, which calls on the Centre to utilise information and communication technologies in distance and open learning. The centre has since linked Gaborone, Maun and Francistown centres through an interactive video-conferencing sponsored by the USAID-funded Education, Development and Democracy Initiative (EDDI) project. It has also started technology based learning facilities such as asynchronous online learning (CCE Annual Report, 2000). The nation intends to invest substantially in the creation of an elaborate e-learning infrastructure for use by the CCE and the Botswana College of

Open and Distance Learning (BOCODOL) during the *National Development Plan 9*, (2003-09). These are a sufficient indication of the country's commitment to the realisation of the *Dakar Framework For Action* and Vision 2016.

### **Conclusion**

The *Hamburg Declaration* and the *Agenda for the Future, the Dakar Framework For Action* served as signposts in the history of education worldwide. The CONFINTEA Mid-Term Review has given Botswana an opportunity to pause and take stock of its efforts towards achieving these themes and goals such as providing education for all, alleviating poverty, and halting the spread of HIV/AIDS in the population. Botswana participated in these conferences and ratified their recommendations. As a follow up to ratified protocols, the nation organised stakeholder workshops to formulate national plans of action for both adult learning and education for all. However, they ensured that these tasks were integrated into the existing national policies and development planning mechanisms.

Botswana has an elaborate policy framework such as the Revised National Policy on Education, Vision 2016 and the National Development Plans that enable it to address most of the Hamburg themes and the Dakar goals. It has identifiable structures and policies on Adult Basic Education, Extension Programmes and Continuing Education, which enable the Government and other stakeholders to provide these services. The provision of free but not compulsory basic education for ten years has enabled the state to attain record enrolment levels. It therefore did well on both increasing adult learning opportunities and the virtual attainment of Education For All. However, this achievement is threatened by Government's agitation for cost-sharing and cost-recovery. Extension services provided by Government and NGOs have made some progress in serving different groups as shown above, especially on the fight against HIV/AIDS. In future it is anticipated that extension programmes will focus more on poverty alleviation. The problem in extension services is the lack of coordination. The Government introduced measures such as the participatory approaches to increase its impact on their clients. It still has to be determined how the training influences the quality of their work as adult

educators. However, the training of the officers increased after the publication of the *Hamburg Declaration* and the provision of related opportunities in Botswana.

Continuing education offered alternative mode of certification for senior secondary and tertiary education. All these forms of education enabled Botswana to address the recommendations of Hamburg and the goals of the Dakar framework.

It is extremely difficult to determine whether there is any increase in investment on adult education. For example, while DNFE gets only 1.1% of the Ministry of Education recurrent budget, it is not the only provider of extension education. Other extension departments are major providers but no analysis of their budgets is currently available. There is an increase in personal spending on continuing education as testified to by increases in individuals willing to sponsor themselves through BOCODOL, CCE, private schools and technical colleges. It is however, not easy to determine whether there is adequate participation because while courses are offered, they seem to fall far short of meeting the needs. The other problem is the lack of evidence on whether the courses provided actually meet the needs of the participants.

Available data indicates that some research work has been done on adult basic education. Research remains scanty on both extension programmes and continuing education services. However, in all cases there is no indication on how research findings influence policy and practice. The major problem has been that research lacked depth in both scope and methodology. Over and above, researchers do not make sufficient efforts to make their finding user friendly for practitioners.

Adult literacy teachers are volunteers who have a low status and are highly mobile whenever, better opportunities emerge. The latest increase in their honoraria is still too small to attract and keep better-qualified personnel. A number of organisations provide both extension and continuing education training. The other issue is that private school functions with individuals with varied qualifications and it is difficult to ascertain their qualifications and status. In spite all the shortcomings, the training help to improve the services of staff members in adult learning. However, adult learning programmes seldom empower learners because the curricula in adult basic education are based on expert knowledge and not need assessments. Since 1997, some extension staff members have been trained on participatory approaches but the impact of that training is not yet

established. It is only in BOCODOL, that some efforts were made to conduct systematic needs assessment in order to provide professional courses. There are some exemplary and innovative practices in the provision of adult learning. Currently, the Department of Non-Formal Education rolled out a very clear strategic plan that suggests a lot of collaboration and willingness to review their curriculum to address national issues such as HIV/AIDS. Another exemplary approach is the dissemination of information on HIV/AIDS through pulling together all stakeholders and the coordinating agency willing to hand over the process to providers. Another is the concerted effort to empower women through enabling them to make decision in the public arena. Extension services are working on participatory methods that would enable communities to own decisions made in their contexts.

Finally, although the future targets for the key adult learning services and planned activities are in place, they would turn into white elephants if not allocated resources to ensure that the strategic action plans are implemented. The state has incorporated some international initiatives such as the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework, the enhanced sharing of resources, the coordination of vocational education and the improvement of future prospects for tertiary education in order improve national delivery of adult education. However, the most immediate task should be addressing the HIV/AIDS scourge, and the prevalence of poverty, especially in the rural areas.<sup>3</sup> These two remain the most critical threats in Botswana and they need to be addressed urgently if Botswana is to make better progress in addressing the ten themes of the *Agenda for the Future*, and the six goals of *Dakar Framework For Action*.

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<sup>1</sup> Today, Botswana has a population of 1.7 million inhabitants. A sizeable percentage of the population live in the rural areas and survive on different types of agricultural activities. The population includes the economically and politically powerful Tswana ethnic groups and minority communities who speak languages other than Setswana, which is the national language. Politically, the country is a multiparty democracy. However, the ruling Botswana Democratic Party has won all the successive elections since Independence, which renders the state a *de facto* one party system. Botswana's economy was one of the weakest in the world during the 1960's but it has expanded rapidly reaching a GNP per capita of \$3,700 by 1998 (World Bank, 2000). The growth has been based on the discovery and exploitation of mineral wealth, especially diamonds. However, the Household Income and Expenditure Survey of 1993/94 showed that the distribution of disposable income among persons was such that the poorest 40% earned only 11.6% of the total national income, whilst the next 40% and the top 20% earned 29.1% and 59.3% of the national income respectively. Poverty was more prevalent in rural areas, where 60% of the poor and 70% of the very poor female households live.

<sup>2</sup> The citizens of Botswana are called Batswana for plural and Motswana, singular. As indicated above, the nation constitutes of people who speak different languages but there is the Setswana language, which is the politically sanctioned national lingua-franca used by all citizens.

<sup>3</sup> However, in spite of its relative success, in order to assist Botswana in maintaining the implementation of its educational policies and programmes it is recommended that the UNESCO Institute for Education develop a system for country level monitoring that can be adopted for use in member states.