



# Role of Faith Based Organisations in Adult Education in Kenya

Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services



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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>BAE</b>	Board of Adult Education
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>DAE</b>	Department of Adult Education
<b>EFA</b>	Education For All
<b>FBO</b>	Faith Based Organisation
<b>GOK</b>	Government of Kenya
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index
<b>HPI</b>	Human Poverty Index
<b>KIE</b>	Kenya Institute of Education
<b>KNEC</b>	Kenya National Examinations Council
<b>LAMP</b>	Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>LASDAP</b>	Local Authority Service Delivery Action Plan
<b>LATF</b>	Local Authority Transfer Fund
<b>MOEST</b>	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
<b>MOGSCSS</b>	Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services
<b>NARC</b>	National Alliance Rainbow Coalition
<b>NCCK</b>	National Council of Churches of Kenya
<b>PRSP</b>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
<b>SUPKEM</b>	Supreme Council of Kenya Muslim
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>UON</b>	University of Nairobi

## FOREWARD



Adults are taking on new functions, responsibilities and have new learning aspirations in their capacities as workers, citizens, community workers, parents and family members. To enable adults to respond to these changing needs, it is imperative that educational opportunities are made available to them.

Unfortunately, illiteracy remains a serious problem in our country where more than 4.2 millions adults have no education. Of particular concern to the Government is the fact that two thirds of the illiterate population are women, who are at the same time crucial in creating a conducive learning environment at home for their children.

In an effort to combat illiteracy, the Department of Adult Education in my Ministry has organised adult education programmes for those who had no opportunity to access formal education. The Department works together in partnership with other actors such as NGOs and communities in the belief that promotion of adult education is not the preserve of the Government but a shared responsibility.

The National Seminar for Faith-Based Organisations held at Safari Park Hotel from 6th-7th July 2004 served to emphasise the need for strengthening and building new partnerships in advocating for adult learning. My Ministry acknowledges the important role played by Faith-Based Organisations in mobilising their congregations to participate in education. It is my hope that this important group will continue to view themselves as critical actors in adult education in a holistic sense, where learning includes all aspects of life and in all sectors of development.

It is also my hope that other groups such as the trade unions, business corporations and women organisations will learn from the good example of the Faith-Based Organisations and team up with my ministry in promoting adult education in the country. The Ministry would also like to record its appreciation to UNESCO for providing funds for the seminar.

  
**Hon. Ochiyo Ayacko, MP**  
**MINISTER FOR GENDER, SPORTS, CULTURE**  
**AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

## 1. Background

Kenya's Department of Adult Education is committed to providing education to all adults and out-of-school youth. This commitment is in line with the efforts of the Government of Kenya to ensure a literate nation. However, the enthusiasm experienced with the formation of the Department of Adult Education in the early 80s has waned over the years due to a backtracking on policies made then. As a result of this and other factors, the country's literacy programme has suffered. Available statistics shows a steady decline in literacy enrolments over the years with an ever-increasing number of illiterates.

Given the importance of literacy in achieving Education For All (EFA), reduction in the number of illiterates warrants serious attention. The NARC Government made a radical and laudable policy shift when it introduced free primary education in January 2003. This resulted in a massive enrolment. However, no criteria were set on age of admission of children into the primary schools and as a result, children, youth and even some adults enrolled in primary schools. The massive influx into the primary schools was a manifestation of the public demand for education. It was unexpected that adults and teenagers would join primary schools to benefit from free education. Yet, this was the case, demonstrating rather vividly the lack of alternative avenues and opportunities for youth and adult literacy and education. While appreciating this demand from teenagers and adults, it is professionally not right to mix them with children in the same educational setting since the principles and methods of adult education are different.

To achieve EFA and effectively address the popular demand for learning among youth and adults, literacy and adult education programmes must be expanded and improved. Key to this is

articulating the vision and goals of integrated adult education in today's society. Hence, the Department of Adult Education has adopted a consultative process based on bringing together stakeholders in the provision of adult education and literacy to rethink and strategise on how literacy and adult education can be revived and revitalised.

The Department of Adult Education has recognised the role of Faith-Based Organisations (FBO) in the provision of literacy. In all parts of the country, one finds adult literacy classes being conducted in church halls and many of these are run and supported by the FBOs. Given the wide coverage and influence religious leaders have in the country, the Department of Adult Education believes that these organisations are well-placed to influence their congregations on the value of education and the need to support for adult education and literacy programme.

The Department of Adult Education intends to launch in 2005 a national literacy survey to obtain more accurate and reliable data on the status of adult literacy in the country. Since one of the EFA goal relates to a reduction in the rate of adult illiteracy by 50 per cent by 2015 and another goal is to ensure that learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes, it is important that strategies of renewed collaboration and provision of reliable data are put in place. Up-to-date information on literacy and illiteracy rates should guide the planning and implementation of adult literacy and education programmes to achieve these goals. Therefore, the findings of the national literacy survey are expected to provide vital indicators and be a wake-up call to policy-makers to invest national resources in improving adult literacy nationwide. FBOs active in promoting literacy are expected to be partners in the national survey through, among others, mobilising people and communities to participate in data collection and analysis.

## 2. Purpose of the workshop

The workshop on the 'Role of Faith-Based Organisations in Adult Education' was convened with support from UNESCO from 6th - 7th, July 2004 at the Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya. It brought together some 100 FBO representatives, civil society, government, development partners, the media, among others. [The list of participants appears in Annex 4.] The purpose was to sensitise and mobilise support for the national literacy survey and build consensus on ways of revamping adult education and literacy programmes. The specific objectives were to:

- 1) appraise stakeholders on the state of adult education and literacy in the country;
- 2) identify areas for possible networking and collaboration in the provision of adult and continuing education;
- 3) integrate EFA goals into the provision of adult and continuing educational services; and
- 4) prepare stakeholders for their role in the national alliteracy survey.

Background papers were presented on thematic areas in the adult literacy and education. These were followed by discussions to identify viable areas of collaboration and recommendations for follow-up actions. [See Workshop Programme in Annex 2.]

## 3. Introductory remarks

In the opening remarks, Mrs J. N. Kebathi, Director of the Department of Adult Education, highlighted the vision, mission and the mandate of the Department. She said that the remarkable representation at the workshop was testimony to the



important role played by FBOs in the provision of adult education and literacy services in Kenya. She gave special thanks to the UNESCO Nairobi Office for funding the workshop and accepting to be involved in the facilitation.

Mrs Kebathi underscored the importance of literacy saying "Education for adults is a right, joy and a shared responsibility..." She expressed fear that unless the education of out-of-school youth and adults was given support, we will fail to achieve EFA goals. Finally, she introduced the main FBO groups represented at the workshop, namely, the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM), the Catholic Church, the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) and the Hindu Council of Kenya.

Welcoming participants on behalf of UNESCO, Dr Susan Nkinyangi, the Senior Education Adviser, said the workshop had come at an opportune moment when there was a renewed commitment of the nation in the provision of free primary education and the creation of a literate society. She noted that policy makers have realised the importance of education to poverty reduction and economic recovery. Further, she highlighted the United Nations Literacy Decade and the engagement of UNESCO Member States in reducing the adult illiteracy as a necessary tool for life-long learning and combating poverty.

In view of the expanded vision of literacy that puts literacy at the heart of education, Dr Nkinyangi noted that UNESCO, in conjunction with its Institute of Statistics that is based in Montreal, Canada, have developed a new and more accurate methodology to assess literacy skills. The Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP) is a global and national programme that is being piloted in a selected number of Member States. Kenya was selected as the only country in sub-Saharan Africa to participate in the pilot.

The representative of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Sports Culture and Social Services, Mr William Kurumei, noted that the participation at the workshop was indication of the importance that FBOs placed on an adult education and literacy programme. He was concerned that adult literacy programmes have been relegated to the periphery. The wind of change internationally has filtered down to countries which are now reconsidering their position on adult education and literacy. The World Education Forum that was held in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000, renewed commitments to EFA through setting two goals on adult education: 1) ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programme; and 2) achieving a 50 per cent improvement in the levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

Mr Kurumei noted that the importance of literacy was highlighted by the United Nations General Assembly (Resolution 56/116) that proclaimed the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012). He said that it was important for Kenya to take the advantage of prevailing commitments and goodwill to map out clear strategies for revamping its adult education and literacy programme. He concluded saying that his ministry would follow up on the deliberations and recommendations of the workshop.

The Assistant Minister for Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services, Honourable Alicen Chelaite, delivered the keynote address and noted that the presence of FBOs demonstrated their commitment to the promotion of adult education and literacy. Taking stock of the literacy programme in the country, the minister noted that the launch in 1979 resulted in high

enrolments in adult classes. Sadly, the success of the programme faded over time due to the shortage of personnel and introduction of cost-sharing into the programme.

Referring to the *Population and Housing Census (1999)* that estimated that 4.2 million adult Kenyans were illiterate, the minister called for action to reverse the trend, noting that adults are the ones charged with the development of this country. Moreover, she noted that other surveys have shown that in 1994, 2.3 million women were illiterate yet only 84,000 were enrolled in the literacy classes.

In 2003, when the new government introduced free primary education, there was a renewed enthusiasm for learning resulting in mass enrolment in primary schools. Many out-of-school youth came back to school only to find themselves learning together with much younger children. As much as it was wrong to mix children of different ages in the same class, it was a clear indicator of the need to revamp adult education and literacy programme. The minister also noted that it was the FBOs that started literacy programmes in Kenya as they sought to teach the people to learn to read and understand religious doctrines. It was noted that it is easier to preach to a literate than an illiterate population.

Mrs Chelaite said the Ministry would be launching the national literacy survey to determine levels of literacy and illiteracy in and among regions of the country. This is important for the finalisation of the 'policy paper on adult and continuing education'. The development of a 'national qualifications framework' is also in progress. Finally, the minister expressed the hope that the workshop would map out a plan of action to tackle the high levels of illiteracy in the country.

#### 4. The role of FBOs in the promotion of literacy and adult education

*....I sat for my Form Four examinations*

*while I was already a priest...*

- His Grace R.S. Ndingi Mwana á Nzeki

His Grace R.S Ndingi Mwana a' Nzeki, the Archbishop of Catholic Diocese of Nairobi, expressed gratitude to the organisers' recognition of the noble role of the FBOs in the promotion of literacy. He pointed out that illiteracy disempowers the people and hinders their effective participation in development. It causes poverty, communication barriers and economic enslavement. He referred to the Vatican II Declaration on Education: "The education of the youth, and indeed a certain continuing education of adults, helps people to become more conscious of their dignity and responsibility thus play a more active role in the social life and especially in the economic and political spheres".

His Grace underscored the need for strong advocacy for women literacy noting that they perform like their male counterparts and at the same time they are more available than men. Retrogressive and oppressive cultural practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM) can be tackled through literacy programmes.

In the past, he said, the Catholic Church has complemented government's efforts in provision of literacy in many of its dioceses through the recruitment of teachers, provision of teaching/learning materials and physical facilities. Notable also was his appeal to the government to provide FBOs with qualified adult education personnel to strengthen collaboration and to enhance coverage of literacy programmes. He also

called upon the government to use the provincial administration to mobilise the people for adult education and literacy programmes.

His Grace shared some of the areas where the Catholic Church may support the adult education programmes. First, he mentioned advocacy and mobilisation. The Catholic Church's structure is such that it has representation down to the grassroots level, which is a powerful tool for advocacy. Second, the church has personnel in the form of catechists that can double as adult education teachers. Third, the church can serve as a venue for adult classes. It has parish halls, prayer houses, schools and institutions that can be suitable venues for literacy classes. Fourth, for monitoring and evaluation, the church structure can complement the Department of Education officers in quality assurance in literacy programmes. Finally, for lifelong learning, the vocational and technical institutions owned by the church can be used for life skills training and continuous learning.

As for areas in need of revamping, His Grace asked some pertinent questions:

- i) How do we actively involve the men in literacy programmes?
- ii) How can we link literacy and adult education programmes with economic empowerment of the learners?
- iii) How can we integrate the issues emanating from the HIV/AIDS scourge in the literacy and adult education programmes?
- iv) How can security issues in our society be addressed through literacy programmes?

The representative of the Hindu Council of Kenya, Dr Sunil Shah, highlighted the Hindu perspective for reform of adult

education and FBO participation. While noting relatively high education levels among the Hindu community in Kenya, Dr Shah observed that literacy should be measured with respect to one's ability to effectively function in daily life. He talked of the importance of continuing education and literacy programmes as well as non-formal education to address the needs of those who missed out in the formal literacy programmes and those who wish to have additional qualifications.

The Hindu community is small in Kenya and due to the high literacy rate, the community does not offer a systematic literacy programme. However, the Hindu Council of Kenya and their member institutions offer a number of lectures and talks to educate and inform the Hindus on various contemporary issues such as civic rights and responsibilities, health, medicine, governance, national budget, HIV/AIDS, security, family management, gender, culture and home science. These are sometimes conducted in languages other than English. In this way, the older generation who may not be English-speaking can participate while the younger generation are exposed to their mother tongue. The Hindu Council organises social gatherings for all age groups, publishes newsletter in English and Hindu languages, broadcasts radio programmes in Hindu and so forth.

Dr Shah raised a number of issues and challenges facing adult education and literacy programmes such as:

- a) Who decides on the content of adult education and is it an all-inclusive process?
- b) Is the content of the educational programme owned by the community? Is it centralised or decentralised and to what levels?

- c) Do we use local languages to increase the effectiveness of adult education?
- d) Are there links between formal and non-formal education programmes to allow equal opportunities?
- e) Is there concrete involvement of the FBOs, NGOs, donors and government in the non-formal basic education provision?
- f) As representatives of the religious group, is there any partnership in developing of literacy programmes suited to the activities of the people?

Several recommendations were made by the Hindu Council. First, FBOs should utilise their established structures to mobilise the public for literacy programmes. Second, the government should provide policy direction to enhance the capacities of FBOs to provide literacy. Third, the curriculum and programmes for adult education should be developed in collaboration with all stakeholders. Fourth, the choice of language of instruction should be addressed in respect to the fact that the country is a multi-lingual society.

The vice-chairman of the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslim (SUPKEM), Mr Abdalla M. Kamwana, commended the government for convening the meeting and for taking an interest in gaining awareness on the contribution of FBOS to adult education and literacy programmes. He indicated that the Council has voluntary field workers supporting local organisations. He pointed out that the FBOs are making enormous efforts to raise the standard of literacy which is at the heart of Islam. He referred to the first verse of the Koran that reads "Iqra", meaning "read". Mr Kamwana also shared with the participants that Islam puts high emphasis on education for women.

SUPKEM is running adult literacy classes at the mosques, madrassas, multipurpose halls and conference facilities. It also uses the radio to promote literacy and the classes. The adult literacy classes are very popular and SUPKEM encourages participants of literacy classes to start income-generating projects. In this way, beneficiaries get introduced to functional literacy. In its adult education programmes, SUPKEM emphasises that it is important that people's ambitions and expectations are met. The classes are flexible and tailored to suit the learners' life styles and daily schedules. SUPKEM has for a long time organised specific courses such as secretarial courses, tailoring, embroidery and computer. However SUPKEM faces constraints, in terms of resources, especially skilled personnel, teaching aids and material. It also wants to work closely with the government in developing the non-formal education (NFE) curriculum.

SUPKEM made the following recommendations: a) sharing of experiences between FBOs; b) the need for motivation in order to enhance and promote literacy; c) promotion of moral values of honesty and caring for others; d) improved coordination and networking among FBOs at the grass root level; e) the need for appropriate policies on adult education and literacy. Finally, SUPKEM believes that education is a continuous process and a shared responsibility.

The Director Social Services Delivery, National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK), Mr Bwibo Adieri, noted that since 1913, the organisation in conjunction with the member churches was involved in literacy programmes. He referred to the establishment of the first schools in the country by the missionaries. In the late 1960s and 1970s, youth polytechnics were established to answer the question 'after school what? Yet, this question still remains unanswered since many youngsters and adults are relapsing into illiteracy.



Mr Adieri referred to the UNESCO definition of literacy as "the ability to read and write simple statements on one's daily life". In light of this definition, the illiterate population in Kenya is very high. This raises concern as to whether this illiterate population can make independent decisions in the contemporary world while relying on others to read for them.

Manifestations of illiteracy in Kenya can be discerned in view of high levels of poverty, resistance to changes, high levels of infant mortality, malnutrition and low life expectancy among others. Mr Adieri highlighted reasons why the church should continue to be involved in the literacy programmes. First, churches have adequate space and forums to promote literacy. Second, literacy enhances the capacity of the people to take charge of their lives through active participation and a literate person is able to absorb information faster and be more innovative and resourceful.

The main challenges facing literacy programmes according to Mr Adieri are related to the low level of enrolment due to stigma associated with adult learning. Others are low recognition given to marginalised groups such as women, the disabled, those living in remote rural areas and irrelevance of some literacy programmes being implemented. There is also weak collaboration and networking among the stakeholders resulting in poor community support for literacy programmes.

The recommendations proposed by the NCKK include:

a) enhancing collaboration and networking to minimise duplication of efforts and resources; b) quality enhancement measures like improvement of the curriculum and provision of relevant materials; c) provision of adequate resources for promotion of literacy; d) borrowing from the past best practices in literacy; e) making adult education interesting, enjoyable and relevant to the needs of the learners.

A lively discussion followed the presentations made by the representatives of the four FBOs. Discussants noted that adult education is seen as a shared responsibility and this was highlighted by all the four presentations. There is need for the curriculum to be relevant, flexible and suited to adult learners. There is also need for integration between formal and non-formal education. The importance of a certification and accreditation system was emphasised in this regard. It was also noted that FBOs have an extensive network, which can be used to promote adult education. However, the coordination and exchange between various FBOs needs to be improved and new ways of networking developed.

Questions were raised regarding the language of instruction. Another critical question was "after basic literacy – what?" The issue of functional literacy and education for life was raised, along with the importance of life skills and how education can support development for the person and fight poverty.

There was a common understanding between the faiths regarding the importance of community support for successful implementation of programmes and that there is a need for additional resources and support for adult education. The representatives of SUPKEM and the Catholic Church said that religion must not be imposed on the adult classes and learners should be able to participate in the classes regardless of their religious affiliation.

His Grace Archbishop Ndingi said that those FBOs implementing literacy programmes have to make sure that the community sustains the programmes so that they can continue after the donors/sponsors pull out. Support by the provincial administration, especially the chiefs, is also vital for successful implementation of adult education and literacy programmes. Several participants underscored the fact that the commitment and

actions of chiefs were important in mobilising people for adult literacy and the proposed survey.

A question was raised regarding whether SUPKEM had any gender initiatives and tried to influence the Muslim community to enhance women's education. It was agreed that education and gender has to do with culture, not religion. Islam emphasises education for women. Participants interested in finding out more about programmes implemented by SUPKEM were encouraged to visit the organisation's head office for further information.

The NCK explained that it had adopted a new approach which focuses on six key areas, including adult education and literacy programmes. Dr Shah of the Hindu Council of Kenya proposed that an FBO taskforce be set up to coordinate FBOs initiatives in the education sector.

Noting that it was FBOs that had started education in Kenya, the participants agreed that the organisations have to work together. "Therefore let's support one another (rather than compete against each other) to provide literacy." It was suggested that the process could begin by sharing what exists and by utilising facilities to disseminate policy issues. The FBOs agreed that resources should be shared at all levels to ensure maximum results. This, they added, would help solve problems such as lack of personnel, materials and curriculum implementation.

## 5. The role of adult education in national development

Mr Eliud Moyi from the Ministry of Planning and National Development discussed the role of adult education in national development. He started by establishing the connection between education at all levels and economic growth. He pointed out that education plays a key role in human development through its contribution to the enhancement of people's

capabilities and quality of life. Further, he argued that education contributes to economic growth by: creating a more productive labour force and endowing it with increased knowledge; providing the kind of training and education that would promote literacy, numeracy and basic skills while encouraging positive attitudes; and by providing widespread employment and income earning opportunities.

Mr Moyo introduced some key concepts of development and indicators of development that are measured using composite indicators in which education plays a significant role. For example, the Human Development Index (HDI) measures a country's average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development namely, life expectancy, educational attainment and adjusted real income. In addition to the HDI there is the Human Poverty Index (HPI), which captures poverty beyond income and expenditure and takes into account a country's adult literacy rate.

Some recent theories linking education to development and policy prescriptions associated with the various paradigms were presented. Since Kenya emphasised human resource development through education and training as evident from the huge spending on education, it can be said to subscribe to the human capital theory. But the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have inspired the education sector reforms of the early 1990s that introduced cost-sharing. This seemed to lean towards the public choice theory, which prescribes a decrease in public spending on education. However, Mr Moyo argued that this is not necessarily the Government's official position. Government policy may be guided by a hybrid of theories as none of the theories is watertight.

Seven important economic and social areas affected by adult education were mentioned: gains in agriculture and livestock, efficiency of the informal sector, environmental conservation, benefits for health and population, social cultural transforma-

tion, community development and good governance. Finally, globalisation and information, communication technologies were raised.

Concerns were expressed among participants about the human capital model. A question was also raised as to why adult education is not mentioned in the country's *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)*. Yet according to Mr Moyi, education is a key sector consuming 60 per cent of the human resources budget. He said: "In policy terms, literacy can act as mechanism of social inclusion, as a tool for empowerment and a direction for participation in development by poor people themselves."

## 6. Review and analysis of the state of adult education in Kenya

The Director of the Department of Adult Education, Mrs J. N. Kebathi, gave an overview of the literacy programme in Kenya, highlighting the chronology of government policy commitments. She referred to: *Sessional Paper No. 10 on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya* of 1965; the *Education Commission Report* (Ominde Commission) of 1964; The Board of Adult Education Act, 1966 (revised 1967); Presidential Directive of 1978 that created the Department of Adult Education; *Sessional Paper No. 6* of 1988 that renewed commitment to eradication of illiteracy; and the NARC Manifesto - 2002 (Section 5:2:3) with its commitment to develop a comprehensive adult education programme.

Mrs Kebathi mentioned that globally 864 million adults are illiterate. While in Kenya 4.2 millions aged 15 years and above are reported to be illiterate. Literacy is at the heart of EFA and also key to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Literacy is a way out of poverty and a means to economic recovery.

Among the challenges facing adult education programme, she mentioned are: inadequate personnel; poor image and stigmatisation; lack of continuation of programmes; unreliable

data; weak monitoring and evaluation system; lack of relevance of the curricula and lack of clear policy guidelines. To address these, she highlighted various initiatives that the Department of Adult Education are undertaking including the finalisation of 'adult education policy paper', the national literacy survey, advocacy and encouraging good practices, creating dynamic literate environment, introduction of the innovative ways in literacy, improving links between formal and non-formal education and intensification of collaboration and networking.

She emphasised the fact that it was the intention of the Department to have an adult education centre in every sub-location. The Department will require an additional 4000 teachers to cover all the 6541 sub-locations countrywide. Currently there are only 2000 teachers.

## 7. The role of stakeholders in the national literacy survey

Dr Susan Nkinyangi, UNESCO's Senior Education Adviser, reminded participants of the international commitments in education, namely the Education For All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). While stressing the massive challenge facing countries in expanding literacy and adult education, she referred to education as a right that has been enshrined over 50 years ago in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Yet this right to education continues to be violated for a large proportion of humanity. Cognisance of these injustices, the United Nations General Assembly launched the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2013) with the target to achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women.

Focussing on the Kenya national literacy survey, Dr Nkinyangi indicated that its purpose is to obtain better data and information on the actual literacy situation in the country among

and across the different regions. She provided UNESCO's working definition of literacy:

*"Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning to enable an individual to achieve his or her goals to develop his or her knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in the wider society."*

Accordingly, the concept of literacy is situated within a continuum of skills and there is need for developing skills at different levels, in different context, for different uses and purposes.

The national literacy survey will use a new methodology for measuring a person's literacy skills that has been developed by UNESCO Institute of Statistics. Some 10,000 to 15,000 households will be statistically sampled. In addition to household and demographic data, survey respondents will undertake an actual test to measure literacy and numeracy skills. The survey will assess the current level of literacy, provide an overview of skills in the country and the profile of Kenyans in need of literacy and along regional lines. This should inform policy and guide literacy programme development. The literacy data will also serve as a benchmark for reporting on international indicators such as EFA and MDGs.

Dr Nkinyangi appealed to FBOs to support the survey and contribute to its successful implementation. Specifically, FBOs are needed for advocacy and information-sharing to mobilise participation and disseminate the findings. Participants at the workshop suggested that FBOs establish a 'special task force' to assist in the survey launch and field work. It was further suggested that Members of Parliament be informed and

sensitised on the scope, nature and importance of the national literacy survey.

It was further suggested that FBOs be called upon to assist with the survey especially in hard to reach areas such as North Eastern Province. Concerns were raised about the need to complement the quantitative data collection with some qualitative analysis to capture the views, opinions and expectations of people. Questions were also raised regarding literacy and civic empowerment, family structure and religious affiliation related to literacy/illiteracy. To make the survey more qualitative, a participatory approach allowing for questions such as "what is literacy for the people?" and "what does it mean to be literate?" was proposed.

## 8. Mapping the way forward

Participants at the workshop were divided into four working groups to discuss issues and challenges relating to advocacy, reaching the unreached, quality and relevance of adult education and literacy and partnerships. [The outcome and suggestions from these working groups appear in the Annex 3.]

The first group discussed advocacy and focused on the role of FBOs in the national literacy survey and actions that can be undertaken to promote adult education and literacy. They looked at possibilities for revamping adult education and literacy and ways to ensure political goodwill.

The second group discussed ways of reaching the unreached and those marginalised from adult education and literacy programmes. It looked at possible strategies to enhance access to adult education and literacy among these groups and recommended immediate interventions by FBOs, civil society organisations and lobby groups.



The third group looked at quality and relevance of adult education and literacy and discussed what teaching and learning materials and packages should be introduced to make adult education and literacy more attractive and relevant to the beneficiaries. It discussed how teachers should be recruited, trained and remunerated and suggested ways of strengthening monitoring and evaluation of adult education and literacy programmes.

The fourth group discussed partnership and collaboration and looked at strategies that can promote adult education and literacy. It discussed the challenges hindering effective collaboration and networking among these stakeholders/adult education and literacy providers and considered ways of improving coordination and collaboration among the various actors. Finally, it identified resources that can be utilised to support adult education and literacy programmes.

## 9. Conclusion

The representatives of the four FBOs - His Grace R.S Ndingi Mwana a' Nzeki, Archbishop of Catholic Diocese of Nairobi, Dr Sunil Shah, Hindu Council of Kenya, Mr Abdalla M. Kamwana, Supreme Council of Kenya Muslim (SUPKEM) and Mr Bwibo Adieri, Director of Social Services Delivery at the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) and the other participants issued a joint communiqué, which appears in Annex 1.

# Annex 1

## COMMUNIQUE ON ADULT EDUCATION

We the representatives of the Faith-Based Organisations and lobby groups attending the national seminar for Faith-Based Organisations on "Literacy empowers all to participate in development- Literacy a shared Responsibility", held at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, between 6<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>, July 2004, organised by the Department of Adult Education and UNESCO Nairobi office,

### RECOGNISING:

1. The key role of adult education and literacy for a working nation especially in the Economic Recovery Strategy of the Government.
2. The impressive efforts being made by the Government in the area of free primary education.
3. The Government's commitment to the provision of education to ALL, which includes a commitment to promoting adult literacy.
4. The commitment made by the Government (*NARC Manifesto – 2002 Section 5:2.3*) to establish a comprehensive Adult and Continuing Education Programme with its own examinations and certifications by the Board of Adult Education.
5. That Kenya is a signatory to international protocols that include adult education and literacy.
6. The critical role of adult education and literacy in realising the Education For All (EFA) goals, the United Nations Literacy Decade and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

7. That the Government has demonstrated commendable creativity in deepening the dialogue with Faith-Based Organisations on adult education and literacy.
8. That the Government faces difficult choices concerning the allocation of resources against a background of many competing needs for the limited public funds.
9. The pivotal role of adult education and literacy in combating diseases, particularly the HIV/AIDS pandemic and in the prevention of drug and substance abuse.
10. The critical role of adult literacy in societal development, industrialisation and poverty reduction.
11. The critical role of adult education and literacy in promoting good governance.

UPON FURTHER REALISING:

12. That the Faith-Based Organisations carry a responsibility to assist in the moral rebuilding of our nation afflicted by a culture of selfishness, dishonesty and mistrust.
13. Our ability to offer holistic education to our members is limited where literacy skills are lacking. Holistic education includes explicit matters of faith, social responsibility and good citizenship.
14. That, like the Government, our efforts to promote child and youth education and literacy must be matched by efforts to promote adult education and literacy.
15. That, in fact, offering literacy to parents and guardians increases the chances of children receiving basic education of quality and being motivated to perform well in school and later on in life.

16. That illiteracy can make individuals vulnerable to the influence of extreme forms of religion leading to fundamentalism, violence and anti-social behaviours.
17. That the provision of adult education and literacy programmes is a shared responsibility between the Government and Faith-Based Organisations.
18. That some Faith-Based Organisations have not given priority to their responsibility in promoting adult education and literacy.
19. That the Department of Adult Education has not been given adequate support to properly provide and manage adult education and literacy programmes.

#### CALL UPON THE GOVERNMENT:

1. To establish a 'National Committee on Adult Education and Literacy' comprising the Kenya Episcopal Conference, SUPKEM, Hindu Council of Kenya and National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) under the auspices of the Department of Adult Education to coordinate activities that promote the national adult education and literacy programme.
2. To implement its pledge of establishing a comprehensive adult education and literacy programme that offers equivalencies and certification.
3. To review and revise the philosophy and vision for adult education programmes in collaboration with the Faith-Based Organisations to address the emerging needs and challenges in collaboration with the 'National Committee on Adult Education and Literacy'. The content of adult education and literacy programmes be

developed respecting the social, cultural and religious beliefs of the people.

4. Establish working partnerships and linkages among the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services and other related ministries.
5. To urgently review and finalise the pending Board of Adult Education Act, National Adult Education Policy Guidelines and Non-Formal Education Policy Guidelines.
6. To recruit adult education teachers and other support staff to provide quality education to the learners.
7. To play a leading role in facilitating the work closely of the National Committee and other stakeholders to develop and sustain strategies and activities that will add value to adult education and literacy programmes.
8. To make special efforts to address adult education needs of disadvantaged and marginalised groups.
9. To develop strategies in collaboration with Faith-Based Organisations, that will address the plight of out-of-school youth in light of the working nation.

## WE FURTHER CALL UPON FAITH-BASED ORGANISATIONS:

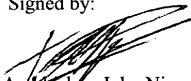
1. To renew their commitment to promote adult education and literacy.
2. Intensify sensitisation and advocacy campaigns in favour of adult education and literacy.
3. Use existing human resources within the FBO structures to complement the Government teachers in their efforts

to provide adult education and literacy.

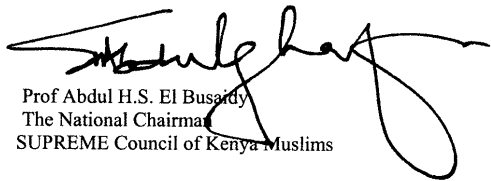
4. To be ready to actively work with the Government in the proposed 'National Committee on Adult Education and Literacy'.
5. To assist the Department of Adult Education to monitor and evaluate programmes to ensure quality, accountability and transparency.
6. To provide space for learning and to assist in the provision of teaching and learning materials.
7. To support and actively participate in the forthcoming national literacy survey.

Finally, we recommend that the Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services (Department of Adult Education), using these resolutions, the Board of Adult Education Act, past consultative reports and any other relevant reports and documents, in consultation with Faith-Based Organisations and other key stakeholders develop necessary sectoral policies and implementation strategies that will ensure provision of quality education to all Kenyan youth and adults.

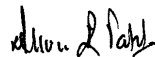
Signed by:



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Chairman  
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Prof Abdul H.S. El Busaidy  
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Mr. Shree Ashwin Patel  
The National Chairman  
Hindu Council of Kenya



The Rev Mutava Musyimi  
General Secretary  
National Council of Churches of Kenya

# Annex 2

## Workshop Programme National Seminar for Faith Based Organisations Programme Theme: "Enhancing Literacy For A Working Nation"

6th July 2004		
TIME	ACTIVITY	PRESENTER
8.30 a.m. - 9.00 a.m.	Registration of Participants	Mrs S. W. Wanjohi Department of Adult Education
9.00 a.m. - 9.30 a.m.	Introductions and Seminar Objectives	Mrs J. N. Keibathi - Director of Adult Education
9.30 a.m. - 10.00 a.m.	Introductory remarks	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Culture and Social Services
10.00 a.m. - 10.30 a.m.	Opening and Keynote address	Hon. Alison Chelaisi, M.P. Assistant Minister for Gender, Culture and Social Services
<b>10.30 a.m. - 11.00 a.m.</b>	<b>Tea break</b>	
11.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.	The Role of Faith Based Organizations in the Promotion of Literacy and Adult Education (Panel Discussion)	Heads of Faith based organisations
<b>1.00 p.m. - 2.30 p.m.</b>	<b>Lunch break</b>	
2.30 P.M. - 3.00 p.m.	Review and Analysis of the State of Adult Education Programme	Mrs. J. N. Keibathi Department of Adult Education
3.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.	The Role of Adult Education in National Development	Permanent Secretary National Development Ministry of Finance and Planning
<b>3.30 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.</b>	<b>Tea break Departure</b>	
7th July 2004		
8.30 a.m. - 9.00 a.m.	Arrival and Registration	Mrs S. W. Wanjohi Department of Adult Education
9.00 a.m. - 10.00 a.m.	The Role of Stakeholders in the Literacy Survey (Plenary Discussion)	Susan Nkinyangi UNESCO Nairobi Office
<b>10.00 a.m. - 10.30 a.m.</b>	<b>Tea break</b>	
10.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.	Group Discussions	Mr. J. Omange Department of Adult Education
11.30 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.	Group Reports	Mr. J.M. Katwa Department of Adult Education
<b>1.00 p.m. - 2.00 p.m.</b>	<b>Lunch break</b>	
2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.	Plans of Action in Support of Literacy, adult Continuing Education	J. N. Keibathi Department of Adult Education
4.00 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.	C L O S U R E	
<b>4.30 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.</b>	<b>Tea and departure</b>	

# Annex 3: Reports of the group discussion

## Group One: Advocacy and publicity

### Topics for group discussion

- Role of FBOs in the national literacy survey.
- Proposals on a countrywide action plan that can be undertaken to promote adult education and literacy.
- Possible marketing/promotion strategies to revamp adult education and literacy.
- Ensuring that the existing political will on education is translated into action to revamp adult education.

### Issue one: Advocacy and publicity

#### Strategic objectives.

- 1 To involve FBOs in the national literacy survey planning process including recruitment of enumerators.
- 2 To inform the community about the literacy survey and mobilise community support.
- 3 To facilitate transport.
- 4 To provide personnel.
- 5 To source for funding.
- 6 To provide resource centres.
- 7 To promote adult education and literacy.
- 8 To improve the image of adult education.



## Activities

1. Mainstreaming the FBOs in planning activities.
2. Networking from national to grassroots levels.
3. Create awareness on the literacy survey.
4. Hold meetings within relevant structures.
5. Transport those involved in community mobilisation (in form of vehicles, fuel, camels,).
6. Participate in identifying the personnel.
7. Provide personnel, stationary, fuel vehicles.
8. Carry out research; provide materials, store and display materials derived from the survey.
9. Improving the remuneration teachers.
10. Training and in service of teachers.
11. Employment of teachers (more).
12. Provide the learning centres.
13. Provide human resource personnel.
14. Develop/provide learning teaching materials.
15. Review/developing of the curriculum to make it relevant.
16. Remove stigmatization/attitudes that come up with adult education by - sensitising the community through use of FBOs, barazas, and opinion leaders.
17. Accreditation such as award of certificates.

18. Reconceptualisation of the terms used in adult education.
19. Write articles on adult education and literacy like newsletters/magazines.
20. Tailor the programmes to fit within the time frame.
21. Establish income-generating activities

### Who should carry out the activities

All FBOs (with representatives of main FBOs on survey planning committee), GOK and individual.

## Issue two: Revamping adult education and literacy

### Strategic objectives

- To promote functional literacy centres.
- To translate political will into action.
- To sensitise political leaders on the need for having a literate society for development.

### Activities

1. Use of media such as radio, TV and newspaper to promote adult literacy
2. Introduce open-learning/distance education.
3. Sensitising members of the parliamentary education committee.
4. MPs be brought on board/committees
5. Enlighten the community on there right to education.

6. Free adult education to be enjoyed for those who never went to school.
7. Provision of learning material/teaching materials.
8. Address the needs of the community to reduce poverty.
9. Maximise use of existing community facilities.

### Who should carry out the activities

Civil society/GOK/FBOs, GOK.

### Group 2: Targeting youth and adults - reaching the unreached

#### Topics for discussion

- Groups which are currently unreached by adult education and literacy programmes.
- Possible strategies to assist these groups to access adult literacy and education.
- Immediate interventions for FBOs civil society organisations and lobby groups to assist the Department of Adult Education.

### Issue one: Targeting all youth and adults

#### Strategic objectives

1. To identify the unreached.
2. To establish learners centres.
3. To create awareness on adult education.
4. To identify partners to promote adult education.
5. To develop relevant curriculum.
6. To eradicate illiteracy

## Activities

1. To mobilise the society
2. Media campaigns.
3. Equip the centre with learning materials.
4. Prepare an action plan.
5. Develop relevant materials.

## Who should carry out the activities?

FBOs, DAE, KIE, community members, and other stakeholders.

## Issue two: Groups unreached by adult education and literacy programmes

1. Street families
2. Impaired persons
3. Aged people
4. Pastoralists/nomadic
5. The disadvantaged
6. Long-term prisoners
7. Refugees
8. Slum dwellers
9. Ethnic minorities like the Ogiek.
10. Orphans
11. Non-skilled workers like peasant farmers, people working in the plantations and in the industries

12. Domestic workers
13. Hawkers
14. Touts and drivers

## Strategic objectives

1. To sensitise the public on the importance of adult education.
2. Establish learning centres within the community.
3. Create conducive learning environments and which, strategically placed.
4. Encourage participation of the learners.
5. Recruit teachers from the locality who are well versed with the culture of the community.
6. The government to employ more teachers so as to reach the unreached.
7. FBOs to participate in the recruitment of the teachers.
8. FBOs to partner in promotion of adult literacy and education to the target groups by providing learning facilities and personnel thus subsidising the government expenditure.
9. Government can channel some incentive through the FBOs to cater for the shared personnel.
10. County councils and municipal councils to be involved during the action plan strategy.
11. The ministry to prepare a clear data on the number of teachers.

12. FBOs to partner by helping in the personnel through integration like Catholics have catechists, who can assist the adult teachers. Muslims can also assist through madarasa teachers, while Protestants can use the education secretaries.
13. Identify local people who can be possible sponsors.
14. Utilise constituency development fund to support adult literacy and education. Government should facilitate capacity building to reach the unreachable

## Activities

### Immediate interventions

FBOs to have a policy to:

1. Support adult education from grassroots level.
2. FBOs to mobilise and do advocacy on adult education through the media and highlight the importance of adult education.
3. FBOs and civil society to mobilise and create awareness to all. Lobby groups to involve the parliamentary committee on education and also local authority.
4. Provide the churches with learning materials that can be used to promote adult literacy and education.

### Immediate plan (short term)

1. Awareness - articles in the papers, mass media, radio, and TV.
2. Churches, priests, talk about the value, importance of adult education development.

3. Chief barazas, politicians.
4. Leaders in other forums should talk about adult education.

### Long term

1. Development of the curriculum (updating the curriculum).
2. Training of teachers.
3. Starting of classes after mobilisation.
4. Implementation of the strategic plan for adult education - who can implement what?

## Group 3: Quality and relevance of adult education and literacy

### Topics for discussion

- Type of learning package that could be introduced to make adult education and literacy more attractive; how to improve teaching and learning materials to respond to the needs of the learners.
- How teachers should be recruited, trained and remunerated.
- Ways to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of adult education and literacy programmes

### Issues

1. Having appropriate learning packages for adult literacy and education.
2. Need for a broader basic education curriculum appropriate for adult learners and one that responds to

the education needs of adults in different regions of Kenya.

### 3. Teachers' recruitment training and remuneration

## Strategic objectives

1. Develop a national basic education curriculum for adults, which clearly stipulates the basic competencies necessary for adult learners to function within social/cultural and economic environment.
2. Develop region-specific curricula appropriate for adult learners in different communities.
3. Develop a national framework for purposes of assessment, examination, certification and accreditation for adult learners.
4. Develop a framework for establishing equivalencies between formal and non-formal education at the different levels.
5. Provision of adequate qualified and effective adult education teachers.
6. Enhance capacity of the teachers through training.
7. Harmonise employment procedures and develop remuneration procedures for adult education teachers.
8. Develop appropriate learner books and teachers guides to correspond to the needs of the adult education curricula.
9. Develop print and electronic information, education and communication (IEC) materials to correspond adult education curricula.
10. Improve the quality of adult education programmes through effective monitoring and evaluation systems.



## Activities

1. Appropriate literature search.
2. Review of existing curricula.
3. Carry out a needs assessment to determine regional needs.
4. Development of appropriate curriculum.
5. Review current certification and accreditation procedures.
6. Develop a national assessment, examination and certification framework for adult learners.
7. Establish equivalencies.
8. Review current procedures for the recruitment of adult education teachers and identify gaps.
9. Develop guidelines and modalities for adult education teacher recruitment.
10. Institute appropriate inservice programmes (especially for volunteer teachers).
11. Develop a pre-service training programme.
12. Review the current adult education remuneration package.
13. Develop strategies for harmonising adult education teachers' scheme of service and remuneration.
14. Review existing teaching/learning materials to identify appropriateness and gaps.
15. Develop the relevant curricula support materials.

16. Establish monitoring and evaluation systems in adult education programmes.
17. Training adult education providers in monitoring and evaluation.
18. Establishment of information, management system/data bank of adult education programmes.
19. Information-sharing across adult education providers.
20. Set in place mechanisms to ensure information sharing across the different adult providers.

### Who should carry out the activities?

Adult education providers and stakeholders, FBOS, CBOs, MOEST, KIE, KNEC, MOGSCSS, DAE, Board of Adult Education, other relevant ministries, private sector, publishers, development partners and universities.

### Group 4: Partnership and collaboration

#### Topics for discussion

- Strategies that each of the above actors play to promote adult education and literacy for all youth and adults.
- Challenges hindering effective collaboration and networking among these stakeholders/adult education and literacy providers.

- Improving coordination and collaboration among the various actors.
- Areas of collaboration and resources that can be utilised to support adult education and literacy programmes.

Strategies that each of the above actors should play to promote adult education and literacy for all youth and adults

### Government: Department of Adult Education

- Finances; funds, human resources, teachers, teaching and learning materials.
- Policy-making, like curriculum and others.
- Facilitating, facilitators, initiation and continuation of the national programmes in collaboration with other literacy providers.
- Decision-making.

### Faith-based organisations

- Programme implementation at the grassroots level as they have the infrastructure.
- Community mobilisation and participation.
- Sustainability of projects at community level.
- Information dissemination like education policies.

## Civil society organisations

- Monitoring such as budget tracking of government and donor funds at national and local levels.
- Policy analysis.
- Advocacy and lobbying for policy change.
- Close collaboration with the media for awareness creation and lobbying parliamentarians and other policy-makers.
- Civic education.

## Challenges hindering effective collaboration among stakeholders/adult education and literacy providers

- 1) Identifying genuine literacy providers (FBOs and CBOs). Some have ill-motives.
- 2) Lack of linkages and communication between the various FBO groups like one does not know what the other is doing.
- 3) Clustering of FBOs such as the more powerful ones (the Big Four) have been found to work against the smaller FBOs.
- 4) CBOs and some FBOs just seek money from donors and do not actually alleviate the lives of people at the community level whom they claim to represent.
- 5) Suspicion and distrust prevail between the various FBOs.
- 6) Territorial nature of FBOs such that if a FBO has been working in a certain area, it will resist efforts by another FBO seeking to initiate programme in the same area.
- 7) Lack of effective monitoring systems within the administrative structures of FBOs affects service

delivery/project implementation.

- 8) Lack of accountability and transparency.
- 9) Ensuring quality in service delivery.
- 10) Lack of a uniform curriculum and certification for adult education and literacy programmes
- 11) Lack of infrastructure and human resources.
- 12) Lack of political commitment and good will. When FBOs come together to undertake an initiative the government tends to be wary and often not supportive.
- 13) Some politicians are known to politicise education activities at the grassroots levels.
- 14) Culture, such as men often refuse attending adult literacy centres because in many ethnic communities the two genders do not interact in educational settings.

### Improving coordination and collaboration among the various actors

1. Opt for the big four to act for FBOs and find ways of successfully achieving this:
  - (a) Catholic Church
  - (b) Hindu Society of Kenya
  - (c) NCKK
  - (d) SUPKEM
2. A taskforce consisting of the government and FBOs at the national level to develop strategies for implementation at provincial, district and constituent level.

3. Use existing structures for implementation of the adult literacy and education programme.
4. Joint projects between the FBOs for enhanced communication and to develop the much desired and needed linkages.
5. Developing management structures for enhanced collaboration such as monitoring, reporting capacity development and sharing.
6. Teacher training and capacity building.
7. Developing a database and/or directory to enhance collaboration and information sharing.
8. Production and development of teaching and learning material.
9. Setting up an information desk for FBOs at the DAE to facilitate communication and information sharing.
10. Advocacy for adult literacy programmes such as advocating for enrolment, participation of the citizenry and Government commitment in terms of resource allocation and the provision of teaching and learning resources/materials.

## Areas of collaboration and resources that can be utilised to support adult education and literacy programmes

- (i) Infrastructure /established structures available at the community level such as vehicles, motorbikes, bicycle, buildings.
- (ii) Personnel; volunteer teachers paid by the community.
- (iii) Learning materials; learning resource centres have been opened by various donor agencies and the DAE for community use.
- (iv) Best practices are a resource to FBOs because they help avoid previous errors and learn from challenges experienced in implementing previous projects.
- (v) Information.
- (vi) The community is a vital resource and FBOs are the link between the community and government. The community is the beneficiary for adult literacy and education programmes, FBOs are closely or immediately placed with community members.

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# Role of Faith Based Organisations in Adult Education in Kenya

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