



**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF
SWAZILAND**

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

**NATIONAL REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND
STATE OF THE ART OF ADULT LEARNING AND
EDUCATION (ALE) IN SWAZILAND**

**SUBMITTED TO THE 6TH CONFITEA
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ADULT
EDUCATION**

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Background Information

The National Commission for UNESCO – Swaziland requested the Ministry of Education to prepare a national report on the Development and State of the Art of Adult Learning and Education.

In pursuance of this directive, the ministry invited a number of Adult Education providers in the country to contribute to the preparation of the report. But due to unforeseen reasons the response was very minimal and as a result the ministry was forced to use the information at its disposal to compile the report.

The Confinte VI (6th International Conference on Adult Education) is to renew international momentum for adult learning and education by highlighting the crucial role that they play in achieving the education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in building of knowledge economics and learning societies, as well as other major international policy frameworks in relation to education and development, in particular the literacy initiative for empowerment.

The kingdom of Swaziland through the Ministry of Education undertakes the endeavour to take stock of relevant developments related to the practice and promotion of adult learning and education in the country since 1997.

This report aims at informing the global community about Adult and Non-Formal Education activities taking place in the country as well as the challenges, expectations of the conference and future perspectives of adult learning and Education in Swaziland.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. The Context of Adult Learning and Education in Swaziland

1.1 Brief general overview of Swaziland

- Swaziland lies in Southern Africa, between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Mozambique and has a total surface area of approximately 17000 km². This area consists of 10070 km² Swazi Nation land held in trust by the King on behalf of the Swazi Nation and the rest is title deed land privately owned.
- Swaziland has four regions all with unique climatic conditions and these are Hhohho (highveld), Manzini (middleveld), Lubombo (lowveld and plateau) and Shiselweni (middleveld).
- Swaziland has a population of approximately one million people of which 53% are females and 47% are males. The majority of these people reside in the rural areas.
- There is a great movement of rural-urban migration and this tends to create problems in the provision and management of the social amenities, such as schools, hospitals and accommodation. The rural-urban migration is due to the belief that in the cities there are more opportunities for jobs.
- The Adult and Non-Formal Education is an important wing of the education system in the country as it provides education opportunities to all, especially women and the disadvantaged out of school children. Various programmes and strategies have been put in place through Adult Education Centres such as the Rural Education Centres, Swaziland Skills Centres and Sebenta National Institute.

1.1 POLICY LEGISLATION AND FINANCING

- The Ministry of Education has a National Policy Statement on education. This policy is very broad and it encompasses all activities under the ministry without precisely spelling out the adult and non formal education activities as its main focus.
- Sebenta national Institute, a public enterprise operating under the public enterprise unit act has formulated its own non formal education policy, a document that is still under consideration by its board members.
- The institute's operations are monitored by the board appointed by the Minister of Education in consultation with SCOPE
- Sebenta is headed by the CEO who sits in the board as general secretary.
- Rural Education Centres (REC) are administered at the Ministry of Education headquarters under the Inspectorate of Adult and Non-Formal Education. At the centre level, the school is managed by the Principal assisted by REC Coordinator.
- Each REC has its programmes based on felt and expressed needs and interest of the community; hence no two programmes are alike.
- Swaziland skills Centres is a government supported non governmental organization that provides vocational skills to young people with minimal formal education. Its main mandate is to alleviate poverty.
- It is headed by a Centre Manager who reports to the Chief Inspector Tertiary in the Ministry of Education

1.2. FINANCING OF ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION

- Government supports adult learning and education programmes offered by departments under its jurisdiction.
- Some assistance comes from the Global fund through NERCHA, specifically for the youth.
- Other donor agencies such as UNESCO, World Food Programme and skill share play a major role in funding adult learning and education programmes.
- Despite the successes in providing adult learning and education, the department is still faced with a number of challenges. These include the need to further diversify the curriculum to include trades that are highly competitive in local labour market.
- Encouraging local tourism and small business and other skills.
- Increasing participation of the private sector in non formal education
- Strengthening the Adult Education Centres so that they become focal points for all adult education programmes.
- Developing a coordinated approach for all activities of adult education providers.
- Developing and implementing a policy that will ensure that all structures enable children and other people with disabilities to access education and reviewing the working conditions for adult education providers with objective of encouraging and attracting the participation of other people in this agenda.
- The ultimate challenge however is to completely eliminate illiteracy from all categories of people.

Chapter 2

2. QUALITY OF ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION, PROVISION, PARTICIPATION AND ACHIEVEMENT.

- Adult Learning and Education plays a leading role in promoting sound health and environmental practices in empowering women and men in different trades in the service sector and in almost all human undertakings.
- Older adults are no less active; they play a key role in many adult learning initiatives, sharing their wisdom and experiences with younger learners. This exercise is not only confined to the Ministry of Education, other ministries are engaged in promoting adult learning and interministerial cooperation is growing.
- Employers, Unions, non governmental and community organizations are increasingly involved. This results in a dramatic decentralization of adult learning activities and a vast expansion in the range of subjects covered.
- Vocational Rehabilitation Centres(VRC) are for that part of the continuous and co-ordinated process of rehabilitation which involves the provision of those vocational services, that is vocational guidance, vocational training and selective placement designed to enable a disabled person to secure and retain suitable employment.
- The main aim of VRC is to evaluate the activities of the person with disabilities and their attitudes towards work and train them in suitable vocational trades. They are then evaluated to find out their physical capacities, vocational interest and aptitudes, work habit, job endurance and attributes.
- Skills out reach programme in the Ministry of Enterprise and Employment aims at meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that are for capacity building for economic growth and sustainable development

- Objectives of the programme
 - To develop life skills for youth and adults
 - Reduce unemployment in the country, thus alleviating poverty as part of the MDGs objectives
 - To bring the training programme closer to the people on the regions for accessibility
 - To enhance gender equity in life skills development
 - The training programme is funded by the Government of China in Taiwan and that of Swaziland.

- Home Economics section is engaged in educating different ministries and non-governmental organizations on nutrition and healthy eating issues.
 - The issue of HIV/AIDS and nutrition increased demand on nutrition talks and healthy eating practices.
 - Caregivers are trained on diet recommended for HIV/AIDS patients. These include caregivers in neighbourhood carepoints, home based carers and school cooks.

2.1 Provision of adult learning and education and institutional frameworks.

- The Ministry of Education policy statement reflects the government commitment to the provision of Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Education.

- Adult Education programmes are administered at local community level under local leadership. At the centre level; they are managed by the Regional Manager/ Teacher Leader assisted by facilitators/instructors.

- A draft policy at Sebenta which pertains to education and training, personal health, safety, and transport was prepared by administration with an input from the staff members.

- Adult Education Centres are well established with work rooms, classrooms, offices for administration purpose, some operate in any form of shelter convenient to the participants.
- The University of Swaziland, under the department of adult and non formal education is working in partnership with Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA) to bring change in the area of learning by distance or open and distance learning.

2.2 PARTICIPATION IN ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION

- The Ministry of Education support and monitor all adult learning and education programmes under its auspices and those of Sebenta National Institute.
- All programmes are learner based, before embarking on any educational programme the community is consulted through a needs assessment exercise, and then the responses are prioritized.
- The community leadership also participates as overseers of the programmes within their areas.
- Each Rural Education Centre has an Adult Education Committee, which is a wing of the school committee. The function of the committee is to assist in the running of the non-formal education programmes and activities. The principal is the secretary of the Adult Education Committee and the Teacher Leader is the minute secretary of the Adult Education Committee.
- The chairperson of the Adult Education Committee and the Principal should keep the committee informed about the Adult Education Training Programmes which has the overall responsibility over the R.E.C.
- The Adult Education Inspectorate monitors and maintains high standards in the Adult Education Centres. They visit the centres with the purpose of helping the instructors / facilitators to do work more effectively. To inspect physical structures, premises and instructions/ learning facilities. To review inspection findings with the principal of the Adult Education Centre and the staff.
- To write inspection reports.

- Sebenta National Institute as a public enterprise, it is affiliated to the Ministry of Education. Its operations are monitored by the board members appointed by the Minister of Education in consultation with SCOPE.
- Sebenta has an administration headed by the Chief Executive Officer, who also sits in the board as secretary. The institute also enjoys patronage of the Prime Minister of the day, Her Majesty the Indlovukazi and His Majesty King Mswati III.

2.3. MONITORING AND EVALUATING PROGRAMMES AND ASSESSING LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Departments have officers deployed in all adult education centres who monitor the activities run by the centres.
- The centres are directed by Regional Managers and Teacher leaders.
- The learning out comes are reviewed and assessed on a yearly basis.
- After graduations the learners form community groups and initiate communal projects for income generations.

2.4. ADULT EDUCATORS/FACILITATORS STATUS AND TRAINING

- Education levels of the facilitators range from grade 10 to skills certificate and diploma.
- From time to time facilitators are offered refresher courses as per the programmes they participate in.
- Those facilitators showing interest and qualify are encouraged to enroll with tertiary institutions, currently there are those who are registered with UNISWA in the department of adult education.
- Facilitators are offered management and operational skills in the public and related sectors through short courses, consultancies by the Swaziland Institute of Management and Public Administration.

Chapter 3

3. RESEARCH INNOVATION AND GOOD PRACTICE

Research studies in the field of adult learning.

- Not much has been done in this area except for student and staff member's initiatives of the University of Swaziland.
- The department was commissioned to undertake a needs assessment study which was funded by the University of Swaziland Research Board. This was done in order to identify adult education needs and opportunities.
- The above mentioned research had lead to the introduction of the Masters Degree in Adult Education as well as the review of the certificate and diploma.
- Studies on non formal education have been undertaken in Botswana and Namibia and some of their strategies are of great help to the country and institutions.

3.1 Innovation and examples of good practice

- The introduction of skills training programmes in Swaziland has lead to the production of semi-skilled, self reliant, small and medium entrepreneurs.
- Contribute through skills development towards a vibrant national economy.
- Eradicate gender based violence through economic empowerment.
- Develop skills indiscriminately to attain gender equality.
- Alleviate poverty.

Chapter 4

4. ADULT LITERACY

- Sebenta is the only institute which provides adult basic education in the country, so all issues pertaining to adult literacy are dealt with through the institute.
- Non-formal and adult learning programmes are structured in three levels:
- Basic literacy in siSwati (National Language) takes 9 months to complete. Learners progress to next level after going through an internal evaluation test.
- Basic and post basic English (second and official Language) literacy programme each taking 12 months to complete. SiSwati learner graduates participate at this level and also take an internal examination and those who pass proceed to the next level.
- Non - Formal Upper Primary Educational (NUPE), this programme is designed to be completed in two years and has 6 subjects that is, Belief Systems, English, Practical Maths, Practical Science, SiSwati and Social Studies. Learners at this level will take an external examination and they stand a chance of progressing to secondary education.
- A practical basic literacy programme (Mathematics and English) is also in place for the youth and young learners. The programme caters for orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC's) and school children who have dropped out the formal system.

Chapter 5

5. Challenges

- Inadequacy of the budget allocation is a major set back in the Adult and Non-Formal Education department.
- There is need to improve the present structure of Adult and Non-Formal Education in the country.
- Producing a relevant curriculum/programme of study on HIV/AIDS
- Tools for training are worn out and replacement is difficult due to financial constrains.
- The equipment at the various workshops were installed at inception and have become obsolete.
- Low education level for most of out facilitators.
- Accreditation of literacy and NUPE courses still not in place.

Chapter 6

7. EXPECTATIONS OF CONFINTEA AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES OF ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION

- Commitment and concerted efforts by Member State Governments in the funding of not only adult learning and education, but also all learners registered in the non formal education sector irrespective of their age and disabilities.
- Emphasis on the change of adult learning and education endeavors by member countries.
- Encouragement by country governments to increase budgets for adult and non formal education programmes.
- Emphasis on the monitoring and evaluation of adult learning and education of non formal education efforts.
- Provision of Information Communication Technology training in adult learning and education programmes.
- Provision of an inclusive education especially and in reference to individuals with disabilities.

Chapter 7

8. CONCLUSION

The foregoing analysis has shown that in the last 10 years Swaziland has made significant strides in the field of primary and adult education activities, including NUPE. This is shown by the increase in the literacy rate from 21% in 1986 to 81% in 1997. Similarly, the proportion of the population that has never attended school has declined substantially over the years.

Although Swaziland does not segregate in the admission of girls and boys, but there is still need to promote the education of girls since they have been disadvantaged for a long time. Government has noted that girls participation in some areas is not relatively strong, and this is attributed to a number of factors that discourage girls from participating in male dominated professions. Now Government has taken it upon herself to review and revise the curriculum so that it is gender sensitive and includes the rights of children.

The high poverty level in the country is a cause for concern to Government and to communities since this undermines any developmental process and instills a dependency syndrome among the communities. As a result, Government has embarked on developing a poverty reduction strategy in order to empower communities with knowledge and skills. The provision of education is central to the reduction of poverty and the Ministry is making every effort to provide basic education to all citizens.

The analysis has shown that one area where the country is still lacking is vocational education, only about 5% of the population had vocational certificates and diplomas in 1997. Males held most of the certificates and diplomas with most residing in the urban areas.