



NFE Initiatives in Kenya – Challenges and Achievements

EDITORIAL

Welcome to this special edition of the ADEA Working Group on Non-Formal Education *Newsletter*.

The *Newsletter* presents an overview of non-formal education initiatives in Kenya to help policy-makers, administrators and educators. It reflects the diversity of the actors involved in NFE programmes government and of the target groups that NFE can serve.

It discusses the organisation of NFE, its relationship to the formal education system and how women can be empowered through functional literacy. These are only a few of the challenges.

In 2003, the Kenyan Government implemented a policy of free primary education as a step towards universal primary education. An unexpected 1.5 million new pupils enrolled. The initiative did away with financial barriers, but schools now have crowded classrooms, a shortage of trained teachers and inadequate teaching materials. So the option is to reach out to children both through the formal system and, where necessary, through complementary and flexible approaches that address their multiple needs.

Non-formal and complementary education (NFE/CE) is not new in Kenya but, as in many countries, it is marginalised and under-resourced.

To reinforce the new drive, national policy guidelines for NFE/CE have been redesigned. The Education Ministry has conducted a school census and an NFE desk has been established in the Ministry. Other initiatives include programmes for children from pastoralist communities and literacy projects in rural areas.

In April 2000, the ADEA WGNFE supported a Symposium on Non-Formal Education and Quality Basic Education for All in Mombasa, together with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST), the Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development, UNICEF, GTZ and ADEA. Since then, the ADEA WGNFE has remained a staunch advocate for NFE in Kenya and has called for recognition of its role in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All. Among other initiatives, the WGNFE is supporting a national NFE mapping exercise.

Contributors to this edition include Hon. Kilemi Mwiria, Kenya's Assistant Minister of Education and member of the WGNFE Steering Committee; Joyce Kebathi, Director, Department of Adult Education; and Wambui Gathenya, C/NFE National Coordinator at MOEST.

Please contact us if you have any comments or suggestion. We hope that you enjoy reading this issue.

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SPECIAL ISSUE

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How Support for Non-Formal Education can help Achieve Free Primary Education for All

Hon. Kilemi Mwiria, Assistant Minister of Education

The Free Primary Education (FPE) scheme announced by the Kenyan government in 2003 meant that primary school enrolment jumped from 5.9 million to approximately 7.2 million – a gross enrolment ratio of 104 per cent. Before the introduction of FPE, high tuition fees and other costs meant that 1.2 million children were locked out of the formal school system. In spite of the increase, 2 million children are still excluded. So achieving universal primary education by the target year of 2005 is quite a challenge. This is mainly because almost 60 per cent of Kenya's population live below the poverty line.

The unprecedented growth of non-formal schools in urban slums and in Kenya's arid and semi-arid areas is the result both of the inadequacy of the number of primary school places in the formal system and of poverty. Non-formal schools provide flexible education for many of the children who live in slums, most of whom are poor, orphans or street children, and for those in the arid and semi-arid areas.

Because non-formal schools have not yet been incorporated into the development plans of the Ministry of Education, they are excluded from the privileges enjoyed by formal schools. For example, they

do not benefit from the Ministry's inspection and supervision services, curriculum development or teacher education. They are not considered as examination centres by the Kenya National Examinations Council and therefore have to register their pupils for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) as private candidates. Children from non-formal schools who do well in the KCPE exam are

... most children who live in difficult circumstances remain virtually excluded from access to opportunities that are assumed to be the right of all children.

not automatically considered for selection to public secondary schools. So most children who live in difficult circumstances remain virtually excluded from access to opportunities that are assumed to be the right of all children.

Although the Ministry of Education has established a department to coordinate non-formal education and now has a draft NFE policy,

much more still needs to be done, especially in opening more non-formal schools.

There is also a need to coordinate non-formal learning institutions across the various ministries. The Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services registers most of them as self-help groups, but the office of the Vice-President and the Ministry of Home Affairs registers them as NGOs. Others are registered under the Attorney General's office as private enterprises, while some are managed by NGOs.

As well as better coordination, a data bank of all existing NFE institutions should be established to facilitate planning and policy implementation. Coordination of NFE initiatives would be more feasible if a national commission for NFE was set up by parliament, under the Ministry of Education, which could lead the way on planning and monitor the quality of NFE programmes.

Thirdly, there is a need for a curriculum that responds to local needs. This should be taught in the local language in the initial years and should use materials that take into account the special needs of learners. Like formal schools, non-formal institutions should be closely monitored for quality assurance. There should also be a national qualification framework that would enable the re-entry of NFE learners into the formal school system.

Finally, there is an urgent need for partnerships among local and international organisations to mobilise resources for NFE. All ministries running non-formal education programmes should receive government funding for NFE initiatives, if only to help them obtain outside support.

Review of Draft Policy Guidelines on Complementary/Non-Formal Education

Dr T. Wambui Gathenya, C/NFE National Coordinator, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

This report highlights the establishment of a Complementary/Non-formal Education (C/NFE) database¹ and the development of national C/NFE policy guidelines by Kenya's Ministry of Education.² The guidelines draw on key policy documents, with important input from both government and non-government providers,³ as well as recent research by the writer (Gathenya, 2003). As this is the first issue of this *Newsletter*, it is useful to first provide a working definition of 'complementary/non-formal education'.



Definitions⁴

In practice, diverse programme realities place C/NFE anywhere on a continuum from informal through non-formal to formal education. In some cases C/NFE appears to

operate almost parallel to the formal education system, while in others it is hard to see any difference.

James Lynch (Lynch et al., 1997: xi) explains that in many instances:

there is no clear-cut definition of non-formal education, and indeed some educational activities may encompass both formal and non-formal modes of delivery. It is very diverse in its substantive and pedagogical dimensions and its organizational arrangements and locations. Indeed, it is this very diversity which means that it is sometimes overlooked, underestimated and under funded. The

term 'non-formal education' is sometimes used as a synonym for non-state or non-institutionalised provision of basic education or training for adults or over-age youth.

Some of the other theoretical literature discusses NFE in relation

to adults rather than to the school-age learners who currently attend such programmes. Basing his research on Kenya, Bagayoko (1999) explains that classifications of educational service delivery into formal, non-formal and informal education were based on the perceived 'failure of formal schooling in terms of both internal and external efficiency', explained by ever-rising costs and lack of relevance.

Kenya's 1998 NFE draft policy guidelines defined education as:

Any organised systematic learning activity outside the formal school system. It provides selected types of learning to particular sub-groups in the population, including adults and children. Examples of such learning activity include agriculture and farmer training programmes, adult literacy, occupational skills training for youth outside the formal system, family planning and cooperatives (and any other learning activity deemed necessary according to the demands of the environment in which a particular population lives).

This definition deviates somewhat from the objectives which govern the provision of basic education for children aged 6–13 years.

Kenya's Children's Act (2001)⁵ stipulates that:

- Every child shall be entitled to education, the provision of which shall be the responsibility of the

- Government and parents; and
- Every child shall be entitled to free basic education which shall be compulsory in accordance with Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Within this basic human rights approach, and building on current attempts to achieve education for all, which include the provision of free primary education, the current guidelines define C/NFE as a:

*... flexible complementary delivery channel of quality basic education to children in especially difficult circumstances, in particular those in need of special care and protection who live or work in circumstances which make it impossible for them to access education through existing conventional formal school arrangements in terms of time, space, and entry requirements.*⁶

This definition is subject to change, as the policy guidelines review process has not been finalised. However, at least for the time being, this is the conceptual framework within which C/NFE for school-age children and youth is operating.

Rationalising C/NFE

By the early 1990s it was clear that far too many children of primary school age (6–13 years) were not attending school. This was the result of poverty as much as of population growth. The situation required innovative integrated programming of the sort that the C/NFE flexible learner-friendly model could provide. In rationalising its approach, the Ministry of Education indicated that it was not possible to realise the goal of basic education for all through the formal education system alone.

So C/NFE has been adopted as a complement to formal schooling, targeting learners such as:

- Children and youth living and working on the streets or in informal settlements
- Children and youth living and working in pastoral and other migratory communities
- Young parents or guardians
- Child labourers
- Refugee children and youth
- Orphans (including those orphaned by HIV/AIDS)
- Other children and youth in especially difficult circumstances (including the abused and young offenders)

Surveys and Policy Developments, post-1994

Previous studies indicated that Kenya's Ministry of Education lacked adequate fiscal and structural capacity to reach out to out-of-school children living and working on the streets or in informal settlements. The Ministry therefore works closely with key partners, including:

- Other government ministries and departments
- Community and faith-based organisations
- Private and other C/NFE providers and stakeholders
- International and local NGOs
- International and local donor and funding agencies

In the 1990s there was a big rise in the number of out-of-school children and youth. At primary school level the gross enrolment rate (GER), which had reached a

high of 95% in 1989 (albeit with wide differences in terms of region, gender and ability), had fallen to less than 80% by the mid-1990s. The surveys and other data that informed such findings were formal and school-based and there was little evidence for the number of out-of-school children and youth or those enrolled in C/NFE schemes. So it was difficult to assess the needs of this increasing group of children. The following is a summary of some of the attempts made since 1994 to include research into the needs of these children in the Ministry of Education's mainstream policy planning.

1 Needs Assessment Survey for Out-of-School Children, 1994

In 1994, in an attempt to reach out to these children and young people and to ensure the provision of quality education in C/NFE centres, the Government established a project within its Programme of Cooperation within UNICEF. The Programme initially ran from 1994 to 1998 and was renewed for a further four years in 1999. The Ministry of Education and the Department of Adult Education coordinated a Needs Assessment Survey targeting the learning needs of 6–17 year olds who were not in formal school. Its findings indicated that there was an urgent need to develop a clear national policy on non-formal education. In the same year, the government established a desk within the Education Ministry to coordinate C/NFE activities and to spearhead policy development.

2 Draft Policy Guidelines Developed in 1998 and under Review in 2003–2004

The 1998 NFE Policy Guidelines provided the base for a coordinated government outreach to children

and young people who remained outside the formal school system. This brought together key players, with the Ministry of Education and Department of Adult Education playing a coordinating role. As well as providing guidelines on management, resource mobilisation and quality assurance, the guidelines articulated goals and provided a policy rationale for NFE. These guidelines are currently under review by representatives of government and non-government providers and stakeholders.⁷

The goal of the C/NFE approach remains:

To provide quality education and related basic services to all school-age children and youth who, for any unavoidable circumstances, are unable to attend conventional formal school programmes.

The objectives are:

- To develop literacy, numeracy, creativity and communication skills
- To encourage pupils to enjoy learning
- To develop an ability for critical thinking and logical judgment
- To encourage respect for the dignity of work
- To develop desirable social standards, and moral, ethical and religious values
- To help students develop into self-disciplined, physically fit and healthy people
- To give students the capacity to appreciate their own and other people's cultures
- To develop awareness and appreciation of the environment
- To develop awareness and

appreciation of other nations and the international community

- To develop respect and love for their own country and the need for harmonious co-existence
- To develop individual talents for the benefit of oneself and others
- To promote social responsibility and help students make proper use of leisure time
- To develop an appreciation of the role of technology in national development

3 Ongoing National Survey and Data Analysis

Information gathered in the process of implementing and monitoring FPE interventions indicates that about 600,000 school-age children and youth may still be out of school and that about 300,000 may attend C/NFE programmes. The government's aim is to extend free primary education to such children in line with its commitment to provide quality universal primary education by 2008 and education for all by 2015.

In an effort to establish a reliable C/NFE database for improved planning and policy implementation through targeted interventions, the Ministry's 2003 national survey on education and training institutions included, for the first time ever, C/NFE programmes.

The data were collected between November 2003 and January 2004 and analysis was expected to be complete by the end of March 2004. In the absence of an existing comprehensive official database, analysis of C/NFE data was given priority, and personnel and computer facilities from the Kenya Institute of Education and the Teachers Service Commission was

used to speed up the process. In the meantime, the Ministry, working with the Department of Adult Education, the City Education Office and Elimu Kwa Vijiji Coalition, facilitated a rapid data verification exercise with crucial input from C/NFE managers and providers. The Nairobi participatory pilot will be replicated, with local adaptations, in other parts of the country.

The 2003–2004 National C/NFE Survey's expected outputs include:

- A national directory of C/NFE centres and programmes
- Classification of C/NFE programmes by type of provider, e.g. community/faith-based organisations, private, public or mixed
- Description of teaching and learning approaches (e.g. formal or complementary/non-formal, mobile, boarding, Lchekuti, shift system, multi-grade)
- Break down of enrolment by gender, zone, division and district, age group, class/level, and number of orphans
- Number of teachers/instructors by gender, education/training level and employer
- Education programmes and other services provided (e.g. pre-primary, primary, secondary, technical, 8-4-4, 7-4-2-3, NFE, specific skills training, feeding and health)
- Availability of physical facilities and instructional materials (including water and sanitation) and status (for example sustainability, need for renovation, day, boarding)
- Management, sponsorship, stakeholders and their

representation and participation levels and roles (e.g. boards of governors or directors, parents associations, school/centre management committees, NGOs and other stakeholders)

- Location of the centres, nature and ownership of learning space (for example own land, lease, or rented premises)
- Teacher/pupil contact hours
- Financial/accounting procedures
- Accountability mechanisms

Conclusion

Key partners and stakeholders have been active in attempts to harmonise and mainstream C/NFE, and develop a coordinated system. It is not possible here to capture all the exciting developments that are currently underway. They include innovative holistic and integrated service-provision models by caring individuals and groups, on the one hand, and the mushrooming of small unviable centres, or in the worst scenario, so-called 'briefcase programmes' by unscrupulous 'economic predators', on the other. However, the majority of providers are working tirelessly to complement government efforts to reach previously unreached children and young people with caring and protective approaches.

C/NFE is only one of the ways that these aims can be achieved. It is hoped that the survey and the policy guidelines will provide the necessary support for reaching out to all out-of-school children and young people through formal, C/NFE and other strategies, and striving to achieve education for all, preferably before 2015.

In this context, one could think, for

example, of open and distance learning, virtual learning and home-based schooling as complementary education delivery approaches that have not been fully explored or utilised. It is also clear that in terms of pupil-centred flexibility, the formal school can learn from the C/NFE approach. Without ignoring the quality and nature of the different programmes, this is

The ideals are enshrined in the Children's Act 2001:

... every child shall be entitled to free basic education, which shall be compulsory ...

especially true of faith-based C/NFE programmes that sometimes record GERs of 100% and over in areas where formal education attracts 30% or less of the eligible age group.

The way forward requires pro-active strategies and early interventions to achieve improved access to quality education for all.

Notes

- 1 See, for example, Republic of Kenya/MoE, 1994.
- 2 Republic of Kenya/MoE, 1998a; 2003/20204; ongoing.
- 3 Two such inputs are included as NFE case studies in this *Newsletter*.
- 4 Non-formal education is not meant to be a system that runs parallel to the formal education system. It should rather be seen as a complementary delivery approach that includes formal education to help achieve the goals of Education for All.
- 5 Government of Kenya, Children's Act (2001), Cap 536, Section 7,

- subsections 1 and 2.
- 6 Republic of Kenya/MoEST, 2003/2004, draft: 3.
- 7 Readers are welcome to send their views to the MoEST on the way forward for C/NFE and other potential complementary strategies towards the goals of UPE and EFA.

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The mission of Kenya's Department of Adult Education is to eradicate illiteracy and promote life-long learning among out-of-school youth and adults so that they can make informed decisions, become self-reliant and improve their livelihoods.

Educating young people and adults is a major government concern because:

- They are agents of development: the fight against poverty and for economic recovery will be held back so long as they have a low level of knowledge and skills.
- Parents are the key to the education of children. Literate parents ensure that the home environment is conducive to education; they can become formidable partners with teachers at school.
- 15–30 year olds are a key age group in the development process. But they also fall victim to crime, street begging and drugs. Because they lack skills, assets and access to credit facilities, many of them are unemployed. Education is crucial in their rehabilitation. Young people are flexible and open-minded. If their education is properly handled it will be quicker and cheaper than primary schooling.

There are currently more than 4.2 million illiterate Kenyans aged 15 years and over. To reach this group, the Department has organised the following NFE programmes.

Basic Literacy Programme

The basic literacy programme (BLP) was launched in 1979 through a mass literacy campaign. By the end of the campaign period in 1983

Promoting NFE for Youth and Adults

Joyce Kebathi, Director, Department of Adult Education, Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services

over three million young people and adults had enrolled in literacy classes. Efforts made by the Department and its partners have helped to raise literacy levels from 60 per cent in 1989 to 74 per cent in 2002. In addition to improved literacy levels, the basic literacy programme has promoted literacy in pupils' mother tongues, which is crucial to developing local languages.



The Department uses the functional approach to literacy, which integrates other development programmes like health, agriculture and environmental knowledge with the acquisition of core reading, writing and numeracy skills. It is also making a big effort to target specific groups of learners categorised according to age, gender or occupation. Because 60 per cent of illiterate Kenyans are women, particular emphasis is placed on reaching women in rural areas and urban slums.

Post-literacy Programme

The main objective of the post-literacy programme (PLP) is to enable newly literate young people and adults to use their literacy skills. The project is designed on the basis of a number of strategic interventions, including the establishment of functional and operational links with the BLP. This strategy is based on the assumption that the post-literacy programme would be unsustainable without an effective basic programme.

The two methodological approaches which constitute the theoretical framework of the PLP, the curriculum course-bound approach and the open curriculum approach, take into account the functional needs of the target groups, for example newly literate adults and out-of-school young people.

Functional Needs of Newly Literate Adults

The learning needs of newly literate adults include knowledge and skills development and internalisation of positive values. The circumstances in which the learners are living to a large extent determine how these needs can be addressed. Social, economic and cultural contexts are important factors in the design and implementation of adult education programmes.

In the case of the PLP, beneficiaries expressed a number of functional needs during a baseline study at the start of the programme. These included:

- Development of paid employment or opportunities for self-employment;
- Relevant reading materials to support people in their development efforts in agriculture, health, trade, environment and other fields.

These needs were initially addressed in two ways – by producing relevant reading materials and by training adult education teachers through the participatory integrated development (PID) process.

The programme has already had a number of successes:

- Capacity development of over 2,000 adult education teachers through the PID approach. This seeks to build teachers' capacity for community development work;
- The design, development and production of a competency-based curriculum in eight learning areas;
- Production of post-literacy materials by adopting and adapting indigenous knowledge;
- Development of the concept of community learning resource centres (CLRCs) and support for their establishment and use;
- Linking literacy and livelihood through 'learning and earning' activities;
- Tapping into indigenous knowledge through learner-generated materials (LGMs).

Cooperation with Other NFE Providers

There are many players in the NFE field who work closely with the Department of Adult Education. They differ in size and influence, but they all play an important part in ensuring access to education.

The Department's goal is to work closely with other organisations in to reduce wastage through duplication and competition for the limited human and financial resources available to NFE.

These key players include:

- Bible Translation and Literacy, which promotes literacy among nine small language groups;
- the Kenya Adult Education Association, an umbrella group with community-based programmes in four districts;
- Elimu Yetu Coalition;
- Kenya Adult Learners Association;
- the Christian Children Fund, which promotes life skills among destitute children;
- the Bible Society of Kenya;
- CARE Kenya, which supports CBOs involved in adult and community education;
- ActionAid, which promotes literacy through the REFLECT approach; and
- the Forum for African Women's Education, Kenya (FAWE), which promotes education among girls and young women.

There are also community-based groups all over the country which are involved in specific NFE programmes such as those related to HIV/AIDS, health and nutrition, gender, environment and poverty

reduction. NFE also receives support from international partners, particularly UNICEF, UNESCO, Oxfam (UK) and German Technical Cooperation (GTZ). Many of these have praised the Department for its out-going approach in offering sound leadership in NFE. One of the department's strengths is its ability to collaborate with other agencies. It has worked with all the agencies mentioned above through joint planning and the exchange of materials and ideas.

The Department's collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) has special significance because MOEST holds the main mandate for education. The cooperation of the Kenya Institute of Education and the National Examination Council are also crucial.

Strengthening NFE Programmes

To improve the Department's programme, plans are underway to:

- Enhance advocacy and mobilise support for policy-making and communities;
- Encourage good practices in literacy and other NFE programmes;
- Create a dynamic literate environment;
- Introduce innovative training and learning methodologies;
- Improve links with formal education through the development of a National Qualification Framework;
- Intensify collaboration and build new partnerships with other government departments, civil society groups and community-based organisations.



The Kenya National Literacy Survey: The Lamp Approach

J. M. Katwa, Deputy Director, Department of Adult Education, Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services

Traditionally literacy means 'reading, writing, and numeracy', the ability to read, write and do simple computations. This is what it signifies in most developing countries. In modern times, however, literacy goes beyond the three 'R's. In the wider world there are 'literatecies', rather than just 'literacy'. Its meaning has expanded to include a people's ability to cope with a situation and understand the operations of the world in which they live. We therefore talk of computer literacy, economic literacy, political and other types of literacies.

Literacy enhances all dimensions of an individual's life: their health and the health of their families; the education of individuals and of entire communities; participation in decision-making processes, governance and general development which increases the collective well-being and wealth of a nation.

In Kenya, as in many developing countries, the term is still used simply to refer to the ability to read, write and do simple

arithmetic. Since independence in 1963, the government has been committed to the eradication of illiteracy, which it recognises as one of the major causes of under-development.

However, the biggest challenge now facing the Kenyan government is lack of data on literacy levels. Kenya's last literacy survey was conducted in 1988. Since then, the country has relied on statistics from the Welfare Monitoring Surveys, national population censuses and other surveys which were not specifically designed to measure literacy. So the extent of illiteracy is unknown, particularly for adults.

Data on adult literacy in Kenya are insufficient, unreliable and therefore not useful for planning purposes. The current estimate of 4.2 million illiterate adults, based on the 1999 National Housing and Population Census, is probably a serious underestimate. It was based on individuals' self-declaration of their own literacy status or on proxy indicators such as education levels attained. Neither of these methods

provides reliable data on adult literacy.

This is because, firstly, adult illiteracy is heavily stigmatised in Kenya, so that illiterate adults are reluctant to admit their status. Secondly, attainment of an education level does not necessarily mean retention of the skills that have been acquired. Many people have attained certain levels of education but cannot read fluently. In addition, it is now six years since the estimate was made in 1999, and it needs to be updated and validated.

The reality in Kenya is that completion rates of the primary cycle of education have been low for a very long time. Before the introduction of the free primary education programme in 2003, only 47.3 per cent of children who enrolled in primary schools completed Class 8, and the percentage enrolled decreased as children moved up the educational ladder. Most of the school drop-outs revert to illiteracy and take up unskilled jobs that stymie their individual development, with adverse

effects on national development. The cumulative effect of continuous high drop-out rates over many years must have translated into an ever-increasing population of illiterate adults. The actual extent of adult illiteracy can only be established by a comprehensive literacy survey.

The Kenyan Government realises that without an accurate assessment of the situation, it will be difficult to design and implement suitable adult literacy programmes. Setting development targets can be equally elusive. There is therefore an urgent need to develop a methodology which will help to measure people's literacy skills more accurately.

The government, through the Department of Adult Education, has therefore initiated a comprehensive National Adult Literacy Survey as one of its key contributions to the UN Literacy Decade. The Survey is being undertaken in collaboration with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS); other key players are the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) in the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

Objectives

The purpose of the Survey is to obtain data on adult literacy in the country, using standard criteria and methods of determining literacy. It is expected to:

- Obtain comprehensive data on adult literacy from all literacy providers in both the public and private sectors;
- Determine the magnitude of adult literacy by establishing its levels, distribution and dimensions;
- Identify gaps and issues of concern that need to be addressed;

- Identify the causes of persistent illiteracy among adults and analyse their relative impact;
- Provide reliable data for use in planning and implementing a vigorous literacy and adult education programme.

Survey Strategies

Type of Survey

The National Adult Literacy Survey will be based on households, rather than institutions. This is because adult learning is mainly informal and takes place outside formal education institutions, as part of the daily life of adults.

The LAMP Approach

The Survey will use the UIS Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP) approach. The UIS will provide a basic framework for testing and assessing literacy skills, and Kenya will adapt the framework and develop survey instruments appropriate for Kenya's needs.

LAMP is a new approach to literacy measurement which functions by:

- Using a questionnaire to interview respondents about their literacy and educational background as well as collecting their biodata;
- Subjecting respondents to 'filter tests' on reading, writing and numeracy to assess a range of literacy levels. Those able to perform simple literacy tasks are given more complex tests to determine their literacy levels.

Consensus Building

A planning workshop has already been held. Participants were drawn from relevant government departments and from civil society organisations including NGOs,

CBOs, universities, faith-based organisations, leading educationists and development partners. A consensus was reached on the need for such a survey and it was agreed to use the LAMP approach.

Target Population and Sampling

The Survey will target all Kenyan citizens aged 15 years and above. It will use the well-established national sampling framework of the CBS and will cover approximately 15,000 households spread all over the country to ensure regional, socio-cultural and economic representation.

Language: Survey instruments will be translated into 30 of the 42 languages spoken in Kenyan. This will cover all main language blocks. Kiswahili will be used in urban centres.

Collaboration and Partnerships

The Department of Adult Education and UIS will be key players. The Ministry of Education and its specialised agencies, such as the Kenya National Examinations Council and the Kenya Institute for Education, will be consulted in their respective areas of expertise.

Local and international development partners will be approached for financial support in partnership with government.

Consultancy Services

The services of a well-qualified and experienced educational consultant researcher will be hired. The consultant will work closely with the Department of Adult Education and CBS in designing the study, developing survey instruments, training research personnel, data collection and analysis and in the writing of the report.

In 2002 the Kenya Institute of Education, with assistance from UNICEF and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, initiated a quality enhancement strategy. The strategy was aimed at changing the delivery of the national non-formal education curriculum which the Institute had developed between 1998 and 2001 and was piloting in nine districts.

The curriculum developers set out to build the capacity of NFE teachers in participatory teaching and learning facilitation methodologies in order to ensure that the voices of learners, particularly those of girls, were heard in the learning environment.

The rationale for NFE teacher capacity development was based on the fact that most of the teachers are untrained and have many professional capacity gaps that act as barriers to quality education delivery and facilitation.

The key features of the teacher capacity development strategy and immediate outcomes include:

- Restructuring traditional sitting arrangements inside the classroom so that the teacher is not the centre of power and authority. This was done by moving the teacher from the front to the middle of the classroom and by creating wallboards for each child which they are free to use. The wallboards give the children space and the use of chalk, previously a preserve of the teacher, empowers the learners.

This approach encourages peer learning and means that there is a lot of consultation in class. Children no longer hide their

Training Teachers to Create Child-friendly Classrooms

Mary Muito, Kenya Institute of Education

work from one another and they tend to form consultative learning groups. This approach to learning has great appeal for girls, in particular, and accelerates their learning in subjects previously perceived as challenging, such as Mathematics. Teachers are reporting that children are keen to stay in class and that retention rates have greatly improved.

- The production of high quality, low-cost, teaching/learning materials by teachers and learners. This has been achieved through the use of the school/centre cluster model, where neighbouring schools are grouped together and teachers who have specific strengths in

teaching certain subjects are encouraged to build the capacity of their colleagues through peer learning. One school or centre in each cluster is equipped with resources that facilitate production of teaching and learning aids by teachers.

A key aid to teaching produced by teachers has been the mobile pocket board that is used with a set of cards to teach language and mathematical concepts. The mobile board has particularly helped teachers to shift learning from the tradition classroom to more open spaces in the school, including outdoor areas. This approach has worked very well in the drier and hot regions of the



country, as classes can be conducted in shady areas.

- Community engagement and participation in children's education both at home and in school. The quality education strategy emphasises dialogue between parents, teachers and learners in an attempt to ensure that the rights-based approach to education delivery is a key feature of the learning environment.

The rights-based approach is also encouraged in the light of the fact that most of the critical hurdles which bar girls from accessing education are culturally rooted. Positive behaviour change can only be achieved through dialogue with communities.

During the training, emphasis was placed on ensuring that teachers were well oriented on the key features of the rights-based approach to education delivery. Through a participatory process, teachers were guided to respond to key questions and build consensus around the following questions:

Why do we need child-friendly and gender responsive learning environments at school and at home?

- To help children learn what they need to learn (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and life-skills)
- To enhance the health and well-being of children
- To improve school enrolment, completion rates and achievement
- To raise teacher morale and motivation
- To guarantee safe and protective spaces for children

- To encourage children to participate in the development of their school and society
- To mobilise community support for education

What is a rights-based, child-friendly school?

- A place where the voices of children are heard and their opinions are considered on all matters that affect their well-being
- A place that is protective and inclusive
- A gender-sensitive learning environment where the needs of both girls and boys are catered for
- A place where the voices of families and the community are valued

What are the characteristic features of a rights-based, child-friendly school?

A child-friendly school:

- Demonstrates, promotes and helps monitor the rights and well-being of all pupils
- Actively seeks out excluded children, enrolls them in school and ensures that they are included in classroom learning
- Is child-centred and democratic, encourages child participation and focuses on children's needs
- Is flexible and responds to diversity, including gender, culture, social class and ability
- Helps to defend and protect all children from abuse and harm, both inside and outside school
- Guarantees the safety and security of children

- Acts to ensure inclusion, respect for diversity, and equality of opportunity for all children (e.g. girls, working children, children with disabilities, victims of exploitation and violence)
- Does not stereotype, exclude or discriminate on the basis of difference
- Is gender sensitive
- Promotes equality in the enrolment and achievement of girls and boys
- Eliminates gender stereotypes
- Guarantees girl-friendly facilities, curricula, textbooks and teaching-learning processes
- Socialises girls and boys in an environment which is non-violent and encourages respect for rights, dignity and equality
- Is concerned about what happens to students before they enter school and after they leave the classroom
- Is family-focused, working to strengthen families and to help children, parents and teachers to establish harmonious, collaborative relationships
- Is community based, encouraging local partnerships in school-based management and working with others to ensure constant attention to children's rights and well being

Having equipped the teachers with these skills, the major challenge for the Kenya Institute of Education is to monitor the implementation of the NFE curriculum to ensure that teachers bring value to the learning environment and that positive change occurs in teaching and learning processes.

A Curriculum for Non-Formal Education

Benson Muthendi, Kenya Institute of Education

The 15 years preceding the declaration of free primary education in Kenya was characterised by an unprecedented increase in the number of out-of-school children. In response, NGOs, communities and individuals established non-formal education centres for under 17-year-olds.

In 1994 the Kenyan Government, together with UNICEF, carried out a survey of non-formal education methods in Kenya. The study indicated that NFE centres provided an alternative form of basic education for children who were unable to take part in the formal system. It also noted that NFE centres were providing different types and levels of knowledge and skills, which were not based on a standardised or relevant curriculum.

The study recommended that NFE centres should offer a dual curriculum – one that provides employment skills for those who might not go on to further education, and another for those who might wish to continue their education. It further recommended that the NFE curriculum should be synchronised to allow horizontal and vertical linkages between NFE institutions and formal schools.

The Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), the curriculum development and research arm of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, has developed an NFE curriculum in line with the recommendations of the survey. This includes provisions for academic study and for teaching trade skills. For each subject, KIE has developed a syllabus, a teachers' guide and a learners' book.

The NFE curriculum is divided into three levels. The core subjects in level I are Maths, English, Kiswahili, Social Studies and Science. At levels II and III learners take the same core subjects as well as one trade subject and two support subjects – Entrepreneurship and Applied Geometry. Each level takes two years to complete and the entire NFE curriculum can be completed in six years. There are horizontal and vertical linkages and equivalences to the formal education curriculum. At each level, learners are expected to acquire the same competencies as learners in the corresponding classes of the formal system.

The NFE curriculum is flexible, enabling learners to attend classes at their convenience during the day, as well as allowing them to re-enter after dropping out. Education against drug addiction, on HIV/AIDS, and about environment

and gender issues has been included in the curriculum to make it more relevant to contemporary needs.

The NFE syllabuses, teachers' guides and learners' books have been written by panels comprised of curriculum specialists, education officers, adult education officers and teacher trainers, as well as teachers at primary schools and NFE centres. The curriculum is currently being piloted in 18 NFE centres in five districts throughout Kenya. Feedback from teachers and learners will be used to strengthen the curriculum.

Implementation of the NFE curriculum has, however, run into problems. The concept of NFE has never been well understood by stakeholders; consequently many have failed to work out practical strategies for its implementation. Most NFE teachers lack proper training and many, being primary school drop-outs themselves, have difficulty understanding and internalising this complicated programme.

NFE centres also lack physical facilities, equipment and teaching/learning resources, which are essential for the running of a sound NFE programme. Most of the facilities are built on rented premises and they are mainly makeshift structures.

Since the government's announcement of free primary education, the challenge of mobilising resources for NFE has grown. Because NFE centres are owned by individuals, community-based organisations and religious bodies, they do not benefit from the free primary education kitty of the Ministry of Education.

Providing Basic Education at St Martin de Porres Centre

Salvatory Odhiambo, Headteacher, St Martin de Porres Centre

St Martin de Porres Centre was started in 1990 as a reception unit and rehabilitation centre for the most marginalised and abused street boys in Nairobi. It is currently one of four centres run by the Brothers of St Charles Lwanga in the city.

St Martin de Porres acts as a conduit for the other centres run by the Brothers. Children who are successful at reforming their habits through the centre's rehabilitation process are referred to the other centres or to the schools around. There they have the opportunity to learn practical skills or engage in further education.

Primary Education

By 1994 the number of children using the services provided by the St Martin de Porres Centre had grown to such an extent that larger and improved premises were sought. The improved space provided the impetus and means to integrate basic primary education into the mainstream rehabilitation process. Children at the centre, many of whom had previously dropped out of school due to psychological, social, economic or other problems, were given an opportunity to acquire basic primary education.

The Centre's flexible approach to learning and its child-friendly environment have enabled many of our past students to go on to

succeed in many different areas. The majority have either moved on to secondary education or joined vocational training courses, but all have benefited from the care they received from the staff at St Martin's.

'Nairobi Cares for its Children'

The announcement of Kenya's free primary education policy prompted the St Martin's Centre community to reach out to children living and working on the street through designated NCC (Nairobi Cares for its Children) centres.

With the support of head office, the entire community took time to reflect on the best ways to fulfil the vision and mission of the Watoto wa Lwanga Children Organisation. Those reflections formed the inspiration for our recent achievements, which are highlighted below.

- A non-formal education workshop was organised and facilitated by curriculum specialists from the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE).
- In September 2003, a non-formal education programme was integrated into the Centre's activities. This was made possible by insights gained from the workshop and by support from the KIE.

- In October 2003, the KIE selected St Martin's as a pilot centre to implement the proposed NFE curriculum.
- Since January 2004 the Centre has been a fully-fledged NFE Centre, piloting the KIE NFE Curriculum with assistance from the Kenyan Government and UNICEF.

Our current activities include:

- Providing NFE lessons within the new structure
- Improving the quality of guidance and counselling
- Strengthening co-curricular activities and integrating them into curricular activities
- Continuing to provide drop-in rehabilitation programme activities
- Supporting community initiatives aimed at empowerment and encouraging involvement in continued care, protection, rehabilitation and support for children

We hope that the successful completion of the pilot phase will enable us to venture into simple vocational training programmes. These programmes will provide graduates with skills that will enable them to be 'masters of their own future' in this fast and competitive developing world.

The Street Families Rehabilitation Trust Fund (SFRTF) is an initiative of the Ministry of Local Government in conjunction with the Ministry of Home Affairs and other stakeholders. The aim, mission and objective of the programme is to implement sections of Kenya's Children's Act 2001 that deal with children in need of special care and protection, specifically street children and their families.

To achieve these broad goals, the programme has set up a secretariat and a fund to plan, coordinate, monitor and evaluate rehabilitation activities for street families in Kenya. There is a special focus on Nairobi, where the programme has been in existence for slightly over a year. The experiences and successes of non-formal education in the process of rehabilitation are discussed below.

Rehabilitation Challenges

Defining who is and is not a street child is difficult to do with any real precision, because there is a relative lack of systematic studies of the phenomenon. Nonetheless, several commonalities can be identified that characterise street children.

A street child is any boy or girl below the age of 18 years for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings and wasteland) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults.

In the Kenyan context, street children are chronologically children, but function in society as adults without the levels of protection expected by adults.

SFRTF – Rehabilitating Nairobi's Street Children

Francis Mwangi, Street Families Rehabilitation Trust Fund

A street child spends at least a part of his/her day on the streets. He/she uses them as a place of congregation and for moving from one place to another. Street children live on the street full or part time and usually generate their income there.

risks experienced by street children.

Provision for the needs of street children needs to be directed at re-integrating them into mainstream society. This is often achieved by encouraging family reunions, influencing their behaviour and character, and equipping them



Street children are a special category of young people whose needs and risks are higher than those of children raised within a family or by institutions and agencies that provide care to children in difficult circumstances. These could include homelessness, ill health, nutritional needs, social amenities and many others factors. The process of rehabilitation is a long, complex and costly undertaking that seeks to address the needs and

with literacy or vocational skills to enable them earn a decent and safe living. Rehabilitation is not an end in itself.

Because of the magnitude of the problems faced by street-children, the answers are not easy to arrive at.

Causes of 'Streetism'

Most of the street children in Kenya are caught in a vicious circle. They

start by being born into a poor or abusive family, which frequently leads many to drop out of school. From there the average child goes on to the streets and finally ends up in a corrective institution. This institution is inappropriately charged with rehabilitating the child, whose neglect is underpinned by society's negative attitude towards such cases.

Political, social, economic and environmental factors can also be linked to the appearance of street children. They manifest themselves in situations where there is land reform, population growth, drought, rural to urban migration, economic recession, unemployment, domestic violence and the HIV/Aids pandemic.

The above causes can be categorised into three groups.

- (a) Poverty
- (b) Dysfunctional families
- (c) Modernisation

Poverty

Poverty can be defined as a state of existence in which people's food needs are not satisfied, or where the overall needs of the individual are not satisfied due to a lack of adequate purchasing power.

This causes the breakdown of families and moral values, often pushing children in this situation onto the streets in search of opportunities to earn some money to support themselves and their families.

They may also be responding to other needs of their own, for example a desire for open space, or a place where they can have some peace, find supportive new relationships, and take greater responsibility for their own lives.

Dysfunctional families

Street children are a result of dysfunctional families who abandon, abuse, neglect and violate the rights of children. This may result in teenage pregnancies, many arising from rape and sexual exploitation. Young girls and women who

... street children in Kenya are caught in a vicious circle. They start by being born into a poor or abusive family, which ... leads many to drop out of school. From there they go on to the streets and finally end up in a corrective institution.

become single parents may set off for the urban centres in search of a livelihood, where they or their children may end up on the streets.

Modernisation

The traditional African ethos of the family provided social security for victims of dysfunctional branches by absorbing children who needed care and preventing the phenomenon of street children. The presence of street children can be seen as an indicator that

such traditions are being eroded by the culture of individualism.

Physical and sexual harassment and abuse are also major causes. Some children are born in the streets or establish themselves on the street early in life, rather than gradually moving from home to the street. Some form quite structured gangs loosely based on the family, but more often they form less stable groups that are adapted to the problems, difficulties, defined roles and territories of street life.

The above conditions are entry points for any rehabilitation programme or activity that targets street children. Street children themselves have some knowledge about the various organisations that offer services and humanitarian assistance in an attempt to mitigate these conditions and their causes.

It is unfortunate that this knowledge does not translate into full participation in these programmes. Fortunately many know the benefits to be gained by engaging with these service providers, which often leads to demands that those benefits are made available almost immediately.

Education

Almost all Kenyan street children are aware that education, both formal and non-formal, is one of the benefits that can be derived from any organisation or programme that they engage with. However, they passionately dislike the degree of discipline enforced in schools and centres. These often include rigid rules and regulations and result in their freedom of movement and association being curtailed

How Children Survive on the Street

In spite of the diverse elements and characteristics of street life, there are some important discernable common conditions:

- Life on the street implies a public disclosure of personal destitution. One's poverty is made so visible that there is no way to escape confronting its existence, either by the external observer or the street children themselves.
- Survival becomes a moment-to-moment pre-occupation. For the street child, the ability to divide and order time so as to contemplate, let alone plan for a future, is an unfamiliar luxury.
- Street life demands ceding one's entitlement to private and personal space.
- When their ability to protect themselves is challenged, all sense of permanence with respect to personal and social relations is thrown into question.

Experiences and Successes

Experience has shown that non-formal education is one of the best tools available for delivering information and helping street children to realise their potential. Non-formal education is often tailor-made to meet their needs and aspirations. It is participatory and flexible, which allows the children own and appreciate the whole education process.

Through a non-formal education process, one can equip street children with literacy skills, vocational skills and general knowledge, delivered at their own pace. Integrating many different

models of passing information and lesson content, through such avenues as role-plays, theatre free association and carrying out demonstrations, can help facilitate their comprehension of various concepts.

Since non-formal education is child-friendly, it guarantees street children their dignity as human beings and promotes self-esteem, which enhances the process of rehabilitation. Through the SFRTF, 800 young people have benefited from non-formal education in one year and all are undergoing the second phase of rehabilitation. During the second phase, students either pursue vocation skills training, professional courses, or

engage in initial training at the National Youth Service (NYS) in Gilgil and other NYS institutions.

Over 60 former street mothers have also been trained informally and are now placed at the EPZ Athi-River where they are engaged in gainful employment. Additionally, 150 young children have undergone catch-up education (bridging education) before being placed in formal education classes at Morrison Primary School.

Street children... passionately dislike the degree of discipline enforced in schools and centres.

The above successes have been achieved in the face of exceptional challenges. During the initial phase of rehabilitation, street children tend to have a very low concentration span. This can challenge the morale of a professional non-formal education facilitator, especially if they have not previously dealt with street children. Some non-formal education initiatives have been stigmatised as alternatives designed specifically for the poor, with the implication of inferior quality. In the face of such stigma, street children who attend those classes risk being further marginalised.

Lastly, most non-formal schools and classes lack the infrastructure and educational equipment that is necessary to motivate both the child and the teacher. There is therefore a need to give non-formal education institutions the same amount of support as goes to the formal education system.

Non-formal education as I have seen it practised

Sister Mary Kileen, Director, DKA Support Office

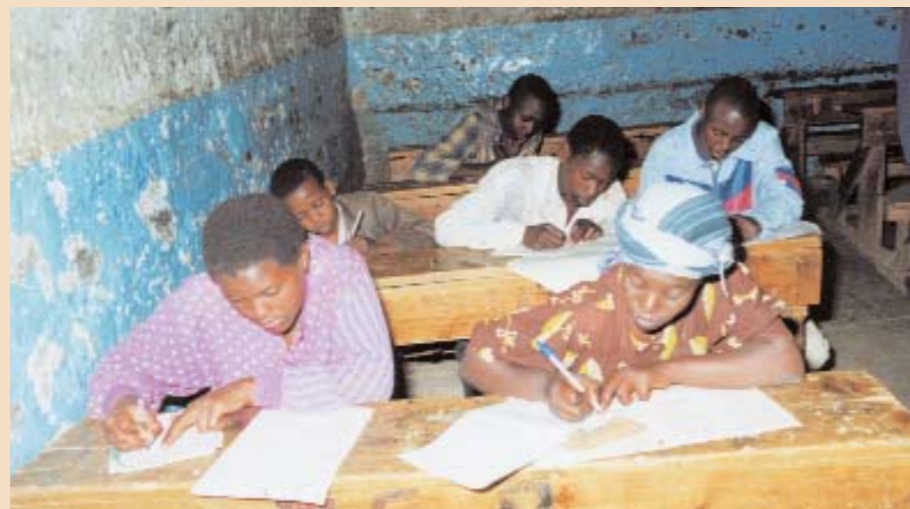
I have seen very different types of non-formal education. The first is a very simple and non-structured variety, such as the small Vijana Kwanza (First) Project (VIP). The project's director and social worker meet children on the streets of South B Shopping Centre in Nairobi, talk to them about their lives, hopes and dreams, and their former home situation.

They try to get the child to consider what their life will be like if they continue to live on the street and grow up to be an adult there, and they ask them if this is what they want. They then invite the child to the VIP Centre for a cup of tea and some bread in the mornings, and build up a relationship of trust. They introduce the child to educational toys and games, puzzles and books.

When the child has settled down a bit, is able to come regularly and concentrate, and has reduced his intake of glue or stopped taking glue altogether, he is referred to one of ten permanent rehabilitation centres, such as the Mary Immaculate Centre, South B or the Goal Non-Formal Centre.

At both these centres, education is more structured than at VIP. There is a timetable with special times for classes in different subjects. Children sit at desks or on chairs at tables. There is an atmosphere of learning and teaching. A curriculum is followed but it is not the formal curriculum.

One of the important goals of these centres is for the child to acquire literacy and numeracy skills, become steady in their behaviour and improve their ability to concentrate and be punctual. For most children there comes a time when they are ready to transfer to a formal school. St Martin de Porres School, part of Watoto Wa Lwanga



Street Children Project, is currently piloting the Kenya Institute of Education's Non-Formal Syllabus and so far has found it very successful. It is hoped that the future implementation of this system will help guide many institutions wishing to practise NFE.

There is also a more usual type of non-formal school which, although it is called non-formal, follows the formal curriculum and timetable. In a way, these schools are low-cost private schools, such as Watoto Wa Lwanga Ruai. There are also non-formal skill training schools for

older children and young people at which the students learn masonry, carpentry, dressmaking, arts and crafts, and computer and other skills. These are mostly second-level training centres. Pupils join them after they have finished primary or secondary school. More of these training centres are needed if the huge number of students leaving primary school are to attain the skills they need to be employable. In May, I hope to facilitate the opening of an NFE centre which will have both skills training and continuing learning programmes. In the Mukuru slums more than 1000 children leave primary school each year. The percentage of those going on to

secondary school is only about 30%, due to the high costs involved. Many more children could get a more appropriate education in a non-formal secondary centre. The centre would have flexible hours, morning only for younger students, and evening for working youth and adults. The fees would be kept as low as possible and would exclude non-essential items, such as uniforms, transport and other payments.

I am looking forward to seeing how this centre will work and what the response from the surrounding slum areas will be.

The dynamics of the non-formal (out-of-school) education situation in Kenya cannot be fully understood without an in-depth understanding of the formal basic education sub-sector. Over the years, this sub-sector has been grappling with challenges which have had a negative impact on the provision of quality social services throughout the country.

In particular, the quality of education in the arid and semi-arid areas (ASAL) has been badly affected, largely due to marginalisation and poverty. The situation has been aggravated by low completion rates and acute under-participation of girls. Critical issues such as low quality and questionable relevance of the curriculum, especially given the cultural ethos in the ASAL, further compound the gravity of the situation.

Against this background, individuals, communities and organisations have taken action to respond to the educational needs of out-of-school children and young people.

What is the Lchekuti Programme?

The Samburu District has gained a reputation for strong community initiatives, particularly in identifying the educational needs of children and taking collective action to address them. The Shepherds' Programme, popularly known as Lchekuti, was initiated in Baragoi in 1992. Because it has responded appropriately to the variety and diversity of learning needs in the area, it has attracted a large number of children. Because of this success the programme has been replicated in other parts of the

The Christian Children's Fund's Approach to NFE

district with support from the Christian Children's Fund (CCF) and other partners.

The Lchekuti programme aims to assist boys and girls who have not had the opportunity to attend formal school in the past. Time constraints, such as domestic chores or looking after livestock, prevent many children from attending traditional educational facilities. Learning in the Lchekuti programme therefore takes place in the evening after herding and other responsibilities are over for the day.

The CCF's Approach

- We carry out an assessment, using the CCF focus group structure that takes a bottom-up approach, to ascertain the community's needs, including literacy levels.
- Having ascertained that the community's needs include improving low literacy rates, we then help the community to identify the root causes, possible interventions and strategic ways forward, before developing an action plan.
- Due to low literacy rates, it is mandatory that all projects in the CCF North Rift A.P.P initiate a Lchekuti programme and a functional adult literacy programme for each zone.

- The community identifies resource people to handle the programme and a committee to oversee it. They identify a central learning centre, usually an early childhood development centre, primary school or church building.
- The programme targets herders who were unable to attend formal school because of their pastoral life-style. The programme means that they are now able to herd livestock in the daytime and still attend class in the evening.
- As the herders continue learning, their interest in education grows. In 2000–2003, a total of 128 boys and 61 girls graduated from the Lchekuti programme and moved into the formal school system.
- The Lchekuti programme runs from Grades 1–4, when the students are meant to join the formal school system.
- CCF North Rift A.P.P.'s support for the Lchekuti and functional adult literacy programmes includes help in hiring teachers, providing learning and teaching materials, supporting visits, and supplying documentation.

Justification

A survey conducted in Baragoi and other parts of the Samburu District, found that the educational needs of

the pastoral community were not being met. Important points include:

- 1 Less than 30% of school-age children in the district were enrolled in school;
- 2 The drop-out rate was 80%;
- 3 The community was opposed to the education of girls.

A number of factors justify providing the programme to the pastoral community. These include:

- 1 Illiteracy levels among parents hinders an understanding of the importance of education;
- 2 There have been no campaigns to foster an understanding of the need to take children to school;
- 3 Environmental factors such as drought that drive children long distances in search of pasture, forcing those who are enrolled in school to drop out;
- 4 Culture and customs that conflict with educational demands;
- 5 Increasing conflict that disrupts schooling activities in the area;
- 6 The fact that the community has frequently been forgotten by existing government structures;
- 7 The lack of research showing the importance of the group;
- 8 Lack of a any route through which children can eventually enrol in school.

Target: The programme targets boys and girls between 6 and 16 years of age.

Time: Learning takes place in the evening after a long day's herding, from around 4.30 to 9.00 pm. The programme's low cost and flexibility make it the preferred choice.

Subjects taught

- Business skills
- Animal husbandry
- Civic education
- Child care
- Simple arithmetic
- Kiswahili
- English
- Agriculture

Teaching methodology

- Discussion
- Question and answer
- Demonstration
- Role play

Constraints and challenges

- Lack of a curriculum that relates to the learners' needs
- Cultural practices, i.e. moranism
- Lack of awareness regarding the value of education
- Seasonal calendar, i.e. enrolments are high during wet seasons compared to dry seasons
- Inadequate equipment for practical learning, e.g. animal husbandry
- Insecurity
- Long distances to travel
- Nomadism

Achievements

- Many Lchekuti children have gone on to formal education
- Training in alternative sources of livelihood has proved beneficial
- Learners can treat basic animal diseases
- Improved literacy rates
- A sense of gender awareness

Lessons Learned

- The Lchekuti programme is community driven
- Community ownership of the programme and its compatibility with people's way of life
- Sustainability – the participation and involvement of the community is crucial
- The importance of cost-effectiveness as the communities use makeshift structures
- The fact that more girls are enrolled than boys because many parents enrol their boys in formal schools while girls stay behind to do domestic chores during the day

The Way Forward

- Formulation of an NFE policy and guidelines for its implementation
- Official recognition of NFE as a complement to formal education
- A co-ordinating mechanism for NFE within the framework of Ministry of Education
- Provision of support to NFE programmes and providers, e.g. supervision, inspection and other forms of management support
- Establishment of equivalency between formal and non-formal systems in order to facilitate access and re-entry modes between the two
- Innovation in programme design is called for, e.g. programmes for nomadic pastoralists and girls' education
- Community management of NFE
- Partnership and networking

The Lchekuti Education Programme in Samburu

Illiteracy is a major indicator of poverty in society. This has led to a global bid to eliminate illiteracy; the Samburu people have not been left behind by this initiative.

The Samburu district, in the arid and semi-arid land (ASAL) region of Kenya, has historically had very low literacy levels. The area has been generally marginalised and has a high prevalence of poverty. Despite these challenges, the Samburu community, with the assistance of the Christian Children's Fund (CCF) and other partners, has established education centres known as Lchekuti centres. 'Lchekuti' means 'shepherds' among most of the pastoral communities in Kenya. The centres target boys and girls aged 6–16 years old who have not had the opportunity to go to school. This is often because they have been herding livestock, which is a major source of livelihood in the area, or attending to domestic chores.

The Lchekuti programme was initiated in Baragoi in 1992 to improve literacy levels and the standard of living in the district. Because of the high poverty levels and customary laws, which require the boys to be morans and the girls to be married off at an early age, for many children the programme provided their first educational opportunity.

So that children and young people who are working as herders can attend, classes are normally

conducted in the evening, between 4.00 and 9.00 pm. By this time, the boy and girl shepherds have finished their duties for the day, and the girls have finished their domestic chores. Trained teachers are provided by the CCF and they conduct classes in a variety of subjects.

Business skills is a popular subject, focusing on building self-reliance. It is especially valuable for students who are too old to join the formal education system. Animal husbandry is another subject that is of great importance to pupils at the Lchekuti centres, as their new skills enable them to handle basic animal diseases. Civic education, childcare, simple arithmetic, Kiswahili, English and Agriculture are also taught in order to prepare graduates for the formal education system and to benefit the wider community.

Interactive Teaching Methods

As many of the learners are illiterate, teachers use a variety of methods to convey important concepts. A physical demonstration of how a concept works often makes it easier for students to grasp the concept. Discussion often plays a valuable role in promoting cross-learning among students, initiated when teachers place students in small discussion or study groups. Question and answer and role-play are other interactive teaching methods used to make learning easier and more interesting.

In its bid to eliminate illiteracy, the programme has encountered problems related to the administration of the programme and to the community's cultural beliefs. Cultural practices, especially rites of passage like moranism for boys, and female genital mutilation and early marriage for girls, have contributed to irregular attendance and have led some students to drop out.

Lack of equipment for subjects such as animal husbandry is another difficulty because teaching theory has proved to be more difficult than practical demonstrations. Other challenges include:

- Social insecurity in the area due to cattle rustling
- Lack of a curriculum that is relevant to the learners' needs
- Inadequate learning centres

All these result in less enthusiasm and energy for learning.

Despite these challenges, the Lchekuti model has had many successes. It has done well in its primary objective of improving literacy levels in the district.

The programme has also helped to instil some gender awareness in the community, demonstrated by the continually growing rates of enrolment of girls.

Teaching practical skills like animal husbandry have contributed to the welfare of the community and this success has led some children to join the formal education system. The Lchekuti model responds to a variety of needs of learners and the community. Because of this it has a valuable role to play in combating illiteracy.

Recent statistics show that Kenya has more than 250,000 street children. Since 1973, the Undugu Society of Kenya (USK) has undertaken work to rehabilitate street children and has supported over 24,000 children. Its emphasis is on getting the children back to their own families and communities. It therefore focuses on community empowerment programmes, health projects, sanitation, advocacy for the rights of the child and land rights, as well as devising marketing strategies for the products of its income-generating and training unit.

How the Undugu Society Came About

The history of the Undugu Society of Kenya goes back to 1973 when the organisation’s founder, the late Father Arnold Grol, tried to improve the prospects of street children, who were then commonly referred to as Parking Boys, because they directed motorists to parking lots.

The Parking Boys phenomenon, which emerged in the early 1970s, was the result of rural-urban migration and the growth of slum settlements in Nairobi. Depending on tips from motorists, the boys eked out a miserable subsistence from begging or stealing. At night, they would retreat to their shacks in the slums or simply huddle outside on the cold pavements.

Father Grol spent time on the streets talking to the boys. Gradually they explained the circumstances which brought them onto the streets: poor backgrounds, inability of their parents to afford education or even to provide basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. On the streets, they said, they could make some money and

‘Every child belongs to a family or community’

The Undugu Society – Working with Nairobi’s Street Children

buy food. Still, they yearned for care and protection like other children of their age.

After the Boys Came the Girls

Over the years, the Undugu Society has put in place curative and preventive interventions to rescue children from the street, provide them with shelter, food and clothing, medical care, education and training, and most importantly, reintegration, as well as addressing the underlying factors contributing to the influx of children onto the streets. Preventive interventions include the development of small enterprises, employment creation, non-formal education and skills training and other community-related activities.

The children are given security in the form of centres where they can come and go, under no obligation whatsoever. Most of the children ask about education and are enthusiastic about the prospect of going to school. However, in most instances, the schools feel that these youngsters cannot fit back into the normal school routine because of the character change

that they may have undergone while on the streets. Others are too old. This frustration has stimulated the devising of a non-formal education programme responsive to the special needs and unique circumstances of these children.

Before 1990, USK catered more for boys than girls. In 1973, when the Society began, girls were rarely seen on the streets of Nairobi. Today, there are almost as many girls as boys. The vulnerability of girls makes it especially important to help them. They are liable to abuse not just from older boys, but also from men hunting the streets for cheap sex. HIV/AIDS makes the situation even worse. USK has responded by now running a programme for girls.

Streetwise Rehabilitation

USK’s rehabilitation intervention has several stages:

Street work: regular visits to the streets, usually at night when children have retired from their busy daytime chores and the streets are less crowded by members of the public. This aims at weaning the children off the streets for rehabilitation.



The Undugu Society helps boys like these to go back to their families and communities and to learn basic skills.

One of the greatest hindrances to street work is rampant substance abuse (of glue, marijuana, petrol and local brew). Drugs help the children to bear their harsh life: they become oblivious of the cold at night and have the courage to get into fights or commit crimes.

Reception centres: These shelters make the children aware of the need for change. They have access to basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing and medical care. Sports and other recreational activities are important to the children at this stage to help them go through the de-drugging process. They take part in intense counselling sessions and informal theory sessions which assess their literacy levels.

It is also still possible to reintegrate a child with their family at this stage. The Reception Centre is the most dramatic stage in the rehabilitation process and requires innovation, creativity and patience from programme managers.

Community centres: children who are not reintegrated after the Reception Centre stage move to other rehabilitation facilities which provide them with more defined programmes. These are either for

further rehabilitation of some children or for counselling of parents or guardians. Children who do not have an identified place of origin also fall under this category. At this stage, sponsorship permits the children to undertake formal or non-formal education. Children usually stay at the community centre for two years.

Undugu comes from the Kiswahili word ‘ndugu’ ... a gender-free term denoting blood relationship. Undugu is therefore closely translated by brotherhood or sisterhood. The closest English equivalent is solidarity or comradeship.

Reintegration: Reintegration is a process of reuniting children with their families or communities of origin. It involves addressing the factors that caused the child to go onto the streets. A series of home visits prepares both parties and emphasises the responsibility of the family or guardian towards the child.

Changing strategies: Institutional rehabilitation is expensive and often

has a limited capacity. So USK now puts more emphasis on family-centred rehabilitation, which enables children to rejoin their families and communities while they continue to receive support from USK. This approach has the advantage of reaching more children within the family or community of origin. It also recognises the African tradition that every child belongs to a family or community. While family-centred rehabilitation is a positive move, it needs to be thought through again in the light of the growing number of children who have been orphaned because of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The Council for Children’s Services needs to be strengthened at both national and local level to provide alternative care for orphaned and other disadvantaged children.

Community Development Programme

USK tries to keep children off the streets by offering them, their families and communities better opportunities for a basic livelihood. It has developed an integrated community development model which focuses on non-formal education, informal skills training and an integrated urban poverty reduction programme in selected Nairobi slums (Mathare, Kibera, and Kitui Pumwani). It also works to empower selected rural and urban-based handicraft producers through fair trade and provision of credit.

Making credit available is an important part of enterprise development intervention. USK’s credit programme is modelled on Grameen Banking. It entails

recruitment of clients, registration, training, opening of a bank account and overseeing loan disbursement and collections from group members, as well as the provision of technical assistance. Each credit group comprises 25 members. USK is currently running 24 groups, while the area programme interventions reach about 700,000 people in Nairobi’s slum areas.

Education and Training

USK’s Education and Training Programme comprises the Undugu Basic Education Programme (UBEP) and an Informal Skills Training Programme (ISPT).

Undugu Basic Education Programme

UBEP caters for children living on the streets or in slum dwellings who are unable to pursue formal education. The three-year programme, followed by a year of learning basic technical skills, offers basic literacy and numeracy skills to learners, and runs parallel to formal primary schools. Under UBEP, a calendar year is a phase; learners go through three phases. Basic skills are learnt during the fourth year. Phase 1 is equivalent to Grades 1–4 in formal primary school, and Phases 2 and 3 to Grades 5–6 and 7–8. Carpentry and joinery, sheet metal work and tailoring are examples of the skills taught. The core subjects are Languages, Mathematics, Business Education, Religious Education, Social Studies, and Art and Crafts.

UBEP learners receive hot meals and are not required to wear school uniform. The age of admission into these special schools is 12 years and over. The four schools cater for about 850 pupils a year.

UBEP is a unique intervention, which has boosted support for NFE in Kenya. The government now recognises and supports this form of education as one of the ways of teaching the nearly three million school-age children who currently do not attend school.

Skills Training Programme

UBEP graduates usually require further skills training. The Informal Skills Training Programme is an apprenticeship training programme which also prepares young people for life beyond USK and helps them handle circumstances they may encounter in adulthood.

Graduates are priority candidates for USK’s Skills Training Programme. Recruitment takes place through the UBEP schools and social workers from the area programmes. Trainees are apprenticed to practising artisans for five days a week for practical lessons, and attend a theory class every Saturday for one year. Trainees also prepare for the Government Trade Test Examinations.

Common trades taught on the ISPT are motor mechanics, carpentry and joinery, tailoring, sheet metalwork and hairdressing.

In recent years, USK has expanded

its Skills Training Programme to Western and Eastern Kenya. The Western Kenya Youth Project, based in Kisumu, has a credit and business advisory programme component.

The Eastern Kenya Project, which currently covers only Machakos, is expanding to other areas. More than 400 young people benefit from USK’s skills training programmes in Nairobi, Western Kenya and Eastern Kenya every year.

Income-generating and Training Units

USK’s Income-generating and Training Units generate income through the production of goods and services while allowing the young people to upgrade their skills. They also provide surplus funds for formal school sponsorship for children supported by USK.

The Undugu Shop and Export Units, which are the flag bearers in the handicraft trade, provide two market outlets for producers. These follow the principles of fair trade and target both local and international markets. The units also provide product development training for handicraft producers, ensuring the high quality of a range of products. USK is a member of the International Federation for Alternative Trade (IFAT).

On average, USK’s income-generating and training units account for up to 48% of the Society’s annual budget.

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