Moderator: Prof. Sozinho F. Matsinhe

Rapporteur: Mrs Lily Nyariki

Topic B: **Writing, publishing and access to books in local languages, writes contribution to lifelong reading competencies, the role of various stakeholders in promoting literacy and EFA, the role of libraries in promoting a culture of reading in Africa.**

Question 1.   How can internal resource mobilisation and the involvement of technical and financial partners be increased so as o enable the establishment of a fund supporting the publication, distribution and promotion of books in African languages and supplied with resources through a multi stakeholder approach

Challenges:

- Lack of viable policies in education, local language use and book development strategies.

- No support financing for publishing activities in local languages

- Lack of incentives for use of Local languages

- Lack of relevant reading materials and distribution mechanism

Policy implications:

A comprehensive National Education, Language, Communication and Book Policy to be formulated and implemented by Stakeholders and Governments.

Best Practice

- Collaborative marketing with private sector to promote local languages.

- Writing of materials that meet the needs of the readers e.g. farming activities.

- Governments to levy small percentages like in other sectors that can be used to fund local languages development.

- Set up a Prize for excellence to award effort in local languages development.

- Burkina Faso Literacy Fund involves Private/Public sector partnership in local language support and development.

Policy implications

- Relevant government ministries to initiate an Advocacy strategy that will endear private sector to support publishing in local languages.

- Through deliberate policy, Governments to set up a fund in support of local language development.

Recommendations

- Teaching institutions should offer courses in translation and interpretation.

- Relevant government ministries to find ways and means of ensuring that just like international languages value is added to their use.

- Governments, private sector, publishers and other stakeholders to work together in order to contribute materially and form a think tank on local languages development.

Policy implications

A comprehensive National Education, Language, Communication and Book Policy to be formulated and implemented by Stakeholders and Governments.

Question 2　　How can the impact of libraries and other community reading centres be supported to promote sound reading habits in the community.

Challenges:

- Stakeholders in the book and information sector must work together.

- Adopt a multi approach to learning where books and activities go together

- Ensure adequate and relevant materials.

- Reading clubs to involve the youth where reading competitions are organised.

- Mobile phones, National TVs can be used more to disseminate information in Local languages

- Lack of trained personnel.

Policy implications

- The need to set up community reading centres especially in rural areas to make information more accessible.

- There is need for capacity building for personnel to manage reading centres.

Best Practice

- CODE support in Tanzania and Mali can be replicated in other countries.

Policy implications

- Book Industry stakeholders (National Book Development Councils) must lobby Private sector and governments to raise and set up a special fund to develop local languages.

Recommendations

- Governments/AU to lead by example and fully support these initiatives

Policy implications

- ACALAN should be given full support and enabled financially to move the local language agenda forward and ensure the profile local languages is raised in African countries.

Question 3   How can lasting habits of reading outside the school context be creates and maintained with a view to lifelong learning?

Challenges:

- Parents are not an example to their children as they do not read nor buy books

- Mobile libraries can be used to make books more available but this needs resources

- Library staff must be friendly to keep readers coming

- Libraries are expensive to build hence the need to improvise and use whatever room is available

Policy implications

- Government should have clear policy guidelines on development of school libraries and community centres.

- Training of Library personnel to manage school libraries and community centres.

Best Practice

- In Kenya, Mali Senegal reading campaigns are undergoing through deliberate efforts of the Civil Society

Policy implications

- Book Development Councils whose main role is to regularise and harmonise the book industry and stimulate writing, publishing, bookselling/distribution, Library development and reading be set up under legislation to ensure implementation.

Recommendations

- Parents should take the lead to stimulate reading interest in their children so they acquire the habit of reading even before they start schooling.

- It should be a policy for all schools to have school libraries and a reading hour in the timetables

Policy implications

- Head teachers must take it upon themselves to ensure reading hours are part of the syllabus and where there is no Library they should set up reading corners in each classroom.

Question 4. What kind of incentives could be used to support writers working in both African Languages and Foreign languages (Award competitions, promotions support to community based organisations?

Challenges:

- Use of the Media to give them recognition

- Capacity building of individual authors to equip them with the necessary skills.

- Give them Awards or certificates including cash.

Policy implications

- Governments to make deliberate efforts to have Language policies enacted to raise the profile of Local Languages.

Best Practice

- The Chinese and Japanese offer the best example of nations that resisted use of foreign languages and yet have excelled in Science and Technology.

Policy implications

- With the Language Mosaic that confronts African countries, it is imperative that Governments make paradigm shifts on Local Language use.

Recommendations

- The African Union should take lead in this debate and begin to sensitise Africa member states to rethink their Language policies.

Policy implications

- Individual governments should support the AU initiative through ACALAN.