

THE DEVELOPMENT AND STATE OF THE ART OF ADULT LEARNING AND
EDUCATION (ALE)

National report of Nepal

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Acronyms

LSGA: Local Self Governance Act

M/VDC: Municipality/Village Development Committee

MDG: Millennium Development Goal

MOES: Ministry of Education and Sports

NFEC: Non Formal Education Center

NNEPC: Nepal National Education Planning Commission

PRSP: poverty Reduction strategic Paper

National reports on the situation of ALE

Section one

General overview:

Nepal is a landlocked nation in South Asia, bordering the people's Republic of China to the north and India to the south, east and west. Nepal has a diverse landscape, ranging from the humid Terai plain lands in the south to the mountainous Himalayas in the north. Similarly, Nepal is a multilingual, multireligious and multiethnic society.

Languages:

Nepal's diverse linguistic heritage evolved from four major language groups; Indo-Aryan, Mongolian, Tibeto-Burman and various indigeneous language isolates. According to the 2001 national census, 92 different living languages are spoken in Nepal. The major languages of Nepal are:

Nepali-49 %, Maithili- 12%, Bhojpuri- 8%, Tharu- 6%, Tamang5%, Newari- 4%, Magar-3% and Awadhi- 2 %.

Nepali is the official, national language and served as lingua franca among Nepalis of different ethno linguistic groups.

Religion:

Nepal is a secular state. However, majority of the population belongs to Hinduism. The 2001 census identified 80.6% of the population as Hindu and 10.7 % . Buddhist, 4.2 % Muslim, and 3.6 % of the population follows the indigenous Kirant Mundhum religion. Christianity is practiced by less than 0.5 % of the population.

Ethnicity

Nepal's 2001 census enumerated 103 distinct castes and ethnic groups. The caste system of Nepal is rooted in the Hindu religion while the ethnic system is rooted in mutually exclusive origin myths, historical mutual seclusion and the occasional state intervention. The major caste/ethnic groups identified by the 2001 census are :

Chetri = 15.8 %, Hill Brahmin = 12.7 %, Magar = 7.1 %, Tharu = 6.8 %, Tamang = 5.6 %, Newar = 5.5 %, Muslim = 4.3 %, Kami = 3.9 %, Rai = 2.7 %, Gurung = 2.5 %.

Vital Statistics

- Population : 26,469,569 (July, 2003)
- Age Structure : 0-14 years = 39.7 %
15-64 years = 56.7 %
65 + years = 3.6 %
- Population growth rate = 2.17 % (2006)
- Birth rate : 32.46 births/1,000 population (2003)
- Death rate : 9.84 deaths/1,000 population (2003)

- Sex ratio :
 - at birth : 1.05 male/female
 - under 15 years : 1.07 male/female
 - 15-64 years : 1.05 male/female
 - 65 + years : 0.97 male/female
 - total population : 1.05 male/female (2003)
- Infant mortality rate : 70.57 deaths/1,000 live births .
 - Where,
 - Female = 72.27 deaths/1,000 live births
 - Male = 68.95 deaths/1,000 (2003)
- Life expectancy at birth :
 - Total population = 59 years
 - Male = 59.36 years
 - Female = 58.63 years (2003)
- Total fertility rate : 4.39 children born/woman (2003)
- Nationality :
 - Noun : Nepali (Singular & plural)
 - Adjective : Nepali
- Literacy :
 - Total population = 45.2 %
 - Male : 62.7 %
 - Female : 27.6 % (2003)
 - Where
 - age 6 & over
 - Literacy rate = 53.74 %
 - Male = 68.51 %
 - Female = 42.49 %
- Area : 147, 181 km² (56,827 sq.mi) (Length 800 km, wide 200 km)
- Density = 184/ km² (4771 sq.mi)
- GDP:
 - Total : 48.18 billion \$ (2006)
 - Gini (2003-04) = 47.2 (high)HDI (2007) : 0.534 (medium)

- Currency : Rupee
- Time Zone : NPT (UTC + 5 : 45)

Economy

Nepal's gross domestic product (GDP) for the year 2005 was Just over US \$ 39 billion making it the 83rd largest economy in the world. Agriculture accounts for about 40% of Nepal's GDP, services comprise 41% and industry 22% Agriculture employs 76% of the workforce, services 18% and Industry 6% main agricultural products are: tea, rice, corn wheat sugarcane, and root crops, mild.

The rate of unemployment & underemployment approaches half of the working age population. Thus many Nepali citizens move to abroad in search of work. The country receives foreign aid from India, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States, the European Union, china, Switzerland, and Scandinavian countries. Poverty is actual; per-capita income is less than US\$ 300. The distribution of wealth among the Nepal's is consistent alien that in may developed and developing countries: the lightest 10% of HH control 39.1% of the national wealth and the lowest 10% control only 2.6%.

Section Two

This report traces the ways in which the Government of Nepal has made progress in ensuring literacy for all with particular focus on the analysis of education and literacy status along with objectives, target groups and strategic actions to be prioritized in the future in the light of the over all literacy policy framework as included in various plans and programmes of the country.

1. Policy, legislation and financing:

1.1 Legislative and policy frameworks of ALE

NNEPC proposed that a number of adult education centers be developed in the country. It also planned to introduce an experimental illiteracy eradication campaign in some village. ARNEC of 1962, NESP of 1970, PEP of 1980, BPEP 1&2 of 1990s and EPF of 2000 followed the same tradition. But there were some potential differences between them. Similarly, there were ten different development plans and at present three year interim plan is in operation.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal has included free secondary education in its fundamental rights. The right to primary education in the mother tongue is emphasized in the constitution as well as in the Education for all National Plan of Action Nepal (EFANPA) 2001-2015. In line with the spirit of the constitution as well as the EFANPA on providing primary education in the mother tongue, attempts have begun by the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) to produce curriculum, text books and supplementary readers in the mother tongue. Similarly, the NFEC has started preparing the literacy materials in mother tongues, which are being piloted in selected areas. Some NGOs have also taken initiatives in this regard. Non Formal Education Center (NFEC) is the main in charge for ALE. NFEC is providing the ALE as decentralized concept and implementation through DEOs. UNESCO is providing support to the NFEC in the process of providing literacy through mother tongues.

Vision, goal and objectives: NFEC and other partners in the promotion of literacy including Nepal, while underpinning the contribution of literacy to freedom and equity, commonly accept the following vision, goal and objectives of literacy in developing literate societies and literate environments in which everyone can participate leading to:

Vision:

- Literacy for democratic participation: ‘voice for all.’
- Literacy for fulfilling potential: ‘learning for all.’
- Literacy for expression and sharing of identity and knowledge: ‘creative and reciprocal literacies’.

Goal:

To raise the level of adult literacy, particularly amongst women and people belonging to marginalized groups such as dalits and disadvantaged ethnic groups, through the provision of appropriate learning and life skills programmes for all young people and adults, thus contributing to achieving poverty reduction and equitable socio-economic and human development is the over all goal of literacy in Nepal.

Objectives:

In line with the above, Nepal Three Year Interim Plan (2007-2010) has set the following objectives for the development of literacy for all:

- To achieve 75% adult literacy rate by the year 2015 as reflected in the EFA National Plan of Action.
- To achieve socio-economic and human development through literacy, non-formal and open-learning systems.
- To establish a sustainable, dynamic, national non-formal education system which will create a system of life-long learning that supports national development efforts.
- To promote innovative, indigenous, national literacy/NFE programmes as a means of harnessing community support for the programmes.
- To strengthen national and international partnerships in order to support literacy and non-formal education programmes.

In line with the fundamental principles of the mentioned document, there are sixteen NFE policy which are as follows;

Policy 1: Non-Formal Education will be expanded to provide the academic and practical knowledge, skills and information to different age and levels of learners.

Policy 2: NFE equivalent to FE will be provided to those who are deprived of educational opportunity or who dropped out of education

Policy 3: Special provisions will be made to increase access to education

Policy 4: Development and distribution of curricular and learning materials will gradually be decentralized and localized.

Policy 5: Community Learning Centres (CLCs) will be developed as the centre of educational activities to ensure equitable access to quality non-formal education for all.

Policy 6: The implementation of monitoring, supervision and evaluation of NFE programs will be decentralized.

Policy 7: Networking and coordination and partnership will be maintained with the agencies involved in NFE for resource generation and mobilization

Policy 8: Inclusive education policy will be adopted to ensure access, quality and co-existence

Policy 9: Common database will be developed and shared among the agencies involved in NFE programs.

Policy 10: Training, research, self monitoring and innovation will be included in NFE programs to build the capacity of the human resources involved in the NFE programs.

Policy 11: Government and non-government organizations and private agencies will be mobilized to meet the targets of 'Education for all.'

Policy 12: The financial management of non-formal education will be made compatible with the economic condition and policy of the government.

Policy 13: Local bodies will play the regulatory role for the management of non-formal education. Any of the modalities mainly from the following four will be applied to implement NFE programs:

- (a) Local body modality
- (b) NGO modality
- (c) CLC modality
- (d) Educational institution modality

Policy 14: NFEC will coordinate and collaborate with government, non- governmental, and international organizations to create cooperative environment among the agencies involved in NFE programs.

Policy 15: The literacy campaign will be developed as the main policy strategy for the eradication of illiteracy and local agencies will be made responsible for the program.

Policy 16: The agencies involved in NFE will develop their policies and strategies within the framework of the policies and strategies included in this policy document.

A major shift in the policy of the extension programs occurred after the installation of multiparty democracy in 1990. For example, the FCHV and information education programmes of the Ministry of Health changed the structure of the institution to fit the changed political context. The introduction of Local Self Governance Act of 1999 was another landmark which changed the extension programme implementation and decision making procedures. As a result the district level authorities began partnering with NGOs to implement the ALE activities as and when needed. The practice of developing and producing educational materials at local level can also be attributed to the policy changes in extension programmes. The proliferation of mass media has also changed the policy to some extent. For example; initially the agriculture programme nurtured grand exhibition programmes. The following are additional examples of policy shift over the period.

- From general to group specific demonstration: In the earlier days general exhibitions were organized to let people know about health and agriculture related information.
- From authority to facilitators as the organizer of the exhibition programme: Increased advocacy in the practice of local governance and the empowerment of local people has increased the number of grassroots workers. The sub district level personnel and the local partners began to share the responsibility of organizing the ALE.
- From awareness to ALE linkage: Recently information giving and the process of empowerment through group initiatives have been blended. This change is seen in community forestry groups, small farmers groups, health mobilizers and mothers groups.

Main development challenges of ALE:

- a. **Policy:** Primarily the goal of the extension programmes was to make people aware of their situation; help develop human resources and achieve the program objectives. However, with national and global changes, the goals of ALE have also changed. Inclusion of HIV/AIDS in the health awareness programs, organic farming techniques in the agriculture extension programs, community forestry, utilizing and marketing of no timber products are some of the

examples of such changes. However, study showed that for some people literacy is not the means to an end but an end itself. But others it is a means of getting somewhere. This situation indicates that approaches to ALE should be decided on the basis of learner's need. Moreover, ALE providers should also be ready to use multiple approaches. And, Nepal is standing in change into federal system by near future. Therefore, policy regarding content selection, material distribution, financing and management structure, are need to be revised according to the changing context of the country i.e. federal system.

- b. **Institutional arrangement:** Different institutional and management arrangement are witnessed in ALE that Government has no section or unit to look after ALE at district level. The organogram of MOES does not include NFE at district and sub district. The DEOs are responsible for it. However, they are overloaded from formal schooling programme and give less priority to the ALE. Again, the engaged personnel at NFE program, are from general educational background and thus, lacking NFE professionalism. This situation has deterred NFE from developing itself as a system on the one and strengthens its management structure on the other. As long as this is the case NFE will hardly be legitimized as a potential contributor to the overall development of the nation and there will be less opportunity to develop sound institutional arrangement. This situation demands strong lobbying to include ALE at district and sub district level management structures of MOES. Moreover, ALE providers have been practicing various models; i.e. NGO model, CLC model, M/VDC model, Communal organization model and school model. These models can be implemented in different locations as per the need and interest of the society. Thus, strong coordination between ALE providers should be needed at central as well as district level.
- c. **Material development and use:** The materials used by GOV run ALE programs are focused in ATLP frame work. Keeping in view the changes in social-cultural, political and economic structure and learners interests, the frame work needs to be revised. For example; the materials shows that very few cover indigenous knowledge and wisdom. This situation demands that there be assertive measures for the development of literacy materials on indigenous knowledge and wisdom. Similarly, internal and external migration has tremendously increased for economic reason. Given the heterogeneity of culture, topography and life styles across the country cross-cultural knowledge is also required to make ALE learners know about lives of other people as well as their own. In this context, learners require multiple life skills and knowledge of other communities. Again, the materials are systematized in terms of thematic classification and utilization. But not all learners have access to such materials. This situation demands material/resource center at the center, district and sub district level to make naximum sharing and utilization.
- d. **Documentation and sharing:** Evaluation and research reports of literacy/ NFE programs being produced. But such materials are not available for use by larger audiences. Organizations barely store these reports systematically. This implies that there is a need for responsible agency at district and central level. Similarly, various innovative ideas have been practiced. However, they are rarely documented and shared with literacy providers. This situation demands self reported documentation from all providers. Moreover, good practices have evolved out of the context and the innovative abilities of literacy practitioners. This shows that there is a need for a frame work to document good practice and shared among literacy providers.
- e. **Human resource development and use:** Different approaches have been adapted to capacitate existing ALE human resources. On the job training and sharing is necessary and a

more appropriate method of capacitating local practitioners. The content of facilitators training is also based on the same areas that primers are based on. However, the facilitators are oriented to use learner centered methods, they have the pressure of transmitting the knowledge, information and skill that the curriculum framework demands in a given time period. Thus mismatch between curricular goal and competency of the facilitators needs to be bridged. Moreover, a number of literacy facilitators, supervisors and mobilizers have been trained and reused. But there is no database of trained human resources. At this point different network should prepare database of these practitioners and share this among ALE providers.

- f. **Link with formal education:** Five streams viz; oral literacy, conventional literacy (Reading and Writing), skills training, post literacy and continuing education are being practiced. But they are not implemented consolidated manner. Moreover, they don't have institutionalized linkage with formal education system. This situation demands simultaneous implementation of two approaches: consolidated implementation and institutional linkage with the formal education system through equivalent certification.
- g. **Mainstreaming literacy/NFE:** LSGA has given responsibility to local bodies to plan and organize literacy and ALE activities. But this policy could not be fully implemented. Therefore it is necessary to establish functional linkage between village education plan (VEP), School improvement plan (SIP), and the plans of other ALE providers.
- h. **Approach to language use:** Some of the ethnic groups have already started ALE in their mother tongue other than official language. But they are yet to be reported as literate. Moreover, the graduates of these ALE programmes have not been transferred to the official language Nepali through pedagogical and material support approaches. This situation needs inclusion of multi lingual teaching approaches.
- i. **Network and collaboration:** Territory setting, activity sharing and technical expertise have emerged to reduce overlaps in implementation of ALE.
- j. **Approach to inclusiveness:** Different pedagogical practices were identified in the ALE field. This indicates that single practice cannot be effective to facilitate learning. Similarly, contemporary social issues such as gender, caste, ethnicity, regionalism, language, religion and disability have been included in ALE. However, they are presented in a disintegrated or fragmented manner.
- k. **Financial :** The initial understanding was to cover 40-60 percent from government and non government sector. But the scenario has changed because not many non governmental agencies have ALE as their priority. Literacy is now being implemented only to support and to achieve their agendas. Thus it has been reduced tremendously. Therefore, the contribution of non governmental sector has naturally shrunk. In this situation, funding responsibility has fallen solely on the government shoulder. However, an adequate resource of funding is still lacking. At the same time, a system to ensure transparency, flexibility in fund utilization and resource mobilization through ALE trust at local level are some measures which need to be taken.
- l. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Different approaches have been used in monitoring and evaluation of ALE programme. But most of them are surveillance measures. These measures should be changed into reflective monitoring and evaluation system. Moreover, class repetition has been an often raised problem in ALE which needs an effective tracking system.

1.2 Financing of ALE :

Two types of funds are being used for the extension ALE program. Line Ministries provide regular funds through their functionaries. Similarly, there is also development fund which is granted by donors through a central level programme. The INGOs are also funding the ALE programme. Moreover, local people are contributing as kinds i.e. venue for class, sitting arrangements, supporting materials, motivating peoples to enroll into literacy class etc.

However, the government needs to provide adequate financial resources to the literacy/NFE programme following the principle that literacy is a fundamental part of a total education system and is essential for the fulfillment of both individual and development goals. Mobilization of sufficient funds and resources from national and international partners combined with partial funding by DDCs and VDCs for total literacy in the district, especially in the areas where the illiteracy rate is much higher than the national average should be intensified. Major action areas include an allocation of financial resources based on the plans and programmes developed at village and district levels, a simplified financial disbursement system based on approved programmes and autonomy to local level bodies for financial management. At present about 16 percent of the total annual budget is allocated for education where less than 2 percent budget goes to ALE.

The number of illiterates and out of school children and its projection for a period of ten years and financial resources required to be mobilized are given in annex. These projections and estimates may be further verified and refined to keep in line with ground realities. In total, it is estimated that NRs. 9.6 billion are required to make 7.7 million persons literate.

2. Quality of adult learning and education provision, participation and achievement

Administrative structure: The country is administratively divided into 75 districts with a further subdivision between 3915 village development committees (VDCs) and 58 municipalities. It has five development regions – eastern, central, western, mid western and far western, which is spread along its three geographical zones i.e mountains, hills and Terai. While the mountains zone accounts for 35% of the total land area at an altitude from 4877 to 8848 meters, the hills occupy 42% and the Terai 23% respectively.

Various functional offices under the Ministry of Education and Sports have been instrumental in achieving the educational goals set by the country. These offices are established in order to institutionalize the specialized technical functions of education development as well as to ensure efficiency in educational development in the country. These constituent offices, main functioning as the technical wings of the Ministry are:

- Department of Education (DOE)
- Curriculum Development Centre (CDC)
- National Centre for Educational Development (NCED)
- Non-formal Education Centre (NFEC)
- Office of the Controller of Examinations

There are five Regional Education Directorate Office (RED) and seventy five District Education Office (DEO) followed by Resource Center (RC) and Community Learning Center (CLC) for the implementation of ALE programme.

Institutional frameworks:

Education Regulation has provisioned for the following arrangements:

- Non Formal Education Council headed by the Minister of Education
- NFEC
- District Level Non Formal Education Committee

Village Level Non Formal Education Committee

The NFEC is the main responsible for managing and coordinating ALE at national level. There are several types of ALE providers. The following tables describe in details on it. (Please, see detail budget on annex).

Programme	Provider			Area of learning			Target groups	unit cost	Funding source
	Public / state	NG O	Private	general competencies	Technical skill	Knowledge generation, innovation			
ALP	✓	✓		✓		✓	15-45 / M & F	875/person	GOV, Donor, I/NGO
PLP	✓	✓		✓		✓	„	„	„
WEP I	✓	✓		✓		✓	„ / F	„	„
WEP II	✓	✓		✓		✓	„ / F	„	„
IG	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	„ / F	500/person	„
SOP	✓	✓		✓		✓	6-8 children	42000/class	„
FSP	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	8-14 children	„	„
OL	✓			✓		✓	„	312000	GOV

* ALP= Adult Literacy program

* PLP= Post Literacy Program

* WEP= Women Literacy Program 1st and 2nd

* IG= Income Generating Program

* SOP= School Outreach Program

* FSP= Flexible School Program

* OL= Open Learning

There is a linkage between SOP, FSP and formal school. For example; after graduation from SOP and FSP, the participants are eligible for grade 4 and 6 respectively to enroll into the school.

There are a number of principles of engagement that are vital for the effective implementation of the ALE process within Nepal. They define the strategic approach and set the parameters of how the ALE will operate. At every stage the following principles should guide the implementation of activities:

- All work is undertaken within the existing framework and building on institutions already within communities. The involvement of Community Learning Centres (CLCs) and Village Development Committees (VDCs) within the context of Village Education Plans (VEPs) is vital.

- Initiatives are consistent with and supportive of the “Ten Year Literacy/NFE Policy and Programme Framework” which has recently been approved by the Non-Formal Education Council.
- The expertise and experience of a variety of partners are utilized and built upon, including local communities, local officials, local institutions, research organizations, technical agencies, NGOs and INGOs.
- Implementation is based on the needs of and at the request of each community, i.e. in response to local demand rather than imposed from outside.
- Learning packages will be developed and utilized which are appropriate for adults and the local context, actively involving the participants themselves in the choice of topics and activities.
- From the outset links are made with social and economic development programmes in order to integrate literacy learning with other activities.
- For a comprehensive literacy programme the adult literacy initiatives are coordinated with programmes for out-of-school children and illiterate adolescents as well as support efforts for universal primary education (UPE).
- The ALE is advocate and promotes gender equality and social inclusion in education issues related to social integration and gender empowerment.
- Follow the poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) in planning process.

Areas of learning: There are seven for the learning content of literacy. They are conservation of environment, livelihood, income generating and agriculture, awareness, women and development, culture and tradition, and health and nutrition.

Target groups: Keeping in view the objective to achieve 75% adult literacy by the year 2015, the target groups of people to be benefited from the literacy/NFE programme include:

- Women
- People living in remote areas.
- Those who are very poor.
- People working in factories and industries.
- Low castes and disadvantaged marginalized ethnic groups.
- Religious minorities such as the Muslims
- School drop-outs who have not completed primary education.
- People with disabilities
- Children with the worst form of child labour.
- Children who have been affected by the conflict.

Participation of ALE: There are several institutional are involving in ALE. Government of Nepal, UNESCO, I/NGO, local communities, Local Bodies are mainly found in involvement with ALE. Basically, the entire ALE program is implementation as community based. There is a class management committee at the bottom and a facilitator in the class. The class size is 20 participants. The facilitator will receive two types of training; named pre service and in service training with 7 and 3 days period. There is a local supervisor at the sub district level for 15 classes and he/she will have responsibility to monitor each class per month. Similarly, district education

offices manages all the classes .i.e. selection of site, facilitators, provide training to the facilitators and involvement in monitoring and evaluation. The facilitators will employ as contract on the basis of payment by result and have to serve for programme period i.e. six month and receive 300 rupees/ graduates. School leaving certificate passed local women are eligible for the facilitators job. The methodology of teaching is key word approach.

3. Research, innovation and good practices.

A comprehensive review of the practices of literacy and non formal education in Nepal is one of the key studies in the field of ALE. Various types of research studies are required to support the effective implementation of the literacy/NFE programme. Comprehensive formative research needs to focus on identifying strengths and weaknesses of the programmes so that measures can be taken in time to improve operation. Action research programmes are needed to allow for reflection on and recording of the process of innovative literacy/NFE programmes. Studies designed to identify the appropriateness of learning materials are of particular significance. Major research areas include formative research, action research, and research on materials, tracer study, periodic comprehensive external evaluation and continuous assessment of quality.

Analysis of education and literacy status (Basic education statistics and trends on literacy situation from 1952 to present):

Although Nepal has made substantial progress in education as well as in enhancing the status of literacy, ensuring quality basic education for all and increasing the literacy rate to meet the targets set for 2015 poses a significant challenge. The following table shows that literacy rate has increased gradually over the last 50 years from 1952 to 2001. However, the goal of achieving literacy for all is still very far away.

Literacy trend in Nepal for persons 6 years and above by sex, 1952/54-2001.

Year	Total	Female	Male
1952/54	5.3	0.7	9.5
1961	8.9	1.8	16.3
1971	13.9	3.9	23.6
1981	23.3	12.0	34.0
1991	39.6	25.0	54.5
2001	54.1	42.8	65.5

Source: (MoPE) : Népal Population Report 2004

The Flash Report of School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal 2006 put the NER of primary, lower secondary and secondary education at 87, 52 and 35 respectively. However, the Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS II) 2003-2004 found the NERs 72, 29 and 15 percent for primary, lower secondary and secondary schooling level respectively. Disparities across sex group, urban/rural areas, and consumption quintiles are very noticeable. For instance, at the secondary level of school, male NER is 17 percent and that for females is 13. Urban NER is 34 while rural NER is 12 at the same level. Quintile gaps are most severe as demonstrated by the 51 percent NER

for the poorest quintile in the primary level against 87 percent for the richest quintile- Secondary level NER is only 2 percent for the poorest quintile while it is 35 percent for the richest quintile. In higher secondary education it is 1 percent for the poorest quintile with their no representation in the tertiary education while for the richest quintile it is 13 and 10 percent respectively.

The survey showed that the proportion of the relevant population that “never attended” school was larger than that “ever attended” and “currently attending” categories (44 percent versus 26 percent and 30 percent) with large differences across sex, geographic and consumption group dimensions. For instance, never-attendance rate was 31 percent for male population compared to 56 percent for females, and current-attendance rates were 35 percent and 25 percent for males and females respectively. Urban areas had a much lower never-attendance rate than rural areas. Among rural areas, the East Terai had the highest never-attendance rate. These disparities were again sharpest across consumption quintiles, where never-attendance rate for those from the poorest households was 64 percent while that for those from the richest households was just 26 percent.

In the case of school attendance and mean years of schooling, it was found that only 46 percent of adult population (aged 15 years and above) ever attended school (either in the past or currently). For this group, the mean years of schooling was estimated to be 7.5 years. 61 percent of adult males ever attended school while this figure was only 33 percent for adult females. However, no significant gender gap was observed in mean years of schooling.

Disparities across urban/rural areas were quite severe in both of these variables. Relative to rural areas, urban areas had a much larger school attendance rate (70 percent versus 41 percent) and mean years of schooling (9.2 versus 6.9). However there were minor differences among rural areas. Among development regions, the West had the highest attendance rate while the Central region had the highest mean years of schooling. Among ecological zones, Hills had ranked first in both indicators. There was a distinct pattern across consumption quintiles. Attendance rate was found rising sharply moving from poorer quintiles to richer ones and so did the mean years of schooling. By age-groups, attendance rate was higher among younger cohorts and mean years of schooling was higher for mid-aged ever attendees.

A vast majority of the illiterates in the world live in three regions: South and West Asia, East Asia and the Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa. Compared to the world literacy rate of 82%, South and West Asia with 381 million adult illiterates has the lowest literacy rate (59 %) of any region. Nepal with a literacy rate of 48.6% is an abode of over 7 million illiterate adults contributing to about 1 percent of the world’s illiteracy rate (Education for All: Global Monitoring Report, 2006).

Following is the basic statistical information regarding the status of literacy reported by the national census in 2001 and Nepal living standards survey 2003-2004

Literacy rates 6 years and above, and 15 years and above by sex, 2001

	Male	Female	Total
6 years and above	65.5	42.8	54.1
15 years and above	62.7	34.9	48.6

Literacy rates 6 years and above, and 15 years and above by sex, 2003-2004

	6 years and above			15 years and above		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Nepal	63.5	38.9	50.6	64.5	33.8	48.0
Urban	84.5	64.2	74.4	84.4	61.2	72.8
Rural	59.3	34.3	46.1	59.9	28.5	42.7
Consumption Quintile						
Poorest	36.0	15.8	25.1	36.7	11.6	23.1
Richest	87.1	63.6	75.2	86.8	59.1	72.3
Ecological Zone						
Mountains	55.7	31.8	43.1	57.6	25.5	40.4
Hills	69.7	44.9	56.4	70.2	39.8	53.4
Terai	59.5	34.5	46.6	60.8	29.7	44.3
Development Region						
East	62.1	37.6	49.4	63.7	34.7	48.2
Central	58.4	35.5	46.5	60.5	31.8	45.5
West	75.1	50.7	61.8	73.3	41.7	55.5
Mid West	64.2	35.4	49.1	65.2	28.5	45.2
Far West	63.8	33.4	47.3	65.3	27.4	43.9

Source: Nepal Living Standards Survey II, 2003/04

Quantitative status: Fifty years of literacy programmes have succeeded in raising the literacy rate in the age group 6 years and above to 54.1 percent in 2001 from about 5.3 percent in 1952/54 (Nepal Population Report, 2004).

Male-female gender gap: The male-female differential of 22.7 percent (Male 65.5 and female 42.8) in the literacy level is a matter of serious concern. The existence of this 22.7 male-female differential in spite of the GO and INGO efforts to address female literacy indicates the inadequacy and the lack of targeted and focused interventions on the part of the literacy providers to address the gender gap issue.

Urban-rural gap: The wide urban-rural disparity in literacy rates as revealed by Nepal Living Standards Survey II, 2003/4 warrants the attention of the literacy planners to concentrate on reducing the gap which is 73% for urban while it is only 43% for rural areas.

Regional and eco gap: The far and mid west development regions have the largest illiteracy rates in the country. Mountain and central terai zones have also the largest proportions of illiterates.

Castes and ethnic groups: Wide discrepancies in literacy rates are also evident among different caste and ethnic groups. The lowest literacy rate is found among the Dalits living in the terai, such as the Musahar and the Dom while the highest groups are invariably high castes such as the Hill

and Terai Brahmins and Chhetris. Some of the Hill Janajatis such as the Thakali, Newar and Rai also have high literacy rates. Available statistics shows that the literacy rate of privileged groups such as Jain, Marwadis, Kayasthas, Brahmins, Newar ranges from 60% to 94% whereas the literacy rates of such disadvantaged ethnic groups and castes as Chepang, Chamar and Musahar are as low as 19.1%, 12.7% and 3.7% respectively.

The big gap in the literacy rate among different castes and ethnic groups indicates clearly that the existing literacy programs have fallen short to reach out to the disadvantaged and marginalized population groups. Janajati groups such as the Newar and the Thakali residing in urban areas are economically advanced, and they tend to have substantially higher literacy rates than those poorer groups found primarily in remote and mountainous regions such as the Tamang and Magar or the Tharu, living in the mid and far-western Terai region. Accessibility of these deprived groups to literacy programs either under the government or under I-NGOs' sponsorship needs to be massively increased.

Key recommendations:

- Increase in the allocation of budget on literacy to at least 3% of the total education budget
- Provide literacy through mother tongues (Provide literacy classes in the mother tongue, Prepare literacy materials in mother tongues and Provide training to teachers of literacy who can teach in the mother tongue)
- Strengthen policy coordination through better linkages among all providers of literacy
- Maintain the learner facilitator ratio at 1:10 (The present ratio is 1:20 in Nepal).
- Decentralize literacy programmes to the local body with an accountability framework for achieving literacy for all within three years
- Conduct literacy census to give a better picture of the literacy situation in the country
- Emphasize on building literate environment particularly in the rural community with clear definition and measurable indicators

4. Adult literacy:

Definition of literacy: In earlier censuses of Nepal, Literacy was defined as the ability to read and write. In 1991 census, the definition of literacy was changed and it included the ability to read and write with understanding and to perform simple arithmetic calculations (CBS, 1995). The same definition was followed in the 2001 census.

Plans and programmes: Nepal has developed and implemented the Education for All National Plan of Action (EFANPA) 2001-2015 with a time frame to achieve the adult literacy rate of 75 percent by the year 2015. In the EFANPA, literacy is regarded as a fundamental human right. It lays emphasis on universal literacy as the foundation for democratic process and over all national development. It is an indispensable aspect of basic education. Literacy and human and physical development go side by side. Low literacy is an indication of poverty and poverty is an indication of widespread illiteracy. It is a huge challenge for people working in the field of literacy to break

the vicious cycle of poverty and illiteracy. In this respect, developing appropriate strategies and reliable programmes with adequate resources is most essential to ensure the right and achieve the EFA literacy goal. The role of governmental and non- governmental agencies and the donor community is considered crucial for ensuring literacy for all.

It is worth mentioning here that even the Tenth Plan 2002-2007 (NPC, 2003) which constituted the poverty reeducation strategy paper (PRSP), stressed on pro poor approach for achieving the objectives of universal primary education and reducing illiteracy.

The Education for All Programme 2004- 2009 (MOES 2003) highlights the importance of literacy in poverty reduction as well as achieving the goal of ensuring basic education of good quality for all especially girls, marginalized, disadvantaged and persons with all sorts of disabilities.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 has for the first time included education in the fundamental right by stating that (1) Each community shall have the right to get basic education in their mother tongue as provided for in the law. (2) Every citizen shall have the right to free education from the State up to secondary level as provided for in the law. (3) Each community residing in Nepal shall have the right to preserve and promote its language, script, culture, cultural civility and heritage.

The Three Years' Interim Development Plan of Nepal (2007-2010) aims at achieving an adult literacy rate of 66% by 2010.

- Focused programme targeting to 30 low literacy districts with less than 40% literacy rates out of 75 districts of Nepal
- Women literacy
- Alternative schooling for out-of-school and drop out children
- Skills training to women and persons with disabilities
- CLCs as a powerful means of delivery
- VEP as a powerful tool of planning and monitoring
- Partnership with I/NGOs and civil society
- Literacy network

The interim constitution, the Government of Nepal has prepared a Three Year Interim Development Plan (2007-2010), which lays primary emphasis on literacy with a view to achieving the goals of education for all by 2015. One of the objectives of education in this plan exclusively relates to the attainment of the literacy goal. The plan states that literacy, post literacy, income generating and life related non-formal education will be implemented in collaboration with local Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and Civil Society Organizations. Following are the strategies mentioned in the plan to achieve the goal of ALE:

- Local bodies shall be empowered to partnering in resource mobilization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of non-formal education.
- Equivalence of non-formal education with formal education shall be established facilitating to mainstreaming non-formal schooling to formal stream.

- Implementation of non-formal education shall focus on the pockets of marginalized and vulnerable Janajati (ethnic groups) communities.
- Mechanism shall be devised to transiting from non-formal to formal and vice versa based on assessed competency and capacity.

It is evident that all these plans and programmes are geared towards achieving a 50 % reduction in the present status of illiteracy in the country for raising the status of adult literacy at 75 % by 2015.

The women literacy 1st and 2nd , and IG are directly focusing to the women only.

Primary/Basic Education and Literacy/NFE: As primary education contributes significantly to raising the national literacy level, the priority of education programmes in Nepal is formal primary schooling with special focus on universal completion of primary education of reasonable quality by all school age children and at the same time multiplying the current level of literacy and non-formal education programs for out-of-school children as well as illiterate adults and youth.

Recently, the Ministry of Education and Sports has been involved in the preparation of the School Sector Reform (SSR) Programme for implementation from 2010 at the accomplishment of the current EFA Program 2004-2009. The SSR has proposed for the restructuring of school education for eight years of basic education by combining the present primary and lower secondary education from grades 1-8 and four years of secondary education by associating the current secondary and higher secondary education from grades 9-12. The programme includes a comprehensive set of policies for providing quality education through both formal and non formal means of education. Basic education is envisaged to be free as well as compulsory. Decentralization of education and inclusion are the primary strategies with focus on the autonomy of the school to serve as the catalyst of change and transformation for achieving the goals of education and literacy for all. In this context, it is a great challenge to manage and allocate adequate resources as well as fund for the mentioned programme.

Enhancing quality of education: As stated above, quality of education and literacy programmes are emphasized in the Three Year Interim Plan. Training of school teachers and literacy facilitators will be the main vehicle of providing quality education to all. Present provisions of training for school teachers and literacy facilitators will be continued. Quality of education will be defined for all levels and norms and standards aligned with objective indicators set with broader consensus for measuring quality of education and levels of equivalence. However, institutionalization of ALE is still challenge. Diverse in culture, age groups, language and economic status seems as barriers to achieve the quality. Moreover, the provision of short term training for facilitators, professional support to facilitators and learning materials are crucial to maintain quality. Similarly, having general education background personnel are providing training for trainers and facilitators. Quality and standards are not yet defined.

Use of ICT in education and literacy: Policies to introducing computer literacy in each level of school education shall be initiated and Information and Community Technology included in school curriculum. Use of Information and Communication Technology shall be encouraged in teacher training programs. Employees working under the Ministry of Education and Sports system shall be supported with relevant packages of capacity building. There is lacking adequate fund on it. The ICT is very appropriate tools to fight against illiteracy at northern part of Nepal. Because the distribution of literacy materials in these area seems to be difficult due to lack of transport facility and programme cost is comparatively higher.

Monitoring and evaluating of the programmes and assessing learning outcomes: In order to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes of ALE activities, a set of verifiable indicators has been identified and systematic monitoring and evaluation processes are developed at all levels,

supported by research findings and databases, under the guidance of the international literacy expert.

- Efforts to improving efficacy of monitoring, evaluation and supervision system are also emphasized.
- NFEC needs authority to prepare guidelines, rules and regulations based on the principles of decentralized management. NFEC is concentrating mainly on developmental activities. Actual authority and responsibility to operate literacy/NFE programs should be devolved to district level agencies. The District Education Office should act as the focal office to implement the literacy/NFE programmes. The District Non-formal Education Committee with representation of the district level offices of INGOs/NGOs should be made more representative. Major action areas include management of programmes by DDC/DEO through the local NGO's/CBO and VDC's in line with LSGA, and participatory monitoring. Institutions like CLCs, Resource Centers and Schools should be authorized to implement, monitor and supervise the literacy/NFE programmes. Efforts to create special literacy/NFE support groups to generate social and community involvement are crucial.

Overall assessment of ALE process and future directions in Nepal: UIL has provided support to UNESCO Kathmandu Office for conducting a Situational Analysis of ALE. This decision was made in the face of the fact that Nepal has strong commitment to promote literacy and that Nepal requires increased technical assistance being in a post conflict situation. The Situation Analysis will feed into the planning of a larger strategy in support of literacy.

A 10-year literacy policy and programme framework was developed and approved by the Non-Formal Education Council. Now it has to be operationalized into a concrete strategy informed by further research on realities on the ground. The framework has emphasized on the following strategic actions to be prioritized in the future.

Major strategic actions include focusing on poverty reduction by linking the local development components of health, hygiene, family planning, agriculture and forestry, land use and income generating activities, etc. The Ministry of Education serves as the focal point with the key development ministries as equal partners who will have full ownership of the national literacy/NFE programmes. This must then be followed by appropriate structural and administrative arrangements all the way down to the local (district, municipality and village) level.

Extending and access to raise the literacy rate: Raising the adult literacy rate to 75% means one has to face the challenges presented by different locations. A large number of illiterate people live in remote regions of the country. The inability of the primary education system to enroll 100 percent of primary school age children increases the number of illiterate adults. Major action areas are launching of literacy campaign in selected high illiteracy districts as a priority, planning based on the VDC literacy profile with special focus on girls/women, dalits, poor people, marginalized groups and people with disabilities and linking alternative schooling programmes with formal education scheme by operating an open school system.

Mainstreaming out-of-school children's education programmes: Even if universal enrollment in primary school is achieved by 2015, a large number of children will not complete primary education adding to the number of illiterate adults. Hence, the MOES needs to tackle the problem of out-of-school children if it is to raise the literacy rate. A comprehensive open school programme is required. Major action areas require providing financial support to operate special support classes for primary-school dropouts and children not enrolled at the right age to complete grade 5. This relates to establishing an open school system as a means of linking non-formal education with the formal school system. Support should also be provided for the development of abridged courses to enable children to complete lower secondary and secondary level and take the external examinations at grade VIII and grade X.

School based "Accelerated" literacy programme (complete 5 year primary education within one year) for the young people of age 10-15 group needs to be considered for adaptation to substitute the existing OSP.

Institutional infrastructure: A technical committee needs to be formed at central level with representation from I/NGOs, research institutions and social service organizations to garner support and to develop an integrated and comprehensive literacy NFE programmes. Major action areas include the creation of an NFE national network and establishment of an NFE committee in the National Planning Commission mainly to plan and to pool financial resources of line ministries that are involved in literacy/NFE programmes. Constitution of an existing NFE Council including district and VDC level committees needs to be revisited with broader representation from women and disadvantaged communities.

Linkages between literacy/NFE and grassroots based development programs: Literacy/NFE programs should be promoted and implemented in close linkage with community based and targeted development programmes on health, family planning, agriculture, forestry and other local development programmes.

Development and distribution of literacy/ALE materials: Additional support for the publication of reading materials specially designed for women, dalits, disadvantaged, disabled and marginalized ethnic groups is required. Local communities should be encouraged to develop materials in the local language which reflect local needs and context. NFEC needs to develop abridged text materials to support those students who join the open school system in order to complete school education. Major action areas include NFEC to concentrate on the production of learning materials to be used in the programmes for women, dalits, disadvantaged, disabled and marginalized ethnic groups, etc. and control the quality and standard of materials produced by other agencies. A documentation centre should be established for the collection of all types of ALE materials produced by other agencies. A separate curriculum committee, supported by

subject committees, on various subjects will facilitate the process to develop materials including materials in other national languages.

Community Learning Centers: Community Learning Centers can play a critical role in literacy/ALE programme implementation. The level and type of programmes in the CLC should be decided on the basis of the needs of the community it serves. Major action areas include developing CLC as the venue for conducting various educational and social activities ranging from simple literacy classes to skills training, community social gathering, etc. CLC is instrumental to promote lifelong learning for people at community level. Community support in terms of financing and management is a basic requirement for the operation of CLCs. Its ownership and management will lie with the community.

A policy of providing an annual lump-sum financial grant to CLCs for the operation of literacy and ALE should be encouraged and intensified. Depending on the location, support should be provided to equip CLCs with some appropriate equipment, materials and human resources.

Use of ICT and other media: In addition to written words, information communication technology (ICT) and media are being effectively used in literacy programmes. Certain programmes in Nepal have been very successful in using FM Radio and local TV channels. The potential for using ICT is likely to develop considerably over the next ten years. There is an enormous need for expansion and effective implementation of literacy programme through the use of ICT. The Open and Distance Learning System can be used at optimum level for quality and coverage. Major action areas include use of electronic media such as FM and TV, skills training, income generating activities and distance education and open learning (DEOL) and for the promotion of literacy and benefit of neo-literates.

Adult educators / facilitator status and training

A policy to continually assess the existing status of human resources both at leadership and facilitators' level is required. Programmes should be implemented to improve literacy/NFE human resources at all levels. Major action areas include developing a system to maintain a list of high level and middle level human resources in the NFEC, capacity building of literacy workers and facilitators and establishment of an institution to meet the demands of more competent NFE trainers and facilitators to execute literacy/NFE programmes. A fully equipped training section with adequate competent trainers can be established in the NFEC as an alternative to the training institution to fulfill the immediate needs.

5. Expectations of CONFINTEA :

- It will help to raising fund for ALE.
- Shares experiences and ideas among participants.
- Provides technical support for ALE.

- Build up the ALE provider's capacity.
- Developed professionalism.

Conclusion: This report underpins decentralized planning and governance in the formulation and implementation of the policy and programme, establishment and use of information, accountability framework, partnership and networking', etc. as extremely useful for the country to meet the EFA goals, in particular, the Goal 4 "a 50% increase of adult literacy with special reference to women and ethnic and religious minorities". This will contribute to the preparation for Nepal's participation in UNESCO's global programme on 'Literacy Initiative for Empowerment' (LIFE) within the framework of UNLD 2003-2012. The Government of Nepal has agreed to work closely with UNESCO and all other EFA partners so that the country can go ahead with clear objectives, strategies and programmes in order to achieve the national goals of EFA by 2015. Literacy efforts have so far not reached the poorest and most marginalized groups of people in Nepal – LIFE along with all literacy programmes should particularly address such populations under the banner of Literacy for all: voice for all, learning for all.

Annexes:

Map of Nepal



Indicator: Adult Literacy Rate (15 Years Old and Above)

Disparity: Caste / Ethnicity

Year: 2001

	Literate 15+ yr Olds (of respective group)			Total 15+ yr Old Population (of respective group)			% Literate 15+ Yr Olds			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
NATIONAL	4,261,575	2,440,060	6,701,635	6,796,770	6,991,577	13,788,347	63%	35%	49%	0.56
Dalit	304,601	135,146	439,747	801,793	855,776	1,657,569	38%	16%	27%	0.42
Janajati	1,518,471	876,904	2,395,374	2,511,599	2,631,229	5,142,828	60%	33%	47%	0.55
Others	2,438,503	1,428,010	3,866,513	3,483,378	3,504,572	6,987,950	70%	41%	55%	0.58

Source: Population Census 2001, CBS; Women in Nepal: Some Statistical Facts, 2004, CBS.

Indicator: Youth Literacy Rate (age 15-24 years old)

Disparity:

Caste / Ethnicity

Year:

2001

	Literate 15-24 yr olds (of respective group)			Total 15-24 Yr Old Population (of respective group)			% Literate 15-24 Yr Olds			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
NATIONAL	1,718,850	1,366,194	3,085,044	2,132,568	2,273,202	4,405,770	81%	60%	70%	0.75
Dalit	184,080	118,728	302,808	273,873	277,606	551,479	67%	43%	55%	0.64
Janajati	818,175	664,578	1,482,752	991,263	1,066,112	2,057,375	83%	62%	72%	0.76
Others	716,595	582,889	1,299,484	867,432	929,484	1,796,916	83%	63%	72%	0.76

Source: Population Census 2001, CBS; Women in Nepal: Some Statistical Facts, 2004, CBS.

Review of EFA Goal: 'Achieving a 50% improvement in the level of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adult' as the EFA goal is a hard not to crack for a country like Nepal.

The government has been implementing women's literacy programs with specific objective of increasing their literacy rates and the quality of their life. Different kinds of readers, primers and continuing education materials have been developed and tested over the years. Currently the effort has been to connect the literacy completers to income generation activities.

F. Total illiterate people with age group - Status of age group illiteracy rates

Age-group	Male	Female	Total	Total in %
6-10	635070	740355	1375425	20.9
11-14	161216	278915	440131	6.7
15-25	509420	1131314	1640734	24.9
26-45	1066120	2070413	3136533	47.6
Total	2371826	4220997	6592823	100

Source: HMGN, NFEC, 2002

.UNIT Costs

Education for All Programme 2004-2009 has emphasized on reducing the illiteracy rates especially for women and disadvantaged groups. The unit cost for making a person literate is also calculated, which is NRs. 875. The unit cost for providing skills training to a woman is NRs. 5,000.

An analysis of the trends on financing in terms of the actual expenditures of literacy programmes gives the following picture. The expenditure of literacy is about 1%, which is

one of the lowest and less than the accepted global standard of 3%. Moreover, the allocations below from 2000 - 2005 do not suggest moving towards improvement.

Actual Expenditures of Education from 2001/02-2005/06

Fiscal Year - Description	2000-01 Actual expenditure	2001-02 Actual expenditure	2002-03 Actual expenditure	2003-04 Actual expenditure	2004-05 Actual expenditure	2005-06 Actual expenditure
GDP at basic prices (NRs in 000)	413429000	430397000	460325000	500699000	548485000	603673000
GDP per capita USD	259	255	261	293	328	350
Total national expenditure (NRs in 000)	79835098	80072291	84006081	89442593	102560471	110,889,158
Total education expenditure (NRs in 000)	11134195	13136946	13286606	14477740	17269888	19420639
% GDP	2.69	3.05	2.89	2.89	3.15	3.22
% Ed expenditure	13.95	16.41	15.82	16.19	16.84	17.51
Pre-primary (NRs in 000)	0	0	6849	0	1165	157317
% Ed expenditure						0.81
Primary (NRs in 000)	6572139	6988989	7788332	8437292	10207602	11064498
% GDP	1.59	1.62	1.69	1.69	1.86	1.83
% Ed expenditure	59.03	53.20	58.62	58.28	59.11	56.97
Non-formal education and literacy (NRs in 000)	121728	103245	45826	70088	86349	219614
% Ed expenditure	1.09	0.79	0.34	0.48	0.50	1.13

Source: MOF, Red Book of the concerned year

