



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

## UGANDA COUNTRY REPORT

CONFINTEA MID – TERM REVIEW, 2003  
Six Years After CONFINTEA V: Status And  
Future Prospects Of Adult Learning

BY

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## **CONFINTEA MID TERM REVIRE 2003**

### **Introduction:**

The Hamburg Declaration and the Agenda for the Future which were adopted by the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education in 1997 set targets to be met by UNESCO Member States. The Hamburg Conference was closed followed by the Dakar Conference of the year 2000 which came up with a framework of action. In the area of adult learning, the following Education for All (EFA) goals were to be addressed by UNESCO member states.

- ◆ Ensuing that the learning needs of all youth and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.
- ◆ Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

The ensuing chapters indicate what Uganda has been able to contribute towards achieving the Hamburg Declaration and the Dakar Framework of Action:

### **CHAPTER 1: BUILDING UP STRUCTURES AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS: POLICIES, LEGAL PROVISIONS, DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND INNOVATIONS**

- 1.0. The Government of Uganda has been able to consolidate a policy of promoting Functional Adult Literacy as one of the major vehicles for poverty eradication.

Government has also come up with the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) which is a national planning framework for development in Uganda. Using the PEAP, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has come up with a Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan (SDIP), a sectorwide strategy of addressing major concerns in the PEAP regarding social development.

- The SDIP highlights the importance of Functional Adult Literacy in community mobilisation and empowerment. In addition to the SDIP, the Ministry of Gender,

Labour and Social Development has come up with a National Adult Literacy Strategic Investment Plan (NALSIP). This five-year document spells out a number of strategic programme areas which are being used to improve delivery of services to adult learners

### **1.1. Legal provisions**

The Uganda Constitution of 1995 stipulates that education is one of the fundamental rights irrespective of age, gender or other dimensions..

### **1.2 Delivery systems and innovations**

Delivery system is done within the framework of decentralized system of governance. Bottom up planning is emphasized. The process begins with assessment of learning needs and using the results, a curriculum and other literacy materials are developed. Training of literacy instructors and supervisors is organized based on the learning needs identified at community level.

After training, classes are conducted and support supervision and continuous assessment of adult learners achievements is done. Management information system has been developed. Information is generated from grassroots level to national level. Feed back to community level is channeled through the district offices for performance improvement.

Accreditation system has been developed to motivate adult learners at various levels. A qualification framework for adult learners is being developed and it is hoped that it will be linked to the overall National Qualification framework for formal education.

Second chance courses have been developed to absorb the learners who drop out of the formal education system. It also happens that learners from non-formal education system join the formal system at various levels for continuing education.

### **1.3. Mobilisation and use of resources**

Learning Needs Assessment has revealed that poverty is a priority concern among adult learners. It is for this reason that the Functional Adult Literacy programmes has been able to access Poverty Action Funds. These funds are set aside to address

priority areas of Government. The Central Government disburses the funds for Functional Adult Literacy as Conditional grants to Local governments. The Local governments also contribute funds to the programme using locally raised funds in a form of taxes.

Civil society organizations both local and international are involved in resource mobilisation to support implementers of adult literacy programmes at various levels.

#### **1.4. Fostering equality and access to special groups**

As regard fostering equality and access to adult learning, gender sensitive programmes are emphasized. As a result both men and women are attending adult literacy classes. Gender issues have also been fully mainstreamed in the adult literacy curricula and other learning materials.

Special groups being addressed include persons with disabilities, the elderly, pastorists and the fisherfolk. Special programmes have been developed for each group. For instance, Braille literacy has been developed for the blind and sign language for the deaf community.

## **CHAPTER 2            INCREASING INVESTMENT IN ADULT LEARNING**

Public investment in adult learning has been increasing overtime. For instance investment in adult learning by both Government and civil society Organizations was estimated at US \$ 200,000 in 1999 and it has now reached about US \$ 3 million.

Policies and Strategies that promote public investment in adult learning include:-

- Sensitization of local authorities to continue planning and budgeting for adult literacy;
- Involvement of communities and adult learners in planning and implementation of the programme to promote community ownership and sustainability.
- Government supports and encourages private and community based initiatives.
- Development of National Adult Literacy Strategic Investment Plan.

- Government will continue to seek bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation in the financing and execution of the programme.

### **CHAPTER 3: INCREASING PARTICIPATION**

**Increased participation in adult learning has been promoted through the following: -**

- Training of literacy supervisors and literacy instructors.
- Improvement on the management structures,
- Development of curricula responding to the learner's needs.
- Improvement of more supporting materials or teaching aids for various groups of learners.
- Increased advocacy work among Government and other stakeholders, through the media and libraries.
- Increased co-operation between NGOs as networks to promote adult literacy.
- The mainstreaming of gender into various sectors has led to participation of male and female instructors/adult educators to work in adult learners programmes. This has increased female participation of learners.
- Acquisition of grants to support the running of adult education programmes, by local and international supporters
- Sensitization of both men and women to participate in adult literacy activities as equal partners.
- Introduction of Braille literacy for the blind learners.
- Introduction of sign language for the deaf learners.
- Promotion of various methods in teaching literacy.

### **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH STUDIES IN THE FIELD OF ADULT LEARNING**

#### **4.1. NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY – 1992**

This was the first study in adult learning. This survey resulted into the decision by government to revive literacy programme in the country. Consequently, the pilot phase started basing the development of the pilot on the learning needs assessment results.

Using the Needs Assessment Survey results, a curriculum was developed and it mainly addressed the following programme areas: agriculture, cooperatives, marketing, health, gender issues and civic consciousness among others.

#### **4.2. A PROCESS REVIEW OF FAL PILOT PROJECT -1995**

The aim of this study was to generate recommendations to be considered during the expansion of FAL pilot project into a programme. This study found out that there was demand for FAL programme at all levels.

The study recommended for the expansion of FAL pilot project into a programme in a planned, systematic and controlled manner.

#### **4.3. EVALUATION OF FAL PROGRAMME IN UGANDA – 1999**

This was the third study undertaken in adult learning. The study sought to: -

- Compare and contrast the resource requirements and the effectiveness of the FAL programme and of the Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT)
- Assess the implementation of adult literacy education; and
- Recommend future policy on the development of adult literacy education.

The study found out that the majority of participants had attained a level of reading, writing and numeracy higher than that of primary (stage) four. The study recommended for more government involvement, encouragement and support to NGOs.

#### **4.4. NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY FOR FUNCTIONAL ADULT LITERACY (FAL) IN KARAMOJA UGANDA - 2000**

This was carried out to address the concerns of pastoral community as a disadvantaged group. The study sought answers to the following:

- i). What were the most urgent problems and needs of the people of Kotido and Moroto to which they felt most strongly about? The most serious problems were famine (85%), lack of water (40%). Others were disease, insecurity, poverty, ignorance and illiteracy;
- ii). In particular what was the level of people's awareness of HIV/AIDS? Everyone interviewed indicated that HIV was mostly spread through sexual intercourse showing that the message had reached Karamoja, but needed strengthening;
- iii). To what extent were the people aware of the problems of illiteracy and the benefits of literacy? Whereas ignorance and illiteracy featured low in the hierarchy of problems, all respondents except three men and two women felt that illiteracy was a problem. They were being cheated in doing business, failure to communicate, read signposts and lack of privacy when they are to write or read letters. They wanted and were ready to learn reading, writing and numeracy. They needed a qualified teacher, any skilled person or an Instructor to be their teacher;
- iv). What were some of the factors likely to affect the functioning of FAL programme in Karamoja? Famine was rated as the first problem. Others were sickness causing quite high level of morbidity and mortality, floods and wind, as classes would be held under trees.
- v). What were the ongoing adult literacy and related initiatives? Some literacy initiatives were by agencies who were engaged in some literacy work namely; the Community Development departments, supported by the World Food Programme through ADRA; the Catholic Church and Church of Uganda and a few others where cooperation could be established.

**The main recommendations of this study were: -**

- ◆ Strengthening FAL so that it should change the people's way of looking at things in Karamoja;
- ◆ FAL design should address famine, water shortage, disease, insecurity, poverty and HIV/AIDS;
- ◆ FAL should target the interests of the dominant age-group namely 31-40 years old especially the women;
- ◆ Training and incentives for Instructors should be deliberately planned;

- ♦ Literacy materials should be in the local languages namely; Ngakarimojong and Lebat Thur

#### **4.5. NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY FOR FAL IN KALANGALA DISTRICT – 2002**

This was the fifth study in adult learning. The main purpose of the study was to understand the factors that would promote or constrain FAL education efforts among the fisherfolk in Kalangala district, which is composed of islands in lake Victoria.

The study found out that the people's situation, problems and concerns were conflicting. For example, whereas there was high literacy (85%) second to Kampala city. Kalangala's general welfare was very low. Fishing industry was the main activity as 80% of the people live at the very poor landing sites. Their population was thinly distributed, but with a very high growth rate and mobile according to fishing movements.

The people's main concern was poverty. The people wanted to learn skills to improve their business skills, agriculture, English and literacy. Hence, the reasons were to improve their economic and social status. They preferred to be taught by skilled instructors and there was a gender prejudice particularly among men folk.

Accordingly, the study recommended as follows that: -

- i). FAL should be strengthened and developed at both the basic and post-basic levels;
- ii). Special programmes should be designed to address business skills training;
- iii). Special programmes should also be designed to train people to form viable groups or cooperatives;
- iv). Literacy and numeracy components should be embedded within business skill training;
- v). Integration of good fishing ideas and methods of proper fish handling in FAL;
- vi). Materials development should take into account all the interests of the different groups- the fisher folk, farmers and business community;
- vii). Instructors should receive good incentives;

Based on these recommendations, the way forward for the FAL programme was for its intensification, development of relevant materials, specific short training, sensitising leaders and collaborating with other service providers.

It can therefore be observed that the above studies lead to the development of new policies to expand literacy programmes throughout the country with participation of NGOs such as Action Aid, LABE etc. In each of these organisations, a curriculum for literacy programme, learning materials, guidelines and standards for implementing the programmes were developed. Special areas such as Karamoja and Kalangala districts have been absorbed into the programme. Above all literacy programme has been linked with people's livelihoods.

#### **4.6. STUDY ON SKILLS AND LITERACY TRAINING FOR BETTER LIVELIHOODS: CASES FROM UGANDA**

The study was to examine two broad approaches to combining livelihood training with literacy instruction: one incorporating livelihood training into literacy programmes, the other incorporating literacy instruction into livelihood skills training programmes. Three cases were studied from Uganda: the Government's functional adult literacy (FAL) programme as offered countrywide, the FAL activities incorporated into the economic activities of women groups in Rukungiri District, the FAL activities carried out by ADRA and Action Aid's REFLECT programmes in Bundibugyo.

The main conclusion reached at the end of the study was that the majority of documented adult education programmes in Uganda have literacy as their lead element. The major challenge noted was for the programmes to effectively design and implement a good balance between literacy training and practical knowledge and skills that can be of immediate use to the learners in improving their living conditions.

### **CHAPTER 5: ADULT EDUCATORS/FACILITATORS' STATUS AND TRAINING**

There are at least two categories of adult educators/facilitators in Uganda. The first group is the Supervisors of Adult Learning programmes. These are the Community Development Workers

(CDWs) working for government and NGOs throughout the country. The second category is the Literacy Instructors and other community educators who are operating at community levels.

Literacy supervisors are in charge of each of the over 540 sub-counties where FAL is being implemented. Others work with NGOs, Community-Based Organizations and Private Sector Agencies. Out of the government-based supervisors, 669 have been trained by different agencies. Meanwhile, there are over 20,000 Instructors throughout the country. Three quarters of these Instructors were recruited by government agencies and 14,544 of them have been trained. There are 358,264 adult learners that have been enrolled.

Some of the Supervisors are on the government payroll. They receive between US\$ 1200 and US\$ 3600 per year. They are pensionable officers. They are facilitated with bicycles or motorcycles to help them reach every part of their sub-counties. The Supervisors from NGOs receive better salaries than those under Government services.

The instructors are however not well motivated. About 7,500 bicycles have been distributed to literacy Instructors who are under government's literacy programmes. Others with NGOs and Private Sector Agencies get similar awards from their parental organizations.

### **5.1 Training and duration**

Government has established a Institutional framework for training literacy workers who are supervisors of adult learning programmes. They undertake different degrees such as Bachelors of Arts, Social Sciences, Social Work and Social Administration, and Adult and Community Education. The second level institutions offer Diplomas in Social work and Adult Education. There are also other institutions that offer Certificates in the above fields and these operate at local levels. Throughout their training, emphasis is laid on acquisition of skills through fieldwork practicals.

Instructors are trained by both the Local governments (districts) and NGOs. Training is done using a literacy training manuals. The training lasts for a week. This is simply basic training. Other training opportunities are offered to the Instructors.

Specific activities and programmes aimed at improving conditions of adult educators.

- i). Training. It is the aim of the programme that all the adult educators are trained as stated above.
- ii). Development of materials for the literacy programmes. All instructors have been taught how to use training materials. These include a curriculum, training manuals, primers where necessary, Instructor's guides and modules.
- iii). Continuous assessment. Instructors have been taught how to carryout continuous assessment of the learners' performance.
- iv). Incentives. Instructors are given bicycles. Most instructors have received bicycles others have not yet. It is the aim of the literacy programme to give each instructor a bicycle that helps in visits to each class. Supervisors are given motorcycles.
- v). Supervisors are also given a monthly imprest as operational funds to run the literacy programmes at sub-county levels.
- vi). Instructors and supervisors have been taught how to administer tests every quarter and examinations are administered at the end of nine months. Thereafter successful learners are awarded certificates and they advance to higher levels.

## **5.2 Training policies**

The government of Uganda believes that it is necessary to have a literate, well-informed and prosperous society. Any adult learning programme must have as its goal, "increasing people's access to information and participation in self, community and national development. Government has therefore put in place a national training team. This team has built the capacity of district officials to put in place a district training team. Through these policies, the capacity of adult educators/facilitators are being built to improve on the performance of adult learning programmes.

## **5.3 Improving quality of training**

The following strategies are in place: -

- i). Participatory methods to make learning more practical Elements. REFLECT methodology are integrated into basic literacy to make FAL approach more practical.
- ii). Supervisors and Instructors can be trained up to degree level through the Institutional framework.
- iii). Networking.  
Stakeholders involved in adult learning are coordinated by literacy agencies like Literacy Network (LITNET) and Uganda Adult Education Network (UGAADEN).

## **CHAPTER 6: EMPOWERING ADULT LEARNERS**

- Adult Learners through their Organization called Uganda Literacy and Adult Learners Association has been given a platform by Government and Civil society Organizations to exercise their rights.
- Adult learners are free to organize themselves as groups or associations to fight for their rights (recognition)
- Opportunities are sometimes provided to adult learners to publicize their activities.
- Adult learners have been playing a role in the process of developing strategic plans.
- The curriculum and content of the learning materials address the learning needs of the adult learners.
- The proficiency tests for adult learners are prepared in line with the curriculum.
- Continuous assessment system has been developed. This has been done through a series of workshops with participation of implementers of adult literacy programmes at various levels. Literacy instructors and adult learners themselves have played a key role in this exercise.

Continuous assessment of adult learners achievements have merits, some of which include: -

- Builds confidence in the learner
- Helps to strengthen areas of weakness
- Helps learner and instructor progress systematically
- Provides greater chances to learners to qualify for accreditation
- It promotes good relationship between instructor and learner.
- Learners with special needs are given attention.

A part from continuous assessment, the adult learners also do proficiency tests and examination. Competencies in reading, writing, numeracy and functionality have been developed to help in the assessment of adult learners at different levels.

The process of developing a qualifications framework has been initiated. This is expected to motivate adult learners further.

## **CHAPTER 7: EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE AND INNOVATIONS**

### **7.1: FAMILY BASIC EDUCATION (FABE).**

This programme was started in 1997 by Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE), a local NGO. The implementation is being done in partnership with Bugiri Local government.

The project's aim is to improve the performance of Primary School pupils by increasing parental education support to children through increased adult literacy and parental skills. LABE has identified a strong positive correlation between literacy skills of parents and increased parental support to children.

#### **FABE project has three objectives: -**

- ◆ To develop effective communication channels between parents and teachers for increased information flow on children's education issues.
- ◆ To develop a leaning programme that promotes parental ability to support their children's learning by acquiring literacy and numeracy skills.
- ◆ To increase parent-child educational interactions for shared learning that will benefit both parties.

Some of the project activities include:

- Sensitization of parents on their roles and contribution to their children's learning.
- Training of school management committees on their roles
- Training Primary School teachers and literacy instructors
- Production of instructional materials to use in adult and children classes.

**Impact: -**

- Initial results from pilot in one district are very encouraging.
- The actual literacy acquisition by parents especially mothers has increased
- Decision making by previously non-literate and fearful parents has been increased and quality of issues been improved
- Teachers are more accountable to parents
- School management committees have more women representatives
- Decrease children (especially girls) drop out of schools.

**7.2 REFLECT - (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques)**

The Reflect approach, which was conceived by Action Aid, promotes broad adult learning and social change. It fuses the theory of Paulo Freire with the methodologies of Participatory Rural Appraisal. REFLECT helps groups identify local issues and problems of common concern. Each group then produces their own learning materials. During the process, the participants learn the words of the common problems. The approach creates high motivation, self –esteem and participation. Participants do not use textbooks; they generate their own instructional materials. Literacy is not the major focus but wider community development. In the end, the approach is able to offer great development and empowerment benefits to its participants. In Uganda, it is being tried out in 6 districts.

**CHAPTER 8: FUTURE ACTIONS**

- Planned action for adult education and literacy in particular are contained in the Government Poverty Eradication Action Plan, which is Uganda’s major framework for poverty eradication. Other sectorwide strategic plans include Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan and National Adult Literacy Strategic Investment Plan.

**The key action points that come out of these documents are:**

- Consolidation of a comprehensive policy on adult literacy and education
- Significantly increased financing for adult literacy

- Development of a national qualification framework incorporating a qualification framework for adult literacy
- Development of a functional management information system to ensure adequate monitoring, evaluation and feedback
- Establishing an effective and sustainable research programme for systematic research-development-diffusion process in all aspects of adult education
- Improving the capacity of literacy facilitators through enhanced training, motivation and status recognition
- Strengthening partnership with Civil Society Organisations in the provision of adult education
- Strengthening support for learners' organisations and their involvement in adult education management, especially monitoring

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