

Functional Literacy and Numeracy in Northern Mozambique: A Case Study Involving Community-Based Producer Associations

Co-operative League of the USA (CLUSA)

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The promotion of rural producer associations in the northern Mozambican province of Nampula and Zambezia has been a joint effort of CLUSA (Co-operative League of the USA), as the implementing organization, and The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Netherlands Embassy and the Swiss Cupertino, as funding partners.

CLUSA has a long history of working with rural groups around the world, particularly in Africa. The CLUSA program in Mozambique is aimed at promoting the emergence of a private network of economically viable and democratically controlled rural group enterprises in the provinces of Nampula and Zambezia in order to improve productivity and rural income.

This process, which started in early 1996, involves:

Creating a producer organization business capability in Mozambique. CLUSA employees train local personnel and establish a value-based organization, which is transferred to local ownership for carrying on the project work.

Developing a sense of ownership, control, and responsibility among the association members for their organizations, by having them assume decision-making authority, which is then discharged in a democratic, participatory manner.

Initiating the processes leading to sustainability:

- self-management - transferring skills: literacy/numeracy, operational, organisational, financial, and managerial to the association leaders, employees, and general members.
- economic strengthening – helping the associations develop a series of profitable business activities that address the members' economic and social needs.
- financing - securing a direct relationship between the associations and reliable sources of credit for financing their business activities.
- networking - accessing the technology and information needed to establish and operate competitive businesses.

Over a period of 3½ years the program has assisted in the development of 370 Producer Organisations (POs) in 8 districts of Nampula Province and 5 districts of Zambezia Province. These POs, representing a total of 12,000 members, have helped rural producers improve their access to input and output markets and to other important services such as savings and credit, agriculture extension, and training in functional literacy and numeracy.

An important service provided to the POs has been the establishment of functional literacy and numeracy training systems at the village level. In CLUSA's experience, the key to preparing PO members for management of their own associations is functional literacy. Without the ability to read, write and perform basic mathematical

calculations, the PO will always be dependent on others for information and unable to make informed decisions on their own behalf. While acquisition of these skills by the leadership is necessary for self-management, extending these skills to the general membership assures that the management will be honest and undertaken in the best interest of all. The approach is to tie literacy and numeracy training directly to whatever economic activity has been chosen by a particular association.

In northern Mozambique, over 80 percent of the farmers contacted during the design phase of the program claimed they could not read and write. In some cases that number was as high as 90 percent, and even higher among women.

Functional literacy and numeracy services were introduced in the POs in 1996, at the end of the program's first year, when the first POs were demonstrating a minimum of organisation. Initially, the program sought local partners who would be able to take the lead in functional literacy and numeracy activities in rural communities. But a thorough analysis of the capabilities of potential partners revealed that none could guarantee adequate program implementation by themselves. CLUSA decided instead to subcontract two literacy trainers from an adult education training centre (Mutauanha) in Nampula, who would focus their attention on developing literacy initiatives within the CLUSA program and train literacy facilitators in the associations.

CLUSA's intention has always been to disengage itself from playing a direct role in adult literacy. However, despite the hard work of national literacy trainers, local institutions are still struggling to provide substantive literacy programs without external assistance. So for the time being, CLUSA continues to support literacy trainers and activities directly, as functionally literacy skills are fundamental to the success of POs and other rural group enterprise activities.

The literacy training process presented here was developed by trial and error over a three-year period. An adult literacy consultant from outside Mozambique was contracted to help the two trainers from the Mutauanha Centre design a program to train literacy facilitators selected by community associations and rural group enterprises in Nampula. With an ever-increasing demand for functional literacy and numeracy activities, three additional trainers have been recruited in the last year, with co-financing from the Swiss Cupertino

Since the start of the initiative, 91 POs have been involved in functional literacy and numeracy activities. Some 200 village literacy facilitators have been trained, who have, in turn, trained over 1,700 PO members in basic literacy and numeracy.

Functional literacy and numeracy - the model

Defining the literacy facilitator profile and facilitator training

All groups participating in literacy activities must first demonstrate their desire and willingness to become literate. The decision to request program assistance originates with the association or group itself.

Before starting work with the groups, the trainer's first task is to outline the attributes of an ideal ALFA literacy facilitator. The community or group can then use these attributes to define for itself the profile of an ALFA facilitator and to identify potential candidates. The group makes the final selection of the facilitator.

Normally, more facilitator candidates are trained than the number that will be needed, so that only the best qualified individuals will be selected at the end of training. All candidates are involved in the process of establishing selection criteria and are aware that only those best fitting the facilitator profile will be selected.

The facilitators participate in a vigorous two-week training program covering these themes:

- What defines an adult? What are the characteristics of an adult? What motivates an adult?

- Creating a climate conducive to learning
- The difference between the “banking” concept of education and a concept that emphasises problem solving
- The role of the literacy facilitator
- Literacy training methodology
- Objectives and methods per theme

After getting this information under their belts, the facilitators focus their attention on producing their own materials.

Implementation of facilitator activities - Continued support to the facilitator

Once trained, facilitators have the task of organising their own "training centres." The most important aspects of getting organised are:

- Agreeing with the trainers on training objectives, themes and materials
- Deciding together how much time will be needed to fulfil the training objectives
- Establish the frequency and duration of training sessions
- Setting up a personal system for keeping track of days present and absent
- Deciding together on a system for evaluating trainers' progress.

The program trainers establish a contract with the association, which stipulates the responsibilities of the trainers and the facilitators, as well as the literacy training objectives. Terms of payment or reimbursement of the facilitators by the associations can also be included in the contract.

This initial contract is important because it helps establish principals of self-management and assumption of personal responsibility for the process.

Program quality control and monitoring

Taking into consideration that the majority of literacy facilitators are farmers with only the most rudimentary education, the secret to their success as facilitators is not only in the content and methodology transmitted by the trainers but also in the capacity of the program to accompany and monitor the facilitators as they carry out their tasks.

In order to assure that the facilitators are playing their role well, CLUSA has adopted the monitoring system, SAP, used in adult literacy initiatives in Cabo Verde. It has also created a network of Literacy Co-ordinators (LCs), elected from among the literacy facilitators, who co-ordinate a group of Literacy Centres. These co-ordinators work directly with the facilitators and maintain links with the ALFA team—a central team—at CLUSA. The co-ordinators are also part of the FORUM of Associations, which represent associations by region and provide a platform for associations to exchange information, make decisions, and evaluate the services they provide.

The CLUSA ALFA team is a mobile team, formed and trained specifically to monitor the literacy training process. The monitoring process is taken seriously by the program. The ALFA team has four members who circulate in the field, using various monitoring instruments, such as checklists and questions for trainers, to gauge difficulties and take note of strong points that can later be used to promote synergy among the facilitators.

If a literacy group is having difficulties, in-service training sessions are held. If the difficulties are dispersed among facilitators, individual counselling is arranged. ALFA team members exchange information among themselves when they return to their base in Nampula, thus providing mutual support.

In addition to monitoring and training, the team's tasks, include:

- Keeping a library of literature in the Emakhua language
- Disseminating monthly bulletins for the newly literate
- Keeping up with the training centre and preparing educational materials.

Other important aspects of the literacy training experience

An issue that all trainers must confront is what language to teach. The best language in which to begin reading and writing is one's mother tongue. However, many rural farmers want to learn to read and write in Portuguese rather than Macua because they know that is the language of business, and they don't want to waste time. It is an enormous struggle to convince participants to learn literacy first in their own language. Groups generally reach a compromise: they begin learning to read and write in Macua and then move on to include Portuguese.

Another important aspect of the program is to take stock of the human resources in the areas where the program operates and to enlist the collaboration of many others. This begins the process of establishing synergy among organisations and activities. A list is compiled of potential collaborators, according to the themes that will be included in course discussions. In this way, other individuals are invited to participate in the training of the literacy facilitators. For example, outside participants were involved in discussions of the new land law adopted in Mozambique.

During the training sessions, creating a positive learning dynamic is promoted through the use of small groups, assigning tasks, and creating challenges. For example, one group invents a task for another group, which tries to complete the task and return it to first group. In these situations, participants develop their skills of inventing, resolving, returning, analysing, adapting, and reformulating.

Participants are not given manuals at the outset of Phase I of the training. Rather, they construct their own manuals as the course activities unfold.

The most interesting aspect of this program's experience has been the way in which the methodology of Paulo Freire has been combined with some of the Reflect methodology. In the Freire methodology, the challenge for trainees is to analyse and debate a selected subject or to make a decision and act on it. But the challenge ends there—with a conversation about an abstract idea. Topics are discussed but not seen, unless the facilitator introduces an image evoking the subject of discussion.

This program's goal is to make the experience more dynamic, involving, and stimulating. To do this, it uses a technique from the Reflect methodology: making maps on the floor. This association of methodologies—debate and map making—is especially useful for helping mathematics become more accessible and operational, because participants take data straight off the maps and work with questions originating with the maps.

Summary of maps themes in the local language – Emakhua

ROOT WORD	MAP TITLES
MURO	Housing and natural resources
MUTEKO	Human resources and workload based on gender
MUKASU	Agriculture
MATTUVI	Classification of crops according to priority of participants
NXOTTE	Calendar with periods of harvest and lean seasons
NAKHUWO	Agriculture calendar

ETTHAYA	Land tenure
EPASARI	Market prices calendar
OKOPHA	Income and expenses tree/calendar
EKOOFIRI	Household economics flow chart

Summary of maps themes in Portuguese

ROOT WORD	MAP TITLES
Association Principles	
VIDA , association life	Association Organisation
DONO , association ownership	How are we organised? Association principles Functions of each association office Roles of association leaders Member rights and responsibilities
VOTO , association vote	General assembly Decision-making processes
RODA , rotation in the association	Pros and cons of office rotation Members and the rotation of offices
Land and Income	
MUDA , change crops	Change crops Change / risks and solutions
FOME , fight hunger	Factors that help fight hunger
Marketing	
PRODUTO , marketing a product	Steps in marketing a product
FICHA , book-keeping forms	Forms that are used in an association The importance of forms
Environment	
LUME , brush fire control	Avoiding uncontrolled fires

Ideas and suggestions on how to lead participant groups in discussions on complex and abstract themes, such as those in the above tables, and how to produce maps around these topics are presented in the "Facilitator's Manual," which is written in Portuguese. The themes themselves are the result of identifying topics central to CLUSA program activities.

Looking at the tables in Annex I, it is possible to see a thematic sequence that is followed when shifting learning from Macua into Portuguese.

Teaching techniques

Introducing Portuguese

The introduction of Portuguese requires a great deal of persistence and patience on the part of trainers and those being trained. Learners confront two difficulties simultaneously: learning to speak a language that is familiar only to a limited extent, and learning to read and write in this language. The method used for teaching reading and writing in Macua must be fine tuned, so as to minimise this problem. When they teach literacy skills in Macua,

learners have a strong vocabulary, which allows them to rely on their memories and own knowledge, making use of their imagination and creativity to construct new words, based on those they already know.

With Portuguese, however, personal knowledge is a weak resource, because people cannot rely on their own vocabularies. Thus the possibility of creating news words based on ones already known is much more limited. Consequently, new techniques must be introduced to permit groups to continue learning in a creative and participative manner.

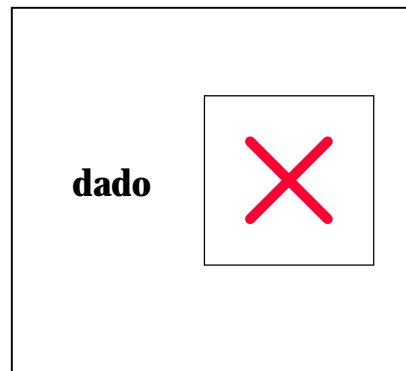
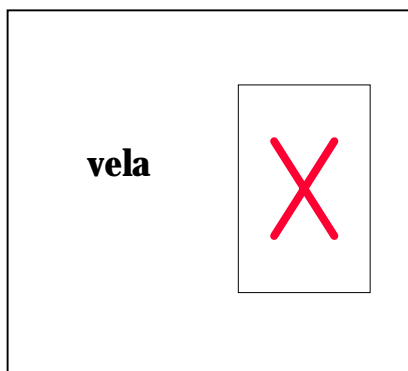
Just as with Macua, the facilitators start teaching in Portuguese with a two-syllable word, each syllable having two letters, such as *VIDA* (life). After that, the facilitators introduce three-syllable words, for example, *PRODUTO* (product). Continuing on, they teach two or three-syllable words in which each syllable has three letters. They use some Portuguese syllables, which they have already introduced in teaching Macua; the learners' familiarity with these words greatly facilitates the process.

When starting in Portuguese it is better to not be too ambitious. Taking small but sure steps rather than aiming too high can help prevent participants from becoming discouraged and dropping out. As soon as participants feel comfortable with simple Portuguese words that they can construct themselves, they can move more easily to more complex words and pass to Phase 2 of the training.

Facilitators are given room to invent other learning sequences, as long as they follow the principle of starting with the most simple and then moving to the more complex.

Specific techniques

- (1) Early on in the first phases of teaching in Macua, facilitators seek ways or to promote associations, at least to provide information, using corresponding words in Macua and Portuguese.
- (2) During discussions in which participants are speaking freely in Macua, they are encouraged to use one or two words in Portuguese that fall within the theme under discussion.
- (3) A databank of words is compiled and written on small cards. A corresponding image of the word is added at the word's side or on the other side of the card. These are just a few additional examples of learning exercises. Each Literacy Facilitator is invited to arrange dozens and dozens of small cards, all cut to the same size. Based on the syllables being introduced, words are written on the cards alongside with illustrations, which are made by hand or glued on. In this way facilitators can use corresponding images to familiarise participants with the meaning of written words. In addition to syllable cards made for Macua words, a set of cards for Portuguese words is also used. The more cards, the better.



When participants are constructing new Portuguese words and have exhausted their own vocabulary, they can go to the word bank and, by visual association, look for additional words. A participant can read and immediately know what the new word is by the image on the card.

For example, when using the root word, **VIDA** (life), the participants look for words that use the syllables **VI DA** in the word bank, such as:

VIVI; DÁVIDA; **DEDO**; **VOVÓ**; **VOVÔ**; VIRTUDE;
VONTADE; **DUDA**; VETO; DEDICADO; **VIDA**;
DATA; **DADO**; **DADA**; DAMA; DANADO; DANO;
DATA; **DEDADA**; DELA; **DEVE**; **DEVIDO**; DIA;
DÍVIDA; **DITO**; VALA; VALE; **VEDADO**; VELA;
VIDE; VILA; VALETA....

In the box above, the words written in heavier type are those most likely to be correct and those that use the syllables learned when studying the word VIDA (life).

Of course, this is all hard work. A lot is demanded of literacy facilitators and of the ALFA team. The rewards though are evident when trainees are able to learn with greater success. By the time participants are working on their second or third root word, more and more words can be introduced to the group.

Literacy facilitators are advised to build a dictionary of the most frequently used words in Portuguese by consulting other literacy facilitators and individuals in their community, such as priests and nuns, teachers and nurses. Facilitators are advised to involve as many people as possible in transforming their work into a collective cultural activity. It can end up actually being fun!

Syllable cards are frequently used as a deck of cards. When the groups are playing with the cards in order to form new words, each person in the group has a certain number of new word cards, which may or may not use the syllables the group is currently learning. One at a time, each person in the group will place in the centre of the table a card with a word that appears to use the syllables that have just been learned. If the player is certain and rest of the group agrees, he or she wins a point. The game continues with each person having several turns. The person with the most points at the game's end wins.

(4) A fourth technique is to use syllable cards with word lists written legibly on a sheet of paper. The word lists are selected by the facilitators according to a chosen theme, using words with known and some unknown syllables. The game proceeds by each person trying to find among the word lists, a new word that uses the syllables that are currently being learned. Each person takes a turn with the word list. Once the player has found a new word, he or she looks among the stack of syllable cards for syllables that describe the new word. Those selecting the correct syllables earn a point. The player with the most points wins the game.

Another version of the game is for each group to try and construct as many new words as possible in a set period of time marked by the facilitator. The team constructing the most new words wins the game.

After playing the games, participants try in their small groups to write in their notebooks the newly constructed words.

(5) This technique follows the same steps as one used to teach in Macua; participants are asked to circle in a newspaper article or text the syllables they have learned. In a slightly more complex activity, participants can circle entire words that use known syllables.

Another technique is to put in the correct order syllables that have been mixed up to form a word that makes sense. For example, TATABA for BATATA (potato), LAVE for VELA (candle), or VIDÁDA for DÁVIDA. This last technique can only be used when people know more spoken words and have developed a good Portuguese vocabulary.

To teach numeracy, the program employs a series of games and activities known as "alternative mathematics." These activities help the participants learn numeracy skills that are related to "real life."

IMPACT DATA

Initial phase - functional literacy in Portuguese: 1996-1998

No. of Associations	No. of Literacy Facilitators Trained			No. of Enrolees			No. of Successful Completers					
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	%	W	%	T	%
35	94	3	97	512	380	892	412	80	234	62	646	72

Second phase - functional literacy in Emakhua : 1998-1999

No. of Associations	No. of Literacy Facilitators			No. of Enrolees			No. of Successful Completers					
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	%	W	%	T	%
21	38	-	38	250	267	517	201	80	195	73	396	77

Third phase – functional literacy in Emakhua : 1999 (Reflect method)

No. of Associations	No. of Literacy Facilitators			No. of Enrolees			No. of Successful Completers					
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	%	W	%	T	%
35	59	1	60	456	401	857	409	90	320	80	729	85

ANNEX I

Summary table of first phase of literacy course - teaching in Makua

Theme	Root Word	Objectives	Family of Syllables	Mathematics
<i>ENVIRONMENT</i>	MURO	<p>Discuss the reality of the community, linking this reality with the resources WATER / RIVER.</p> <p>Natural Resources.</p> <p>Reflect on the importance of rivers and how to keep them clean.</p> <p>Reflect on the community's water needs and solutions.</p> <p>Reflect on other natural resources in the community, their importance, how to conserve and develop them.</p> <p>Identify ways to keep water clean for consumption.</p>	<p>ma ra</p> <p>me re</p> <p>mi ri</p> <p>mo ro</p> <p>mu ru</p>	<p>Numbers</p> <p>1 to 5</p>
LAND AND INCOME	MUTEKO	<p>Reflect on and discuss on the potential of local human resources and the division of work according to gender in the community and in the family.</p> <p>Reflect on how to alleviate and simplify some work processes, in particular women's work.</p>	<p>Ma ta ka</p> <p>Me te ke</p> <p>Mi ti ki</p> <p>Mo to ko</p> <p>Mu tu ku</p>	<p>Numbers</p> <p>6 to 9</p>



Theme	Root Word	Objectives	Representation of the family of syllables	Mathematics
LAND AND INCOME	MUKASU	<p>Reflect on the development of ideas about the ownership of cashew trees and forests.</p> <p>Reflect on the reasons cashew trees don't produce as well as in the past.</p> <p>How to improve production.</p> <p>Discuss prevention of uncontrolled burnings and their dangers.</p> <p>Identify other fruit trees cultivated in the region.</p> <p>Discuss the care of cashew trees</p> <p>Discuss the problems associated with marketing cashews.</p>	ma ka sa me ke se mi ki si mo ko so mu ku su	Number 10 Reading of 0 and its value Notion of tens
LAND AND INCOME	MATTUVI	<p>Classify crops according to importance, according to knowledge of crop, and according to income value.</p>	Ma tta va me tte ve mi tti vi mo tto vo mu ttu vu	Numbers up to 30 Notion of a dozen Notion of a half dozen



Theme	Root Word	Objectives	Representation of the family of syllables	Mathematics
LAND AND INCOME	NXOTTE	<p>Reflect on the phases of cotton production and what is involved in terms of care and tasks during each phase.</p> <p>Discuss the problems in the buying and selling of cotton.</p> <p>Reflect on the periods when food availability and income are highest according to the agricultural calendar, to determine ways of better control allowing for improved quality of life of the family.</p>	nxa tta nxe tte nxi tti nxo tto nxu ttu	Graphic notion of weight (kg)
LAND AND INCOME	NAKHUWO	<p>Reflect on the role of cash crops and subsistence crops in the household economy and how to improve this relationship.</p>	Na kha wa ne khe we ni khi wi no kho wo nu khu wu	Addition
LAND AND INCOME	ETTHAYA	<p>Reflect and discuss the map "Land ownership." The question of land distribution and land use.</p> <p>Discuss the causes of land conflicts.</p> <p>Talk about the new Land Law.</p>	a ttha ya e tthe ye i tthi yi o ttho yo u tthu yu	Numbers up to 50

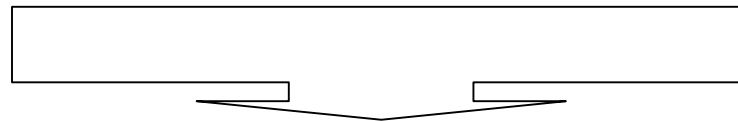
MARKETING	EPASARI	<p>Reflect on the relationship of market prices and basic purchases.</p> <p>Reflect on which months prices are low and in which they are highest.</p> <p>Discuss the best time to sell surpluses.</p> <p>Identify the products that are bought in outside markets and those that are produced locally.</p>	<p>a pa sa ra</p> <p>e pe se re</p> <p>i pi si ri</p> <p>o po so ro</p> <p>u pu su ru</p>	<p>Numbers up to 70</p> <p>Continue with addition</p>
MARKETING	<i>OKOPHA</i>	<p>Reflect on the relation between income and expenses.</p> <p>Reflect and learn simple forms of planning the use of loans.</p> <p>Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of loans.</p>	<p>a ka pha</p> <p>e ke phe</p> <p>I ki phi</p> <p>o ko pho</p> <p>u ku phu</p>	<p>Numbers up to 100</p>
MARKETING	<i>EKOOFIRI</i>	<p>Reflect on the system of household economies.</p> <p>Discuss the best ways of keeping money and talk about the advantages and disadvantages of each.</p>	<p>a ka a fa ra</p> <p>e ke e fe re</p> <p>i ki i fi ri</p> <p>o ko o fo ro</p> <p>u ku u fu ru</p>	<p>Subtraction</p>

Summary table of first phase of literacy course - teaching in Portuguese

Theme	Root Word	Objectives	<i>Representation of family of syllables</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>
ASSOCIATION PRINCIPLES	VIDA (Life)	Reflect on why an association exists. Reflect on what we expect from our association. Reflect on the advantages of being a member of an association.	va da ve de vi di vo do vu du	
ASSOCIATION PRINCIPLES	DONO (Owner)	Reflect and deepen understanding of association structure. Reflect on association principles. Define more precisely and develop knowledge of rights, duties and tasks of each key figure in the association.	da na de ne do no du nu di ni	



Theme	Root Word	Objectives	<i>Representation of family of syllables</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>
ASSOCIATION PRINCIPLES	VOTO (Vote)	Reflect on and develop greater understanding of the proceedings of a General Assembly. Reflect on and develop greater understanding of decision-making processes. Reflect on and develop greater understanding of making a decision regarding a problem.	va ta ve te vi ti vo to vu tu	
ASSOCIATION PRINCIPLES	RODA (Rotation)	Reflect and discuss rotation in an organisation. Reasons for. Advantages and disadvantages.	ra da re de ri di ro do ru du	



Theme	Root Word	Objectives	<i>Representation of family of syllables</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>
LAND INCOME AND	MUDA (Change)	Reflect on traditional crops. Advantages and disadvantages. Reflect on new cultures. Advantages and disadvantages. Implications. Reflect on the risks and solutions regarding the introduction of new crops. Reflect on the relationship between quick decisions and greater opportunities. Reflect on the effects of this rapidity in the economy of the farmers. Reflect on slowness in decision making and the effects on the economy of the farmer. Reflect on what rapid change requires.	ma da me de mi di mo do mu du	
LAND INCOME AND	FOME (Hunger)	Reflect on and discuss the factors that help in the fight against hunger. Reflect on and discuss the factors that contribute to hunger.	fa ma fe me fi mi fo mo fu mu	



Theme	Root Word	Objectives	<i>Representation of family of syllables</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>
MARKETING	FICHA (Forms)	Reflect on the registration files that are used in an Association. Reflect on the files that are still needed in the opinion of the trainers. Discuss the importance of registration	fa cha fe che fi chi fo cho fu chu	
MARKETING	PRODUTO (Product)	Develop knowledge of market analysis, how to contact buyers and negotiate sales. Develop knowledge of and discuss the advantages of making contracts with buyers.	pra da ta pre de te pri di ti pro do to pru du tu	

Program Profile

Key Dates: February 1996: Producer organization development started in Nampula
March 1996: Functional literacy strategy defined
April 1996: Agreement signed with the Mutauanha Adult Education Centre
May 1996 : Training of literacy trainers
September 1996: Training of 1st Literacy Facilitators in the associations
November 1996: Literacy activities started in 9 associations

Lead Organization: Co-operative League of the USA (CLUSA)

Supporting Agencies: Funding: USAID, Netherlands Embassy, Swiss Cupertino,
Other : Mutauanha Adult Education Center in Nampula

Technical Consultant:: Maria José Nóvoa

No. National Trainers: 4

No. Associations Involved in Literacy Activities: to Date: 91

No. Literacy Facilitators Trained: 195

No. Successfully Completing Literacy Course: 1,770 farmers

Success Rate: 78 % of participants passed the course

Success Rate using newly introduced Reflect Method: 85 % of participants passed the course

Length of Initial Literacy Training for Association Facilitators: 80 hours

Length of In-service/Refresher Courses for Facilitators: 40 hours

Literacy Course Length: 1st level: 3 months Emakhua; 2 months Portuguese
2nd level: 8 months Portuguese

Contact: Alexandre Serrano or Maria Jose Nóvoa, CLUSA, P.O. Box 423, Nampula, Mozambique
Ph: (258) 6-215825, Fax: 6-215826, Email: aserrano@teledata.mz., mnvoa@icon.co.za